

**Minutes of the Meeting of the LICENSING AND PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE
held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 3 July 2025**

PRESENT -

Councillor Peter O'Donovan (Chair); Councillor Neil Dallen (Vice-Chair); Councillors Steve Bridger, Julian Freeman, Rob Geleit, Julie Morris (as nominated substitute for Councillor Alex Coley), Phil Neale, Humphrey Reynolds and Clive Woodbridge

Absent: Councillor Alex Coley and Councillor Shanice Goldman

Officers present: Ian Mawer (Planning Policy Manager) and Phoebe Batchelor (Democratic Services Officer)

1 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions or statements were received from Members of the Public.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other registrable or non-registrable interests were made by Members with respect to any items to be considered at the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 11 March 2025 and authorised the Chair to sign them.

4 MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on 22 January 2025.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on 22nd January 2025 and authorise the Chair of the Sub-Committee meeting to sign them as a true record of that meeting.**

5 PROPOSED REFORM OF PLANNING COMMITTEES: TECHNICAL CONSULTATION

The government has launched a consultation on the reform of Planning Committees, which opened for comments on 28th May 2025.

The key areas the consultation is seeking views on are:

- introducing a national scheme of delegation so there is greater consistency and certainty about which decisions go to committee;
- introducing rules regarding the size and composition of planning committees; and
- introducing a requirement for mandatory training for all planning committee members so they are more informed about key planning principles.

The Committee received a report setting out the Council's draft consultation response for their approval.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Planning reporting.** A Member of the Committee suggested that a quarterly report on Planning and Appeals performance is made available. The Democratic Services Officer explained that quarterly Planning, Appeals, and Enforcement reports are received by the Planning Committee, and agreed to share the latest reports with the Member.
 - b) **Mandatory Training.** A Member of the Committee raised that they believed the response to Question 15 could be clearer, to highlight the agreement that Planning Committee Training should be mandatory nationally but administered locally.
 - c) **Local Training.** The Vice Chair asked if there is a commitment for Council's to hold local training for Planning Committee Members. The Planning Policy Manager explained that there is currently no national requirement for Council's to hold mandatory training.
 - d) **EEBC Training.** A Member of the Committee asked why training has to be repeated annually if the membership of the Planning Committee does not materially change. The Planning Policy Manager informed the Committee that it is good practice to refresh training, and new national planning policy documents or updated guidance being published means training is recommended to be maintained annually.
- Councillor Woodbridge proposed a motion to amend the response to Question 15 to state that the Council does agree there should be mandatory training for Planning Committee Members, but it should not be administered at a National level, it should be administered locally and

tailored to local requirements, as is currently done at Epsom and Ewell Borough Council.

Councillor Geleit seconded the motion.

The Committee resolved (7 for and 1 abstaining) to support the amendment.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

(1) Note the contents of the consultation

~~(2) Approve the draft response (Appendix 1) or;~~

(3) Agree amendments and nominate and authorise the Head of Place Development, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, to finalise and submit the response

6 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT 2024/25

The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is a factual report that has two purposes; to monitor progress towards new Local Development Documents and to monitor the effectiveness of key policies set out in Local Development Documents.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Affordable Housing.** A Member of the Committee expressed their disappointment in affordable housing numbers and kind of affordable housing provided (1-beds). The Chair noted the comments.
- b) **CIL pots.** A Member of the Committee asked how much is currently in the Strategic and Neighbourhood CIL pots. The Planning Policy Manager informed the Member, that they would send the figures following the meeting.
- c) **Infrastructure statement.** A Member of the Committee asked where the infrastructure statement could be found. The Planning Policy Manager explained that it is a legal requirement to publish the infrastructure funding statement, which is done annually, and can be found on the Council's Website. The Planning Policy Manager informed the Committee that the infrastructure funding statement for the 2024/2025 monitoring year must be published by the end of December 2025.
- d) **Local Plan.** A Member of the Committee raised how important it is to get the new Local Plan in place, as it can be seen in the report, the positive effect of the last Local Plan, when it comes to delivery much needed housing. The Chair noted the comments.
- e) **Town and Country Housing.** A Member of the Committee spoke about the Member Briefing they attended from Town and Country Housing. The

Member explained it was immensely helpful to hear Town and Country Housing's approach to the housing situation in Epsom and Ewell. The Member explained that the future investment in Epsom and Ewell is going to be aimed at affordable housing.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

(1) Note the content of the Authority Monitoring Report for the 2024/25 Monitoring year and agree to it being published

**7 RESPONSE TO STONELEIGH AND AURIOL SUBMISSION
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (REGULATION 16)**

This report considered the Council's proposed response to the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Plan that was published for consultation between 20 June 2025 and 1 August 2025 under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Forum following consultation on a draft Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14) that was undertaken between 9 September 2024 and 27 October 2024.

The Council is a statutory consultee on neighbourhood plans, and it is important that the council provides detailed responses on neighbourhood plans at the formal consultation stages.

Once adopted the neighbourhood plan becomes part of the boroughs statutory development plan and will therefore be used in the determination planning applications in the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Forum Area.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Adoption of the Plan.** A Member of the Committee asked for clarification as to whether the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Plan would be adopted even if the Local Plan does not pass its inspection. The Planning Policy Manager explained that the Neighbourhood Plan will be assessed against its conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and the current strategic policies of the Council's current development plan, which is the core strategy. The Planning Policy Manager explained if there is any conflict between plans, the most recently adopted document will take precedence. The Planning Policy Manager informed the Committee that the adoption of the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Plan will not be delayed or affected by the Local Plan process.
- b) **Paragraph 0.** A Member of the Committee raised that they had not been able to find paragraph 0 in the Neighbourhood Plan document. The Planning Policy Manager confirmed that there is no paragraph 0 and this has been picked up on and written into the consultation response.

- c) **Thanks.** A Member of the Committee expressed their thanks to all those who have input into and worked on the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Plan.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved with 7 votes for and 1 abstention to:

- (1) Approve the Councils response to the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 16) set out in Appendix 1 that is currently subject to public consultation under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.**

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.01 pm

COUNCILLOR PETER O'DONOVAN (CHAIR)