

**Minutes of the Meeting of the COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE held  
on 20 March 2018**

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**PRESENT -**

Councillor Barry Nash (Chairman); Councillor Tony Axelrod (Vice-Chairman);  
Councillors Kate Chinn, Hannah Dalton, Jane Race, Jean Steer, Clive Woodbridge and  
Tella Wormington

In Attendance:

Absent: Councillor Rekha Bansil and Councillor Humphrey Reynolds

Officers present: Damian Roberts (Chief Operating Officer), Rod Brown (Head of  
Housing and Community), Stewart Cocker (Countryside Manager), Rachel Jackson  
(Licensing, Grants and HIA Manager), Serena Powis (Community and Voluntary Sector  
Liaison Officer), Teresa Wingfield (Senior Accountant) and Tim Richardson (Democratic  
Services Officer)

**30 ORDER OF COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

The Chairman informed the Committee that the business of the meeting would  
be reordered, with Item 6 of the agenda (Voluntary sector grants and funding  
2018/19) considered following the Minutes of the previous meeting.

**31 QUESTION TIME**

No questions were received from members of the public.

**32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In the interests of openness and transparency, the following declaration was  
made by a member of the Committee in respect of an item on the agenda:

Epsom & Ewell Local Biodiversity Action Plan - Annual Update 2017

Councillor Tella Wormington, Other Interest: Member of volunteer groups  
undertaking work on the Council's open spaces.

**33 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 January 2018 were  
agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**34 VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS AND FUNDING 2018/19**

The Committee received a report proposing the support to be provided by the Council to voluntary organisations in 2018/19. The following matters were considered:

- a) **Level of support provided to voluntary organisations.** The Committee was informed that the proposed level of support for voluntary organisations in 2018/19 was slightly higher than in 2017/18, due to a revaluation of the notional rent value of Town Hall accommodation provided. There was no increase in any cash grants given by the Council.
- b) **Review of organisations supported.** It was noted that the most recent review of voluntary organisations to which the Council provided support was carried out approximately 5 years ago.
- c) **Local nature of charities.** The Committee was informed that each of the charities supported by the Council was locally based, and that they were not national bodies.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Approved the proposed support for voluntary organisations in 2018/19, as detailed in Annexe 1 to the report.

**35 REVIEW OF DISCRETIONARY GRANTS POLICY**

The Committee received a report requesting an amendment to the Private Sector Housing Grants Assistance Policy. The following matter was considered:

- a) **Purpose of amendment.** The Committee was informed that it was proposed to remove the requirement for a legal charge on grants under the value of £5,000 to enable 'quick-win' works to be undertaken without delay, and reduce the administrative burden of providing the Discretionary Grants Programme. It was noted that a legal charge would still be applied for grants of £5,000 or more.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Agreed to amend the Private Sector Housing Grants Assistance Policy (Discretionary Grants Programme) to remove the legal charge on grants under the value of £5,000.

**36 EPSOM & EWELL LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN - ANNUAL UPDATE 2017**

The Committee received a report providing an update on progress in 2017 on the implementation of the Epsom and Ewell Local Biodiversity Plan. The following matters were considered:

- a) **Funding for countryside and open spaces following 'Brexit'.** The Committee was informed that the majority of external grant funding for the council's countryside and open spaces was received from European Union sources. There was uncertainty over the medium-long term impact of leaving the European Union (Brexit) on grant funding for countryside services, and officers were monitoring the situation. The Government had indicated that existing funding schemes would initially be maintained after Brexit.
- b) **Stones Road allotment site.** The Committee was informed that use of the Stones Road allotment site was currently suspended due to difficulties in its operation due to the presence of a population of Great Crested Newts in the neighbouring habitat. Officers continued to monitor the issue.
- c) **Instances of Ash dieback and Oak Processionary Moth infestation in the Borough.** The Committee received a verbal update on instances of Ash dieback disease and Oak Processionary Moth infestation in the Borough, and the control measures which were utilised in their management.
- d) **Thanks to volunteers and staff.** The Committee expressed its gratitude for all of the work undertaken in the Borough's parks, countryside and open spaces by volunteers. It was noted that the Chairman would communicate the Committee's thanks to the volunteer groups, and that an article would be included in the next issue of Borough Insight magazine.

The Committee also expressed its thanks to the Countryside Management Team for all their work on the Council's behalf.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Noted progress during 2017 in implementing the Epsom and Ewell Local Biodiversity Plan.

### 37 VOTE OF THANKS

The Committee passed a vote of thanks to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for their work on its behalf over the past year.

### 38 OUTSTANDING REFERENCES

The Committee noted that in line with the Council's other Policy Committees, a list of outstanding references would not be presented to its future meetings. A forward plan of items would be considered by the Chairman and officers during the preparation of each committee agenda.

*The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.15 pm*

COUNCILLOR BARRY NASH (CHAIRMAN)