



EPSOM AND EWELL

Minutes of the Meeting of the COUNCIL of the BOROUGH OF EPSOM AND EWELL held at The Town Hall, The Parade on 19 July 2016

PRESENT -

The Mayor (Councillor George Crawford); The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Liz Frost); Councillors Chris Frost, Michael Arthur, Tony Axelrod, Richard Baker, John Beckett, Steve Bridger, Alex Clarke, Lucie Dallen, Neil Dallen, Hannah Dalton, Graham Dudley, Robert Foote, Rob Geleit, Eber Kington, Omer Kokou-Tchri, Jan Mason, Tina Mountain, Barry Nash, Peter O'Donovan, Martin Olney, Keith Partridge, Jane Race, David Reeve, Humphrey Reynolds, Guy Robbins, Vince Romagnuolo, Clive Smitheram, Alan Sursham, Mike Teasdale, Peter Webb, David Wood, Clive Woodbridge and Tella Wormington

Absent: Councillors Rekha Bansil, Kate Chinn, and Jean Steer

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

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Liz Frost wished it to be recorded that her current employment within NHS England, could be said to give rise to a disclosable pecuniary interest under the Council's Local Code of Conduct for Members, but that the Council's Standards Committee did not consider that, in most circumstances, this would damage the public's confidence in the conduct of the authority's business and, for the avoidance of doubt, she has been granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee to speak and vote on matters related to health.

14 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 17 May 2016 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

15 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS/BUSINESS

There were no matters which the Mayor wished to communicate to members.

16 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Questions had been submitted to Committee and Panel Chairmen and written answers had been provided as follows:

QUESTION 1**Question from Councillor Alex Clarke to the Chairman of the Environment Committee, Councillor John Beckett**

Litter collection in High Street/Market: Why is it we have only one person to cover the relatively large area of the Town Centre, who also is responsible for moving the big market bins in position – something which is complicated by the fact that, despite there being work phones provided, no system is in place for the truck team to give an advanced warning of their arrival?

Reply:

I understand that Councillor Clarke has spoken with officers prior to this question and answer and there appeared to be some confusion on roles which has now been clarified. The crews have also been briefed to ensure that all operatives are carrying out the correct procedures and tasks.

I would also like to mention Sean Winter who is our full time litter picking operative in the Town Centre. For many years he has done an absolute sterling job. He is backed up by the mechanical sweepers who sweep the Town Centre first thing in the morning and also a part time market cleansing operative.

In addition to this, the refuse collection crews provide two waste collections during the day (morning and afternoon) and a further collection is carried out at the end of the market. The large 1100litre bins used by stall holders should only be moved by the refuse collection crews.

I would therefore like to personally thank Sean and all the operatives in the town centre for their hard work in continuing to make Epsom a great place to live and shop.

QUESTION 2**Question from Councillor Tella Wormington to the Chairman of the Health Liaison Panel, Councillor Liz Frost**

I am sure that other Councillors were as concerned as I was to read about the outcome of the recent CQC report into Epsom & St Helier Hospitals. Can the chairman of the HLP let us know what part the Council plays in trying to ensure that services are satisfactory?

Reply:

I thank Councillor Tella Wormington for her question.

To look at the reports themselves, the CQC visits to both Epsom and St Helier Hospitals took place on seven days in November 2015 although the reports were not published until the end of May. There is a report covering the whole trust and one focussed on Epsom. Although the overall rating for Epsom is 'Requires Improvement', that is not the whole picture. It rates SWELEOC as Outstanding. Medical Care, End of Life Care, and Out Patients and Diagnostic Imaging were all rated 'Good'. Urgent and Emergency Services, Surgery, Critical Care, Maternity and Gynaecology, and Services for Children and Young People were rated as 'Requires Improvement'. I appreciate the concerns of fellow Councillors about the 'Requires Improvement' ratings, but understand that this is the rating given to the majority of hospitals. I would also point out that many of the criticisms of the services stemmed from the low levels of staff and the design and age of the estate. Since the inspections the Trust has had a major recruitment drive and their vacancy rates have fallen from 15% to 7%. A huge amount of work has gone into improving the state of the buildings, which in turn reduces the risk of infections and improves the feeling of wellbeing of both patients and staff.

The HLP normally meets 3 times per year and over the past few years at each meeting we have had a presentation by either the chief executive or a senior director of the Hospital Trust. At these meetings we are given an update on the hospital performance and other topical issues. There is the opportunity for members of the panel to question speakers and to put our views to them. In a departure from our normal format, the February HLP was held as an open public meeting so a good number of Councillors and other residents were able to ask about the services themselves.

Every year the hospital produces a Quality Account, which reports on the quality of healthcare services and declares their plans for improvements over the coming year. Local stakeholders, including both local borough and county councils, are invited to meetings and workshops to hear about the reports and to have input into the priorities for improvements for the next year. Both council officers and I have attended several of these meetings and contributed to the priorities. We have also held meetings with the Chief Executive to hear updates. I also endeavour to attend the other open and invitation meetings, such as the Trust Board briefing meetings, held by the hospital to ensure that they are aware of our desire to see excellent local health facilities for our residents.

Additionally, Councillor Tony Axelrod represents the Borough Council on Surrey County Council's Wellbeing and Health Scrutiny Board. Part of their remit is to look at the work our NHS Provider Trusts, suggesting ways that services might be improved.

As a borough council, we do not have commissioning or scrutiny powers over healthcare, however we believe that in the ways mentioned above, we are playing an active part in influencing improvements in the quality of the services provided by our hospital.

QUESTION 3

Question from Councillor Clive Woodbridge to the Chairman of the Community and Wellbeing Committee, Councillor Barry Nash

Would you please update the members about the recent success in the Surrey Youth Games and could you please acknowledge the general development of sports provision within the Borough?

Reply:

Surrey Youth Games 2016

Team Epsom & Ewell were defending champions from 2015 and lost out by one point from retaining the trophy again in 2016. This year we came 2nd to Woking, who were placed 2nd last year.

We were also joint winners of the Highest Team Entry award with 30 teams entered across 15 sports. This is the 9th consecutive year that Epsom & Ewell have won the award.

This year we smashed through the 500 barrier with 523 young people registering to take part in the free trial and taster coaching sessions for the Surrey Youth Games.

These sessions were delivered by 19 team managers and their assistant coaches who represented 14 of our local sports clubs.

We also had a record number of Youth Games Ambassadors this year with 59 across the Borough's primary and secondary schools.

202 young people represented Team Epsom & Ewell at the Surrey Youth Games Weekend. We won gold medals in Girls Rugby, Lacrosse and Senior Table Tennis. Silver medals were won in Senior Badminton, Junior & Senior Squash and Touch tennis. Our Junior Badminton, Girls and Boys Hockey teams, High 5 Netball and Junior Boys Judo teams also secured bronze medals in another tremendous record haul for the Borough. There was also a host of individual medals secured in Judo.

The SYG presentation evening at Epsom Playhouse saw over 300 guests attend. Each of the SYG participants and the Young Ambassadors received a certificate for their efforts. There were also presentations to the most Supportive School, Club, Volunteer and Team Manager, as well as Young Ambassador.

Sports Provision in the borough

Following three successful funding bids to 'Inspired Facilities', we have upgraded Court Recreation Ground Astro pitch (Jan 2013), refurbished the changing rooms in Gibraltar Recreation Ground Pavilion (March 2013) and installed a new Skate Park facility in Long Grove Park (April 2014).

Following two successful bids to Surrey County Council's Community Improvement Fund, we have installed a new skate park facility in Cox Lane (Nov 2013) and upgraded and extended the playground in Gatley Avenue (March 2016).

Following seven successful funding bids to QEII: Fields in Trust (Aug 2015), we have resurfaced the tennis courts in Court Recreation Ground, added outdoor table tennis equipment in Alex Rec, installed a new outdoor gym in Gibraltar Recreation Ground installed a new outdoor gym and upgraded the play equipment in Warren Rec, upgraded the play equipment in Shadbolt Park, Upgraded the play equipment in Chessington Road Rec and added to play equipment in Rosebery Park.

In addition we have reinstated two tennis courts in Auriol Park (2014).

Next year there are plans to resurface the tennis courts at Alex Rec, along with the outdoor basketball court and plans to install an extension for beginners in the skate park in Long Grove Park. The latter project is part of the capital programme and funding has been identified and agreed. The former projects are currently going through the council process for approval.

Lastly, given the restraint on this council's budget and the cuts in Government grants, these completed schemes and planned improvements to our leisure facilities are an enormous achievement and a testament to the quality of our officer's grant funding bids, as well as this Council's effective use of developer funding with a limited capital budget.

QUESTION 4

Question from Councillor Guy Robbins to the Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee, Councillor Eber Kington

The Council Tax Support Scheme is an important element in managing the changes in welfare benefit in a way that reduces the impact on the most vulnerable in our community. When the Government passed the administration of Council Tax support to local authorities the funding was cut as part of the national cuts to welfare spending, and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council received £337,000 towards the administration of the scheme. Subsequently the cost of administering the scheme was incorporated within the Council's Revenue Support Grant – no longer identifiable as a separate sum of money.

The Conservative Government has determined that in 2019 this Council will not receive any Revenue Support Grant at all. Would the Chairman of Strategy and Resources please give an estimate of the likely costs of the scheme in 2019 and clarify how the cost of running the Council Tax Support Scheme, without any Government grant, will be funded from 2019 onwards.

Reply:

In response to the two parts of your question:

What are the likely costs of administering the local council tax support scheme in 2019?

When the local council tax support scheme was introduced by Central Government it was done on the basis that it was being part funded by additional revenue support grant provided by Government. In subsequent years of RSG

award the funding was not separated out and could not be individually identified, but as RSG was reduced year on year the Council has been required to find savings to meet the reductions in Government funding. Central Government announced in the last 4 year financial settlement that RSG support to this Council is to be withdrawn from 2017/18 onwards and it can be assumed that the Council will receive no financial support towards funding of the LCTS.

The cost of council tax support scheme for 2015/16 was £2.8 million with EEBC share being £308k, however, the cost to this Council going forward is difficult to predict with a number of variables that could affect our level of expenditure, some of these are:

The number of claimants (i.e. our caseload) – this has been falling as we slowly crawl out of recession, and has the effect of potentially reducing what we spend on CTS. However, we must wonder whether Brexit will have an adverse effect on the economy and increase claimant numbers. The above estimated figure is based upon no increase or decrease in caseload.

Pensioner caseload - they are 'protected' by being on the 'default/DCLG scheme' which we cannot amend. There's no sign of the DCLG making changes that would reduce the CTS we pay to pensioners. However the national review of CTS did recommend that government consider allowing LAs more say on how pensioner CTS was calculated. The above estimated figure is based on no increase or decrease in pensioner caseload and no significant change to the way their CTS is calculated.

Council Tax is likely to increase and this naturally increases CTS expenditure. Annual Council Tax increases of £5 per annum for a Band D equivalent property have been assumed.

Councillors might decide to change our local 2017, 2018 and/or 2019 CTS scheme, for example increasing the Minimum Payment from 20% to 25% or 30%. The above estimated figure is based upon the Minimum Payment remaining at 20%.

An increasing Council Tax charge whilst DWP benefit rates are frozen for the next 4 years is a recipe for higher demand on our Discretionary Fund. The cost of this is met directly by the council, but estimating what that demand will be and how much the council is wishing to provide for the fund will be very difficult.

With point 5 in mind, the contributions from recipients will surely reduce below (perhaps well below) the 82% recovery rate of 2015/16 for CTS customers.

It is therefore difficult to determine the cost of the scheme in 2019 but, for financial planning purposes, the MTFP plan is assuming a cost of £333K in 2019

How will the local council tax support scheme be funded in 2019?

In the absence of any revenue support grant the cost of the scheme, estimated at £333K, will have to be met by council tax receipts and other locally generated income. This means in effect that, from 2019, this previously national funded

welfare benefit will, in Epsom and Ewell but not in most other parts of the country, have to be totally financed locally which I believe is an unfair and unacceptable burden on Epsom and Ewell council taxpayers and residents.

QUESTION 5

Question from Councillor Michael Arthur to the Chairman of the Environment Committee, Councillor John Beckett

The Environment Committee on 12 April agreed to terminate an agreement with Surrey County Council of management of highway trees effective from 1 April, 2017. The minute of that meeting did not specifically reflect involving the loss of new tree planting on the highway of around 120 small ornamental trees per annum.

Highway tree planting has always been a notable feature of this Borough. Its cessation will have a detrimental effect on the distinctive suburban leafy appearance so much appraised by residents particularly in the more urban northern wards, perhaps not immediately, but in years to come.

I wish to request that a meeting be set with the Chairman of Environment and members of the Borough's Tree Advisory Board to seek a way forward so that this important service is not lost.

Reply:

As Cllr Arthur has indicated the Environment Committee took the decision to terminate the agency agreement with the County Council back in April 2016. As part of the information before the Committee was a note that stated there would be no replacement tree planting by the Borough Council on SCC owned highway verges.

New tree planting within highway verges will be entirely a matter for the County Council from April 2017. It would therefore be appropriate for the Tree Advisory Board to contact SCC regarding all highway tree issues.

However the 2016/17 tree planting schedule for both SCC highways and EEBC parks is currently under way and is being managed by our tree officer, Mr Jeremy Young.

I would therefore personally like to thank Jeremy for all his hard work over the years dealing with the highway trees on behalf of Surrey County Council.

QUESTION 6

Question from Councillor Vince Romagnuolo to the Chairman of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor David Reeve

As we have seen with the tragic murder of Jo Cox MP, racially and politically motivated hate crimes are on the rise. We have already seen this in my own ward. On Saturday night, a resident reported to me that he had intervened and had come to the aid of an EU citizen who was being physically and verbally

abused. It is important that this Council sends out a clear message that this will not be tolerated in our community.

With one of the highest number of residents from an ethnic and EU background in Surrey, can I ask what steps are being taken to work with the Police and other agencies to stamp out this intolerance?

Reply:

It is noted that there is already a Motion that addresses the above which will be debated, and hopefully agreed, during this Council meeting.

From information I have received, it seems that there has not been a material increase in this sort of crime in Surrey as a whole or in Epsom & Ewell. If any Member believes that there is an increase in his ward, can he or she ensure that any crime is reported to the Police so that they can take appropriate action(s).

The Council is committed tackling, wherever possible, any anti-social behaviour or crime against individuals, groups or property that is perpetrated because of hate. This would include victims of hate ASB or crime having differing race, religious or cultural beliefs, sexual orientation, political beliefs or perceived physical or mental capabilities.

The Council achieves this through its corporate objective of 'Supporting the Community' by participating in statutory partnerships such as the Community Safety Partnership, and specifically through the Community Incident Action Groups and Joint Action Groups that support victims and find ways to deal with perpetrators. This applies to individuals, identified community groups and places where such activity has been identified.

On a practical level the Council will, for example, remove any signage or graffiti that promotes intolerance.

The Council acts as a point of contact for the community who can report any incidents either involving them or that they have witnessed. These reports are logged and passed to the relevant agency within the council or our external partners. In addition to the powers available to the Police, the Council has the powers to issue Community Protection Notices on individuals, Public Spaces Protection Notices in areas and Closure Notices on properties where hate crimes and associated ASB is taking place. We will be looking at ways such powers can be used to best effect, whilst being mindful of the resources available.

The Council also has responsibilities under the PREVENT (Government Counter Terrorism) through the CHANNEL programme to identify individuals who may be drawn towards acts of aggression and violence against those of differing ethnic, cultural or religious groups. The CHANNEL panel is a tool available to the Council to bring together agencies in order to intervene and divert individuals from the influences that have generated the desire to take such actions.

QUESTION 7

Question from Councillor Tina Mountain to the Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee, Councillor Eber Kington

What was the cost of the last Council Meeting to inaugurate the Mayor? Please include administration, refreshments, flowers, maintenance of the robes, chauffeur and mayoral car.

Reply:

As Councillor Mountain will know it is a statutory requirement to hold an Annual Meeting and these are the associated costs.

Administration: There were no specific direct costs incurred in relation to the Annual Council meeting. In terms of administration, the meeting is simply one of the meetings which are administered by the Democratic Services team, supported by other colleagues. We do not specifically record the time spent on each meeting, so it is not possible to give a meaningful estimate of the notional costs.

Cost of the refreshments: £2,780 (funded from the Mayor's allowance).

Maintenance of the robes: £0 – no costs were incurred in relation to the Annual Council meeting.

Chauffeur and mayor's car: £0 – there are no such costs associated with the Annual Council meeting itself.

Flowers: £220 (paid for out of the Council's Civic budget)

QUESTION 8

Question from Councillor Neil Dallen to the Chairman of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee, Councillor Graham Dudley

Has there been any Government reaction so far to the responses (including from Epsom and Ewell Borough Council) to the Government's consultation on Crossrail2?

Reply:

Overall there were nearly 21,000 replies to the Government's consultation on Crossrail2. The Government's initial response was published as recently as 7 July 2016 and for those who wish to study it the response is available on the Crossrail2 website. The document is too long and detailed to summarise here but in a quick reading I noted in particular paragraph 2.2 (which deals with services to Waterloo) paragraph 3.2 (concern about loss of green space during construction), and paragraph 13.3 (services between Epsom and Worcester Park) all of which are of local interest. The response also acknowledges that some of the more complex challenges require further work.

I have therefore concluded that rather than bring a further report to the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee at this stage it may be prudent to wait until further details emerge.

QUESTION 9

Question from Councillor Alex Clarke to the Chairman of the Environment Committee, Councillor John Beckett

Can it please be it be clarified what is being done to keep Epsom & Ewell a Green (in terms of arboreal verdance etc.) Borough i.e. what is the current budget for planting, and what scheme is currently being implemented?

Reply:

The greenness of the Borough is a widely recognised and valued asset. The Council promotes its protection and improvement through its policies, plans and maintenance contracts. Maintaining the greenness of the Borough remains one of our key priorities.

All of our largest open spaces operate under agreed management plans and these include extensive woodland management. In addition we have the Borough-wide Biodiversity Action Plan that assists in both supporting our management plans and in laying firm foundations for the continued protection and enhancement of biodiversity across the Borough.

Through locally adopted planning guidance developers are required to take every opportunity to ensure a net benefit to the Borough's biodiversity, including the implementation of new landscaping on new development sites.

Planning policies also seek the protection of existing trees and hedgerows.

Green Belt policies protect 42% of the Borough from inappropriate urban sprawl. A new nature reserve is being created by Surrey Wildlife Trust on 41 hectares of land at Priest Hill.

New tree planting is carried out annually within parks and open spaces and within the street. Within the urban area, this has included more than 200 trees annually planted within the highway and parks.

It is important to remember that our success in keeping the Borough green is greatly enhanced by the commitment and dedication of many volunteers.

In conclusion, the work being done to maintain the greenness of the Borough is extensive and substantial but cannot be defined in terms of a single scheme or a particular budget.

QUESTION 10

Question from Councillor Tella Wormington to the Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee, Councillor Eber Kington

As a Town Ward Councillor I, along with my two ward councillors, have been updating residents and businesses regarding the impending highway works under the Plan E Project, based on the information provided by Surrey County Council who is responsible for delivery. We informed our residents that work was due to start this month and after Derby week. However, we now understand that this will not be the case. Please could I ask the Chairman of S&R for an update on the highway work, in the absence of any public communications from Surrey County Council, as it is extremely important to both residents and businesses to be able to plan around these major works and for there to be certainty with regard to delivery?

Reply:

I am sorry that delays by, and lack of information from, Surrey County Council have led to changes in the timescale for the start and delivery of the highway improvements in the town centre. I fully understand your frustration when information that is given in good faith to residents and businesses is changed without notice and without any public comments on the matter.

As a result of the delay, and to ensure that the planning of these key Epsom and Ewell Borough Council/Surrey County Council joint projects are better managed, Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and Surrey County Council have set up a Joint Place Team, meeting monthly, to monitor the progress of the town centre and other joint schemes. Key officers from both Councils are expected to attend.

Unfortunately the timescale for the start of the work has now slipped and the latest information is a start date for the main works in January 2017. However some smaller elements of the scheme may start earlier.

As part of the work of the Joint Place Team, a clear time line for the town centre highway and public realm works will be produced and made publicly available as soon as possible.

QUESTION 11

Question from Councillor Vince Romagnuolo to the Chairman of Strategy and Resources, Councillor Eber Kington

Following last year's review and the decision to close the Wells the playgroup was offered a year's extension. Unfortunately this was too late to make the playgroup viable so they have now closed. Sadly the Girl Guides held their last session on Tuesday 12 July. Could the Chairman of Strategy and Resources provide an update of the current use of the Wells, the future plans and the expected timescales of those plans?

Reply:

The decision to close the Wells Centre, fund an enhanced adult services centre in Sefton Road, develop the land for much needed housing, build a new self-managed community facility and achieve financial savings, is progressing. However, an offer by SCC to undertake a site development brief was not forthcoming and has delayed that aspect of the work. The Council has now

entered into an arrangement via Woking Borough Council to obtain a development brief, but until that is received and the options considered it is not possible to give a forecast of exact future plans and timescales.

Although the original proposal was to end all use of the current building on December 31st 2016 the working party of members overseeing the project have now agreed to extend this to July 2017. There are seven regular hirers currently using the Wells Centre on a self-caretaking basis.

QUESTION 12

Question from Councillor Tina Mountain to the Chairman of the Environment Committee, Councillor John Beckett

The County spends a great deal of time and money painting yellow lines in order to keep our residents safe, yet traffic wardens do not keep them free of cars. How many parking tickets were issued last year as a result of illegal parking?

Reply:

The County doesn't spend a great amount of money on painting yellow lines as Cllr Mountain should know. The majority of the expenditure on a parking review goes on the public consultation and officer time.

The majority of yellow line requests come from residents to stop commuter, shopping or school traffic and have little to do with resident safety. Whilst some drivers do deliberately ignore a waiting restriction, there are many reasons why a vehicle can park on restrictions such as:-

- Vehicles completing a loading/unloading activity
- Vehicles carrying out domestic or commercial removals
- For as long as is necessary to pick up or set down passengers. The driver should remain with the vehicle unless evidence of assisting young or disabled passengers
- Whilst displaying a valid Blue Disabled Badge with clock for up to 3 hours
- Whilst it is evident to the CEO that a security gate/barrier at the entrance to premises, to which the vehicle requires access to or from which it has emerged, is being opened or closed, in circumstances when no other practical waiting area available
- When a valid dispensation is clearly displayed within the vehicle whilst the vehicle is parked within the confines granted
- Royal Mail used in conjunction with the carriage of mail under their universal postal license and as such attract an exemption whereby there is no time limit

- Local Authority vehicles carrying out statutory duties
- Vehicles considered to be parked for ambulance purposes, police purposes, or fire brigade purposes
- Vehicles parked for the purpose of erecting or dismantling scaffolding.
- All of the above plus the central Governments 10minute grace period makes the Civil Enforcement Officers job virtually impossible to keep all waiting restrictions free of vehicles at times.

However our CEO's still issued 7,976 on street parking tickets last year showing this Council's commitment to try and keep our roads clear as far as legislation allows.

QUESTION 13

Question from Councillor Alex Clarke to the Chairman of the Environment Committee, Councillor John Beckett

Can the business case & relevant research used to justify the continued car park charging increases please be given to Councillors, especially its relationship with the business plan that must exist to continue the growth and regeneration of Epsom & Ewell's shopping areas?

Reply:

Over the past 4 years EEBC car park charges had not continually increased prior to the recent changes in April 2016. In the last 4 financial years the Council has reinvested an average of 67% of the total income back into our car parks through revenue and capital expenditure. This expenditure is crucial to continue running the overall car park service and undertaking essential repairs and remedial works.

Every year all Council fees and charges are reviewed by officers, these include car park charges. The proposals and relevant research also considers prices charged by neighbouring boroughs or those with a similar retail offering. Other factors include car park usage, length of stay and occupancy levels at varying times of day for each individual car park, where data was available to do so.

A report proposing the new charges was presented and discussed at the Environment Committee in October 2015. At that Committee the proposed new charges were agreed in principle, and it was also agreed to constitute a cross party car park working group to look at matters related to car parks in EEBC. As well as Councillors Beckett, Dallen, Arthur, Race and Geleit the working group also includes the Head of Customer Services and Business Support, the Parking Manager, the Senior Accountant and the Town Centre Manager.

The Cross Party Working Group proposed amendments to the car park fees which were approved at the January 2016 Environment Committee and subsequently at the full Council Meeting in February 2016.

Discussions have also taken place at the Cross Party Working Group towards a longer term strategy of charging according to the designated purpose of each car park i.e. long, medium, short term. Initial discussions have indicated that the Town Hall and Hope Lodge car parks are to be designated as short stay premium car parks, the Ashley Centre as short to medium term, Depot Road and Upper High Street as medium to long term with Hook Road as the primary longer term parking option for commuters and workers within Epsom.

The Borough Council's adopted Parking Strategy (2012) states that there is a balance to be made, to ensure that the continued economic vitality and viability of the Borough's retail environment is maintained. The cost of parking is one of a number of factors of where people choose to park. Proximity of ease to destination, habit, personal safety and a safe environment are all key factors. The Strategy incorporates an off-street parking charge and management regime that carefully balances the continued economic prosperity of the Town Centre, the demand from residents, businesses and shoppers. The Council is committed to working with retailers and the business community to ensure that the necessary measures introduced to manage car parking across the Town Centre do not have a long term adverse impact on trade. As part of this strategy, the Cross Party Working Group has recently approved a consultation with Epsom retailers to establish their views and requirements whilst balancing the continued pressures on Council resources and finance. The findings from the consultation will be reported at Environment Committee late 2016/early 2017.

Given the information had been discussed, several times, at the Cross Party Working Group, Environment Committee and full Council, there have been numerous opportunities for individuals to discuss the proposals and raise questions with either the Chairman of Environment Committee, any Member of the Cross Party Working Group or with the relevant officers.

QUESTION 14

Question from Councillor Alex Clarke to the Chairman of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee, Councillor Graham Dudley

What efforts are being made to discern the level of impact that there might be on Epsom & Ewell of the new Mayor of London's housing plan?

Reply:

In order to fully discharge the duty to co-operate in the Local Plan making process, the Borough Council continues to engage with neighbouring local planning authorities and other partners on strategic matters, including planning for future housing growth. This includes our neighbouring London Boroughs (the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and the London Borough of Sutton) and the Greater London Authority. Inter alia, this provides an opportunity for them to inform us of their objectives so that we can consider the potential impact on our policy making process. This process has in the past taken account of the London Plan and the local plans of our neighbours', and we foresee that it will continue to do so.

QUESTION 15

Question from Councillor Tina Mountain to the Chairman of the Environment Committee, Councillor John Beckett

Residents only parking is in great demand because of the lack of affordable parking. How did the increase in the parking charges alleviate this problem?

Reply:

The demand for residents only parking has generally been driven by commuter, business or school parking not due to the lack of affordable parking in shopper orientated car parks.

The problem has been growing over several years and in the town centre the council has changed the designation of hook road car park specifically for the purpose of catering for commuter and business parking to alleviate such pressures on local residential roads. This RA led Council also supports the night time economy, as in the evenings many of our car parks have a standard set fee which is considerably lower than that of the daytime charge. I am also aware that residents who do not or cannot park outside their house take advantage of this evening rate to park their vehicles.

QUESTION 16

[Question 16 was withdrawn]

QUESTION 17

Question from Councillor Tina Mountain to the Chairman of the Planning Committee, Councillor Humphrey Reynolds

On at least three occasions recently changes to plans or changes to actual building has taken place without consulting affected residents. Why does the Residents Association run Council not consult its residents?

Reply:

The Borough Council, in its role as Local Planning Authority, fully discharges its statutory duty to notify and consult on planning applications. The Council is committed to consultation and takes care in the exercise of its responsibilities. Whilst errors may occasionally occur I am satisfied that our residents are duly informed where appropriate, in the vast majority of cases. Any dissatisfaction on an individual case should be addressed in the normal fashion using the established procedures of the Council.

QUESTION 18

Question from Councillor Tina Mountain to the Chairman of Strategy and Resources Committee, Councillor Eber Kington

Why are the Committee minutes incorrectly recorded? The Conservative Group ask that should agreement not be unanimous that the word 'most' or 'majority' be inserted.

Reply:

1. The minutes are not recorded incorrectly.
2. No

17 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

The recommendations arising from the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 21 June 2016 were received.

Upon being put, recommendation **1 A (Revision of Contract Standing Orders)** was **CARRIED** without a division.

RESOLVED

That the Council approve the new Contract Standing Orders and that the Constitution be updated accordingly.

18 REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

Council received a report from the Head of Legal & Democratic Services regarding the Appointment of the Independent Remuneration Panel. Upon being put the recommendations in the report were **CARRIED** without a division.

RESOLVED

That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with Group Leaders, be authorised to confirm appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel.

19 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT, CRIME AND DISORDER AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Annual Report of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee was received and noted.

20 MOTIONS TO COUNCIL

Pursuant to FCR 79, Councillor Alex Clarke **MOVED** and Councillor Jane Race **SECONDED**, the following Motion:

“That this Council commend the efforts of Epsom General, especially the Doctors, Nurses, and Administrators of Emergency Care department, for the support and care they provide to the community of Epsom & Ewell. They are as such a vital part of community and deserve our thanks for all their efforts.”

In accordance with the advice given by the Chief Executive, the Council **RESOLVED** (without a division) to debate the motion.

Councillor Tony Axelrod **MOVED** and Councillor Liz Frost **SECONDED** an amendment to substitute the following wording for the wording of the above motion:

“That this Council commend the efforts of all staff and volunteers working in Epsom Hospital for the support and care they provide to the community of Epsom & Ewell. They are such a vital part of our community and deserve our thanks for all their efforts.”

Upon being put the amendment was **CARRIED** unanimously, and upon being put the motion as amended was also **CARRIED** unanimously.

Pursuant to FCR 79, Councillor Alex Clarke **MOVED** and Councillor Tina Mountain **SECONDED**, the following Motion:

“That this Council commend Prince Harry and the other organisers of the Invictus Games, for their service to veterans, especially those whom have spent time at Headley Court, for example Nathan Cumberland and Andy Kelsey (to name but two). “

In accordance with the advice given by the Chief Executive, the Council **RESOLVED** (without a division) to debate the motion.

Councillor Tony Axelrod **MOVED** and Councillor Martin Olney **SECONDED** an amendment to substitute the following wording for the wording of the above motion:

“That this Council commend Prince Harry and the organisers of the Invictus Games for their service to veterans, especially those whom have spent time at Headley Court, and further commend and thank our service charities and all Epsom and Ewell residents who volunteer for them, organise collections and donate many thousands of pounds year on year, in support of all veterans.”

Upon being put the amendment was **CARRIED** unanimously, and upon being put the motion, as amended, was also **CARRIED** unanimously.

Pursuant to FCR 79, Councillor Eber Kington **MOVED** and Councillor Peter O'Donovan **SECONDED**, the following Motion:

“This Council notes the outcome of the referendum on membership of the European Union and accepts there will be new and different challenges for local government and for our communities. In light of the decision this Council agrees to:

- i. put in place processes and teams to ensure that nationally agreed changes affecting the powers and duties of local government can be analysed and, where appropriate, implemented as soon as practicable*
- ii. seek support and advice from the Local Government Association as well as the national Government on transitional arrangements*

- iii. *respond quickly and in detail to any consultation requested by the national Government*
- iv. *work with local partners and groups in our community to ensure a smooth, efficient and supportive transition over the next few years*

This Council also notes the recently reported national rise in racism, xenophobia and hate crimes following the referendum result. This Council condemns such behaviour, and Members and Officers will work with local partners and groups to combat and prevent racism and xenophobia and to ensure that all in our community feel safe and supported.”

In accordance with the advice given by the Chief Executive, the Council **RESOLVED** (without a division) to debate the motion.

Upon being put the motion was **CARRIED** unanimously.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 9.06 pm

GEORGE CRAWFORD (MAYOR)