EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
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EPSOM & EWELL TIMES

Up to £1 where sold

The cost of planning

25 April 2023



Green Belt campaigners have obtained a breakdown of over half-a-million pounds spent so far by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council on the draft Local Plan and the Town Centre MasterPlan. The Epsom and Ewell Times provides the figures below.

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's response to a Freedom of Information Act request:

"The figures below are broken down into two time periods:

• The first covering the April 2016 to December 2021.

• The second period covers January 2022 until 15th April 2023 – this is to reflect that from January 2022 additional evidence was commissioned to support the preparation of the Draft Local Plan 2022-2040.

April 2016 – December 2021 Local Plan consultancy

Service	Consultant	Cost
Spatial Economic Development Strategy	Economic Growth Management Ltd	£13,725
Post Covid – Spatial Economic Development Strategy	Economic Growth Management Ltd	£7,787.50
Sports Facilities Assessment and Playing Pitch Strategy	Ploszajski Lynch Consulting Ltd	£24,113

Green Belt Studies	Atkins Ltd	£36,471.61
Housing Needs Assessment Update	Cobweb Consulting	£14,497.55
Background paper on the horseracing industry	Matthews Associates (UK) Ltd	£2,970
Local Plan Viability Assessment (2019)	HDH Planning & Development Ltd	£16,063
Habitats Regulation Assessment	Lepus Consulting	£7,244.33
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Jacobs UK Ltd	£9,838
Graphic Design services	Soapbox Design Limited	£5,940
Local Plan Consultation Support	Luther Pendragon	£16,557.30
Mapping services	Pindar Creative	£2,624
Retail Study	Urban Shape	£26,654
Retail Study – update	Urban Shape	£6,050
Master planning	Allies and Morrison	£71,984
Total		**£262,519.29**

January 2022 onwards to support Draft Local Plan 2022-2040

Service	Consultant Appointed	Cost
Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)	GL Hearne	£47,890.49
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)	Opinion Research Services Ltd	£6,850
Local Plan Viability Study (2022)	HDH Planning & Development Ltd	£16,000

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Interim Sustainability Appraisal of Draft Local Plan 2022-2040 (Reg 18)	AECOM	£23,807.50
Habitats Regulations Assessment of Draft Local Plan 2022-2040 (Reg 18)	Lepus Consulting	£3,410
Climate Change Study (Part 1)	Wood Plc	£17,512
Graphic Design services	Urban Graphics	£23,000
Emerging Town Centre Masterplan	David Lock Associates	£99,768.10*
Independent Review of Draft Local Plan (Reg 18)	Carewold Associates Ltd	£750
Social Media promotion of Draft Local Plan consultation	Quick Fox Labs	£4,786.45
Printing of consultation materials	EEBC print room and Blue Dot display	£6,291
Total		**£250,695.54**

* note no net cost to EEBC as funded by the Local Enterprise Partnership The total spend on external services from 1st April 2016 until the 15 April 2023 was **£513,214.83.** However as noted above £99,768.10 of this was for the Emerging Epsom Town Centre Masterplan was funded by the Capital to Coast Local Enterprise Partnership."

Mark Todd, Chair, Epsom and Ewell Labour Party and a candidate in Horton Ward for the upcoming local election, responded to our request to all parties for comment: "Yet more evidence of terrible waste and mismanagement by the Residents' Association running Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. No wonder our council tax is so high and our services so poor. It's time for change at the local elections on May 4. The local Labour party will clean up the council and make sure money is spent wisely again."

Julie Morris, College Ward Councillor and Liberal Democrat told us: "The need for a new Local Plan is known years in advance and steps should have been taken to make sure our borough had robust local planning policies in place, rather than procrastinate over what was exactly the right time to create a new Local Plan.

Much of the evidence base has needed to be updated and has therefore required the work of professional organisations to do this, resulting in a much greater spend than was originally forecast. There was no alternative but for council to agree to this expenditure. Had Residents Association councillors given the matter greater priority, expenditure would undoubtedly have been less. It's important to bear in mind too, that the process is far from complete."

The Residents Association, Conservative Party and Green Party have not responded.

Related Reports:

£225,000 to plan the unplanned

The Local Plan to plan The Local Plan

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