

**Minutes of the Meeting of the LICENSING AND PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE
held on 15 July 2021**

PRESENT -

Councillor David Reeve (Chair); Councillor Steven McCormick (Vice-Chair); Councillors Steve Bridger, Monica Coleman, Neil Dallen, Chris Frost, Rob Geleit, David Gulland (as nominated substitute for Councillor Julie Morris), Jan Mason (as nominated substitute for Councillor Clive Woodbridge) and Phil Neale

Absent: Councillor Julie Morris and Councillor Clive Woodbridge

Officers present: Amardip Healy (Chief Legal Officer), Viv Evans (Interim Head of Planning), John Cheston (Planning Policy Manager), Harry Burchill (Senior Planning Policy Officer) and Tim Richardson (Committee Administrator)

5 QUESTION TIME

No questions had been submitted or were asked by members of the public.

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in items on the Agenda.

7 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee held on 27 May 2021 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

8 HOUSING DELIVERY TEST ACTION PLAN

The Committee received an update comprising significant changes to the layout, formatting and structure of two previous action plans.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Planning Policy Officer.

The following matters were raised by the Committee:

- a) **Structure of Action Plan:** Members spoke about the possibility of points in the Action Plan being put into priority order and given proposed timeframes. The officer noted that the completion of some of these actions

would be dependent on the progress of the Local Plan, but that this would be looked at to discuss a way forward for the next iteration of the plan.

- b) **Relation to 2020 Action Plan:** Following a question from a Member, the Officer confirmed that the Housing Delivery Test Action Plan refers back to points completed last year which formed part of the 2020 Action Plan. The Officer explained that some of these actions have remained amber having been through Committee but not formally published. The Officer would revert to last year's Action Plan and ascertain whether any of the completed work can be utilised for this Action Plan.
- c) **Empty Property Strategy:** Following a question from a Member, the Officer confirmed that the Housing Department deals with the Empty Property Strategy. The Officer noted that most local authorities ceased keeping lists of empty properties, as it encouraged Freedom of Information requests from potential squatters. The Officer suggested that Members may find it beneficial to familiarise themselves with the Strategy to understand the triggers for when it comes in to action.
- d) **Paragraph 2.4:** Members noted the end of paragraph 2.4 of the report which included reference to the 'wider Residents Association' and asked whether it was necessary to include them. The Officer confirmed that this wording could be changed to something to the effect of 'Any allocations will be put forward in a draft plan which would come back to this Committee for debate/consideration'.
- e) **Action Point 14:** Members requested that reference to further training "e.g. after elections" be removed and more suitable wording be used to reflect the fact that training will be recurring.

Following consideration, it was resolved unanimously that the Committee:

- (1) **Approved the Epsom & Ewell Housing Delivery Test Action Plan as drafted for publication on the Council website.**

9 LOCAL PLAN MEMBER WORKING GROUP

The Committee received a report proposing the establishment of an informal cross-party Local Plan Member Working Group to advise the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee on planning policy matters.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Planning Policy Manager.

The following matter was raised by the Committee:

- a) **Working Group Arrangements:** Members noted the arrangements for current and past Working Groups, and the efficiency of these in practise. It was noted that a smaller, cross-party group would be favourable in terms of efficiency and representation. It was noted that details surrounding the Working Group could be finalised in the Terms of Reference.

Following consideration, it was resolved unanimously that the Committee:

- (i) Agreed to establish an informal cross-party Local Plan Member Working Group to advise the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee on planning policy matters; and**
- (ii) Agreed the draft terms of reference for the Local Plan Member Working Group**

10 THANKS TO CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER

The Committee wish to place on record it's thanks to the Chief Legal Officer for all of her work over the years for the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.08 pm

COUNCILLOR DAVID REEVE (CHAIR)