

CHAIR'S STATEMENTS TO COUNCIL

Councillor Steven McCormick
Chair of the Licensing & Planning Policy Committee

Taxi and Hackney Carriage Emissions

A public consultation has been launched on the proposed changes to add emissions requirements to our private hire and hackney carriage taxis licensed in Epsom & Ewell.

The emissions standards proposed are inline with the ULEZ emissions requirements. We are not talking about the ULEZ zone, or applying the emissions requirements to private vehicles.

Following the consultation, a recommendation will come to LPPC and following a decision a recommendation for adoption may come to the full council meeting in December.

Planning Performance

We continue to proactively monitor and work hard to ensure we are dealing with planning applications of all shape and size in a timely manner.

We dealt with 100% of Majors within time and have been well above the 70% target for minors and others.

A report is to be filed with central government following which they will make a final decision on whether to designate this council.

Local Plan

Currently the local plan is paused following a motion to full council in March 2023. A briefing session with members was held on 27th June with the simple question of what does unpausing look like?

A healthy discussion was had with several options discussed.

Overwhelmingly members at the briefing felt we need to unpause sooner than later with a review of the spatial strategy/selection as soon as is possible.

The call for sites is open until the end of July 2023. Once this closes the site supply can be reviewed and confirmed with numbers being updated.

At the time of writing there are several hundred brownfield sites, shown in appendix 2, that have NOT come forward. This final number will be confirmed at the end of July but it means approximately 750 units drop out of the local plan housing supply figures.

All items on the council motion in March have been complied with, a majority of which would have been progressed as a matter of course without the motion.

We have written to this council (EEBC) again asking for any additional sites that they may like to put forward for consideration into the local plan process.

ALL landowners on the Kiln Lane and Longmead estate have been contacted again.

The 2018 numbers have been reviewed and the results were shared in the June LPPC report.

Our MP has been written to and he has provided a response.

ALL responses to the draft local plan have been published on Friday 30th June at 5:00pm on our digital platform, Innovem.

Central government has not updated the NPPF nor has it given an updated timeline.

Next steps will see briefing sessions with ALL members on key aspects of the Local plan along with sessions on spatial strategy / site selection.

A paper to consider unpausing the local plan will likely come to LPPC later this year with an updated Local Development Schedule (LDS).

I will continue to provide a statement at each full council and welcome questions from members on any item under this committee's remit.

<p style="text-align: center;">Councillor Neil Dallen Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee</p>

Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP)

The panel has been set up and hopes to provide a report for February Full Council meeting. Councillors will have an opportunity to input to the IRP over the next few months.

Town Hall relocation to East Street

Our consultants who have been appointed to look at the feasibility of relocating the town hall to 70 East Street are getting feedback from Members on how and where members work, member facilities and views on the civic spaces.

All information will be collated by our consultants who will then produce detailed layouts for how we could look within 70 East Street.

Chuter Ede Grants

Officers are working on re-introducing grants from the Chuter Ede fund this academic year and secondary schools have been contacted to identify possible applicants. The grants are small and are aimed at assisting with expenses for students hoping to attend university.

Household support fund – tranche 4

The household support fund is aimed to support the most financially vulnerable families and we have been allocated over £200k in tranche 4. Our officers are aware of many of those families through other support schemes but, last tranche, we agreed that the 'Good Company' (incorporating Food bank, Epsom Pantry, Refugee Network and East Surrey Poverty Truth Commission) would assist in reaching the most vulnerable and difficult to contact. It has been agreed, through a delegated authority form, that Good Company would be given £50k from tranche 4 to again distribute to those hardest to contact. The Good Company would report back to the Council on the use/allocation of the money. In addition, a report will come to September strategy and Resources seeking approval of an additional £50k to be allocated to Good Company to be distributed from October 2023.

Councillor Alex Coley
Chair of the Crime & Disorder Committee

The new Crime & Disorder policy committee meets on 12th September and the forward plan for the agenda is as follows:

- CSP Action Plan public consultation
- CSP review - stakeholder feedback
- Video Surveillance Systems policy
- Community Safety & ASB Intervention policy

CSP Action Plan

The purpose of the Action Plan is to set out the identified community safety priorities for the Council linked with those of the Community Safety Partnership, coupled with a coherent plan of action upon which the council will seek residents view through a public consultation.

It is proposed that the Action Plan would cover a two year period, identifying under each community safety priority, council actions and activities, including clearly defined success criteria, timescales and metrics, that would address each priority. Actions will be grouped under each of the categories of the identified CSP priorities of the focus on the most vulnerable or those at risk of harm, Serious Organised Crime and PREVENT, Identifying and tackling crime and antisocial behaviour and improving community engagement.

Following the feedback from the consultation, the final version will be presented to the Crime and Disorder Committee in January 2024 for adoption. Members will be updated on progress. To enable the right level of focus, and ensure our slim resource is not wasted, it is intended the actions are aligned to those the Council has already committed to as part of the Community Safety Partnership.

CSP review

The Council's Chief Executive has commissioned a review of our Community Safety Partnership. Recommendations focused on improved partnership working and shared resourcing to improve co-ordination and partnership agenda planning. CSP partners will feedback over the next few weeks.

Activity

This month I attended three street events with Surrey Police, Rosebery Housing and the Council's enforcement team, listening to resident concerns and logging issues.

We had a very strong and consistent attendance from partners with lots of interest from residents.

I also promoted our safer streets initiative in the Ashley Centre following Home Office funding that was supported by the Surrey PCC. Outcomes include: anti-drink spiking tools and training, drink testing kits, street pastor funding and the renewal of CCTV with high resolution digital video.

Since my appointment I have met with the local MP, the borough commander and Shopwatch which is hosted by the Epsom BID. Areas of concern have included county lines drug dealing, the use of electric bikes and scooters to facilitate crime and the increase in shoplifting, particularly in Epsom town centre.

I also attended the Surrey Police & Crime Panel as the Epsom & Ewell representative, where I offered the PCC team support and connections with the PCC's new Data Hub, which have been accepted.

I asked several questions, including for a written response on how many officers left Surrey Police in the same time period as the recruitment uplift (ie since 2019). I await the reply.

I also asked a question on the use of surplus funds and increased precept. The S151 officer suggested these would be used to meet savings targets, increase the PCC reserve, contribute to the Net Zero reserve, contribute to the inflation contingency reserve and potentially be used for a 4% pay uplift.

I then requested a written answer on the historical pensions deficit for Surrey Police Group and interest payable. I also await the reply.

Lastly I have initiated partnership relationships with fellow panel members, especially those from East Surrey. All of which led to in-depth conversations about priorities and issues unique/similar to our respective areas. All are keen to continue the conversation, particularly on joint bids for funding.

