

Minutes: of the meeting of Surrey County Council's Local Committee in Epsom and Ewell held at 19.00 on Monday 14th March 2005 at the Ebbisham Centre, Epsom.

Members Present – Surrey County Council

Mr Chris Frost (Epsom and Ewell South East) Jean Smith (Epsom and Ewell North)
Mrs Jan Mason (Epsom and Ewell West) Colin Taylor (Epsom and Ewell West)
(Chairman)
NRM Petrie Esq. MBE (Epsom and Ewell
North East) (Vice Chairman)

Members Present – Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Cllr Pamela Bradley (Ewell) Cllr Nigel Pavey (Stamford)
Cllr Graham Dudley (Cuddington)

PART ONE

IN PUBLIC

[All references to items refer to the agenda for the meeting]

22/ APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS (Item 1)
05

Apologies were received from Cllr Alan Carlson and Cllr Michael Richardson. There were no substitutions.

23/ DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 2)
05

All Members apart from Chris Frost declared a personal interest in respect of Item 7 and 7a by virtue of being a school governor.

24/ PETITIONS (Item 3)
05

No petitions were received.

25/ WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (Item 4)
05

No written public questions were received.

26/ MEMBERS WRITTEN QUESTION TIME (Item 5]
05

No written Members questions were received.

27/
05 **ADJOURNMENT [Item 6]**

The Committee agreed to adjourn for up to half an hour for questions from the public. One question was received from a member of the public and it is attached as an annexe to these minutes.

28/
05 **PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE MENCAP HOME AT THE PARADE, EPSOM [Item 6a]**

The Officer introduced the report.

Members asked if the Housing Association, which owns the MENCAP home has agreed to carry out the building works to convert the property to make it suitable for supported living accommodation. Members also enquired which body was ultimately responsible for the residents at The Parade.

The Officer replied that MENCAP were dealing directly with the Housing Association about the commissioning of building work. The Officer stated that Surrey County Council are ultimately responsible for the care of the residents at The Parade.

A Member asked if it was now policy to assess people as requiring supported living as opposed to residential care.

The Officer replied that "Valuing People" did introduce, as a principle of good practice, that people with low to moderate needs should be assisted to live as independently as possible and this often results in supported living arrangements. It was then

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted the discussions that have taken place concerning the future of 28 The Parade, Epsom.

29/
05 **EDUCATION REPORT FOR EPSOM & EWELL 2003-2004 ACADEMIC YEAR [Item 7]**

The Officer introduced the report.

A Member enquired about the relatively high percentage of pupils resident outside the Borough who attend schools in Epsom & Ewell and if this means that local children are unable to attend a school within the Borough.

The Officer replied that the high number of out of Borough pupils did not mean that local children could not attend a school within the Borough, especially as Blenheim, Glyn and Rosebery have all seen extensions to their facilities to increase the capacity at those schools.

Members were concerned that the new policy whereby more popular schools received greater levels of funding and support than the less popular schools, would widen the gap between schools and in effect create a two tier system. Members felt that it would be more appropriate and beneficial for the schools that are less popular to receive the additional funding.

The Officer responded the scheme had only just started and as yet it is unclear how it would work and what the impact would be on schools.

Members asked about the numbers of schools within the Borough operating with a 5% budget deficit and how would this affect a schools ability to deliver the aims of workforce re-modelling.

The Officers responded that there were now no schools within in Epsom & Ewell operating with a licensed budget deficit of over 5%. The Officer explained that workforce re-modelling was an imposed national strategy and was a priority for Surrey County Council. Schools are being given assistance by 4-S in addressing budget problems and workforce re-modelling.

Members asked if a local sub-group of governors could be formed, to enable local governors to meet.

The Officer replied that a separate governors sub-group in Epsom & Ewell would be investigated.

A Member asked if the data showing attainment levels categorised by gender could be supplied to the Committee.

The Officer responded that the data would be circulated to Members.

It was then

RESOLVED

- i) that the Committee request Officers' to investigate establishing a sub-group of governors locally; and
- ii) that the contents of the report be noted.

30/
05

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT & CHILDREN'S SERVICES REPORT [Item 7a/ 8]

The Officer introduced both reports and highlighted some positive stories from both services. The Sycamore Pupil Referral Unit at West Street has achieved a 100% of pupils gaining 5 GCSEs grades A* - G and 32% of pupils gaining grades A* - C. The Sycamore Centre would welcome involvement from Members on their management board. The Officer offered to arrange for Members to visit the Sycamore Centre to see the achievements for themselves. The Officer informed Members of the summer Mayford Green BBQ which is for foster carers and their families, the Officer offered to accompany Members to the BBQ.

Members suggested that the Local Committee website and the newsletter could be used to promote the Sycamore Centre and its achievements.

A Member enquired about the work of the Special Education Needs co-ordinator and the delays they experience receiving medical reports on time, which in turn delays the completion of statements for children with special needs.

The Officer responded that the Team Manager for the North East Multi-Professional Team was also concerned about the delays and the Officer would request that the Team Manager provide Members with a statement on how this issue was being dealt with.

Members enquired about the cost of using out of county services for children with special needs and would this funding not be better spent on preventative work.

The Officer responded that the county preferred not to send children to out of county services, but in some cases they are instructed to do either by a judicial review or by the courts.

It was then

RESOLVED

That Item 7a be noted and that Item 8:

- i) the performance of the service both countywide, by area and locally within boroughs be noted;
- ii) the content of the report be noted;
- iii) the Committee consider further opportunities for familiarisation and engagement with the service via visits to teams/ establishments; and
- iv) the awareness of the role of elected Members as corporate parents for looked after children be raised.

31/
05

CONSULTATION DRAFT OF THE SOUTH EAST PLAN [Item 9]

The Officer introduced the report.

Members expressed great concern at the impact of the additional housing proposed for the South East. The infrastructure both at borough and regional level would not be able to cope with the new housing levels. Members made particular reference to health care provision, especially as the new critical care centre will be based in Sutton. Meaning that local people will have to travel for major operations and A&E services. Members raised the issue of water provision for new housing. Water is already a precious resource in the South East and current demands are only just met. Members stated that the road infrastructure would not cope, this would be compounded by the increased levels of on street parking, due to the fact that new planning applications only allow for a limited number of parking spaces. Which would further increase the levels of congestion on the roads.

Members were unhappy about the consultation process around the South East Plan and that it had not been carried out as efficiently as it could have been. Members said that they would urge local constituents to reply to the consultation via the website.

Members were unhappy about the smaller planning applications that get passed, whereby a large property is approved for construction on a small site and the impact of such applications in reducing the general greenness of the Borough.

Members enquired if the green belt within Epsom & Ewell would be re-designated and would possibly come under threat because of the South East Plan. Members stated that the green belt in Epsom & Ewell was particularly important because it provided a buffer between London and Surrey and was meant to prevent the spread of urban sprawl.

The Officer responded that the green belt would not be threatened and there was no intention to change the classification of the green belt in Epsom.

The Officer responded that similar concerns had been raised by other local committees and that these views would be fed in to the Executive on the 29th March. The minutes of the Local Committee meetings would also be presented as a dossier to the Executive.

It was then

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted the report and that their comments would be presented to the Executive.

32/ 05 **SELF RELIANCE PROGRESS REPORT [Item 10]**

The Officer introduced the report.

A Member enquired about the additional health visitor hours.

The Officer responded that the self reliance project was funding the first 2 years of additional health care hours and the Primary Care Trust had undertaken to pick up the costs of this post from year 3.

It was then

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and that the Committee receive further progress reports at regular intervals.

33/ 05 **DRAFT COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY [Item 11]**

The Officer introduced the report.

A Member enquired about the action on page 17 of the report where Friends of Parks are to develop Park Watch schemes, the Member wanted to know if Friends of Parks had been consulted and who was to establish these groups.

The Officer responded that he would investigate this with the Community Safety Officer.

It was then

RESOLVED

- i) that the Community Safety Strategy 2005-08 for Epsom & Ewell be approved; and
- ii) to receive an annual report on the progress and performance of the strategy.

34/
05 **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES [Item 12]**

The Officer introduced the report.

Members discussed the proposal to fund the Traffic Regulation Order and barrier to prevent people accessing the Longmead waste site via Blenheim Road, when they are already directed along Longmead Road. Members felt that as this was a priority issue that it should be funded by the Local Transportation Service.

It was then

RESOLVED

That the Committee agreed funding from the Members allowances budget:

- i) £1,000 towards improvements at Gatley Avenue Playground (Jan Mason);
- ii) £1,023 towards the John Clarke Memorial Fund (Chris Frost & Jean Smith);
- iii) £168 towards additional seating in Horton Country Park (Jan Mason);
- iv) £1,000 towards the renovation of St Mary's Church Hall, Ewell (Nigel Petrie);
- v) £350 to repair the entrance gate at Stamford Green School (Colin Taylor);
- vi) £5,713 towards repairing Epsom Salt Well (Colin Taylor);
- vii) £1,000 towards clearing rubbish from the cherry orchard at Nonsuch Park (Nigel Petrie);
- viii) £1,500 towards planting and graffiti removal in Nonsuch ward (Nigel Petrie) and;
- ix) £2,000 towards resurfacing the footpath between West Street and Lyncroft Gardens (Nigel Petrie).

Funding from the £35k Capital Allocation Grant:

- i) £1,556.40 to refurbish the Central Surrey Council for Voluntary Service's meeting room in the Old Town Hall.

35/
05 **FLEXIBLE FORWARD PROGRAMME [Item 13]**

It was then

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

Meeting Ended: 22.00

Chairman

**Informal Minutes of Public Question Time at
Surrey County Council's Local Committee
In Epsom & Ewell
14th March 2005**

Mr S Dyke asked (in relation to the MENCAP home at 28 The Parade, Epsom) whether a Housing Association had yet agreed to fund the building conversion proposed and what would happen if the proposed arrangements fell through.

The Officer replied that MENCAP were dealing directly with the Housing Association about the commissioning of building work as they are responsible for the building. However, he added that Surrey County Council have a continuing responsibility for the care of the residents at The Parade and would work with MENCAP to help secure a smooth transition for residents.