

**Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held on
15 November 2022**

PRESENT -

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair); Councillors Kate Chinn, Monica Coleman, Liz Frost, David Gulland, Graham Jones, Colin Keane, Eber Kington and Alan Williamson

In Attendance: Councillor Julie Morris

Officers present: Jackie King (Interim Chief Executive), Clare Lawrence (Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration), Lee Duffy (Chief Finance Officer), Andrew Bircher (Interim Director of Corporate Services), Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Sue Emmons (Chief Accountant), Danielle Brown (Business Advisor) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

32 QUESTION TIME

No questions were asked by members of the public.

33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made in relation to items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

34 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes and Restricted Minutes of the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 29 September 2022 and were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

35 DEVOLUTION, COUNTY DEALS AND THE LEVELLING UP AGENDA

The Committee received a report setting out the background relating to devolution, County Deals and the Levelling Up agenda currently being pursued by the Government. It also covered the way in which this has been received in Surrey and the implications and opportunities offered by participation in the negotiation of a future County Deal.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Amendment 1 to recommendations.** Councillor David Gulland proposed and Councillor Kate Chinn seconded the following amendment to recommendation 2 of the report:

“Agree that the working party will continue discussions with Surrey County Council and other borough and district councils in Surrey to explore opportunities for the delivery of services and renewal programmes in the Borough that either improve the health and well-being of Epsom & Ewell residents or that result in operational efficiencies for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, with particular emphasis on the 8 areas identified by the KPMG report, whether as part of a County Deal or not.”

Following consideration by the Committee, the proposer withdrew the amendment.

- b) **Amendment 2 to the recommendations.** Councillor Eber Kington proposed the following amendment to add a third recommendation to the report:

“Recommendation 3. Agrees that Officers should continue to explore opportunities for joint working with Surrey Boroughs and Districts and other local authorities to provide efficiencies and improved services for our residents.”

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed to the proposed amendment.

The Committee then moved to the vote on the recommendations. The Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Note the background to the development of local government devolution initiatives over recent years and the opportunities and threats offered by the Government’s Levelling Up agenda in the form of a possible County Deal for Surrey.**
- (2) **Agree that the working group will continue discussions with Surrey County Council to explore opportunities for the delivery of services and renewal programmes in the Borough that improve the health and well-being of Epsom and Ewell residents, whether as part of a County Deal or not.**
- (3) **Agrees that Officers should continue to explore opportunities for joint working with Surrey Boroughs and Districts and other local authorities to provide efficiencies and improved services for our residents.**

36 POLLING DISTRICT AND PLACES REVIEW 2022

The Committee received a report setting out the outcome of the consultation process on Polling Places and Districts and making recommendations for proposed changes.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Count venue.** Following a question from a Member, the Committee was informed that the venue for the 2023 Borough Council Elections Count would be at Epsom Downs Racecourse.
- b) **Preparations for 2023 elections.** Following a question from the Vice Chair, the Head of Policy and Corporate Resources informed the Committee that a number of changes were scheduled to be introduced by the Government in advance of the 2023 Borough Council elections, including requirements for voter ID at polling stations. The Council was prepared for the challenges created by these changes. The Interim Chief Executive informed the Committee that discussions regarding funding to meet the new requirements were ongoing with the Government.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Agree the location of the polling places and districts as set out in Appendix 1 to the report for a five-year period from 1st January 2023, or until it is superseded by any subsequent review of any polling place or district; and**
- (2) **Delegate to the Chief Executive in their capacity as the Council's Returning Officer any ongoing review or change of polling places during this period, to ensure that polling arrangements in the Borough remain fit for purpose for each election called.**

37 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee resolved with 7 votes for, 2 votes against and the Chair not voting to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

38 INCOME GENERATING OPPORTUNITY

The decision on this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

39 COST OF LIVING PAYMENT

The decision on this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

40 LAND RETENTION

The decision on this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

41 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY UPDATE

The decision on this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.47 pm

COUNCILLOR NEIL DALLEN (CHAIR)