

WOODCOTE (EPSOM) RESIDENTS' SOCIETY MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH 2025 AT THE EPSOM SPORTS CLUB, WOODCOTE ROAD, EPSOM, KT18 7QN		
AGENDA NUMBER	<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	ACTION
1.	<p>PRESENT:</p> <p>Committee Members – John Mumford (JM) (Chair) Jane Clarke (JC) Fred Mowbray (FM) and Bob Tranter (BT)</p> <p>Councillors - Liz Frost (LF) Bernice Froud (BF) and Steven McCormick (SM)</p> <p>and 18 Woodcote & Langley Vale Ward Residents in person</p> <p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cherrill Auton (CA) and John Steward (JS)</p>	
2.	<p>LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM</p> <p>The Chair introduced our speaker Hannah Dalton (HD), Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Leader, Chair of the Surrey Leaders Group and a Member of the Surrey Local Government Reform Steering Committee.</p> <p>HD opened by setting the context. Devolution was a Government manifesto pledge and therefore not subject to judicial review. The purpose of Local Government Reform is to create a single tier sustainable structure that can deliver high quality services and withstand financial pressure.</p> <p>It was noted that local government reform would mean that Epsom & Ewell Borough Council would no longer exist after 2027.</p> <p>HD explained that it was clear that the re-organisation was going to proceed and it was therefore decided that it would be in the best interest of local residents for the RA Councillors to participate in and help shape the proposals put forward to ensure they would deliver services that would work. She emphasised that it did not mean they agreed with the reorganisation and that there was not evidence from the existing unitary authorities that they deliver savings.</p> <p>HD took the meeting through the timeline for the reorganisation.</p> <p>She reported that Surrey County Council had requested to be included in the first phase and it was agreed by the government partly on the grounds that it would address the major debt issue in Surrey.</p> <p>She went on to talk through the fast-track timetable and the process followed to meet the end of March deadline for Surrey to submit its initial proposal for reorganisation to Government. It was noted that there were extraordinary Council Meetings in every borough next week ahead of the submission deadline to consider the same report and if possible to coalesce behind the same option for the future unitary structure. The options being considered are for the existing boroughs to be grouped into two or three unitary authorities. The future structure set out in the full proposal would</p>	

	<p>need to be submitted by 9 May 2025 and would be followed by a public consultation over the summer of 2025. A government decision was expected sometime in the Autumn. Elections to the shadow new unitary authorities would take place in May 2026 with the authorities going live the following year.</p> <p>HD explained that the fast track-timetable meant that the modelling was very high-level and that there was still a lot of data crunching and analysis to do to substantiate the pros and cons of the different options which would be available on the May timeline.</p> <p>One of the biggest concerns is that the debt will be shared across the new unitary structures and Epsom & Ewell residents could face increased Council taxes as a result.</p> <p>Regrettably the new structure will mean that it will be more difficult for independent councillors to get elected in the future.</p> <p>HD offered to attend a further Society meeting later in the year to update residents on the final proposals and the next steps.</p> <p>HD then responded to a number of questions raised by residents present.</p>	
3.	<p>MINUTES OF THE 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH AT THE HAYWAIN, DORKING ROAD, EPSOM</p> <p>The minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting were approved as a correct record.</p>	
4.	<p>2024 ANNUAL REVIEW</p> <p>The Chair opened by acknowledging how lucky the Ward was to have three such hard working and excellent ward Councillors and thanked Bernard Woolfe, Bob Tranter and Kristine Damberg, the three members standing down from the Committee, for their contributions to the Society and the Committee's work</p> <p>The Chair (JM) took the meeting through the annual review:</p> <p>He highlighted the Society's representations on the local plan and hoped that it would have some influence on the final version.</p> <p>JM also ran through the key planning decisions taken over the past year and the successes the Society had.</p> <p>He went on to talk about the public meeting the Society held back in October 2024 on the future of Epsom & St Helier Hospitals which was addressed by James Blythe, Managing Director and underlined how concerning it was that the new acute hospital was now delayed probably until at least 2032.</p>	

	<p>Lastly the Chair drew attention to the role the Society was playing in ensuring that the concerns of Langley Vale residents had about anti-social behaviour associated with the 2024 Derby Festival are addressed for the 2025 event.</p>	
5.	<p>APPROVAL OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2024</p> <p>There were no questions on the audited accounts for 2024 which were approved as a true and fair statement.</p>	
6.	<p>APPOINTMENT OF THE HONORARY AUDITOR FOR 2025</p> <p>The meeting approved the re-appointment of Chris Bevis of Bevis and Co as the Honorary Treasurer for 2025 and thanked him for continuing to audit the accounts for the Society on a voluntary basis.</p>	
7.	<p>ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WOODCOTE(EPSOM) RESIDENTS' SOCIETY FOR 2025</p> <p>The meeting noted that Cherrill Auton (CA) Jane Clarke (JC), Fred Mowbray (FM), John Mumford (JM) and John Steward (JS) had agreed to continue to serve as members of the Committee.</p> <p>It was noted that the Committee had a number of vacancies and the Chair urged any residents willing to join the Committee or support the work of the Society by becoming a road representative to speak to him at the end of the meeting about what was involved.</p>	
18.	<p>REPORTS FROM YOUR RESIDENT'S ASSOCIATION BOROUGH COUNCILLORS</p> <p>Liz Frost (LF) talked about her role as Chair of the Environment Committee and highlighted the work that had taken place over the past 12 months to implement the Climate Change Action Plan for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council with the aim of Council's operations being carbon neutral by 2035. These included the installation of solar panels on Council buildings and increased tree planting.</p> <p>LF is a member of the Community Infrastructure (CIL) working group. She explained that CIL is funding raised from developers to address new pressures on the borough's infrastructure from new developments. She highlighted some of the projects approved for funding through both Strategic and Neighbourhood CIL aimed at improving the outdoor parks and open spaces to support local health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Bernice Froud (BF) tabled her report to the meeting. She focussed on her role as Vice Chair to the Community & Wellbeing Committee where the main work continued to be on homelessness and affordable housing. She also updated on the Council's Art, Culture and Heritage Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy both of which come under the Committee. BF also attends the Health Liaison Board and she participated in the first</p>	

	<p>meeting of the new Neighbourhood Forum which will be working alongside the Council to offer support for Epsom & Ewell's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>Steven McCormick (SM) spoke about his many roles in the Borough and the Committees he was serving on at County level. He also talked in some detail about the state of the roads across the Borough and the work he had succeeded in getting prioritised over the past year and the works he was pushing hard to be carried out in the coming months.</p>	
11.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>Local concerns raised by residents at the meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -a live planning application for a change of use for 108 Rosebery Road, Epsom to a 10-person house in multiple occupation -the queue on the Dorking Road for the Hospital car park -the further impact on traffic on the Dorking Road of a Sainsbury's Local on the site of the former White Horse public house if the current planning application is approved; and -speeding on the approach to the pedestrian crossing outside the Hospital on Woodcote Road <p>Angela Clifford thanked the Councillors, Chair and Committee Members for all the work they carried out on behalf of residents.</p>	<p>BF</p> <p>SM</p> <p>SM</p> <p>SM</p>
12.	The meeting closed at 21.20	