

Minutes of the Meeting of the LICENSING AND PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 25 November 2025

PRESENT -

Councillor Peter O'Donovan (Chair); Councillor Neil Dallen (Vice-Chair); Councillors Steve Bridger, Alex Coley, Julian Freeman, Rob Geleit, Phil Neale and Humphrey Reynolds

In Attendance: Councillor Tony Froud

Absent: Councillor Shanice Goldman and Councillor Clive Woodbridge

Officers present: Ian Mawer (Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development), Anna Clements (Senior Accountant) and Phoebe Batchelor (Democratic Services Officer)

15 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions or statements were received from Members of the Public.

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other registrable or non-registrable interests were made by Members with respect to any items to be considered at the meeting.

17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 23 September 2025 and authorised the Chair to sign them.

18 MINUTES OF LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee received a report presenting the Minutes of the Meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on the 13 August 2025.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Sub-Committee Minutes.** A Member of the Committee asked why the Committee were being asked to agree minutes for a meeting they had not all been present at. The Chair explained that the Committee were not being asked to approve the minutes, they are being asked to receive them

and then authorise the Chair of the Sub-Committee meeting to sign them. The Chair informed Members that the minutes had already been agreed and approved by the Members who had been present at the Sub-Committee meeting on the 13th of August 2025. The Chair explained that Licensing and Planning Policy Committee receive the minutes of all Licensing Sub-Committees as the parent committee.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on the 13 August 2025 and authorise the Chair of the Sub-Committee meeting to sign them as a true record of that meeting.**

19 2026/27 BUDGET TARGETS

The Committee received a report informing them of the Council's revenue budget targets presented to the Strategy & Resources Committee in July. The report was seeking guidance on the preparation of the Committee's service estimates for 2026/27.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **2027/28.** A Member of the Committee raised that in recommendation 3, it sets out that the projected Council wide funding gap for 2026/27 is £1.93 million, rising to £5.06 million per annum by 2028/29. The Member asked where the projection for 2027/28 is. The Senior Accountant informed the Committee that the information on 2027/28 could be found in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy report.
- b) **Budget Deficit.** A Member of the Committee asked how the Council was expecting such a huge deficit and where things had gone wrong. The Member asked what is responsible for such a huge projected deficit. The Vice Chair raised that it is important to note that the Council has not got things wrong and is merely forecasting things and then adjusting in light of actual expenditure. The Senior Accountant explained that one of the biggest pressures the Council is facing at the moment is the overspend on Temporary Accommodation and Housing. The Senior Accountant noted that this is not an Epsom and Ewell specific issue, and councils all over the country as struggling with rising cost of temporary and nightly-paid accommodation. The Member asked for more information on the cost and number of temporary accommodation the Council is currently experiencing. The Senior Accountant explained that there are lots of pressures surrounding housing issues in the borough. The Vice Chair raised that they would be happy to meet with the Member and discuss the issue of temporary accommodation, as the Chair of Strategy and Resources. The Vice Chair also raised that the issue of homelessness and temporary accommodation situation is reported regularly to both Community and Wellbeing Committee and Strategy and Resources Committee. The Chair raised that the relevant figures and reports could

be shared with the Member following the meeting. The Member thanked the Chair and Vice Chair and agreed to receive further relevant information following the meeting.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved:

Unanimously to:

- (1) Note the implications of the budget targets presented to Strategy & Resources Committee on 15 July 2025.**
- (2) Note that owing to the Council's projected budget deficit, any additional new revenue growth items (i.e. service enhancements resulting in increased net expenditure) supported by Policy Committees will need to be fully funded from existing budgets.**

With 6 votes for, 1 abstention, and the Chair not voting, to:

- (3) Consider how additional income or savings can be generated to address the projected Council wide funding gap of £1.93 million in 2026/27, rising to £5.06 million per annum by 2028/29.**

20 STONELEIGH AND AURIOL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - EXAMINER'S REPORT AND DECISION TO PROCEED TO REFERENDUM

The Independent Examination commenced on 4 September 2025, and the Examiner issued his report on the 23 October 2025 (Appendix 1) which recommends that the Stoneleigh and Auriol NDP, subject to proposed modifications, proceeds to Referendum.

The following matters were considered:

Councillor Tony Froud gave a verbal statement to the Committee.

- a) **Wards affected.** The Vice Chair asked why the front of the report listed Cuddington Ward as an affected ward when it is called the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Plan. The Democratic Services Officer clarified that when the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Area was designated 5 years ago, the boundaries of Stoneleigh and Auriol wards were slightly different to the current ward boundaries, therefore some properties which are now in Cuddington Ward will also be able to vote in the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Plan Referendum as they are within the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Area.
- b) **Thanks.** The Chair expressed their thanks and congratulations to the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Forum. The Chair commended their hard work and continued improvements.
- c) **Great example.** A Member of the Committee raised that this process has been a great example of what residents can do when they want to put

together really clear guidance around planning. The Member commended the time, effort, and hard work put in to producing a clear piece of planning guidance that will aid in protecting and ensuring quality development in the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood area. The Member wished the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Forum good luck going forwards and praised the constructive approach taken by the forum members and local residents.

- d) **AECOM.** A Member of the Committee asked if the AECOM mentioned in the report, is the major global consultancy company. The Member asked for this clarification as they wanted to ensure the name was being used correctly and there weren't any legal issues. The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development confirmed that the AECOM referenced is the large multidisciplinary consultancy firm that produced the design code.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) To accept and agree with the Examiner's proposed modifications to the Stoneleigh and Auriol NDP as contained at Appendix 1 to this report and proceed to Referendum to be held on 12 February 2026;**
- (2) To authorise publication of the Decision Statement (Appendix 2 to this report).**

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 7.54 pm

COUNCILLOR PETER O'DONOVAN (CHAIR)