

Town Ward FOCUS



www.epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk
www.surreylibdems.org.uk
www.libdems.org.uk

Issue 87

ARMED FORCES GIVEN 'FREEDOM' HONOUR

(after Residents' Party
does U-turn!)

The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment were granted the Freedom of the Borough of Epsom & Ewell in January after both national and local press exposed the negative views of the ruling Residents' Party.

The Residents' Party (comprising Residents Association councillors) had also voted against holding the "special" meeting which was needed to decide whether or not to bestow the honour.

Liberal Democrat support was fundamental to the "special" meeting taking place, public opinion won through and the ruling group took notice of it!

Cllr Jonathan Lees (Stamford), who is also parliamentary candidate for the LibDems, said:

"The outcome was good but what a great shame the issue became a political debate. Nobody can put a price on the sacrifices made by our armed forces, but recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have revealed the disparity between what we expect of our soldiers and how they are rewarded."

LibDems want action immediately to restore the military covenant between the armed forces and the people. There is dissatisfaction over pay among the lower ranks and this has a dreadful impact on morale and retention.



Jonathan and Vince Cable MP, LibDem Treasury Spokesman

Jonathan reports that over 51,000 (a quarter of the armed forces) receive less in pay than a new recruit police constable or development-level fire-fighter. He says:

"Under LibDem proposals no service personnel would receive less than a police constable or fire-fighter. A fully trained Private would receive an average basic hourly wage of £9.44, up from £6.74 per hour."

At the moment there is 1 desk job for every 2 servicemen and the LibDems want that ratio reduced. In equipment terms, the pay of all Privates and Lance Corporals could be raised for the price of 4 Eurofighters (unit cost around £70m), Mandelson's loan of £340m to keep the ailing A400M aircraft going and by diverting other wasted money. Also, 1 Eurofighter would pay a battalion of Privates (400) for a decade: the budget over-run (c. £1bn) on new Destroyers would cover salary increases for five years.

Contact Jonathan for further details :
jonathan.lees@epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk
or ring him on 0208 394 1709.

EPSOM AND EWELL NEWS



At a public meeting in November, the Chief Executive of the Epsom & St Helier Hospital Trust revealed that £70m should be available for redevelopment of the Epsom site, excluding any “third party” support offered by the Denbies Trust. This sum relates solely to the buildings and not the services to be provided within them. The CE confirmed that A & E, children’s services and maternity are all safe. The recent “Local Needs Local Health” review had concluded that Epsom and St Helier should remain merged.

Parliamentary candidate **Jonathan Lees** commented: *“It’s good that there is now a clearer plan of what is to happen but it’s a shame it’s taken so long and cost so much to get there – a figure nobody is prepared to state.”* A more detailed review of the public meeting can be found on the November news page of our website at www.epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk

THANK YOU COUNTY COUNCILLOR !

Epsom had some Christmas lights this year helped along by cash from county councillor Colin Taylor’s “discretionary allocation”. The borough council’s ruling Residents’ Party steadfastly refuse to donate any money toward brightening our town at Christmas.



CONTINUING TO ENGAGE WITH LOCAL RESIDENTS

Lib Dem councillors organised three public meetings during November and December:

- On the Tesco proposals for Upper High Street. Numerous questions from local residents were put to Tesco via email and comprehensive replies from them were forwarded on to nearly 100 people and the local press;
- On the plans for Epsom Station. Questions were put to the developer in a similar way, including concerns about the “drop off” area, taxi ranks, parking and the bulk of the building;
- On proposals for Horton Water tower, where an open meeting was held on site. The proposals were subsequently refused permission by the Planning Committee.

The Tesco planning application is now expected to be determined at a special meeting of the Planning Committee on Thursday 11th February 2010, 7.30pm at the Town Hall.

The date for debating the plans for Epsom Station is not yet known.

PROGRESS ON PARKING

A Parking Strategy Group has been set up following pressure from Lib Dem councillors. Cllrs **Colin Taylor** and **Julie Morris** are members of this group. Dealing with commuter parking problems around the town centre and elsewhere around the borough is top priority for your **FOCUS** team. The needs of residents, shoppers and businesses need to be balanced and there is no “quick fix”.

FREE NEWS UPDATES BY E-MAIL

Visit www.epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk,
Click on “Get FREE News Updates”,
Select monthly, weekly or daily digests,
Tick “Consent to receiving news by e-mail”,
Scroll down and click “Register”.

DECISIONS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

It’s good news that the borough council has signed up to the 10:10 movement, but disturbing that this decision was taken behind closed doors and no-one knew! 10:10 is a campaign which seeks to persuade individuals, businesses, organisations and the UK government to reduce their CO₂ emissions by 10% in 2010. When asked, a senior RA councillor admitted that the matter should have been formally debated by councillors in committee first, but no explanation has been given.

There seems to be a trend for some RA councillors to make decisions behind closed doors, without regard for the democratic process – even without consulting their own party colleagues.

We are used to RA councillors being out of touch with local opinion. Now, it seems, they are out of touch with their own party colleagues as well. In political language, is this a dictatorship?

LOCAL NEWS IN BRIEF

CYCLING FROM PILLAR TO POST !

The Lib Dem councillors are still working to get a better deal for cyclists. Cllr Anna Jones's proposal to create a "Year of the Bike" failed to get support from the Residents' Party, but having been debated at the Environment Committee, then at a Full Council meeting, it has now been pushed sideways to the Leisure Committee to discuss before coming back to Full Council again.



The lifespan of this debate will ultimately be almost nine months – no wonder people complain about council bureaucracy and don't understand how decisions are made or why they take so long.

PARKING RESTRICTIONS

The following changes requested in 2007-8 and advertised in Dec. '09, should start by April 2010:

- Corners of Andrews Close and Grove Avenue with Church Road, double yellow lines (24/7);
- Church Road, outside St John Chandler Hall, 08.30 to 18.30 Monday to Saturday;
- Hereford Close, West side and turning head, 08.00 to 20.00 Monday to Saturday;
- Laburnum Road, turning head only, double yellow lines (24/7);
- Temple Road, chicane near St Barnabas moved further North, extra parking on West side;
- Waterloo Road, parking now allowed for 30 minutes outside shops North of the railway;
- Weston Road, parking now allowed on part of one side behind Sainsburys.

Refuse collection has been hampered by inconsiderate parking, resulting in requests for additional yellow lines on corners in **Lintons Lane, Middle Lane, Portland Place, Rosebank, Stevens Close, Victoria Place** and **Wyeths Mews**.

It is also proposed to extend the restrictions in **Hazon Way, Horsley Close, Maidenshaw Road, Gosfield Road** and **Waterloo Road** to include Sundays, allow parking on the East side of **South Street** after 8.00pm and ban unloading on the North side of the dual carriageway in **High Street**.

These are all due to be advertised in April 2010. Watch out for notices on lamp posts.

There are now 2 more parking enforcement officers; they were originally employed for a 2 month trial period before Christmas. The contract has been extended until April at which point the Parking Manager is hoping to persuade Surrey County Council that they can be retained permanently.

GRAFFITI AND LITTER

Despite the snow, graffiti has started to appear on NTL boxes, particularly around **Grove Road**. Cllr **Alison Kelly** has also tried to ensure that litter bins are available, e.g. outside **Epsom Station**, and get emptied regularly. The greatest need seems to be litter picking and cleansing of street corners. The council does respond promptly to requests, so to keep the town clean please report issues direct on 01372 732000. If there is any delay, ask your councillors to follow this up.

ROSEBANK

The housing development in **Rosebank** has started. Work has also started on extra parking spaces for residents by reinforcing the grassed area at the top of the hill, thanks to supplementary funding made available by county councillor **Colin Taylor**.

SOME USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

From talking to residents during our popular "mobile street surgeries" it seems that it might be useful to list the following phone numbers:

- Epsom & Ewell Borough Council:** To report a litter, graffiti or missed bins: 01372 732000
- Surrey Highways:** To report a pothole or a street light not working: 0300 200 1003
- Surrey Police:** to report cars obstructing the footway, or a crime where those responsible have already fled, use their non-urgent number: 0845 125 2222

In an emergency or to report a crime in progress always ring 999

THE TOWN WARD FOCUS TEAM

Cllr Alison Kelly

Borough Councillor

01372 726504

alison.kelly@epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk



Cllr Charles Wood

Borough Councillor

01372 747042

charles.wood@epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk



Cllr Colin Taylor

County Councillor

01372 721336

colin.taylor@epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk



Cllr Jonathan Lees

Parliamentary Candidate

020 8394 1709

jonathan.lees@epsom-ewell-libdems.org.uk



COUNCILLORS' SURGERIES

Lib Dem Councillors' advice surgeries are held in the Rosebery Room in the Ebbisham Centre on the second Saturday of every month, from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon.

These sessions are free of charge and open to all. No appointment is necessary.

The next three surgeries will be on:

- 13th February,
- 13th March,
- 10th April.

MOBILE STREET SURGERIES

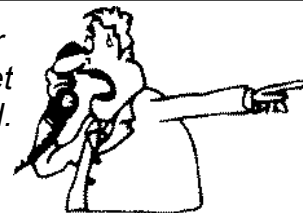
We are continuing our street surgeries around the ward. We walk down your street and deal with any issues that you want to raise.

We have dealt with trees, blocked drains, poorly parked cars, speeding motor bikes, graffiti, litter and neighbourhood issues.

Cllr **Jonathan Lees** said "Street surgeries are an excellent way for us to visit every road in the ward and see the real problems!"

If we miss you, visit us in the Ebbisham Centre on the second Saturday of each month.

GOT A PROBLEM? Use this space for any problems, complaints or ideas that you want the **FOCUS** team to take up. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary. Add your name and address in the box below if a reply is needed.



HELP US TO HELP YOU

Town ward **FOCUS** is a local community newsletter that is produced, financed and delivered entirely by volunteers. It keeps you in touch with what's going on, tells you what the **FOCUS** team have been doing for our area and asks for your views. Would you be willing to help deliver **FOCUS** in your road?

- I can deliver Town ward **FOCUS** in my road.
- I'd like to help the Lib Dems at election time.
- I'm interested in joining the Liberal Democrats.
- I'd like one of my councillors to visit me.

NAME

ADDRESS

Send to: Epsom & Ewell Lib Dems, (Town ward FOCUS), c/o 16 Sunnymede Avenue, Epsom KT19 9BR.



Printed on recycled paper by EELD Print & Design, 30 Pound Lane, Epsom KT19 8SB.

