

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.

Council
30 April 2019

**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.

Council

30 April 2019

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.