

## Surrey Police know where they're going with more of them

23 April 2025



Surrey Police will have 'the highest number of officers in a generation' after locking up money for 40 more patrol cops. The estimated £2.5million in central government money is part of a Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee and will add to the 222 extra officers who joined the force since March 2021 – and its March 2025 total of 2,336 officers. The new recruits will likely comprise 25 full time police officers and 15 special constables.

The programme is part of the government's plan to have at least one named, contactable, officer in each neighbourhood, as well as dedicated teams on patrol in town centres and other hotspots. There will also be dedicated antisocial behaviour leads in every force which Surrey Police said reflects the government's recognition of the public's crime and safety concerns.

Surrey Police Chief Constable, Tim De Meyer, said: "For us, the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee is a chance to strengthen our presence in the heart of our communities, with officers working alongside residents, identify local issues, and resolve problems before they escalate. It's about building lasting relationships and ensuring that we are seen as a trusted resource, not just an authority figure. The guarantee reinforces our commitment to community engagement, crime prevention, and proactive policing. With this initiative, we will be better equipped to build stronger relationships, deliver more targeted interventions through our hotspot policing efforts, and improve overall safety for the communities we serve. The promise of increased officer numbers will enable us to further tackle issues such as anti-social behaviour, theft, and drug-related crimes. While the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee presents several advantages, it also comes with challenges that we must address to ensure its success. The demand for resources across the Force must be managed effectively to ensure that neighbourhood policing remains a priority, even in times of high demand. Additionally, engaging with communities that have historically had strained relationships with the police can take time and require a sensitive, consistent and tailored approach. However, these challenges present an opportunity for us to demonstrate our commitment to transparency, community-focused policing, and problem-solving."

Assistant Chief Constable, Tanya Jones, added: "By staying true to the Force principles, and embracing the goals of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, we can strengthen our role as a trusted, proactive Force that works alongside local communities to tackle crime, improve public safety, and build a sense of community pride. As officers and staff, we must embrace opportunities to speak with local residents, build trust, and work collaboratively to prevent crime. We can create environments where residents feel heard, supported, and secure. It's more than just policing, it's about shaping communities in a way that promotes safety, confidence, and lasting social cohesion."

Surrey's Police and Crime Commissioner, Lisa Townsend welcomed the additional funding. She said: "Based on the funding allocation provided, it is projected that Surrey Police will benefit from an additional 25 police officers, as well as 15 Special Constables." Adding: "Neighbourhood policing is a key commitment for Surrey Police, and residents are already benefiting from that focus, with an additional 3,500 charges and 2,500 more arrests across all crime types in 12 months. Initiatives such as the Safer Streets programme and hotspot policing have led to increased trust and greater intelligence gathering in our communities. However, forces across the country are also seeing a rise in 'hidden' crime types, such as fraud, domestic abuse and sextortion, and Surrey is no exception. These crimes have very real victims, and we must ensure those victims are getting support from specially-trained officers dedicated to pursuing justice for them. As part of the doctrine of operational independence, Surrey's Chief Constable Tim De Meyer decides where his officers and staff are best-deployed to tackle offending. Under his leadership, the Force is one of the fastest-improving in the country. Both Tim and I are determined to ensure this brilliant progress is sustained."

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## Labour decries Residents' Associations' unfettered power on Epsom & Ewell Council

23 April 2025



Dear Editor,

Thank you for your excellent reporting of last week's meeting of Epsom and Ewell Council's Standards and Constitution Committee, which highlighted some important and contentious issues about how councillors represent our residents.

Your analysis that public trust and democratic scrutiny hang in the balance is spot-on. In my two years so far as a councillor, I have frequently sought to highlight these issues, often in conjunction with other opposition councillors and sometimes with the support of more independent-minded Residents Association (RA) councillors.

In this light, I would like to highlight Cllr Robert Leach's comment concerning the committees that decide the bulk of what the council does, that "The RA group can put through anything it likes".

This shocking comment goes to the heart of issues of democratic scrutiny and appears to reflect the approach of the ruling party and many RA councillors to a situation where it has two-thirds of councillors. Despite its councillors purporting to represent residents at a very local level, the RA can often operate as a monolithic block.

One major change that the RA administration has attempted to implement is to neuter the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, of which I am also a member, which should play a key role in scrutinising what the council does in the name of residents.

Despite, or perhaps because of this, the administration has proposed to remove the committee's scrutiny function, on the grounds that scrutiny should take place on the committees that make policy and spending decisions.

Cllr Leach's blunt assessment that "The RA group can put through anything it likes" on such committees should represent the death knell for this proposal, which the administration has already had to "pause" in the face of fierce opposition.

While Cllr Leach's words represent the numerical reality, they neglect the role that opposition councillors can play in raising questions and challenges and, on

occasion, influencing how other committee members vote.

Last month, for the second year running, the Audit and Scrutiny Committee amended its own annual report, as drafted by the administration, to record that it had carried out “limited scrutiny” over the past year.

While this is an unfortunate situation, to say the least, it does show that some RA councillors have an appetite for a stronger scrutiny role and, despite what Cllr Leach says, can vote according to their own individual judgement.

Democratic scrutiny of what the council does in the name of residents is essential to maintain the public’s trust in it. We need more of it – and less of a ruling party that thinks it can put through anything it likes.

Councillor Chris Ames – Labour – Court Ward

## Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Faces Scrutiny Over Constitutional Reforms

23 April 2025



The Standards and Constitution Committee meeting of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council on 16th April was marked by heated exchanges and concerns over transparency, democratic participation, and officer-councillor relations.

The meeting, chaired by Councillor **Hannah Dalton** (RA Stoneleigh), dealt with contentious proposals affecting the structure of council committees, rules on public participation, and the delegation of powers to council officers. In the words of Councillor **Chris Ames**, (Labour Court) “There hasn’t been a meeting of the Constitution Working Group for seven months,” raising the stakes and intensity of the evening’s debate.

### A Push for Plurality Rejected

A major flashpoint was the proposal to increase the number of councillors on the influential Strategy and Resources (S&R) Committee from eight to ten. Liberal Democrat Councillor **James Lawrence** (LibDem College) introduced the motion, arguing that the change would reflect “the plurality on the council” following the expansion to five political groups. “Strategy and Resources is, of course, our most important committee... and particularly so with unitarisation occurring and property decisions,” he said, asserting the need for broader representation.

Independent Councillor **Alex Coley** (Ruxley) added, “We should attempt to achieve the best plurality so that voices of smaller groups can also be heard and we can undertake proper, robust scrutiny.”

Despite the support, the motion fell. Councillor **Robert Leach** (RA Nonsuch)) dismissed it as a matter of “*adiaphora* — decisions that don’t really matter,” and declared, “The RA group can put through anything it likes... so I don’t think this would make much difference.”

Others expressed scepticism over inclusivity. Councillor **John Beckett** (RA Auriol) questioned the logic of the expansion: “We’re only going to give a voice to four [groups] if we go with this enlargement, so not everybody’s voice will be heard.”

### Clashes Over Public Participation Rules

The committee also reviewed proposed changes to public participation rules, particularly Standing Order 3.1.3, which would allow officers to reword public questions for clarity. Councillor **Bernie Muir** (Conservative Horton) condemned the change as “seriously open to abuse,” warning it could “deny transparency, public accountability... and result in many issues and decisions being conducted without appropriate discussion.”

Councillor Lawrence suggested a compromise, proposing that officers “may suggest rewording” questions, rather than having an absolute right to do so. This amendment was accepted.

More fiercely contested was Standing Order 3.1.4, which sought to restrict questions relating to past legal cases or complaints. Councillor Ames described it as “having a chilling effect on public participation,” and stated bluntly, “We should not be trying to exclude members of the public... from participating at this meeting.”

In the end, the committee voted unanimously to refer the contentious clause back to the Constitution Working Group (CWG), along with concerns about the reduced five-to-three day notice period for residents’ questions.

### Officer-Member Protocol Sparks Sharp Exchange

Perhaps the most contentious moment came with the debate on proposed additions to the officer-member protocol. Redrafted clauses sought to clarify officers’ expectations of councillors’ conduct.

Councillor Leach objected to the tone of the changes, declaring, “The council comprises councillors... not its officers... Officers are staff who are employed to do what we tell them to do.” This drew a stern rebuke from the Monitoring Officer, who warned that such language failed to acknowledge officers’ statutory duties: “If, in their professional opinion, something is unlawful or unconscionable, they have obligations.”

Councillor Lawrence defended the need for balance: “I don’t mind there being a look at the update of the officer-member protocol... but I would like it to be balanced.”

Ultimately, the committee agreed to refer the proposed changes to CWG, with a review of the Surrey County Council protocol as a potential model for achieving parity between officers’ and councillors’ expectations.

### Delegated Powers Under the Microscope

Another area of concern was the list of proposed delegations to officers. Councillor Lawrence warned that not all proposals were “minor service changes,” pointing to one that would authorise officers to purchase properties for temporary accommodation.

“We should not delegate such significant capital decisions,” he argued. The committee eventually agreed to amend the wording, allowing officers to “identify and negotiate” but not to “purchase” without committee approval.

## A Question of Process

Underlying the evening was a shared frustration with procedural breakdowns. Several members criticised the administration for sidelining the Constitution Working Group. “This administration, under your leadership, has twice postponed or cancelled the CWG,” Councillor Ames alleged, adding, “It would appear the CWG was not giving the answers that the administration wanted, so it’s been done away with.”

Chair Hannah Dalton acknowledged the delay, attributing it partly to the “devolution white paper” and pressures of local government reorganisation. However, she also committed to convening a new CWG to consider unresolved matters, stating, “You’ll probably need an extraordinary SNC and then bring it to the July meeting.”

As public trust and democratic scrutiny hang in the balance, the committee’s decisions to refer key changes back to the CWG suggest a desire to tread carefully. Whether this marks a course correction or a temporary pause in constitutional reform remains to be seen.

Image: The meeting from Epsom and Ewell Borough Council YouTube channel

## How did Aldi arrive at this Epsom junction?

23 April 2025



Plans for an Aldi store near an Epsom junction described as being “fraught with danger” have been green-lit after an appeal—but with conditions attached. For years, the budget superstore has been trying to get planning permission on the Former Dairy Crest Site on Alexandra Road in Epsom. The planning inspector recognised the road is “far from easy to navigate and potentially dangerous” but said mitigations to encourage people to walk to the store would help.

Members of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council had thrown out the German company’s second application in July 2024 due to fears that increased traffic would have a severe impact on road safety. A previous application was rejected in 2015 over concerns about the site’s location, car parking capacity, traffic levels, and the potential effect on the neighbourhood’s character. The new £5 million development includes parking and some landscaping, but earlier plans for residential units have been dropped.

Residents and councillors had previously criticised the scheme for exacerbating an already ‘challenging junction’, often described as a “rat run” and “fraught with danger”. Despite these objections, Surrey Highways raised no formal objection and concluded the development would not create unacceptable risks.

Although the planning inspector agreed that the Aldi store would “undoubtedly increase the potential for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians”, they concluded that “additional measures to encourage drivers to slow down and take extra care would help to mitigate these increased risks.” The decision statement noted: “At the end of the day, nearly all collisions are the result of human error. In this case, the lack of an obvious pattern of collisions suggests that there are not significant problems with the layout which could easily be addressed by engineering interventions.”

The conditions imposed on Aldi’s approved scheme include improving pedestrian access to the site, implementing slow-down measures, installing new junction signage, and laying anti-skid surfacing—all subject to full agreement by the Surrey Highways Authority. The inspector highlighted the Former Dairy Crest Site as a location with “good opportunities to encourage more customers to choose to walk to the store”.

Improved pedestrian access was seen as an acceptable compromise, rather than simply accepting that peak times would bring queues and delays due to limited parking. Based on average data, the risk of excessive pressure on the Five Ways junction was considered small, though the inspector acknowledged that at exceptional times—such as Christmas—some delays would be inevitable. However, they concluded that seasonal stress is not sufficient justification for additional parking, “when the priority should be to promote increased numbers of visits to the store on foot.”

Aldi now has three years to begin construction of their new bargain grocery store on Alexandra Road before planning permission expires.

Image: CGI visualisation of Aldi store on the Former Dairy Crest Site, on Alexandra Road, Epsom. (Credit: Aldi/ Epsom and Ewell Borough Council)

## Global fast-food giant targets Surrey village

23 April 2025



A global fast food giant could be coming to a Surrey village as a new McDonald’s restaurant and takeaway might get the go ahead. Despite being famed for its ‘Happy Meal’, some residents fear the American icon will be ‘detrimental to the health of Cobham’.

The popular burger and nugget chain is hoping to find a new home in the former Loch Fyne Restaurant on Portsmouth Road, Cobham. The fate of the application will be decided by Elmbridge Borough Council members at a planning meeting on April 24.

Planning officers have recommended McDonald’s gets the green light to transform the disused fish restaurant. Residents have railed against the scheme, with nearly 500 letters of objection sent to the council.

The village of Cobham was named as one of the most affluent communities in the county but the Northfield Estate, where the restaurant is proposed, is among Surrey’s poorest socio-economic areas.

Significant concern has been raised about the proposed distance (or lack of) to local schools and playgrounds nearby. Opponents have claimed the new branch will “encourage children to form unhealthy habits”, “exploit young people” who will eat at McDonald’s and add to the country’s obesity crisis.



People have said the new outlet will be “detrimental to the health of Cobham” and the impact “cannot be underestimated”. Lots of residents pointed out there is already an outlet at the M25 services, so they do not need another one closer to the village.

Wyndham Avenue park and Hamilton Ave play area, both managed by PA Housing, are just a four-minute walk away (321m) from the potential McDonald’s site. Felton Fleet Prep School, Cobham Free School and Cobham recreation ground are only a seven minute walk (482m) away from the fast food chain.

But planning officers said the nearest schools are not within a 400m radius walking distance to the site. The intervening A3 would be a “man-made barrier” to the fast food chain, officers reported, and the proposed restaurant is not on the main school route to Cobham Free School so children would be walking the opposite way.

Although the neighbouring petrol station has a Greggs, the proposed restaurant will not create a ‘cluster’ of takeaways. The nearest other takeaways are in Cobham’s centre some 700m away, according to the report.

Despite recognising local public health concern, officers found there is no evidence the multi-million fast food chain will have a detrimental impact on health in the neighbouring areas. National planning guidance says local authorities should refuse plans for takeaways near schools and where young people hang out. Surrey County Council’s public health team did not object to the new McDonald’s in principle.

Cobham residents launched a petition in May 2024 against the plans to open a new restaurant and takeaway. The petition, which has garnered over 34,000 signatures, calls for the site to be turned into a community hub instead. Concerns raised include increased traffic, litter, and potential impacts on the area’s health and well-being.

Despite the concerns, many people flagged the multi-million dollar company would bring huge financial benefits to the village, increasing visitors and supporting local business. Others said the new ‘Happy Meal’ site could provide up to £60k a year in business rates for the council.

Supporters of the proposed McDonald’s slammed the listed building as an “eyesore” and in need of “restoration”. The new fast food outlet would employ around 120 people, which the company hopes to recruit from the local area, as well as offering training and career development.

People said comments about the quality and ‘wholesomeness’ of the food is “irrelevant” as no one has to eat there. Those looking forward to the new branch said it would be a good place for young people to meet and socialise as well as providing more takeaway options.

According to the chain, the new restaurant would include both indoor and outdoor seating with space for 60 diners, 30 cars parking bays, two of which would be accessible and three with EV charging spaces. The American fast food branch is hoping to be open every day from 6am to 11pm.

McDonald’s has been approached for further comment.

## Volunteers Join Forces with Councillor to Give Epsom a Spring Clean

23 April 2025



**Epsom Town Centre was treated to a thorough spring clean on Sunday 6th April**, as a team of around 40 volunteers from the international youth group ASEZ WAO UK joined local councillor **Arthur Abdulin** (RA, Town Ward) in a community litter pick.

Dressed in high-vis jackets and armed with litter grabbers and bin bags, the group covered key areas including the High Street, Epsom Square, and alleyways leading to the railway station — even tackling neglected corners of car parks and hotspots often used by the homeless. In total, the team collected an impressive 38 bags of rubbish, which were later gathered by council rangers.

The ASEZ WAO UK is a local volunteer group in Epsom that works to serve the Surry area and make it a better place for everyone. Mostly made up of young adults who are passionate about doing their bit to help the local community, they have been carrying out various volunteer activities in Surry since 2021.

The Epsom clean-up began with a presentation highlighting the dangers of plastic pollution — a growing threat to the environment and public health. The initiative aimed not only to tidy up the town centre but also to raise awareness about responsible waste disposal and inspire behavioural change among residents.

Councillor Abdulin, who frequently takes part in litter picks, joined volunteers in clearing a significant amount of long-neglected waste. “The greatest impact this kind of event has is sharing the message,” he said. “It will have a great impact on people so that they think before littering and get rid of it properly.”

The warm spring-like weather added to the atmosphere as locals strolled through the market and visited the Ashley Centre — perhaps unaware that just metres away, volunteers were working hard to ensure the town remained pleasant and welcoming for all.

Recent signage from Epsom & Ewell Borough Council reminds residents that dropping litter could lead to a £100 fine. But campaigners like ASEZ WAO UK hope that community-led efforts and education will play an even greater role in keeping the town clean.

Their message is clear: everyone can make a difference. Whether by using a bin, reducing plastic waste, or picking up just one piece of litter, every small action contributes to a cleaner, healthier Epsom — and a better world.

Image: L to R. A volunteer and Cllr Arthur Abdulin

## Shock as Surrey Council Puts Protected Woodland Up for Auction

23 April 2025



A surprise decision by Surrey County Council (SCC) to auction off a cherished woodland in the heart of Cuddington has sparked uproar among residents and elected councillors, who are now rallying to save the green space from the threat of large-scale development.

The 13-acre site, situated between Grafton Road and Old Malden Lane and bordering Linden Bridge Special Needs School, was discreetly marketed for potential

development of up to 40 homes by commercial estate auctioneers. The move came without prior consultation with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council or even the local Surrey County councillors representing the area.

Local County Councillor **Eber Kington** (RA) , alongside RA Cuddington ward councillors **Kim Spickett**, **Graham Jones** and **Phil Neale**, and the Cuddington Residents' Association, have launched a campaign urging SCC to reconsider its course of action.

"This woodland isn't just a patch of land – it's a vital green refuge in our urban landscape, a space of peace, biodiversity, and community value," said Cllr Neale. "We're asking residents to stand with us and help protect it for future generations."

The woodland, known locally for its mature trees and diverse wildlife, lies adjacent to the Grafton Park Road estate and has long been considered a buffer zone preserving local environmental quality and character.

The auction concluded in late January, but SCC is yet to announce a winning bidder. The auctioneers stated that the highest bid would not necessarily be accepted, leaving room for alternative proposals to be considered.

One such alternative comes from a joint venture involving the Cuddington Residents' Association, the Wandgas Sports & Social Club, and a local developer. Their bid proposes a modest housing scheme to fund the creation of a community-led sports and recreational space, including public woodland access for walkers and cyclists. The vision includes safeguarding the majority of the natural landscape and establishing long-term protections for its use.

Campaigners argue that SCC's recent adoption of a **Community Asset Transfer** (CAT) scheme—championed by Epsom & Ewell's own county councillor Eber Kington—should provide the framework to enable this type of locally-driven project.

"Transparency and local accountability are vital when it comes to decisions that affect our shared spaces," Cllr Webb added. "We're calling on the County Council to respect the CAT process, consider our community proposal seriously, and honour the values of environmental stewardship and public trust."

Residents are now being asked to sign a petition backing the community bid and urging SCC to reject blanket housing development in favour of a sustainable, locally-beneficial plan.

The petition can be signed online and will be submitted to Surrey County Council ahead of a final decision.

For more information or to add your name to the petition, visit: [Change.org](https://change.org)

## Epsom Choral Society Bids Farewell to Long-Serving Pianist Marion Lea

23 April 2025



Epsom Choral Society (ECS) has said a heartfelt goodbye to their much-loved accompanist, Marion Lea, who is retiring after an extraordinary 50 years.

At a special farewell party held in her honour, choir members gathered to celebrate Marion's remarkable contribution to ECS since she first joined in 1975. In a warm and emotional tribute, ECS President Jon Pullinger shared the story of Marion's involvement with the choir, remarking, "What amazing good fortune for us" – her musicianship, support and professionalism have been a cornerstone of ECS for half a century.

In recognition of her long-standing dedication, Marion was presented with a series of personal gifts: a facsimile of Mozart's C minor Piano Concerto (K491), a subscription for a monthly bouquet of flowers for the next year, and a set of four handmade, music-themed coasters. She also received a beautiful bouquet of flowers and a magnificent, personalised cake in the shape of a piano.

Members past and present paid tribute to Marion's extraordinary skills, her quiet professionalism, and the musicianship she brought to every rehearsal and performance. As Jon Pullinger said of Marion: "The accompanist will pick out weaknesses in one part or another and come to their rescue with appropriately judged emphases. We have been so fortunate in having Marion with us as both fine soloist and consummate accompanist."

ECS looks back with gratitude for all Marion has brought to the choir and with warm wishes for her retirement.

Nina Kaye

## Paintball plans to entertain Epsom's youth

23 April 2025



Plans for a new paintball and laser tag centre have been put forward in a former farm building. The new play shooting centre could be launched at The Paddock on Langley Vale Road, Epsom.

The proposed play shooting range already has a name- dubbed 'PandaWarz'-and will offer Lasertag to the under 16's and Tactical Paintball to those 16 and over.

Developers claimed Epsom is a "thriving town with much to offer" but is "limited in leisure". Planning documents sent to the council read there are "minimal opportunities for young children and young adults" particularly when it comes to their "special annual celebrations", or birthdays.

Details of the scheme include changing the existing agricultural building into an indoor children's Lastertag arena. Two containers could also be installed, making closed arenas, along with a temporary roof covering for the indoor Tactical Paintball.

Planning documents said that "PandaWarz's objective is to modernise the game" by using military skills and techniques from close range to build up obstacles.

The equipment will be modernised and operating with magazines, according to the applicant. Planning documents read: “The games are tactical, not simply spraying paintballs and hoping to hit.”

The two purpose play area will be made up of shipping containers, internal rooms, mazes and obstacles. Fine mesh is proposed to cover the arenas so no paintballs can be fired beyond the confines of the play area. A gantry has been designed over and around the arena with a temporary roof covering to protect both spectator and player from any weather.

Planning details read: “Twenty minutes running around a dark room filled with obstacles and UV reactive artwork shooting each other in teams. A successful way of both entertaining [children] and wearing them out!”

Noise will be reduced by containing the games within the existing building and as well as using the constructed containers and temporary roofing, the application states.

Car parking for up to 15 vehicles is included, with additional parking directed to the open, free roadside parking a short walk away on the Downs.

Locals can comment on the proposals until April 30 on the council’s website. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council will decide the future of The Paddock site at a later date.

Proposed site layout. Epsom and Ewell planning documents.

## Pedestrian visions of Mole Valley

23 April 2025



Masterplans for Dorking and Bookham are set to be signed off by Mole Valley District Council’s executive committee on April 16. These set out a bank of projects the council would like to “bring to life” in order to make “a lasting positive impact” on the towns. Among the works being considered are improvements to Dorking town centre, as well as connections to the three train stations. The council said it wants to improve streets and public spaces, get more people walking and cycling, and find uses for its vacant buildings.

For Dorking, the council wants to create a greater sense of arrival, improve its cultural offering, and address crash hotspots. A new “more attractive” civic hub would create an “important cluster” of cultural, leisure and civic buildings to encourage more people to spend time there – while pedestrianising access to Dorking Halls could help maximise the experience around the famous site. As a whole, the masterplan focuses on the town centre, public spaces, transport infrastructure, and HGV restrictions to protect the heritage character of the town.

The option to pedestrianise West Street was not taken forward in Dorking, but the idea of cutting cars from High Street in Bookham has been retained. The council is also looking to capture more of the visitors to Polesden Lacy and Box Hill into the historic core of Bookham village by reducing the impact of traffic and its “car dominated environment” and celebrating the town’s heritage and cultural links.

At this stage though, all options are concepts and not fully realised designs or planned projects. The intention, the draft masterplan reads, is to “plant seeds of ideas for change; as such they will need to be further developed subsequent to completion of this study.”

In a statement issued ahead of the meeting, Councillor Margaret Cooksey, cabinet member for community services, said she was pleased the masterplans had reached the approval stage and that the majority of feedback had been in support of the project. She said: “We listened to our communities and made necessary and appropriate changes based on the feedback received, before presenting the final plans to cabinet.

“Once the masterplans are approved, the commencement of these projects will depend on securing the necessary funding. Mole Valley District Council will explore various funding streams, including government grants, national organisations, and local contributions. We are committed to bringing these projects to life and making a lasting positive impact on Bookham and Dorking. Many of the schemes will require further discussions about their details in the future.”

The council said that more than 500 people engaged in the Bookham masterplan consultation and that there were more than 1,000 responses for Dorking.