

# Public Document Pack

Legal and Democratic Services



**To: All Members of the Council**

Dear Councillor

## **COUNCIL - TUESDAY, 30TH APRIL, 2019**

Please find attached the following reports for the meeting of the Council to be held on Tuesday, 30th April, 2019. These were not included in the original Agenda pack published previously.

### **4. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS (Pages 3 - 4)**

To answer any written questions from Councillors

**Note:** The deadline for questions was 5pm on 11 April 2019 (the tenth clear working day before the meeting).

### **5. CHAIRMEN'S STATEMENTS (Pages 5 - 8)**

To receive statements from the Chairmen of the Council's policy committees, briefing Members on current events and issues relating to the relevant Committee's area of work.

A period of 15 minutes will be set aside for Members to ask questions on the statement of any policy committee Chairman.

For further information, please contact Democratic Services, tel: 01372 732122 or [democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

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Chief Executive

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**QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED UNDER THE PROVISIONS  
OF FCR 12 OF THE CONSTITUTION**

**QUESTION 1**

**Question from Councillor Hannah Dalton to the Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee, Councillor Eber Kington.**

I note that South Western Railway has been successful in their bid to obtain funding to provide Stoneleigh Station with step-free access. Will the Chairman of Strategy and Resources provide an update on the bid process and what action is required now by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council given its funding commitment of £500k to a successful bid.

**Reply:**

Stoneleigh station is the only railway station in Epsom and Ewell and within walking distance of the Borough border that does not have step free access or work in train to address this. This means that it is completely inaccessible for disabled people and anyone who is unable to confidently navigate stairs, which can include older people and parents with young children and buggies.

The Council and local ward Councillors have therefore been engaging with South Western Railway to explore how Stoneleigh Station could be made accessible. An opportunity arose last autumn through the Department of Transport's "Access for All" funding programme. This was a competitive process where the Council worked with South Western Railway to ensure that a strong bid was submitted for Stoneleigh Station. To meet the match funding requirements of the national bidding process, Strategy and Resources Committee agreed a Borough Council contribution from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding of £500k. This is funding collected from developers that can only be spent on local infrastructure such as this.

I was of course delighted when earlier this month, the Department for Transport confirmed that Epsom and Ewell's bid had been successful and that we would get the inward investment that our residents need.

As the funding that the Council has secured covers the next five years, we are seeking to have South Western Railway undertake the building works as early as possible in the programme and to ensure that the station stays fully operational throughout. South Western Railway will be responsible for preparing the design and specification, procuring the build contractor, and supervising the quality of the works. The Council will continue to engage closely with South Western Railway to ensure that local residents and commuters are kept fully informed.

**QUESTION 2**

**Question from Councillor Liz Frost to the Chairman of the Community and Wellbeing Committee, Councillor Barry Nash.**

With the recent confirmation of the sale of valuable land at Epsom General Hospital (EGH) to a consortium headed by Legal & General (L&G), can I request that this Council enters into meaningful discussions with both the Epsom & St Helier University Hospitals Trust (ESHUHT) Board and the consortium headed up by L&G, to get these parties to stick to the commitment made to residents last year by ESHUHT, to provide a social care facility, dedicated, in part at least, for use by NHS patients, especially those elderly residents currently taking up precious beds in EGH? These patients do not always need the specialist in-patient facilities and could instead be discharged to a recuperative unit, which could form a discrete element of the otherwise private social care facility, now to be constructed next to EGH.

**Reply:**

The Council clearly set out its opposition to the sale of the hospital land at the Community & Wellbeing Committee in June 2018, when the sale was first announced. In opposing the sale, we wanted to safeguard the land for additional health and related services for the residents of Epsom and Ewell and East Surrey.

We are disappointed that the trust went ahead and sold the land, despite our serious concerns about the future provision of health and related services in the local area. But now the land has been sold, it remains the Council's position that this land should still be used to accommodate additional health and related services, such as social care provision open to NHS patients and the local community.

We will now seek to work with the Trust Board and the new owners of the site, to ensure that the clear commitments made to both the Council and local residents are delivered.

**CHAIRMEN'S STATEMENTS TO COUNCIL**

**Councillor Eber Kington,  
Chairman of the Strategy & Resources Committee**

I was pleased to learn that the South Western Trains Bid for Government Funding to make Stoneleigh Station step-free accessible has been successful. The bid was supported with CIL money by this Council, and step-free will improve ease of travel for many individuals and also provide a real boost to the local economy.

The second phase of Future 40 has now started and a new questionnaire has been issued. Several stakeholder workshops have taken place including events with the BID and other business groups. This an important part of the development of a Vision for Epsom and Ewell which is driven by the community.

The Government announced the setting up of a Future High Street Fund and the Borough Council has submitted an Expression of Interest, with supporting letters from businesses and local organisations.

I am pleased to report yet again this Council bucks the national trend and reported a negative mean gender pay gap of 15.3% which represents a slight increase from last year. As Councillors will know the gender pay gap relates to the average pay between men and women and it should not be confused with equal pay.

Our Facilities Management (FM) contract covering maintenance, cleaning and associated FM services to approximately 40 operational Council properties including offices, public venues, community centres, pavilions (in parks), depot and car parks expired on the 30 March 2019. The new contractors Churchill now provides the cleaning whilst Rydon undertake the repair and maintenance element. The new contracts commenced 1 April 2019 and whilst it is early days, both contractors are receiving positive feedback.

Our contract for the provision of internal audit service also expired on the 30 March 2019 and Southern Internal Audit Partnership are now providing this service.

Finally I am pleased that the launch of the Poverty Truth Commission an innovative project aimed to help reduce poverty in East Surrey will be taking place at Bourne Hall and I can confirm that the Council will have both member and officer involvement.

**Councillor Graham Dudley,  
Chairman of the Licensing & Planning Policy Committee**

The work of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee (L&PPC) is currently dominated by the preparation of the new Local Plan. At its heart is the provision of more homes. Unfortunately, regular increases in Government housing targets are imposed with no regard to land availability or future infrastructure needs such as roads, healthcare and schools. In broad terms, we are currently expected to provide in excess of 10,000 new homes up to and including the year 2032.

Epsom and Ewell is the smallest borough in Surrey, with roughly 40% of its land in the Green Belt. Our current target is therefore unachievable within our urban land boundaries, even after allowing for a reasonable increase in height and density. And because we are currently unable to demonstrate a five-year forward land supply the Government may impose a further 20% increase in our target against which there is no appeal. Many neighbouring local authorities are thought to be in a similar position.

We will therefore need to consider whether e.g. existing car parks, open spaces and retail areas are being used efficiently, and/or can be combined or swapped, including in the longer term an element of regeneration. We may also be able to persuade neighbouring boroughs to take some of our projected deficit, even though many of them are in a similar situation. Such discussions have commenced and will continue.

Against this background the recent work of the L&PPC has included consideration of the current state of the Green Belt; a review of the Longmead and Nonsuch Industrial Estate capacity; an Urban Capacity study; a Future Infrastructure Requirement study; and a Borough wide consultation exercise as to where future development should be focussed. A further such consultation is planned for later this year.

The L&PPC has also commissioned a study to explore possible opportunities for housing land supply/delivery within the Borough by taking a design led master plan approach. The study will assess how Epsom and Ewell might 'transform' in the future to meet its needs, including an element of regeneration.

The L&PPC, as it's name implies also deals with licensing issues. These include e.g. taxi licences, licensed premises, and other similar matters. Most recently, it has approved new Animal Welfare regulations, particularly in regard to dog breeders offering puppies for sale.

All this is a heavy workload and I pay tribute to all members of the L&PPC. I should also like to thank all officers who regularly furnish reports, advice and other support.

**Councillor Peter O'Donovan,  
Chairman of the Environment & Safe Communities Committee**

Since February we have started the new grass cutting season. Surrey County Council have not improved their funding so the RA led council have continued to fund extra cutting to keep our street season clear and tidy. The officers have built in a plan for ad-hoc street cleaning should the need arise or bad weather causes delay in the street plan. We have also purchased some new equipment to assist in the removal of weeds.

Funding has been agreed at The Ashley Centre carpark to install safety fencing as we have had 2 fatalities and also to prevent anti-social behaviour.

The Committee has also agreed to freeze car parking charges across the Borough in response to the continued disruption to the Town Centre by Plan E. We wish to attract back our residents to the Town Centre and feel they have suffered enough with traffic problems.

The Committee has also agreed the installation of 12 parent and child parking spaces on the 4th floor of the Ashley Centre. The decision also added another 10 larger spaces for bigger vehicles to also assist as cars are increasing in size. The installation is timed with the works on the security fencing.

The Council has now adopted a Single Use Plastic policy in line with Surrey County Council. Hopefully residents and businesses will support our actions.

The Borough Council has received a further extension from the High Court banning unauthorised encampments from 56 Borough Council owned site. The new Public Space Protection Orders in Langley Vale and parts of Ewell and Epsom are now active and the relevant signs are in place. Our Officers have been working with the Police to identify specific target areas for joint action. These are areas where the skills of our officers and the legal powers of the Borough Council can most effectively be used.

The Borough Council has received £13,928 from the High Streets Community Clear Up Fund which has to be used to fund working with existing community groups to undertake community-led high street and town centre cleans.

Since the last Council Meeting the Borough Council has submitted a strongly worded response to the Heathrow consultation on potential changes to flight paths, opposing plans which will see an increase in flights over the Borough and at a much lower level than is currently the case. Councillor Eber Kington has also requested that the Heathrow Airport Engagement Team provide a briefing evening for members of this Council after May.

Finally we are soon to issue our response to the government waste strategy consultation well ahead of the May 12th deadline.

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