

## **FUTURE40 - DRAFT LONG-TERM VISION FOR EPSOM AND EWELL**

**Head of Service/Contact:** Damian Roberts, Chief Operating Officer

**Urgent Decision?(yes/no)** No

**If yes, reason urgent decision required:**

**Annexes/Appendices (attached):** **Annex 1** - Borough Profile  
**Annex 2** - Public engagement images

**Other available papers (not attached):**

### **Report summary**

Future40 is a Council led initiative to develop a long-term vision for Epsom and Ewell.

Rather than imposing a top down view on what Epsom and Ewell's vision should be (an approach adopted in other places), the Borough Council embarked on the largest consultation and engagement exercise ever undertaken in the borough, to engage and listen to residents, businesses, community groups, faith organisations and other public sector organisations about what their priorities and aspirations are for the future of the borough.

This report sets out the outcomes from the public engagement that has taken place and sets out the next steps in bringing forward a new vision and putting in place arrangements to oversee its successful implementation.

### **Recommendation (s)**

- (1) To agree the draft long-term vision for Epsom and Ewell set out in paragraphs 6.5 and 6.6 of this report for further stakeholder engagement.**
- (2) Note that the Committee is due to consider the Council's new draft Corporate Plan 2020-2024 at its 26 November meeting.**

## **1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy**

- 1.1 Epsom and Ewell's new long-term vision will help set the direction of the Council's new Corporate Plan 2020-2024.

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### 2 Background

- 2.1** Just over a year ago on the 26 July 2018, the Strategy and Resources Committee agreed to develop a new long-term vision for the borough and the type of engagement process that would be fundamental to that process.
- 2.2** The approach agreed by Members reflects the Council's vital community leadership and resident engagement role. It demonstrates that the Council is listening to its local community, is not just focused on the actions it is taking today, but also has a keen eye on the borough's future. This is important as decisions taken today can have a significant bearing



on future including the environmental, social and economic outcomes for Epsom and Ewell. It is also the case that improving outcomes in these and other important areas often requires a sustained focus over the short, medium and longer-term and relies on the support and coordination of other key stakeholders (Health, Police, Business, Voluntary Groups etc) working alongside the local authority.

- 2.3** The approach agreed by this Council also reflects the need for a clear evidence base of the drivers impacting on the borough and the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data on the views and aspirations that local people have for Epsom and Ewell.

### 3 Key quantitative characteristics of Epsom and Ewell

- 3.1** Epsom and Ewell's long-term vision is informed by the demographic and socio economic drivers as well as key characteristics of the borough. This is summarised below with further details attached at **Annex 1** in the form of a borough profile.

#### **3.2 Community**

- The population has been growing faster than any other place in Surrey over the past 16 years
- Over the next 16 years, the population will age significantly with the over 85 year old population increasing by over 80%

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- While there is a projected increase in births over the same period, the core working age population is projected to decline
- Epsom and Ewell is the least affordable place to live in Surrey when comparing household income to property prices.
- 91.9% of properties in the borough are privately owned - higher than Surrey and Nationally.
- One of the highest rates of homelessness in Surrey
- While Epsom and Ewell is a relatively safe place, 2016/17 and 2017/18 drug offences increased by 35.2%, domestic burglary increased by 29.3%.

### **3.3 Environment**

- About 42% of the borough is formally designated as green belt with almost 40% of this being publically accessible open space
- Four of the Borough's Parks have been awarded the prestigious Green Flag Award - Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve, Ewell Court Park, Alexandra Recreation Ground, Rosebery Park
- Compared with the rest of Surrey, Epsom and Ewell is also the most urban and densely populated borough.
- While air quality in Epsom and Ewell has improved year on year, it still has one declared air quality management area (AQMA) along a section of Ewell High Street where pollution levels, Nitrogen Oxide (NOx), just exceed national targets. The biggest contributor to this problem is non electric vehicles.
- Fantastic Parks and Open spaces including Horton Country Park Nature Reserve, Auriol Park, Ewell Court Park, Nonsuch Park, Hogsmill Park, Bourne Hall Park, and the Epsom Common - the largest local nature reserve in Surrey.

### **3.4 Location and connectivity**

- Epsom and Ewell is the Smallest borough in Surrey with everything within easy reach, for example this is the closest Borough in Surrey to the City of London and the West End.
- Easy rail access within and on the borders of Epsom and Ewell and Epsom Station being the 3<sup>rd</sup> busiest in Surrey
- Located equidistant from the two busiest airports in the UK and easy reach of the M25 and 45 miles to the South Coast

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- Overall rated as the most well connected Borough in Surrey

### **3.5 Opportunity and Attainment**

- Epsom and Ewell is the top performing place in the County for attainment at GCSE level with Surrey being the highest performing County in England. 17 local schools are rated outstanding by OFSTED
- Epsom and Ewell is rated top overall in Surrey for “Social mobility” and in the top 20 nationally. This means that it is a great place for opportunity where anyone can build a good life for themselves regardless of their background.
- The highly regarded University of the Creative Arts, including the only international Business School for the Creative Industries in the county.
- North East Surrey College of Technology (NESCOT) is the highest performing FE College in Surrey and number one for apprenticeship achievement in UK.
- 52% of residents of working age hold a qualification at level NVQ4 or above. This is higher than both the Surrey average of 50% and significantly higher than the national average of 38%.

### **3.6 Culture**

- Epsom Downs Racecourse, home of the world famous Derby, and one of only six Grade 1 Racecourses in England
- University of the Creative Arts – a leading university in the creative industries.
- Laine Theatre Arts, a leader in turning out top talent for the West End and the national performing arts sector.
- Home of Epsom Playhouse Theatre and The Horton Chapel – new arts centre is currently in development
- Bourne Hall Community Centre and Bourne Hall Museum
- NESCOT – highly regarded Performing Arts and Art and Design schools
- The new Market Place and performance area
- Arts and cultural events held throughout the year
- 8 Screen Odeon Cinema

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- Grand places such as Nonsuch Mansion, Royal Automobile Club and Ewell Court House and landmarks such as the Clock Tower, and from the Epsom Downs vantage points over London

### **3.7 Health and Wellbeing**

- The history of being a spa town, with invigorating waters and clean air
- Epsom General Hospital– providing an extensive range of inpatient, day and outpatient services, and a busy accident and emergency (A&E) service
- The previous long-stay hospital clusters
- The Borough Council's Community and Wellbeing Centre
- The Borough Council's award winning Rainbow Leisure Centre
- 54.4% of the adult population of the Borough is classified as overweight or obese which is similar to the figure for Surrey as a whole
- However, the prevalence of obese children aged 4 - 5 years is only 4.7%, compared to Surrey's 6.1%. At aged 10-11 years the rate in Epsom and Ewell is 9.1%, compared to Surrey's 13.4%.
- Despite the Borough being relatively prosperous, life expectancy varies up to 10 years between the poorest wards and those that are most affluent
- Despite being a relatively affluent borough, some parts are among the top 5 most deprived places in Surrey

### **3.8 Business and Economy**

- In the top 20 most affluent (and least deprived) local authority areas in the country
- The median gross weekly pay for employees living in the borough is £723.60. This is higher than the Surrey equivalent at £702 and much higher than the South East equivalent at £614.50.
- Epsom and Ewell was ranked 45 out of 379 on the business competitive index where 1 is the most competitive.
- The total number of enterprises (VAT Traders and PAYE employers) in the borough in 2018 is 3,725, an increase of 40 from the previous year.
- The home or UK headquarters for a number of national and international companies such as Nuffield Health, Atkins and of Toyota on the borough boundary,

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- Third largest horse training facilities in England

### 4 Future 40 Engagement that has taken place

4.1 The Future40 engagement process took place between August 2018 to June 2019, a period of eleven months. Following the creation of dedicated Future40 branding (for banners, posters, leaflets, etc), website [www.future40.org](http://www.future40.org) and an on-line and social media presence, a wide ranging engagement programme was rolled out. This included:

- Detailed on-line and paper based questionnaires
- Post cards “from the future” and promotional video
- Large Citizen’s Panel workshops at Bourne Hall
- Front page and main feature in Borough Insight sent to every household in the borough and information sent to all subscribers to the Epsom Playhouse Magazine
- Front page and main feature in the Epsom Comet newspaper
- Large stakeholder events held at Epsom Downs Racecourse drawing in local leaders from the business, public and voluntary sectors
- Meeting with existing professional network groups (eg the Business Leader’s breakfast, the local Property Agents Network etc)
- Meetings with local community and faith organisations
- Attendance (stands or exhibition trailer) at high footfall locations including the Ashley Centre, the Playhouse, and in supermarkets and at regular events (eg Farmers Market, Book Fairs etc)
- Attendance at high profile events (Surrey Youth Games Awards, Film Festival, the annual Jobs Fair, Herald of Spring etc)
- Engagement workshops with each of the main five political parties
- Engagement with local schools and colleges, including through the borough wide children’s Art Competition
- Meetings with stakeholder organisations (The BID Board, Nescot, Toyota, etc)

## 5 A high level of engagement achieved

- 5.1 The Council received a very positive response to its engagement on Future40 which reached out to every household in the Borough over the past year. Over 3,300 local people engaging directly with Future40. In addition, over 4,600 have engaged through the Council's dedicated website, over 15,000 through social media. Over 1,800 people have completed detailed questionnaires, and over 1,100 have been part of one to one or group engagement such as Future40 workshops. Some images from this engagement are included in **Annex 2**.
- 5.2 There was very strong support from those that the Council engaged with, for the need for a long term vision for the borough, and great appreciation of the efforts made and the collaborative approach taken by the Borough Council.
- 5.3 There was also strong consensus about what made Epsom and Ewell the very special place it is today and what the priorities should be for the future.

## 6 The findings

- 6.1 The following word cloud provides a visual indication of the words that most people would use to describe the borough today. The bigger the word the more people included that word in their description of the borough



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### 6.2 What people consider to be the Borough's key strengths:

- ✓ The great parks and open spaces
- ✓ Location and connectivity
- ✓ Excellent education offer
- ✓ Rich history and heritage
- ✓ The Racecourse and racing industry
- ✓ Creative Industries (UCA, Laine Theatre Arts etc)
- ✓ Retail centre and being a Market Town
- ✓ Long association with health and wellbeing

### 6.3 What people are most concerned about:

- × Traffic, congestion and the dominance of motor vehicles
- × Declining / unkempt/ unwelcoming/ old fashioned / uninspiring
- × Risks to the high street with changing shopping habits
- × Lacking a coherent identity for the borough
- × Lack of affordable housing for local people & workers
- × Lack of affordable work spaces for new business
- × Lack of safe cycle routes and adequate bus services
- × Growing anti social behaviour
- × Not enough facilities for young people
- × Not able to retain talented young people & young professionals
- × Protecting the environment including biodiversity and clean air quality

### 6.4 What local people have identified as their priorities for the future:

- Green
- Prosperous, enterprising, and vibrant
- Safe
- Healthy
- Attractive and clean
- Creative and Cultural
- Affordable homes and affordable places to start a business
- Making more of the borough's history and heritage
- Connected (transport, digital, communities etc)
- Attractive for young professionals and families
- A clear and unique identity



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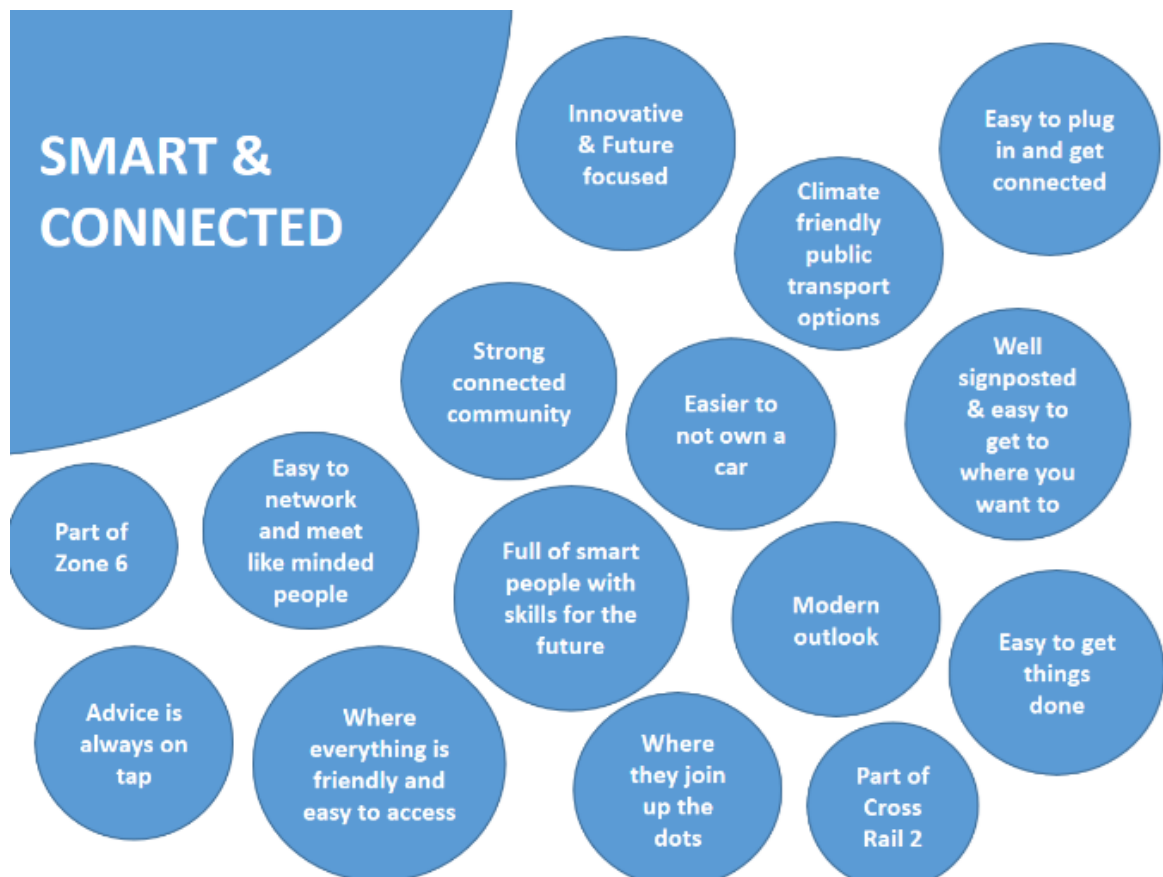
- 6.5 The emerging issues from the consultation were also subsequently consulted on during the later stages, and the outcome has helped draw out five overall themes that best reflect the views and priorities of local residents and stakeholders for the future of the borough. These are:



- 6.6 As well helping to identify the five themes of: Green and Vibrant; Opportunity and Prosperity; Safe and Well; Cultural and Creative and Smart and Connected, the latter stages of the consultation has also assisted with the identifying the nature of the outcomes that local residents and other stakeholders want to see. These are set out below under each theme.







## 7 Delivery arrangements

- 7.1 However well founded and articulated a vision can be on paper, its real value is derived from the actions and outcomes that are delivered as a result. It is therefore important to consider how this long-term vision will start to shape and drive positive change in the Borough.
- 7.2 There are a number of opportunities over the coming year for the new vision for Epsom and Ewell to inform the direction of the Council's work, setting the context and direction for a number of important work streams. This includes the development of the Council's new Corporate Plan 2020-2024.

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### New Corporate Plan 2020-2024

- 7.3 The Council's new Corporate Plan will be an important opportunity for the new Council to set out its delivery priorities for the next four years, reflecting Member aspirations and informed by the new Vision for Epsom and Ewell including the significant resident and stakeholder engagement that has taken place in recent months through Future40. The focus will be on deliverability, carefully balancing ambition with available resources and making the most of opportunities to work in partnership with others.
- 7.4 As well as the new Corporate Plan, other key plans and work programmes will be informed by the new vision for Epsom and Ewell, this includes:
- The new Local Plan for Epsom and Ewell
  - The new Transformation Master Plan
  - The Council's future approach to regeneration
  - Asset Management Plan
  - The investment in and expanded use of the Market Place
  - Health and wellbeing Strategy
  - Community Safety and Enforcement Plan
  - Future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Priorities
- 7.5 The new vision will also give increased weight and context to the Council's existing work such as Enterprise and Income Generation, and Economic Development and Business Support, etc.

### 8 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 8.1 The work on Future40 has been supported by an agreed budget of £45,000 which has been used to meet the costs of all the resident and stakeholder engagement and communication activities, events, surveys and research that has taken place over the past year including design and fund the design and print costs associated with the final vision.
- 8.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** The funding for the visioning has been funded from the uncommitted balance of the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant reserve and the remaining £25,000 funded from within the revenue budget for 2018/19 by aligning with other existing activities related to Economic Development, Planning and Community Wellbeing.

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### 9 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

9.1 The Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities the power to act to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their area. More than a decade later, this power was updated and further extended by the Localism Act 2011, which introduces a general power of competence, ie “a local authority has power to do anything that individuals generally may do”. The Council therefore has the power to develop a new long-term vision for the Borough and helps secure the long-term success of the local area.

9.2 **Monitoring Officer’s comments:** none arising from the contents of this report.

### 10 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

10.1 The proposals set out in this report are designed to make a positive contribution to making Epsom and Ewell a more sustainable place in both the shorter and longer-term. In particular, the emerging theme of Green and Vibrant recognises the importance of the boroughs’ green infrastructure, sustainable building design, clean air and bio diversity.

### 11 Partnerships

11.1 Developing a longer-term vision for the Borough is a partnership endeavour. It builds on the Council’s positive relationships and increasing track record at partnership working. In developing a longer-term vision for the borough, the Council will engage with the key organisations in the borough from the private, public and voluntary sectors. .

### 12 Risk Assessment

12.1 There are significant potential risks of not having a long-term vision for the Borough that has the buy-in of both residents and partners. The Council’s actions to develop a long-term vision for Epsom and Ewell and the comprehensive approach taken to the community and stakeholder engagement through Future40, can be seen to have substantially addressed this risk.

### 13 Conclusion and Recommendations

13.1 Following a thorough resident and stakeholder engagement process the Council now has a draft vision that reflects the clear views of local people and stakeholders about their priorities for the future of their borough. Once agreed, the Council will need to put into place, with relevant partners, arrangements to ensure that the vision is delivered on the ground.

**Ward(s) affected:** (All Wards);