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Democratic Services



STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Thursday 25 January 2024 at 7.30 pm

Place: Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall

Online access to this meeting is available on YouTube: [Link to online broadcast](#)

The members listed below are summoned to attend the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair)
Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Chris Ames
Councillor Shanice Goldman

Councillor Graham Jones
Councillor Alison Kelly
Councillor Robert Leach
Councillor Alan Williamson

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

For further information, please contact democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk or tel: 01372 732000

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

No emergency drill is planned to take place during the meeting. If the fire alarm sounds continuously, or if you are instructed to do so, you must leave the building by the nearest available exit. You will be directed to the nearest exit by council staff. It is vital that you follow their instructions.

- You should proceed calmly; do not run and do not use the lifts;
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings;
- Once you are outside, please do not wait immediately next to the building, but move to the assembly point at Dullshot Green and await further instructions; and
- Do not re-enter the building until told that it is safe to do so.

Public information

Please note that this meeting will be held at the Town Hall, Epsom and will be available to observe live using free YouTube software.

A link to the online address for this meeting is provided on the first page of this agenda. A limited number of seats will be available on a first-come first-served basis in the public gallery at the Town Hall. If you wish to observe the meeting from the public gallery, please arrive at the Town Hall reception before the start of the meeting. A member of staff will show you to the seating area. For further information please contact Democratic Services, email: democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk, telephone: 01372 732000.

Information about the terms of reference and membership of this Committee are available on the [Council's website](#). The website also provides copies of agendas, reports and minutes.

Agendas, reports and minutes for this Committee are also available on the free Modern.Gov app for iPad, Android and Windows devices. For further information on how to access information regarding this Committee, please email us at democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk.

Exclusion of the Press and the Public

There are matters scheduled to be discussed at this meeting that would appear to disclose confidential or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The Committee is likely to resolve to exclude the press and public during discussion of these matters by virtue of the private nature of the business to be transacted.

Questions and statements from the Public

Up to 30 minutes will be set aside for questions and statements from members of the public at meetings of this Committee. Any member of the public who lives, works, attends an educational establishment or owns or leases land in the Borough may ask a question or make a statement on matters within the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

All questions must consist of one question only and cannot consist of multiple parts. Questions and statements cannot relate to planning or licensing committees matters, the personal affairs of an individual, or a matter which is exempt from disclosure or confidential under the Local Government Act 1972. Questions which in the view of the Chair are defamatory, offensive, vexatious or frivolous will not be accepted. Each question or statement will be limited to 3 minutes in length.

If you wish to ask a question or make a statement at a meeting of this Committee, please contact Democratic Services at: democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Questions must be received in writing by Democratic Services by noon on the third working day before the day of the meeting. For this meeting this is **Noon, 22 January 2024**.

A written copy of statements must be received by Democratic Services by noon on the working day before the day of the meeting. For this meeting this is **Noon, 24 January 2024**.

For more information on public speaking protocol at Committees, please see [Annex 4.2](#) of the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Operating Framework.

Filming and recording of meetings

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Filming or recording must be overt and persons filming should not move around the room whilst filming nor should they obstruct proceedings or the public from viewing the meeting. The use of flash photography, additional lighting or any non-handheld devices, including tripods, will not be allowed.

AGENDA

1. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

To take any questions or statements from members of the Public.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in respect of any item of business to be considered at the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 16)

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 November 2023 and the Minutes and Restricted Minutes of the special meeting of the Committee held on 12 December 2023 (attached) and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

4. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY (Pages 17 - 32)

This report provides details of the newly developed Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Communications Strategy for the 2024-28 period.

5. EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT (Pages 33 - 52)

This report introduces the draft Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 and seeks approval of the Statement prior to its presentation to Full Council and subsequent publication on the Council's website.

6. ANNUAL PLAN 2024-2025 (Pages 53 - 60)

This report asks the committee to approve the Annual Plan for the council for 2024 – 2025.

7. POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW (Pages 61 - 130)

This report sets out the outcome of the consultation process on Polling Places and Districts and makes recommendations for proposed changes.

8. REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL (Pages 131 - 150)

Further to the appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel ('IRP') by full Council at its July 2023 meeting, a report outlining their review of the Council's Member Allowance Scheme and recommended changes is brought to this committee for its review and recommendation to full Council at its February 2024 meeting.

9. REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 (Pages 151 - 174)

This report sets out estimates for income and expenditure on services in 2024/25 and recommends fees and charges for which this Committee is responsible, with the new charges being effective from 1 April 2024. The report also details council tax discount bands for 2024/25, a capital scheme proposal and seeks approval to include the project in the capital programme to be submitted to Full Council in February 2024.

10. URGENT DECISIONS (To Follow)

Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 14 November 2023

PRESENT -

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair); Councillors Chris Ames, Shanice Goldman, Alison Kelly, Robert Leach, Kim Spickett (as nominated substitute for Councillor Graham Jones) and Alan Williamson

In Attendance: Councillor Alex Coley and Councillor Steven McCormick

Absent: Councillor Graham Jones

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive), Andrew Bircher (Interim Director of Corporate Services), Brendan Bradley (Head of Finance), Piero Ionta (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Will Mace (Business Assurance Manager) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

20 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions or statements were received from members of the public.

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in relation to items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

22 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes and Restricted Minutes of the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 21 September 2023 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

23 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REVIEW

The committee received a report presenting the annual review of the Risk Management Strategy. This review incorporated recommendations from the council's internal auditors (SIAP), and addressed points raised by council members and officers over the last year.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Responsibility for Strategy.** In response to a question from a councillor, the Business Assurance Manager informed the Committee that the Strategy was owned by the Strategy and Resources Committee, but the application of the Strategy would be reviewed by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee through its consideration of corporate performance reporting.
- b) **Alignment of risk appetite.** In response to a question from the Vice-Chair regarding the methodology and timing for ensuring that both Member and Corporate risk appetite were aligned, the Business Assurance Manager informed the Committee that feedback and recommendations from the workshop sessions would be used to inform the next annual review of the Strategy in September/November 2024.
- c) **Risk awareness.** In response to a question from the Vice-Chair regarding how risk awareness was embedded within the council, the Business Assurance Manager informed the Committee that there were a number of channels detailed within the Strategy. These included: Committee Risk Registers which were reviewed at each Policy Committee Chair's meeting, quarterly reviews of corporate risks undertaken by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee and provision within the council's project management toolkit. In addition, the council's Internal Auditor undertook periodic reviews of risk management arrangements, and the council's Local Code of Corporate Governance provided details of its risk management arrangements.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Approve the revisions to the Risk Management Strategy as attached at Appendix 1 to the report.**
- (2) **Agree to run a workshop with key councillors and officers to review: a) the council's risk appetite, and b) risk targets, and how these could be applied in practice.**

24 CONFERRING THE TITLE OF HONORARY ALDERMAN

The Committee received a report inviting it to consider conferring the title of Honorary Alderman on former Councillor Eber Kington, former Councillor Chris Frost, and the late former Councillor Clive Smitheram (awarded posthumously) in recognition of their eminent services to the Borough.

The following matter was considered:

- a) **Honorary Aldermen standing for re-election.** In response to a question from a councillor, the Head of Legal informed the Committee that there was no legal bar on an Honorary Alderman standing for re-election, and that re-election for an Honorary Alderman would not affect the award of the title.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved with 6 votes for, 1 abstention and the Chair not voting:

- (1) **To recommend that the Council places on record its deep appreciation of the eminent services to the Council rendered by**
 - a. **former Councillor Eber Kington**
 - b. **former Councillor Chris Frost, and**
 - c. **the late former Councillor Clive Smitheram (awarded posthumously)**
- (2) **That a Special Meeting of the Council be convened immediately following Full Council on 12 December 2023, at which members will be recommended to confer the title of Honorary Alderman.**

25 STAFF PAY AWARD

The Committee received a report providing information and options to enable it to make a recommendation to Council for a staff pay award for 2024/25.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Rate of inflation.** Members of the Committee noted that the rate of inflation had been significantly above the percentage pay award agreed for staff in recent years and expressed support for the higher rates provided as options within the report.
- b) **Budgetary considerations.** Members of the Committee noted that a pay award of above 3% would have implications for the council's projected budget deficit.
- c) **Staff eligibility for pay progression.** In response to a question from a councillor, the Interim Director of Corporate Services informed the Committee that around four-fifths of council employees were eligible for pay progression. Pay progression would typically equate to an additional 2% increase in salary.
- d) **Staff benefits – travel.** In response to a question from a councillor, the Chief Executive informed the Committee that staff had access to a subsidised car parking scheme and season ticket loans.
- e) **Average staff salary.** In response to a question from a councillor, the Interim Director of Corporate Services informed the Committee that as at 30 November 2021 the mean average pay for employees other than the Chief Officers was £30,362.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Recommend to full council a 6% pay award for staff for 2024/25 as set out in paragraph 3.6 of the report.**

26 URGENT DECISIONS

The Committee received a report informing it of the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with Appendix 2 to the Constitution – The Scheme of Delegation paragraph 3.1 since the last meeting.

The following matter was considered:

- a) Communication of urgent decisions.** The Committee received a statement from a councillor in attendance at the meeting. The councillor informed the Committee that the first and third urgent decisions recorded in the report had not been reported in Member News, as required by Appendix 2, para 3.1 iii of the Constitution. The councillor requested the Chair to enquire as to the reason for this and report back to the next meeting on the steps that will be taken to make sure urgent decisions are recorded and communicated in the future. The councillor also requested that communication of urgent decisions be clearly marked as such in future. The Chair responded that he had already made the enquiry and that a response would be made to the next meeting of the Committee.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved:

- (1) To note the urgent decisions taken and the reasons for those decisions, since the last meeting of the Committee.**

27 RESOURCES

The Chair informed the Committee that no report had been published for this item, as the need for a report had been superseded by grant funding and the availability of internal funding.

Accordingly, the matter was not considered by the Committee and no vote was taken.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.01 pm

COUNCILLOR NEIL DALLEN (CHAIR)

Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 12 December 2023

PRESENT -

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair); Councillors Chris Ames, Graham Jones, Alison Kelly, Robert Leach and Alan Williamson

In Attendance: Councillor Arthur Abdulin, Councillor Christine Cleveland, Councillor Alex Coley, Councillor Julian Freeman, Councillor Rachel King, Councillor Steven McCormick, Councillor Bernie Muir and Councillor Clive Woodbridge

Absent: Councillor Shanice Goldman

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive), Andrew Bircher (Interim Director of Corporate Services), Victoria Potts (Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration), Brendan Bradley (Head of Finance), Piero Ionta (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager), Phoebe Batchelor (Democratic Services Officer) and Dan Clackson (Democratic Services Officer)

28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in relation to items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

29 LOCAL PLAN BUDGET RESOURCES

The Committee received a report providing an updated financial position for the Epsom and Ewell Local Plan (2022-2040), towards its submission and subsequent adoption in accordance with the timescales defined in the recently published Local Development Scheme (November 2023).

The Licencing and Planning Policy Committee on the 22 November 2023 agreed to report the estimated shortfall in funding for completing the Local Plan to the Strategy and Resources Committee with a request to secure funding for the £629,000 shortfall.

The Strategy and Resources Committee considered the following matter:

- a) **Work scheduling and resource requirements.** A Member of the Committee asked for further information regarding why it was proposed to extend the contracts of two temporary members of staff to the end of

2026, given that the Regulation 19 documents would need to be submitted by mid 2025. In response the Interim Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration informed the Committee that following the submission of the Regulation 19 documents there would be an examination period and an implementation period, and these were anticipated to occur during 2026. The contract extensions were proposed to ensure that the Council had sufficient resource to complete the whole process.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved:

- (1) To agree to allocate £629,000 funding from the Corporate Projects Reserve to enable the completion of the Epsom and Ewell Local Plan (2022-2040).**

30 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee unanimously resolved to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

31 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

The Committee received a report providing the Strategic Outline Business case for a new civic office in 70 East Street, Epsom.

The Committee's consideration of this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Recommend to Council that:**

- a) The update in respect to 70 East Street be noted.**
- b) The Strategic Outline Business case to establish the Council's new Civic Offices at 70 East Street, Epsom be agreed and:**
 - I. the relocation of the Council Chamber and ancillary functions to Bourne Hall be approved.**
 - II. the relocation of the civic office to 70 East Street be approved.**
- c) an indicative capital budget of up to £7.0 million and a revenue budget of up to £0.5m for programme delivery are approved.**

- d) Funding Option 3, as set out in the Strategic Outline Business Case, be adopted to fund the relocation, noting the specific agreements regarding the optimal use of the existing Town Hall site.**
 - e) An implementation programme, supported with appropriate governance, be established to oversee the mobilisation to the new building.**
 - f) The Chief Executive and Interim Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration (or subsequent permanent Director), in consultation with the S151 officer, be delegated specific authority to approve all necessary project/procurement expenditure and release of funds from budgets/reserves (up to the approved limit above) through to completion and delivery.**
- (2) Resolve that authority be given to the Head of Property and Regeneration to commence procurement for the refurbishment works to 70 East Street.**

The meeting began at 6.30 pm and ended at 6.52 pm

COUNCILLOR NEIL DALLEN (CHAIR)

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COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Head of Service:	Jackie King, Chief Executive
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Communications Strategy 2024-28

Summary

This report provides details of the newly developed Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Communications Strategy for the 2024-28 period. The Communications Strategy is attached as an Annex.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Agree that the 2024-28 Communications Strategy be adopted as a living document.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The council's current Communications Strategy was developed in 2020 and runs until March 2024. It is vital that a refreshed Strategy is in place from April 2024 that will be able to support the council in meeting its current and future ambitions and priorities.

2 Background

- 2.1 The 2024-28 Communications Strategy builds on the previous Strategy and on the recommendations from the LGA Peer Review in January 2020.
- 2.2 The Communications Strategy sets out the strategic approach for the council's communications, the activity we undertake and the core principles we follow. It also highlights the areas we intend to develop and improve upon over the duration of the Strategy.

- 2.3 It sets out a clear direction so that the communications function contributes significantly to the organisation's objectives with planned, clear, authentic, consistent and high-quality communications that reaches the right people, at the right time.
- 2.4 It is proposed the Strategy runs from April 2024 – March 2028, to align with the Four-Year Plan. It will be a living document that will be regularly updated during this time period by officers under Delegated Authority.
- 2.5 Industry best practice guidance, research into other councils' strategies, the council Communication Team's expertise and experience, and the specific circumstances and priorities of the council have all been used in developing this Strategy.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 The Strategy sets out the importance of communications reaching, engaging with and being accessible to all audiences. It highlights the different channels that are already being used and acknowledges that this is an area that needs further development, which will be a priority over the duration of the Strategy. An Equality Impact Assessment will follow.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 Adopting the new Communications Strategy has no direct financial implications. The Communications Team does not hold a centralised campaigns budget; budget for communications and campaigns activity is derived from existing Service Area budgets and decided upon on a case-by-case basis.

4.2 There is no implication for staffing or resource; Communications Team members are permanent employees and there is no request for additional resource in this Strategy.

4.3 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 There are no direct legal implications.

5.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- The Communications Strategy relates to all Key Priorities in the Four-Year plan.

6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6.5 **Partnerships:** The Communications Strategy acknowledges that working with local partners increases the reach and efficacy of our communications. Developing relationships with partners so that communications messages can be shared through their channels is part of the Strategy, but there are no formal arrangements with specific partners announced in the Communications Strategy.

7 Background papers

7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- None

Other papers:

- Communications Strategy 2024-28

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EEBC Draft Communications Strategy 2024-28

1. Introduction

The importance of effective communication cannot be underestimated. It supports the delivery of the council's ambitions and priorities, helps build trust and two-way engagement with our communities, and positively impacts the council's reputation. The way we communicate is key in bringing to life the work the council does to support our vibrant and creative borough.

This Communications Strategy for 2024-28 builds on our previous strategy and on the recommendations from the LGA Peer Review in January 2020. It sets out a clear direction so that the communications function contributes significantly to the organisation's objectives with planned, clear, authentic, consistent and high-quality communication that reaches the right people, at the right time.

It is a challenging time for Local Government in the context of constant change, significant financial pressures and the communications landscape continuing to develop at speed. Therefore this Strategy is a living document, and will be updated and added to during its four-year duration. It will be supported by an annual campaign delivery plan produced each spring which is based on the priorities in the council's Four-Year Plan and annual plans.

The Communications Strategy is for the whole council. Every officer and Member is responsible for helping the council to tell our story, and has a role in helping to promote the council and the services we deliver.

2. Strategic Communications Approach

Communications supports the council in achieving its vision, objectives, ambitions and priorities. These are set out in the Four-Year Plan, Future 40 vision and accompanying annual plans and service delivery plans. The Four-Year Plan uses the following themes to set out its key priorities: *(NB: these will reflect what is in the 2024-28 Four Year Plan once finalised):*

- Green and vibrant
- Opportunity and prosperity
- Cultural and creative
- Safe and well
- Smart and connected
- Effective Council.

The Communications Team provides a mix of business-as-usual support and proactive campaigns which focus on corporate and strategic priorities under these

six themes. Our communications projects and campaigns are designed to do one of three things:

- To inform, engage with, and listen to our residents about things that are important and relevant to them
- To protect and enhance our reputation
- To spark a change in behaviour.

There will always be an element of reactive work for a Communications Team, and it is important that we respond to and support urgent or unexpected communications needs. However, it is crucial that reactive work does not take over from our strategic priorities as a team. We aim for 70% proactive and 30% reactive work – the majority of our time and resource is dedicated to proactive work, because this focuses on the highest priorities for the council and its residents. To support this approach, we work hard to build relationships across service areas and to ensure we are involved with projects from an early stage.

Priorities for 2024-28:

Develop use of behavioural change frameworks and theory such as the EAST framework to encourage behaviour change (Easy, Attractive, Social, Timely)

3. Role of the Communications Team

The Communications Team is a small team where each member works across multiple disciplines. We work in close partnership with service areas, as well as with SMT and Members, and have a number of responsibilities which all support the council in achieving its communications objectives:

- Proactive communications work:
 - Campaigns linked to strategic priorities, including key projects and income-generating activities
 - Ongoing communications support for all service areas
- Reactive communications work:
 - Mitigating / minimising reputational risks
 - Responding to urgent or unexpected corporate priorities
 - Crisis communications
- Professional strategic and tactical communications advice and guidance to SMT, Members and service areas
- Reputation promotion and protection
- Management and development of council communications channels
- Brand guardians
- Internal communications

- Developing audience insight.

As a team, we take responsibility to learn, develop and improve on a continual basis; to utilise best practice from across the industry to help us innovate and be effective; and to keep up with developments, advances in technology and current trends. We do this through active research, learning and development and through interacting with fellow local government communicators.

4. Strategy objectives

The Communications Strategy objectives are to:

- Support the council to achieve commercial and non-commercial ambitions and objectives that help improve the lives of those who live in, work in and visit the borough
- Increase resident understanding of the full range of services we provide, and equip and inspire them to engage with and utilise our services
- Ensure residents are informed in an effective and timely manner about issues within the borough that may impact on them
- Make a positive contribution to resident perceptions of the council
- Empower Members and officers to be effective communicators to our audiences and to be ambassadors for the council, ensuring that they have the required information, skills and opportunities to do so
- Use data and insight in the development and evaluation of communications to continually improve our service.

5. Key messages and tone of voice

The way we communicate is vital in creating a consistent story and voice that reflects our values and champions the work being done across the council to support and transform the borough. Our communications will:

- Promote council and local good news stories and successes, showcasing Epsom & Ewell, its people and its places
- Use a wide range of stories and case studies using real people – council officers, Members, residents and businesses
- Tell residents about the full breadth of our services and how to engage with them – increasing understanding of the wide range of services we offer, and the varied work we do to improve quality of life for residents in the borough

- Show how we are making a difference - to make sure the council's unique role in supporting residents is understood and appreciated, to inspire people and to make them proud of the borough.

We aim to use **one trusted voice** that is embedded across the whole council and used in all communications with our audiences. We will further develop our council narrative and tone of voice over the coming year.

Priorities for 2024-28:

Lead cross-organisation work to develop a powerful, compelling and authentic narrative that helps us to tell the council's story simply, effectively and truthfully, with one trusted voice.

6. Audiences

It is fundamental to our communications work that we segment and target audiences effectively. There is no 'one size fits all' approach; different audiences have different needs and preferences and we tailor our communications in a variety of ways to have the maximum impact on different audiences. This includes but isn't limited to:

- The channels we use
- The language and messaging we develop
- The type of visual content we create
- The timing of our communications.

Our key audiences include:

- Residents
- Businesses
- Students
- Visitors to the borough
- Members
- Employees
- Partners, including wider public sector and BID
- Voluntary, community and faith groups
- Media.

Our audiences can be segmented further using data and insight, whether demographic (such as their age or where they live) or behavioural (such as their thoughts and feelings on a topic, their interests and activities, their preferred communications channels or their individual needs and preferences).

It is vital that we segment and target audiences as effectively as we can with the data and insight we have available. We draw our audience insights using data such as the borough profile, ONS data, Surrey-I, LG Inform and previous research and evidence about how residents want to be communicated with, and what engages them. Just as important as this is the deep knowledge that our service areas and partners have of the audiences they serve, which helps the Communications Team to place their messaging and choose their channels effectively.

However, there is much more still to be done in this space and this is a priority for the duration of this Strategy.

Priorities for 2024-28:

To increase and hone our audience insights, both through analysing existing data more extensively, and through finding new ways to learn about our audiences.

7. Channels

We use a tailored, targeted approach using a combination of channels depending on the message and the audience. Our communications need to be easy to understand, to be accessible to different audiences and to reflect all parts of the borough, and therefore we use a combination of a wide variety of channels, depending on the project or campaign. Many of our channels are cost-neutral; paid channels are used with careful consideration depending on what the campaign is trying to achieve.

The channels we use regularly include our website, organic and paid social media (including Facebook, X, Instagram and NextDoor), marketing materials, Borough Boards, media relations, e-newsletter, internal communications and partnership communications.

While many of our audiences are online, there is still a proportion who do not use the internet or social media. Other audiences have a first language that is not English, or do not engage with our primary channels. We use a blend of channels for our communications, including offline channels, with the aim that no-one is excluded, including those who may be harder-to-reach. We produce hard-copy materials for many of our campaigns and plan distribution carefully. We utilise our Borough Boards as a valuable way to reach people offline across the borough. Perhaps most valuable for our harder-to-reach audiences is working with service areas, Members and external partners, to use their channels and relationships with audiences to get communications through effectively.

We will also ensure that we support and promote any initiatives relevant to our residents that help them to develop their digital capabilities, whether these are council, national or partner-led initiatives.

We know there is still work to do in this area to further improve the reach and accessibility of our communications and this will be a priority over the duration of this strategy.

Communications channels are constantly changing and developing, and it is a responsibility of the Communications Team to keep up with, and respond to, emerging trends and technological advances. Recent examples of this are the changes to X (formerly Twitter), the emergence of Threads as a new social media channel, and the emergence of AI.

Appendix 1 of this strategy provides a Communications Channel Analysis which sets out our ambitions, both for our established channels, and for developing channels we are either not currently using or are at the early stages of using.

Priorities for 2024-28:

- To continually improve our usage of our established channels, and to develop our usage of new or nearly new channels on an ongoing basis
- To get feedback from audiences, through methods including a survey, on how they would like to be communicated with and where we can improve on our channels and messaging.

8. Branding and design

Our brand (including but not limited to our logo and crest) must be used clearly, consistently and appropriately, by all those within the council and by partners when appropriate. This ensures the council is visible in our communities, and gives credibility and authenticity to the information we share with our audiences.

The Communications Team is the guardian of the council's brand. We provide advice and guidance to others on use of our brand to make sure we meet these objectives.

Priorities for 2024-28:

- Refresh and update our brand and editorial guidelines and embed them across the organisation
- Build up a strong suite of images for use in our communications work

9. Communications activity and campaigns

We develop, run and evaluate a range of proactive communications campaigns each year, based on corporate priorities, and including income generation projects.

We also support service areas with ongoing, business-as-usual communications work. We use a client-account manager system with each service area having a specific comms representative who attends regular meetings and builds close relationships with the teams, to ensure involvement with projects at early stages and a deep understanding of what communications work needs to achieve.

Our campaign plans are structured using the ‘ROSIE’ method:

- Research and background
- Objectives of the campaign
- Strategy (audiences, key messages, channels, timescale and resources)
- Implementation plan
- Evaluation.

Examples of key campaigns delivered over 2023-24 include Elections, the Local Plan consultation, cost of living support, Town Centre Masterplan consultation, and a community services campaign.

Over the coming four years, campaigns will be developed for priority areas identified in the 2024-28 Four Year Plan and service delivery plans. An annual campaign plan will be produced each spring for the coming financial year.

Communications campaigns over the life cycle of this Strategy may include, but won't be limited to, our Arts, Heritage and Culture strategy and associated activity; health and wellbeing initiatives; the Government Waste Strategy; the Local Plan; climate change and biodiversity; economic development; and elections.

10. Evaluation

Robust evaluation of communications work and campaigns is critical, so that we can:

- Understand what has worked well
- Identify areas to change or improve upon next time
- Provide information and evidence of the impact of communications activity on council priorities.

All too often, evaluation stops at ‘what we did’, but this is only one element of evaluation. Evaluation needs to consider audience action on the back of the campaign, and most crucially, what impact the campaign had. Did it achieve its objectives? Was there a change in audience attitude or behaviour as a result?

We evaluate all our campaigns using four key criteria, and using a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The final criterion, Outcomes, is the most important:

Evaluation Criteria	Description	Examples
Inputs	The campaign activity that was carried out. “What did we do?”	Synopsis of activity carried out across range of channels

Outputs	Reach, distribution, exposure of the campaign. “How many people saw it?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media reach • Website page views • Number of e-newsletter opens • Media coverage • Marketing materials distributed.
Outtakes	Interest, engagement and action due to the campaign. “How did audiences engage with the campaign?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media engagement (likes, shares, comments, clicks) • Website clicks • E-newsletter article clicks • Visitors at an event • Positive feedback or comment on public channels.
Outcomes	Impact, influence, change in attitude or behaviour due to the campaign. “Did the campaign achieve its objectives?”	Impact of campaign on project objectives (e.g. number signed up to a service; increase in recycling rates; decrease in people not registering to vote on time)

Priorities for 2024-28:

- Develop regular reporting mechanisms for SMT and Committee Chairs on communications activity, engagement and achievements.
- Develop mechanisms to evaluate audience reactions to a campaign

11. Appendix: Channel Analysis

The tables below give information about the established and developing channels we use to communicate with our audiences, including our current priorities for the 2024-28 Communications Strategy period.

Communications channels are constantly developing and new channels emerging. This channel analysis provides a snapshot in time, but will be revisited and updated regularly over the duration of the Strategy.

Established channel	Further information	Priorities for development in 2024-28 strategy period
Media relations	<p>The Communications Team manages the council's relationship with the media. It provides strategic advice on the council's overall media approach and is responsible for proactive media releases as well as responses to reactive enquiries, in liaison with the relevant service area and Member.</p> <p>The media is a constantly changing landscape; print media readership has reduced significantly, though online versions of local and regional media continue to be key influencers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increased focus on trade, specialist and regional media, including proactive targeting for relevant profile and editorial pieces • Proactive packages for local press on key good news stories • Review of media list • Closer following of media coverage.
Website	<p>While service areas are responsible for their sections of the website, the Communications Team provides support with content, design and location of pages related to key campaigns. The Team also manages the homepage carousel which is the primary location on the website for campaign promotion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A website redesign is planned during the time period of this Strategy. This is needed to modernise and update the website, reflect audience requirements and improve the user journey.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging audiences to self-serve when they can via My Council Services • Increased use of Google Analytics to monitor website usage and engagement, evaluate campaign activity and identify areas for improvement.
Organic social media	<p>Social media is extensively used by local audiences and is a valuable two-way channel to communicate and engage with our audiences, and to hear back from them. We are active on Facebook, X, Next Door and Instagram, and have recently started using Threads.</p> <p>We use our social media platforms to share useful, relevant and interesting information; to inform and explain; to promote our campaigns; to ask for opinions; and to answer questions from residents. We share content from partners as well as our own content.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping up to date with, and utilising, new platforms and technical advances • More varied content utilised, including an increase in video • Encouraging further engagement and response from audiences through the content we post • A social media strategy will be developed to grow followers and increase engagement.
e-Magazine (e-Borough Insight)	Our e-newsletter goes out monthly to about 1,550 subscribers. It includes articles on relevant and important council and community news and events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The e-newsletter will be rebranded with a focus on making it modern, visually pleasing, clear, relevant and easy to navigate • Once this work is done, a campaign will be undertaken to increase subscriptions, readership and engagement • Analytics will be used more extensively to assess what is working and what needs refinement or change.
Marketing materials	A range of marketing materials are designed and produced by the Communications Team. These include flyers, leaflets,	

	posters and banners and are used regularly for all kinds of communications activity and campaigns.	
Borough Boards	The Communications Team manages submission of posters for the 25 Boards placed around the borough, and distributes them to custodians to place on the Boards.	
Internal communications	<p>It is vital that through effective internal communications, we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase staff's connection with each other and with the organisation • Inform and engage them in key corporate news, events and priorities • Increase accessibility to our senior management team • build a shared sense of purpose • Recognise and celebrate good work across the organisation • Ensure employees have a voice and feedback mechanisms, and feel heard. <p>This will enable the council to develop a stronger organisational culture based on a clear vision and set of values.</p> <p>A range of internal communications initiatives are already in place or are underway to support these aims, including the creation of a new intranet. This work will be ongoing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An operational internal communications strategy will be developed to further help this work to move forward. • We will work to ensure that the newly developed intranet is used and valued by the organisation.

Developing channel	Further information
Paid social media	We have recently started using paid, targeted Facebook adverts to widen engagement from target audiences in key campaigns. This is a valuable, low-cost channel that enables us to guarantee exposure to our target audiences, and to evaluate what is successful.
Local Facebook groups	Local Facebook groups are a key method that residents use to communicate with each other about local issues and interests. While we monitor them, we don't currently have an active presence as a council on local Facebook groups and this is something to focus on in future.
Email marketing / Direct mail	<p>We don't currently have an email marketing function but this is a valuable way to reach target audiences, particularly those who use the internet but aren't on social media. This is a potential future project to be considered, in terms of benefit vs resource required.</p> <p>Direct Mail has a place when targeting certain areas or audiences in the borough, for key campaigns that have some budget behind them.</p>
Advertising	This includes online, digital, print in relevant local magazines and media, Out Of Home eg buses, billboards. Advertising is expensive so it is not currently used extensively, but should be considered for key suitable campaigns.
SEO and Google Adwords	Effective search engine optimisation (SEO) ensures your webpages appear near or at the top of a search engine's results when certain keywords and search terms are used. SEO can be encouraged both via organic methods (general best practice when setting up and tagging webpages and so on), and via paid methods such as Google Adwords.
Retargeting	Retargeting is a paid digital channel which shows council adverts to those who have visited our website on subsequent websites they visit. It encourages those who have considered taking an action to go back and complete it.
Partnership communications	<p>We have established relationships with a number of partners including Surrey County Council, other borough Councils, Active Surrey, the Employment Hub and the Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network. We plan to deepen the existing relationships with local partners and also to establish relationships with a wider section of partners who can help us get relevant messaging out to their audiences; as well as even better utilise the relationships service areas across the council have with a far wider network of partners.</p> <p>Members and staff are also valuable partners in helping to get key messaging out to audiences.</p>

EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Head of Service:	Debbie Childs, Head of People & OD
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 - Draft Pay Policy Statement Appendix 2 - Scale of Returning Officer Fees

Summary

This report introduces the draft Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 and seeks approval of the Statement prior to its presentation to Full Council and subsequent publication on the Council's website.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Approve the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.
- (2) Agree that the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 is referred to Full Council for approval.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Pay Policy Statement sets out the Council's policy regarding remuneration in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 and associated statutory guidance. The purpose of the statement is to provide transparency regarding the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees.
- 1.2 The Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 requires approval from the Strategy & Resources Committee prior to being presented to Full Council for approval and subsequent publication on the Council's website.
- 1.3 Once approved by Full Council, the Pay Policy Statement will come into effect on 01 April 2024 and will be subject to annual review.

2 Background

2.1 Pay Policy Statement

2.1.1 The Pay Policy Statement is attached in Appendix 1. The information provided complies with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

2.1.2 The Pay Policy Statement is prescribed in terms of its content and therefore details the following key areas:

- Level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer
- Remuneration of Chief Officers on recruitment
- Increases and additions to remuneration for each Chief Officer
- The approach to the payment of Chief Officers on their ceasing to hold office or to be employed by the authority
- The publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of Chief Officers
- Pay multiple (ratio) between Chief Officers' pay and all other employees
- Election fees
- Gender Pay Gap Information
- Policy on employing someone who has taken redundancy
- Policy on employing someone who is also drawing a pension
- Policy on lowest paid

2.1.3 The information contained in the Statement is current as at 30 November 2023.

2.1.4 The Statement also contains reference to the agreed pay award of 6% from April 2024. The Council's Employee Pay and Reward Procedure has been updated to reflect the 2024/25 pay award which was agreed by Full Council on 12 December 2023.

2.2 Election Fees

2.2.1 The council is required to provide funding to the Returning Officer to discharge statutory functions relating to the administration of local government elections. The Returning Officer will make payments to those officers who undertake specific duties in relation to the elections (including to Chief Officers) in accordance with their role.

2.2.2 Appendix 2 sets out the current Returning Officer fees and charges for 2022/23.

2.2.3 The process for agreeing this fee structure is coordinated by Guildford Borough Council. Consultation is undertaken with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council before the proposed fee structure is passed to the Surrey Chief Executives for approval. A new fee structure is not due to be released until the end of January 2024 at the earliest and the 2022/23 fees therefore have been included for reference (Appendix 2).

2.2.4 The source of funding for elections in England varies according to the type of election. For example, the costs of running UK Parliamentary general elections and European Parliamentary elections are provided by Ministry of Justice. The costs of local elections, to include by-elections are met through local authority budgets, as provided by Section 36 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

3 Key points to note/Summary of changes

3.1 The following changes have been made to the basic salaries for Chief Officers (defined as the Chief Executive and Directors):

The proposed 6% uplift from April 2024 has been applied to the 2024/25 figures below.

Post	2023/24: Bottom of salary range (£ per annum)	2024/25: Bottom of salary range (£ per annum)	2023/24: Top of salary range (£ per annum)	2024/25: Top of salary range (£ per annum)
Chief Executive	£126,072	£131,016	£143,376	£151,979
Director	£89,677	£93,156	£103,135	£109,323

3.2 Pay Multiples (ratios)

3.2.1 There has been no change to the pay multiple (ratio) between Chief Officers' pay and the pay of all other employees. The ratio between the bottom of the lowest pay scale and the top of the Chief Executive pay scale remains at 1: 7.

3.3 Gender Pay Gap

3.3.1 In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, which came into force on 31 March 2017, employers with at least 250 employees are required to publish Gender Pay Gap information as at 31 March each year. This information is published on the Council's website no later than 30 March annually.

3.3.2 For the purpose of this report, the Council's mean Gender Pay Gap as at 31 March 2023 is -5.4%. As in previous years, the negative Gender Pay Gap is primarily due to the majority of front-line operatives being male and many senior management roles being held by females. This positions the council favourably in terms of women's pay.

3.4 Policy on lowest paid

3.4.1 The Government has confirmed that the national living wage will rise from £10.42 to £11.44 from April 2024. This represents an increase of 9.8% and it is acknowledged that this is significantly greater than the 6% increase which will be applied to our pay scales from April 2024.

3.4.2 Work is currently underway to assess the impact of the national living wage increase on our lowest pay scale. No employee will be paid below the UK national living wage.

3.4.3 There is currently no formal commitment within our Pay Policy to pay the Voluntary Living Wage (vLW) promoted by the Living Wage Foundation as the minimum hourly rate at which an employee should be paid. The 2024/25 vLW rate for outside of London is £12.00 per hour. This represents a 10% increase on the 2023/24 vLW rate of £10.90.

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

4.1 Equality Impact Assessment: None arising from the contents of this report

4.2 Crime & Disorder: None arising from the contents of this report

4.3 Safeguarding: None arising from the contents of this report

4.4 Dependencies: None arising from the contents of this report

4.5 Other: None arising from the contents of this report

5 Financial Implications

5.1 The 6% increase has been factored into the 2024/25 budget, as agreed at Full Council in December 2023.

5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 The key provisions concerning pay accountability are cited in the body of this report. Approval of the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 is an *in principle* decision and the report must be referred to Full Council for resolution.

6.2 The deadline for approval is 31 March 2024, this being the preceding financial year to which the Statement relates. The Localism Act also requires the Council to publish its approved Pay Policy Statement.

6.3 **Legal Officer's comments:** Under section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council must prepare a pay policy statement for each financial year. The Pay Policy Statement must set out the Council's policies for the financial year relating to (a)the remuneration of its chief officers, (b)the remuneration of its lowest paid employees and (c)the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers (section 38(2) Localism Act 2011).

6.4 Section 39(1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires that the Pay Policy Statement must be approved by resolution before it comes into force. Each Pay Policy Statement must be prepared and approved before the end of the 31 March immediately preceding the financial year to which it relates (section 38(3) Localism Act 2011). As soon as is reasonably practicable after approving or amending a pay policy statement, the Council must publish the statement or the amended statement in such manner as it thinks fit (which must include publication on the Council's website) (section 38(5) Localism Act 2011).

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** Effective Council

7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None arising from the contents of this report

7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None arising from the contents of this report

7.5 **Partnerships:** None arising from the contents of this report

8 Background papers

8.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy Statement 2023/24, Strategy & Resources 26 January 2023
- Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy Statement 2023/24, Full Council 14 February 2023

Other papers:

- Openness and accountability in local pay: guidance under section 40 of the Localism Act 2011
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/openness-and-accountability-in-local-pay-guidance>
- Openness and accountability in local pay: guidance under section 40 of the Localism Act 2011: supplementary guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/openness-andaccountability-in-local-pay-supplementary-guidance>



Pay Policy
Statement
2024/2025

Version number: 7
Date: January 2024

Tracking

Policy Title	Pay Policy Statement 2024/2025		
SMT sign off			
Committee	Strategy & Resources Full Council	Date approved	
Review due date	12 months	Review completed	
Service	People & Organisational Development		

Revision History

Revision Date	Revisor	Previous Version	Description of Revision
March 2019	Head of HR & OD	Version 2	Updated for 2019-20
January 2020	Head of HR & OD	Version 3	Updated for 2020-21
January 2021	Head of HR & OD	Version 4	Updated for 2021-22
January 2022	Head of HR & OD	Version 5	Updated for 2022-23
January 2023	Head of People & OD	Version 6	Updated for 2023-24
January 2024	Head of People & OD	Version 7	Updated for 2024-25

Document Approvals

Each revision requires the following approvals:

Sponsor Approval		Name	Date
S&R	Version2		2 April 2019
Full Council	Version 2		30 April 2019
S&R	Version 3		30 January 2020
Full Council	Version 3		13 February 2020
S&R	Version 4		28 January 2021
Full Council	Version 4		16 February 2021
S&R	Version 5		27 January 2022
Full Council	Version 5		15 February 2022
S&R	Version 6		26 January 2023
Full Council	Version 6		14 February 2023
S&R	Version 7		25 January 2024
Full Council	Version 7		13 February 2024

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2	Purpose
3	Level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer
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5	Increases and additions to remuneration for each Chief Officer
6	The approach to the payment of Chief Officers on their ceasing to hold office or to be employed by the authority
7	The publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of Chief Officers
8	Pay multiple (ratio) between Chief Officers' pay and all other employees
9	Election fees
10	Gender Pay Gap
11	Policy on employing someone who has taken redundancy
12	Policy on employing someone who is also drawing a pension
13	Policy on lowest paid

1. Introduction and background summary

- 1.1 In line with the Localism Act 2011 the Council is required to publish an annual pay policy statement which has been approved by full Council. The information is set out under headings which have been prescribed by the Localism Act and relates to 2024/25 financial year.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The statement sets out the levels of remuneration for the Council's senior officers as well as a general approach to pay which is lifted from the Council's Employee Pay & Reward Procedure.
- 2.2 The information set out in the pay policy statement meets the requirements of the legislation and details the relationship between those employees who are lowest paid and Chief Officers.
- 2.3 The policy statement outlines the following key areas:
- Level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer
 - Remuneration of Chief Officers on recruitment
 - Increases and additions to remuneration for each Chief Officer
 - The approach to the payment of Chief Officers on their ceasing to hold office or to be employed by the authority
 - The publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of Chief Officers
 - Pay multiple (ratio) between Chief Officers' pay and all other employees
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 - Policy on employing someone who has taken redundancy
 - Policy on employing someone who is also drawing a pension
 - Policy on lowest paid

3. Level and elements of remuneration for each senior officer

- 3.1 All staff are employed on an Epsom & Ewell Borough Council contract of employment and therefore are subject to PAYE. All employees are on local conditions and the pay structure applies to all employees, including Chief

Officers. The grade allocated to a post is determined by the qualifications, skills and knowledge required as outlined in a role profile and person specification. The Council has a job evaluation scheme which is used to evaluate the grades of posts.

- 3.2 For the purposes of this policy statement, all references to “Chief Officers” is taken to include the Chief Executive and Directors. Their 2024/25 salary scales are set out in the table below:

Post	Bottom of salary range p.a.	Top of salary range p.a.
Chief Executive	£131,016	£151,979
Director	£93,156	£109,323

- 3.3 In addition to basic pay these officers may receive the following benefits, where applicable:

- Payment into the pension scheme if the employee has opted in and pays into the required employee contribution rate. The employer’s contribution is currently 17.4% of pensionable pay, with the next actuarial valuation due 31 March 2026.
- Chief Executive and Director monthly allowance of 4% of basic salary in respect of subsistence and other expenses, thereby reducing administration and providing a cap on the cost.
- Payment of up to two annual subscriptions to professional institutions where this is an essential requirement of the role. Costs of memberships vary but most are around £200.
- Allowance for the requirement to have a car for the effective performance of duties. The amount varies according to the role of the individual.

- 3.4 Our policy is to pay appropriately to attract competent and experienced senior staff to lead the organisation. We do not aim to be in the upper quartile of payment levels locally but nearer the mid-point or median.

- 3.5 We recognise that the cost of housing in Epsom & Ewell is amongst the highest in the South East and that we are within commuting distance of London and the higher salaries there. These factors are taken into account when determining salary levels from the benchmarking information.

- 3.6 The overall consideration is what is reasonable and financially affordable.

4. Remuneration of Chief Officers on recruitment

- 4.1 Our policy is to appoint at the bottom of the salary scale, or near the bottom taking into account relevant skills and experience. Progression through the grade is subject to sustained satisfactory performance in accordance with our performance management scheme.
- 4.2 On occasion it may be necessary to appoint above the bottom point, in this case consideration will be given to the justification for doing so and will be dependent upon factors such as experience and market conditions.
- 4.3 Appointments to the post of Chief Executive are made by the Council and appointments of Directors are made by an Appointments Panel.

5. Increases and additions to remuneration for each Chief Officer

- 5.1 Cost of living pay increases for all staff are considered in line with the Council's Pay Policy, which has been revised for 2024. The Pay Policy is agreed in consultation with the Staff Consultative Group, which is made up of employee representatives and is the body which the Council consults with on terms and conditions of employment and other employee related matters.
- 5.2 Based on a recommendation by Full Council, a 6% cost of living increase will be applied to the pay scales in a one year pay deal for 2024/25. The 6% increase has been factored into the 2024/25 budget, as agreed at Full Council in December 2023.
- 5.3 When determining pay awards we take into account financial affordability as well as the increase in cost of living for all staff.
- 5.4 All employees (including Chief Officers) may be awarded a single increment on the salary scale annually. This is dependent on satisfactory performance with no automatic progression through grades. All employees are expected to perform their duties to a satisfactory standard to progress through the grade.
- 5.5 Once an employee reaches the top of their salary scale there is no opportunity for further progression, however, any cost of living increase will apply.

6. The approach to the payment of Chief Officers on their ceasing to hold office or to be employed by the authority

- 6.1 Our Managing Workforce Change policy sets out a consistent method of calculating redundancy pay which uses the Modified Statutory Redundancy ready reckoner which is applied to all redundant employees including Chief Officers.

- 6.2 The level of redundancy pay is calculated on weekly earnings using the statutory system. The payment is intended to recompense employees for the loss of their livelihood and provide financial support whilst they seek alternative employment.
- 6.3 The Council has a Local Government Pension Scheme Discretions Policy which is applicable to all employees, including Chief Officers.

7. The publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of Chief Officers

- 7.1 As required our annual pay policy statement will be published on the website where it can be easily accessed by any interested parties.
- 7.2 Information about Chief Officer remuneration is also published as part of the Final Statement of Accounts. The pay scales for all employees can also be found on the website.

8. Pay multiple (ratio) between Chief Officers' pay and all other employees

- 8.1 The pay of all employees is set according to the Council's pay scales. There is a fixed relationship between each point on each of the grades. There are no predefined pay ratios between different groups of employees or specific posts.
- 8.2 The bottom of our lowest pay scale is £21,734 and the top of the Chief Executive scale is £151,979. This is a pay multiple of 1:7. Please note that these figures are based on pay scales and not actual salaries.
- 8.3 The figure above is within the maximum ratio 1:20 identified as a maximum pay multiple in the Hutton Review of Public Sector Pay.
- 8.4 As at 30 November 2023 the mean average pay for employees other than Chief Officers was £36,177; therefore currently the ratio of mean average Chief Officer pay to mean average pay of other employees was 1:2.9.

NB The mean average pay for employees other than Chief Officers in 8.4 may fluctuate throughout the year

9. Election fees

- 9.1 Fees in respect of the role of Returning Officer for borough and county elections are paid separately from and in addition to the relevant Officer's salary package. The amount payable varies according to the size of the electorate and number of postal voters and is calculated as set out in the attached Election of County/Borough/Parish Councillors in Surrey: Scale of Returning Officer's Fees and Charges – 2022/23 (Appendix 1).

- 9.2 The process for agreeing this fee structure is coordinated by Guildford Borough Council. Once issued, consultation is undertaken with Surrey Chief Executives. A new fee structure is not due to be released until the end of January 2024 at the earliest.
- 9.3 Payments for employees below Chief Officer level for Local Election duties are made in accordance with the same scale.

10. Gender Pay Gap Information

- 10.1 In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, which came into force on the 31 March 2017, employers with at least 250 employees are required to publish Gender Pay Gap information as at 31 March each year. This information is published on the Council's website and on the Government's Gender Pay Gap website no later than 30 March annually.
- 10.2 The Council will continue to comply with the submission of this data.

11. Policy on employing someone who has taken redundancy

- 11.1 Employees who have left the Council's employment voluntarily are free to apply for Council jobs that are advertised.
- 11.2 Employees who leave the Council with a redundancy payment and are subsequently apply and are appointed to a position within the Council must repay any redundancy payment if the appointment is taken up within 4 weeks of their termination date.
- 11.3 If the appointment start date is longer than 4 weeks the employee can return to work in the position offered in accordance with the Redundancy Modification Order and will lose any contractual right to have their continuous service recognised for all purposes.

12. Policy on employing someone who is also drawing a pension

- 12.1 We employ staff on merit and pay the full salary applicable to the role. We do not take into account whether a person was already in receipt of a pension in respect of previous employment with the Council or otherwise.
- 12.1 We will consider requests from staff who wish to draw their pension but continue working in a reduced capacity either through a reduction in working hours or levels of salary / responsibility.

13. Policy on lowest paid

- 13.1 When determining any pay award we will take into account the needs of the lowest paid along with national living wage requirements set out by Government.
- 13.2 No employee will be paid below the UK National Living Wage.

ELECTION OF COUNTY/ BOROUGH / PARISH COUNCILLORS IN SURREY: SCALE OF RETURNING OFFICER'S FEES AND CHARGES - 2021/2022			
The scale of Fees and Charges specifies the maximum recoverable amounts available for each electoral area.			
It also sets maximum recoverable amounts for specified services and specified expenses.			
Neither of these can be exceeded but the Returning Officer is entitled to disburse funds on the different functions specified in the fee scale as he/she sees fit, provided the expenditure is accounted for properly and only spent on what is necessary for the efficient and effective conduct of the election.			
This scale of Fees and Charges is also to be used at any referendum held under the regulations listed in the Notes at the bottom of Annex 1.			
All references in this document to the Returning Officer or County DRO are to be read and interpreted as applying to the Counting Officer at any Referendum covered by the list of regulations in the Notes at the bottom of Annex 1.			
Part A - Note: The Returning Officer or County DRO may allocate some of his/her fee to deputies or vire them to another expenditure head.			
	2019/2020	2020/2021(Hourly Rate)	2022/2023(Hourly Rate)
	Bringing payments up to Living Wage	The Hourly rate is calculated for working 15 1/2 hours	The Hourly rate is calculated for working 16 hours
1	(a) Separate County, Borough or Parish Elections		
	First 500 electorate	£32	£32
	For every additional 500 electors, or part thereof	£16	£16
	(b) Combined County / Borough and Parish Elections		
	First 500 electorate (in combined part of area only)	£43	£43
	For every additional 500 electors, or part thereof (in combined part of area only)	£21	£21
	Note 1: Where a combined fee is payable, that fee must be split between the areas. A total combined fee is not payable in each area.		
	Note 2: Where a single election is payable from this fee scale in combination with an election paid by central government, the combination element will only be paid by this local fee scale if there is no payment for combination in the government fee scale.		
	Note 3: Where more than two elections are combined from this fee scale, the following payment will be made per 500 electors or part thereof for each extra election. This is only applicable in the areas in which those elections apply.	£6.00	£6.00
	(c) Uncontested Election *	£27.00	£27.00
	* Fee applicable at by-elections for County / Borough or Parish Councillors or, at Ordinary Elections, when the election of Borough Councillors is contested but the election for the Parish or Parish Ward is uncontested.		
2	In each contested electoral area, for services in connection with the despatch and receipt of postal ballot papers		
	For first 100 postal voters	£7.00	£7.00
	For each additional 75 postal voters or fraction thereof	£6.00	£6.00
3	In each contested electoral area, for services in connection with the preparation and issue of Official Poll Cards (all types - Poll/Postal Poll/Proxy Poll/ Proxy Postal Poll)		
	First 2000 poll cards	£20.00	£20.00
	For every additional 250 poll cards, or fraction thereof	£1.00	£1.00
4	NOTE: At a contested by-election the total fee payable to the Returning Officer must be at least equal to the sum of the Presiding Officer and Count Assistant fees stated at B1(a) and B4(a)(i) respectively and the amount opposite	£90.00	£90.00
5	Max fee for training Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks per session (min 25 people at ordinary election. One session only at by-election if training deemed necessary). This fee to be distributed direct to the Trainer(s).	£162.00	£162.00
Part B - Expenses of Returning Officer or County DRO for which maximum amounts are specified			
In no case shall a charge exceed the sum actually and necessarily payable or paid by the Returning Officer or County Deputy Returning Officer. Subject thereto the MAXIMUM charges shall be as follows:			
1	For the Presiding Officer at each Polling Station		
	(i) (a) at separate Borough or Parish Polls (including payment for use of mobile phone £5)	£260.00	£269 (£17.03)
	(i) (b) at combined Borough / Parish Polls (including payment for use of mobile phone £5)	£300.00	£319 (£20.25)
	(i) (c) for each extra election above a combined election	£30.00	£30.00
	(ii) Where at a polling place there is more than one polling station, the maximum recoverable amount in respect of one only of the presiding officers at the polling station at such a polling place is increased by	£20.00	£20.00
	NB Where a polling station is situated within the boundary of a District or Borough Council which adjoins a London Borough the fees in B1 (a) & (b) are increased by	£40.00	£40.00
	Max fee per session for training of Presiding Officers as necessary	£43.00	£43.00
2	For each Poll Clerk at each Polling Station		
	(a) at separate Borough or Parish Polls	£145.00	£167 (£10.77)
	(b) at combined Borough / Parish Polls	£170.00	£192 (£12.39)
	(c) for each extra election above a combined election depending on local circumstances and as the Returning Officer thinks fit	£15.00	£15.00
	Part time Poll Clerk	Will be calculated on hourly rate	Will be calculated on hourly rate
	NB Where a polling station is situated within the boundary of a District or Borough Council which adjoins a London Borough the fees in B2 (a) & (b) are increased by	£40.00	£40.00
	Max fee per session for training of Poll Clerks as necessary	£43.00	£43.00
3	For each Postal Vote Issuing/Opening Clerk		£11.05 per hour
	Postal Vote Scanning Clerk		£11.05 per hour
	Postal Vote / Scanning Supervisor		£15 per hour
	Postal Vote / Scanning Deputy Supervisor		£12 per hour

4	For the remuneration of persons employed in the despatch and receipt of postal ballot papers. (NB. See C3 below. If external contractors are used to prepare/despatch ballot paper packs then the total fee is actual costs.)			
	For each 100 postal ballot papers, or fraction thereof in each electoral area of the County / Borough / Parish	£75.00	£75.00	£75
5	For the remuneration for persons employed in connection with the count			
	(a) Counting Assistants			
	(i) For overnight counts		£17.00	£17.00
	(ii) For Weekend Day time counts		£14.00	£14.00
	(iii) For Day time counts		£11.00	£11.05
	(b) Count Supervisors			
	(i) For overnight counts		£27.00	£27.00
	(ii) For Weekend Day time counts		£24.00	£24.00
	(iii) For Day time counts		£22.00	£22.00
	(c) Senior Count Supervisors			
	(i) For overnight counts		£33.00	£33.00
	(ii) For Weekend Day time counts		£30.00	£30.00
	(iii) For Day time counts		£28.00	£28.00
6	For each Electoral Division, Ward or Parish Ward			
	(a) Contested Elections: * County/Borough Councillors and Parish Councillors			
	(i) Separate Polls			
	First 500 electorate	£35.00	£35.00	£35.00
	For every additional 500 electorate, or part thereof	£17.00	£17.00	£17.00
	(ii) Combined Polls (County/Borough & Parish)			
	First 500 electorate (in combined part of area only)	£46.00	£46.00	£46.00
	For every additional 500 electorate, or part thereof (in combined part of area only)	£23.00	£23.00	£23.00
	Note: Where a combined clerical fee is payable, that fee must be split between the areas. A total combined fee is not payable in each area.			
	(b) Uncontested Elections * :	£28.00	£28.00	£28.00
	* Fee applicable at by-elections for County / Borough or Parish Councillors or, at Ordinary Elections, when the election of Borough Councillors is contested but the election for the Parish or Parish Ward is uncontested. The Fee is also applicable at Ordinary Elections where the Parish or Parish Ward is contested but the Borough Ward is uncontested.			
	*For un-contested scheduled Parish elections the Returning Officer can charge a maximum administration fee	£150.00	£150.00	£200
7	Preparation and issue of poll cards (all types - Poll/Postal Poll/Proxy Poll/ Proxy Postal Poll)			
	For every 100 cards or fraction thereof	£5.00	£5.00	£5
Part C -	Expenses of Returning Officer for which NO maximum amounts are specified			
1	For travelling and overnight subsistence expenses of:			
	(a) the Returning Officer			
	(b) the Deputy Returning Officer(s)			
	(c) any Presiding Officer or Poll Clerk			
	(d) any clerical or other assistants employed by the Returning Officer			
2	Expenses in printing or otherwise producing the ballot papers	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs
3	Expenses in printing or otherwise producing the postal ballot ballot paper packs by external contractors. (NB See B3 above. If external contractors are used to prepare/despatch ballot paper packs then the total actual costs apply).	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs
4	Expenses in printing or otherwise producing the official poll cards (all types - Poll/Postal Poll/Proxy Poll/ Proxy Postal Poll) and in delivering them to voters, excluding the expenses referred to in paragraph 6 of Part B above	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs
5	Expenses in printing or otherwise producing and, where appropriate, publishing notices and other documents required by the Representation of the People Acts			
6	Expenses in renting, heating, lighting and cleaning any building or room for the purpose of the election	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs
7	Expenses in adapting any building or room and in restoring it to a fit condition for its normal use	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs
8	Expenses in the provision of voting compartments and any other furniture necessary for polling stations. Prior agreement to be sought from paying authority.			
9	Expenses in the provision of ballot boxes and instruments to stamp on the ballot papers the official mark and also the provision of devices to record the signatures relating to the issue of ballot papers. Prior agreement to be sought from paying authority.			
10	Expenses in the conveyance to and from the polling stations of:			
	(a) the ballot boxes and ballot papers, and	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs

	(b) the voting compartments, any other furniture necessary for polling stations and the instruments to stamp on the ballot papers the official mark or any other equipment required in the administration of the election.	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs
11	Expenses in the provision of stationery and writing implements and in postages, including postal ballot paper postages (but excluding official poll cards - see paragraph 4 of Part C above) telephone, bank charges and other miscellaneous items	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs
12	Expenses in connection with the provision of security measures	Actual costs	Actual costs	Actual costs
13	Expenses in connection with the employer's portion of superannuation contributions for the Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officer(s), etc			
14	Expenses in the provision of equipment and software for the checking of personal identifiers on the postal voting statements. Prior agreement to be sought from paying authority.			
15	Reimbursement of up to 50% of the costs of any elections management software licence charge in the year in which local elections are held. Further scaled down to a proportionate amount if a by-election held.			
	For maximum levels of expenditure for certain duties under Part C above - see Annex 1 attached.			
ANNEX 1				
Maximum Levels of Expenditure under Part C of Scale of Fees and Charges for County / District / Borough / Parish Elections within Surrey				
Head	Duty			
C1(c)	Presiding Officer Travel - Fixed w	£25.00	£25.00	£25.00
C1(c)	Poll Clerk Travel - Fixed w	£10.00	£10.00	£10.00
	<i>Mileage rates applicable in rural areas where fixed travel is not appropriate</i>	£0.48	£0.48	£0.48
C1(d)	Fixed Travel of staff to transport boxes at the Count (if not delivered by Presiding Officer)	£21.00	£21.00	£21.00
C1(d)	Count staff travel - fixed w	£10.00	£10.00	£10.00
C2	Checking Ballot Papers - per 10,000 ballot papers or part thereof ww	£18.00	£18.00	£18.00
C4	Poll Cards (all types - Poll/Postal Poll/Proxy Poll/ Proxy Postal Poll) - Hand delivery	£0.19	£0.19	£0.20
C7	Polling Station Inspectors - maximum payable per person 1 w	£262.00	£269.00 (£17.03)	269 ((£16.8125)
C8	Preparation of Ballot Boxes & stamping instruments (each polling station)	£9.00	£9.00	£13
C10	Transport of Postal Votes to Count - 2 per District / Borough 1 w	£85.00	£85.00	£85.00
C10	Staff to transport boxes at Count - per District / Borough 1 ww	£635.00	£635.00	£635.00
C10	Remove bundles of counted votes - 3 per District / Borough 1 w	£141.00	£141.00	£141.00
C12	Security at Count - per District / Borough 1 ww	£254.00	£254.00	£254.00
C12	Security at Count - Fixed Travel 1 w	£14.00	£14.00	£14.00
	Note: C12 restriction on ordinary day of election only to be removed			
NOTES	1 Applicable only at the Ordinary Day of Election for County /Borough / Parish Councillors			
	w payable per person			
	ww maximum payable to be disbursed appropriately			
	Referendum regulations applicable to this fee scale:			
	The Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (England) Regulations 2012			
	The Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (Council Tax Increases) (England) Regulations 2012			
	The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012			
ANNEX 2				
Proposed calculation and distribution of core payments - see Word document annexed to this document. Actual payments agreed by each Surrey authority to be recorded in the 'Actual Core Staff Payments' worksheet. Core staff will be paid overtime as per agreed Council policy or if no policy in place a minimum of normal hourly rate is paid				
	Signed _____			
	Tom Horwood, Returning Officer Guildford Borough Council			
	On behalf of all Surrey Returning Officers			

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ANNUAL PLAN 2024-2025

Head of Service:	Andrew Bircher, Interim Director of Corporate Services
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Annual Plan 2024-2025

Summary

This report asks the committee to approve the Annual Plan for the council for 2024 – 2025.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Approve the Annual Plan 2024-2025 at Appendix 1.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 Subject to any changes, Appendix 1 sets out the proposed Annual Plan for the coming year and the ambitions and targets for the council to achieve through its committees and officers.

2 Background

- 2.1 The council's Four Year Plan 2021-2024 will come to an end in March 2024. While the council is formulating its new Four Year Plan, it is prudent to set out its priorities for next year.
- 2.2 A core priority for the Annual Plan 2024-2025 ("the Plan") is ensuring the council's long term financial sustainability. This is the foundation on which the council delivers its services to people who live, work and study in the Borough. Therefore several objectives in the Plan (Appendix 1) relate to this goal, such as the Town Hall relocation and service reviews.

- 2.3 Other objectives relate to the delivery of the council's [corporate strategies](#), such as the new Arts, Heritage and Culture Strategy, and the Climate Change Strategy and Homelessness strategies. Some objectives are continuations of work conducted in 2023-2024, such as implementing the ICT Strategy, reviewing property assets, and progressing the development of the Local Plan.
- 2.4 Sitting underneath the Plan will be service delivery plans for individual departments, the annual budget setting process, as well as specific targets for officers as part of overall performance management.
- 2.5 Performance against the plan will be reported back to the policy chairs on a quarterly basis within their performance packs. In addition, performance will also be reported to Audit and Scrutiny Committee, as well as circulated internally.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1.1 An EIA has not been carried out for this annual plan, as EIAs for individual objectives will be completed as necessary.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

- 3.2.1 No direct implications.

3.3 Safeguarding

- 3.3.1 No direct implications.

3.4 Dependencies

- 3.4.1 There are links to the service delivery plans and other council strategies.

3.5 Other

- 3.5.1 Not applicable.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Financial implications will be considered as each objective is progressed, and individual business cases brought forward as necessary.

- 4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** In setting Annual Plan objectives, Policy Committees should ensure that they are deliverable within existing budget envelopes and the resources available to the Council.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Legal implications will be considered as each objective is progressed.
- 5.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None arise further to the contents of the report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:



- 6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** Climate change priorities are included in Appendix 1.
- 6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** No direct implications.
- 6.5 **Partnerships:** No direct implications.

7 Background papers

- 7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- Strategy & Resources Committee (2023) Annual Plan 2023-2024, Tuesday 28th March (see item no. 58). Online available: <https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=1300> [last accessed 22/12/2023].

Other papers:

- Strategy & Resources Committee (2020) Four Year Plan 2020-2024, Tuesday 14th January (see item no. 37). Online available: <https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=907> [last accessed 22/12/2023].

- Strategy & Resources Committee (2020) Future 40 – Long-Term Vision for Epsom and Ewell, Tuesday 14th January (see no. 36). Online available: <https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=907> [last accessed 22/12/2023].

2024/25 Annual Plan

No.	Committee	Four Year Plan Theme	Applicable Sub-theme Priority from Four Year Plan	2024/2025 Annual Plan Key Deliverables	Target	Responsible Officer	Completion Date
1	S&R	Effective Council	EC1 - Strengthen the council's financial independence.	Set balanced budget, progressing towards removing reliance on the use of reserves to fund day-to-day services.	A balanced budget.	Head of Finance	31 March 2025
2	S&R	Effective Council	EC1 - Strengthen the council's financial independence.	Deliver a plan in conjunction with Budget Policy Chairs and Vice Chairs that will have a multi-year programme of prioritised service reviews as part of the budget making process in successive years with the aim of delivering sustainable budgets through the MTFS 2024-28. Consider opportunities for collaborative work with other organisations	Plan developed by completion date, to be followed by implementation as agreed in the plan.	Chief Executive	31 July 2024
3	S&R	Effective Council	EC3 - Support and enable a high performing and adaptable workforce	Deliver the ICT Strategy's 2024/25 road map objectives.	In year objectives delivered.	Head of Information Technology	31 March 2025
4	S&R	Effective Council	EC1 - Strengthen the council's financial independence.	(i) Develop full operational project structure, plan and associated documentation for the Town Hall move to 70 East Street and progress delivery. (ii) Prepare a high level roadmap / timeline for councillors including key workstreams, deliverables and budget/costs.	Regular progress updates to be provided via Strategy & Resources Committee Chairs' meetings and budget Policy Chairs.	Chief Executive	31 July 2024 (project plan) Begin delivery on plan adoption.
5	S&R	Effective Council	EC1 - Strengthen the council's financial independence.	Decision made by Full Council on the proposals around the development / disposal of the current Town Hall site.	Proposals considered by Full Council by "Completion date".	Head of Property and Regeneration	31 December 2024
6	S&R	Effective Council	EC4 - Improve openness, transparency and customer service	Review and update the Procurement Strategy, CSOs and associated documents in line with legislative updates. <i>This objective is dependent on the when the Government adopts the new legislation.</i>	Strategy updated and approved by Strategy & Resources Committee by "Completion Date".	Head of Policy and Corporate Resources	31 March 2025
7	S&R	Effective Council	EC1 - Strengthen the council's financial independence.	Develop the scope and terms of reference for a detailed Asset Management Plan review for discussion with Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy & Resources Committee. Action linked to Objective 8 below.	Report submitted to Strategy & Resources Committee Chairs by "Completion Date".	Head of Property and Regeneration	31 July 2024
8	S&R	Effective Council	EC1 - Strengthen the council's financial independence.	Develop a new Property Strategy in conjunction with Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy & Resources Committee, to help guide decision making around acquisition, disposal and redevelopment. Action linked to Objective 7 above.	Report submitted to Strategic Leadership Team and agreed at Full Council by "Completion Date".	Head of Property and Regeneration	31 March 2025

2024/25 Annual Plan

9	S&R	Effective Council	EC1 - Strengthen the council's financial independence.	Embed a Risk Management Strategy ethos in the delivery of services and review of policy to ensure that the council takes and manages appropriate risks whilst protecting public funds.	Risk Management Strategy reviewed and approved annually by Strategy & Resources Committee by "Completion Date".	Head of Policy and Corporate Resources	30 November 2024
10	S&R	Effective Council	EC1 - Strengthen the council's financial independence. EC3 - Support and enable a high performing and adaptable workforce. EC4 - Improve openness, transparency and customer service.	Receive the 2024 Corporate Peer Challenge report. Develop and adopt an action plan.	Draft report submitted to Strategic Leadership Team and agreed at Full Council by "Completion Date".	Chief Executive	30 September 2024
11	LPP	Green & Vibrant	GV4 – Encourage high quality design which balances the built environment with new open green spaces.	Progress the Local Plan toward Regulation 19 submission.	Project milestones achieved.	Head of Place Development	31 March 2025
12	LPP	Opportunity & Prosperity	OP1 - Promote Epsom & Ewell as a great place to live, work and study, and encourage inward investment	Progress both Strategic and Neighbourhood CIL spending via implementation of CIL spending protocol	Projects evaluated and recommendations taken to Licensing and Planning Policy Committee	Head of Place Development	30 November 2024
13	C&W	Cultural & Creative	CC1 - Promote Epsom & Ewell's identity as a centre for creative and cultural excellence. CC2 - Promote the borough's rich history and heritage.	Deliver the Arts, Cultural and Heritage Strategy's 2024-2025 objectives.	In year objectives delivered.	Head of Place Development	31 March 2025
14	C&W	Safe & Well	SW1 - Work with partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities, focusing in particular on those who are more vulnerable.	Draft and agree a revised Health & Wellbeing Strategy and deliver the 2024-2025 objectives.	In year objectives delivered.	Head of Housing and Communities	Submitted to committee 31/07/2024 Objectives 31/03/2026
15	C&W	Safe & Well	SW1 - Work with partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities, focusing in particular on those who are more vulnerable.	Implementation of the 2024-2025 actions in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy including updating empty homes policy. Housing stakeholder event(s) to be agreed and arranged with clear outcomes.	In year objectives complete, with quarterly reports to the Community & Wellbeing Committee Chairs meeting. Housing event held and network operational.	Head of Housing and Communities	31 March 2025
16	C&W	Safe & Well	SW1 - Work with partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities, focusing in particular on those who are more vulnerable.	Progress the re-tender of the Leisure Centre contract.	Tender milestones achieved, and briefing note prepared for S&R and C&W Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs. In year objectives delivered.	Head of Policy and Corporate Resources	31 March 2025

2024/25 Annual Plan

17	C&W	Safe & Well	SW1 - Work with partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities, focusing in particular on those who are more vulnerable.	Implement a programme of "Homelessness pods", helping to alleviate homelessness in the Borough and reduce the council's costs for supporting homelessness, subject to feasibility considerations and planning permission.	Report submitted to Strategic Leadership Team and agreed at with relevant Policy Committee Chairs by "Completion Date".	Head of Housing and Communities	31 July 2024
18	C&W	Effective Council	EC1 - Strengthen the council's financial independence	Prepare a Programme that will review income generation opportunities from the council's venues.	Initiatives presented to relevant policy committee Chairs and a quarterly update to Community & Wellbeing Committee Chairs meetings.	Head of Operational Services	31 March 2025
19	E	Green & Vibrant	GV3 – Work with partners to reduce our impact on the environment and move closer to becoming carbon neutral.	Deliver the Climate Change Strategy's 2024-2025 objectives.	In year objectives delivered.	Head of Place Development	31 March 2025
20	E	Effective Council	EC1 - Strengthen the council's financial independence.	A feasibility report and business case for providing a pet crematorium and memorial garden in the Borough.	Report submitted to S&R Committee for consideration.	Head of Operational Services	31 October 2024
21	E	Safe & Well	GV3 – Work with partners to reduce our impact on the environment and move closer to becoming carbon neutral.	To continue to monitor developments in Government Waste Strategy and respond accordingly.	Briefings provided to Environment Committee on any forthcoming developments or opportunities.	Head of Operational Services	Ongoing throughout 2024-2025

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POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACE REVIEW

Head of Service:	Piero Ionta, Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1: Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places & Polling Stations: Consultation – September 2022 Appendix 2: Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places & Polling Stations: Consultation Responses - October 2022

Summary

This report sets out the outcome of the consultation process on Polling Places and Districts and makes recommendations for proposed changes.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to recommend that the Council:

- (1) Agrees the location of the polling places and districts as set out in Appendix 1 for a five-year period from 1st March 2024, or until it is superseded by any subsequent review of any polling place or district; and**
- (2) Delegates to the Chief Executive in their capacity as the Council's Returning Officer any ongoing review or change of polling places during this period, to ensure that polling arrangements in the Borough remain fit for purpose for each election called.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 Following the completion of the Electoral Review of the Parliamentary Constituency of Epsom and Ewell by the Boundary Commission for England, the Council is required to undertake a review of polling districts and places before 31 January 2025. Mindful that there is an election for the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner on 2 May 2024 and an anticipated parliamentary election in 2024, it was decided that it would be preferable to conduct the review prior to both sets of elections.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Representation of the People Act 1983 (the Act) was amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (Section 16) and later by the Electoral Registration Act 2013 (Section 17) to detail the current process regarding the way reviews of polling districts and polling places must be undertaken.
- 2.2 The Act specified how frequently reviews should be undertaken and made it a requirement that relevant authorities (i.e. this Council) carry out a review every four years (this was changed in 2013 to every five years). The Council was required to conclude the first review by 31 December 2007. The review was duly undertaken in September 2007 and the outcome of the review reported to Council in December of that year.
- 2.3 The Electoral Registration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews and these were subsequently held in December 2014, December 2019 and December 2022. The next statutory review period commenced on 1 October 2023 with all local authorities required to review their UK Parliamentary constituency polling districts before 31 January 2025.
- 2.4 The Council is responsible for undertaking each review to provide a sufficient number of polling districts and polling places for elections.
- 2.5 The Council's Chief Executive, as Returning Officer for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, is responsible for undertaking the reviews. The Returning Officer is also responsible for deciding how many polling stations are required for each polling place and for allocating electors to those polling stations as they consider appropriate.
- 2.6 At least one polling place must be identified for each polling district. Polling places have polling stations located within them; so, for example, a church building may be a polling place, with the room or hall where voting takes place comprising the actual polling station.
- 2.7 There are a number of factors that need to be considered when reviewing existing polling places or when assessing new polling places. In practice, the designation of polling places is very much dependent on the availability of suitable premises that can be used as polling places.

- 2.8 The current review cannot propose changes to Ward, Borough or Constituency boundaries, which are the responsibility of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) or Boundary Commission for England (BCE).
- 2.9 If the proposals of this review are agreed, the polling districts and polling places proposed will be confirmed with effect from 1 March 2024, and will be used for the Police and Crime Commissioner elections on 2 May 2024, or for any election called subsequent to 1 March 2024.

3 Council Motion on use of Schools as Polling Places

- 3.1 At its meeting on 23 July 2019, Council passed the following Motion:

“This Council agrees that it will no longer use any schools that, in order to act as a polling station, would have to close for the day. It will provide polling districts which it has been accustomed to using such schools with alternative polling stations as near as possible to that polling district”.

- 3.2 It is important to note that the legislation (Representation of the People Act 1983, Schedule A1) sets out the requirements for polling place reviews. This requires Local Authorities to comply with the access requirements. As part of the review, they must:

- Seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
- Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practical every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.

- 3.3 In the event these tests are not met, an elector has a right of representation (i.e. appeal). The two appeal grounds are:

- The local authority has failed to meet the reasonable requirements of the electors in the constituency
- The local authority has failed to take sufficient account of accessibility to disabled persons of the polling station/ polling stations within a polling place.

- 3.4 It is therefore clear, that a polling place is determined with the elector as the primary interest, no other considerations form part of the legislative requirements.

4 Current Arrangements

- 4.1 The Borough is divided into 14 electoral wards:

- 4.1.1 Five are made of one polling district and have one polling place in each (Auriol, Ruxley, Stoneleigh, Ewell Village, Horton);
- 4.1.2 Seven are made of two polling districts with two polling places in each Ward (Cuddington, Ewell Court, West Ewell, Court, Stamford, Nonsuch, College);
- 4.1.3 Two are made up of three polling districts with three polling places in each Ward (Town, Woodcote & Langley Vale)

5 Consultation Exercise

- 5.1 The consultation in respect of the Polling Districts and Places Review was carried out for five weeks between 27 October and 1 December 2023, a copy of the consultation document is attached at Appendix 1. The review was conducted in accordance with the Electoral Commission's guidance on conducting such reviews.
- 5.2 To ensure a wide circulation of the consultation, it was made available on the Council's website, communicated via social media and a number of consultees were directly informed as detailed on page 5 of Appendix 1. All venues including the affected schools (i.e. those allocated as Polling Places) were contacted directly to advise of the review and to enable them to comment on the proposals.
- 5.3 During the consultation period, a number of representations were received, and the breakdown for all the representations is contained at Appendix 2. In essence, the representations were made up as follows:

Ward	Total Number Received
Cuddington	0
Auriol	0
Ewell Court	1
Ruxley	1
West Ewell	0
Court	1
Stamford	1
Stoneleigh	0
Nonsuch	0
Ewell Village	0
Town	0
College	1
Woodcote & Langley Vale	0
Horton	1

6 Consultation Responses and Recommendations

The representations and recommendations are as follows:

6.1 Cuddington Ward

6.1.1 No representations were received.

6.1.2 Recommendation: No change to Polling District or Polling Place, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.2 Auriol Ward

6.2.1 No representations were received.

6.2.2 Recommendation No change to Polling District or Polling Place, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.3 Ewell Court Ward

6.3.1 One representation was received from the venue (Ruxley Church) confirming suitability.

6.3.2 Recommendation: No change to Polling District or Polling Place, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.4 Ruxley Ward

6.4.1 One representation was received, suggesting that the Cox Lane Centre be used instead of Epsom & Ewell High School which is currently a polling place that hosts a double polling station.

6.4.2 Officers have previously considered the suitability of the Cox Lane Centre and conducted a site visit to the Cox Lane Centre back in 2022. Whilst the building is of a good size, there were concerns that voters not living in the immediate area would have difficulty locating the venue which is on the edge of the borough boundary at the far end of Cox Lane. The current polling place at Epsom and Ewell High School is highly visible being on a main road and a bus route.

6.4.3 An important criteria in designating a polling place is location, so that voters can easily find and get to their polling station whether they are on foot or in a vehicle.

6.4.4 There are concerns that the increased distance to get to the polling station would deter people from voting. This Ward already has a low turnout of around 23% at local elections.

6.4.5 There are 2 bus services in the area, the E5 and the 418. The E5 has a stop in Cox Lane but only operates on an hourly basis between 6.30am to 6.30pm. The 418 does not stop in Cox Lane but does stop directly outside the current polling place at the Epsom and Ewell High School and operates throughout and beyond polling hours.

- 6.4.6 It should also be noted that if the polling place was moved to Cox Lane, voters needing to travel by vehicle from roads on the west side of the ward will have further to travel past the current polling place, as there is no direct road access to Cox Lane other than via Ruxley Lane (Amis Avenue is no longer a through road to traffic).
- 6.4.7 The Cox Lane Centre is currently in use as a Doctors' Surgery and will also be used by a Children's nursery opening in 2024, which would mean that they would need to make alternative arrangements if the venue was used. Due to concerns regarding access arrangements and safeguarding (i.e. operating the nursery whilst in use as a polling station) it is not considered to be a suitable or an available venue for a polling station.
- 6.4.8 Officers also previously made enquiries regarding The Edge Centre in Rowden Road back in 2022. However, this Centre is currently used by Surrey County Council for schooling excluded pupils which would mean that they would need to make alternative arrangements if the venue was used. The location is, as per its name, on the edge of the borough and even further to walk for the majority of voters. For those reasons, it is not considered to be a suitable or an available venue for a polling station.
- 6.4.9 Due to the lack of suitable alternative locations, it is recommended that the polling place is retained at Epsom and Ewell High School and that the Council maintains its search for an alternative location.
- 6.4.10 Epsom and Ewell High School was notified directly about the review but did not submit a representation.
- 6.4.11 Officers held a site visit to the school in December 2023 following a request from the school outside of the consultation period that polling stations be relocated from its 6th Form IT Suite to its Sports Pavilion. Whilst the Sports Pavilion is considered by officers to be adequate for disability accessibility requirements, it is located at the rear of the school site and accessed by an alleyway a distance from the main entrance to the school. Pedestrian access and parking arrangements would therefore be different from those used for the 6th Form IT Suite. If the Council agrees to the recommendation that the polling place is retained at Epsom and Ewell High School, officers will investigate the possibility of a trial of the use of the school's Sports Pavilion as a polling station for the Police and Crime Commissioner election on 2 May 2024. Any such trial would require clear communication to voters of the polling stations' location and access arrangements, and this will be incorporated into the planning arrangements for the election.

6.4.12 It should also be noted that Epsom and Ewell High School was asked if it was able to schedule an inset day on polling day and notification of scheduled elections dates is provided well in advance so it can facilitate this option, but its response was that inset days had already been allocated for other purposes during 2024.

6.4.13 Recommendation: No change to Polling District or Polling Place, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.5 West Ewell Ward

6.5.1 No representations were received.

6.5.2 Recommendation No change to Polling District or Polling Place, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.6 Court Ward

6.6.1 One representation was received suggesting that voters in Hook Road could vote at a different polling station to their current station, the Community and Wellbeing Centre, Sefton Road.

6.6.2 These voters are currently voting in Polling District 'FB' due to the County Council Electoral Boundaries. There is an ongoing electoral review for the County Council (to be completed in 2024) and depending on the outcome of that review there may be scope in the future to move them to Polling District FA, which votes at the Court Recreation Ground.

6.6.3 Recommendation: No change to Polling Districts or Polling Places, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.7 Stamford Ward

6.7.1 One representation was received from the venue (The Wells Centre) confirming suitability.

6.7.2 Recommendation: No change to Polling Districts or Polling Places, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.8 Stoneleigh Ward

6.8.1 No representations were received.

6.8.2 Recommendation: No change to Polling District or Polling Place, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.9 Nonsuch Ward

6.9.1 No representations were received.

6.9.2 Recommendation: No change to Polling Districts or Polling Places, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.10 Ewell Village Ward

6.10.1 No representations were received.

6.10.2 Recommendation: No change to Polling District or Polling Place, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.11 Town Ward

6.11.1 No representations were received.

6.11.2 Recommendation: No change to Polling Districts or Polling Places, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.12 College Ward

6.12.1 One representation was received expressing support for the recommended arrangements.

6.12.2 Recommendation: No change to Polling Districts or Polling Places, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.13 Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward

6.13.1 No representations were received.

6.13.2 Officers held a site visit to St Martins C of E Junior School in December 2023 following a request from the school outside of the consultation period that the polling station be relocated from its Music and Library Unit to its Children Centre. The Children Centre is considered by officers to be adequate for disability accessibility requirements and is easily accessible for voters on arriving on foot or by car. If the Council agrees to the recommendation that the polling place is retained at St Martins C of E Junior School, Officers will investigate the possibility of a trial of the use of the school's Children Centre as a polling station for the Police and Crime Commissioner election on 2 May 2024. Any such trial would require clear communication to voters of the polling station's location and access arrangements, and this will be incorporated into the planning arrangements for the election.

6.13.3 It should also be noted that St Martins C of E Junior School may be able to schedule an inset day on polling day and notification of scheduled elections dates is provided well in advance so it may be able to facilitate this option.

6.13.4 Recommendation: No change to Polling Districts or Polling Places, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

6.14 Horton Ward

6.14.1 One representation was received asking whether residents of Noble Park would have further to travel to a polling station at Horton Chapel (Horton Arts Centre).

6.14.2 The Horton Arts Centre is considered to be suitable as it is in the middle of the 4 estates that will vote there and is large enough to contain a double polling station. Voters in Noble Park were in Stamford Ward previous to 2023 and voted at Christ Church Hall which is a similar distance to the Horton Arts Centre.

6.14.3 No change to Polling District or Polling Place, as proposed by the review documentation (Appendix 1).

7 Delegated Authority for the Chief Executive:

7.1 Delegated authority is sought to enable the Chief Executive in their capacity as the Council's Returning Officer to make changes to polling places if necessary to ensure that polling arrangements in the Borough remain fit for purpose for each election called. This delegation is sought for a five-year period from 1st March 2024, or until it is superseded by any subsequent review of any polling place or district and would be utilised in circumstances in which there was insufficient time to present a report to Council prior to an election being held, for example: if a Polling place became inaccessible at short notice.

7.2 The Council agreed a similar delegation (superseded by this review) to the Chief Executive in 2022 and 2019. If approved by the Council, this delegation will be added to Appendix 2.1 of the Constitution (Live Register of Delegations).

8 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

8.1 Equality Impact Assessment

8.1.1 The Council has due regard to its equality duties under Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010. In addition, it is a legal requirement of the Returning Officer that, in so far as is reasonable and practical, every polling place is accessible to electors with disabilities. This has been taken fully into account during this review process.

8.1.2 Appropriate equipment (such as ramps, visual enhancement aids etc.) will continue to be provided at all polling stations, and all polling staff will continue to be fully trained to provide support and facilities for voters with disabilities.

8.2 Crime & Disorder

8.2.1 None.

8.3 Safeguarding

8.3.1 Safeguarding issues are considered for all potential polling places prior to their recommendation to the Council, and prior to every election. Any issues identified are appropriately managed in accordance with Council policies and in agreement with the management of the premises.

8.4 Dependencies

8.4.1 None.

8.5 Other

8.5.1 None.

9 Financial Implications

9.1 The cost of venue hire for national elections and referenda is met by central Government. Costs for local elections are covered by the council's own allocated budgets.

9.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

10 Legal Implications

10.1 This review has been undertaken in accordance with Section 18 of Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended by Section 17 of the Electoral Registration Act 2013), which requires such a review to be undertaken every five years. A review requires all of the steps set out in Schedule A1 of Representation of the People Act 1983 to be met, as demonstrated by this report and its appendices.

10.2 In addition, due consideration has been given to the requirements of the Electoral and Registration Act 2013 in relation to the timing of this review.

10.3 The regulations that govern the use of schools falls under rule 22, Schedule 1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. There is a duty imposed on schools who are either maintained or assisted in any way by money provided by Parliament, to be used free of charge (with the exception of certain expenses) as polling places.

10.4 **Legal Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

11 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

11.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- Effective Council.

11.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

11.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** The accessibility of polling places by foot, bicycle and public transport has been considered in the process of their recommendation to the Council.

11.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None.

11.5 **Partnerships:** None.

12 Background papers

12.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- [Report to Council 23 July 2019, Notices of Motions, Polling Stations](#)
- [Report to Council 18 December 2019, Polling Stations Review 2019](#)
- [Report to Council 4 December 2022, Polling District and Places Review 2022](#)

Other papers:

- Electoral Commission: Reviews of Polling Districts, Polling Places And Polling Stations:
<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/reviews-polling-districts-polling-places-and-polling-stations>
- [Local Government Boundary Commission Electoral Review of Surrey County Council](#)
- [Constitution Appendix 2.1 – Live Register of Delegations](#)

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Public Consultation

Polling District and Polling Places Review

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

October 2023

**Jacqueline King - Acting Returning Officer
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
The Town Hall
The Parade
Epsom
Surrey KT15 8BY**

www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Background

The Representation of the People Act 1983 (the Act) was amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (Section 16) and later by the Electoral Registration Act 2013 (section 17) to detail the current process regarding the way reviews of polling districts and polling places must be undertaken.

First Review

The Act specified how frequently reviews should be undertaken and made it a requirement that relevant authorities (i.e. this Council) carry out a review every four years. The Council was required to conclude the first review by 31 December 2007. The review was duly undertaken in September 2007 and the outcome of the review reported to Council in December of that year.

Subsequent Reviews

Notwithstanding the legislation, the Council regularly reviews its polling places but duly completed a second statutory review in December 2011.

The Electoral Registration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews and these were subsequently held in December 2014, December 2019 and December 2022. The next statutory review period commenced on 1 October 2023 with all local authorities required to review their UK Parliamentary constituency polling districts before 31 January 2025.

Definition of a Parliamentary Constituency, a Ward, Polling District, Polling Place and Polling Station

To assist any interested party who may wish to make representations, the following definitions may be helpful:

a) Parliamentary Constituency

This is an area designated by the Boundary Commission which is represented by a Member of Parliament (MP) in the House of Commons. This cannot be changed by the review – it is the division of the constituency into polling districts and places that is under review.

b) Wards

The Borough is divided into areas known as “Wards” which are represented by Borough Councillors.

c) Polling Districts

A polling district is the area created by the division of a Ward into smaller parts, within which a polling place can be determined which is most suitable for the electors.

d) Polling Places

A polling place is the building or area in which the number of polling stations will be selected by the Acting Returning Officer.

e) Polling Station

A polling station is the room or area in which voting takes place. This must be located within the polling place that has been designated for the particular polling district. The number of polling stations to be accommodated within a polling place is the decision of the Acting Returning Officer.

Timetable for the Review

The Council is required to publish notice of the holding of a review. This has been carried out by way of notices posted outside the Town Hall, Epsom and on the Council's website. The timetable for the review is set out below:

Publication of notice	27 October 2023
Publication of consultation document	27 October 2023
Closing date for representations	5pm, 1 December 2023
Consideration of all representations	1-8 December 2023
Report to Strategy and Resources Committee	25 January 2024
Report to Full Council	13 February 2024
Publication of notice of amendments to electoral register and intention to publish revised version of register (If necessary)	15 February 2024
Publication of revised version of register (if necessary)	1 March 2024

Criteria for Polling Places and Polling Districts

The Electoral Commission has set out guidance to assist in assessing the current arrangements and any proposals for change.

As part of the assessment of the suitability of polling district boundaries, the following should be considered:

- Are the boundaries well defined? For example. Do they follow the natural boundaries of the areas? If not, is it clear which properties belong in the polling district?
- Are there suitable transport links within the polling district, and how do they relate to the areas of the district that are most highly populated? Are there any obstacles to voters crossing the current polling district and reaching the polling place e.g., steep hills, impassable major roads, railway lines, rivers?

There are also a number of factors that must be considered when reviewing existing polling places or assessing new polling places, including:

- **The location:** is it reasonably accessible within the polling district? Does it avoid barriers for the voter such as steep hills, major roads, rivers, etc.? Are there any convenient transport links?
- **Size:** can the polling place accommodate more than one polling station if required? If multiple polling stations are required, is the polling place ample enough to accommodate all voters going into and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout?
- **Suitability:** is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections? Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development? Is the building accessible to all those entitled to attend the polling place?

The Electoral Commission recognises that the choice of polling place will often be a balance between the quality of the building in terms of access and facilities and the proximity of the building to the electors it is intended to serve and that there may be circumstances, where the polling place might fall wholly or partly outside the polling district because suitable alternatives are not available in the relevant Ward.

Although it is Council policy to avoid the use of schools wherever possible, there may be locations where there are no other suitable premises in the area. If a school is used, the polling station(s) should be located within the school grounds to enable the school to remain open with suitable separation of pupils from voters to cause minimal disruption to the school day. Any decision to close any school ultimately remains with the school itself.

There are occasions where a school may be the only option available, and it may need to close.

For the purposes of elections, the Acting Returning Officer is entitled to use free of charge, subject to covering the cost of heating, lighting and caretaking charges, schools maintained or assisted by a local authority as well as those schools that receive grants made up of monies provided by Parliament.

In conducting this review, it is proposed that, in order to minimise the risk of queues at a polling place, as far as possible, that no more than 2250 voters should be assigned to each polling station as recommended by the Electoral Commission.

It should be noted that the number of postal voters in each polling district is a relevant consideration in this regard. In the event of a combined and/or Parliamentary Election, given more complex arrangements and higher voter turnout, it may be necessary to review these numbers. In all circumstances, consideration is given to whether a polling place is capable of accommodating more than one polling station, if necessary.

Current practice, to avoid confusion and delays at polling stations and the Count, is not to locate polling stations from more than one Ward in the same building and this will be taken into consideration when considering any proposals.

Polling station staff are encouraged to make comments and observations regarding the suitability of polling places to which they are allocated, as are Polling Station Inspectors who visited all polling stations during the last elections held in May 2023. Comments made have been taken into account when conducting this review.

The Role of the Acting Returning Officer

Whilst it is for the Council to decide on the creation of polling districts and location of polling places, it is for the Acting Returning Officer to decide how many polling stations are required for each polling place and must allocate electors to the polling stations in such manner as they think most conducive to the smooth running of polling day.

The Council is required to consult the Returning Officer for every Parliamentary Constituency that is wholly or partly within its area. The whole of the Borough falls within the Parliamentary Constituency of Epsom and Ewell there are no other Constituencies wholly or partly within its area.

Therefore, the Council needs only to consult the Acting Returning Officer for Epsom and Ewell as part of the review and the Acting Returning Officer must comment during any review on both the existing polling districts and the polling stations and any proposed changes.

Other representations

Any elector in the Constituency may make representations on the designation of polling districts or places.

The Council is also required to seek representations from those with an expertise in relation to access to premises and facilities for disabled people. Such persons must also be given the opportunity to comment on the representations made by the Acting Returning Officer (which are contained in this consultation document).

Summary of Consultees

Set out below is a list of persons specifically notified about the review:

- The Member of Parliament for Epsom and Ewell, Chris Grayling
- Surrey Coalition of Disabled People (www.surreycoalition.org.uk)
- All Epsom and Ewell Borough Councillors
- All Surrey County Councillors representing divisions within the Epsom area
- Election agents who acted at the 2023 Borough Council elections
- Registered political parties who regularly field candidates in local and parliamentary elections in the Borough
- Venues used as polling places

Completion of the review

After considering all of the representations, a report will be presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee. It is anticipated that this will be at its meeting on 25 January 2024. The Strategy and Resources Committee will consider the report and make recommendations as it thinks appropriate to full Council on 13 February 2024 at which the final decisions will be made.

The Council is required to give reasons for its decisions in respect of the designation of both polling districts and polling places and these will be published, together with the following information, on the Council's website and made available, on request, at the Town Hall, Epsom:

- all correspondence sent to the Acting Returning Officer in connection with the review
- all correspondence sent to any person who the Council thinks has particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability
- all representations made by any person in connection with the review
- the minutes of any meetings held by the Council where details of the review have been considered
- details of the actual designations of polling districts and polling places agreed as a result of the review

Challenging the Review

Although the Electoral Commission has no initial role in the review process itself, it does have an important role in respect of considering representations and observations made that a Council has failed to conduct a proper review on one of two grounds:

- that the Council has failed to meet the reasonable requirements of the electors in the constituency, or a body of them (i.e., the reasonable requirements of a particular area of the authority have not been satisfactorily met)

or

- that the Council has failed to take sufficient account of the accessibility to disabled persons of polling stations within a designated polling place.

Representations based on any other grounds will not be considered by the Commission.

All representations made to the Commission must be in writing either by post, or email and should include the location and any other relevant information, stating specifically why it is inaccessible or does not meet the reasonable requirements of the electors.

Who may make a representation to the Electoral Commission?

Section 18D (1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, sets out who may make representations to the Electoral Commission namely;

- not less than thirty registered electors in the constituency (although electors registered anonymously cannot make a representation)
- a person (except the Acting Returning Officer) who made representations to the council when the review was being undertaken
- any person who is not an elector within the constituency but who the Electoral Commission feels has sufficient interest in the accessibility of disabled persons in the areas or has particular expertise in relation to the access to premises or facilities of disabled persons

The Acting Returning Officer is entitled to make observations on any representations made to the Commission.

What will the Electoral Commission do?

The Electoral Commission is required to consider any representations and observations and may direct the relevant council to make any alterations it sees necessary to the polling places designated by the review. Should a Council fail to make the alterations within two months of the direction being given, the Commission may make the alterations itself.

Proposals

Set out in Appendix A are details of current and proposed polling districts and polling places for each of the Wards within the Borough of Epsom and Ewell.

Appendix B contains a map and a breakdown for each polling place with the details of any proposed changes and the comments of the Acting Returning Officer.

The electorate, broken down into polling districts, is based on the electorate as at 1 October 2023.

Any significant comments from polling station staff or polling station inspectors regarding the condition or accessibility of currently used polling places are included where appropriate.

A full review of polling districts & places was last conducted in 2022 and this review is available on the Council's website (<https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/council/elections-and-voting/electoral-boundaries>).

There are no known plans which would affect the availability of those Council-owned premises currently used as polling places. The Council has had no indication that private venues currently used will not be available in future, apart from as indicated in Appendix B.

Representations

Any persons wishing to make comments or representations regarding the proposals may do so. Any representations you wish to make should be **received by no later than 5pm on 1 December 2023**

All representations must be made in writing either by post or email.

Representations by email with the subject line Polling District/Place Review, should be sent to:

electoralservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Representations by post should be sent to:

Electoral Services (Polling District/Place Review)
Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
The Town Hall
The Parade
Epsom
Surrey
KT18 5BY

For any queries, please telephone 01372 732000 and ask to speak to Electoral Services.

All representations will be published on the Council's website after the closing date for representations.

The final decision will be taken by full Council at its meeting on 13 February 2024 and, if necessary, a notice of any alterations to the register will be published on the Council's website no later than 16 February 2024.

Any new polling districts and polling places will become effective at all elections held after 1 March 2024.

Appendix A**Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
Schedule of Current and Proposed Polling Districts and Polling Stations**

WARD	CURRENT POLLING DISTRICT	CURRENT POLLING PLACE
CUDDINGTON	AA	Rowe Hall, 2 nd Cuddington Scout HQ, Salisbury Road, Worcester Park KT4 7LP
	AB	St Mary's Church Hall, The Avenue, Worcester Park
AURIOL	B	Stoneleigh Methodist Church Centre, Stoneleigh Crescent, Ewell KT19 0RT
EWELL COURT	CA	Ruxley Church, Ruxley Lane, West Ewell KT19 0JG
	CB	Ewell Court House, Ewell Court Avenue, Ewell KT19 0EB
RUXLEY	D	Epsom & Ewell High School, Ruxley Lane, West Ewell KT19 9JW
WEST EWELL	EA	West Ewell Evangelical Church, 23 Lansdowne Road, West Ewell KT19 9QJ
	EB	All Saints Church & Community Centre, Fulford Road, West Ewell KT19 9QY

WARD	CURRENT POLLING DISTRICT	CURRENT POLLING PLACE
COURT	FA	Bowling Pavilion, Court Recreation Ground, Pound Lane, Epsom KT19 8SB
	FB(1) & FB(2)	Community & Wellbeing Centre, Sefton Road, Epsom KT19 9HG
STAMFORD	GA	The Church Hall, Christ Church, Christ Church Road, Epsom KT19 8NE
	GB	The Wells Social Centre, Spa Drive, Epsom KT18 7LR
STONELEIGH	H	Stoneleigh Baptist Church Hall, The Glade, Stoneleigh KT17 2HL
NONSUCH	IA	St Paul's Church Centre, Northey Avenue, Cheam SM2 7HS
	IB	NESCOT, Reigate Road, Ewell KT17 3DS
EWELL VILLAGE	J	Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell KT17 1UF

WARD	CURRENT POLLING DISTRICT	CURRENT POLLING PLACE
TOWN	KA	Defoe Court, 87 East Street, Epsom KT17 1AQ
	KB	Epsom Playhouse, Ashley Avenue, Epsom KT18 5AL
	KC	St. Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom KT19 8TU
COLLEGE	LA	The Pavilion, Alexandra Recreation Ground, Alexandra Road, Epsom KT17 4BU
	LB	The Church House, Church Street, Epsom KT17 4PX
WOODCOTE*	MA	Grace Baptist Church, 32 Dorking Road, Epsom KT18 7NH
	MB	St Martin's C of E Junior School, Ashley Road, Epsom KT18 7AD
	MC	Langley Vale Village Hall, Rosebery Road, Epsom KT18 6AF
HORTON	N(1) & N(2)	The Horton Arts Centre, Haven Way, Epsom KT19 8NP

TOTALS

Number of Polling Places	25	Number of Polling Stations	35
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Appendix B

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

Existing Polling Districts & Places and Acting Returning Officers'
representations

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Cuddington Ward

Number of Polling Districts: Two
 Number of Polling Places: Two
 Electorate in Ward: **4918**
 Postal Voters in Ward: **779**

Polling District	A(A)
Electorate in District:	2695
Postal Voters:	368
Polling Place	Scout Hut (Rowe Hall), Salisbury Road, Worcester Park KT4 7LP
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	1
Proposals	Polling Place - No change Polling District – No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – limited off-street parking available on site. On-street parking available around venue.

Polling District 2023



Cuddington Ward AA (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

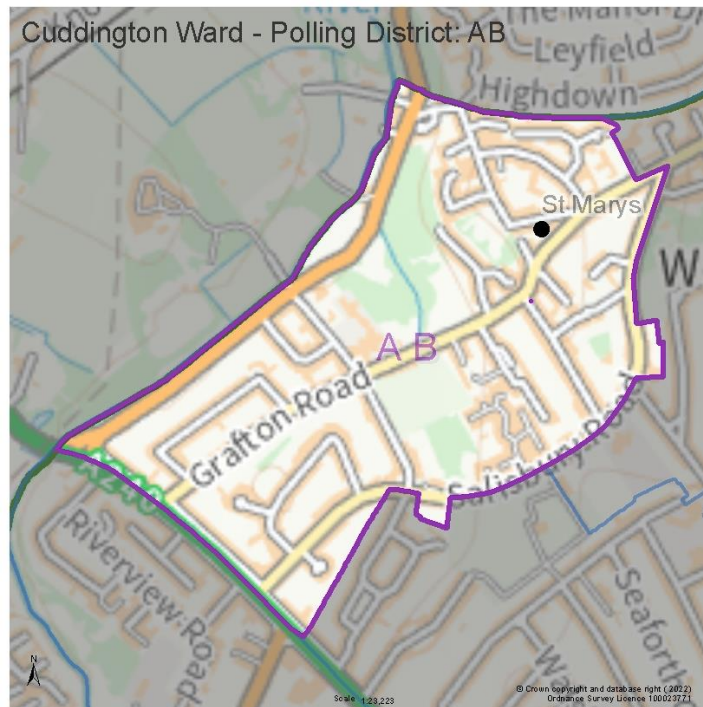
No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Cuddington Ward (cont)

Polling District	A(B)
Electorate in District	2223
Postal Voters	411
Polling Place	St Mary's Church Hall, The Avenue, Worcester Park KT4 7HL
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	2
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking - off-street parking available on site. On-street parking also available around venue. Venue is large enough to accommodate 2 polling Stations if necessary

Polling District 2023



Acting Returning Officer’s Representations

No adverse feedback has been received following the May 2023 elections.

No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the proposed polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Auriol Ward

Number of Polling Districts: One
 Number of Polling Places: One
 Electorate in Ward: **3369**
 Postal Voters in Ward **512**

Polling District	B
Electorate in District	3369
Postal Voters	512
Polling Place	Stoneleigh Methodist Church Centre, Stoneleigh Crescent, Stoneleigh, Ewell KT19 0RT
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	3
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on site. On-street parking available around venue.

Polling District 2023



Acting Returning Officer’s Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

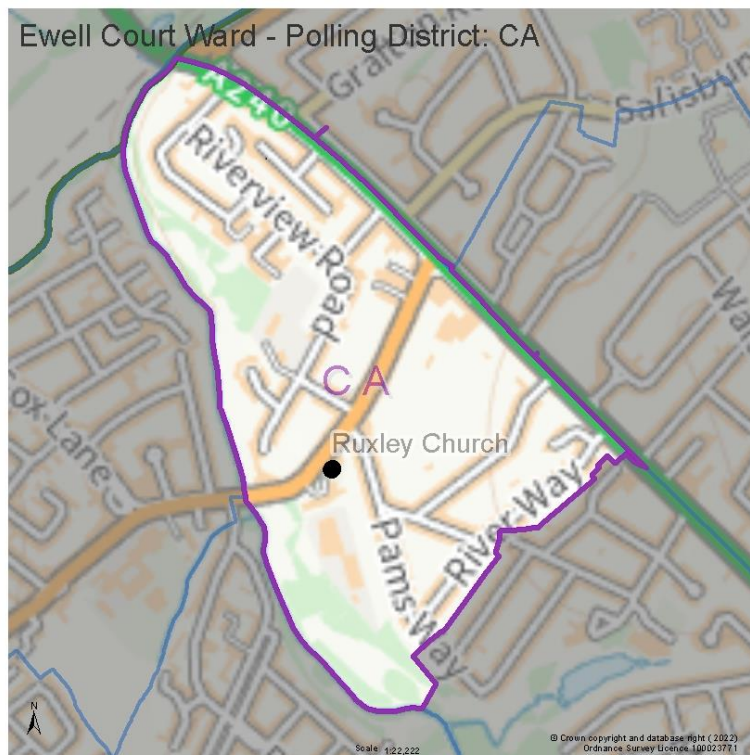
I consider the polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Ewell Court Ward

Number of Polling Districts: Two
 Number of Polling Places: Two
 Electorate in Ward: **3561**
 Postal Voters in Ward: **597**

Polling District	C(A)
Electorate in District	1883
Postal Voters	319
Polling Place	Ruxley Church, Ruxley Lane, West Ewell KT19 0JG
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	4
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location - Good Disabled access - Good Parking – off-street parking available on site.

Polling District 2023



Acting Returning Officer’s Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

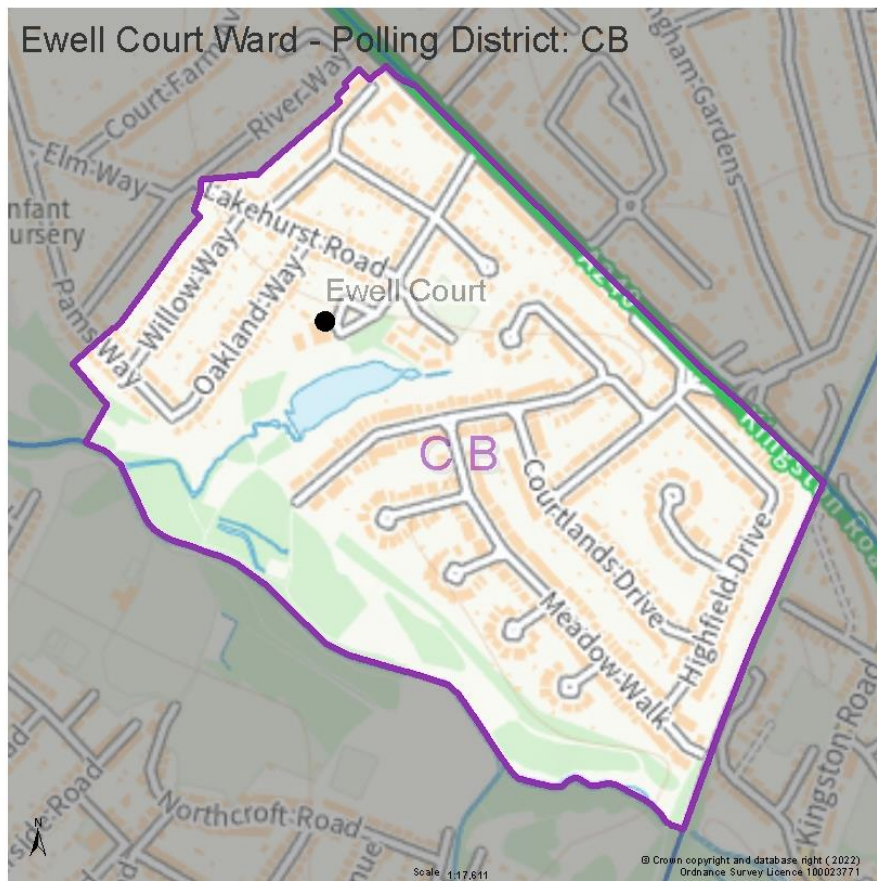
No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Ewell Court Ward (cont)

Polling District	C(B)
Electorate in District	1678
Postal Voters	278
Polling Place	Ewell Court House, Lakehurst Road, Ewell KT19 0EB
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	5
Proposal	No change
Comments	Council owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – good via separate side door Parking - off-street parking available

Polling District 2023



Acting Returning Officer’s Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

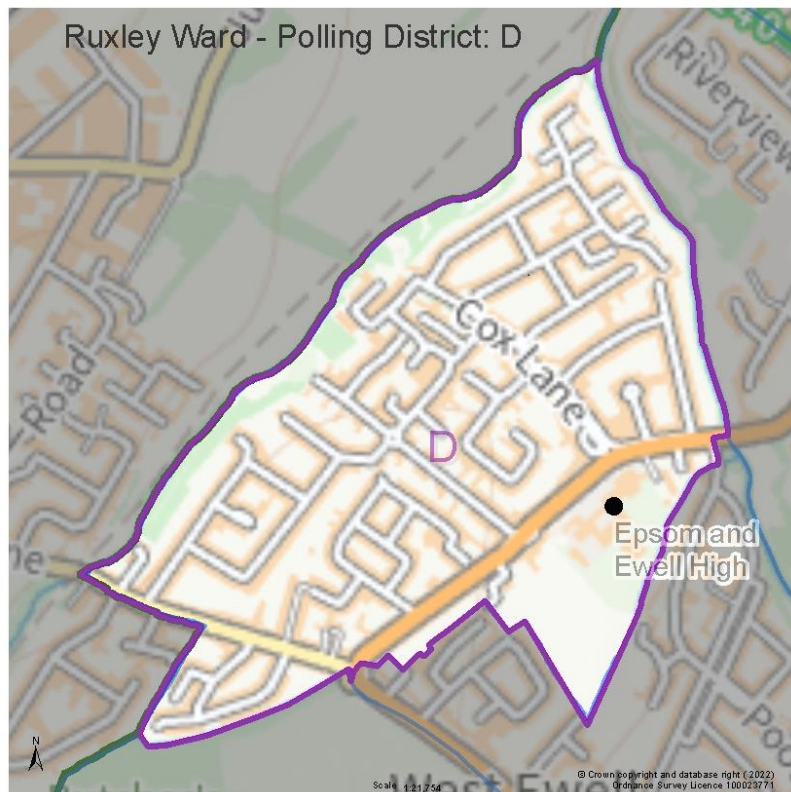
I consider the polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Ruxley Ward

Number of Polling Districts: One
 Number of Polling Places: One
 Electorate in Ward: **3612**
 Postal Voters in Ward **488**

Polling District	D
Electorate in District	3612
Postal Voters	488
Polling Place	Epsom & Ewell High School, Ruxley Lane, West Ewell KT19 9JW
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	6
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – good Parking – off-street parking available on-site for disabled only during school hours</p> <p>Polling station is located in the North Annexe which is separate from main school building and enables the school to remain open on polling day.</p>

Polling District 2023



Ruxley Ward D (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

It is recognised that the location of the current polling place in a school is not entirely satisfactory, but enquiries have failed to identify any premises suitable for designation as a polling place elsewhere in the ward and there would be a significant cost implication in providing temporary accommodation even if a suitable location could be found.

There have been issues with parking for voters during the school hours, however a compromise has been reached with the school to enable on-site parking for disabled voters. There is on-street parking available on roads close to the school.

To advise voters regarding limited vehicle access, a warning is now printed on poll cards.

For the elections in May 2023 the school asked that the new pavilion be used instead of the usual location (North Annexe building), but the request was made too late to notify voters. A site visit will be undertaken to further investigate the suitability of the pavilion i.e. disabled access/parking etc. before the end of the consultation process.

In the absence of any suitable alternatives, I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

West Ewell Ward

Number of Polling Districts Two
 Number of Polling Places Two
 Electorate in Ward **4918**
 Postal Voters in Ward **649**

Polling District	E(A)
Electorate in District	2025
Postal Voters	280
Polling Place	West Ewell Evangelical Church, Lansdowne Road, West Ewell KT19 9QJ
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	7
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – satisfactory Parking – Limited off-street parking on site; on-street parking on residential road.

Polling District 2023



West Ewell Ward EA (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

West Ewell Ward (cont)

Polling District	E(B)
Electorate in District:	2893
Postal Voters	369
Polling Place	All Saints Church Community Centre Fulford Road, West Ewell KT19 9QY
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	8
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – good Parking – limited off-street parking available on site otherwise on-street parking in residential road.

Polling District 2023



Acting Returning Officer’s Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

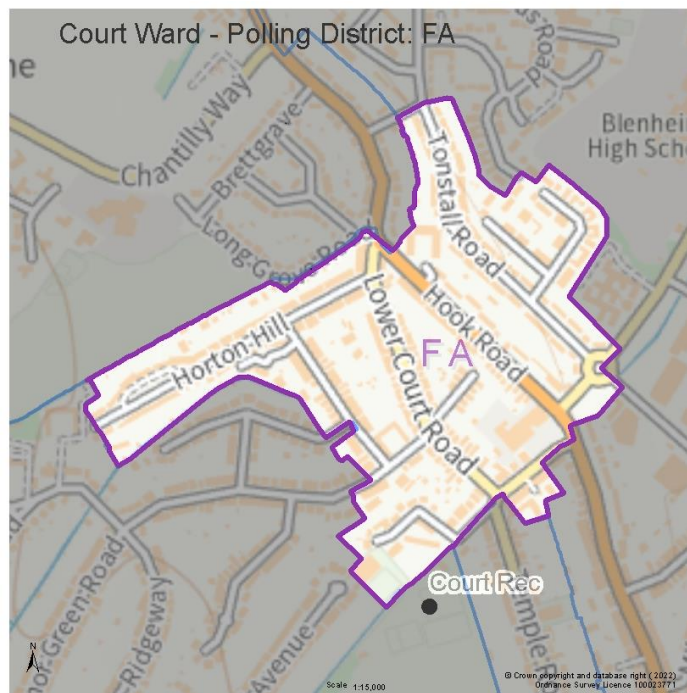
I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Court Ward

Number of Polling Districts: Two
 Number of Polling Places: Two
 Electorate in Ward: **4639**
 Postal Voters in Ward **571**

Polling District	F(A)
Electorate in District	1504
Postal Voters	201
Polling Place	Bowling Pavilion, Court Recreation Ground, Pound Lane, Epsom KT19 8SB
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	9
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – good Parking – off-street parking available in adjacent car park

Polling District 2023



Acting Returning Officer’s Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

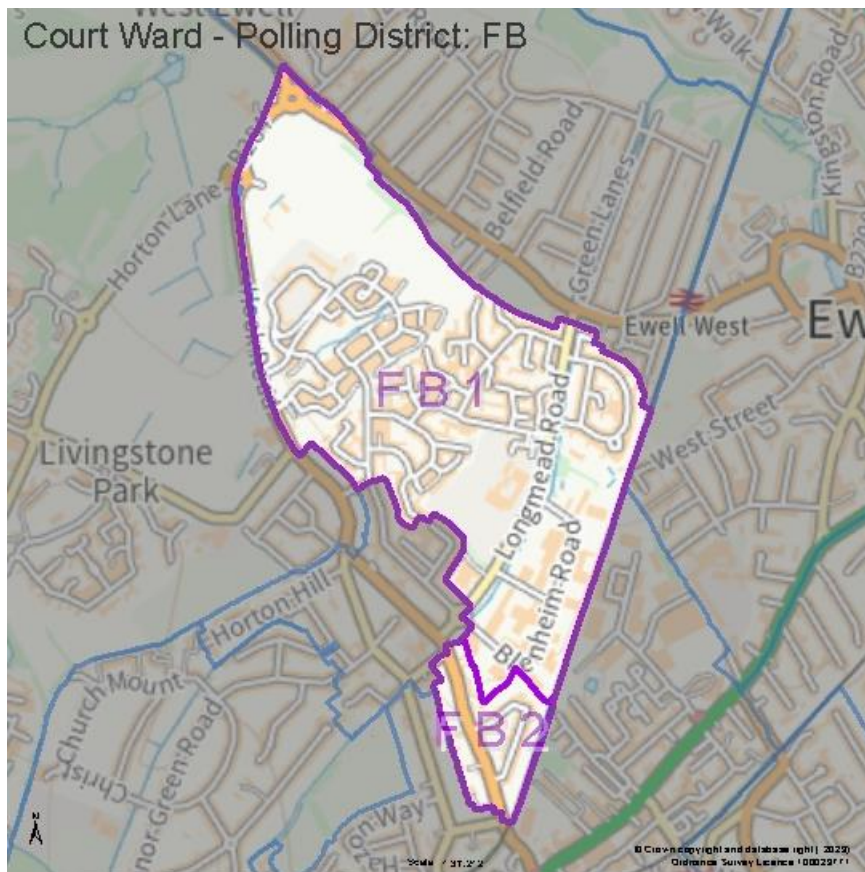
No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Court Ward (cont)

Polling District	FB(1) & FB(2)
Electorate in District	3135
Postal Voters	370
Polling Place	Community and Wellbeing Centre, Sefton Road, Epsom KT19 9HG
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	10
Proposal	No change
Comments	Council-owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – good Parking – off-street parking available on site. The polling station is located in the main hall.

Polling District 2023



Court Ward FB(1) & FB(2) (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

Due to the increase in number of voters , the polling place was split into 2 polling stations for May 2023 rather than the usual single polling station. The venue is easily able to accommodate 2 polling stations for voters.

The reason the polling district is split into 2 is due to the ward currently being in 2 different County Council electoral divisions. This will be revisited after the ongoing County Council boundary review is finished.

No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

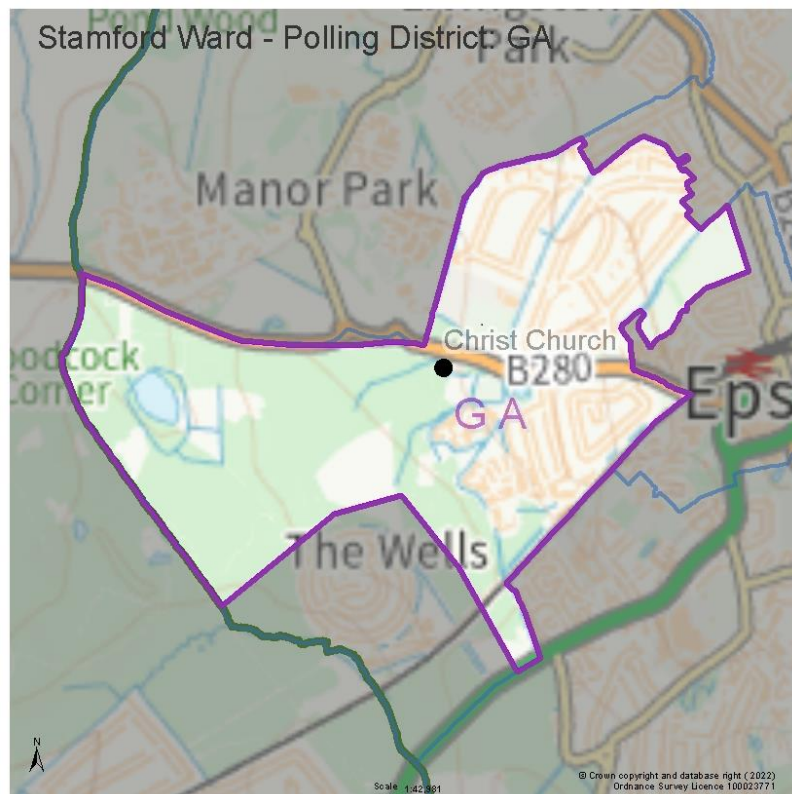
I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Stamford Ward

Number of Polling Districts Two
 Number of Polling Places Two
 Electorate in Ward **3675**
 Postal Voters in Ward **652**

Polling District	G(A)
Electorate in District	2684
Postal Voters	522
Polling Place	Church Hall, Christ Church, Christ Church Road Epsom KT19 8NE
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	11
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises satisfactory. Location – adequate Disabled access - adequate Parking – car park available on site but not immediately adjacent to building. On-street parking is also available.

Polling District 2023



Stamford Ward GA (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

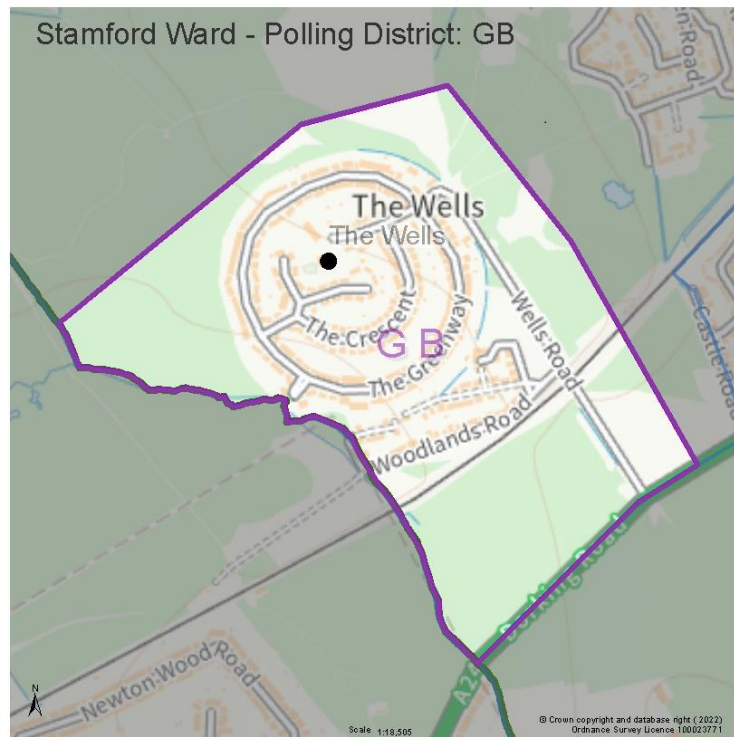
No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Stamford Ward (cont)

Polling District	G(B)
Electorate in District	991
Postal Voters	130
Polling Place	The Wells Social Centre, Spa Drive, Epsom KT18 7LR
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	12
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Council-owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – Good Parking – good – car park on site.</p> <p>The polling station was located in a portable temporary unit in May 2023 due to the unavailability of the main building.</p> <p>The centre has now re-opened and run by a local community group. It is understood that leasing arrangements are in place to enable the use of the hall as a polling place once more and it should be ready for the next scheduled elections in May 2024</p>

Polling District 2023



Stamford Ward G(B) cont

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

The polling station was located in a portable temporary unit in May 2021 & 2023 due to the unavailability of the main building.

With the centre being re-opened it is the best option as a polling place for voters as there are no other venues on the Wells Estate that can be used.

No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

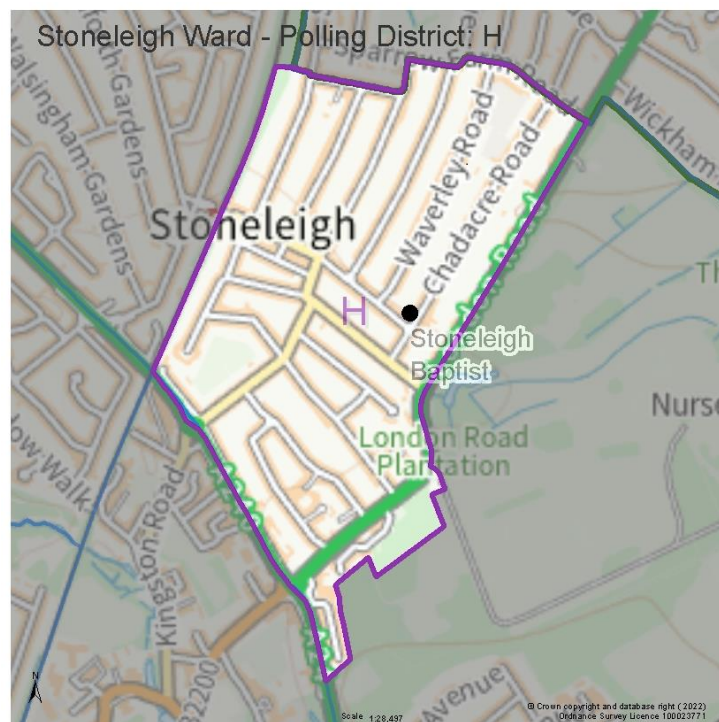
Subject to the above comments, I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Stoneleigh Ward

Number of Polling Districts: One
 Number of Polling Places: One
 Electorate in Ward: **3593**
 Postal Voters **494**

Polling District	H
Electorate in District	3593
Postal Voters	494
Polling Place	Stoneleigh Baptist Church Hall, The Glade, Stoneleigh KT17 2HL
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	13
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – limited off street parking available. On-street parking available around venue

Polling District 2023



Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

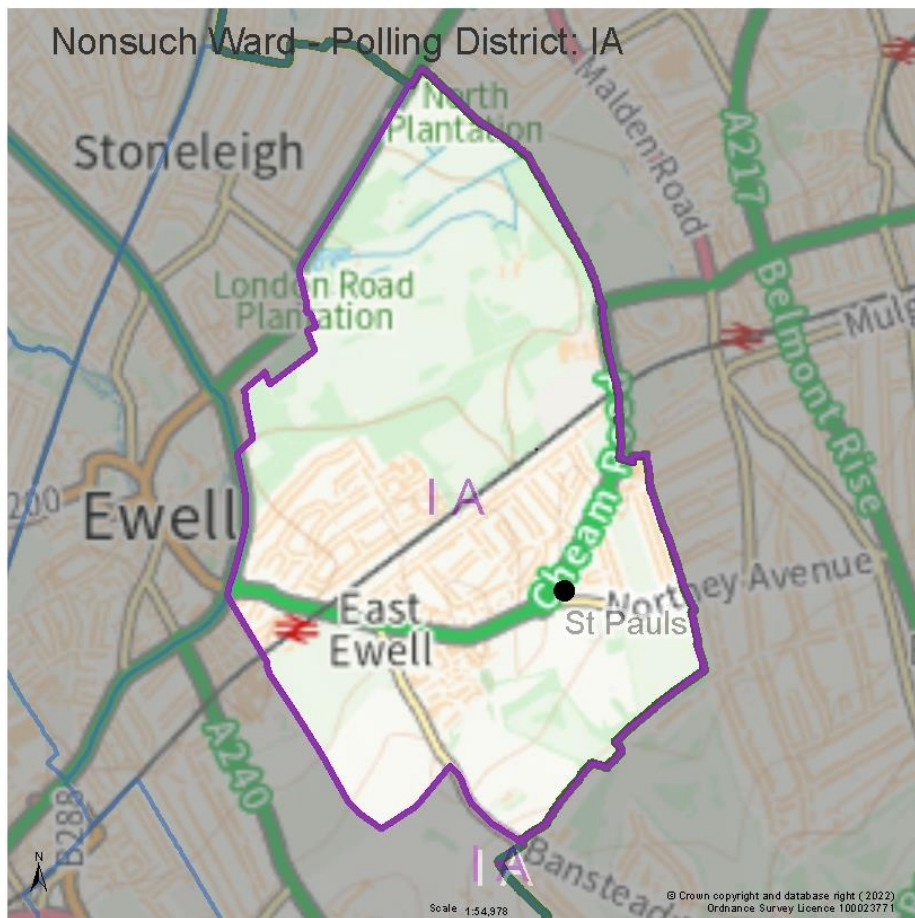
I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Nonsuch Ward

Number of Polling Districts: Two
 Number of Polling Places: Two
 Electorate in Ward: **5218**
 Postal Voters **951**

Polling District	I(A)
Electorate in District	3444
Postal Voters	609
Polling Place	St Paul's Church Centre, 15 Northey Avenue, Cheam SM2 7HS
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	14
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on site. On-street parking available around venue

Polling District 2023



Nonsuch Ward IA (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

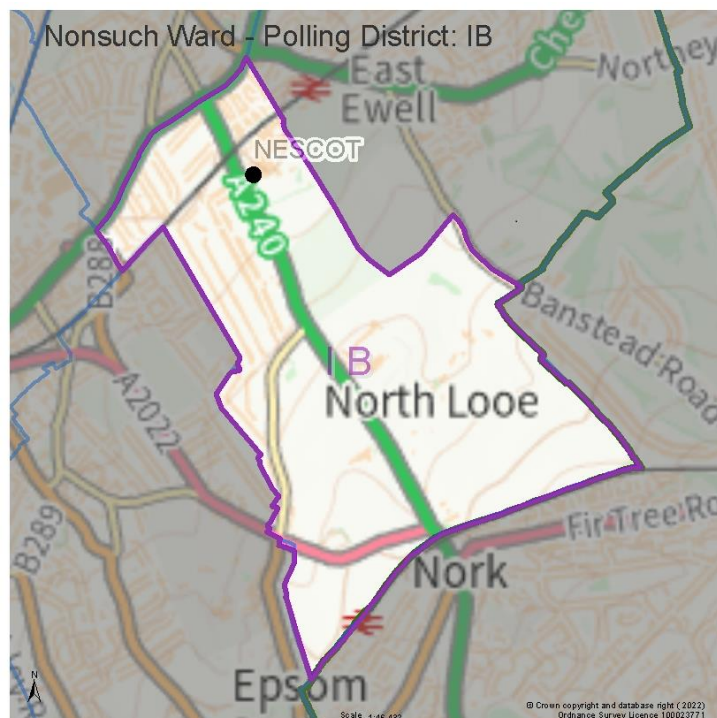
No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Nonsuch Ward (cont)

Polling District	I(B)
Electorate in District	1774
Postal Voters	342
Polling Place	NESCOT College, Reigate Road, Ewell KT17 3DS
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	15
Proposal	No Change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – good Parking – off street parking available in large car park close to venue.</p> <p>Previously Wallace Fields Junior School was used as a polling station which was unpopular with parents of students and caused many complaints every scheduled and unscheduled election even though the school had been given plenty of notice of planned election dates and could have planned one of their inset days to be on election day.</p> <p>In 2021 we trialled the use of NESCOT, Reigate Road as an alternative. The Adrian Mann Theatre was used for those elections but in 2023 the theatre was not available so instead a temporary portable unit was used in the main car park.</p>

Polling District 2023



Nonsuch Ward IB (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

In 2023 neither the theatre nor other suitable accommodation was available in the main buildings so to continue to use NESCOL we instead had a temporary polling station unit in the main car park. The unit was able to be placed away from the main buildings and worked well for voters.

Other than Wallace Fields Junior School there are no other suitable venues in the area. A site visit was made to investigate the use of the pavilion at the playing fields owned by Glyn School adjacent to NESCOL, but it was found to be unsuitable due to the usage by the school and its internal layout.

Subject to the above comments being accepted I consider the proposals for the continued use of NESCOL to be appropriate and no further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Ewell Village Ward

Number of Polling Districts: One
 Number of Polling Places: One
 Electorate in Ward: **3337**
 Postal Voters **511**

Polling District	J
Electorate in District	3337
Postal Voters	511
Polling Place	Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell KT17 1UF
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	16
Proposal	No changes
Comments	Council-owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available (public car park). The polling stations are normally located in the Rose Room.

Polling District 2023



Ewell Village Ward J (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

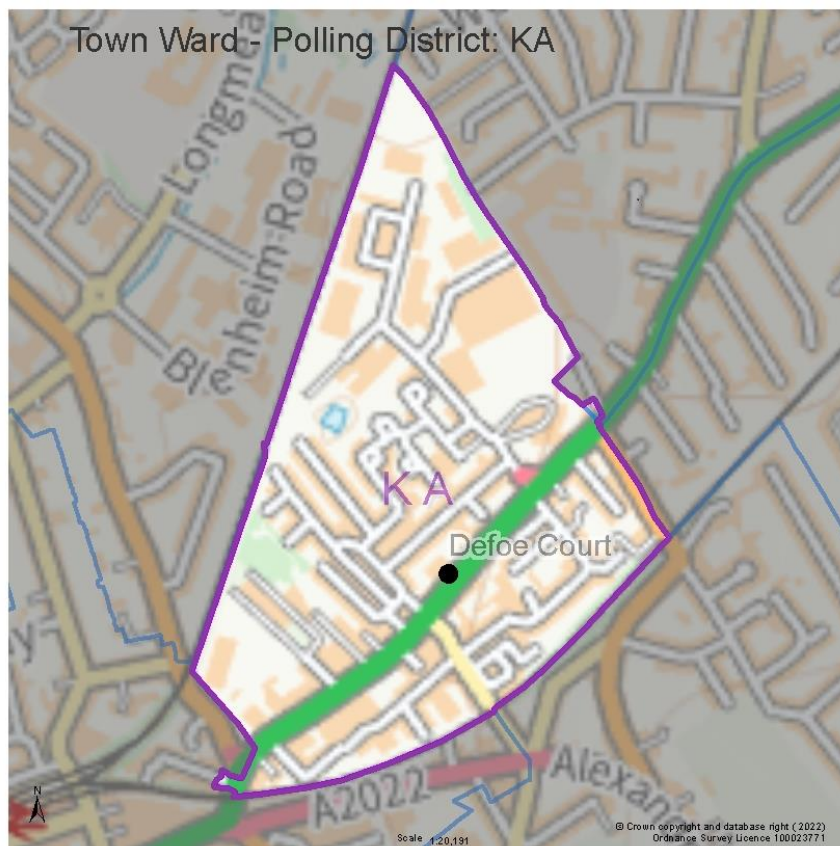
I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Town Ward

Number of Polling Districts Three
 Number of Polling Places Three
 Electorate in Ward **5212**
 Postal Voters **759**

Polling District	K(A)
Electorate	1816
Postal Voters	281
Polling Place	Defoe Court, 87 East Street, Epsom KT17 1AQ
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	17
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – no parking available The polling station is located in the conference room.

Polling District 2023



Town Ward KA (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

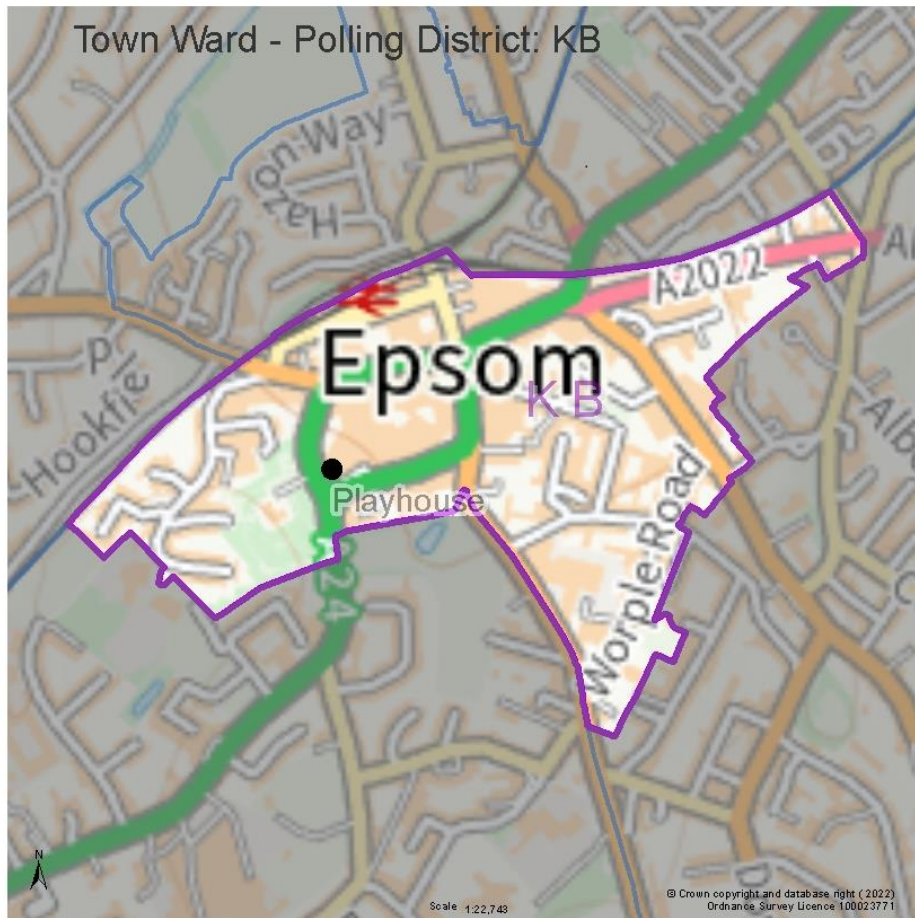
No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Town Ward (cont)

Polling District	K(B)
Electorate in District	2285
Postal Voters	323
Polling Place	Epsom Playhouse, Ashley Avenue, Epsom KT18 5AL
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	18
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Council owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking - Multi storey public car park adjacent to Playhouse. No on-street parking close to venue.</p> <p>The Polling Station is normally located in the Myers Hall.</p>

Polling District 2023



Town Ward KB (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

The number of polling stations was reduced down to 1 for the May 2023 elections due to the drop in electorate. The Presiding Officer that was on duty has advised that at a Parliamentary election it may be necessary to increase the number of polling stations back up to 2 as the number of electors was just manageable at the May 2023 elections. The premises does have sufficient space to accommodate this if required.

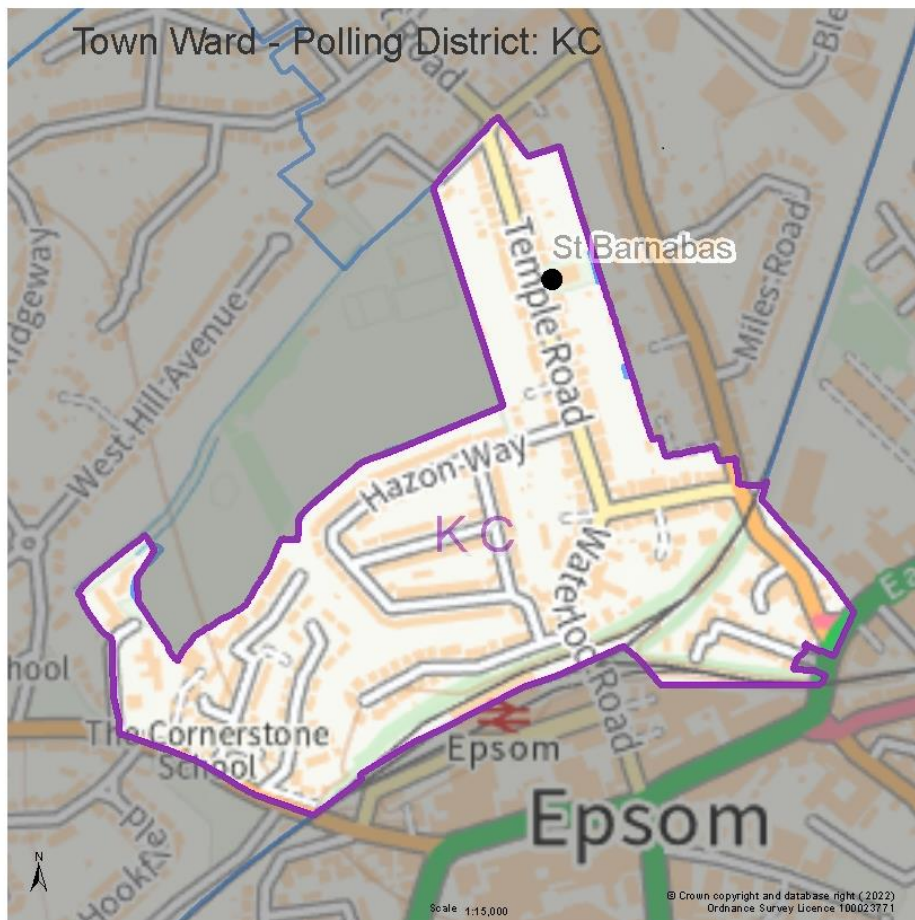
No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Town Ward (cont)

Polling District	K(C)
Electorate in District	1111
Postal Voters	155
Polling Place	St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom KT19 8TU
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	19
Proposal	No change to polling place
Comments	Premises and location good Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on site.

Polling District 2023



Acting Returning Officer’s Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

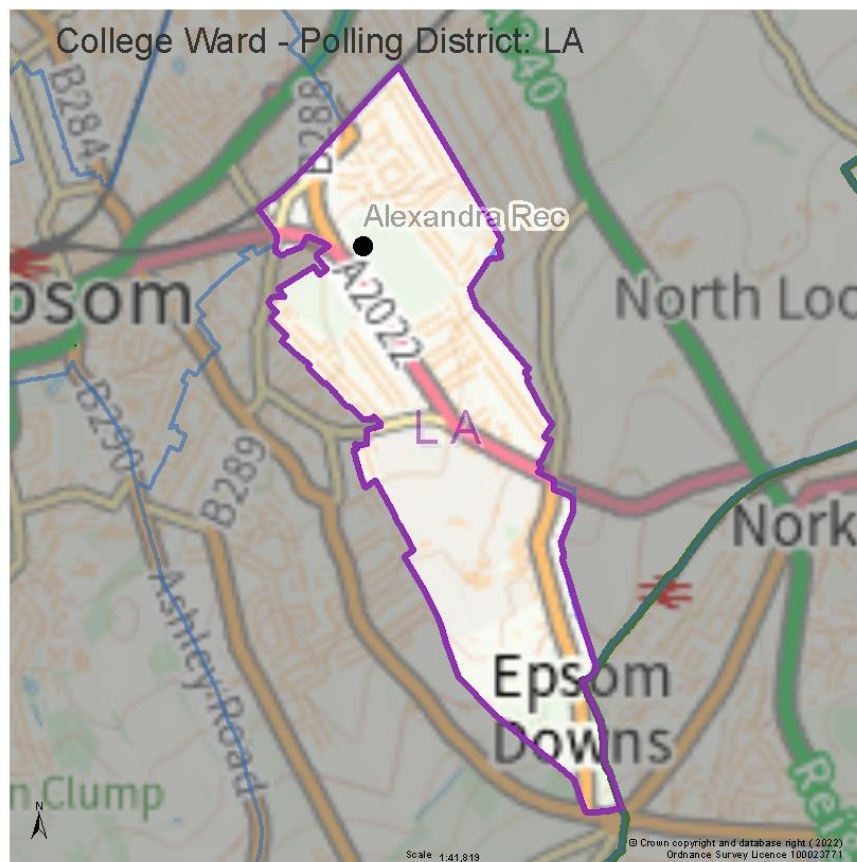
I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

College Ward

Number of Polling Districts Two
 Number of Polling Places Two
 Electorate in Ward **5008**
 Postal Voters **1085**

Polling District	L(A)
Electorate in District	2143
Postal Voters	447
Polling Place	The Pavilion, Alexandra Recreation Ground, Alexandra Road, Epsom KT17 4BU
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	20
Proposal	No change
Comments	Council owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - Adequate Parking – close to pavilion for staff & disabled. In main car park for other voters.

Polling District 2023



College Ward LA (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

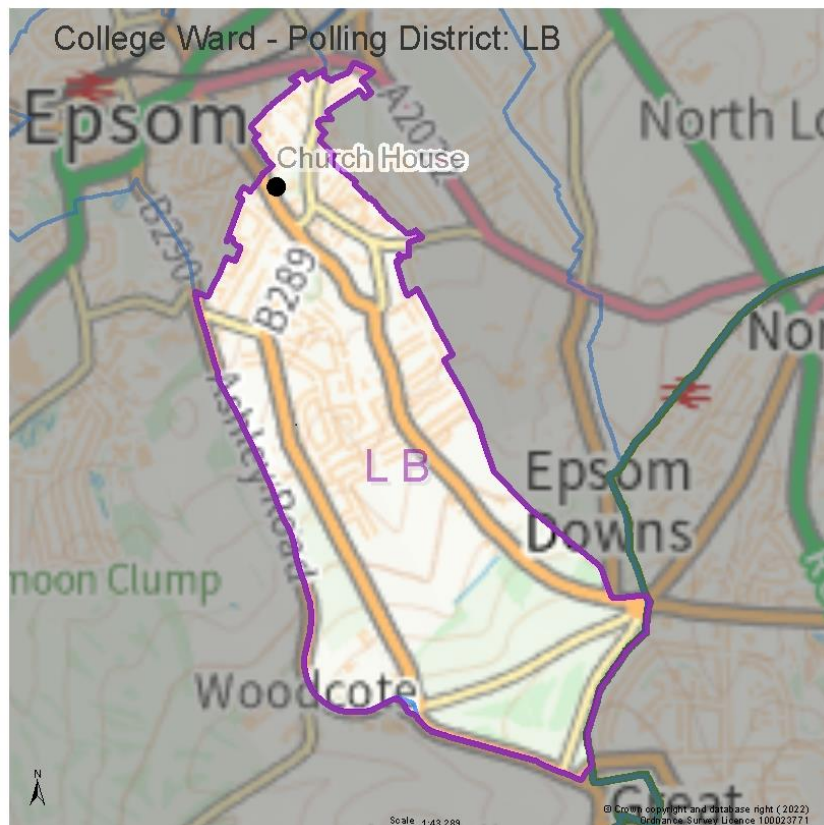
No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

College Ward (cont)

Polling District	L(B)
Electorate in District	2865
Postal Voters	638
Polling Place	The Church House, Church Street, Epsom KT17 4PX
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	21
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on site. No on-street parking close to venue.</p> <p>The venue has worked very well for many years and depending on the number of postal voters should be able to accommodate a double polling station if required. As far as the Council is aware, there are no other suitable premises (halls etc) within the College Ward/Polling District boundaries.</p> <p>The polling station is normally located in The Wisley Room.</p>

Polling District 2023



College Ward LB (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

This polling station historically has a high turnout of voters. If a double station was required, it may need to be located in the upstairs room. This room has lifts both inside and outside of the building so should be suitable for use at a Parliamentary election.

No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

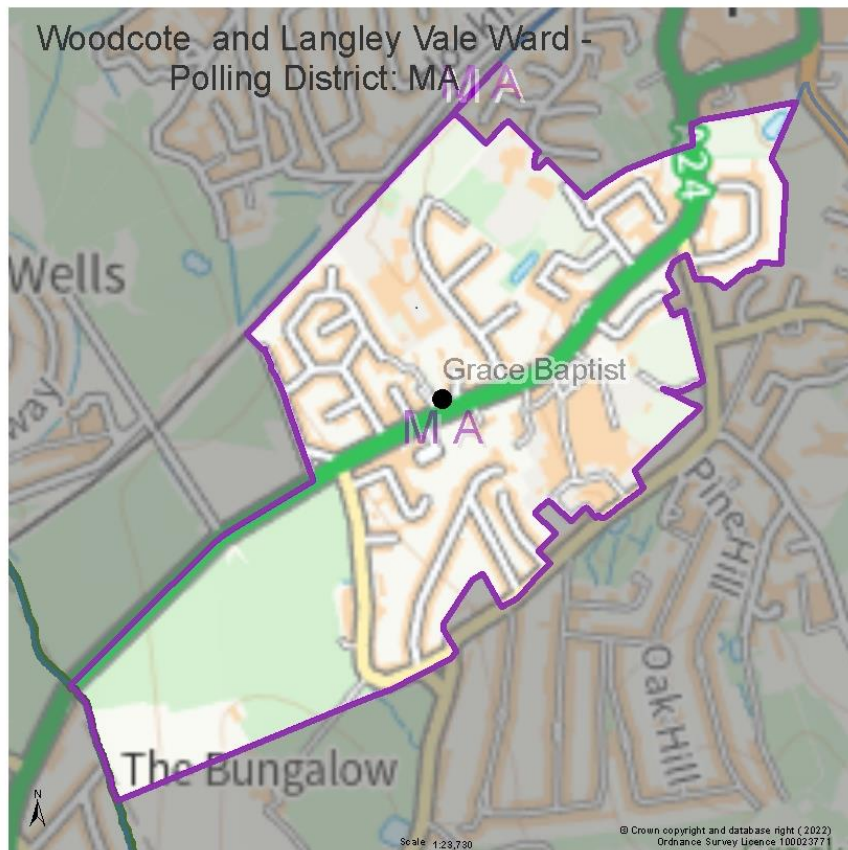
I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward

Number of Polling Districts	Three
Number of Polling Places	Three
Electorate in Ward	4487
Postal Voters	901

Polling District	M(A)
Electorate in District	1539
Postal Voters	317
Polling Place	Grace Baptist Church, 32 Dorking Road, Epsom KT18 7NH
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	22
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - adequate Parking – limited off-street parking on site

Polling District 2023



Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward MA (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

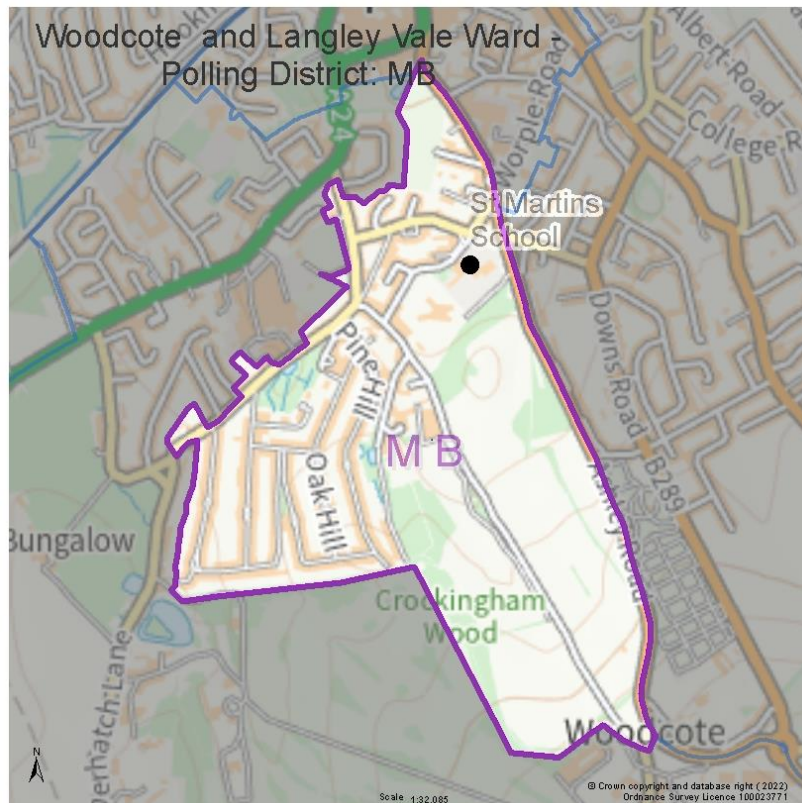
No further changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward (cont)

Polling District	M(B)
Electorate in District	1647
Postal Voters	377
Polling Place	St. Martins C of E Junior School, Ashley Road, Epsom KT18 7AD
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	23
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – adequate Vehicle access via Ashley Road only Parking – off-street parking available on school premises</p> <p>It is Council policy to avoid the use of schools wherever possible but there are no other suitable premises in the area. Schools are notified of scheduled elections as early as possible, preferably before the start of the academic year, to allow them the option of setting an INSET day. The polling station is located in the Music block, as this building is separate from the main building and can be cordoned off from the rest of the school so that it can remain open on polling day.</p>

Polling District 2023



Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward MB (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

It is recognised that the location of the current polling place in a school is not entirely satisfactory, but enquiries have failed to identify any premises suitable for designation as a polling place elsewhere in the ward and there would be a significant cost implication in providing temporary accommodation even if a suitable location could be found.

At the time of the previous review, it was reported that as a result of reconfiguration of the premises, discussions with the Headteacher had resulted in the offer of the use of a separate classroom block (the Music block) close to the Ashley Road entrance. These facilities had the advantage of being self-contained and close to the car park for disabled voters. Since that review the accommodation has been used for polling without the rest of the school having to close. Ramps are provided to accommodate for the slight lip into the classroom and for the curb from the car park.

With the use of this classroom block, polling day has been successful with the school able to remain open for all elections. The access to the polling station for vehicles is via Ashley Road only and a message to voters is now included on all poll cards so they are aware.

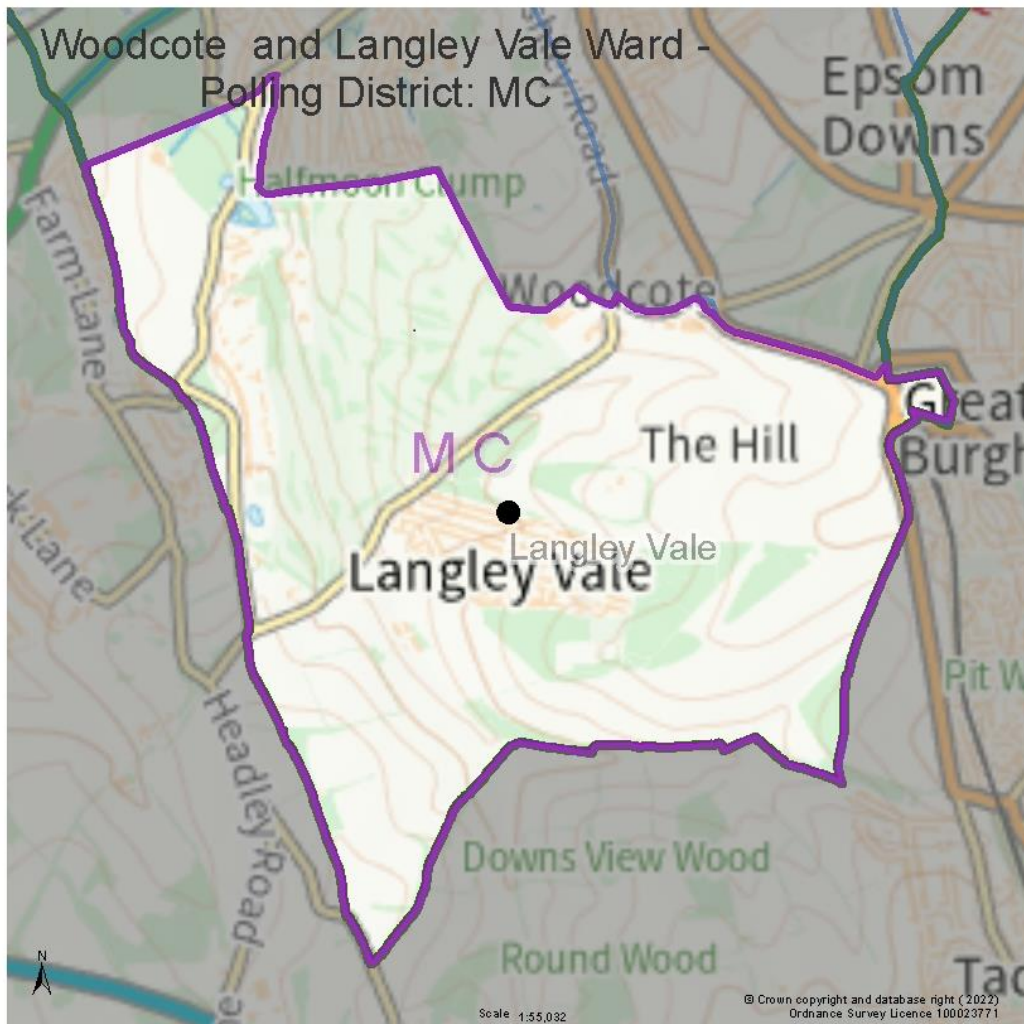
Following the elections in May 2023 the school asked that the Children Centre be used instead of the usual location (Music Block). A site visit will be undertaken to further investigate the suitability of this building i.e., disabled access/parking etc. before the end of the consultation process.

I consider the polling district to be appropriate and in the absence of any suitable alternatives I consider the polling place appropriate.

Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward (cont)

Polling District	M(C)
Electorate in District	1301
Postal Voters	207
Polling Place	Langley Vale Village Hall, Rosebery Road, Epsom KT18 6AF
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	24
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – on-street parking available around venue.

Polling District 2023



Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward MC (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

During previous reviews there were concerns about accessibility for disabled people due to the sloping access to the Village Hall. It was suggested that the adjacent Church Hall or the school at Langley Vale might be a more appropriate venue.

It is Council policy to avoid the use of schools wherever possible and the school is less conveniently located than the current polling station. A site visit was made to the Church Hall and although the slope to the building is less than at the Village Hall, the layout of the building was considered unsuitable as a polling place and there would be no advantage in relocating there.

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2023 elections.

No changes are proposed to the polling district at this time

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Horton Ward

Number of Polling Districts	Two
Number of Polling Places	One
Electorate in Ward	3291
Postal Voters	658

Polling District	N(1) & N(2)
Electorate in District	3291
Postal Voters	658
Polling Place	The Horton Arts Centre, Haven Way, Epsom KT19 8NP
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	25
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – venue car park on site

Polling District 2023



Horton Ward (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

The use of the Horton Arts Centre in May 2023 worked well, and we hope to continue to use it as a polling place for all future elections.

The reason the polling district is split into 2 is due to the ward currently being in 2 different County Council electoral divisions. This will be revisited after the ongoing County Council boundary review is finished.

I consider the polling district proposals to be appropriate and the polling place to be suitable.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Polling District & Polling Places Review 2023						
2							
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
4							
5	Ewell Court	1					
6			1	Ruxley Church Admin - Confirm location is available to use as a Polling Station.	Comments are noted.	No further action.	
7	Ruxley	1					
8			1	Labour Party - Suggests use of Cox Lane building for Ruxley Ward to save Epsom & Ewell High School Polling Station and the crossing of Ruxley Lane for most voters.	The Authority is aware of the effect of having elections at the school and has tried to find a suitable alternative, however this is proving to be difficult. The Cox Lane Centre and Edge Centre have both been visited but their location on the far edge of the Borough is not as central as the school site and there is concern that voters will be less inclined to vote unless living in the immediate/surrounding roads if they have further to travel.	Maintain search for alternative location.	
9	Court	1					
10			1	Labour Party -Suggests alternative polling station for voters at the town End of Hook Road.	These voters are not able to join Polling district FA at present due to County Council Division electoral boundaries. An electoral review of the County Council is currently underway and the outcome of this is awaited as it may provide scope for these voters to be included in Polling District FA (polling station at Court Recreation Ground) in the future.	No further action.	
11	Stamford	1					

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
12			1	Epsom Wells Community Association - Confirm location is available to use as a Polling Station.	Comments are noted.	No further action.	
13	College	1					
14			1	College Ward Residents Association - Confirms suitability of arrangements.	Noted	No further action.	
15	Horton	1					
16			1	Councillor Alison Kelly - Asks whether residents of Noble Park would have further to travel to a polling station at Horton Chapel (Horton Arts Centre).	The proposed use of the Horton Arts Centre is considered to be suitable as it is central to the 4 estates that will vote there and the venue is large enough to contain a double polling station. Previous to 2023 voters in Noble Park were in Stamford Ward and voted at Christ Church Hall which is a similar distance to Horton Chapel.	No further action.	

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Head of Service:	Piero Ionta, Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Report of the IRP, dated December 2023.

Summary

Further to the appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel ('IRP') by full Council at its July 2023 meeting, a report outlining their review of the Council's Member Allowance Scheme and recommended changes is brought to this committee for its review and recommendation to full Council at its February 2024 meeting.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee recommends to Full Council that:

- (1) The report and recommendations of the IRP are noted.**
- (2) The Members Allowances Scheme be updated to accept Option A /or Option B (as set out in para 2.6 and Appendix 1)**
- (3) The SRA for the Chair of the Standards and Constitution Committee should be increased from 10% to 30% of the Basic Allowance from 1 April 2024.**
- (4) The SRA for the Vice Chair of the Standards and Constitution Committee should be increased from 5% to 15% of the Basic Allowance from 1 April 2024.**
- (5) The SRA for Chair of Human Resources Panel should be withdrawn from the end of this municipal year.**
- (6) The SRAs for 2024/25 to be in accordance with those listed in Appendix 1 of the IRP report.**
- (7) That the Council's existing Dependants Carers Allowance continues without amendment.**

- (8) The Annual Indexation of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances in line with the 'cost of living' percentage increase in staff salaries should be implemented from 1 April 2024 /or 1 April 2025 for the next two financial years.**
- (9) To fund any increases to the Members Allowances Scheme that arise from the above recommendations, officers will need to be tasked with identifying compensating savings/additional income within services.**
- (10) The Panel be instructed to review the Scheme on or before December 2025, as to the following specific issues:**
 - (a) A full review of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) be undertaken, in particular the adoption of a 'One SRA per Councillor' rule;**
 - (b) Explore awarding a SRA for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and**
 - (c) To review and propose a policy for pre-approved payments for travel, subsistence and attendance at conferences, seminars and other official Council business outside of the borough, having reviewed how this should work in future.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 In light of the appointment of the IRP at the full council meeting held on 25 July 2023, a report has been received with several recommendations for consideration by this Committee so that it may forward recommendations for full council to adopt at its meeting in February 2024.

2 Background

- 2.1 The arrangements for setting a Scheme of Allowances and appointing an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) are set out in The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations). These Regulations state that local authorities must establish and maintain an IRP with the purpose of making recommendations to the authority about allowances paid to members.
- 2.2 The Council last received a report from an IRP at its meeting on 13 February 2020, and following consideration, agreed a Members Allowances Scheme. The Scheme has subsequently received an annual variation linked to the Consumer Prices Index in 2021, 2022 and 2023 in accordance with its terms.

- 2.3 The Regulations set out that the Council may not rely on an index-based adjustment to its scheme of members allowances for longer than a period of four years before seeking a recommendation from an IRP. Accordingly, the Council appointed an IRP to enable a report to be presented for consideration prior to May 2024. Council must have regard to the recommendations of the IRP before making any changes to the Members Scheme of Allowances.
- 2.4 A review of the Scheme of Members' Allowances by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) was carried out between August 2023 and December 2023, and the IRP's report is attached at Appendix 1. The IRP's workplan was as follows:
- July 2023 – Council ratified IRP appointments.
 - September 2023 – IRP induction and IRP review commences.
 - January 2024 - Feb 2024 – IRP presents its report to this Committee and its recommendations to Council.
- 2.5 In addition to meeting with the Chief Executive and s.151 officer of the Council, the IRP met with the majority of Political Group Leaders and sent a survey to all councillors to gather feedback on the current Allowances Scheme. A total of 28 elected members replied to the survey, including each Committee Chair.
- 2.6 The findings of the IRP are as follows:
- 1 The Basic Allowance for Members of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council for the year 2024/2025 should be increased using a structured formula from the current Basic Allowance of £4031.70 to either Basic Allowance Option A (£4,461.60) or Basic Allowance Option B (£5,736.90) subject to any indexation.**
 - 2 That a full review of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) be undertaken by a future Independent Remuneration Panel.**
 - 3 The SRA for the Chair of the Standards and Constitution Committee should be increased from 10% to 30% of the Basic Allowance.**
 - 4 The SRA for the Vice Chair of the Standards and Constitution Committee should be increased from 5% to 15% of the Basic Allowance.**
 - 5 The SRA for Chair of Human Resources Panel should be withdrawn.**
 - 6 The SRAs for 2024/25 to be in accordance with those listed in Appendix 1 of the IRP report.**
 - 7 That if the Council agrees to accept a recommended increase to Basic Allowances as set out in this report, it also considers whether it wishes to introduce a "One SRA per Councillor" rule to limit Councillors to being paid for only one SRA even if they qualify for more than one.**
 - 8 That the Council's existing Dependants Carers Allowance continues without amendment. That the Council considers how the allowance can**

be promoted to councillors to ensure that they are aware of its availability.

9 That the Council agrees to adopt a policy in relation to pre-approved payments for travel, subsistence and attendance at conferences, seminars and other official Council business outside of the borough and that until such a policy has been adopted by the Council, that the existing arrangements set out in the Members' Allowances Scheme continue without amendment.

10 Any index linkage agreed by the Council for the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances should be in line with staff salary increases for a maximum of two years starting from either 2024/2025 or 2025/26.

11 It is recommended that the new Members' Allowances as set out in this report be implemented from 1 April 2024.

2.7 Having considered the report and recommendations of the IRP, this Committee is asked to make appropriate recommendations to Full Council on changes to the Members Allowances Scheme.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 The purpose of the Members Allowances Scheme is to create a transparent schedule of remuneration that will support and enable councillors to execute their roles across a range of governance duties and responsibilities. A successful scheme will:

3.1.1.1 enable any local resident to be able to stand for election and fulfil the roles of office without experiencing the deterrent of financial disadvantage,

3.1.1.2 assist in increasing the diversity of councillors, to better reflect the communities they represent and serve, and

3.1.1.3 encourage local democratic participation.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The delivery of the IRP's review of the scheme of allowances supports the Council's strategic framework by ensuring payments to councillors are reflective of their roles and responsibilities. It will help to ensure allowances are set at a level that facilitates suitably able, qualified, and representative people standing as candidates for Council.
- 4.2 The Panel has suggested an increase to the Basic Allowance that then also increase SRAs. These increases will adversely impact on the Council's finances; the Council already faces a substantial underlying budget deficit in future years, as separately reported in the Revenue Budget Report.
- 4.3 The Options set out by the Panel equate to:
- **Option A** alone would see the basic member allowance cost increase by c.11%, the collective cost of which is c.£20k overall;
 - **Option A + 6%** would see the basic member allowance cost increase by c.17%, the collective cost of which is £32k overall;
 - **Option B** would see the basic member allowance cost increase by c.42%, the collective cost of which is £78k overall, and
 - **Option B + 6%** would see the basic member allowance increase by c.51%, the collective cost of which is c.£94k overall.
- 4.4 Whichever option is chosen, to fund any increases to the Members Allowances Scheme, officers will need to be tasked with identifying compensating savings/additional income within services.
- 4.5 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Members are advised that an above inflation increase in members allowances would add further costs for the Council to manage, adversely impacting the Council's financial position in the short term until further compensating savings or additional income can be identified from services.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 In accordance with Regulation 22 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1021), upon publication of this report, the council shall:
- 5.1.1 publish in one or more newspapers circulating in its area, a notice which—
- (i) states that it has received recommendations from an independent remuneration panel in respect of its scheme;

(ii) describes the main features of that panel's recommendations and specifies the recommended amounts of each allowance mentioned in the report in respect of that authority;

(iii) states that copies of the panel's report are available at the principal office of the authority for inspection by members of the public at such times as may be specified by the authority in the notice; and

(iv) specifies the address of the principal office of the authority at which such copies are made available.

5.2 Upon a decision being taken by full Council further to the recommendations of this Committee having duly considered the recommendations of its IRP, a further notice will be published in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

5.3 **Legal Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- Effective Council

6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None

6.5 **Partnerships:** None

7 Background papers

7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- [Report to Council, 13 February 2020](#)

Other papers:

- None

Independent Remuneration Panel 2023

Members' Allowances Scheme

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Background and Scope of the Report

1. The Council is required, under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP/Panel) to review and make recommendations to the Council on the range and levels of remuneration for elected Members. This report has been prepared in accordance with those regulations, to enable the Council to meet its statutory responsibilities when reviewing and amending its allowances.
2. The IRP was asked, in September 2023, to undertake a review of members' allowances. The terms of reference were:-

“To review the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme and make recommendations to the Council on an appropriate Scheme of Allowances. The recommendations should reflect the roles and responsibilities of Members, both in the Council and in serving their constituents and having regard to:

- the political management structure implemented by the Council;
 - comparative data on the allowances paid by other similar local authorities.”
3. This report sets out the IRP's recommendations on the above matters. The report will be considered by the Council & if its recommendations are accepted, they will be implemented from 1 April 2024.

Main Recommendations

As set out in this report the main recommendations of the Panel are:

- **The Basic Allowance for Members of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council for the year 2024/2025 should be increased using a structured formula from the current Basic Allowance of £4031.70 to either Basic Allowance Option A (£4,461.60) or Basic Allowance Option B (£5,736.90) subject to any indexation.**
- **That a full review of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) be undertaken by a future Independent Remuneration Panel.**
- **The SRA for the Chair of the Standards and Constitution Committee should be increased from 10% to 30% of the Basic Allowance.**
- **The SRA for the Vice Chair of the Standards and Constitution Committee should be increased from 5% to 15% of the Basic Allowance.**

- The SRA for Chair of Human Resources Panel of 30% of the Basic Allowance should be withdrawn.
- The SRAs for 2024/25 to be in accordance with those listed in Appendix 1 of the report.
- That if the Council agrees to accept a recommended increase to Basic Allowances as set out in this report, it also considers whether it wishes to introduce a “One SRA per Councillor” rule to limit Councillors to being paid for only one SRA even if they qualify for more than one.
- That the Council’s existing Dependants Carers Allowance continues without amendment. That the Council considers how the allowance can be promoted to councillors to ensure that they are aware of its availability.
- That the Council agrees to adopt a policy in relation to pre-approved payments for travel, subsistence and attendance at conferences, seminars and other official Council business outside of the borough and that until such a policy has been adopted by the Council, that the existing arrangements set out in the Members’ Allowances Scheme continue without amendment.
- Any index linkage agreed by the Council for the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances should be in line with staff salary increases for a maximum of two years starting from either 2024/2025 or 2025/2026.
- It is recommended that the new Members’ Allowances as set out in this report be implemented from 1 April 2024.

Contents of the report

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Membership of the Panel

4. The members of the Panel were appointed following a public recruitment exercise. Their appointment was agreed at a meeting of the Council on 25 June 2023. The members of the Panel are:
 - Robert Coyle – Robert is Chair of this year's panel. Robert is a Chartered Accountant & these days acts as an independent non-executive director. Additionally, Robert holds various statutory appointments & has sat on or chaired other IRPs in Surrey. Robert also sits on the remuneration committee of a substantial local authority owned business.
 - Akbar Khan – Akbar has an extensive background in public sector ethical standards regulation having held and remains appointed to Standard Panels for other regulatory authorities.
 - Pinky Kwok – Pinky has an extensive background in remuneration governance and is currently appointed to two local IRP for other local authorities.

3. Each Panel member has considerable experience of leadership and management roles within the public sector. None has previously been a member of Epsom and Ewell's IRP.

Guiding principles

4. In developing its recommendations, the Panel adopted the following guiding principles:
 - Relativities between different SRAs should, so far as practicable, reflect the breadth of the role and the time required to undertake it.
 - SRAs should be of a sufficient level that they should allow most Members to consider taking on a role without suffering undue financial hardship, while not being at such a level that allowances would become a primary reason for seeking a role.
 - A proportion of Members' time should be regarded as voluntary (public service discount).
 - The cost of the Members Allowances Scheme should be affordable.
 - The scheme should be transparent – including to residents – simple and easy to administer.
 - The Scheme of allowances, and this report from the Panel should provide a structured framework upon which future reviews can be based. The Scheme should be realistic, sustainable and fair.
5. The criteria set out above do not necessarily all point in the same direction. In particular, there may well be a conflict between affordability and some of the other criteria.

Work undertaken by the Panel

6. The Panel were required to take evidence in arriving at their conclusions. The work undertaken has included:
 - Five scheduled meetings of Independent Remuneration Panel between September and November 2023, held via MS Teams.
 - A formal training session run by the South East Employers on the roles & responsibilities of IRPs, good practice and possible matters to consider.
 - Consideration of the Council's existing Members Allowances Scheme 2023-24.
 - A review of relevant statistical data on 2022-23 Members' Allowance Schemes at other relevant councils in the South East of England.

- Review of Reports of former IRPs for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council from 2017 and 2020.
- Circulation of a questionnaire to all councillors. There are 35 councillors, of whom 28 replied.
- Meetings via MS Teams with political Group Leaders, the Council's Chief Executive Officer and Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer.

Basic Allowance

7. All councillors receive a basic allowance to support their work as members of the Council. The current Scheme of Allowances sets out that the Basic Allowance may be increased annually by September CPI. The present level of Basic Allowance is £4,031.71 per annum.
8. The Panel when reviewing previous reports and recommendations could find no structured and coherent formula for calculating the Basic Allowance and was of the view that a structured formula for calculating the Basic Allowance will provide a foundation to allow a future Panel to better determine the allowance and also provide a transparent formula for how the Basic Allowance was arrived at.
9. In determining a formula, the Panel was mindful of the budgetary challenges faced by the Council and considered that it would be helpful for our report to offer options, whilst still providing a structured basis for the calculation. We have therefore provided two calculations using different hourly rates: the National Living Wage from 1 April 2024 (£11.44) and the median hourly earnings for the Borough of Epsom and Ewell as a workplace. This latter information is published by the Office for National Statistics each December as part of its [National Statistics of Hours and Earnings \(NOMIS\)](#) and in December 2022 this was £14.71 per hour.
10. The results of the Members' Allowances questionnaire and subsequent interviews conducted as part of the review, identified that 10 to 20 hours per week for the basic duties of the Councillor role for Epsom and Ewell Borough Council was in many cases accurate. The Panel therefore chose 15 hours to support the calculation of the Basic Allowance.
11. The Panel also looked at the level of the Public Service Discount (PSD). The PSD is the element of a Members activity that should be given on a purely voluntary basis. The questionnaire responses had varying differences ranging from 0% to 80%, the median across Surrey District and Borough Local Authorities is 50%¹. The Panel was of the view that a level of 50% should represent the level of recommended "Public Service Discount".
12. Based on these figures the level of Basic Allowance for Members of the Council can be calculated as:

¹ Data provided by the Sout East Employers Members Allowances Survey 2023

Basic Allowance Option A: National Living Wage (1 April 2024)

- **15 hours x 52 weeks x £11.44 per hour - 50% Public Service Discount** which gives an annual Basic Allowance of £4,461.6, at a total cost of £156,156 prior to the application of any indexation.

Basic Allowance Option B: Median hourly earnings for the Borough of Epsom and Ewell as a workplace (December 2022)

- **15 hours x 52 weeks x £14.71 per hour - 50% Public Service Discount** which gives an annual Basic Allowance of £5,736.90, at a total cost of £200,791.50 prior to the application of any indexation.

13. Currently Epsom and Ewell Borough Council is the lowest (11th position) of the Basic Allowances paid within all Surrey Borough and District Councils. If Option A is implemented, Epsom and Ewell Borough Council will still be in the lower part of the ranking (10th position). If Option B is implemented, Epsom and Ewell Borough Council will be above the mid-point of Basic Allowances across those Councils (5th position).

Benchmark of Councils – Basic allowance (September 2023)

Council	Basic Allowances
Guildford Borough Council	£8,348.00
Woking Borough Council	£7,380.00
Spelthorne Borough Council	£6,531.00
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council	£5,956.00
Surrey Heath Borough Council	£5,711.00
Waverley Borough Council	£5,609.10
Elmbridge Borough Council	£5,512.00
Runnymede Borough Council	£5,500.00
Mole Valley District Council	£4,793.01
Tandridge District Council	£4,446.00
Epsom and Ewell Borough Council	£4,031.70 (Basic Allowance Option A: £4,461.60, Basic Allowance Option B: £5,736.90)

14. The Panel notes that it only has an advisory role and that the Council can choose whether or not to accept its recommendations. The Panel further notes that predecessor panels have largely had their recommendations on the Basic Allowance not adopted: it believes that this was on grounds of cost & an understandable wish by elected officials not to be seen to be awarding themselves a pay rise at a time of financial restraint.
15. One of the purposes of paying allowances is to allow people of all backgrounds to be able to put themselves forward to serve. A diverse range of councillors who reflect the wider population is desirable. The Panel received feedback from all elected members it interviewed, that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find candidates and a reason cited was that the low level of allowances puts people off.
16. Our preferred option is Option B, Median hourly earnings for the Borough of Epsom and Ewell as a workplace because it reflects the specific circumstances

of the Borough. However, we recognise the budgetary position of the Council. We therefore further recommend that if a decision is made to adopt the lower rate, taking account of local circumstances, we believe that the council should commit itself to moving to the higher rate over a relatively short period of time. It is the Panel's view that this should be prior to the next Borough Council elections, as low allowances were quoted in the responses to the Members' Allowances questionnaire and subsequent interviews as a barrier to people standing.

17. The Panel has set out a logical methodology for determining allowances. We strongly recommend that the council 'bite the bullet' & adopt this methodology, otherwise the issue of unviable allowances will continue to become worse.

RECOMMENDATION: The Basic Allowance for Members of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council for the year 2024/2025 should be increased using a structured formula from the current Basic Allowance of £4031.70 to either Basic Allowance Option A (£4,461.60) or Basic Allowance Option B (£5,736.90) subject to any indexation.

Special Responsibility Allowances

18. The Panel have largely used the same methodology for our recommendations on Special Responsibility Allowances as those currently in place. At present most SRA's, including those of Committee Chairs, are based on a percentage of the Basic Allowance. The SRAs for Vice Chairs are 50% of the SRA for the Chair of the relevant Committee. The only SRA which is not based on a percentage of the Basic Allowance is the SRA for Minority Group Leaders, which is based on the lump sum and increased by the number of members of the Group.
19. For ease of reference, we have set out in Appendix 1 the current allowances and the level of allowances the IRP recommends for 2024/25.
20. In determining which roles merit an SRA (Special Responsibility Allowance) the Panel was mindful of the [Statutory Guidance](#) that states:

"SRAs may be paid to those members of the council who have significant additional responsibilities over and above the generally accepted duties of a councillor. These special responsibilities must be related to the discharge of the authority's functions."
21. When considering all the current roles at Epsom and Ewell Borough Council that receive an SRA, the Panel was of the view that further to its discussions with elected members it did not have enough evidence to undertake a full root-and-branch review of all SRAs at the present time. However, the Panel noted that a number of responses from the consultation with members suggested that any additional resources provided to the Scheme of Allowances should be targeted to SRAs, and the Panel considers that this is a matter which requires future consideration with a more detailed evidence base. The Panel therefore recommends that this should be a matter considered by a future Independent Remuneration Panel once a more realistic and fair Basic Allowance had been adopted by the Council.

22. The Panel also noted that the current scheme provides Committee Vice Chairs with an SRA of 50% of the rate of the Committee Chair, but also makes provision for them to receive a payment at the same rate as the Chair if they stand in for them for a period of absence of a month or more. We do not propose any change to this arrangement but consider that a review of the SRAs provided to Committee Vice Chairs should be included in a future Panel's review, to consider whether an SRA is appropriate to the additional level of responsibility and work undertaken in the role.

RECOMMENDATION: That a full review of Special Responsibility Allowances be undertaken by a future Independent Remuneration Panel.

23. Whilst the Panel recommends that a full review of SRAs is undertaken at a later date, our attention was brought to the level of the SRA for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Standards and Constitution Committee during the course of our review. This SRA is currently significantly lower than that for the Chairs and Vice Chair of other Committees and Advisory Panels, but the workload of the Committee has increased significantly since its adoption of responsibility for reviewing the Council's Constitution in 2022. The Committee has also created an active working group to advise on a number of its work streams which is chaired by the Chair of the Committee. In light of this, the Panel recommends that the SRA for the Chair of the Standards and Constitution Committee is increased to 30% of the Basic Allowance, and the SRA of the Vice Chair of the Committee is increased to 15% of the Basic Allowance.

RECOMMENDATION: The SRA for the Chair of the Standards and Constitution Committee should be increased from 10% to 30% of the Basic Allowance.

RECOMMENDATION: The SRA for the Vice Chair of the Standards and Constitution Committee should be increased from 5% to 15% of the Basic Allowance.

24. The Panel's attention was also brought to the level of the SRA for the Chair of the Human Resources Panel during the course of our review. Currently the Chair of the Human Resources Panel receives an SRA of 30% of the Basic Allowance. The Human Resources Panel is an advisory body to the Strategy and Resources Committee and has met only once a year for each of the past 3 years, to receive a Human Resources overview report. As an advisory panel it does not have decision making powers. Given this frequency of meetings, it is the view of the IRP that the role of the Chair of the Human Resources Panel does not incur significant enough responsibility to receive an SRA.

RECOMMENDATION: The SRA for Chair of Human Resources Panel of 30% of the Basic Allowance should be withdrawn.

RECOMMENDATION: The SRAs for 2024/25 to be in accordance with those listed in Appendix 1 of the report.

Should a Member receive more than one SRA if they qualify for more than one?

25. The Council's Members Allowances Scheme currently permits councillors to be paid for more than one SRA if they are eligible to receive more than one SRA. This was a recommendation of the former IRP in 2020 and was accepted at that time by the Council.
26. Benchmark analysis identifies that 50% of other Surrey Borough and District Councils (5 of 10 other Councils)² currently operate a "One SRA per councillor" rule which limits Members to being paid for only one SRA even if they qualify for more than one.
27. During our review, the Panel felt that it was premature to make a recommendation on the introduction of a "One SRA per councillor" rule for Epsom and Ewell Borough Council due to the existing low level of the Basic Allowances. If the Council agrees to the Panel's recommendation on the Basic Allowance, we recommend that members also consider whether they feel it would be appropriate to introduce a "One SRA" rule.

RECOMMENDATION: That if the Council agrees to accept a recommended increase to Basic Allowances as set out in this report, it also considers whether it wishes to introduce a "One SRA per Councillor" rule to limit Councillors to being paid for only one SRA even if they qualify for more than one.

Dependants' Carers' Allowance

28. Currently Epsom and Ewell Borough Council offers a Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA) at a rate linked to the Living Wage although take up has always been low. The Local Government Act 2000 explicitly clarifies the right of local authorities to pay a DCA, which members can claim to assist them with the costs of care for their dependants while undertaking approved Council duties.
29. The Panel was of the view that the Dependants' Carers' Allowance was important and should continue to be recommended. The Panel noted that there was a low take up of the allowance currently, but that responses to the questionnaire and interview questions did not indicate that the rate of the allowance was at the wrong level. It is our recommendation that the Dependants' Carers Allowance is maintained at its current level but that it is more widely promoted by both council officers and political group leaders to ensure that councillors are aware of its availability.
30. The wording of the existing Dependants' Carers Allowance is as follows:

"A payment equivalent to the actual cost incurred may be made to Councillors to cover child-care or dependent care subject to the provision of receipts and filling in of a claim form, in respect of childcare and other dependent care respectively with the exception that claims will not be payable in respect of carers in the same household. In addition, the rate payable to carers who are not in the same household as, but are family members of, the Member, should be at the appropriate rate of the National Living Wage."

² Data provided by the Sout East Employers Members Allowances Survey 2023

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council's existing Dependants Carers Allowance continues without amendment. That the Council considers how the allowance can be promoted to councillors to ensure that they are aware of its availability.

Travel, subsistence and attendance at conferences, seminars and other official Council business outside of the borough

31. The Panel considered that a review of the scheme of payments for travel, subsistence and attendance at conferences, seminars and other official Council business was outside of its scope. The Panel observed that the current system seems to be unsatisfactory with regard to what can be claimed and the process for approval. It is our recommendation that a policy is created and adopted by the Council to address these issues and that until such a policy has been adopted, that the existing arrangements set out in the Members Allowances Scheme continue without amendment.

32. The wording of the existing arrangements is as follows:

“Travel expenses and subsistence will only be reimbursed for **pre-approved** attendance at conferences and seminars or other official Council business outside the Borough where reimbursement will be at the officer rate up to a maximum allowed under the Inland Revenue scheme. All other travel, subsistence and necessary costs are covered by the scheme of allowances.”

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council agrees to adopt a policy in relation to pre-approved payments for travel, subsistence and attendance at conferences, seminars and other official Council business outside of the borough, and that until such a policy has been adopted by the Council, that the existing arrangements set out in the Members' Allowances Scheme continue without amendment.

Index Linking

33. The index linking of the Basic Allowance is currently linked to September CPI.

34. The Panel is of the view that any future index linking of the Basic Allowance and the Special Responsibility Allowances should be at the rate of increase in staff salaries. Whilst the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 set out that the Members Allowances Scheme can be adjusted by an index for a maximum of four years, it is the Panel's recommendation that the Council expedites its next Independent Panel review and undertakes such a review in 2 years' time. This will enable both the changes proposed and the issues identified by our report to be reviewed.

35. The Panel have noted earlier in this report that it is mindful of the budgetary challenges faced by the Council, so rather than make a recommendation as to when indexation should begin, it invites elected Members to consider the financial impact of applying it from April 2024 compared to April 2025.

36. It has been brought to our attention that the council's Strategy and Resources Committee has recommended that full Council award a 6% pay rise to all staff effective as of April 2024. Members therefore could deem it appropriate to adopt indexation as at the same date and therefore apply the same level of indexation to the suggested increased noted earlier in this report. An alternative view may be that Members consider the work of this Panel has been carried out looking toward the implementation of its recommendations as of April 2024 and therefore any indexation should apply as of the following financial year. Both views have their respective merits and thus as a Panel we take the view that we are not in a position to make a recommendation. To assist Members reach a decision on this, we set out as follows, the financial impact of applying indexation to our recommended increase to the Basic Allowance (Option A & B):

Basic Allowance Option A as at April 2024 = £4,461.60 x 6% indexation = £4,729.30

Basic Allowance Option B as at April 2024 = £5,736.90 x 6% indexation = £6,081.11

RECOMMENDATION: Any index linkage agreed by the Council for the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances should be in line with staff salary increases for a maximum of two years starting from either 2024/2025 or 2025/2026..

Implementation of Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the new Members' Allowances as set out in this report be implemented from 1 April 2024.

Appendix 1 - Proposed 2024/2025 Allowances

	Number of Members Allowance payable to	Current Allowances (£)	2024/2025 Basic Allowance Option A [Indexation amount] (£)	2024/2025 Basic Allowance Option B [Indexation amount] (£)	Rationale & methodology
Basic Allowance	35	£4,031.70	£4,461.60 [£4,729.30]	£5,736.90 [£6,081.11]	
Special Responsibility Allowances					
Committee Chairs					
Strategy and Resources	1	£4,031.70	£4,461.60 [£4,729.30]	£5,736.90 [£6,081.11]	100% of Basic Allowance
Environment	1	£2,822.19	£3,123.12 [£3,310.51]	£4,015.83 [£4,256.78]	70% of Basic Allowance
Community and Wellbeing	1	£2,822.19	£3,123.12 [£3,310.51]	£4,015.83 [£4,256.78]	70% of Basic Allowance
Licensing and Planning Policy	1	£2,822.19	£3,123.12 [£3,310.51]	£4,015.83 [£4,256.78]	70% of Basic Allowance
Planning	1	£4,031.70	£4,461.60 [£4,729.30]	£5,736.90 [£6,081.11]	100% of Basic Allowance
Audit and Scrutiny	1	£2,822.19	£3,123.12 [£3,310.51]	£4,015.83 [£4,256.78]	70% of Basic Allowance
Crime and Disorder	1	£1,209.51	£1,338.48 [£1,418.79]	£1,721.07 [£1,824.33]	30% of Basic Allowance
Standards and Constitution	1	£403.17	£1,338.48 [£1,418.79]	£1,721.07 [£1,824.33]	30% of Basic Allowance
Panel Chairs					
Financial Policy	1	£1,209.51	£1,338.48 [£1,418.79]	£1,721.07 [£1,824.33]	30% of Basic Allowance
Health Liaison	1	£1,209.51	£1,338.48 [£1,418.79]	£1,721.07 [£1,824.33]	30% of Basic Allowance

Other Chairs					
Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators	1	£1,209.51	£1,338.48 [£1,418.79]	£1,721.07 [£1,824.33]	30% of Basic Allowance
Vice Chairs					
Strategy and Resources	1	£2,015.85	£2,230.80 [£2,364.65]	£2,868.45 [£3,040.56]	50% of Basic Allowance
Environment	1	£1,411.10	£1,561.56 [£1,655.26]	£1,561.56 [£2,128.39]	35% of Basic Allowance
Community and Wellbeing	1	£1,411.10	£1,561.56 [£1,655.26]	£1,561.56 [£2,128.39]	35% of Basic Allowance
Licensing and Planning Policy	1	£1,411.10	£1,561.56 [£1,655.26]	£2,007.92 [£2,128.39]	35% of Basic Allowance
Planning	1	£2,015.85	£2,230.80 [£2,364.65]	£2,868.45 [£3,040.56]	50% of Basic Allowance
Audit and Scrutiny	1	£1,411.10	£1,561.56 [£1,655.26]	£2,007.92 [£2,128.39]	35% of Basic Allowance
Standards and Constitution	1	£201.59	£669.24 [£709.40]	£860.54 [£912.17]	15% of Basic Allowance
Planning Committee Membership					
Membership of Planning Committee	8 (Chair & Vice receive separate Allowance)	£403.17	£446.16 [£472.93]	£573.69 [£608.11]	10% of Basic Allowance

Other posts					
Majority Group Leader	1	£4,031.70	£4,461.60 [£4,729.30]	£5,736.90 [£6,081.11]	100% of Basic Allowance
Minority Group Leader	Dependant upon number of Groups	Dependant on number of group members	Dependant on number of group members	Dependant on number of group members	£200 + £50 per group member
				Increase from FY 2023/24 to 2024/25	
Total cost of Basic Allowance and SRAs under the current 2023/24 Members' Allowances Scheme:				£185,097.20	
Total cost of Basic Allowance and SRAs under the Option A Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 prior to any indexation:				£204,722.04	£19,624.84
Total cost of Basic Allowance and SRAs under the Option A Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 inclusive of 6% indexation:				£217,005.36	£31,908.16
Total cost of Basic Allowance and SRAs under the Option B Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 prior to any indexation:				£262,939.49	£77,842.29
Total cost of Basic Allowance and SRAs under the Option B Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 inclusive of 6% indexation:				£278,715.86	£93,618.66

Epsom and Ewell District Council Independent Remuneration Panel

December 2023

REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25

Head of Service:	Brendan Bradley, Head of Finance
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Fees and Charges 2024/25 Appendix 2 – Proposed Capital Programme Appendix 3 – Capital Appraisal form for proposal 2

Summary

This report sets out estimates for income and expenditure on services in 2024/25 and recommends fees and charges for which this Committee is responsible, with the new charges being effective from 1 April 2024. The report also details council tax discount bands for 2024/25, a capital scheme proposal and seeks approval to include the project in the capital programme to be submitted to Full Council in February 2024.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Recommend the 2024/25 service estimates for approval at the budget meeting of Full Council in February 2024;
- (2) Recommend the 2024/25 fees and charges, as set-out in Appendix 1, for approval at the budget meeting of Full Council in February 2024;
- (3) Agree the Council Tax Discount bands for 2024/25, as set-out in section 9;
- (4) Support the future savings options as set out in 5.2 for inclusion in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- (5) Submit the capital programme for 2024/25 as identified in section 8 of this report to the Full Council for approval in February 2024;
- (6) Note the provisional forecast of schemes for the capital programme for 2025/26 to 2028/29.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The recommendations will enable the Council to meet its statutory duty to set a balanced budget for 2024/25, agree a Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-28, and ensure essential works at the Depot are included within the Council's capital programme of works for 2024/25.

2 Background

- 2.1 For the period 2024/25 to 2027/28, Full Council will be asked in February to agree a four year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to maintain the financial health of the Council whilst delivering the priorities in Corporate Plans. The recommendation in this report is consistent with the proposed MTFS.
- 2.2 Local authorities face a great deal of financial planning uncertainty over the medium term. This is mainly because central government funding settlements tended in recent years to be limited to one-year only. In addition, the economic environment remains highly challenging and difficult to forecast, with elevated inflation impacting demand for services and the cost of delivering those services.
- 2.3 At its meeting on 13 July 2023, Strategy and Resources Committee agreed the budget targets and workstreams to enable the Council to work towards setting a balanced budget for 2024/25 and over the next Medium Term Financial Strategy four year-period.
- 2.4 The committee noted that excluding any new growth in expenditure, additional annual income/savings of £1.1 million are projected to be needed to achieve a balance budget for 2024/25, increasing to £2.5m by 2027/28.
- 2.5 To address this deficit, Strategy & Resources Committee agreed that the following workstreams should be progressed by Directors and Heads of Service:
 - 2.5.1 Officers to be tasked with identifying further efficiencies, although these are becoming harder to achieve after over a decade of austerity.
 - 2.5.2 A base review, which entails reviewing the year end position for 2022/23, identifying any potential savings, additional cost pressures and areas where savings can be developed.
 - 2.5.3 Service Reviews focusing primarily on discretionary services to be undertaken over the next four years with the aim of increasing efficiencies and effectiveness whilst reducing cost.
 - 2.5.4 Review of existing asset utilisation, to realise cost reductions in Council operational buildings and increased income from investment properties.

- 2.5.5 Investigate income streams to maximise revenue from new and existing services, such as invest to save opportunities. Ensure any new powers are considered to generate additional income for the Council, such as the pending new charging policy for waste.
- 2.5.6 Undertake a review of reserves, providing a justification for the level of reserves retained.
- 2.5.7 A target to increase fees and charges income by 6% in both 2024/25 and 2025/26 (as previously agreed by S&R in July 2022), then by CPI+1% for both 2026/27 and 2027/28. Heads of Service review fees and charges annually to ensure increases are achievable and report fees and charges to policy committees for approval.
- 2.5.8 To maximise external funding and partnership opportunities.
- 2.6 The figures in this report reflect the latest outcome of the above workstreams, a number of which will continue into future years, and the provisional local government finance settlement for 2024/25.
- 2.7 Service estimates for this Committee are included in the draft Budget Book 2024/25 that will be made available to all Councillors.
- 2.8 Estimates have been prepared on the basis that existing services to residents are maintained, unless specified otherwise in section 5.
- 2.9 Where the Council incurs contractual inflationary uplifts, budgets have been adjusted accordingly. The budget also includes a central provision of £500,000 to mitigate any price inflation in excess of 2% next year.
- 2.10 For pay inflation, the budget includes a provision of £982,000; £155,000 is for pay progression, as eligible officers progress along their pay scale with experience, and £827,000 is for a 6.0% cost of living increase, in accordance with Full Council's agreed settlement in December 2023, and statutory national living wage uplifts.
- 2.11 Aside from income and rents, there are a limited number of services provided by the Committee for which fees and charges are levied. The impact of changes to Town Hall room hire charges and land charge tariffs have been estimated and incorporated in the estimates for 2024/25.
- 2.12 The proposed tariffs are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.13 The Council agreed a target to increase overall income from locally set fees and charges by a minimum of 6% annually, after making allowance for any further changes in service. Certain charges for committees are being proposed at above or below this level, either to maintain service demand, reduce service subsidy levels or to enable the Council to achieve a balanced budget.

2.14 To allow the Council to determine the budget and Council Tax in February, the Committee estimates have been presented as follows:-

2.14.1 The Budget Book contains the service estimates for 2024/25.

2.14.2 Unavoidable cost increases and income reductions are reflected in the estimates.

2.14.3 Recommended increases to fees and charges have been included within the Budget Book and the income estimates.

2.14.4 All increases in charges are subject to approval by the Committee/Council.

3 Forecast Outturn 2023/24

3.1 Before considering the revenue estimates for 2024/25, this section provides a summary of the forecast outturn for the current financial year.

3.2 Variations identified with on-going effects have been taken into account in preparing next year's budget. The Council's probable revenue outturn at Q1 monitoring for all Committees in 2023/24 anticipates an adverse variance of £98k, as set out in the Q1 monitoring report and summarised by the following table:

Committee	2023/24		
	Current Approved Budget	Q1 Forecast	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Strategy & Resources	331	61	(270)
Environment	4,920	4,998	78
Community & Wellbeing	4,948	5,149	200
Licensing & Planning Policy	760	850	90
Capital charges	(2,669)	(2,669)	0
Total budget requirement	8,289	8,388	98

3.3 The probable outturn specifically for Strategy & Resources Committee for 2023/24 is an underspend of £270,000, which is shown in the following table. The key reasons for the major variances are explained in the subsequent paragraphs.

Forecast Outturn by Service	Current Approved Budget*	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Strategy & Resources Committee</u>			
Democratic & Civic	862	862	0
Corporate Functions	693	693	0
Corp Financial Management	1,878	1,648	(230)
Tax Collection & Benefits	212	212	0
Land Charges	19	19	0
Land & Property	(3,350)	(3,398)	(47)
Economic Dev. & Prosperity	74	74	0
Employee and Support Services	(147)	(140)	8
Building Control Contract	90	90	0
Subtotal Strategy & Resources	331	61	(270)

**includes agreed changes in accordance with the Council's virement policies.*

- 3.4 Within Corporate Financial Management, treasury management income is forecast to overachieve the budget by £230,000, supported by elevated interest rates.
- 3.5 Within Land and Property, a rent review has been successfully completed, resulting in additional back-rent income and the favourable £47,000 variance.
- 3.6 The Committee's probable outturn (estimated net expenditure) for 2023/24 is included in the draft Budget Book on each service group page, with a detailed analysis of variations to budget. The outturn forecasts are all based on quarter one budget monitoring reports used by all managers.

4 Proposals for 2024/25 Budget

- 4.1 The service estimates for 2024/25 are included in the draft Budget Book, circulated to councillors in January.
- 4.2 A summary of the Committee's service estimates for 2024/25 is shown in the following table:

Strategy & Resources Committee	Published Budget 2023/24	Base Position 2024/25
	£000	£000
Democratic & Civic	862	752
Corporate Functions	693	858

Corporate Financial Management	2,046	50
Tax Collection & Benefits	132	1,134
Land Charges	19	19
Land and Property	(3,317)	(3,019)
Local Economy & Community Consultation	74	74
Community Safety	91	121
Contracts - Building Control	90	106
Employee & Support Services	270	665
Total Strategy & Resources	960	760

- 4.3 The following table comprises a summary of the main changes to the Committee's proposed budget for 2024/25 compared with the published budget for 2023/24.

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE		BUDGET £'000
Published Budget 2023/24		960
Service Group	Change	
All	Variation in pay provisions & support service recharges	(680)
Democratic & Civic	Remove budget for cost of 2023 local election	(80)
Democratic & Civic	Budget for Parliamentary and PCC elections	240
Democratic & Civic	Grant funding of Parliamentary and PCC elections	(240)
Democratic & Civic	Increase in member & mayoral allowances	95
Land & Property	Change in contributions to/(from) Property Income Reserve	(700)
Land & Property	Decrease in EEPIC Dividend	661
Land & Property	Changes to rental income following rent	(644)
Land & Property	Change in contributions to/(from) Property Income Reserve	1,127
Land & Property	Change in premises related expenses	(94)
Corp Financial Management	Reduction and apportionment to services of pension deficit contributions as per actuary	(140)
Corp Financial Management	Use of additional New Homes Bonus (NHB) income to fund services	(225)

Corp Financial Management	Movement in use of corporate projects reserve to balance budget	(458)
Corp Financial Management	Projected change in interest income, net of fund manager fees	(358)
Corp Financial Management	Net reduction of inflation & corporate contingencies to services in 2024/25	(555)
Corp Financial Management	Apportionment and removal of contingency for loss of on-street parking income	(250)
Tax Collection & Benefits*	Removal of contribution from collection fund equalisation reserve	1,090
Employee & Support Services	Pay award and NI funding apportioned to services	515
Employee & Support Services	Increased IT licence costs	308
Employee & Support Services - Town Hall	Loss of rent and service charge income from SCC at Town Hall	109
All	Inflationary increase on contracts	65
All	Other net changes	14
Base Position 2024/25		760

*The transfer to/from the Collection Fund Equalisation Reserve is currently provisional and is required to fund the prior year collection fund deficit from 2023/24, which generally arises due to statutory government business rate reliefs for businesses in certain sectors such as retail, leisure and hospitality. The deficit is expected to be reimbursed retrospectively by central government through Section 31 grants, however, any residual deficit is met by the Collection Fund Equalisation Reserve. The final quantum of the transfer from the Collection Fund Equalisation Reserve will only be confirmed in late January 2024 when statutory business rates projections are submitted to central government.

5 Financial Sustainability Proposals for Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28

- 5.1 As set-out in section 2, Strategy & Resources Committee had agreed a Council-wide savings/additional income target of £2.5m to achieve a balanced budget by 2027/28.
- 5.2 The estimates for this committee include the following new savings / additional income targets to reduce the Council's projected budget deficit:

Summary of New Savings/Income From Efficiency Plan	Committee	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		£000	£000	£000	£000
Income from Commercial Property	S&R	249	38	-	-
Review of Town Hall	S&R	-	-	-	400
Other operational efficiencies	All	27	58	50	-
Total Savings/Additional Income		276	96	50	400

5.3 It is anticipated that the additional commercial property income will be achieved principally through contractual rent reviews.

5.4 The Council currently holds a vacant property at 70 East Street. In reviewing options for the existing Town Hall, the Council is targeted to generate operational savings of at least c.£400k per annum by 2027/28, however, this will be subject to further options appraisals due to be presented to members in 2024.

6 2024/25 Budget Gap

6.1 The impacts of elevated inflation and demand for homelessness services will continue into next year and following the budget setting process, the Council's provisional, projected budget gap for 2024/25 is £624k. To mitigate this budget gap, it is proposed that temporary funding of £624k should again be allocated from the Corporate Projects Reserve (in 2023/24, £166k was required from this reserve). The budget is also supported by a forecast appropriation of £0.7m from the Property Income Equalisation Reserve, to mitigate anticipated reduced rental income from EEPIC in the year ahead (as previously agreed at S&R Committee).

6.2 This approach will enable the Council to continue to produce a balanced budget in the short term, while options including service and asset reviews continue to be assessed during 2024/25 to produce a sustainable, balanced budget in the medium term, with the aim of removing reliance on reserves to fund the day-to-day revenue budget.

7 Fees and Charges 2024/25

7.1 Fees and Charges within the remit of this Committee are set out in Appendix 1.

7.2 In February 2018, the Committee confirmed that the Chief Finance Officer should have delegated authority to vary fees and charges for items generating income under £1,000 per annum and/or for one-off items not included in the fees and charges schedule.

7.3 Charges at the Town Hall for room hire and associated officer time fees have been raised between 5% and 10%, to reflect increased inflationary pressures. The budgeted income is £3,013.

- 7.4 For land charge searches, fees have been raised between 5% and 10%, to reflect increased inflationary pressures. The annual income budget for land charges is £102,000.

8 Capital Programme 2024/25

- 8.1 Financial Strategy Advisory Group (FSAG) met in September 2023 to consider initial capital proposals for the 2024/25 Capital Programme, assessed against criteria agreed by S&R in July 2023. FSAG met again in November 2023 to consider the detailed business cases and recommend which schemes should progress to be considered by policy committees in January 2024, for inclusion in the Capital Programme recommended to Full Council in February.
- 8.2 In November 2023, FSAG agreed that the Longmead depot proposal, detailed at Appendix 3, budgeted at a cost of £50k, should be recommended to this committee for inclusion in the Capital Programme for 2024/25 to be recommended to Full Council.
- 8.3 Appendix 2 provides a provisional forecast for Strategy & Resources five-year capital programme and includes the capital investment required for the IT Strategy agreed by this committee in September 2023. The provisional forecast provides an illustration of the Council's anticipated capital expenditure need from 2025/26 to 2028/29 but is not an exhaustive list as future schemes may be identified through other workstreams such as the Climate Change Action Plan and Annual Plan cycle.
- 8.4 Where schemes proposed for an earlier financial year were not progressed, and the works remain outstanding, they have been included within the 'deferred' column of the table and included in the total.

9 Council Tax Income Discount Scheme 2024/25

- 9.1 In November 2020, Strategy & Resources Committee agreed to replace the previous means-tested Local Council Tax Support with a simpler, income-banded Council Tax Discount scheme.
- 9.2 Income bands and discounts are subject to member approval each year. For 2024/25, bands have been increased in line with the Council's scheme rules;
- 9.2.1 Income bands have been increased by 6.7% (and rounded to whole figures), which was the CPI figure for September 2023. This is in line with the government's increase of social security benefits.
- 9.3 Council tax discounts range from 80% for households in income band A, to 40% for those in income band D.

- 9.4 The Council Tax Income Discount scheme, which commenced in 2021/22, was established following a detailed analysis of the Council’s working age caseload requiring financial support and was based on similar discount schemes run by other local authorities.
- 9.5 The income bands are considered appropriate for the current caseload and, having been increased by the September CPI figure, are in line with the increase in national social security benefits.
- 9.6 Since the scheme cost falls on the local council tax payer, it was not designed to change the bands (other than by inflation) or discount percentages on an annual basis, and this assumption has been used when setting council tax.
- 9.7 Pensioners continue to receive support through the Council Tax Reduction scheme set by central government and are not affected by this scheme.
- 9.8 The Council’s Local Care Leavers Discount remains in place and is unaffected by the Council Tax Income Discount scheme. 2023/24 and 2024/25 income bands are shown in the following tables:

2023/24	Household Type & Monthly Income				
Council Tax reduction percentage	Passported	Single, no children	Couple, no children	Lone parent/Couple with one child	Lone parent/couple with two or more children
Income Band A – 80%	Relevant Benefit	£0.00 - £369.00	£0.00 - £688.00	£0.00 – £900.00	£0.00 - £1,168.00
Income Band B – 65%	N/A	£369.01 - £565.00	£688.01 - £906.00	£900.01 - £1,094.00	£1,068.01 - £1,404.00
Income Band C – 50%	N/A	£565.01 - £665.00	£906.01 - £1,079.00	£1,094.01 - £1,213.00	£1,404.01 - £1,723.00
Income Band D – 40%	N/A	£665.01 - £1,353.00	£1079.01 - £1,708.00	£1,213.01 - £2,074.00	£1,723.01 - £3,366.00

2024/25	Household Type & Monthly Income				
Council Tax reduction percentage	Passported	Single, no children	Couple, no children	Lone parent/Couple with one child	Lone parent/couple with two or more children
Band A – 80%	Relevant Benefit	£0.00 - £394.00	£0.00 - £735.00	£0.00 - £961.00	£0.00 - £1,247.00
Band B – 65%	N/A	£394.01 - £603.00	£735.01 - £967.00	£961.01 - £1,168.00	£1,247.01 - £1,499.00
Band C – 50%	N/A	£603.01 - £710.00	£967.01 - £1,152.00	£1,168.01 - £1,295.00	£1,499.01 - £1,839.00
Band D – 40%	N/A	£710.01 - £1,444.00	£1,152.01 - £1823.00	£1295.01 - £2,213.00	£1,839.01 - £3,592.00

10 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

10.1 Equality Impact Assessment

10.1.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

10.2 Crime & Disorder

10.2.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

10.3 Safeguarding

10.3.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

10.4 Dependencies

10.4.1 Other Policy Committees are also being presented with their budgets for approval in the January committee cycle.

10.5 Other

10.5.1 In preparing the revenue budget estimates officers have identified the following main risks facing the Committee in delivering services within the budget. These budgets will require careful management during the year.

Service	Risk	Budget Estimate 2024/25	Risk Management
Energy Costs & Inflation	<p>Medium: The energy market is currently volatile and inflation remains well above the recent historical average.</p> <p>Inflationary prices rises are hitting all areas of the Council's operations.</p>	<p>Budgeted Inflationary Contingency: £500k</p>	<p>Inclusion of corporate contingency budget to mitigate impact of elevated energy costs and inflation. Pursue initiatives to reduce energy usage. Regular budget monitoring of impact. Utilise any government support schemes that are announced. Use of reserves if necessary.</p>
Land and property rental income	<p>High: Loss of tenants and commercial rental income.</p>	<p>£3.3m EEBC £626k EEPIC Dividend Income</p>	<p>Asset Management Plan – property and rent reviews. Property/tenant management. Use of Property Income Equalisation Reserve.</p>
Savings / Additional Income Delivery	<p>Medium: Savings targets have been agreed across the Council's budget. There is a risk that if the savings are not delivered the Council's deficit position will widen further.</p>	<p>Budgeted savings: S&R - £276k Environment: £0 C&W: £30k LPPC: £50k</p>	<p>Officers will monitor income and costs throughout the year. Progress on meeting savings targets will be reports to members through quarterly budget monitoring.</p>

11 Financial Implications

- 11.1 The draft Budget Book 2024/25 is highly detailed, therefore please can any questions or queries be sent to relevant officers in advance of the Committee meeting wherever possible.

- 11.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Financial implications are contained within the body of this report.

12 Legal Implications

- 12.1 The Council is under a statutory obligation to produce a balanced budget and to comply with its policy on equalities.
- 12.2 Although there are no direct legal implications arising from this report, decisions taken about the budget will impact the services which can be delivered. In the event of any impact, there will need to be an equalities impact assessment in relevant cases.
- 12.3 **Legal Officer's comments:** None arise further to the contents of this report.

13 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 13.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged: Effective Council.
- 13.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 13.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None arising from the contents of this report.
- 13.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None arising from the contents of this report.
- 13.5 **Partnerships:** None arising from the contents of this report.

14 Background papers

- 14.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- Strategic Financial Planning report to S&R Committee in July 2023.

Other papers:

- Draft 2024/25 Budget Book.

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Service	Charged At	Description	Unit	2023/24	2024/25	% Change
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Town Hall

Room Hire

Hirer			£	£	
Standard	Atrium (Evening 18:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	95.00	103.00	8.4%
Standard	Committee Room 1 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	60.00	66.00	10.0%
Standard	Committee Room 2 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	50.00	55.00	10.0%
Standard	Council Chamber (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	95.00	103.00	8.4%
Commercial	Atrium (Evening 18:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	195.00	213.00	9.2%
Commercial	Committee Room 1 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	120.00	130.00	8.3%
Commercial	Committee Room 2 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	90.00	98.00	8.9%
Commercial	Council Chamber (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	195.00	213.00	9.2%
Community	Atrium (Evening 18:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	50.00	54.00	8.0%
Community	Committee Room 1 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	29.00	31.00	6.9%
Community	Committee Room 2 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	25.00	27.00	8.0%
Community	Council Chamber (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	50.00	54.00	8.0%

Staff Hire

All	Support officer	Per hour	66.00	72.00	9.1%
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Miscellaneous Sales

	Radar key	Each	7.00	8.00	14.3%
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Service	Charged At	Description	Unit	2023/24	2024/25	% Change
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Land Charges

	Additional enquiries: (per hour or any part of)	Per enquiry	38.50	41.00	6.5%
	Con29O Optional - highway enquiries	Per enquiry	25.00	26.50	6.0%
	Con29O Optional - Other enquiries	Per enquiry	17.50	19.00	8.6%
	CON29R	Per search	185.00	197.00	6.5%
	Con29R component	Per question	3.00	3.25	8.3%
	LLC1	Per search	30.50	32.50	6.6%
	Parcel Fee (Con29R)	Per parcel	26.50	28.50	7.5%
	Parcel Fee (LLC1)	Per parcel	10.60	11.25	6.1%
	Assisted Personal Search/LLCR	Per search	0.70	0.75	7.1%

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Strategy and Resources Committee Proposed Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2028/29

	Original Budget 2024/25	Proposed Budget 2025/26	Proposed Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Deferred Works from Prior Years	Total Provision 2024/25- 2028/29
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
S&R Proposal 1: Longmead Depot - Works to prevent accidental contamination of water sewerage system	50	0	0	0	0	0	50
Agreed at S&R 21/09/2023: IT Capital Strategy	250	140	50	50	50	0	540
Provisional: Cox Lane	0	0	0	0	0	80	80
Provisional: Longmead Depot	0	40	0	0	0	40	80
Provisional: Ewell Court House	0	0	0	85	0	50	135
Total Strategy and Resources Committee	300	180	50	135	50	170	885

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Capital Programme Review 2024-25 Project Appraisal Form

**COMMITTEE &
PROPOSAL
NUMBER**

Strategy & Resources 2

PROJECT TITLE

Works to Longmead depot to Prevent accidental contamination of water sewerage system

ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER

<p>Officer responsible for project planning and delivery of the scheme. Accountable officers are also responsible for post project review.</p>	<p>Ian Dyer</p>
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DETAILS OF PROJECT

<p>Project scope, what is included/excluded in the scheme.</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>Thames Water have inspected Longmead Depot because of some evidence of contamination of the water courses in the area local to the depot. Thames Water are satisfied that the contamination was not caused by the Depot and its operation, but they did highlight several risks that need to be eliminated at the depot. Epsom and Ewell are obliged to undertake remedial works to eliminate these risks and ensure that no accidental contamination occurs because of the operations that are undertaken in the depot.</p> <p>Important Note</p> <p>If we do not carry out these works Thames Water have the power to issues notices and fines for lack of action to prevent contamination to local water supplies.</p> <p>Scope of works</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All salt used for gritting pathways and car parks during the winter period needs to be put under cover to prevent contamination of the sewerage system during bad weather. This will require a self-contained building (shed or barn type) to be built in a new location at the depot. 2. All chemicals stored for use in the operation of the depot including all storage of AdBlue exhaust additive and waste engine coolant as well as chemicals used for horticultural purposes are to be provided with bunding arrangements to ensure any spillage does not contaminate the sewerage system in the event of an accident. 3. Provision will need to be made to block a small overspill of water used for cleaning refuse and other vehicles, in order that it cannot contaminate the general rainwater sewerage system. <p>Financial Strategy Advisory Group groups comments 29th September 2023</p> <p>That the proposal could progress to the next stage of the capital programme. Members requested that the final proposal consider whether external funding could be secured, for example, or whether funds could be available from a nutrient mitigation scheme.</p>
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Agenda Item 9
Appendix 3

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	<p>After investigating it appears that the nutrient mitigation scheme is devised to protect our waterways from pollution and enable home building when applying for planning permission and does not cover council Depot yards and coverage and protection of road salt supplies.</p> <p>Tendering Please note that all projects over £25k must be tendered on the procurement portal in accordance with standing orders procedure and at this stage these are budget figures. By the time we get on site this process will have been running for over a year and cost of the project can increase with inflation or decrease depending on the tendered prices received.</p>
Project outcomes and benefits	<p>Criteria - Where it is mandatory for the Council to provide the scheme (e.g., Disabled Facilities Grants and Health and Safety). - Minimum required to continue to deliver the services of Council (e.g., Minimum level of building maintenance and IT).</p> <p>Benefits Undertaking this project is required to comply with environmental legislation and will ensure that Epsom and Ewell do not accidentally contaminate the sewerage water system. There is not an option to do nothing as it is illegal to discharge trade effluent into a surface water sewer. Thames Water are aware of how the depot operates and have said that they will be monitoring the situation. We need to be able to inform them soon that we plan to undertake these works</p>

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

		Cost of Project £	Comments and detail where necessary. Provide appendices where relevant. Examples of business cases spreadsheets can be found in the Finance Handbook
a	Estimated cost of purchase, works and/or equipment	50	
b	Consultancy or other fees	0	
c	Total Scheme Capital Costs (a+b)	50	
d	External Funding Identified (e.g. s106, grants etc.) Please give details, including any unsuccessful funding enquiries you may have made.	0	

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e	Net Costs to Council (c-d)	50	
f	Internal Sources of Capital Funds Identified (e.g. repairs & renewals reserve etc.)	0	
g	Capital Reserves Needed to Finance Proposal (e-f)	50	
h	Annual Ongoing Revenue Additional Savings as a Direct Result of the Project	0	
i	Annual Ongoing Revenue Additional Costs as a Direct Result of the Project	0	

Year	2024/25 £
Spend Profile of Scheme – please identify which year (s) the scheme spend will fall into	2024

REVENUE IMPACT

Can Revenue Implications be funded from the Committee Base Budget? – Please give details	No impact
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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Does the scheme meet any of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan targets, and if so, which ones?	Longmead depot is an essential element of the Borough's plan to help businesses and residents to recycle their waste. It is essential for the borough to be seen to be taking care of all environmental issues associated with its operations
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FOUR YEAR PLAN 2020/24

<p>Is this investment linked to EEBC's Key Themes? If so, say which ones and evidence how. How does project fit within service objectives?</p>	Enhance the Borough's natural assets, preserving and increasing biodiversity.
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TIMESCALES

What is the proposed timetable for completion of the project? Give estimated start and finish dates for each stage of the project. These dates will be used as milestones during quarterly budget monitoring to assess performance of project delivery.

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		Target Start Date	Target Finish Date
1	Design & Planning	January 2024	
2	Further Approvals Needed	N/A	
3	Tendering (if necessary)	February 2024	
4	Project start date	April 2024	
5	Project Finish Date	April 2024	

BASELINE CRITERIA

All capital schemes are assessed against criteria set by the Financial Strategy Advisory Group annually. Proposals should meet at least one of these criteria. State which capital criteria(s) for assessing proposals are met and why. Leave blank any which are not met.

Spend to Save schemes should meet the following criteria:

- Payback of the amount capital invested within the project within 5 years (10 years for renewable energy projects).
- The return required on capital employed should be linked to the potential cost of borrowing (MRP) rather than potential loss of investment income.
- Risk of not achieving return on investment is low.
- Clear definition of financial cost/benefits of the scheme.

Members may consider schemes with longer paybacks on major spend to save projects going forward, especially those that incur borrowing.

Is there a guarantee of the scheme being fully externally funded and is it classed as a high priority? Please give details of funding streams, including any restrictions on the funding.	No
Is the Scheme a Spend to Save Project? Will investment improve service efficiency including cost savings or income generation? What is the payback in years?	No
Is it mandatory for the Council to provide the scheme? Is investment required to meet Health and Safety or other legislative requirements? If so state which requirements.	Yes

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<p>Is this project the minimum scheme required to continue to deliver the services of the Council? - Is investment required for the business continuity of the Council? If so, say how.</p>	<p>Yes providing we continue to grit car parks, paving and perimeter of buildings in freezing conditions.</p>
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ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

<p>Is investment identified in the Council's Asset Management Plan?</p>	<p>No</p>
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PRIORITISATION

State which one of the four prioritisation categories are met and why.

1	<p>Investment essential to meet statutory obligation.</p>	<p>Yes, we have been told by Thames water to put a cover over the road salt storage to prevent the rain from washing the salts down the drainage system into the river.</p>
2	<p>Investment Important to achieve Key Priorities.</p>	
3	<p>Investment important to secure service continuity and improvement.</p>	
4	<p>Investment will assist but is not required to meet one of the baseline criteria.</p>	

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH SCHEME

1	<p>Outline the risks of delivering this project to timetable and budget. (Please do not include risks to the service or asset if project is not approved.)</p>	<p>Limited risk, area needs to be cleared and empty in advance to carrying out the work.</p>
2	<p>Are there any risks relating to the availability of resources internally to deliver this project</p>	<p>No</p>
3	<p>Consequences of not undertaking this project</p>	<p>If we do not carry out these works Thames Water have the power to issues notices and fines for lack of action to prevent contamination to local water supplies.</p>
4	<p>Alternative Solutions (Other solutions considered – cost and implications)</p>	<p>Do not store any road salt for use in freezing temperatures.</p>

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Is consultation required for this project? Please give details of the who with and when by.	No
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Ward(s) affected by the scheme	Court ward
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Accountable Officer Responsible for Delivery of the Scheme

Name and Signature:

Whole life revenue costs of capital project

Where savings or budget virements are being used to part fund a project, the relevant budget manager must sign the appraisal form.

Accountable Officers for the revenue implications of the project

Project Manager Name and Signature Date

Revenue Budget Holder Name and Signature Date

Service Accountant Name and Signature Date

Director Name and Signature Date