



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
[Epsom & Ewell]

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2 MARCH 2009

KEY ISSUE:

This report examines the work of the Local Committee in Epsom & Ewell over the last year 2008/09.

SUMMARY:

The report describes the work of the Committee and the Local Partnerships Team during 2008.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee [Epsom & Ewell] is asked to note this report for information.

1. INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Epsom & Ewell Local Committee has held 4 formal meetings and 4 informal meetings during 2008.

2. ANALYSIS and COMMENTARY

- 2.1. The **formal meetings** have been well attended by the public with an average of 20 people attending each Local Committee meeting; although some meetings had had higher numbers in response to particular issues of local concern such as the priority 4 waiting restrictions phase 3, Local Educational Attainment/Schools Admissions and flight paths over the Epsom and Ewell area.
- 2.2. **Public question time** is held at each of our formal meetings, both formal questions submitted prior to the meeting and informal public questions,

where local residents have posed questions to the Local Committee and Officers on a variety of subjects, ranging from school admissions, street lighting, speed limits, parking restrictions, to traffic calming. Generally we have had 6 to 8 written questions, 4 to 5 member questions, and between 7 and 11 informal public questions. The increased flexibility of public question time has worked well, particularly around difficult and controversial topics such as the parking restrictions, faulty streetlights, and school places. It is evident that the public value this form of engagement.

2.3. **Petitions** - Several have been taken to the Local Committee mainly on highway related issues, 1] the traffic lights at the junction of Ruxley Lane and Chessington Road and congestion, where the Local Committee agreed to raise this issue with the Executive Portfolio Holder. 2] Traffic calming in Grafton Road, Worcester Park and measures are now being put in place to address some of these problems. 3] a petition to request single yellow lines and this is part of a report to be presented to the 2 March 2009 meeting.

2.4. **Reports** - The Committee has taken 29 to the Local Committee in 2008/09 [not including those being presented to the March 2009 meeting. (An analysis of the breadth of these reports is attached as Annex A). 12 of these reports have been on Transportation/Highways matters covering such topics as the Edge of the Common Task Group report on findings, the agreement of the Priority 4 Waiting Restrictions Phase 3, and the Blenheim Road Civic Amenity Site Access.

In previous years of the Local Committee there have been more reports presented to the meetings, however it is considered that whilst there are fewer reports the members and the public have benefited from more qualitative and topical presentations and reports specific to Epsom and Ewell.

2.5. Members do also meet 4 times a year at informal Local Committee meetings. These meetings have been an excellent opportunity for some of the County's services to bring items for information to the Members attention that do not require a decision or formal Committee approval. Examples of topics reported on have included the Epsom Town Centre Area Action Plan, Safeguarding children and adults, Neighbourhood police and an annual update from the Surrey Fire & Rescue Service.

2.6. **Local issues** - The Committee has commissioned reports regarding locally issues including the Self Reliance Project, the Edge of the Common task group, Lintons Lane, an update on the Children's Centres proposed for the area, the Green Arc/Lower Mole Countryside project, consultation on the Learning Disability Day Service and discussion around flight paths over the area.

2.7. **Partner agencies** - The Committee has also taken reports from partner agencies i.e. Surrey PCT – integrated strategy for communications and engagement with PCT staff, primary care contractors, patients, carers,

partners and the community, Domestic Abuse Forum [working in partnership with the CAB], and the Local Strategic Partnership – Epsom Town Centre sub group [working in partnership with the Borough, Surrey Police, Rosebery Housing Association and voluntary agencies.

The Committee have taken a particular interest in engaging with young people, in particular the presentation and annual report from representatives from YELL at the Local Committee meeting in June 2008. Members have also kindly provided some of their members' allocations' to Surrey's Young People Sports Development project, Disability challengers, and the 4-7-11 Epsom Gang Show. With proposals for funding to the March 2009 meeting towards the Surrey Youth Games, one youth club, a boxing club and two schools.

2.8. The Committee has taken a proactive role in referring issues to the Executive, and Executive portfolio holders.

The Local Committee this year has referred their concern regarding the traffic congestion at Ruxley Lane to the Executive Portfolio holder.

An update on the Lintons Lane site was reported at the September meeting and Members referred their concern about the lack of concern for people's welfare during the winter months using the centre with no heating etc., and the conditions the staff and other clubs using the centre had been working in to the Executive Member.

The Self Reliance end of project report was presented to the September meeting of the Local Committee and the Members expressed their concern as to the funding moving forward on the Stronger Communities agenda. Surrey County Council, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and Rosebery Housing Association are entering into a tri-partite agreement to promote stronger communities. The Local Committee wrote to the Executive Member for Safer & Stronger Communities to encourage Surrey County Council to provide funding to secure the Council's future position in this worthwhile agreement and endeavouring to strengthen the two community partnerships of Ruxley and Court in collaboration with our partners, and local residents. A tour of the area was arranged for the Executive Member, but had to be postponed due to the bad weather with another date to be arranged.

3. AREAS OF WORK OUTSIDE THE LOCAL COMMITTEE

Within the Local Partnership team, James Painter, Area Director North Area covering Spelthorne, Elmbridge and Epsom & Ewell and Lynda Tarling, Local Committee & Partnership Officer work tirelessly brokering improvements in partnerships across SCC services and sectors, working on the stronger communities agenda outlined above, ensuring effective partnership working with Police and others at borough-based statutory Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership Executive (CDRP's) in support of the Council's Community Safety Unit, alongside working with Members

locally to support community engagement and delivering local improvements through the Local Committees. Margaret Bower, the Local Support Assistant, undertakes the pivotal role of assisting with the allocation of members allocations, and capital grant funding, reporting the allocations back to the Council's financial central budgets, and prepares the distribution of the agenda papers for the Committee meetings.

- 3.1. **Crime & Disorder** - A particular focus for the Local Partnerships Team is its participation on the Community Safety agenda. James Painter sits on the Local Strategic Partnership [LSP]/CDRP and Lynda Tarling is a member of the Community Safety Group [CSG], the Joint Action Group (JAG), the LSP Epsom Town Centre Sub Group, and the Nuisance Prevention Group [NPG] These multi-agency groups are designed to focus actions to address community safety concerns. The Team monitors SCC targets within the Community Safety Action Plan and plays a key role in ensuring that all SCC services fulfil their responsibilities locally e.g. working with the Youth Service.

The Committee receives reports on Community Safety issues, namely Neighbourhood Policing, Surrey Fire & Rescue Service, both on annual basis, alongside the Annual Community Safety Plan which includes the Epsom & Ewell Partnership Plan and agrees the transfer of the funds agreed by the Council to the LSP for Community Safety and Domestic Violence posts etc.

- 3.2. **Stronger Communities** - The County Council adopted the self-reliance programme to address deprivation in the County. Within the Borough, Court & Ruxley is one of the County's five main self-reliance areas and whilst the Self Reliance project has now ceased as briefly outlined in 2.7 above, the stronger communities agenda for the area continues.

The Epsom & Ewell Stronger Communities Steering Group (comprising of representatives from Council, Borough Council, Rosebery Housing Association, the Police, Central Surrey Health, the Primary Care Trust and the voluntary sectors) will play an active role in support of the County's policy, and work collectively to develop an action plan moving forward, with the aim of the work to create greater community cohesion and capacity so that the areas can become self-sufficient and that initiatives established are sustainable in the long term.

Funding from the County Councillors' members' allocations have also contributed to some of the work in the two wards towards the production of community newsletters.

Some of the self reliance initiatives were linked to the new Children's Centres at Riverview and Epsom Primary, and it is hoped that when these centres come on stream, further projects will be identified and able to be carried out within the centres.

- 3.3. **Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)** -The Local Partnership Team has provided a significant contribution to the Local Strategic Partnership in Epsom. The LSP oversees the implementation of the local Community Strategy and as such has commissioned a number of sub-groups to focus on specific areas of work. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Local Committee also sit on this group.

In particular the LSP established two sub-groups – the Town Centre Sub Group focussing on two keys target areas for 2008/09 – Transportation and Congestion and alcohol related problems in Epsom Town Centre. The Local Committee has played an important role in the Town Centre Group, with the Area Director, Local Committee & Partnership Officer and the Local Highways Manager as members of this group. The Local Committee received a report at the March 2008 meeting to update Members on progress.

4. **CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1. Consultation involving the community (and partners) from the outset has been a key principle in taking forward and developing initiatives. One of these has been the Blenheim Road Civic Amenity Site access where consultation was held with local businesses, Members and Officers. Also at the June meeting in the public question time several residents of Garbrand Walk and Lyncroft Gardens expressed their views on the proposed parking restrictions.

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council's Local Committee in Epsom and Ewell has contributed to many of the partnership projects within the Borough, reinforcing the reputation of the Council's Members at a local level.

Each County Councillor was allocated a budget of £11,000 in 2008/9 to be spent on schemes and projects, which promote social, environmental or economic well being. The Committee as a whole was also given a £35k capital allocation grant. The Committee intends to commit all its funding for this financial year. Members have used their allowances for a wide variety of initiatives. (See Appendix 1 of Members Allocations Report item no. 15].

The £35K capital allocation pot has been used to enable larger scale projects. [see Appendix 1 of the Members Allocations' Report Item no 15] for further details.

6. **CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

None

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1. A key aspect of all initiatives is to ensure sensitivity and responsiveness to diversity. The Local Committee is sensitive to the needs of the community and positively promotes equality through our activity and communications. The Local Committee ensures that the meetings are held in a variety of venues in the Borough, chosen for their accessibility and relevance locally of the items on the agenda. If any member of the public requires the papers in large print or Braille, or another a language; or special requirements such as an induction loop, this can be undertaken as required.

8. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. This report sets out the Chairman’s view of the seventh year of operation of the Local Committee. It concludes that it has been a successful year measured against the aims and ambitions for the Local Committee as set out by the Council and by the Committee itself. The County Councillors and Borough Councillors within Epsom & Ewell work well together on the Local Committee.

8.2. There is work in progress by the Council through the ‘Local Area Agreement’, the Surrey Strategic Partnership and Local Committees will play an important part in delivering these initiatives over the coming year.

Epsom & Ewell Local Committee and the Local Partnership Team remains the key tool for partnership working and citizen engagement within the Borough acting on behalf of the Council and its members locally.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:	None