



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
[Epsom & Ewell]

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

8 March 2010

KEY ISSUE:

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

SUMMARY:

The report describes the work of the Local Committee and the Local Partnerships Team during 2009/2010.

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 5 formal meetings and 3 informal meetings during 2009/2010.

2. ANALYSIS and COMMENTARY

- 2.1. The meetings have been well attended by the public with an average of 10-15 people attending each Local Committee meeting; although some meetings have had higher numbers in response to particular issues of local concern such as:

The priority 4 waiting restrictions
A joint parking strategy
A240 Reigate Road – change of speed limit,
New speed limit at Tattenham Corner,
Chalk Lane, Epsom – objections to traffic regulation Order
Epsom & Ewell High School improvement initiatives
Mental Health Services, Surrey & Borders Partnership NHS
Foundation Trust.

- 2.2. **Public question time** is held at each of our formal meetings. There is an informal public question time when members of the public and local

businesses may pose questions to the Officers and Members present, and if they are unable to answer the questions then a written response is provided after the meeting.

Formal questions can be submitted prior to the meeting from members of the public local businesses, and Members of the Local Committee, and written responses are available at the meeting. Over the last year the informal and formal questions have been on a variety of issues such as speed limits, traffic congestion, parking, gritting, and potholes, to bus routes, and the future of Epsom & Ewell High School.

Generally we have had approximately 8 to 10 written questions, 6 to 8 member questions, and between 4 and 6 informal public questions. The increased flexibility of public question time has worked well, particularly around difficult and controversial topics such as the parking restrictions and speed limits. It is evident that the public value this form of engagement.

- 2.3. **Petitions** – two have been taken to the Local Committee in the last year the first from a resident in Stoneleigh proposing an alternative route for the the Sri Raja Rajeswary Amman Temple Procession. The second from residents in Church Road, Epsom regarding the use of this road as a short cut to avoid Epsom Town Centre. Following changes to the Constitution in 2009, local businesses may now also present petitions to the Local Committee, although none has been presented to date.
- 2.4. **Reports** - The Committee has taken 32 reports in 2009/2010 [not including those presented to the March 2010 meeting]. An analysis of the breadth of these reports is attached as Annex A. Sixteen of these have been on Transportation/Highways matters covering such topics as Priority 4 Waiting Restrictions Phase 4 and 5, a Borough Parking strategy, and the Surrey County Council's Bus Review.

As a comparison, in 2008 29 reports were taken to the Local Committee, 12 of which were on Transportation/Highways. Fewer reports have been presented to the Local Committee in the last couple of years, however the Members and the public have benefited from more qualitative and topical presentations and reports specific to Epsom and Ewell.

In December 2009 a report was presented to the Local Committee to approve amendments to its Local Protocol to incorporate clarified arrangements for public participation in items relating to Rights of Way applications. For the past nine years the Council has permitted public participation at the Planning and Regulatory Committee. As the Local Committees have been successful in attracting public interest this local protocol was adopted. However, as this was approved in Epsom & Ewell quite recently, no applications have yet been received.

- 2.5. **Informal Meetings** - Members also met 3 times in 2009/2010 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 formal Committee approval. Some of the topics reported on have been the SCC Children's Services update, Surrey Fire & Rescue annual report, neighbourhood policing, Surrey County Council's Local Resilience Forum, and Epsom Town Centre Action Plan update.

- 2.6. **Local issues** – In 2009 the Committee formed a Joint Parking Strategy working group, and the Terms of Reference of this group were approved at the December 2009 meeting of the Local Committee. This group of Members is working with Surrey County Council and Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Officers to endeavour to ensure that Epsom & Ewell residents have a parking strategy that is fit for purpose, and meets the needs of our residents, within the timeframe required to suit the Borough Council's Local Development Framework.
- 2.7. **Partner agencies** - The Committee has also taken reports from partner agencies i.e. Mental Health Services – Surrey & Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Borough Youth Plan.

The Committee has taken a particular interest in young people, and has provided funding from their members allocations for the Surrey Youth Games, and funding from the capital grant for the Surrey Fire and Rescue Youth Engagement Scheme. Other projects from members allocations have included a Community Garden Project at Wallace Fields Infant School, a garden project at Danetree School, an Eco Garden at Epsom & Ewell High School, drugs awareness at Southfield Park Primary, a breakfast club at Riverview School, and an on-line reporting of bullying at Blenheim High. Further details of members' allocations can be found in Appendix 1 of Item 15.

- 2.8. **Resolutions to the Cabinet** - The Committee has taken a proactive role in referring issues to the Cabinet Members, i.e. regarding their concerns on the overspend of the integrated transport schemes in 2008/09, the maintenance of Vehicle Activated signs, and their dismay that in the Building Schools for the Future programme - Epsom & Ewell High School is 7th on the list and should be prioritised on its own merits.

3. **AREAS OF WORK OUTSIDE THE LOCAL COMMITTEE**

In the Local Partnership team, James Painter, Area Director North Area covers three areas, namely Spelthorne, Elmbridge and Epsom, as the strategic lead officer working with statutory and voluntary partners, liaising with SCC Officers in all directorates and the Leadership Team, also brokering projects with partners.

Lynda Tarling, Local Committee & Partnership Officer works tirelessly brokering improvements in partnerships across SCC services and sectors, working on the stronger communities agenda covering the two deprivation areas in Epsom & Ewell of Court and Ruxley, 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, also preparing the reports and agenda papers for the formal and informal Local Committee meetings.

Margaret Bower, the Local Support Assistant, undertakes the pivotal role of assisting with the allocation and management of the 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 [LPT] is its participation in the Community Safety agenda. James Painter sits on the Local Strategic Partnership [LSP] and Lynda Tarling is a member of the Crime & Reduction Disorder Partnership [CDRP]. Lynda also regularly attends the Joint Action Group and Nuisance Prevention Group meetings which report to the CDRP on issues of local concern to agencies.

The LPT 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 Borough on the Community Safety Action Zones and with SCC Youth Service.

The Committee receives reports on Community Safety issues, namely Neighbourhood Policing, Surrey Fire & Rescue Service, on an annual basis, and agrees the transfer of the funds agreed by the Council to the LSP for Community Safety and Domestic Violence of posts etc. The North LPT is negotiating the Domestic Violence outreach contract for 2010/2011, and works to support the continuance of the North Surrey Domestic Abuse Forum.

- 3.2 **Stronger Communities** - The County Council adopted the self-reliance programme to address deprivation in the County, and whilst this project ceased in 2008, the LPT with its partners – Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Rosebery Housing Association, Surrey Police, Central Surrey Health, the Primary Care Trust and the voluntary sectors - has continued with the Stronger Communities agenda for the area, and has developed an action plan, which will be reported on within the LSP, Borough Council and Local Committee. The aim of the action plan is 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
- 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 of the Local Committee also sits

on this group.

Late in 2009 Epsom & Ewell Borough Council undertook a review of the LSP/CDRP. The conclusion was to have a LSP with thematic groups sitting beneath this on Children and Young People, Health Housing and well-being, economic well-being, environment and sustainability, and safer and stronger.

The LPT assisted EEBC in the organisation of a conference held in early December to discuss the various thematic groups and proposed action plans. These multi-agency groups are now in the process of having their first meetings to agree short and long term actions to address the issues for the borough. James Painter has organised the first of the Children and Young People's thematic group which met in early February.

3.4 Work with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

The LPT have worked with the EEBC Planning Department discussing Plan E, also involving SCC Highway Officers. The LPT have arranged a visit to the SCC paramics modelling for traffic systems within Epsom Town Centre for County and Borough Councillors and EEBC Officers.

The LPT have been involved in working with EEBC and other partner agencies to endeavour to resolve local issues i.e. a local business and anti social behaviour etc, from local residents.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1. Consultation involving the community (and partners) from the outset has been a key principle in taking forward and developing initiatives. All County Councillors with assistance from Officers when required are committed to ensure local residents are kept fully informed of issues in their particular areas. For example, the recent advertising of the Phase 4 waiting 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 £8250 in 2009/10 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. 14].

The £35K capital allocation pot has been used to enable larger scale projects. [see Appendix 1 of the Members Allocations' Report Item no 14] for further details.

6. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

The LPT works with partner agencies to address crime and disorder issues within the borough on a regular basis. There are no crime and disorder implications regarding this report.

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 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 eighth 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 Surrey Strategic Partnership, Local Strategic Partnership and other initiatives proposed by the Council in these challenging financial times, and Local Committees will play an important part in delivering these 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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