

Report from Cllr Bernice Froud for W(E)RS 13 November 2024

Community & Wellbeing Committee – main points to note

At the meeting on **9 July**, the priority action points which are used to manage our homelessness population were agreed to be continued.

The use of the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) reserves was noted. These funds cover some of the increased expenses arising from dealing with homeless households and are needed in order to meet statutory duties.

The Arts, Heritage & Culture Strategy has been very successful. All targets on track and the latest project has been the creation of murals around the Borough in areas where graffiti was prominent. Community groups have been involved in working with a professional arts company to produce some outstanding artwork to cheer up some vulnerable areas of the Borough. The funding has come from UKSPF.

The meeting on **8 October** saw an update to the use of HPG funds to support homelessness work and as expected, it was not good news. It is hoped that this grant will be increased in order to assist the council in meeting its statutory duties throughout 2024-25.

Committee also agreed to support the approach taken by the council in the way it intends to engage with the community in order to better understand its needs. Specifically mentioned was the veterans group, young people, the seldom heard and councillors becoming more involved in speaking with young people and being visible at community events.

Community Events Attended

Opening of Epsom Picturehouse in June – through C&W

D-Day 80th Commemoration Service in the marketplace – June

The Vale School Summer Fair – June

Mayor's Civic Service in September

World Suicide Prevention Day event at the racecourse in September – through C&W

Landlord's Forum in September – through C&W

NESCOT in October

Remembrance Day - November

Casework

I have been assisting residents with:

Inconsiderate parking problems – ongoing.

Damaged trees in Warren Wood – ongoing. I brought this problem formally to The Epsom & Walton Downs Consultative Committee Meeting recently.

Planning matters

I called in 3 planning applications affecting our Ward. Luckily one did not need to come to committee as Officers recommended it for refusal (derelict bungalow at Langley Bottom Farm); 1 was granted under permitted development rights (shelter at the Woodland Trust Site) and 1 was heard at Planning Committee last week (demolition of bungalow and development of 3 houses in a back garden in Rosebery Road). Although I spoke on behalf of a concerned resident residing next door to this application, the application was granted by one vote. Thank you to W€RS for their support on this and expert advice given.

Although it was disappointing not to have been able to prevent this application from going ahead, I fear that should it have been refused by committee, the likelihood is that an Inspector would have overruled that decision on Appeal. That said, it is a shame for the neighbours who will be quite substantially affected by it.

BF

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