

## Developing a Longer-Term Vision for the Borough

<b>Head of Service/Contact:</b>	Damian Roberts, Chief Operating Officer
<b>Urgent Decision?(yes/no)</b>	No
<b>If yes, reason urgent decision required:</b>	N/A
<b>Annexes/Appendices (attached):</b>	None
<b>Other available papers (not attached):</b>	None

### Report Summary

This report sets out a proposal for developing a longer-term vision for the borough, bringing together the views and aspirations of those that live and work in Epsom and Ewell. This would have a valuable role in:

- Further demonstrating this Council's vital community leadership and resident engagement role and that the Council is not just thinking about today, but also has a keen eye on the borough's future.
- Developing a clear evidence base of demographic, economic, social and technological drivers impacting on the future success and wellbeing of the borough and its residents.
- Positive resident engagement - listening to the views and aspirations of local people about what they enjoy most about living in Epsom and Ewell and what they want to see in the future for their children and their children's children.
- Speaking with key organisations in Epsom and Ewell to understand their emerging plans and aspirations for the future and ensuring that this contributes to and is aligned with the emerging longer term vision for the borough.

### Recommendation (s)

To approve the approach set out in this report to develop a long-term vision for the Borough.

That £20,000 of Housing & Planning Delivery Grant is used to part fund the visioning work estimated to cost up to £45,000

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

- 1.1 The Council's Community Strategy, Corporate Plan, Master Planning and key corporate priorities should be shaped by the longer-term vision for the Borough.

### **2 Background and Context**

- 2.1 In delivering positive outcomes for local residents, the Council is increasingly also having to take a longer-term perspective in its work. For example, the Council's next Local Plan will look forward over the next 15 to 20 years and acknowledges that decisions that are taken as part of the Local Plan process will fundamentally shape the future of the Borough over the next few decades and beyond. The Council's Infrastructure Development Plan in a similar way identifies the infrastructure necessary to meet both the current and future needs of the Borough.
- 2.2 The Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy also recognises the importance of taking a longer-term perspective, aligned to long-term demographic trends in the borough such as an aging population and more people projected to be living in the community with dementia. In addition, the action that the Council takes now to successfully encourage young people to participate in regular sport and exercise, may not realise the full benefit until those people are well into their adulthood, hopefully avoiding the serious health risks associated with a sedentary lifestyle and obesity.
- 2.3 Therefore in taking decisions today, the Council is already increasingly having an eye on the future, and this is also the case for the Council's key partners such as the University of the Creative Arts, the Race Course, NESOT, Epsom Hospital, Network Rail to name a few.

### **3 Place Shaping**

- 3.1 As well as delivering statutory services, the Council has a wider place shaping role, where it already delivers a wide range of discretionary services that help improve the quality of life of local people. These services include:
  - 3.1.1 The Playhouse
  - 3.1.2 Community Buildings
  - 3.1.3 Affordable housing
  - 3.1.4 Support to the voluntary sector
  - 3.1.5 Leisure services
  - 3.1.6 Market Place

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3.1.7 Meals at home, telecare, community transport etc

3.1.8 High needs day care services

3.1.9 Community Safety

3.2 Place shaping is certainly about responding positively to the needs of local people, making sure that the right services and facilities are available to meet that need. This includes finding places for the voluntary and charity sector to deliver local services and creating opportunities for local people to participate in cultural activities. However, place shaping is also about ensuring that there are jobs and affordable homes for local people, great schools, further education and higher education services and high quality health and care services.

3.3 While the Council does not have specific responsibility for many of these services, it does have a significant influencing role, working alongside other organisations to help secure the best outcomes for local people. An example of this is the Council's Health Liaison Panel and the work that the Council does with the Police and Fire Services through the East Surrey Community Safety Partnership.

## **4 Community Leadership**

4.1 The Council has a clear democratic mandate, with 38 Councillors elected every 4 years to represent the interests and concerns of its residents. This mandate places the Borough Council in a unique and unrivalled position compared to other organisations operating in the Borough, in representing its residents in taking a lead in coordinating the development of a new longer-term vision for the whole borough that reflects the needs and aspirations of local people.

## **5 Listening and engaging with residents and stakeholders**

5.1 Successful Councils also listen to their communities and ensure that what they deliver is aligned and relevant to the needs and aspirations of local people. This has long been a characteristic of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. An important part of this is hearing from those in the community who in the past have been harder to reach, including younger people and young families. This is because the decisions the Council take today will shape the borough for Epsom and Ewell's children and their children's children. Therefore engaging with schools, youth groups, and parent and toddler groups, and engaging young people at key events in the borough and through social media will be key.

5.2 As part of developing a longer-term vision for the borough, it is proposed to undertake a comprehensive public engagement exercise, seeking feedback on key questions, such as:

- What makes the borough such a special place to live and work?

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- What does it mean to be successful town in the 21st century and how can the borough's history help inform how it develops in the future?
- What do you see as the biggest opportunities and risks facing the borough in the longer-term and what can we do now to secure the best long term outcomes.
- How would you like to see the borough develop over the next 20 to 30 years?
- In relation to characteristics that the borough is most recognised for today, what would you want to see more of in the future and what would you want to see less of?

### **6 Creating a legacy**

- 6.1 The Council has two important and complementary roles. First and foremost, it is to deliver day to day operational services that meet the current needs in the here and now, and secondly to be planning for the future, creating a positive longer-term legacy for future residents and generations. This is particularly relevant to how the Council utilises its own capital investment including Community Infrastructure Levy and a new longer-term vision will help the Council to prioritise such longer-term investments.

### **7 Self-determination and taking a positive stance on the future**

- 7.1 There are inevitably many external drivers that will have an impact on the Council and the future shape of the borough. Recent examples include the new draft National Planning Policy Framework, Negative Financial Subsidy (where the Government takes funding away from local Council tax payers to fund activities in other parts of the country), Business Rates Retention Scheme, Crossrail 2 and the impact on the high street arising from the shift to on-line shopping etc. Rather than simply being a victim of those various drivers and being buffeted in different directions by emerging events and the actions of other organisations, there is an opportunity through the development of a longer-term vision to understand how best to respond to these longer-term trends and where ever possible maximise the opportunities for a positive outcome for the borough.

### **8 Collaborative approach to vision development**

- 8.1 The challenges facing the borough – affordable homes, jobs, safety, health and wellbeing, quality of life etc are not issues that can be solved by the Borough Council acting alone. The Council has an important role to play, but so do other organisations locally. This includes Housing Associations, the Police, the County Council, Developers, land owners, local businesses, health sector, voluntary sector and the residents themselves.

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- 8.2 At a time of very tight resources there are significant advantages in taking an approach that achieves close alignment between the plans of organisations operating locally. There is a clear logic that organisations pulling together can achieve far more than organisations operating in isolation or worse, pulling in opposite directions.
- 8.3 Key to developing a longer-term vision for the borough is securing close engagement and buy-in from partner organisations, many of whom will already be in the process of developing their own longer-term plans for their organisation.
- 8.4 Surrey County Council, for example, are now also talking about developing a longer-term vision for the whole County. While this is potentially a positive move, it is vital that there is clarity about Epsom and Ewell's distinct vision within this. In this way, the future needs and aspirations of the borough, as articulated through the Epsom and Ewell vision, will inform any long-term plans at a County level.

### **9 'Taking an evidenced based approach**

- 9.1 The development of a longer-term vision needs to draw on a clear socio economic evidence base for the borough, including important demographic and economic trends and exploring how the borough's outcomes compare with other Councils in Surrey and the wider region. Capturing the most important information within a borough profile, will be an important early stage in the development of a longer-term vision for the borough and will be used to inform the engagement process with residents and stakeholders.

### **10 Timescale**

It is proposed that the development of a new longer-term vision for the borough takes place over coming year. Initial engagement has already happened through an all Member Seminar that took place on 29 May and will be concluded by a report to Strategy and Resources Committee and full Council in the summer of 2019.

### **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 key organisations such as the University of the Creative Arts, NESCOT college, the Clinical Commissioning Group, the Racecourse, big business, the Chamber of Commerce and the new Business Improvement District (BID) to name a few.

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### 12 Financial and Manpower Implications

12.1 The cost of supporting the work required to deliver a longer term vision for the Borough is likely to be in the region of £45,000. It is proposed that this one-off cost is funded by £20,000 from the Housing & planning Delivery Grant Reserve and £25,000 from the Council's contingency for corporate improvements

12.2 The costs will include:

- Resident and stakeholder engagement activities, events and surveys
- Researching and compiling the required social economic evidence base
- Events to bring together other key organisations in the borough to discuss and inform their plans for the future and secure greater alignment.
- Publicity and marketing (including use of new media)
- Analysis of the results
- Production of a final vision report and associated engagement and launch

12.3 Chief Finance Officer's comments: The funding for the visioning can be funded from the uncommitted balance of the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant reserve and the remaining £25,000 funded from within the existing revenue budget for 2018/19 by aligning with other existing activities related to Economic Development, Planning and Community Wellbeing.

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

13.1 There are no legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

13.2 ***Monitoring Officer's comments:*** *There are no comments arising from the contents of this report.*

### 14 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

14.1 The proposals set out in this report are designed to make a positive contribution to making Epsom and Ewell a sustainable place in both the short and longer-term.

### 15 Risk Assessment

15.1 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. These are referenced in the body of the report.

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- 15.2 Having a longer-term vision would provide a valuable context for a number of important Council initiatives, including the development of a new Local Plan, and the Local Infrastructure Plan. It would also be very helpful to have a vision in place to inform the increased focus on master planning in the borough and defining the best way to take forward urban intensification in appropriate locations in the borough.

**Ward(s) Affected:** (All Wards):