

Minutes of the Meeting of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 13 June 2023

PRESENT -

Councillor John Beckett (Chair); Councillor Liz Frost (Vice-Chair); Councillors Arthur Abdulin, Anthony Froud, Steven McCormick, Julie Morris, Kieran Persand and Kim Spickett

Officers present: Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Sue Emmons (Chief Accountant), Samantha Whitehead (Streetcare Manager), Jon Sharpe (Transport & Waste Services Manager), Oliver Nelson (Public Protection Manager), Charlotte Scott (Environmental Health Officer), Daniel Atubo (Programme Officer) and Dan Clackson (Democratic Services Officer)

1 QUESTION AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions or statements were received from members of the public.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Tennis in the Borough

Councillor Julie Morris, Other Interest: Councillor Julie Morris declared that her son was a Tennis coach. She stated she believed it to be a prejudicial interest and confirmed that she would leave the meeting room for the duration of the item's discussion.

Formation of Allotment Working Group

Councillor Julie Morris, Other Interest: Councillor Julie Morris declared that she held an allotment in the Borough. She stated that she did not consider it to be a prejudicial interest.

Formation of Allotment Working Group

Councillor Steven McCormick, Other Interest: Councillor Steven McCormick declared that he held an allotment in the Borough. He confirmed that he was not prejudiced and maintained a clear and open mind.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 21 March 2023 and authorised the Chair to sign them.

4 SURREY ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP - SEP2025

The Committee received a report requesting that the Committee review and endorse SEP2025 (the high-level approach document on county-wide waste management for the period 2023/25, generated by the Surrey Environment Partnership (SEP)), on behalf of the Council.

The following matters were considered by the Committee:

- a) **To contact SCC/Central Gov:** A Member suggested that it would be prudent to write to Surrey County Council and Central Government highlighting that Epsom & Ewell is awaiting announcements regarding the progress of the new Joint Municipal Waste Strategy and National Waste Strategy. The Chair confirmed he would work with the Transport and Waste Services Manager to contact the mentioned bodies.
- b) **Epsom & Ewell's Climate Change Action Plan:** Following feedback from a Member, the Transport and Waste Services Manager confirmed that he would liaise with the Environment and Sustainability Officer in relation to how the items listed in the 2023/23 programme of activities in SEP2025 might cross-reference with and contribute to Epsom & Ewell's Climate Change Action Plan.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved (4 for, 3 abstaining, and the Chair not voting) to:

- (1) **Endorse SEP2025 on behalf of the Council.**

5 TENNIS IN THE BOROUGH

Councillor Julie Morris left the meeting room for the duration of the discussion of Item 5, on account of her declared interest.

The Committee received a report on modernising the way parks' tennis courts are operated and presenting a clear opportunity for the Council to optimise the impact and value of its existing assets to benefit residents. The proposal relied on grant funding from the Lawn Tennis Association.

The following matters were considered by the Committee:

- a) **Yearly Cost:** Following a question from a Member, the Programme Officer confirmed that the yearly cost associated with the proposal involved an annual subscription fee of £2,380 per year over a 5 year contract, not including staffing costs.
- b) **Self-Sustaining Courts:** The Head of Operational Services explained that any revenue taken over the amount required to cover the maintenance of the gates and software licence will feed into a reserve-fund to go back into the upkeep of the courts. He explained that

historically the Committee has been required to apply for capital in order to maintain them and that this scheme will allow the tennis courts to become self-sustaining. He informed the Committee that other authorities such as Elmbridge have implemented the scheme with success.

- c) **Future Update Report:** The Committee and the Chair agreed that an update report on the matter would be brought back to the Committee after a 12 month period.
- d) **Communications and Marketing:** It was recognised by the Committee that effective communication with residents and marketing with respect to the scheme was of paramount importance.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved (5 for, 1 against, and the Chair not voting) to:

- (1) **Grant permission for officers to apply for a non-repayable grant from the Lawn Tennis Association to install gate technology to all tennis courts in the borough as set out in section four of the report.**

Unanimously resolved to:

- (2) **Agree to income received for use of tennis courts to be placed in the Council's reserves and used solely for the ongoing maintenance need of the courts.**

Unanimously resolved to:

- (3) **Agree that £10,330 identified from section 106 funding is used to carry out maintenance and improvement works on tennis courts across the borough ahead of implementing the charging scheme.**

Resolved (5 for, 1 against, and the Chair not voting) to:

- (4) **Agree the fees and charges for tennis provision for 2023/24 as set out in appendix 1 to the report.**

Unanimously resolved to:

- (5) **Agree that the fees and charges will be reviewed annually and align to the LTA guidance and market testing of neighbouring authorities.**

6 FORMATION OF ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP

The Committee received a report seeking approval to form of an Allotment Working Group and proposing a draft Terms of Reference for comment.

The following matters were considered by the Committee:

- a) **Officer Resource:** A Member of the Committee remarked that there had been a declining Officer resource with respect to Allotments and

suggested it could be matter for consideration. The Chair suggested that the topic of Officer resource could be explored by the Working Group.

- b) **Working Group Members from Environment Committee:** Councillors Julie Morris and Steven McCormick confirmed that they would be happy to sit on the working group as Members of the Environment Committee.
- c) **Climate Change Action Plan:** A Member of the Committee suggested that aligning the Working Group's vision with that of the Climate Change Action Plan should be a point of business, as a matter of priority, at the first meeting of the Working Group. The Chair advised that the Chair of the Working Group would be happy to receive suggestions for topics for inclusion on agendas for the Working Group's meetings.

Following consideration, Councillor Julie Morris proposed that recommendation (2) be amended as follows:

Original recommendation:

- (2) *Approve the draft Terms of Reference, noting any amendments.*

Amended recommendation:

- (2) *Delegate authority to the Allotment Working Group to make amendments to its Terms of Reference.*

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Steven McCormick.

The Committee unanimously agreed to amend the recommendation as proposed.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Approve the formation of an Allotment Working Group**
- (2) Delegate authority to the Allotment Working Group to make amendments to its Terms of Reference.**
- (3) Appoint the Vice-Chair of the Environment Committee to Chair the Allotment Working Group and appoint at least two additional members of this committee to form part of the group.**
- (4) Delegate authority to the Vice-Chair to appoint/invite additional Councillors, Stakeholders and Officers to the Allotment Working Group as required.**

7 FOOD SAFETY SERVICE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY INTERVENTION PLANS

The Committee received a report setting out how the Council intends to discharge its statutory responsibilities in respect of food hygiene and health and

safety interventions in the year 2023-2024 and reporting on activities in the previous years, in compliance with national monitoring arrangements.

The following matters were Considered by the Committee:

- a) **Thanks to Officers:** The Committee wished to express their appreciation for the work carried out by the Environmental Health team.
- b) **Member Site Visits:** The Chair suggested to the Committee that, should Members be interested, they can contact the Environmental Health team to arrange to attend site visits.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Adopt the service plan for food safety.**
- (2) **Adopt the intervention plan for health and safety.**
- (3) **Agree to receive revised food and health and safety plans for the year 2024-2025 at a date in 2024.**

The meeting began at 7.45 pm and ended at 9.15 pm

COUNCILLOR JOHN BECKETT (CHAIR)