EPSOM AND EWELL

Minutes of the Meeting of the COUNCIL of the BOROUGH OF EPSOM AND WELL held at the Council Chamber - Epsom Town Hall on 30 July 2024

PRESENT -

The Mayor (Councillor Steve Bridger); The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Robert Leach); Councillors Arthur Abdulin, John Beckett, Kate Chinn, Christine Cleveland, Neil Dallen, Julian Freeman, Liz Frost, Tony Froud, Rob Geleit, Shanice Goldman, Alison Kelly, James Lawrence, Jan Mason, Steven McCormick, Lucie McIntyre, Julie Morris, Bernie Muir, Phil Neale, Kieran Persand, Humphrey Reynolds, Kim Spickett, Darren Talbot, Chris Watson, Alan Williamson and Clive Woodbridge

Absent: Councillors Chris Ames, Alex Coley, Hannah Dalton, Bernice Froud, Christine Howells, Graham Jones, Rachel King and Peter O'Donovan

The Meeting was preceded by prayers led by the Mayor's Chaplain

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by Councillors regarding items on the agenda.

14 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 14 May 2024 were agreed as a true record and the Mayor was authorised to sign them.

15 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS/BUSINESS

The Mayor invited Councillor Steven McCormick to address the Council. It was with sadness that Councillor McCormick informed the meeting that Mr Mike Ford, founding member of the Epsom and Ewell Tree Advisory Board had recently passed away. Councillor McCormick spoke of Mr Ford's years of dedication to

planting, nurturing, and caring for countless trees within the borough and beyond. As a mark of respect, the Council stood in a minute's silence.

Following this, the Mayor made a number of announcements relating to noteworthy recent and upcoming events.

16 QUESTIONS

Fourteen questions had been addressed to Committee Chairs, to each of which a written answer had been provided and published.

Seven supplementary questions were asked and answers were given by the relevant Committee Chair.

17 CHAIRS' STATEMENTS

The Council received written statements from the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee, Chair of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee, Chair of the Environment Committee and Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee.

7 questions were asked relating to the statements and responded to by the relevant Committee Chair or Vice-Chair.

18 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2023-2024

Council received a report presenting the Annual Report of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee 2023-2024 in accordance with the requirement of Paragraph 7.2 of Annex 4.6 of the Council's Operating Framework.

Councillor Steven McCormick **MOVED** the recommendation in the report.

Upon being put the recommendation was **CARRIED** with 24 votes for, 2 abstentions and the Mayor not voting.

Accordingly, it was resolved to:

(1) Receive the Annual Report of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee 2023-2024 (Appendix 1 to the report).

19 MOTIONS

The Council received five Motions submitted under FCR 14 of Appendix 4 of the Constitution.

Motion 1

The Council resolved by a majority vote (with 8 votes for dealing with the motion at the meeting, 18 votes to refer the motion to the relevant committee and 1 abstention) to refer the Motion to the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee for consideration. In accordance with FCR 4.61 of Appendix 4 to the Constitution, a recorded vote was taken on this matter as detailed below, there being 8 councillors in support of a recorded vote.

Motion 2

The Council resolved by a majority vote (with 8 votes for dealing with the motion at the meeting, 18 votes to refer the motion to the relevant committee and 1 abstention) to refer the Motion to the Strategy and Resources Committee for consideration. In accordance with FCR 4.61 of Appendix 4 to the Constitution, a recorded vote was taken on this matter as detailed below, there being 8 councillors in support of a recorded vote.

Motion 3

The Council resolved by a majority vote (with 4 votes for dealing with the motion at the meeting and 23 votes to refer the motion to the relevant committee) to refer the Motion to the Environment Committee for consideration. In accordance with FCR 4.61 of Appendix 4 to the Constitution, a recorded vote was taken on this matter as detailed below, there being 8 councillors in support of a recorded vote.

Motion 4

The Council resolved by majority vote to debate the Motion at the meeting.

In pursuance of the Council's Rules of Procedure, Councillor Alan Williamson MOVED and Councillor Clive Woodbridge SECONDED the following Motion.

Motion

"The dangers of lithium-ion batteries overheating and catching fire have been well documented, and the speed and fierceness of such fires has already proven to have devastating effects on people's lives and businesses.

These effects also have had an impact for this Council, for example, a battery fire in one of our refuse lorries, damaged the vehicle, caused disruption to services and had a knock-on financial impact. Thankfully no one was injured.

With increasing ownership of e-bikes and e-scooters, this is a problem that is likely to increase.

E-bikes and e-scooters are often stored and charged in places in such as communal areas, hallways or garages where they may not be monitored and the warning signs of overheating are missed, increasing the danger of a fire, which may block the escape route or be close to other combustibles.

Legislation to require safety standards for the batteries, chargers and their components could significantly reduce the risks of fires, injury, loss of life and loss of property.

This council welcomes the news that pressure will be put on Central Government to pass a Bill to:

- introduce safety standards for lithium-ion batteries used for e-bikes and e-scooters;
- introduce safety standards for conversion kits and components of the batteries;
- control the disposal of such batteries.

As part of any Bill, this Council agrees that it will:

1. Respond to consultations –

- Supporting the introduction of proportional safety standards and controls
- Opposing any Bill which proposes to impose additional financial burdens on Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.

2. Lobbying our MP and other interested parties, such as Surrey Fire and Rescue."

Upon being put the Council RESOLVED by majority vote:

The dangers of lithium-ion batteries overheating and catching fire have been well documented, and the speed and fierceness of such fires has already proven to have devastating effects on people's lives and businesses.

These effects also have had an impact for this Council, for example, a battery fire in one of our refuse lorries, damaged the vehicle, caused disruption to services and had a knock-on financial impact. Thankfully no one was injured.

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This council welcomes the news that pressure will be put on Central Government to pass a Bill to:

- **introduce safety standards for lithium-ion batteries used for e-bikes and e-scooters;**

- **introduce safety standards for conversion kits and components of the batteries;**

- **control the disposal of such batteries.**

As part of any Bill, this Council agrees that it will:

1. Respond to consultations –

- **Supporting the introduction of proportional safety standards and controls**

- **Opposing any Bill which proposes to impose additional financial burdens on Epsom & Ewell Borough Council.**

2. Lobbying our MP and other interested parties, such as Surrey Fire and Rescue.

Motion 5

The Council resolved by a majority vote (with 4 votes for dealing with the motion at the meeting, 18 votes to refer the motion to the relevant committee and 5 abstentions) to refer the Motion to the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee for consideration. In accordance with FCR 4.61 of Appendix 4 to the Constitution, a recorded vote was taken on this matter as detailed below, there being 8 councillors in support of a recorded vote.

Recorded votes

The tables below provide a record of the voting for each Motion for which a recorded vote was held.

Motion 1 - Vote on whether to debate the motion or refer to Committee (Motion)	
Councillor Steve Bridger	Against
Councillor Robert Leach	Against
Councillor Arthur Abdulin	Against
Councillor John Beckett	Against
Councillor Kate Chinn	For
Councillor Christine Cleveland	Against
Councillor Neil Dallen MBE	Against
Councillor Julian Freeman	For
Councillor Liz Frost	Against
Councillor Tony Froud	Against
Councillor Rob Geleit	For
Councillor Shanice Goldman	Abstain
Councillor Alison Kelly	For
Councillor James Lawrence	For
Councillor Jan Mason	Against
Councillor Steven McCormick	Against

Councillor Lucie McIntyre	Against
Councillor Julie Morris	For
Councillor Bernie Muir	For
Councillor Phil Neale	Against
Councillor Kieran Persand	For
Councillor Humphrey Reynolds	Against
Councillor Kim Spickett	Against
Councillor Darren Talbot	Against
Councillor Chris Watson	Against
Councillor Alan Williamson	Against
Councillor Clive Woodbridge	Against
Result: Motion Referred to Committee	

Motion 2 - Vote on whether to debate the motion or refer to Committee (Motion)	
Councillor Steve Bridger	Against
Councillor Robert Leach	Against
Councillor Arthur Abdulin	Against
Councillor John Beckett	Against
Councillor Kate Chinn	For
Councillor Christine Cleveland	Against
Councillor Neil Dallen MBE	Against
Councillor Julian Freeman	For
Councillor Liz Frost	Against
Councillor Tony Froud	Against
Councillor Rob Geleit	For
Councillor Shanice Goldman	Abstain
Councillor Alison Kelly	For
Councillor James Lawrence	For
Councillor Jan Mason	Against
Councillor Steven McCormick	Against
Councillor Lucie McIntyre	Against
Councillor Julie Morris	For
Councillor Bernie Muir	For
Councillor Phil Neale	Against
Councillor Kieran Persand	For
Councillor Humphrey Reynolds	Against
Councillor Kim Spickett	Against
Councillor Darren Talbot	Against
Councillor Chris Watson	Against
Councillor Alan Williamson	Against
Councillor Clive Woodbridge	Against
Result: Motion Referred to Committee	

Motion 3 - Vote on whether to debate the motion or refer to Committee (Motion)	
Councillor Steve Bridger	Against
Councillor Robert Leach	Against
Councillor Arthur Abdulin	Against
Councillor John Beckett	Against
Councillor Kate Chinn	For
Councillor Christine Cleveland	Against
Councillor Neil Dallen MBE	Against

Councillor Julian Freeman	Against
Councillor Liz Frost	Against
Councillor Tony Froud	Against
Councillor Rob Geleit	For
Councillor Shanice Goldman	Against
Councillor Alison Kelly	Against
Councillor James Lawrence	Against
Councillor Jan Mason	Against
Councillor Steven McCormick	Against
Councillor Lucie McIntyre	Against
Councillor Julie Morris	Against
Councillor Bernie Muir	For
Councillor Phil Neale	Against
Councillor Kieran Persand	For
Councillor Humphrey Reynolds	Against
Councillor Kim Spickett	Against
Councillor Darren Talbot	Against
Councillor Chris Watson	Against
Councillor Alan Williamson	Against
Councillor Clive Woodbridge	Against
Result: Motion Referred to Committee	

Motion 5 - Vote on whether to debate the motion or refer to Committee (Motion)	
Councillor Steve Bridger	Against
Councillor Robert Leach	Against
Councillor Arthur Abdulin	Against
Councillor John Beckett	Against
Councillor Kate Chinn	For
Councillor Christine Cleveland	Against
Councillor Neil Dallen MBE	Against
Councillor Julian Freeman	Abstain
Councillor Liz Frost	Against
Councillor Tony Froud	Against
Councillor Rob Geleit	For
Councillor Shanice Goldman	Abstain
Councillor Alison Kelly	Abstain
Councillor James Lawrence	Abstain
Councillor Jan Mason	Against
Councillor Steven McCormick	Against
Councillor Lucie McIntyre	Against
Councillor Julie Morris	Abstain
Councillor Bernie Muir	For
Councillor Phil Neale	Against
Councillor Kieran Persand	For
Councillor Humphrey Reynolds	Against
Councillor Kim Spickett	Against
Councillor Darren Talbot	Against
Councillor Chris Watson	Against
Councillor Alan Williamson	Against
Councillor Clive Woodbridge	Against
Result: Motion Referred to Committee	

20 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Mayor informed the Council that this item of business was not required, as there were no restricted matters on the agenda for the meeting.

21 EXTENDING TERM OF INTERIM DIRECTOR AND RECRUITMENT OF NEW S151 OFFICER

The Council received a report informing it of the recent resignation of the current Section 151 Officer and the current interim nature of the Director of Corporate Resources. The report asked the Council to support the decision to have the current post holder continue in their role until such time as a new combined Director of Corporate Services/Section 151 Officer is explored and the permanent post/s taken up by the successful candidate(s).

In accordance with section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, by reason of special circumstances, the Mayor informed the Council that he was of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency, as the Council was legally required to appoint a Section 151 Officer.

Councillor Neil Dallen **MOVED** and Councillor Julie Morris **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report.

Amendment

a) **Amendment to Recommendation 1**. Councillor Neil Dallen **PROPOSED** and Councillor John Beckett **SECONDED** the following amendment. That the wording of recommendation 1 be amended to:

"Note the extension of the appointment of the current Interim Director of Corporate Services in post, until such time as a new permanent Director of Corporate Services/Section 151 Officer is appointed and commences in post."

Upon being put the amendment was **CARRIED** by majority vote.

Debate

a) **Thanks to Section 151 Officer.** A member of the Council expressed their thanks to the Council's current Section 151 Officer, Brendan Bradley, for his diligent service and advice to the Council, wishing him well in the future. It was requested that this be noted in the Minutes.

Following consideration of the above matters, the Council voted upon the recommendations of the report. The recommendations as amended were **CARRIED** by majority vote.

Accordingly, it was resolved to:

(2) Note the extension of the appointment of the current Interim Director of Corporate Services in post, until such time as a new permanent Director of Corporate Services/Section 151 Officer is appointed and commences in post.

(3) Agree to appoint an Interim Section 151 Officer from one month prior to the leaving date of the current postholder and for them to remain in post until such time as a new permanent Director of Corporate Services/Section 151 Officer is appointed and commences in post.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.57 pm

COUNCILLOR STEVE BRIDGER
MAYOR