

Kids takeover Ewell's Bourne Hall

22 November 2023



On Friday 17 November **Bourne Hall** in Ewell collaborated with local college **NESCOT** as part of a national Kids in Museums Takeover Day event. This project sits within **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's** Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy which aims to increase access to art, culture and heritage within the borough, as well as nurturing local, creative talent.

Mirroring these values and supported by Arts Council England, the **Kids in Museums** charity, aims to empower young people and help them learn digital marketing skills, as well as support museums to engage younger audiences.

Since Takeover Day began in 2010, over 40,000 children and young people have taken part. Takeover Day was established to help historic institutions empower young people and give them meaningful roles in their organisations. Over 5,000 people, from toddlers to 25-year-olds, now take part each year.

In support of the Takeover Day, Bourne Hall welcomed a group of creative arts students from NESCOT to its Museum this month to view their collection of 'paper tapestry' wallpapers. The wallpapers originated from homes within the borough from 1690 onwards and were created by hand using block-printing techniques. As objects within Bourne Hall Museum's collection, they are excellent examples of our borough's creative and heritage-rich past.

Focused around the Kids in Museums theme of 'Let's Play', students then used the wallpapers as a springboard to let their creativity run free - employing techniques learned in the artistic studios at NESCOT, the end result is a fantastic collection of colourful and characterful textile artworks. An exhibition of the students' work is now on display at Bourne Hall Museum, free to access and enjoy at your own pace.

"As part of our new Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy, we are committed to nurturing creative talent and increasing access to resources and opportunities within our Borough," says Councillor **Clive Woodbridge**, (RA Ewell Village) Chair of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Community and Wellbeing Committee. "Working collaboratively with NESCOT shows how our cultural and historical past can be reimagined through the eyes of the creative talents of the future. Blending the past and the present through such artistic outputs is fantastic to see and I warmly congratulate the students from NESCOT on their exhibition, which I would encourage residents to visit."

Sarah Jane Morgan, Curriculum Coordinator Art and Design and Digital Design and Lecturer and **Chloe Chivers**, Art & Design Tutor at NESCOT added "Our UAL Level One Diploma in Art and Design students put their skills into action creating contemporary fabric prints inspired by historic wallpaper samples found here in the Bourne Hall archive. It was a great opportunity for our students to modernise historic prints dating back to the 17th Century, designing for a new audience. An experience enjoyed all round!"

Local Council gets in the Christmas spirit for all

22 November 2023



The countdown to Christmas is here! **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** and **Bourne Hall** are bringing Christmas cheer to winter days for residents and visitors. Festivities begin with the Christmas Lights Switch On in Epsom Market Square on 24 November, and at Bourne Hall on 9 December; followed by a week of family fun at Bourne Hall from 9 - 16 December. Free parking days in Epsom & Ewell town centres will help with Christmas shopping, and The Wizard of Oz panto will be spreading some Christmas panto magic at Epsom Playhouse.

Councillor **Clive Woodbridge**, (RA Ewell Village) Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Committee, said "We are looking forward to Christmas festivities in Epsom & Ewell this year, starting with the Epsom Christmas Lights Switch On.

“The Switch On would not be possible without the support of local charities and community groups. I want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has worked so hard to make it possible for us to hold the event this year. I hope everyone is able to enjoy spending time with friends and family this holiday season”.

Epsom Christmas Lights Switch On

Friday 24 November, 4pm – 9pm. Epsom Market Square. Free event.

- The switch on will take place at 6.30pm.
- Family fun, festive food and drink, live music and more. This event is held in partnership with local charities and community groups.

A Jolly Good Christmas at Bourne Hall

9 – 16 December (excl. 10 December) 10am – 5pm plus evening events (times vary).

To book tickets, visit: www.bournehall.org

Bourne Hall Christmas Lights Switch On.

Saturday 9 December, 10am – 5pm. Free event.

- A day of festive fun including performances from local dance schools.
- 4.30pm: The Mayor of Epsom & Ewell switches on the Christmas lights at Bourne Hall.

Meet Father Christmas.

Saturday 9 & 16 December, 10am – 4pm. Free event.

- No pre-booking required.

Santa’s Grotto.

All week, 9 – 16 December (excl. 10 December), 10am – 4pm. Free event.

- Father Christmas will be there on 9 & 16 December. On other days, visit the beautiful grotto at Bourne Hall and post him a letter in the Bourne Hall post box.

Christmas Wreath-making.

Monday 11 December & Friday 15 December. 7 – 9pm. £60pp (price includes a drink).

- Learn how to create your own beautiful Christmas wreath with Jade Sibly, using flowers and foliage from Hook Heath Flower Farm.

Christmas Cake Decorating Workshop.

Tuesday 12 December, 5.30 – 7pm. Free event.

- Discover how to pipe, shape and accessorise your cake to create your own Christmas showstopper with Anita Chappel, Bourne Hall’s Head Chef.

Seasonal Storytelling.

Wednesday 13 December, 7 – 8pm. Free event.

- As the year ends, enjoy age-old tales and seasonal superstitions from the cold heart of winter. Brought to you by Bourne Hall Museum’s curator, Jeremy Harte.

Family screening of How the Grinch Stole Christmas (PG).

Thursday 14 December, 6 – 8.30pm. Free event.

- A heart-warming tale for all ages.

Live music.

Saturday 16 December, 11am – noon & 1pm – 2pm. Free event.

- Enjoy festive snacks and drinks whilst listening to acoustic music in the Flying Saucer Café.

The Wizard Of Oz - Panto 2023

Friday 15th December 2023 to Monday 1st January 2024

To book tickets, visit: www.epsomplayhouse.co.uk

- Join Dorothy as she begins her adventure into the wonderful land of Oz, helped along the way by Lion, Tin Man and Scarecrow. A show filled with excitement, laughter and all the usual panto magic.

Find out about events in Epsom & Ewell over the festive period here: <https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/visitors/whats-on/all>

Free parking days in Epsom & Ewell

Find information about car parks managed by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council here: <https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/car-parks>

- Epsom: Epsom & Ewell Borough Council car parks will be free on 10, 17, 24 and 25 December.
- Ewell High Street and Dorset House car parks will be free from 4pm on Friday 8th December until 7am the following day for Ewell Yule.

Changes to council services

The Town Hall will be closed on 25, 26 & 27 December 2023 and 1 January 2024. On the 28 & 29 December it will be open between 9am – 3pm.

Waste and refuse services:

- During the Christmas and New Year's weeks, collections must accommodate the public holidays, and at a time when bins are much fuller than usual. So, some services may not be available as usual, and your normal collection day may change.
- All planned changes can be found here: <https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/recycling-and-waste/christmas-and-new-year-collections>
- Christmas week: there will be no refuse collections during Christmas week. Please leave out food and recycling (including glass recycling) only. During Christmas week, collection days may change. Please check the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council website for recycling and food bin collection days during Christmas week.
- New Year's week: Normal refuse collections start again in New Year's week. However, collection days may change. Please check the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council website for collection days during New Year's week.
- Before Christmas, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will place a label on resident's bin handles with collection details for the festive period. If you are an Epsom & Ewell resident, please do look out for this reminder about how services will be changing in your road over Christmas and New Year's weeks.

Community Support Services will be affected. Please check this page to find out opening times and days that services will be closed over the Christmas period: <https://epsom-ewell.gov.uk/support-services>

In January Epsom & Ewell Borough Council offer free real Christmas tree recycling for all residents. This is a fortnightly service – check your Christmas bin label for details of when real Christmas tree collections happen in your road.

Climate Justice. A generation thing?

22 November 2023



With **Epsom Hospital** Doctor and mother of four **Kristine Damberg** in the lead, **Mothers' Rebellion for Climate Justice**, a global grassroots organization, orchestrated coordinated actions across the UK and 30 countries on six continents on Saturday, November 18, to mark **World Children's Day**. In response to the escalating threat posed by the climate crisis to children worldwide, the movement held fifteen impactful "Circles" across the UK, drawing attention to the urgent need for action. Dr Damberg was joined by Epsom mother Lisa Davies and several other Epsom residents, including children.

They joined the action that started at the UN Green for a symbolic march to Parliament Square where they formed a Mothers' Rebellion Circle with speeches, songs and children's activities.

As part of World Children's Day, which falls on November 20 and commemorates the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Mothers Rebellion staged non-violent public protests. The focus was on the severe risks children face due to the impacts of global heating, including floods, heatwaves, droughts, storms, ecocide, and violent conflicts. Particularly emphasized was the disproportionate burden borne by children in the Global South due to resource-intensive practices by the Global North.

Operating under the banner of Climate Justice, Mothers' Rebellion called for respect for the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, demanding that those in power take decisive actions to address the escalating climate emergency. The movement condemned structural violence against children and highlighted the exacerbating factors such as poverty,

economic and social inequalities, food insecurity, and forced displacement.

A recent Unicef analysis revealed that at least 43 million children were displaced over the past six years due to extreme weather events. Healthcare professionals, including Dr. Camilla Kingdon, president of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, warned that climate change poses an existential threat to children's health and well-being, with tangible impacts already witnessed, including air pollution and extreme weather effects.

Mothers' Rebellion members, including Dr. Kristine Damberg, stressed the urgency of meaningful climate action. Damberg highlighted the need for cleaner air, more green spaces, healthier food, and reduced strain on healthcare systems, emphasizing the tangible benefits for both current and future generations.

Expressing deep concern for the future, mothers and allies globally urged countries to incorporate children's right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment into national legislation. They called for just measures to implement these rights and emphasized the historical role of mothers and caregivers in protecting and nurturing the vulnerable.

Elizabeth Cripps, Senior Lecturer in Political Theory, and Lisa Davies, a mother of three, shared their perspectives on the collective need for change, stressing the importance of a united effort in the face of a climate crisis threatening the overall future of children.

UNICEF acknowledged the voices of children and young people, stating, "From climate change, education, and mental health, to ending racism and discrimination, children are raising their voices on the issues that matter to their generation."

Mothers' Rebellion for Climate Justice concluded its global actions with a resolute stance: "In the face of the climate crisis and its impact on children, we refuse to look away."

For more information, visit mothersrebellion.com.

Image: Dr Kristine Damberg, Credit Andrea Domeniconi

Genuine victory on synthetic surface

22 November 2023



Cobham 16 **Sutton & Epsom** RFC 44. Saturday 18th November. Being the last league fixture in November the S&E squad had a rather Edwardian appearance as if they were members of the Epsom Amateur Dramatic Club cast preparing for a performance of 'Journey's End'. However, their Movember charitable generosity did not extend to the rugby pitch as they impressively defeated a more than capable Cobham XV by 44-16. On a gloomy afternoon blissfully free from precipitation Cobham kicked off the match on their pristine synthetic surface.

The hosts had amassed 140 points so far this campaign from their three home victories and were one of a trio of clubs on 27 points looking to close the gap on the top two of Beckenham and Battersea Ironsides. The Memorial Ground men made a confident start as their large, athletic and mobile forwards provided plenty of possession for their quicksilver backs. The home team's high tempo game was matched by excellent defence as Sutton and Epsom's best play was thwarted by an impenetrable wall on the opposition 22. The Fairmile Lane side pressed hard for an opening score as a vital mark five metres from the S&E line denied them a try. Moments later Cobham had the consolation of a scrummage penalty in front of the posts and Jonny Holmes opened their account for a 3-0 lead.

After fifteen minutes the hosts were finally rewarded for their early dominance with a try. Despite valiant defence on their line the Cobham pack would not be denied and hooker Andrew Murphy forced his way over from close-range. Though the conversion drifted wide the home team held an 8-0 advantage. For supporters of the Black & Whites there had been precious little attacking play to cheer but the restart provided them with their first try. The alert Chris Farrell gathered the loose ball and burst into the 22 and a few phases later Josh Pulvirenti exploded from the ruck to run in under the posts. Freddy Bunting chipped over the simplest of conversions to make it 7-8. A couple of minutes later Willem Ratu swooped on the ball and ran it in from 60 metres to score by the uprights. Captain Bunting did the necessary and S&E now led 14-8 at the end of the first quarter.

Cobham might have felt a tad aggrieved that the scoreboard did not reflect the balance of the game. To their credit they responded in the classical manner with a try of their own. A perfectly flighted kick descended from the leaden sky just outside the Sutton and Epsom 22 and Jordan Huie was greeted by the ball and an opponent. It was the hosts turn to scoop up the loose ball and punish the back-peddalling visitors as prop Luke Bliss burrowed his way over the line for the try. The extras were not added but the home team now trailed by a solitary point, 13-14. Sutton made early changes as Ben Tame

and Tom Boaden replaced George London and Callum Gibson. The momentum of the match had shifted back in favour of the hosts as their swarming defence harried Garerth O'Brien and won another penalty in front of the posts. Jonny Holmes gratefully accepted the three points and Cobham held a 16-14 lead.

With 10 minutes remaining in the first half Sutton & Epsom enjoyed their best period of play. An impressive catch and drive from the lineout saw them advance to the line and force a penalty. The ball was kicked to the corner for the 5-metre lineout but there was to be no repeat of the forward efficiency and a knock on gave the hosts an opportunity to clear their lines. A lengthy clearance was skilfully trapped by Jordan Huie who ran the ball back and won a penalty. The irrepressible Bunting made it 17-16 for S&E. In the dying embers of the first period Cobham had a lineout on the Sutton 22 and the platform to edge ahead once more. However, Ewan McTaggart stole the ball to initiate a counterattack. The ball went wide and was twice kicked ahead and Lawrence Elliott was on hand to score in the corner. Freddy Bunting made the touchline conversion look anything but challenging and the referee blew his whistle and the teams turned around with Sutton & Epsom leading 24-16.

After a half of high quality rugby that had been most competitive from the first minute none of the assembled crowd would have risked a wager on the outcome as the game was very much in the balance. From the restart Cobham gathered the ball and launched a speculative Garry Owen that resulted in a mid-air collision on halfway and chaos. The ball was hacked forward as S&E struggled to control it until Willem Ratu touched down over his line. After that escape it was Sutton who were the first to open their account in the second period when they were awarded a scrummage penalty. Freddy Bunting knocked it over from 45 metres to extend the lead to 27-16.

The hosts then dominated territory and possession for the next ten minutes. Earlier in the season S&E's defensive frailties would have seen them conceding tries but the defence now on show was unrecognisable from those autumnal days. The tackling was ferocious and forced handling errors in an impressive collective show of cussed defiance. The next visit to the hosts' half resulted in another penalty and another long-range success for the boot of Bunting as the Rugby Lane men led 30-16 with the game in the final quarter.

As determined as the Cobham attacks were they were trumped by the excellence of the Sutton defence. The visitors not only halted the hosts in their tracks but were making turnovers and counterattacking with relish. With pace on both flanks and confidence in abundance the Black and Whites turned defence into attack. The Memorial Ground XV were equally resolute and threw everything at Sutton in an effort to get back into the game. A glimmer of hope was extinguished with another obliterating tackle by Jordan Huie in the corner. The winger then showed his attacking qualities by carrying the ball into the opposition half and won a penalty. Captain Bunting opted for the kick to the corner and he was rewarded with a try. The 5-metre lineout was taken and the forwards muscled their way over the line and Ben Tame emerged as the scorer. Freddy Bunting caressed over the conversion for 37-16 and the Black & Whites had secured the bonus point for their fourth try.

Once again Chris Farrell regained the restart and initiated a thrilling Sutton attack. A crossfield kick was secured by Jordan Huie who strode towards the 22 and linked with Chris Ballard. The momentum was maintained by a superb piece of support running by lock Ewan McTaggart and the ball was spun wide to Willem Ratu who finished with aplomb in the corner. Freddy Bunting maintained his perfect kicking afternoon taking his personal tally to 19 points as his team lead by 44-16. In time added on there was still time for more thrills and spills. Once more a Cobham attack floundered on the Black & White wall in the S&E 22 and a devastating counter ensued. Freddy Bunting ran from his own half down the wing with deceptive pace that left the would be pursuer clutching a pulled hamstring. The Sutton 10 opted to run over the last defender rather than go round him and as he tumbled to the ground and juggled the ball the referee ruled a knock on as he popped the ball up to a supporting player. The game concluded in the Cobham half with no further addition to the score. Sutton had won 44-16 to record their second bonus point success on the road in consecutive weeks and make it three wins on the bounce.

This was by a margin the finest match of the Sutton season so far. The Cobham side from the first minute to the last carried a serious attacking threat. The front row triumvirate of Messrs Murphy, Bliss and Lippiatt were mightily impressive at the set piece. The home forwards carried with pace and aggression and the backs spread the ball well. However, the deciding factor in the contest was the excellence of the Sutton defence which not only stopped numerous attacks but forced errors and countered with great effect. It was truly a marvellous team performance with the side relishing their defensive duties as much as they enjoyed running with the ball. The second half effort to shut out the quality Cobham XV and to win it 20-0 was most impressive.

Next Saturday is another rest weekend and the campaign continues on 2 nd December when Old Colfeians visit rugby Lane for the 2pm kick off. It promises to be a splendid match as the visitors are enjoying a purple patch having won their last five fixtures. It will also be the 50 th anniversary of the first time the clubs met and their first league meeting since 2007.

Stella servant to local football passes

22 November 2023



Stella Lamont, Club President of **Epsom and Ewell FC**, passed away on Armistice Day 2023 at the age of 95. Born on September 1, 1928, Stella's association with the club spanned over fifty years. A devoted supporter since 1973, Stella initially joined the Committee in 1979, contributing significantly to the improvement of the Match Programme.

Throughout the '80s, she served as Press Secretary, and in 1993, under her guidance, the club won the prestigious "Special Category" programme award. Stella's dedication was further acknowledged in 1998 when she received a voluntary service award for 25 years of involvement with the Epsom and Ewell Boys League.

In 2003, Stella became the President of Epsom and Ewell FC, a position she held with pride. Despite facing health challenges, she remained actively engaged, taking on roles such as Membership Secretary and contributing to the match programme. Her lasting legacy includes her impact on local Boys football and the informative programmes she crafted with meticulous detail.

Stella's commitment endured, even as she faced declining health. In 2016, she received a long service award from the Surrey Football Association, a testament to her enduring influence. Stella's final years saw her contributing articles to the club's programme, showcasing her unwavering dedication.

Beyond her football involvement, a peculiar note in her history involved an appearance in a pop video, "We Stand Around" by I Ludicrous, filmed at the club's old ground. This charming anecdote reflects Stella's unexpected and lighthearted presence in the club's rich history.

As we bid farewell to Stella Lamont, her name will forever be remembered among those who shaped Epsom and Ewell FC into a close-knit family club. Rest in peace, Stella.

Salts succumb to athleticism

22 November 2023



Epsom & Ewell 2-4 AFC Croydon Athletic. Combined Counties League - Premier Division. Saturday 18th November 2023.

A rather harsh 4-2 home defeat to AFC Croydon Athletic in our latest League match should have been the big story of the day, but regrettably we had another to report as a couple of hours before the match it was announced that our long-serving Club President Stella Lamont had passed away seven days previously at the grand age of 95 having completed twenty years in the role, having been appointed at the Annual General Meeting in 2003. As you would expect, the minute's silence (far more appropriate for a Committee member or supporter than applause) was impeccably observed and the focus returned to the football.

Our opponents had of course already won once at our ground this season when turning around a 3-1 deficit into a 4-3 League Cup victory and had strengthened since then with the addition of striker Louie Theophanous, who scored five goals a couple of weeks ago against Sheerwater. We made just the one change with Ethan Nelson-Roberts coming back into the line up at the expense of Nick Inwugwu. Despite no Premier League action taking place and many other matches being postponed it was disappointing to see an attendance of just 79 counted at the ground, particularly as we have been playing better in recent weeks.

Maybe we were affected by the sombre occasion at first, but either way we were a little slow out of the blocks in this match, although there was little of real danger for Harvey Keogh to deal with either. A couple of dangerous crosses into each box whizzed out the other side after failing to reach their intended targets before we lost the ball coming out of defence in the 12th minute. Fortunately the left wing cross into the danger area was then sent well over the bar by Olalekan Osideko from a good position.

It was a bitty start from both teams, with the visitors in particular struggling to keep the ball on the pitch, but we grew into it and Luke Miller was only just beyond the far post with a fifteen yard header as he met Jaan Stanley's cross, before Nelson-Roberts struck at goal, only for his powerful looking strike to hit team mate and Manager Steve Springett and rebound away to safety! Rory Edwards was next to try his luck from around fifteen yards and the ball took a slight

deflection before David Boateng stuck out a leg and diverted the ball only just over his own crossbar from six yards. We were pressing for an opener at this stage with debutant AFC Croydon Athletic keeper Toby Fisher being kept busy, although Keogh had to make a low save on the half hour to keep out a shot from Osideko.

Regrettably, just as we were going into first half injury time a pass through our defence found Theophanous in space and he ran in and slotted the goal past Keogh from close range to open the scoring.

If that half time scoreline looked harsh, things then got worse in a hurry as we conceded two more goals in the 48th and 51st minutes to leave us facing a mountain to climb. The goals came in a similar manner with dangerous balls in from the right wing and close range finishes, although it transpired that the first of these goals was actually knocked in by one of our defenders with Brandon Pierrick registering their third goal. Keogh then made a low save from an angle with his feet as the visitors threatened to run away with things.

We made some substitutions, only for one of them, Nick Wilson to spend just five minutes on the pitch before he was sent to the sin bin for disputing an extremely harsh yellow card that had been brandished in the direction of Eshilokun. This appeared to be poor officiating and I was waiting to hear the comment from someone that “he’s being assessed” which of course he was!

The ten men made a fight of it though and Eshilokun made a good run, only to drag the shot wide with teammate George Owusu in a better position, but I don’t blame any of our strikers when they want to have a shot if they are in a good position. We then had another scare when Keogh was robbed and nearly conceded a fourth goal, but it came anyway in the 73rd minute after Pierrick received the ball on the left and his pull back was struck home by Newbay Haile with the aid of a slight deflection.

At 4-0 things were getting desperate. We pushed for a goal and Edwards appeared to be cluttered in the penalty area before Owusu then threw himself to the ground, picking up a yellow card for simulation as a result. However, he redeemed himself two minutes later after a Springett corner was flicked on by Eshilokun and the loose ball found its way through to Owusu who scooped the ball into the net from four yards out to reduce the deficit in the 78th minute.

The visitors sent a left wing cross over that clipped our bar on its way out, but we were getting on top now and Wilson was fouled as he broke away, earning a yellow card for his assailant before Owusu received a pass from Miller, but instead of returning the pass he chose to shoot and Fisher was untroubled by it. We did get a second goal in the 87th minute after a deep Edwards free kick resulted in a couple of collisions. Reece Tierney went up with Fisher and although there was contact, the referee felt there was no foul and with the visiting defence almost frozen, expecting a whistle for a foul, Nelson-Roberts nodded the loose ball over the line from a yard to make the score 4-2.

It was a grandstand finish as Owusu saw his next shot deflected just wide by Fisher’s leg, before their new keeper made a fantastic save with his left foot to deny Edwards his first goal for the club and Thompson Adeyemi then sent his header over from a corner before Owusu then celebrated a “third” goal only to see the flag raised for offside.

We had finished quite strongly and in many ways it was a completely opposite ending to our previous meeting, but AFC Croydon Athletic had enough in the bank to see them over the line with that 4-2 score line and probably did deserve the points over the course of the ninety minutes, mostly for that blistering start to the second half when we had no answers, but football was of secondary importance to our club on this sad day.

Epsom & Ewell: Harvey Keogh (c), Tommy Williams, Ethan Nelson-Roberts, Steve Springett, Reece Tierney, Ollie Thompson, Luke Miller, Rory Edwards, Tijani Eshilokun, Thompson Adeyemi, Jaan Stanley

Subs: George Owusu for Stanley (54), Nick Wilson for Thompson (54), Nick Inwugwu for Williams (58)

Report Source: www.eefconline.co.uk

East Surrey Hospital Inspection

22 November 2023



Maternity services at East Surrey Hospital have been downgraded after inspectors flagged six key areas for improvement. A report following an inspection of the unit raised concerns with infection control, checks on emergency equipment and medicine management.

These areas were listed as steps that must be taken in order for the service to improve along with actions relating to audits, completing documents and safeguarding training for junior doctors.

The Redhill hospital, run by Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, maintains its overall outstanding rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), but an inspection of its maternity service took place in September.

‘Safety of women, birthing people and babies put at risk’: In a report published on November 15, inspectors said they visited the hospital as part of the CQC’s national maternity inspection programme.

The service was downgraded to requires improvement with inspectors saying medicines were “not always managed well”, care records were not always completed and leaders did not always implement improvements in a timely way.

Inspectors said: “Staffing levels did not always match the planned numbers, which put the safety of women, birthing people and babies at risk. The service was not always visibly clean, and there were times when equipment checks were not completed.”

As well as this, “adverse incidents” may have been contributed to by out-of-date policies and guidelines. How has the hospital responded?

Tina Hetherington, chief nurse of Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, said: “Delivering safe, quality care to our patients is our absolute priority. I want to apologise for where we haven’t got it right and the effect this may have on patient confidence in our maternity services. Rest assured that we are taking immediate action to address the issues raised by inspectors to ensure our patients receive the high-quality care they rightly expect.”

Inspectors said feedback from patients as part of the inspection showed there were “mixed views” about experiences of the service. The report said: “Feedback included about concerns about delays, poor communication, and support needing to improve. For example, being spoken to unkindly, short staffing, and not being listened to. Positive feedback commented on the reassurance and care given by staff, especially on delivery suite.”

Some areas ‘not always visibly free of dust, dirt, and bodily fluids’: Under the area of cleanliness, infection control and hygiene, inspectors said: “Staff did not always use equipment and control measures to protect women and birthing people, themselves, and others from infection. They did not always keep equipment and the premises visibly clean, and we saw some staff were not in-line with uniform policy to minimise risk of infection. This included “several staff members” not routinely using gloves when they should, creating an infection risk and bed spaces that were “not always visibly free of dust, dirt, and bodily fluids”.

Inspectors also said delays to discharge on the postnatal ward were negatively impacting on patient and staff experience, with delayed inductions and transfers to delivery suites in evidence.

The service had a rate “well below” the national rate of stillbirths, of between one and two stillbirths per 1,000 births, compares to 4 per 1000 births nationally.

Inspectors were also told by staff there were not enough midwives and managers to mitigate risks of short staffing, leading to “exhaustion and low morale”.

‘Robust improvement plan’ in place: Ms Hetherington said the trust recognised that the national shortfall across maternity had affected services. She said a recruitment drive had been launched this year and since the inspection 13 new midwives had started jobs, with a further five due to start in the coming weeks.

The chief nurse also said a “robust improvement plan” had been put in place since the inspection, which included tougher infection control measures, more frequent cleanliness checks, and more thorough daily safety checks of medicines and specialist emergency care equipment. She added: “We are clear there is more work to do, but our maternity team are passionate about patient care. While the CQC highlighted many examples of good practice such as timely access to services and quick action on any identified patient risks, this report will help us focus our efforts and engage with our patients through forums such as our maternity voices partnership, on making the immediate and long-term improvements that will deliver for our patients and their families year after year.”

Inspectors also raised examples of “outstanding practice” in the report, highlighting an inclusion midwife with a specific focus on promoting equality and diversity for staff and patients, and tackling health inequalities.

Leaders monitored incidents and outcomes for health inequalities and ethnicity to ensure no one was put at additional risk because of their ethnicity or personal circumstances, the report said.

Finance lessons for Parliament from Surrey Boroughs

22 November 2023



Surrey Heath Borough Council is burning through its reserves and eyeing up serious cuts to services, the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee was told. The Monday, November 13, cross-party panel of MPs heard from experts including from the National Audit Office, the Institute of Fiscal Studies, and chief financial officers of local councils as it delved into the ‘financial distress in local authorities’.

Among the group giving evidence were Paul Dossett, from Grant Thornton the forensic accountants deep-diving into Woking Borough Council, Jonathan Carr-West, of the Local Government Information Unit, and Surrey Heath's chief finance officer Bob Watson.

The committee was also told a lack of professional accountability among senior officers – across all councils – has been a driving factor behind local authorities running into financial trouble – and has been made worse with many scared to stand up against councillors for fear of losing their jobs.

Mr Watson said: “ (Surrey Heath) is not in immediate financial distress, it is like many other councils, predicting a use of reserves over the medium finance period and the burn rate on those reserves is unsustainable into the medium and long term future.”

He told the meeting of the “challenging budget process” the council was going through, including looking at cutting non-essential services. He said: “We have over the past two and a half years embarked on a number of efficiency measures where we’ve taken costs out of the organisation without cutting services to the residents and business in Surrey Heath. It is potentially now likely we will have to look at some of the discretionary services. We also have over the past built levels of ear-marled reserves for very such cases where we’ve started to see some of these higher interest rates coming through. We plan to use those reserves to smooth the gap over the four years. Sufficient reserves to take us through the four years but it is challenging.”

Part of the reason, the committee heard, for councils struggling to balance the books has been a 61 per cent cut in funding, which has had the knock on effect of increasing demand for services – notably in housing and homelessness.

Mr Watson told the committee that the cost of living crisis has impacted on people paying private rent and who were now presenting as homeless. He said: “We in our borough haven’t seen it quite the same (levels of homelessness) as some of the other Surrey boroughs but we’re starting to see that increase. Last month’s statistics of people presenting to our council offices actually doubled- again driven by cost of living pressures on individuals. We have the cost prices going up with hotels, we have the cost of hotels going up driven by demand going through and were now starting to see some of the hotels closed by central government these people now presenting to the local authority as homeless.” He added that it was not just a refugee crisis as people have been struggling to find affordable homes for years.

Earlier in the session the committee heard from Grant Thornton’s Paul Dossett. Grant Thornton works with about half the councils in the UK and is completing a deep dive into how Woking Borough Council went bankrupt with debts approaching £2.6billion. Mr Dossett told the committee that local government financing “just bumbles along with no attempt to fix it” and when councils do go bust its the most vulnerable, the ones who rely on council services the most, who are impacted.

He said: “Some of the things that have gone wrong, what we have seen with some of those people responsible from an officer side, in those key roles, the golden triangle of chief executive, monitoring officer and section 151 officer, there hasn’t really been professional accountability. There may have been job accountability in that the person has moved on to a different place but the sort of professional accountability of someone not doing their job to the right professional standard we don’t really see that in any meaningful way. Alongside that there needs to be better job protection for statutory officers to enable those statutory functions to speak very clearly to members to say ‘you can not do this’

“That is either breaking the law, or involves a degree of financial risk that the Section 151 officer is not comfortable with, and should be able to say that without any fear that there will be comeback against you in that role.”

How Surrey MPs voted on ceasefire

22 November 2023



No Surrey MPs voted in Parliament for a ceasefire between Israel and Gaza. The vote took place on Wednesday (November 15) on an amendment to the King’s Speech that was put forward by Scottish National Party MPs.

The amendment called for government to “uphold international law and protect all civilians in Israel and Palestine”, to “condemn the horrific killings by Hamas and the taking of hostages” and to “reaffirm that there must be an end to the collective punishment of the Palestinian people”.

It also called for the “urgent release of all hostages and an end to the siege of Gaza to allow vital supplies of food, fuel, medicine and water to reach the civilian population”.

Of Surrey’s 11 MPs, six voted against the amendment, and the other five had no vote recorded.

The decades-long conflict in Israel and Gaza escalated and gained further international scrutiny on October 7 after a Hamas attack on Israel.

The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement remains on the ground supporting those affected and said there were more

than 1.5million people displaced in Gaza, with more than 240 Israeli hostages being held. The situation there was described by the charity as “deeply alarming and worsening every day”.

The King’s speech sets out the priorities for the coming Parliamentary session, and was delivered by King Charles for the first time as monarch on November 7.

The amendment calling for an immediate ceasefire was lost by 293 votes to 125.

The Labour Party saw eight shadow ministers and two parliamentary private secretaries leave their roles after going against leader Sir Keir Starmer’s order not to vote for the amendment.

Surrey’s MPs were all elected to represent the Conservative Party in Parliament.

Sir Paul Beresford, Chris Grayling and Dominic Raab have announced they will not be standing in the next general election, due to be held before January 2025.

Reigate MP Crispin Blunt confirmed he was the MP arrested on suspicion of rape and the possession of controlled substances on October 26. He was suspended by the Conservative Party and has been released by Surrey Police on conditional bail.

All the Surrey MP votes are listed in full below:

Sir Paul Beresford (Mole Valley) - No
Crispin Blunt (Reigate) - No vote recorded
Claire Coutinho MP (East Surrey) - No
Michael Gove (Surrey Heath) - No
Chris Grayling MP (Epsom & Ewell) - No
Jeremy Hunt MP (South West Surrey) - No vote recorded
Kwasi Kwarteng (Spelthorne) - No vote recorded
Jonathan Lord (Woking) - No vote recorded
Dominic Raab (Esher and Walton) - No vote recorded
Angela Richardson (Guildford) - No
Dr Ben Spencer (Runnymede and Weybridge) - No

What are your priorities for community safety?

22 November 2023



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has launched a public consultation on the priorities for community safety in the borough and are asking residents, workers, visitors and businesses to have their say on the proposed action plan.

The council is part of the Epsom and Ewell Community Safety Partnership, which also includes Surrey Fire & Rescue Service, Surrey Police, Surrey County Council, Kent, Surrey and Sussex Probation Service, Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group, Surrey Police & Crime Commissioner and Rosebery Housing Association.

Community safety covers a wide range of activities designed to reduce the likelihood of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour, protect victims and hold perpetrators to account. It also involves reducing incidents of domestic abuse and behaviour damaging to the community.

As part of the Epsom & Ewell Community Safety Partnership, the council have committed to playing its part in the following themes:

1. Focus on the most vulnerable or those at risk of harm
2. Serious organised crime and PREVENT
3. Identify and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour
4. Improve Community Engagement

The new Plan is the first time the council has publicly committed to actions in support of those themes and they would like to gather the views of the community.

Cllr **Alex Coley**, (RA Ruxley) Chair of the Council’s Crime and Disorder Committee said: “I asked for this community safety action plan to go to a public consultation so we can hear what local people think our priorities should be. The government recently conducted a national consultation on expanded anti-social behaviour powers and the relationship

between Community Safety Partnerships and Police & Crime Commissioners.

“Now it’s time to ask what our local community want from the Council and our partners. Please tell us your community safety priorities and share with others so we hear from as many people as possible.”

The consultation will run until 17 December 2023 and can be accessed via:

www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/council/consultations. Comments can be made by email to consultations@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Undiluted squash champions of Epsom

22 November 2023



Ebbisham Sports Club in Epsom is proud of its junior squash members, in particular several of its girls who regularly play in the Ladies Team competing against other clubs in the Surrey Leagues. **Maja Leese**, who turned 15 in May this year plays at Number 1 for the club’s Ladies Team. Recently, Maja and two other Ebbisham girls – **Lara Krnic** and **Imogen Wood** – were all selected to represent Surrey as Numbers 1, 2 and 3 respectively for the 2023/24 Girls Under 17 team.

On the 12th November at Broxbourne Sports Club, Hertfordshire they competed against other counties in Stage 1 of the Junior Inter-County Championships where they emerged as runners-up in their group. All the juniors at Ebbisham have training at the junior club sessions, and are coached by our resident coach **Paul Steward**.

The Club was awarded both Epsom and Ewell and Surrey’s “Sports Club of the Year” in 2009 and 2016. Its mission is to provide a sporting pathway for life, for all ages and abilities, from grassroots to elite level. Members can play racket sports at an affordable price and enjoy a sociable, healthy lifestyle, whether at a casual or competitive level – Ebbisham is a Club for life.

It is a friendly purpose-built club, open 362 days a year, with three dedicated courts each for badminton, squash & racketball and tennis. There is also a small warm-up gym area with a treadmill, indoor rower and a stationary bike. The Club has over 400 adult members and over 200 junior members drawn from all over the borough and beyond.

For more details see <https://ebbisham.mycourts.co.uk/index.asp>

Image: left to right Lara, Maja and Imogen

Damning report on local prison

22 November 2023



The availability of drugs at one Surrey prison is a “critical threat to safety”, as inspectors said it had one of the highest positive test rates for illicit substances of all men’s prisons in England and Wales.

Inspectors pointed to 11 key concerns, highlighting four priority areas for **HMP High Down in Banstead**.

These were: too many acutely mentally unwell prisoners being held in the segregation unit; the availability and use of illicit drugs; increasing violence and prisoners feeling unsafe; and the prison not reaching its potential.

Charlie Taylor, chief inspector, said in his report that the drug situation in the prison “posed a threat to the stability of the prison, contributing to debt, bullying and fear”.

Other concerns raised included there being few incentives to behave well, high levels of self-harm, poor medicine supervision, long waits for dental treatment and not enough support being offered to “large number of prisoners with limited skills in English and maths”.

The prison was inspected in July and August, with a report published on November 13 saying the regime there was “nowhere near what it should be”.

With a positive drug testing rate among the highest in adult male prisons in England and Wales, Mr Taylor said the facility had had a “turbulent few years” in its delayed transition to a category C training and resettlement prison. He said “a real commitment” from leaders and the prison service was needed to make sure High Down completed its transition and that it was “not yet close to fulfilling its function as a category C prison”.

The prison, which was built on the site of a former mental health hospital and opened as a category A local prison in 1992, had 1,171 prisoners at the time of the inspection, and an operational capacity of 1,180 prisoners.

A survey carried out during the inspection showed fewer minority ethnic prisoners said staff treated them with respect, at 57 per cent compared with 77 per cent of white prisoners.

A Prison Service spokesperson said: “We have already taken decisive action to address the concerns raised in this report including bolstering our support for prisoners suffering from mental health issues.

“We are also strengthening the education and training on offer, including introducing a wider range of courses so offenders can gain the vital skills they need to turn their backs on crime.”

Availability of drugs ‘critical threat to safety’: In the survey 45 per cent of prisoners said it was easy to get hold of drugs, compared with 31 per cent at similar prisons.

In the three months leading up to the inspection, the positive drug test rate was “very high” at 33.73 per cent, and 21.08 per cent for psychoactive substances.

Inspectors said the widespread availability of drugs was causing high levels of prisoner debt and was “the main driver of violence which remained much too high”.

Despite having a proportion of positive drug tests among the highest of all men’s prisons in England and Wales, inspectors also said far too few tests were done on those suspected of using drugs. This meant users were not being discouraged, and inspectors said it was “disappointing” that reducing drugs coming in to the prison was not one of the prison’s priorities. Mr Taylor said: “The availability of drugs, in particular psychoactive substances, was a critical threat to safety.”

The report also pointed to steps being taken such as body scanners being used on those suspected of possessing drugs and joint working with police on the number of items entering the prison on drones and tackling staff corruption.

Prisoners spending ‘almost all day locked up’ in fear: Some prisoners spent “almost all day locked up” because they were afraid of bullying and violence, with some who had been assaulted by other prisoners and many in debt. Inspectors said: “Little was done to address the causes of their fear or to enable them to reintegrate with their peers.”

There were also concerns raised about officers not challenging poor behaviour and not supervising prisoners adequately.

Inspectors were told by staff told they saw “little point” in challenging poor behaviour because they lacked faith in the prison’s disciplinary procedures. The report said: “Too many prisoners felt unsafe. Safety was being undermined by violence and bullying, which were linked to drugs, very low wages, debt and a lack of full-time purposeful activity.”

A survey of prisoners also showed that 70 per cent of disabled prisoners felt unsafe at some point compared with 38 per cent of those without a disability. Inspectors also said: “There were still houseblocks where prisoners with a disability did not have an adequate personal emergency evacuation plan in place.”

As well as this, some prisoners being held in the segregation unit for an extended period were acutely mentally unwell, according to My Taylor’s report. There were also “chaotic scenes” seen by inspectors at medicine queues when officers did not supervise or control them well enough. Inspectors said this meant health care staff were “regularly distracted during the critical task of administering medicines, increasing the likelihood of error”.

‘Many prisoners did not have enough to do’: Inspectors said compared to other category C prisons, the regime at High Down “did not yet match” them, with a quarter of prisoners locked in their cells during the working day, described as “too many” in the report.

There were 200 unemployed prisoners and not enough activity places for those in the prison, which meant many prisoners did not have enough to do. The report said: “Many were limited to very basic and uninspiring work on the wing. Only for the few who were in full time work, was the prison offering an experience that was akin to employment in the community.”

Ofsted also inspected the provision at the prison, rating it inadequate overall.

A Storybook Dads programme, which helped prisoners record a story for their children to listen to at home, had been suspended due to a shortage of library staff. But Ofsted inspectors pointed to a monthly homework club where children could come into the prison to get help from their fathers as having “a relaxed atmosphere with both prisoners and their families enjoying themselves”.

What is done well at HMP High Down?

Inspectors said they saw “many positive and constructive interactions between staff and prisoners” including officers playing pool with inmates, despite poor behaviour not always being challenged.

Inspectors also said: “Prisoners on the drug-free living wing appreciated the respite from the high levels of drug use that took place elsewhere in the prison and here too support was provided by specialist staff. “There were also advanced plans to provide another more specialised unit for prisoners with personality disorders.”

The current prison governor has been in post since March 2022, and inspectors said: “If the governor and her team are to win over hearts and minds, they will need to increase significantly their visibility around the jail and improve the way

they communicate with staff and prisoners.”

The report said governor Emily Martin had “developed a clear vision of how she wanted the prison to run and had begun to make progress”.

Related reports:

You could re-train to reform offenders

Image: HMP High Down from Google Maps

The Plot in the thick of planning options

22 November 2023



At a meeting of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council’s Strategy and Resources Committee held on 13th July it was decided that various Council owned “brownfield” sites would not be offered up for development for housing in the long-awaited Local Plan. This followed a note from the Licensing, Planning and Policy Committee of 15th June that “Officers have written to the Council in its capacity as landowner to check the availability of additional sites for promotion through the call for sites process”. I.e., promotion in the Local Plan for housing development.

Most of the Council portfolio on the Kiln Lane and Longmead industrial, retail and commercial areas are held on long-leases. Plot 8, in the far north-east corner of Kiln Lane was held by Wilsons, the car sale emporium, on a 10 year lease that expired in 2019. This was one plot, bordered by housing to the east, that could potentially ease pressure on other land, including green-belt, to deliver on new housing targets. Presently, it is an open area used for storing motor vehicles.

It is understood that with the lease having expired the Council could regain possession upon a redevelopment being planned. However, at the meeting of the same committee held on 21st September it was decided to authorise the grant of a new lease. Details of the new lease were excluded from public and press view at the meeting to protect the privacy of financial and commercial information of a third party, presumably Wilsons.

The length of the lease has not been disclosed but will in due course be available to public view at HM Land Registry.

Cllr **Alison Kelly** (LibDem Stamford) told Epsom and Ewell Times “I voted in favour of extending the lease, as the business wished to continue and it provides much needed income for the council. The details of the lease are part of a restricted document as is normal in these cases. However it was a well thought out contract that does not stop the local plan work. It maybe several years before both the local plan is complete and a developer comes forward with an alternative plan for plot 8.”

Councillor **Chris Ames** (Labour Court) said: “Labour knows that there is a need to build homes, but also to keep people in jobs. What the council needs is a fully thought through local plan that resolves competing requirements for land. Unfortunately the hopelessly divided Residents Association administration hasn’t been able to achieve this. It is also important to maintain the council’s income when cash for vital services is stretched.”

Epsom Civic Society maintains a watchful citizen’s eye on planning matters and its Chair, **Margaret Hollins** told Epsom and Ewell Times “Epsom Civic Society supports retention and encouragement of strategic employment sites which are significant drivers of the local economy. No information is publicly available about the terms and duration of the lease so it is difficult to comment further.

“The Society considers that any attempts to cram residential dwellings along with industrial and commercial activities need to be avoided. Mixed residential and employment use could only be achieved through a carefully conceived regeneration strategy which would need to ensure proper separation between any residential areas and noise/disturbance/air pollution issues that can often occur with the type of distribution/warehousing activities prevalent on the existing industrial estates.”

A spokesperson for the Council responded: “On 13 July 2023, Strategy & Resources Committee considered the land availability of several Council owned sites including the Longmead and Kiln Lane Industrial Sites. The decision was taken not to include the industrial sites and they remain part of the Council’s commercial property portfolio. We are unable to provide any further comment at this time as this relates to confidential commercial matters.”

Do you have a view? Feel free to write to Epsom and Ewell Times.

Council staff to get 6% pay increase?

22 November 2023



November 14th, Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Strategy and Resources Committee grappled with the decision of recommending a pay award for staff in the fiscal year 2024/25. The recommendation to the full council came amid challenging financial projections and a backdrop of heightened inflationary pressures.

The annual pay award, previously agreed upon for a four-year period spanning from 2020 to 2024, necessitated a new deal for the fiscal year 2024/25. Over the past four years, the cost of living pay award had been closely tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation, with a 3% cap implemented when CPI exceeded 3%. The council had maintained a partnership approach, actively consulting with the Staff Consultative Group (SCG) in accordance with its Employee Pay & Reward Procedure.

However, the past two years had seen staff receive pay awards beneath prevailing inflation rates. As of the latest data, CPI inflation for September was at 6.7%, down from 8.7% in April, with projections suggesting further moderation. Despite this, public sector unrest had been evident, and the government had accepted recommendations for pay awards in the range of 5-7% for millions of public sector workers, including police officers and teachers.

In an effort to gauge staff sentiment, the SCG conducted a survey, receiving 140 responses, representing approximately 40% of all staff. The overwhelming preference was for a single-year deal (82% in favor). Furthermore, 58% expressed support for including provision for recognizing those at the top of their pay grade within the pay deal.

The survey also indicated that 80% of staff believed an increase in the 5-7% range was appropriate, with a leaning towards the higher end. Notably, there was a sentiment that the council should prioritize funding the highest percentage pay award rather than opting for one-off, non-consolidated payments or other perks.

As the council faced a budget deficit of £1.1 million in 2024/25, financial prudence was crucial. Budget planning had assumed a 3% pay increase for the next four years. Any award above 3% would escalate the projected deficit, necessitating additional service income or savings.

Despite financial constraints, staff and wider-public sector settlements, coupled with the persistent high level of inflation, indicated that a 3% offer might not be acceptable to employees. The council also had to consider its position as an employer compared to neighboring authorities with higher starting salaries.

The UK National Living Wage (NLW) was expected to rise to at least £11.00 per hour (a 5.7% increase) from April 1, 2024, posing additional challenges for the council in maintaining pay differentials.

The committee was tasked with considering several pay options, each with financial implications. Option 1 maintained a 3% pay award, aligning with existing financial projections. Options 2 through 4 escalated the pay increase and subsequently increased the council's projected budget deficit. Importantly, all options ensured that staff remained eligible for pay progression, and no employee would be paid below the National Living Wage rate uplift.

Councillor **Robert Leach** (RA Nonsuch) expressed concern that the 3% pay award in recent years was below the rate of inflation, effectively resulting in a pay cut for staff in real terms. He advocated for a higher rate, specifically 6%, considering the impact of inflation.

Councillor **Chris Ames** (Labour Court) echoed Councillor Leach's sentiments, emphasizing that staff should not consistently receive pay awards below inflation. He supported the idea of a 6% increase.

Councillor **Alison Kelly** (LibDem Stamford) highlighted that the borough was among the lower-paying ones and expressed disappointment in the need to express concern about the living wage. She favored one of the higher rates.

Councillor **Alan Williamson** (Ra West Ewell) acknowledged the importance of considering the budget deficit implications and proposed a 5% increase, citing projections of a downward trend in inflation.

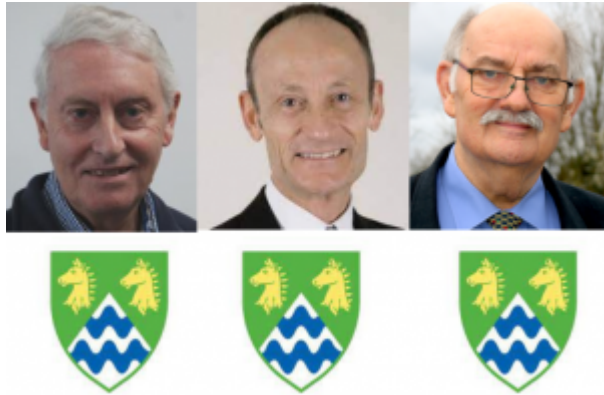
The debate continued, with various councillors expressing their views on the appropriate pay rise percentage. The discussion also touched on the distribution of staff salaries and the potential impact of the pay award on the budget deficit.

Ultimately, Councillor Leach suggested a voting process, starting with the highest figure (6%) and moving down until a majority-supported percentage was reached. A unanimous decision was reached in favor of recommending a 6% pay rise for staff.

The chair Cllr **Neil Dallen** (RA Town) clarified that this recommendation would be presented to the full Council, emphasizing that the percentage discussed did not guarantee approval but would be subject to further debate.

Local Council stalwarts up for local honour

22 November 2023



In a proposal put to the Strategy and Resources Committee of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council on 14th November, councillors were urged to consider bestowing the prestigious title of Honorary Alderman upon three distinguished figures: former Councillors **Eber Kingston**, **Chris Frost**, and the late **Clive Smitheram** (to be awarded posthumously).

The proposed honours come as a customary practice at the commencement of a new municipal term, wherein the Council contemplates honouring Councillors of longstanding and outstanding service, typically those who have held the position of Mayor of the Borough.

A formal nomination for the former Councillors has been submitted to the Council's Chief Executive, underscoring their significant contributions to the community.

Former Councillor Eber Kingston, a stalwart in local governance, dedicated an impressive 36 years of service as an Epsom and Ewell Borough Councillor, presiding as Mayor of the Borough in 1999-2000 and Deputy Mayor in 2000-2001.

Similarly, former Councillor Chris Frost, with 24 years of devoted service from May 1999 to May 2023, held the role of Mayor of the Borough in 2015-2016 and Deputy Mayor in 2014-2015.

Tragically, the late Former Councillor Clive Smitheram, who served for 23 years until April 2022, is being considered for the posthumous title. His term included the role of Mayor of the Borough in 2010-2011 and Deputy Mayor in 2011-2012.

Eber Kingston last served Ewell Court Ward until he switched to his new home ward of Horton where he lost out in this year's May election. He still serves as a County Councillor. Chris Frost for many years served his local ward of Woodcote and the late Clive Smitheram was a councillor in Ewell West. All three represented Residents Associations.

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers Local Authorities to appoint both Honorary Freemen and Honorary Aldermen. The criteria for appointment, whether as Freemen or Aldermen, hinge on an individual's distinguished service to the community or the Council.

The Act stipulates that the appointment must take place at a Special Meeting of the Council, convened exclusively for that purpose. The endorsement requires a two-thirds majority of Members in attendance. While Honorary Aldermen do not enjoy legal or social precedence, it is customary for them to be invited to Civic ceremonial events.

The proposal contemplates posthumously awarding the title of Honorary Alderman to the late Clive Smitheram, an unprecedented move prompted by his exceptional service to the council.

Related report:

[Long serving Councillor Clive Smitheram dies at 76](#)

Flooding concerns defer Church St care home plan

22 November 2023



9th November Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Planning Committee considered once more the plan to build a care home on the sites of the Church Street police and ambulance stations.

Concerns raised by neighbouring land owners about increased risks posed by the development to ground-water flooding to their properties triggered a deferral of the application.

Cllr Neil Dallen (RA Town) proposed the deferment for the applicants to provide a more detailed assessment of flood risk from a “recognized authority”.

Concerns were also expressed about the safety of refuse and re-cycling vehicles entrance and exit from the development.

There was discussion about whether the application could be approved with the imposition of conditions to address these concerns but ultimately no final decision was reached.

Related reports:

Epsom care home plans

Two Epsom brownfield developments?