

Question 1: There are a lot of road works that being carried out in the area at the moment and where these are going on small businesses are affected. What can the Council do in order to help these small businesses in this situation?

Answer: The roadworks are usually carried out by utility companies who liaise with Surrey County Council (SCC) over when and where the works take place and Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) are not involved in those discussions. More information about roadworks can be found at: surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-and-cleaning.

Question 2: Why are the annual accounts so difficult to access online and why does the Council have such large reserves?

Answer: The Council is committed to transparency and in light of the question being submitted in advance we have tested the accessibility of our webpage which contains our accounts. It is 3 clicks from the homepage and the document is free to download. You can also request for a hard copy.

The council does have total revenue reserves of £31m. A large proportion of the Revenue Reserves are earmarked for specific projects, for example the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) must be spent on Infrastructure related Revenue and Capital projects and some are set aside for maintenance of Council owned buildings and to protect the authority's annual budget in the event of interest rate and income fluctuations. EBC's general reserve is £4m.

Question 3: Should EBC be investing in commercial property when it would mean it is operating in a sector that is traditionally not associated with the public sector?

Answer: There are very few areas that Councils can invest in to raise extra revenue and investment in commercial property is one of them. The income which is generated from this investment is very important as it can be used to cover costs in the provision of vital services. The Council employs officers who are suitably qualified and have expertise in these areas and external advice has always been sought when we have considered investing in property.

Question 4: Residents would like to protect the character of the area from development however; we feel that there are limited options for us to do this. Where can we go to do something about this? Furthermore, why are residents limited to speaking for only 3 minutes when they are making their case a Planning Committee?

Answer: The rules on planning come from the legal framework set by central government

and they have recently very drastically changed, which has made it easier to build the type of housing referred to in the question. While the time limits are set for public speaking at sub-committee meetings, It is relatively easy for residents to speak with elected Members to voice their concerns over applications, however the Members have to abide by the laws set by central government.

Question 5: Should Surrey County Council and Surrey Districts and Boroughs become a unitary authority?

Answer: Central government has made it clear that there is no appetite at the national level for Surrey to become a unitary authority.

Question 6: What plans does EBC have for providing anger management services for young people in the area as a way of complementing the youth and social services that SCC provides?

Answer: Anger Management is being dealt with in a variety of ways across the Borough. One way is through the 1-1 Early Help offer and the work that the 1-1 mentors through Surrey Care Trust are doing with their young people. Work is also being undertaken through the Eikon charity and the Switch course that are running in schools.

The other key area of work is been done by the Youth Support Service. Anger management is being addressed and supported in all open Youth Support Service cases where anger issues are identified.

Question 7: Concerns were raised over issues relating to the Waterside Drive Sports hub and Stompond Lane re-development including the movement of clubs, the decontamination of land and the cost of the project.

Answer: We have been working closely with the sports clubs which will be relocating to the new Sports Hub to make the transition as smooth as possible and to ensure that they feel fully supported.

The decontamination works will need to take place regardless of whether we were building on the site as the Council has a responsibility to clear any historical contamination. The overall cost of the Sports Hub will be around £18 million and this will be funded by the receipt of selling Stompond Lane.

Question 8: Residents are keen to protect the character of the area, with Healix having purchased the Lloyds bank site in Esher will the design of the development for this site take this into account?

Answer: Our Planning Committees and officers ensure that the Council abides by the planning laws while striving to protect the character of the area, so far we have done well in preventing unwanted development. Since the purchase of the building there has been dialogue with Healix and their architects, including on the design and streetscape.

Question 9: Why has Elmbridge slipped down the Halifax ratings?

Answer: We have not had confirmation of why this is however, we believe that they have taken data from the 2011 census whereas the previous data was taken from the 2001 census.

Question 10: Residents are concerned about the effects on traffic that over development has; what plans are there in place to help with this?

Answer: The current planning laws do not allow for cumulative effect when judging a planning application so infrastructure capacity is not taken into account. One way of relieving the pressure of increased traffic following development could be by utilising Community Infrastructure Levy funds to get more community transport projects running like the Chatterbus. More information on CIL can be found at:
elmbridge.gov.uk/planning/policy/funding.htm.

Question 11: Please can you address the reduction in the number of Councillors and how it will be ensured that the service provided by them is not affected negatively?

Answer: Following the reduction in the number of Councillors, Elmbridge will still be one of the bigger councils in Surrey. The decision to reduce the number of Councillors was made by an independent organisation and fewer Councillors will be able to conduct the work of the Council more efficiently. Councillors will continue to be responsive to the needs of the residents regardless of the reduction in number. Evidence in this regard was submitted to the Boundary Commission as part of their assessment.

Question 12: The possible Drake Park Development will significantly increase traffic in the area; what can be done to take this into account during the application process?

Answer: The concerns of the residents are shared by all of the Walton councillors and we are working together to address the traffic issues that would be caused by the multiple developments that have been proposed in the area.

On matters such as this the Council has to take the advice of SCC on the effects of development on traffic, if we do not take their advice then it would cause problems should the application go to appeal.

Question 13: Will cycling be part of the rebuilding of the bridge and surrounding roads in Molesey?

Answer: EBC is committed to ensuring that the area is safe for cyclists and supports the activity. SCC is responsible for the road layouts in the areas and cycling will have been taken into account with regard to this development.

Question 14: Concerns were raised over the increase in traffic as a result of the proposed big developments in the area, specifically the Rydens School development.

Answer: It was clarified that this development will be going ahead and preparations will need to be made in light of this however, during the planning process SCC will have taken into account the effects on traffic the development will have.

Question 15: What pressure can be put on SCC to plant trees on the roadsides?

Answer: The Council's commitment to the safeguarding and retention of existing trees, and the planting of additional new and/or replacement trees is delivered by Planning Services through the [Core Strategy \[2011\]](#) and [Development Management Plan \[2015\]](#).

New and replacement planting on the Council's Parks and Commons is undertaken by Leisure and Cultural Services and Surrey County Council are responsible for all highway verges.

At present, Surrey County Council has a policy not to undertake any new highway tree planting. The Council have prepared a new Tree and Woodland Strategy which provides a framework for how we protect, manage, utilise and protect our tree resources, and will be going out for public consultation shortly.

Question 16: How many homeless people do we have in Elmbridge?

Answer: We have over 1,500 people on our Housing register but we do not have many homeless people on our streets. The service has faced significant pressures in recent years but despite these pressures the services available to single homeless has been strengthened and numbers in temporary accommodation remains. On average, we have roughly 30 households in temporary accommodation and the Council is good at moving people on and out of temporary accommodation quickly.