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Democratic Services



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday 15 October 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 Environment Committee meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Councillor Liz Frost (Chair)
Councillor Alan Williamson (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Arthur Abdulin
Councillor Christine Cleveland

Councillor Tony Froud
Councillor Jan Mason
Councillor Julie Morris
Councillor Kieran Persand

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

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

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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- 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

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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.

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Exclusion of the Press and the Public

There are no matters scheduled to be discussed at this meeting that would appear to disclose confidential or exempt information under the provisions Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). Should any such matters arise during the course of discussion of the below items or should the Chair agree to discuss any other such matters on the grounds of urgency, the Committee may wish to resolve to exclude the press and public 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, Thursday 10 October**.

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, Monday 14 October**.

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AGENDA

1. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

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

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other registrable or non-registrable interests from Members in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 14)

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 16 July 2024 (attached) and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

4. MOTION 3 REFERRED FROM FULL COUNCIL ON 30 JULY 2024 (Pages 15 - 22)

The report provides a basis for debate of the motion submitted to the meeting of Full Council on 30 July 2024 in relation to the Pay-to-Play Tennis Scheme and tennis charges.

5. ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP UPDATE (Pages 23 - 26)

To report on the work of the Allotments Working Group during 2023/24.

6. FOOD SAFETY SERVICE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY INTERVENTION PLANS (Pages 27 - 46)

In compliance with national monitoring arrangements, this report sets out how the Council intends to discharge its statutory responsibilities in respect of food hygiene and health and safety interventions in the year 2024-2025 and reports on activities in the 2023-2024 year.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN (2025-2029) (Pages 47 - 68)

This report presents the Council's second Climate Change Action Plan and seeks support for its adoption.

8. TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE (Pages 69 - 76)

This report provides an update on the progress of delivering the Council's Tree Management Plan.

9. TREE PLANTING FEES & CHARGES POLICY - 9 MONTH REVIEW (Pages 77 - 84)

This report provides a review of the delivery of the Council's Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy.

10. HOOK ROAD CAR PARK INTERIM OPTIONS FOLLOW UP PAPER (Pages 85 - 88)

This report seeks to identify funding for a pay and display interim option at Hook Road Car Park or for the Committee to opt for a RingGo solution only.

11. 2025/26 BUDGET TARGETS (Pages 89 - 94)

This report informs the Committee of the Council's revenue budget targets presented to the Strategy & Resources Committee in July. The report seeks guidance on the preparation of the Committee's service estimates for 2025/26.

12. URGENT DECISIONS (Pages 95 - 98)

To report to the committee the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution

13. TENNIS COACHING CONTRACTS (To Follow)

Minutes of the Meeting of the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 16 July 2024

PRESENT -

Councillor Liz Frost (Chair); Councillor Alan Williamson (Vice-Chair); Councillors Arthur Abdulin, Christine Cleveland, Robert Leach (as nominated substitute for Councillor Tony Froud), Julie Morris and Kieran Persand

In Attendance: Councillor Steven McCormick

Absent: Councillor Tony Froud and Councillor Jan Mason

Officers present: Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Richard Chevalier (Parking Manager), Paul Holliday (Principal Licensing Officer) (items 1 - 4 only), Oliver Nelson (Public Protection Manager), Sue Emmons (Chief Accountant), Vanessa Newton (Senior Accountant) and Dan Clackson (Democratic Services Officer)

1 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

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

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Allotment Working Group

Councillor Christine Cleveland, Other Interest: Councillor Christine Cleveland wished to declare she held an allotment. She stated there was no conflict of interest.

Councillor Julie Morris, Other Interest: Councillor Julie Morris wished to declare she held an allotment. She stated it was a non-prejudicial interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 23 January 2024 and authorised the Chair to sign them.

4 PAVEMENT LICENCE FEES AND POLICY

The Committee received a report asking the Committee to review the application fee and policy in relation to pavement licences, following changes made to legislation.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Legislation and Charges.** In response to questions from a Member, the Principal Licensing Officer explained that the Government introduced the Business and Planning Act 2020 as a temporary measure to support businesses through the Covid pandemic. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 had now permanently set in place the pavement trading provisions of the 2020 Business and Planning Act. He explained that processing applications is costly, involving Officer site visits, general administration, processing objections and communication with the businesses in question. He explained that the amount the Council can charge for pavement licences is capped by the legislation and that the report recommendation advised the highest amount be charged in order to cover the Council's costs to the greatest extent possible, elaborating that the highest amount the Council could charge under the legislation would not fully cover the Council's costs.
- b) **Referral of applicants to relevant guidance.** The Committee considered that it would be good practice for Licensing Officers to direct and refer applicants to the relevant Government guidance, rather than producing and adopting an Epsom & Ewell Pavement Licence Policy, as part of the application process. It was noted by the Principal Licensing Officer that the Government website gave full information.
- c) **Trading on private land.** Responding to a question from a Member, the Principal Licensing Officer explained that retailers only required a pavement licence if they intend to place furniture on the highway, and that trading on private land would instead require a lease agreement with the landowner.
- d) **Charge for licence renewals.** In response to a Member, the Principal Licensing Officer stated that a charge of £350 for licence renewals was justified due to the costs incurred by the Council in processing the renewal applications. He explained that the amount the Council can charge for renewals is capped at £350 by the legislation and that neither the capped £500 for new applications nor the £350 for renewals would fully cover the cost to the Council.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved (4 for, 2 against, and the Chair not voting) to:

- (1) **Set the fee for pavement licences as follows; -**

New applications £500

Renewal of licence £350

Unanimously resolved to:

(2) Dispense with the Epsom & Ewell Pavement Licence Policy.**5 FUTURE OF THE PEST CONTROL SERVICE**

The Committee received a report to determine the future of the Council's pest control service.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Number of requests in 2024/25.** The Public Protection Manager confirmed that the table at section 2.6 of the report, listing the number of control requests for 2024/25 as 0, was still accurate as at the time of the meeting.
- b) **Marketing of the service.** In response to a question from a Member, the Public Protection Manager confirmed that the Council's pest control service was advertised on the Council's website and the marketing had not changed over the last year.
- c) **Statutory pest control responsibilities.** Following a question from a Member, the Public Protection Manager explained that the Council's statutory pest control duties are defined under legislation from 1949, requiring the Council to investigate complaints with respect to, and enforce the control and destruction of, rats on private land.
- d) **Low service usage and competition.** In response to a question from a Member, the Chair suggested that since the initial inception of the Council's pest control service, public access to information and to alternative service providers had increased, resulting in a lot of commercial competition that did not exist at the time the service was started.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved (6 for, 1 against) to:

- (1) Discontinue the service and agree that suitable signposting to an authoritative trade body be substituted on the Council's website.**

6 HOOK ROAD CAR PARK - ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY

The Committee received a report proposing the Council and the developer of the SGN Site work collaboratively to investigate the level of contamination and consequent environmental implications for development on any part of the wider gas works site.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Releasing in Principle.** In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Property and Regeneration explained that the report was not requesting for Committee to make the decision now to release the site for redevelopment, but rather, to acknowledge that the site could be recommended for release in the future as a result of the ground investigations and to facilitate the wider redevelopment of the gas holder site.
- b) **Reasoning behind the report recommendation(s).** In response to questions from Members, the Head of Property and Regeneration stated that the wider site owned by the Council and the adjacent site owned by Southern Gas Networks (SGN) together formed what used to be the entirety of the former gas works site. He explained that in the event that redevelopment was proposed on either one of the two sites, the Environment Agency (EA), as a statutory consultee, would very likely require full decontamination on both sites on account of the historical use of the larger site, and the associated drinking water safety concerns (due to its close proximity to the water works). He advised that the developer for the SGN site was likely to put forward an application to develop on its site in the near future. Should any contaminants be confirmed on either site, it is likely that no development could proceed until the whole former gas works site had been decontaminated. He suggested it was highly likely that a ground investigation survey on the Council's site would identify the presence of ground contaminants, and advised, in the interest of being a responsible landowner, the Council ought to proactively investigate its land.
- c) **Cost of the investigation.** The Head of Property and Regeneration stated that the proposed ground investigation survey was procured at a competitive rate in compliance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders.
- d) **Contamination on the Council site.** In response to Members, the Head of Property and Regeneration explained the site was concrete capped as a safety measure c. 30 years ago in order to ensure that any contamination was contained and unable to escape. The Head of Housing and Community explained contamination duties are set out in Government guidance, and that town gas sites are considered as possibly contaminated land under statute. He explained that the site used to burn hydrocarbons back in 1800s, and that people historically were less aware of the risks and dangers associated with the works. He stated that it is very common for town gas sites to be highly contaminated and suggested that a survey on the site would identify the presence of polyaromatic hydrocarbons, and heavy metals.
- e) **Current contamination risk on the site.** In response to a Member, the Head of Property and Regeneration explained that until development took place on the site, there was no risk of contamination and the site remained entirely safe. He stated, however, that once the EA became aware of the contamination risks associated with the site (as a statutory

consultee to any planning application) then, they could potentially require full remediation of the wider site regardless of any development proceeding or not.

- f) **Concerns surrounding the cost.** Members considered the cost that would be incurred by conducting a ground investigation survey and queried the necessity to act pre-emptively and conduct a survey prior to being required to do so by the EA.

Following consideration, the Committee voted (3 for, 4 against) against the recommendation to:

- (1) *Recommend to Strategy & Resources Committee to:*

- a) *Agree to undertake a Ground Investigation (GI) survey of the Council's car park site at a cost of up to £30,000 (includes £7,000 contingency as detailed in this report), to be funded from the Property Maintenance Reserve.*

and recommendation (1) a) was not carried.

The Committee voted (3 for, 4 against) against the recommendation to:

- (2) *Note that the Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration and Head of Property & Regeneration, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Chief Legal Officer, have express authority to take all necessary actions further to the above decisions being made that commit resources, as is necessary and appropriate.*

and recommendation (2) was not carried.

The Committee resolved (5 for, 1 against, and 1 abstaining) to:

- (1) **Recommend to Strategy & Resources Committee to:**

- b) **Recommend to Strategy & Resources Committee to release (in principle) the Hook Road Car Park to facilitate the wider redevelopment of the gas holder site.**

7 CAR PARK OPTIONS - HOOK ROAD

The Committee received a report setting out interim payment options for Hook Road multi-storey car park users prior to any redevelopment.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Accessibility.** The Committee considered that many people do not own smart phones and/or use bank cards, and that a Ringo-only payment option, as set out at option C in the report, may disadvantage people who are only able to pay with cash. The Committee considered that a hybrid

approach, offering Ringo and a pay-and-display option such as option B set out in the report, might be more appropriate.

- b) **Current payment options at Hook Road car park.** In response to a Member, the Parking Manager confirmed that there were currently two payment machines at Hook Road car park, with one being cash only, and one being cash and card.
- c) **Enforcement.** Following a question from a Member, the Parking Manager explained that effectually there would not be much difference between option B and C of the report in terms of the amount of enforcement resources that would be required.
- d) **Resource and time efficiency.** Following comments from Members, the Chair explained that option C would be the most resource-efficient solution as there would be no requirement for Council staff to visit the car park to collect and transport cash. The Chief Accountant elaborated that option C was also the most time-efficient option in terms of administration and payment-processing costs.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved (0 in favour of option A, 4 in favour of option B, and 3 in favour of option C) to:

- (1) **Authorise officers to proceed with Option B, as highlighted in Section 3 of the report.**

8 CAR PARK WORKING GROUP

The Committee received a report seeking agreement on continuation of the Councillor car park working group and to agree the terms of reference for the group.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Conservative member position on the working group.** The Chair confirmed that, following the publication of the agenda, Councillor Kieran Persand had been nominated for the Conservative member position (listed as TBC in the report) on the working group. This was noted by the Committee.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Agree to the continuation of a Car Parking Working Group.**
- (2) **Approve the Terms of Reference for the Car Park Working Group as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.**
- (3) **Agree to appoint members to the working group as set out below:**
 - **The Chair of the Environment Committee (to preside as Chair of the working group) – Councillor Liz Frost**

- **The Vice-Chair of the Environment Committee – Councillor Alan Williamson**
 - **Residents' Association members – Councillors Christine Cleveland, Arthur Abdulin, Jan Mason**
 - **Conservative member – Councillor Kieran Persand**
 - **Labour member – Councillor Rob Geleit**
 - **Liberal Democrat member – Councillor Julie Morris**
- (4) **To authorise the Chair, and in their absence the Vice Chair, to invite Councillors, stakeholders and officers to the Car Park Working Group as required.**

9 ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP

The Committee received a report seeking approval to form of an Allotment Working Group and proposing a draft Terms of Reference for comment.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **October Environment Committee report on the work of the 2023-2024 Allotments Working Group.** The Chair proposed that an additional recommendation be added to the report agreeing that a report on the work of the 2023-2024 Allotments Working Group be brought to the October meeting for the Environment Committee's consideration. The wording of the proposed additional recommendation was as follows:

(5) Agree that a report on the work of the 2023-2024 Allotments Working Group be brought to the October 2024 meeting of the Environment Committee.

Councillor Christine Cleveland seconded the proposal. The Committee voted unanimously in favour of the addition of the recommendation.

- b) **Membership and work of the 2023/24 working group.** In response to comments from a Member, the Chair confirmed that at the time of the formation of the allotment working group, an invitation was extended to all Members of the Council for nominations to the group. She stated that the working group had made achievements throughout the year, which would be detailed in the report to the October meeting as mentioned at recommendation 5.
- c) **Officer attendance at meetings of the working group.** Following a question from a Member, the Chair confirmed that Officers were not present at the 2023/24 meetings of the working group as there was not enough resources at the time. The Vice-Chair confirmed that there would be Officers present at the meetings of the working group for 2024/25, and

that meetings of the group would be arranged as and when required when there was specific business to be discussed.

- d) **Stakeholder invitations to attend meetings.** A Member wished to express that they felt it was important that allotment site representatives be invited to attend meetings of the working group.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Approve the continuation of the Allotment Working Group.**
- (2) **Approve the Terms of Reference for the Allotment Working Group as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.**
- (3) **Agree to appoint members to the working group as set out at section 3.1 of the report:**
 - **The Vice-Chair of the Environment Committee (to preside as Chair of the working group), Councillor Alan Williamson**
 - **Councillor Christine Cleveland**
 - **Councillor Steven McCormick**
 - **Councillor Julie Morris**
- (4) **To authorise the Vice Chair, and in their absence the Chair, to invite Councillors, stakeholders and officers to the Allotment Working Group as required.**
- (5) **Agree that a report on the work of the 2023-2024 Allotments Working Group be brought to the October 2024 meeting of the Environment Committee.**

10 ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP

The Committee received a report recommending the continuation of a Councillor Working Group to oversee the implementation of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan. It proposed terms of reference for the group to be approved.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Conservative member position on the working group.** The Chair confirmed that, following the publication of the agenda, Councillor Kieran Persand had been nominated for the Conservative member position (listed as TBC in the report) on the working group. This was noted by the Committee.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Agree the continuation of the Environment and Sustainability Working Group.**
- (2) **Approve the terms of reference for the Working Group as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.**
- (3) **Agree to appoint members to the working group as set out below:**
 - **The Vice-Chair of the Environment Committee (to preside as Chair of the working group) – Councillor Alan Williamson**
 - **Residents' Association members – Councillors Christine Cleveland, Tony Froud, and Jan Mason**
 - **Conservative member – Councillor Kieran Persand**
 - **Labour member – Councillor Chris Ames**
 - **Liberal Democrat member – Councillor Julie Morris**
- (4) **To authorise the Vice Chair, and in their absence the Chair, to invite Councillors, stakeholders and officers to the Environment and Sustainability Working Group as required.**

11 URGENT DECISIONS

The Committee received a report on the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- a) **Consultation with Committee Members via email.** Councillor Julie Morris proposed that an additional recommendation be added to the report to enable Members of the Committee to be consulted regarding urgent decisions via email if appropriate. The wording of the proposed additional recommendation was as follows:

(2) That if in future and if appropriate the Committee could be consulted by email if the meeting schedule does not permit time for decisions.

Councillor Kieran Persand seconded the proposal. The Committee voted unanimously in favour of the addition of the recommendation.

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.**

- (2) That if in future and if appropriate the Committee could be consulted by email if the meeting schedule does not permit time for decisions.**

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 9.20 pm

COUNCILLOR LIZ FROST (CHAIR)

MOTION 3 REFERRED FROM FULL COUNCIL ON 30 JULY 2024

Head of Service:	Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services
Report Author	Samantha Whitehead
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Motion 3 to Full Council on the 30 July 2024

Summary

The report provides a basis for debate of the motion submitted to the meeting of Full Council on 30 July 2024 in relation to the Pay-to-Play Tennis Scheme and tennis charges.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the motion referred to this Committee by Full Council and take no further action after considering the content of this report.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To enable the Committee to debate the motion and make a decision.

2 Background

- 2.1 A Motion was submitted to Full Council at its meeting on 30 July 2024, proposed by Cllr Kieran Persand and seconded by Cllr Bernie Muir, as attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 This item was referred to the Environment Committee as the relevant policy committee to debate the motion.

- 2.3 In summary the motion asks the Committee to revisit the current court fees and look to lower them, allow free access to people 18 and under, and provide a further discounted rate to those in receipt of low-income benefits.

3 Current Charges

- 3.1 The household membership (up to five people in each household) of £40 per annum allows for unlimited play on all the courts in the Borough. Those on low incomes and receipt of benefits can apply for a discounted household membership of £20 per annum. Alternatively, there is the option to pay £6 for an ad-hoc booking if players do not want to commit to an annual membership subscription.
- 3.2 The table below helps illustrate the cost per session:

Charging scenarios		
Calculations based on booking once a week for 26 weeks of the year		
No of tennis players in household	Standard £40.00 per annum	Discounted £20.00 per annum
1	£1.54	£0.77
2	£0.77	£0.38
3	£0.51	£0.26
4	£0.38	£0.19
5	£0.31	£0.15

- 3.3 During the school summer holidays, the Environment Committee took the decision to offer free bookable tennis sessions to all residents. Free tennis courts could be booked from Tuesday 23 July to Monday 26 August 2024, between 8am and 12pm. During the course of the summer, 173 residents took up this offer.
- 3.4 Additionally, officers have been working closely with Tennis Coaching Providers over the past months to implement tennis coaching in Court Recreation Ground, Alexander Recreation Ground and Auriol Park. A condition of the Coaching Scheme requires coaches to pledge to provide free Activator Led tennis sessions in the Parks on Saturday mornings.
- 3.5 Until these Activator Led sessions are up and running in all tennis courts across the Borough, the Council is offering two free, bookable sessions between 9-10am and 10-11am each Saturday to enable those of all ages, experience, and socio-economic background to participate.

4 Impact of Lowering Charges

- 4.1 At the meeting of the Environment Committee Meeting held on 13 June 2023, members resolved to introduce a charging strategy for tennis in the Borough.
- 4.2 The Council received a grant to install the gates which is covered by a contract with the LTA. The council has committed to maintaining and operating the gate system for 5 years. The income therefore needs to cover the maintenance costs. Should we be in breach of the contract the LTA would request their full grant back.
- 4.3 The charges are in line with other Councils who have successfully implemented Pay-to-Play tennis and were set following advice from the Lawn Tennis Association.
- 4.4 The Environment Committee now have an income target of £17,500 for 24/25 and as of 30 August 2024, £12,500 has been achieved. Leaving £5,000 to be recovered by the end of the financial year.
- 4.5 A reduction in charges will jeopardise this income and any shortfall will need to be found by reducing expenditure in other Environment Committee areas.

5 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

- 5.1 Equality Impact Assessment
 - 5.1.1 By offering free, bookable sessions at the weekends and discounted Pay to Play Annual Membership Passes, the Council is encouraging members of the community, who may be facing financial difficulty, the opportunity to play tennis in the Borough.
- 5.2 Crime & Disorder
 - 5.2.1 Not applicable
- 5.3 Safeguarding
 - 5.3.1 Not applicable
- 5.4 Dependencies
 - 5.4.1 Not applicable
- 5.5 Other
- 5.6 The risk of upholding the motion is outlined in the body of the report.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The motion, if carried, has the potential to significantly reduce tennis income. Without additional income streams, the Council will struggle to maintain and reinvest in sporting facilities. The aim of generating income is to build up a sinking fund that, over time, creates a reserve to pay for future maintenance and refurbishment. There is also a risk that the Committee will not raise sufficient funds to pay for the annual subscription of £2,380 that covers the yearly servicing and general maintenance of the gates and use of the Clubspark software.
- 6.2 If Members choose to revoke or amend the decisions taken at the Environment Committee Meeting held on 13 June 2023 and agree to lower charges, this will have an impact on the Committee's 2024/25 budget and the income will need to be found from another source within the Environment Committee's budget.
- 6.3 Reducing or waiving the fees to users of the tennis courts could lead to similar requests from other users of Council sports facilities. If the Council cannot generate sufficient income to fund non-statutory sports provision, other options would need to be considered such as closing the facilities or stopping other non-statutory services.
- 6.4 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Financial implications are included in the body of the report.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 None.
- 7.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None arise from the content of this report.

8 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 8.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:
- 8.2 **Service Plans:**
- 8.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:**
- 8.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** Not applicable
- 8.5 **Partnerships:** None
- 8.6 **Background papers**
- 8.6.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:
- Other papers:**
- Previous reports:**

- Tennis in the Borough – 13 June 2023

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Motions to Council Request Form

Proposed Title of Motion	Motion 3
Proposer	Kieran Persand
Seconder	Bernie Muir
Motion Set out motion in full	Physical activity and access barriers is an important issue. Resident participation in physical activity should not be obstructed due to lack of access and cost, especially when concerned with council owned community assets. We should look to increase and maximise participation. However, it is noted the costs associated with the maintenance and upkeep of Borough's tennis courts. Therefore, we propose the motion for the Council to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Revisit the current court fees and look to lower them. b. Allow free access to people 18 and under. c. Look to provide a further discounted rate to those in receipt of low-income benefits.
Relevant Committee(s) Motion would relate to	Environment Committee
Name of the Chairman of such Committee	Cllr Liz Frost

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ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Head of Service: Samantha Whitehead, Interim Assistant Head of Operational Services

Report Author Samantha Whitehead

Wards affected: (All Wards);

Urgent Decision?(yes/no)

If yes, reason urgent decision required:

Appendices (attached):

Summary

To report on the work of the Allotments Working Group during 2023/24.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the report and the work of the Allotments Working Group during the 2023-24 year.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To report on the work of the Allotments Working Group during 2023/24.

2 Background

- 2.1 Following changes to the administration and operational management of the Allotments service over the past ten years and the transfer of this service from Community and Wellbeing Committee to the Environment Committee, the Environment Committee agreed to set up an Allotments Working Group at their meeting on 13th June 2023.
- 2.2 The Terms of Reference (TOR) required reports from the group to be presented through the Committee process to Environment Committee.
- 2.3 This item represents the report of the working group during the civic year 2023-2024.

3 Progress of the Working Group During 23/24

- 3.1 The working group comprised Cllr Liz Frost (Chair, and Vice-Chair of the Environment Committee), and two members of the Environment Committee (Cllr Julie Morris and Cllr Steven McCormick), who are also tenants on EEBC run allotments.
- 3.2 The working group meetings were entirely member led with no attendance by officers, but officers provided statistics relating to the allotments.
- 3.3 The working group chair reported that they held two meetings. In line with the TORs, they discussed the current fees and charges; challenges of resources available; waiting lists and tenancies; database concerns and noted the improvement work in progress to implement the My Council Services system; and issues raised by users. A recommendation to reinstate a site representatives' meeting was made and meeting subsequently held.

4 Risk Assessments

Legal or other duties

4.1 Equality Impact Assessment

4.1.1 None

4.2 Crime & Disorder

4.2.1 None

4.3 Safeguarding

4.3.1 None

4.4 Dependencies

4.4.1 None

4.5 Other

4.5.1 None

5 Financial Implications

5.1 None for the purpose of this report.

5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 None for the purpose of this report.

6.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- Green & Vibrant
- Safe & Well

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

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

7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**

7.5 **Partnerships:** None

8 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Allotment Working Group Report – 16 July 2024

Other papers:

- None

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FOOD SAFETY SERVICE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY INTERVENTION PLANS

Head of Service:	Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
Report Author	Oliver Nelson
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Food Service Plan Appendix 2 – Health & Safety Intervention Plan

Summary

In compliance with national monitoring arrangements, this report sets out how the Council intends to discharge its statutory responsibilities in respect of food hygiene and health and safety interventions in the year 2024-2025 and reports on activities in the 2023-2024 year.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Adopt the service plan for food safety.**
- (2) Adopt the intervention plan for health and safety.**
- (3) Agree to receive revised food and health and safety plans for the year 2025-2026 at a date in 2025.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To demonstrate compliance with section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities and the Food Law Code of Practice issued by the Secretary of State.
- 1.2 To update the committee on the priorities within the service areas and the planned use of resources.
- 1.3 Best practice in the area of regulatory service is to establish transparent plans for the deployment of public resources and to publicise those plans.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Environmental Health team based within the public protection service is deployed in many areas of public and environmental health including private sector housing, pollution control, public health and food hygiene and health and safety. The majority of the work undertaken is non discretionary in nature.
- 2.2 The delivery of official controls in respect of food hygiene, and the delivery of a suitable level of regulatory oversight in the health and safety service domain, are two key areas of work and require plans to be approved by the most appropriate policy making body of a Council.
- 2.3 These plans report on activity and achievements in the previous year and set out proposals for the deployment of resource for the forthcoming year.
- 2.4 In respect of the Council's obligations around the delivery of food hygiene Official Controls, it was not possible to fully meet the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice resulting in a backlog of overdue inspections and businesses who have yet to receive their first inspection.
- 2.5 The reasons for this are set out in the Food Service Plan and centre around the fact that other service areas, such as the demands in the private sector housing area, are in competition with those notionally assigned to the delivery of official food controls. The plan reports on corrective action which is being implemented in the 24-25 year to address the shortfall in resource.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1.1 There are no impacts foreseen which would affect the Council's equalities obligations.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

- 3.2.1 There is no expected impact of the proposals on the Council's crime and disorder duties.

3.3 Safeguarding

- 3.3.1 There are no anticipated impacts.

3.4 Dependencies

- 3.4.1 The delivery of the plans depends on the staff resource being available on a consistent basis.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The resource to deliver the work comes from existing budgets in the public protection area.
- 4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council has statutory duties in relation to these service areas, this includes carrying out effective and appropriate official controls and having sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced staff. The Food Standards Agency and the Health & Safety Executive monitor the effectiveness of the Authority's action taken in these service areas. The risk of under resourcing these areas is a decrease in public protection and public health, adverse publicity arising from annual reports on local authority performance and non-fulfilment of statutory obligations.
- 5.2 There is a likelihood that significant long term under delivery of the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice will result in an escalation process from central government. In exceptional cases the FSA and the HSE have powers to take over the duties of persistently under performing Councils.
- 5.3 **Legal Officer's comments: None save as outlined in this report**

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:
- Safe and Well
 - Effective Council
- 6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None
- 6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None directly from this report.
- 6.5 **Partnerships:** None.

7 Background papers

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

- Food safety service and health and safety intervention plans (Environment Committee, June 2023)

7.2 Other papers:

7.3 Food Law Code of Practice, 2023 (Food Standards Agency)

7.4 Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities, 2010 (Food Standards Agency) accessed 22/5/24



Food Safety Service Plan 2024-2025

Contents

1.0	Service Aim, Objectives, Key Tasks and Targets.....	2
2.0	Background.....	2
3.0	Service Delivery	4
4.0	Resources.....	6
5.0	Quality Assessment	7
6.0	Reviewing the 2023-2024 year	7
7.0	Plan for 2024-2025.....	9

1.0 Service Aim, Objectives, Key Tasks and Targets

1.1 Objective, Aims and Key Tasks

- To meet statutory responsibilities in respect of national requirements concerning official controls of food in a cost effective and responsible manner in accordance with statutory guidance.
- To encourage best practice and publish advice on Food Safety to businesses and voluntary groups.
- To discharge food safety inspection and enforcement responsibilities in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice, Regulators Code and the Epsom & Ewell enforcement policy.
- To implement national and local food sampling programmes and to promote Food Safety.

1.2 Links to Corporate Objectives and Targets

The food inspection service is relevant to several of the current key priorities.

Opportunity and Prosperity

By ensuring a level playing field through appropriate and proportional regulatory interventions, holding to account the worst offenders and supporting business by providing a degree of trusted technical advice.

Safe and Well

By ensuring a minimum standard of hygiene in business to reduce the occurrence of ill health through food borne disease and by promoting good hygiene practice in the home.

Effective Council

By discharging our duties in the most time and cost effective way.

2.0 Background

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

The Borough of Epsom & Ewell is situated in the North East of Surrey, with an area of 3,411 hectares, of which over half is open space, particularly to the South and West. The Borough has a population of approximately 81,000 predominantly in suburban areas. There are in the region of 31,320 households in the Borough and the average household size is 2.58 people.

2.2 Organisational Structure

A chart is attached showing the structure of the Council's Public Protection Service and with the elements involved in food hygiene delivery highlighted.

Specialist services, when required, are provided as follows

- (i) Public Analyst: Public Analyst Scientific Services i54 Business Park Valiant Way Wolverhampton. WV9 5GB
- (ii) Microbiological testing: UK Health Security Agency, Food, Water and Environmental Laboratory, Manor Farm Road, Porton Down Salisbury Wiltshire SP4 0JG

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

The Food Safety Service exists to ensure that all food produced, purchased, stored or distributed in the Borough meets statutory requirements under conditions which are hygienic. It is a statutory service and is principally centred on the delivery of Official Controls such as inspections and audits in compliance with national requirements followed by appropriate enforcement action as necessary. By providing this service, the Council actively contributes to the maintenance of high standards of hygiene in processes of production, preparation and sale of food throughout the Borough. Advice is given to food businesses and handlers to ensure they meet legal requirements and observe best practice designed to protect public health.

The Service also undertakes occasional food sampling, a service which complements and reinforces the overall objective of protecting public health. Sampling exercises are typically carried out as part of national surveillance projects or in response to a local incident or complaint.

In certain circumstances the service works in association with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), in relation to the investigation of notifications of infectious disease and food poisoning.

In addition to programmed and demand driven food hygiene inspections, and the investigation of complaints related to food and food premises, other services are delivered in commercial business premises. These include health and safety interventions, infectious disease investigations and pollution emanating from premises where food is prepared, processed or sold. The full range of the environmental health service includes the varied elements of pollution control, conditions in private sector housing, and other public protection and public health obligations.

2.4 Demands on the Food Service

As at April 2024 there were 589 food premises in the Borough, of these 438 were restaurants, cafes, canteens or other caterers, and 121 were retailers. The remainder are made up of small scale producers and distributors. 133 premises fall into the higher risk categories of A to C. Category A requires inspection at 6 month intervals, category B at 12 month intervals and category C at 18 month intervals in accordance with Food Law Code of Practice. There are 122 unrated businesses where the Council has received a registration but has yet to inspect. These mainly consist of low risk home caterers combined with recently established conventional catering premises. Presently there are no approved establishments operating within the Borough.

Environmental Health Services is based at the Town Hall, and the service is available from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday although a substantial proportion of premises now only open in the evening necessitating out of hours visits. In the event of a major incident or an outbreak of food poisoning, there are arrangements for contacting senior officers outside of normal office hours.

A significant proportion of catering establishments are operated by people whose first language is not English. In rare circumstances arrangements are in place for professional translation of necessary documentation and use of interpreters.

2.5 Enforcement Policy

The Environmental Health Enforcement Policy was revised in 2014 to reflect the national Regulators Code.

3.0 Service Delivery

3.1 Food Premises Inspections

The service has the aim of carrying out interventions in line with the Food Law Code of Practice (England) issued by the Secretary of State.

Additional to programmed inspections, the service also carries out a proportion of revisits during the same period. These are necessary to check whether informal action has been successful, where compliance with notices needs to be assessed and where a formal request has been made by a food business operator as part of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

Any significant increase in the numbers of food related complaints or incidents would place additional demands on the service. Without additional resources this demand could only be met at the expense of the premises inspection programme and/or other areas of environmental health.

3.2 Food Complaints and requests for service

Procedures exist to deal with food complaints which allows for working with Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards when necessary.

Enforcement of food safety is undertaken in accordance with the Food Safety Act 1990, Retained EU Regulation 852/2004, the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and associated legislation. Enforcement decisions and decisions to bring legal proceedings in appropriate cases are made in accordance with the Service's Enforcement Policy and the Scheme of Delegated Authority to Officers.

3.3 Primary Authority

The Council is committed to the Primary Authority principle whereby, in order to ensure consistency of enforcement, a business can form a partnership with a local authority, often, but not always the authority where its head office exists and enforcement issues can be moderated by that authority.

Epsom & Ewell have no formal partnerships with any food business at this time.

3.4 Advice to Business

Businesses are encouraged to consult the Council's website in the first instance or else the advice displayed on the website of the Food Standards Agency. Enquiries of a specific and/or technically complex nature will normally be dealt with by telephone. However officers frequently advise business during programmed inspections and other food hygiene interventions such as complaints or sampling visits.

3.5 Food Sampling

The authority undertakes occasional planned food sampling in coordination with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and local initiatives.

Samples may also be submitted to the UKHSA laboratory or to the Public Analyst in support of food complaint investigations.

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

In respect of an outbreak of food poisoning or infectious disease, procedures are set out in the Surrey Outbreak Control Plan and the Environmental Health Service will act in conjunction with UKHSA under the guidance of the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC).

Typically Environmental Health Service receives around 150 notifications of infectious disease including food poisoning, actual or suspected and some notable instances of Hepatitis, Ecoli and legionnaire's disease which require careful handling and which require priority over the majority of other areas of work.

3.7 Food Safety Incidents

Food Alerts are part of a national system of letting local authorities and consumers know about problems associated with food and, in some cases, provide details of specific action to be taken.

Where necessary a media release or high priority visits to premises are arranged.

The resource implications are very much dependent on the category of any given alert 'For Action' alerts can potentially involve a considerable amount of work contacting and inspecting food outlets, whilst 'For information' may involve less response. To date, all work relating to food alerts has been undertaken by Environmental Health Officers and resources are considered adequate. In the event of a large-scale warning, support staff will be drawn from other areas of the Council as required.

3.8 Liaison with Other Organisations

The authority has in place various arrangements to ensure that enforcement action taken in its area is consistent with that in neighbouring local authorities.

Epsom & Ewell is represented on the Surrey Food Liaison and Study Group that includes the other Surrey local authorities, Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards, UK Health Security Agency and the Food Standards Agency.

Joint working with, in particular, Trading Standards will continue and where possible, inspections will be coordinated as will action on food alerts.

Epsom & Ewell is also represented on the Surrey Infection and Environmental Control Group, which is chaired by UKHSA.

The service responds to planning consultations involving new food premises or alterations to existing premises.

Applications received by the Borough's Licensing Service that includes food preparation or sales are individually screened for likely public risk on health grounds.

3.9 Food Safety Promotion

Resource constraints are such that food safety promotion is largely confined to the point of service delivery and mostly at the time of food premises inspection.

The service will seek to publicise any enforcement action which results in a fine or other sanction issued by the courts.

4.0 Resources

4.1 Staffing Allocation

As at the date of this plan, the retention and deployment of qualified officers, together with competing demands on their time remains a challenge to the degree that the Council will be unable to meet the full requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice. This is because of the service demands placed on the team from outside the immediate area of food hygiene are impacting negatively on the ability to carry out routine official controls.

Specifically the increased volume and complexity of general service requests, including that from the private sector housing statutory area, undertaken by the same team as food official controls, are absorbing a disproportionate amount of resource.

Historically a level of 1.2 FTE has been shown to be sufficient to deliver the requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice. However, owing to the above factors and the departure of the Principal Environmental Health Officer in July of 2024, the amount of staff resource available is 0.3 FTE with an additional 0.55 FTE from a temporary contractor. This is insufficient to deliver the requirements of the Code and has prompted an enquiry from the Food Standards Agency and an internal review from which a plan has been formulated.

4.2 Staff Development Plan

The Council operates a system of developmental one to one meetings with staff members and their manager. From this, learning needs are identified and provision made to fulfil them. The Food Law Code of Practice requires at least 10 hours of continuing professional development per authorised officer.

5.0 Quality Assessment

In line with the Food Law Code of Practice, monitoring measures are in place to assess performance of food officers and adherence to standard working methodology.

Any newly recruited officer will be assessed in accordance with the team monitoring procedure involving shadowed visits and follow up. This also applies periodically for food officers already in post and for consultancy members of staff. Team meetings address consistency issues within the team and food service matters are discussed.

Beginning in April 2024, a suite of KPIs has been developed to allow senior staff and Councillors to track the performance against plans.

6.0 Reviewing the 2023-2024 year

6.1 Interventions in 2023-2024

The service was unable to meet the full extent of the Food Law Code of Practice in terms of the requirements of the timings and numbers of official controls. This was particularly because of the high demand for service elsewhere in the team's responsibilities such as an extensive noise nuisance investigation and an outbreak of e coli at a children's attraction. However the fundamental and underlying issue that the resource available for the discharge of the statutory responsibilities in the food hygiene area is in competition with other environmental health based statutory duties. This combined with the growth in volume and complexity service requests in all areas of responsibility has resulted in under performance in the food area.

The service responded to these challenges by adding a part time consultant, utilising limited short term funding from elsewhere in the service area. This partly compensated for the under achievement of inspection targets.

Performance of the service was directly monitored by the Principal Environmental Health Officer in their role as Lead Officer for Food.

6.2 Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

Official food hygiene ratings appear on a national website available for public information at www.food.gov.uk/ratings as well as various mobile device apps. Where a business wishes to improve their score but not wait for the programmed inspection, they may pay a fee to the Council for an additional visit which will be unannounced within a three month window of making that request.

6.3 Complaints

For 2023-2024 76 complaints and other service requests were received and investigated concerning both concerns about food and of food businesses. These ranged from allegations of food poisoning, complaints about foreign bodies in food, unfitness of food and hygiene of premises together with enquiries from food businesses. Where valid, these complaints were investigated and action taken.

6.4 Sampling

The service took no food or environmental samples in 2023-2024.

The financial allocation set aside for Epsom & Ewell by UKHSA is in the region of £2800 per year and this is considered to be adequate. This allocation facilitates bacteriological and qualitative sampling and analysis of food, water and environmental monitoring.

6.5 Education and information

The service does provide a degree of free advice to business who either make contact independently or request advice during inspections. Environmental Health staff are also in the position to be able to refer potential new businesses to the local Growth Hub and for Epsom – the Business Improvement District.

6.6 Partnership working

Representation was made on the Surrey Food Liaison Group which includes trading standards officers to develop joint working relationships such as sampling initiatives and procedural guidance.

6.7 Document review

The majority of documentation now exists on the internet and the service no longer carries hard copies of leaflets. The Council's website contains information for businesses and the consumer whilst the Food Standards Agency website contains more technical information for those involved in food production and catering.

6.8 Enforcement

Two hygiene improvement notices and 66 written warnings were issued in 2023-2024. Separately, following the discovery of a cockroach infestation, a voluntary closure of a business was undertaken.

6.9 Alternative Enforcement Strategy (AES)

The service has an alternative enforcement policy in place for low risk food premises involving a self assessment process. The aim of this strategy is to enable the Council to focus attention on those businesses which present the greatest risk to consumer safety and/or who are failing to meet their statutory obligations whilst relieving low risk businesses from a proportion of formal inspection.

7.0 Plan for 2024-2025

7.1 Programmed inspections 2024-2025

In 2024-2025 185 premises interventions are due broken down as follows.

Category	Number Due
A	2
B	17
C	43
D	64
E	20

Owing to the reasons outlined elsewhere in this plan, as at 1 April there are an additional 57 inspections outstanding from the 2023-2024 year comprising category C to E. The service will aim to deliver these alongside the due inspections from the 2024-2025 year.

There are a further 122 businesses registered over the past 1-2 years who are awaiting their first inspections. Businesses are not required to have an inspection prior to opening, however the Food Law Code of Practice normally requires inspection to take place within 28 days of registration and there are some barriers to becoming established on food delivery aggregators (Just Eat, Deliveroo, Uber Eats) for businesses who do not have a current Food Hygiene Rating.

As a consequence of an internal review and reallocation of resource, a new EHO post has been agreed, which when combined with the recruitment to the existing Principal EHO role, will allow the Council to realign with the requirements of the Code. To overcome both the backlog and the due inspections will take time and it may have a temporary adverse impact on some of the other statutory areas such as private sector housing and pollution control. However an action plan has been submitted to the Food Standards Agency and the Council continues to supply monitoring information to evidence its progress against the plan.

An overriding element of service planning is to risk assess and prioritise. The expectation is therefore that businesses with a greater risk profile will continue to be prioritised over businesses which are inherently less risky.

7.2 Accuracy of database

The accuracy of the commercial premises database will be ensured by the following means:

- A periodic cross check against web based directories for changes to businesses in the Borough
- Updating of details via intelligence gathered during other Council visits and reported to the Environmental Health team.
- Use of local knowledge

7.3 Sampling

A budget of £300 has been allocated for chemical sampling of food and water. Where this is insufficient, underspends will be located elsewhere to supplement this budget. An allocation of around £2,800 is expected from UKHSA for the routine microbiological sampling of food and water.

7.4 Complaints

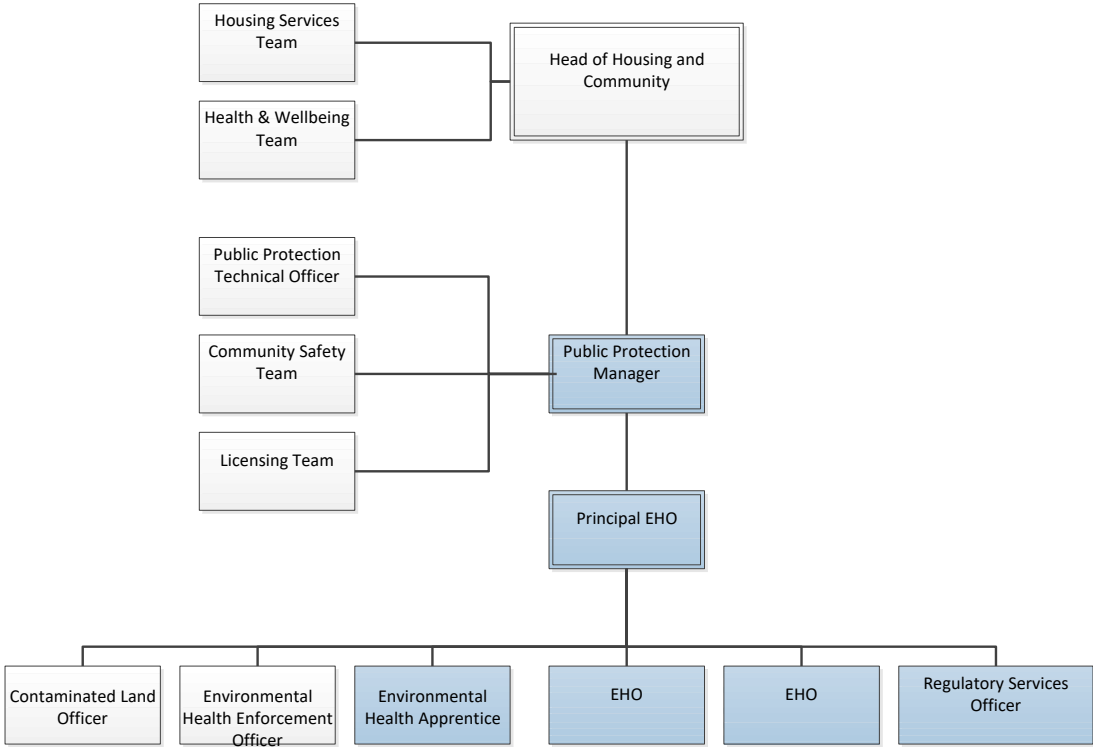
Complaints and enquiries from members of the public will be assessed and priority given to situations representing immediate or urgent public health risks. In some circumstances it will be appropriate to follow the matter up at the next routine inspection or not at all.

7.6 Publicity

The Service will seek to publicise successful initiatives which are of benefit and interest to the public. In particular the service will utilise the Council's social media channels to inform, advise and alert the public to issues pertaining to food safety. It will also publicise any prosecutions and sentencing of businesses who have broken the law and been taken to court by the Council.

7.7 Audit

An audit on the delivery of official food hygiene controls is scheduled for quarter 2 2024/2025, the results of which will be used to highlight and address risks.



Service Structure

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Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Health and Safety Intervention Plan 2024-2025

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has a duty to enforce the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and associated regulations within its district. The Council has enforcement responsibilities in many areas including retail units, offices, warehousing, catering premises, leisure and entertainment premises, consumer services such as beauty parlours and tattooists and tyre and exhaust fitters - the vast majority of areas the public has access to.

The primary objective of the health and safety service placed within the Environmental Health Service at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is to protect employees and the public from hazards arising from work activities and to seek improvement in working conditions in terms of health, safety and welfare.

This intervention plan sets out the overall aim of the service and identifies specific areas where we will prioritise our efforts in line with the better regulation concepts of modern regulatory enforcement.

Contents

Service aim and objectives 3

Key Delivery Priorities 3

Proposed 2024-2025 interventions 4

 Measurable Targets 4

Review of the 2023-2024 year 4

 Proactive 4

 Reactive 4

 Formal action 4

Service aim and objectives

The primary objective of the health and safety service placed within the Environmental Health Team at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is to promote health and protect employees and the public from hazards arising from work activities and to seek improvement in working conditions in terms of health, safety and welfare through advisory and enforcement activities.

We will do this by both proactive and reactive means.

Key Delivery Priorities

In 2013 changes in government guidance and direction caused the service to review its method of operation. For example, The Löfstedt review¹, the Department for Work and Pensions Ministerial Statement on Good Health and Safety² the Young Report³ and the Health and Safety Executive/Local Government Association guidance on reduced proactive inspections⁴ is directing enforcement authorities to carry out fewer overall inspections and utilise greater targeting of proactive interventions. The result of these changes meant that very few routine inspections are carried out in Epsom & Ewell, and instead the Council concentrates on a project based approach taking into account national priorities and local initiatives where there is evidence that intervention is warranted.

The key delivery priorities are as follows

- Delivery of proactive inspections of businesses and undertakings representing particularly high risk or poor standards.
- Investigating accidents and incidents in line with the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) incident selection criteria which has been adopted for use locally.
- Responding to service requests in line with the Council's policy and incident selection criteria.

¹ Reclaiming health and safety for all: An independent review of health and safety legislation
Professor Ragnar E Löfstedt November 2011 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reclaiming-health-and-safety-for-all-lofstedt-report>

² Good Health and Safety, Good for Everyone The next steps in the Government's plans for reform of the health and safety system in Britain 21 March 2011 www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/good-health-and-safety.pdf

³ Common Sense Common Safety www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/commonsense/index.htm

⁴ Joint guidance for reduced proactive inspections www.hse.gov.uk/lau/pdfs/reduced-proactive-inspections.pdf

Proposed 2024-2025 interventions

In 2024-2025 the service plans to deliver the following programme of interventions.

- Planned in person focused inspections based around the identified priorities of
 - Gas safety in commercial business (continuation of 2023-2024 national priority)
 - Hygiene of tattooing premises
 - The safety of outdoor electrical installations in the hospitality industry (national priority)
- Identification and resolution of matters of evident concern identified during interventions for other regulatory reasons.
- Reactive responses to complaints, accidents and requests for assistance from business in line with the incident selection criteria.

Measurable Targets

- We will deliver the identified priorities as planned during the year.
- We will not investigate all accidents or incidents reported to us. Instead we aim to investigate 100% of those accidents which meet the incident investigation criteria.
- We will respond to matters of evident concern highlighted during our work with business and in the community at the time they are identified or as soon as possible afterwards.

Review of the 2023-2024 year

Proactive

The team delivered part of the gas safety identified priority resulting in

241 self assessment questionnaires being sent and 97 returned and evaluated

9 on site interventions involving inspection and assessment of conditions

Various improvements both voluntary and via improvement notices around ventilation cleaning and upgrades, engineer servicing and gas cut off valve installation.

The purpose of this project is to ensure that adequate controls are in place to prevent carbon monoxide exposure to staff and to occupants of adjoined living accommodation and that gas appliances are properly maintained.

Reactive

The service contributed to 2 Safety Advisory Groups including chairing the group responsible for making recommendations to the Epsom Fireworks organisers.

Additionally it responded to 14 other service requests ranging from the investigation of the source of a case of malaria to concern about work in confined spaces.

Formal action

There were 3 Improvement Notices served in 2023-2024 relating to required courses of action as part of the gas safety project.

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN (2025-2029)

Head of Service:	Justin Turvey, Head of Place Development
Report Author	Mark Rachwal
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1: Draft Climate Change Action Plan 2025-2029

Summary

This report presents the Council's second Climate Change Action Plan and seeks support for its adoption.

The proposed 5-year plan covers the period from 2025 to 2029. It demonstrates the Council's continued commitment to tackling climate change and it sets out the actions that will move us closer towards achieving our 2035 carbon neutral target along with supporting Borough wide emissions reduction.

It follows the Council's first action plan, approved at its meeting on 20 January 2020, which comes to the end of its 5-year term in 2024.

The Plan reflects the work of the cross-party Member Working Group and the Officer Climate Change & Biodiversity Action Group which were established to support its delivery.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Approve and adopt the Climate Change Action Plan 2025-2029 set out in Appendix 1**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Council has committed to tackling Climate Change and achieving carbon neutral operations by 2035. To achieve this target and its continued commitment the Council requires an up-to-date action plan.
- 1.2 The existing first Climate Change Action Plan, approved in 2020, is coming to the end of its 5-year term in 2024.

- 1.3 Adopting the proposed second action plan, to cover the next 5-year period, ensures the Council has a clear agreed set of actions and framework for achieving its carbon neutral commitment.

2 Background

- 2.1 A cross party task and finish group was established to oversee the development of the Council's first Climate Change Action Plan. This was approved by this Committee and full Council on 20 January 2020 alongside the approval of the target that the Council would be carbon neutral by 2035.
- 2.2 Following the adoption of the Action Plan, an Environment & Sustainability Officer was appointed to facilitate the delivery of the plan. A cross party Members Working Group, and an officer level Climate Change & Biodiversity Action Group (CCBAG) were then set up to support delivery of the actions.
- 2.3 Progress on the delivery of the plan has been reported annually to this Committee with the reports available and published on the Council's Climate Change webpages (www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/climate-change). The latest annual report was provided to Committee on 23 January 2024.
- 2.4 The first action plan is now coming to the end of its 5-year term, and for the Council to have a clear plan for continuing to progress towards its climate change commitments a new action plan has been developed.
- 2.5 A final progress report on the delivery of the first action plan will be presented to the Committee in March 2025, to cover the progress achieved over the full 5-year term.

The Climate Change Action Plan 2025-2029

- 2.6 The proposed second Climate Change Action Plan details 52 objectives to be delivered over the 5-year period from 2025 to 2029. The objectives support the Council's aim to be net carbon neutral by 2035 and the role the Council has to play in working with other public bodies and partners to improve the environmental sustainability of the Borough as a whole.
- 2.7 The objectives are split across 6 main themes, as agreed for the first action plan:
 - Theme 1 – Council Leadership and influencing others
 - Theme 2 – Council buildings and energy use
 - Theme 3 – Council transport & switching to lower polluting vehicles
 - Theme 4 – Improvements to the environment
 - Theme 5 – Tackling and minimising waste

- Theme 6 – Use of technology & information systems

2.8 **Action Plan format:** A more comprehensive format has been proposed for the new action plan, to include additional information for each objective on:

- Performance indicators - included for all objectives to ensure progress can be clearly tracked and reported on. It is recognised that using quantitative measures is not appropriate for all actions and in some cases, reporting will need to take the form of a narrative description of progress.
- Council or Borough Impact – whether the objective will tackle the Council's own operational emissions or Borough wide emissions.
- Carbon Impact – an indication of the carbon reduction potential of the objective from high to low.
- Co-benefits – the additional benefits of delivering the objective, beyond carbon emissions reduction (i.e. improved air quality, financial savings, building capacity and skills).

2.9 **Action Plan content:** The new action plan includes:

- Objectives that have been carried forward from the previous plan where these had not been implemented (or not fully implemented) or where they had been identified for longer term delivery. For example, climate policy in the Draft Local Plan (action 1) and on-going climate change communications (action 4).
- Objectives that have been revised or updated from the previous plan to ensure continued relevance and deliverability. For example, action 21 having a clearer emphasis on the replacement of heating systems in our operational buildings and action 29 on developing a fleet strategy to support the work to move to zero emission vehicles.
- 17 new objectives that cover areas including staff awareness & training (action 5 & 16), local area retrofitting & green skills (action 8 & 14), Scope 3 emissions (action 12), climate adaptation and resilience (action 17), exploring funding pathways (action 15 & 24), considering options for carbon offsetting (action 43) and delivery of new plans and policy (action 33, 36 & 37).

How the Plan was developed

2.10 The development of the new action plan involved:

- A comprehensive review of the existing action plan both in terms of its format and content. This identified actions that were implemented or due to be completed by December 2024; longer term or not yet complete and should be included in the new plan; no longer relevant or viable for reasons including legislation changes, technological advancements, improved understanding of carbon reducing measures or limited direct ability of the Council to deliver.
- A best practice review of existing local authority climate change action plans, including neighbouring boroughs, all Surrey borough councils, Surrey County Council and a selection of high performing Councils according to Climate Emergency UK's Council Climate Action Scorecards (<https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/>).
- Individual subject specific meetings with internal officers from Council departments and key partners.
- A workshop on the draft plan with officers on the Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Group and with the Member's Environment & Sustainability Working Group.

Future delivery

- 2.11 The delivery of the plan will continue to be supported by a cross party Members Environment & Sustainability Working Group (ESWG), and an officer level Climate Change & Biodiversity Action Group (CCBAG).
- 2.12 Without adopting this second Climate Change Action Plan there will be no agreed plan, beyond 2024, for tackling Climate Change or achieving our 2035 carbon neutral target.
- 2.13 Subject to agreement of the new Climate Change Action Plan by the Committee, it will be published on the Council website. Annual progress reports will continue to be provided to this Committee.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None arising from this report.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 There are no implications in terms of crime and disorder.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None arising from this report.

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None arising from this report.

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None arising from this report.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 The Action Plan includes information on the likely scale of budget and source of Council funding required for each action. For many of the initiatives identified, costs will be met by the relevant Council department through existing agreed revenue and/or capital budgets.

4.2 Where additional funding requirements are identified (for example, once further work has been undertaken to determine detailed costs for a particular project), these will be pursued either from external sources, or through the established internal procedure with a business case to be considered by the Strategy & Resources Committee.

4.3 In some cases, operational costs may be reduced leading to lower energy bills, either immediately or at the end of a payback period, which will be reflected in relevant business cases.

4.4 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Financial implications are included in the body of the report.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 None arising from this report.

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:

- Green & Vibrant

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

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:**

6.3.1 Climate Change is key priority throughout the Action Plan with targets included to support reducing emissions throughout EEBC.

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**

6.4.1 Sustainability considered in all targets – positive implications only.

6.5 **Partnerships:**

6.5.1 Surrey Environment Partnership; District & Borough Climate Change Officers Group (Surrey wide)

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Environment Committee: Climate Change Action Plan – Progress Update 23 January 2024
- Environment & Safe Communities Committee: Climate Change Action Plan – Update & Review 24 January 2023
- Environment & Safe Communities Committee: Climate Change Action Plan - Update 25 January 2022
- Environment & Safe Communities Committee: Climate Change Action Plan Update 26 January 2021
- Full Council: Climate Change Action Plan 20 January 2020
- Environment & Safe Communities Committee: Climate Change Action Plan 20 January 2020

Other papers:

- Climate Change motion to full Council 23 July 2019

Climate Change Action Plan

Page 53
2025-2029



Appendix 7

Key:					
Timescales		Indicative Costs		Carbon Impact	Co-Benefits
S	Short - < 2 years	£	Low - £0 - £50k	Indicative carbon emissions saving potential of delivering the objective, related to the Council's operational emissions or Borough wide emissions.	Financial savings/income, energy savings, water savings, biodiversity enhancement, waste reduction, health & wellbeing, other environment benefits or other benefits.
M	Medium – 2- 4 years	££	Medium - £50k - £250k		
L	Long – 4+ years	£££	High - £250k - £1m		
O	Ongoing	££££	Very High - £1m+		
		NQ	Not yet quantified		

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits	
THEME 1 – Council Leadership and influencing others									
1	Develop and deliver a Local Plan and associated policies that contribute positively and demonstrate the Council’s commitment to climate change	Adopt a Local Plan with design policies addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation. Inclusive of low carbon design, energy efficient buildings; sustainable transport; circular economy; minimising environmental impact.	Aligned to formal published Local Plan timetable	Head of Place Development	Within agreed Local Plan budget	Local Plan adoption inclusive of climate change mitigation and adaptation policy	Borough	High	Energy Water Waste reduction Health & Wellbeing Air Quality Resident comfort Biodiversity
2	Identify how to integrate ‘sustainability’ into procurement requirements (contract procedure rules) and update our procurement strategy.	This could include, ensuring that there is consideration of carbon impact into procurement policies and processes, for goods, works and services. Prioritising low carbon alternatives helps to reduce our total carbon footprint in relation to supply chains.	Short term	Procurement & Contracts Officer	Within existing budget	Sustainability / carbon policy incorporated in updated procurement strategy	Council & Borough	Medium	Lower impact products Local sourcing
3	Identify the Council’s most significant suppliers in terms of carbon emissions and seek to proactively engage with them to establish a more accurate carbon footprint of the goods and services they supply and ways in which they can reduce emissions.	Reduced emissions from our procurement (scope 3 emissions)	Medium term	Procurement & Contracts Officer	Within existing budget	Top suppliers in terms of carbon emissions identified Measures implemented by suppliers to reduce emissions	Council & Borough	Medium	Lower impact products Local sourcing

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits
4	Communicate how EEBC is achieving its climate change commitment to work with partners to reduce our impact on the environment and move closer to becoming carbon neutral, to both internal and external stakeholders.	On-going	Comms & Engagement Manager	Within existing budget	No, type and reach of activities undertaken	Borough	Medium	
Page 56								
		Use owned communications channels to raise awareness around changes in behaviour that will help reduce carbon emissions across our borough in an inclusive way (e.g. promoting fuel poverty grant schemes) and adaptation messages that are targeted at those who are most vulnerable to climate change impacts						
5	Raise awareness and work to ensure all staff reduce unnecessary emissions	Ongoing	Comms & Engagement Manager	Within existing budget	Reduction in building energy usage & carbon footprint	Council	Low	Financial Energy

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits	
6	Promote and provide practical support for residents to access energy efficiency/fuel poverty grant schemes	Reduce fuel poverty in Epsom & Ewell, making homes more energy efficient and decrease carbon emissions from heating	On-going	Principal Housing Grants Officer	Grant scheme funding (i.e. ECO4, HUG, GBIS)	No of properties that have had a measure installed via grant/scheme	Borough	Medium	Financial Energy Health & Wellbeing Resident comfort
7	Support, where resource permits, Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) to ensure that private rental residents are in properties which have an EPC rating of E and above (or as required by future Regulations) to capture non-compliance	Improved energy efficiency of private rented properties in Epsom & Ewell	Medium term	Public Protection Manager	£	No. of private rentals identified with EPC F or G No of landlords engaged No of private rentals improved to EPC – E or above	Borough	Low	Energy Health & Wellbeing Resident comfort Public health
8	Work with our housing association partners and other housing providers to share knowledge and accelerate low carbon measures for social housing	Encourage social housing providers to undertake energy efficiency measures and access relevant funding (i.e. Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund)	Ongoing	Strategic Housing Manager	Within existing budget	No of contacts / engagement events with housing associations	Borough	Medium	Financial Energy Health & Wellbeing Resident comfort Share learning
9	Explore opportunities with partners for a local area retrofit strategy and support implementation of its resulting action plan	Improved energy efficiency of local housing in Epsom & Ewell	Short term	Surrey Greener Futures Team EEBC Officers as required	Within existing budget	Local Retrofit Strategy & Action Plan	Borough	High	Financial Energy Resident comfort

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits
10	Promote the benefits of local food production, maintaining levels of allotment take up and supporting local food markets	Ongoing	Head of Operational Services	Within existing budget	Allotment tenancy no.	Borough	Low	Health & Wellbeing Local sourcing
11	Ensure a robust reporting and monitoring process for all Epsom & Ewell Borough Council emissions	Ongoing	Env & Sustainability Officer	Within existing budget	Annual operational carbon emissions report to Env Committee	Council		
12	Work to improve the collection and baselining of the Council's Scope 3 emissions	Short term	Env & Sustainability Officer	Within existing budget	Baseline of Scope 3 emissions Annual reporting of Scope 3 emissions	Council		
13	Explore opportunities, with partners, for Small & Medium Enterprise (SME) grant schemes that would support energy saving and decarbonisation measures (as a replacement for LoCASE)	Medium term	Head of Place Development	NQ - Individual schemes will be assessed for funding needs	No. of businesses engaged/supported No. of grant schemes delivered	Borough	Medium	Financial Energy Local economy
14	Support Surrey County Council (SCC) initiatives and plans to develop Green Skills across the region to bridge the skills gap and foster local job creation.	Medium term	Surrey Greener Futures Team EEBC Officers as required	Within existing budget	Course uptake against places offered Learners progressed to green jobs	Borough	Low	Local economy Build capacity & skills

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits
15	Explore and advance opportunities for securing joint funding opportunities with SCC and other boroughs	Identifying and securing joint funding that will support delivery of actions within the action plan	Ongoing	All staff	Within existing budget	No & type of funding opportunities explored	Council & Borough	Financial Share learning Partnership working
16	Deliver both general and targeted training to officers and members on a range of environmental sustainability issues to aid understanding and to assist in the delivery of the action plan	Council officers and Members to have the necessary skills and understanding to support the delivery of the action plan	Ongoing	Head of HR Env & Sustainability Officer	Within existing budget Need for external training support to be assessed	No, type and reach of activities undertaken No of staff trained No of Members trained	Council	Low Build capacity & skills Share learning
17	Review the Surrey Climate Change Adaptation & Resilience Strategy (Surrey Adapt) and its action plan to determine those actions relevant to EEBC. Where these actions align with our priorities, work with SCC and other D&Bs to deliver those actions.	Preparedness and long-term resilience to climate change impacts (i.e. flooding, droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, biodiversity impacts)	Medium term	Env & Sustainability Officer Business Assurance Manager	Within existing budget	Surrey Adapt Strategy reviewed Measures implemented	Council & Borough	Adaptation
THEME 2 – Council buildings and energy use								
18	Identify & implement opportunities to reduce energy consumption from Council owned & operated buildings	Deliver a programme of energy saving measures to Council owned buildings	Medium term	Buildings Services & Facilities Manager	£££	Reduction in building energy usage and carbon footprint Measures installed	Council	High Financial Energy

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits
19	Develop detailed feasibility studies of our pavilions and smaller buildings to identify viable energy efficiency projects that are funding ready	Short term	Buildings Services & Facilities Manager	£££	Reduction in building energy usage and carbon footprint Measures installed	Council	Low	Financial Energy
20	As part of the Town Hall move project identify and implement viable measures to decarbonise the new building (70 East Street)	Short term	Head of Property & Regeneration	£££	Reduction in building energy usage and carbon footprint Measures installed	Council	Medium	Financial Energy
21	Plan for the future replacement of gas fired boilers in all Council buildings and review all options available including air source/ground source heat pumps or other state of the art technologies to reduce/eliminate carbon emissions (heating feasibility study). Implement at earliest opportunity in line with heating system life cycles.	Long term	Buildings Services & Facilities Manager	££££	Reduction in building energy usage and carbon footprint Measures installed Feasibility studies completed	Council	High	Energy

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits
22	Identify all remaining traditional lighting at Council assets and replace with energy efficient LED lighting where feasible (i.e. stage lighting at Epsom Playhouse & Bourne Hall).	Short term	Buildings Services & Facilities Manager	££	Reduction in electricity consumption & carbon footprint Measures installed	Council	Low	Financial Energy
23	Investigate the potential for the installation of PV panels, solar storage and solar car ports on Council operated assets and land. Implement where economically and technically viable.	Short term	Buildings Services & Facilities Manager Env & Sustainability Officer	£££	Amount of renewable energy generated No of buildings with renewable energy installed No of feasibility studies conducted	Council	High	Financial Energy
24	Bid for future central government funding and other green energy funding available for investments in energy efficiency and decarbonisation measures in the Council's corporate buildings.	On-going	Env & Sustainability Officer	Within existing budget	No & type of funding opportunities explored Amount of funding secured	Council		Financial Energy
25	Work with tenants to identify and implement measures to improve the energy efficiency of the Council's leased assets (i.e. leisure centre)	Medium term	Head of Property & Regeneration	£££	Measures implemented Reduction in building energy usage	Council	Medium	Financial Energy Share lease

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits	
26	Continue discussions with our energy provider as their green product offers increase and to explore opportunities to include e.g. green gas or local renewable energy into the contract going forward.	Maximise supply of green energy to Council assets	Ongoing	Buildings Services & Facilities Manager	NQ – will be assessed as new options arise	% of Council electricity from a renewable tariff % of Council gas from a renewable tariff	Council	Low	Energy
27	Investigate measures to reduce water consumption in Council owned assets	Efficient use of water across all Council assets	Medium term	Buildings Services & Facilities Manager	££	Water consumption per Council asset Measures implemented	Council	Low	Financial Water
28	Build awareness and support opportunities for community energy projects in conjunction with other stakeholders	Promote and link to the support offered by Community Energy South-East	Medium term	Env & Sustainability Officer	Within existing budget	Projects/schemes supported	Borough	Low	Build capacity & skills Share learning
THEME 3 – Transport improvements and switch to lower polluting vehicles									
29	Develop a fleet strategy to move to zero emissions by 2035. Commit to swapping vehicles owned by the Council and its service providers for zero emission versions, where they exist, are suitable and affordable, by 2035. Maximise the environmental credentials of any remaining petrol and diesel fleet in the meanwhile.	Green (Zero Carbon) Fleet Strategy Small Fleet vehicles transition to electric	Short term Medium term	Transport & Waste Services Manager	Within existing budget ££££	Fleet Strategy completed No. of low emissions vehicles in fleet or in pipeline Reduction in diesel use	Council	High	Air quality

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits
30	Investigate the feasibility and costs of installing the electric infrastructure needed at the Council's Depot (and other sites) to enable the transition of the Council's fleet.	Short term	Transport & Waste Services Manager	Expect to be within existing budget	Investigation complete	Council		
31	Monitor & review the use of public electric vehicle charge points installed in Council operated car parks. Assess need to increase no. of charge points where high demand exists.	On-going	Parking Manager	Within existing budget	EV charge point usage No of EV charge points	Borough	Low	Air Quality
32	Work with Surrey County Council to facilitate on-street residential electric vehicle charge points where there is no scope for off-street charging	On-going	Surrey Greener Futures Team EEBC Officers as required	SCC Funded	No of on-street EV charge points	Borough	Low	Air Quality
33	Implement the Council's adopted Taxi Emissions Policy	Short term	Public Protection Manager	Within existing budget	No of Euro 6 vehicle's licensed No of electric taxi's licensed in the Borough	Borough	Low	Air Quality
34	Support & facilitate the greater take up of car clubs and car sharing in the borough	Medium term	Head of Place Development	Expect to be within existing budget	No of car club vehicles	Borough	Low	Air Quality

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits	
35	Continue to publish DEFRA Air Quality Annual Status Report and seek to revoke Ewell High Street Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) at earliest opportunity	Continued improvement in air quality within AQMA to enable the revoking of the AQMA	Short term	Public Protection Manager	Within existing budget	Annual Status Report Published AQMA revoked Improvement in annual air quality monitoring results for nitrogen dioxide	Borough		Air Quality
36	Support development of an Air Quality Strategy <i>Dependant on revoking of AQMA (action 35)</i>	Improvement in air quality within the Borough	Medium term	Public Protection Manager	Expected to be within existing budget	Air Quality Strategy developed & adopted	Council & Borough		Air Quality
37	Support the delivery of the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan to improve walking and cycling in the Borough	Increased opportunities for exercise through walking and cycling and improving air quality by reducing car dependency, promoting walking and cycling as alternatives to car use and improving walking and cycling infrastructure within the Borough	Long term	Surrey County Council Lead Head of Place Development	NQ - Funding sources will be explored (e.g. external grants, CIL)	No of schemes / infrastructure delivered	Borough	Medium	Air Quality Health & Wellbeing
38	Investigate measures for incentivising Council employees to walk, cycle or use other lower emission modes of transport for their commute	Increase in staff members able to commute by low emission modes of transport	Short term	Head of HR Env & Sustainability Officer	Within existing budget	Schemes & initiatives implemented	Council	Low	Air Quality Health & Wellbeing

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits	
THEME 4 – Improvements to the environment									
39	Identify & implement opportunities to act locally where managing, protecting and enhancing Biodiversity can assist with global priorities of environmental sustainability, aligned with objective 5 of the Biodiversity Action Plan (2020-2030)	This could include appropriate tree and hedgerow planting, supporting local research into climate impacts & carbon sequestration, delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), supporting actions against climate related issues such as invasive plants, pests and diseases	On-going	Countryside Manager	Within existing budget	Progress reporting on the delivery of Objective 5 of the Biodiversity Action Plan	Council & Borough	Low	Biodiversity
40	Implement the tree establishment plans as set out in the Council's adopted Tree Management Plan	Increase in tree cover in the Borough	Long term	Tree Officer Env & Sustainability Officer	£££	No of new trees planted	Council & Borough	Low	Biodiversity
41	Engage with a range of partners, and relevant specialist groups in the community, via existing networks to deliver shared sustainability objectives and share best practice. Seek to develop new groups and networks as appropriate	Partnership working to share knowledge, skills and resource to support delivery of the climate change objectives	Ongoing	All staff	Within existing budget	No of engagements No of people engaged with Type of engagement & audience type	Council & Borough	Low	Share learning Build capacity & skills

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits
42	Establish a project group to explore options for council owned larger scale sustainable energy production on land in the borough i.e. solar farm	Medium term	Env & Sustainability Officer	Expected to be within existing budget	Project group established No of sites assessed/identified	Council	Medium	Financial Energy
43	Explore effective methods and principles for carbon offsetting. To meet our carbon neutral target, we will need to consider offsetting any remaining carbon emissions from 2035 onwards.	Medium term	Env & Sustainability Officer	Within existing budget	Options reviewed No of viable options identified	Council & Borough	NQ	Financial Energy Biodiversity
THEME 5 – Tackling and minimising waste								
44	Utilise the incoming new legislation for simpler business recycling to enable increased recycling by private companies through our Business Bins service	Short term	Transport & Waste Services Manager	Dependant on business interest (new lorry approx. £180k per annum)	Tonnage recycled from business bins	Borough	Low	Waste reduction
45	Develop and deliver initiatives aimed at increasing participation in food waste recycling	Medium term	Transport & Waste Services Manager	Within existing budget	No of properties added to food waste collections Tonnage of food waste	Borough	Low	Waste reduction

Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits	
46	Develop and deliver initiatives aimed at reducing the contamination of dry mixed recycling (DMR) to help increase the quantity and quality that is recycled	A reduction in contamination of DMR bins across the Borough	Short term	Transport & Waste Services Manager	Within existing budget	No of initiatives delivered Tonnage reduction in DMR bin contamination	Borough	Low	Waste reduction
47	Continue to deliver the Council's Single-use Plastics Policy	Eliminate where possible the use of single-use plastics at Borough buildings and venues	Medium term	Env & Sustainability Officer	Within existing budget	No of initiatives delivered	Council	Low	Waste reduction
48	Support sustainable practices at the Epsom Market Place	This could include encouraging use of sustainable packaging, reduction in single use items, recycling and reuse, efficient use of energy and water	Medium term	Head of Operational Services	Within existing budget	No of initiatives implemented	Borough	Low	Energy Waste reduction Local economy
49	Explore opportunities to promote reuse across the Borough, such as setting up a 'Library of Things'.	Facilitate increased opportunities for reuse and a reduction in waste	Medium term	Env & Sustainability Officer	NQ – individual initiative costs will be assessed	No of initiatives implemented	Borough	Low	Waste reduction

THEME 6 – Use of technology and information systems

50	Continue to implement and develop agile working practices to reduce employee journeys and business miles	Utilise conference technology and roll out the IT equipment necessary to enable staff and partner organisations to meet virtually and reduce journeys	Short term	Head of ICT	Within IT Roadmap budget	Business mileage Measures implemented	Council	Low	Air quality
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Epsom & Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

Objective	Desired Outcome/s	Timescale	Lead	Financial cost to Council	Performance Indicator	Council or Borough Impact	Carbon Impact	Co-benefits
51	Continue to improve the Council's digital conferencing facilities and wider digital transformation to reduce the need for staff, customers, Members and partners to travel.	Short term	Head of ICT	Within IT Roadmap budget	Measures implemented	Council & Borough	Low	Waste reduction Air quality
52	Progressively move the Council's systems to more energy efficient cloud solutions	Short term	Head of ICT	Within IT Roadmap budget	No of servers reduced Reduction in electricity consumption of server room	Council	Low	Financial Energy

TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

Head of Service:	Justin Turvey, Head of Place Development
Report Author	Mark Rachwal
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	None

Summary

This report provides an update on the progress of delivering the Council's Tree Management Plan.

The Tree Management Plan was approved by the committee on 21 March 2023, setting out a framework for how the Council will manage its current tree population and where appropriate increase existing tree cover on land in the ownership of the Council.

The plan also sets out a process for dealing with tree planting and memorial planting requests. It was agreed that progress on the delivery of the plan would be reported annually.

Progress has been made in the delivery of the plan in the past year as set out in the following report.

Work will continue during 2024/25 to deliver, monitor and review the Tree Management Plan.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Consider and note the progress made on the delivery of the Council's Tree Management Plan over the past 18 months.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 This report outlines the progress over the past 18 months in delivering the Council's Tree Management Plan (TMP).
- 1.2 The TMP was agreed as a living document that would be reviewed and progress reported annually.

1.3 Key highlights of the past 18 months include:

- 101 trees planted on Council owned sites.
- 556 trees planted/facilitated by Surrey County Council in Epsom & Ewell.
- Submission of funding bids to the Local Authority Treescape Fund & Urban Tree Challenge Fund to cover the cost of planting and aftercare of 2,627 trees. Awaiting bid outcome.
- £19k successfully secured from the Surrey County Council Empty Homes Reallocation Fund for tree planting.
- Adoption of Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy
- Adoption of Ash Die Back Action Plan and setting up of Ash Dieback Management Group
- New 'Trees in Epsom & Ewell' section created on the Council website.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council owns and manages substantial areas of land and estate across the borough and is responsible for the reasonable management of trees on its land, of which there are approximately 41,000.
- 2.2 The Council has committed to actions in the Climate Change Action Plan and Biodiversity Action Plan to increase tree cover in the borough and support and promote appropriate locations for tree planting.
- 2.3 A Tree Management Plan was developed and approved by Committee on 21 March 2023. The plan sets the framework for how the Council manages its current tree stock, now and in the future, and how we will increase the tree cover in the borough, where appropriate, contributing to the commitments made in the Climate Change Action Plan and Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 2.4 The TMP also sets out a process for dealing with tree planting and memorial planting requests.
- 2.5 The Council committed to an action in the Annual Plan 2023/24 to progress delivery of the TMP, including a target to plant 100 trees in the first year.
- 2.6 It was agreed that an annual update on the delivery of the TMP would be provided to this Committee each year. This is the first annual update.

Progress update on New Tree Establishment

- 2.7 During 2023/24 the Annual Plan target was met with the planting of 101 trees at the following Council owned sites:

- 49 at various Parks & Open Spaces (as part of gapping up).
 - 14 at Chamber Mead wetlands (Hogsmill Local Nature Reserve).
 - 34 at Alexandra Recreation Ground (extension of the Mike Ford Copse) in partnership with the Tree Advisory Board (TAB).
 - 4 Auriol Park (by Friends of Auriol Park).
- 2.8 In addition, Surrey County Council (SCC) have delivered or facilitated the planting of 556 trees in Epsom & Ewell during 2023/24:
- 425 at Cuddington Croft Primary School.
 - 131 at Highway locations.
- 2.9 SCC have also provided 100 tree saplings to Epsom & Ewell residents through events & giveaways.
- 2.10 The TMP sets out that opportunities to secure the funding necessary to enable the delivery of the larger scale planting plans would need to be explored. Identifying, and where appropriate applying for, funding to support the tree establishment plans has been a focus in the first year of the plan.
- 2.11 Two Government based funding schemes were identified as options for securing funding: The Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF) and the Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCf). Epsom & Ewell have applied to both schemes, as part of a collaborative funding bid led by Surrey County Council. The bid is seeking £75k of funding to cover the plans for the planting and early years maintenance of 2,627 trees across 6 Epsom & Ewell owned sites.
- 2.12 Planting plans have been developed for the 6 sites which include:
- Long Grove Park;
 - London Road Recreation Ground;
 - Manor Park;
 - Poole Road Recreation Ground;
 - Two separate sections of Hogsmill Local Nature Reserve (one by Ewell Court House and the other by Always Avenue).
- 2.13 The funding bids were submitted in early Summer 2024 and we expect the outcome to be known by mid-Autumn 2024. If successful, it would make a significant contribution to delivering the tree establishment plans and planting would take place over the following planting seasons.

- 2.14 £19k of further funding has been secured for tree planting from the Surrey County Council Empty Homes Reallocation Fund (EHRF). The funding will be used to further support the tree planting plans under the LATF and UTCF, if successful, or a planting scheme at Long Grove Park.
- 2.15 The Empty Homes Reallocation Fund is a scheme where the County reallocates funding where a Borough Council has actively changed their Empty Property policy in order to reduce the number of empty properties in the area. Epsom & Ewell Borough Council changed our Empty Property policy in 2020 and so we are eligible to submit a funding bid for reallocated funding.

Tree Planting Policy, Ash Dieback & OPM update

- 2.16 A Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy was developed and agreed at the January 2024 Environment Committee. This was to set a clear policy for determining proposals made to the Council for tree planting on Council owned land and to set the fees and charges associated, to facilitate the effective implementation of the TMP. A review of the policy is due to be considered by this committee in October.
- 2.17 The TMP highlighted that Ash Dieback is a significant issue for tree stocks in Epsom & Ewell and would need to be managed carefully with a risk-based approach. An Ash Dieback Action Plan has since been developed and was adopted at the October 2023 Environment Committee. An Officer Ash Dieback Management Group has now been set up to coordinate our actions to tackle the disease on trees and land that the Council maintain.
- 2.18 As set out in the TMP, Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) is widespread in Oaks in the Borough and a potential hazard to human and animal health. Ongoing monitoring at Epsom Common over the last year has shown no significant increase from previous years. This is a positive sign, and the current assumption is that a parasitic fly species along with native birds are reducing the level of infestation. Monitoring will continue in 2024/25.

Veteran Tree Mapping

- 2.19 The importance of Veteran trees is recognised in the TMP due to their ecological and cultural value. Identifying and mapping their locations would have the benefit of supporting better management and preservation.
- 2.20 A limited amount of mapping to develop a register had taken place prior to 2024. The Countryside Team have worked with the Tree Advisory Board over this summer (2024) to train three small teams of volunteers who will be able to assist with progressing the veteran tree mapping work going forward.

Communications

- 2.21 A new 'Access to Nature' section of the website has been created to bring together information on the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and on 'Trees in Epsom & Ewell'. The trees section is due to be developed further in late 2024, with a guide to community tree planting.
- 2.22 Promoting tree planting at home was included in our 'Rewild Your Garden' social media monthly theme, as part of our Climate Change & Biodiversity communications in Autumn 2023.



- 2.23 The Climate Change & Biodiversity communications plan for 2024/25 again includes themes to promote tree planting through 'Plant for the Planet' and 'Rewild Your Garden'.
- 2.24 Work will continue during 2024/25 to deliver, monitor and review the Tree Management Plan.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None arising from this report.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 There are no implications in terms of crime and disorder.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None arising from this report.

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None arising from this report.

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None arising from this report.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 Planting and establishing trees can have significant financial implications. The Council will be exploring opportunities for external funding and support for tree planting schemes, along with actively encouraging community involvement.

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Additional funding would need to be identified for any works arising over and above the existing tree maintenance contract budget.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 None arising from this report.

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

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- Green & Vibrant and supports delivery of the Annual Plan.

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

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:**

6.3.1 The plan supports objectives in the Biodiversity Action Plan and Climate Change Action Plan, maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and contributing to increased carbon sequestration and meeting the Council climate change targets.

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**

6.4.1 No specific implications

6.5 **Partnerships:**

6.5.1 None

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Env Committee: Tree Management Plan – 21 March 2023

Other papers:

- Env Committee: Ash Dieback Action Plan – 17 October 2023
- Env Committee: Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy – 23 January 2024

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TREE PLANTING FEES & CHARGES POLICY - 9 MONTH REVIEW

Head of Service:	Justin Turvey, Head of Place Development
Report Author	Mark Rachwal
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1: Local authority fees & charges comparison table

Summary

This report provides a review of the delivery of the Council's Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy.

The Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy was approved by the Committee on 23 January 2024, setting out a Council policy on determining applications for tree planting on land in the ownership of the Council, and the associated fees and charges.

It was agreed that the policy would be reviewed after 9 months and include a breakdown of the fees and charges and a comparison of fees and charges for similar policies adopted by other local authorities.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Consider and note the 9-month review of Council's Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 This report provides a review of the delivery of the Council's Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy. It was agreed by this Committee that the Policy would be reviewed after a 9-month period.

2 Background

2.1 The Council’s Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy was approved by this Committee on 23 January 2024. It set a clear Policy for determining proposals made to the Council for tree planting on Council owned land and set the fees and charges associated, to facilitate the effective implementation of the Council’s Tree Management Plan.

2.2 The Policy covered two types of planting request:

- Single Memorial tree planting requests on Council land to be delivered by the Council on behalf of the applicant,
- Tree planting requests on Council owned land to be delivered by a third party.

2.3 The fees and charges for 2023/24 and 24/25 were agreed as:

Type of request	Action	Fee
Single Memorial Tree – Council to plant	Admin fee	£50
	Planting fee (if site selected is agreed)	£500
Third-party tree planting	Admin fee	£150
	Planting fee	£350

2.4 Prior to the adoption of the Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy the Council had no agreed policy for which to assess tree planting requests against.

2.5 It was agreed that a 9-month review of the Policy would be provided to this Committee.

2.6 The Tree Management Plan was developed and approved by Committee on 21 March 2023. The plan sets the framework for how the Council manages its current tree stock, now and in the future, and how we will increase the tree cover in the borough, where appropriate, contributing to the commitments made in the Climate Change Action Plan and Biodiversity Action Plan.

3 Breakdown of fees & charges

3.1 The fee for single memorial tree planting is split between an administration (admin) fee and a planting fee.

- 3.2 The admin fee of £50 covers the officer time to review the application, correspondence with the applicant and processing of payment. The fee's relating to officer time have been set in consideration of the published fee schedule for the tree officers hourly rate which can be found on the Council website ([Pre-Applications | Epsom and Ewell Borough Council \(epsom-ewell.gov.uk\)](https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk)).
- 3.3 The planting fee of £500 covers the sourcing, planting and long-term aftercare of the tree. It is set in consideration of the Forestry Commission's (FC) standard cost for the supply, planting and 3 years aftercare of an advanced nursery stock tree (set out in the guidance for the Local Authority Treescapes Fund - [Local Authority Treescapes Fund - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)).
- 3.4 The FC sets the standard tree supply and planting cost at £270.45 and 3 years of aftercare at £189, totalling £459.45. The Council planting fee includes an uplift for longer term maintenance beyond 3 years of aftercare.
- 3.5 The fee for third-party tree planting is split between an admin fee and a planting fee.
- 3.6 The admin fee of £150 covers the officer time for reviewing the application, correspondence with the applicant, undertaking a site visit, carrying out a service check and processing payment.
- 3.7 The planting fee of £350 covers the cost of a Council Officer being on site to supervise the agreed tree planting and check compliance with the original proposal.

4 Summary of tree planting requests

- 4.1 In the 9 months since the adoption of the Policy the Council has dealt with the following tree planting requests:
- 4.2 **Single memorial tree planting:** one application received, which was withdrawn prior to assessment.
- 4.3 **Third party tree planting:** one application received for planting a copse of trees at Alexandra Recreation Ground. The application was agreed and the associated fee paid. The planting has taken place, led by the Tree Advisory Board (TAB).
- 4.4 A second application was received prior to the agreement of the new policy but assessed post adoption. It was therefore not charged under the new fees and charges policy but has been agreed. This is for a 'Memorial Grove' at Long Grove Park, led by Age Concern and TAB. The planting has not taken place yet but is expected later this year (during the Nov-Mar planting season).

5 Comparison review of local authorities' tree planting fees & charges

- 5.1 A review exercise was undertaken of other local council fees and charges for tree planting requests as a comparison. This took the form of a desktop study on information published on a sample of local council websites.
- 5.2 One of the initial findings was that many Councils do not promote or actively offer memorial planting/tree planting request schemes on their land. Of the Surrey Borough Councils only Surrey Heath and Spelthorne actively stated options for memorial/sponsored trees on Council land, but they do not publish their fees for planting which are dependent on the type of request and tree to be planted.
- 5.3 Data was collated for 22 Councils that were found to publish fees and charges for tree planting (a summary table can be found in Appendix 1). From those sampled the key findings are set out below:
- Approaches to tree planting request schemes vary widely between local councils. Variations included:
 - type of scheme – whether single memorial tree only, or a tree sponsorship/donation scheme,
 - level of restriction in planting locations,
 - length of on-going tree maintenance,
 - whether plaques are or are not included,
 - set fee or varying fee structure.
 - The fees and charges vary widely between Councils. The lowest found was set at £190 (Rochford Council) and the highest £2,150 (Croydon Council).
 - Most of the Councils had a single set fee, but some had a fee range dependant on the type of tree chosen to be planted (for example Torbay Council had a fee range between £200-£2,000).
- 5.4 The wide variance in methods and fees used by other local authorities makes it difficult to make a straight comparison and suggests that there is no standard approach to the fees and charges set for tree planting requests.

6 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

6.1 Equality Impact Assessment

6.1.1 None arising from this report.

6.2 Crime & Disorder

6.2.1 There are no implications in terms of crime & disorder.

6.3 Safeguarding

6.3.1 None arising from this report.

6.4 Dependencies

6.4.1 None arising from this report.

6.5 Other

6.5.1 None arising from this report.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 Planting, establishing and maintaining trees can have significant financial implications. The Council is supportive of additional tree planting but requests from third parties do have resource implications for the Council. The fees and charges are intended to cover the costs to administer the applications received and cover the cost of any requested tree planting.

7.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Financial implications are included in the body of the report.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 None arising from this report.

8.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report

9 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- Green & vibrant

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

9.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:**

9.3.1 The policy supports objectives in the Biodiversity Action Plan, Climate Change Action Plan and Tree Management Plan, maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and contributing to increased carbon sequestration and meeting the Council climate change targets.

9.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**

9.4.1 No specific implications

9.5 **Partnerships:**

9.5.1 None

10 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Environment Committee: Tree Planting Fees & Charges Policy – 23 January 2024

Other papers:

- Environment & Safer Communities Committee: Tree Management Plan – 21 March 2023

Local authority fees & charges for Tree Planting/Tree Sponsorship schemes

Council	Cost	Notes
Rochford Council	£190	
Tameside Council	£200-£250	
Medway Council	From £200	
City of York Council	From £200	Sponsorship/Donation tree scheme
Torbay Council	Between £200-£2000	On average £500
Southend-on-Sea City Council	£210	
Norwich City Council	£250	Sponsorship of a tree
East Devon District Council	£273	Only includes 6 months follow up maintenance
Rother District Council	From £280	Cost only covers planting. Cost of tree dependant on type of tree chosen
Hackney Council	£355	
Tendring District Council	From £386	
Brighton & Hove City Council	£395	Inclusive of plaque.
Ealing Council	£400	Celebration tree sponsored by Trees for Streets
Cheltenham Borough Council	£450	Sponsorship of a tree
Royal Borough of Greenwich	£450	Sponsorship of a tree
Charnwood Council	£500	
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council	£500-£550	
South Hams District Council	£580	Inclusive of plaque
Hillingdon Council	£597	Crematorium gardens only. Inclusive of plaque
Lydd Town Council	£760 (on average)	
Coventry City Council	£1,425	Only in Gardens of Remembrance. Includes plaque
Three Rivers District Council	£1,870	Inclusive of plaque.
Croydon Council	£2,150	Only in Gardens of Remembrance

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HOOK ROAD CAR PARK INTERIM OPTIONS FOLLOW UP PAPER

Head of Service:	Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
Report Author	Richard Chevalier
Wards affected:	Town Ward;
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	

Summary

This report seeks to identify funding for a pay and display interim option at Hook Road Car Park or for the Committee to opt for a RingGo solution only.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Proceed with Option 1, 2 or 3 as identified in Section 4 of this report.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The current equipment is due to reach end of life at the end of this calendar year and so an alternative solution needs to be identified and funded out of the current budgets.

2 Background

- 2.1 The current barrier-controlled equipment and associated ICT connections at Hook Road are due to reach end of life at the end of 2024.
- 2.2 Whilst the initial hope was to nurse the existing equipment for an extended time, using parts and devices soon to be removed from the Ashley Centre Car Park, this is no longer possible and an interim replacement must be found.
- 2.3 In July 2024 this Committee opted to pursue an interim solution involving the installation of pay and display machines to work in tandem with a cashless parking option provided by RingGo.

- 2.4 In September 2024 Strategy and Resources Committee voted against the release of additional funds for this solution and the matter was returned to Environment Committee to reconsider its options or identify funding for the chosen solution.
- 2.5 All options will include the introduction of some speed reduction measures and costs associated with any required lines, signage or Comms expected to be in the region of £3k. This will come from existing revenue budgets.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was provided with the Environment Committee report in July 2024. Whilst no protected characteristics were directly impacted the use of a phone/app based system only may more proportionately impact older users.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 The Design Out Crime Officer at Surrey Police has noted a concern that the removal of barriers could lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour in the evenings as vehicles could enter the car park unhindered i.e. no barrier access required.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 N/A

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 N/A

3.5 Other

3.5.1 Any option that removes the barriers needs to consider some speed restriction measures being put in place, particularly at the car park exit (see 2.5).

4 Options

Option 1

4.1 To introduce a RingGo only solution within Hook Road Car Park.

4.1.1 This option proposes that a cashless only solution will be available at Hook Road Car Park.

4.1.2 This option will require a nominal amount of additional funding.

Option 2

4.2 To install 2 pay and display machines within Hook Road Car Park at an estimated cost of £8-10k

4.2.1 This option proposes the installation of a pay and display device, taking cash and card payment, on Level 1 and either Level 2 or 3 of the main lobby of Hook Road Car Park

4.2.2 The funding for this option would need to be found from existing revenue budgets.

Option 3

4.3 To install up to 4 pay and display machines within Hook Road Car Park at an estimated cost of £16-20k.

4.3.1 This option proposes the installation of a pay and display device, taking cash and card payment, on Level 1, 2 and 3 of the main lobby of Hook Road Car Park with a further device in the rear stairwell leading to the Rainbow Leisure Centre.

4.3.2 The funding for this option would need to be found from existing revenue budgets.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 In 2023/24 the net income for the Hook Road cost centre was £60,000 which represented an adverse variance of £77,000 against a budgeted net income of £137,000. This adverse position is further increased when the central costs of the car parking service are apportioned across the car parks, with the allocated amount for Hook Road being £65,000.

5.2 The council is currently forecasting a deficit of £77,000 as at Q1 and officers are continually seeking efficiencies to mitigate this. As Hook Road car park has been identified for development in the emerging Local Plan, any investment should be considered against the remaining operational life of the car park.

5.3 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Financial implications are set out in the body of the report.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 None arising from the contents of this report but legal will need to review any proposed new contracts.

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

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- 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

7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** See 3.2.1

7.5 **Partnerships:** The existing fees at Hook Road Car Park enable us to provide a parking alternative for the Rainbow Leisure Centre.

8 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Hook Road Car Park Equipment Funding (S&R) – September 2024
- Car Park Options Hook Road (Environment) – July 2024

Other papers:

2025/26 BUDGET TARGETS

Head of Service:	Brendan Bradley, Chief Finance Officer
Report Author	Vanessa Newton, Senior Accountant
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	None

Summary

This report informs the Committee of the Council's revenue budget targets presented to the Strategy & Resources Committee in July. The report seeks guidance on the preparation of the Committee's service estimates for 2025/26.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the implications of the budget targets presented to Strategy & Resources Committee on 23 July 2024.
- (2) Support the changes to services and savings previously identified in Table 1 of this report and that these are included within the budget presented to this Committee in January 2025.
- (3) Consider how additional income or savings can be generated to address the projected Council wide funding gap of £573,000 in 2025/26, rising to £720,000 per annum by 2028/29.
- (4) Note that owing to the Council's projected budget deficit, any additional new revenue growth items (i.e. service enhancements resulting in increased net expenditure) supported by Policy Committees will need to be fully funded from existing budgets.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The recommendations will provide a clear framework for officers to develop a balanced budget for 2025/26, which is a statutory requirement.

2 Background

- 2.1 Since the Covid pandemic, the Council has been required to use one-off reserve funding to support its services and produce a balanced budget. This practice is unsustainable as reserve balances reduce, and the Council must find additional annual income or expenditure savings to address the budget shortfall.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 23 July 2024, Strategy and Resources Committee agreed the budget targets and workstreams to enable the Council to work towards setting a balanced budget for 2025/26.
- 2.3 The committee noted that excluding any new growth in expenditure, additional annual income/savings of £573,000 are projected to be needed to achieve a balance budget for 2025/26, increasing to £720,000 by 2028/29.

3 Full Proposals

- 3.1 For financial planning purposes, latest forecasts show that the Council faces a projected budget deficit of £573,000 in 2025/26, rising to £720,000 by 2028/29.
- 3.2 To address this deficit, Strategy & Resources Committee agreed that the following workstreams should be progressed by Directors and Heads of Service:
 - 3.2.1 Service reviews focusing primarily on discretionary services to be considered at Strategy & Resources in July 2024, with the aim of increasing efficiencies and effectiveness whilst reducing cost.
 - 3.2.2 Ongoing review of existing asset utilisation to realise cost reductions in Council operational buildings and increased income from investment properties.
 - 3.2.3 Officers to be tasked with identifying further efficiencies and opportunities, although these are becoming harder to achieve after over a decade of austerity.
 - 3.2.4 A base review, which entails reviewing the year end position for 2023/24, identifying any potential savings, additional cost pressures and areas where savings can be developed.
 - 3.2.5 Continue to investigate and bring forward income streams which 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 any new charging policy for waste.

3.2.6 Undertake a review of reserves to be reported to Financial Strategy Advisory Group to seek support for recommended minimum reserve balances.

3.2.7 A target to increase fees and charges income by 6% in 2025/26 (as previously agreed at Full Council in February 2024), then by CPI+1% from 2026/27 onwards. Increased income can come from higher volumes and does not necessarily have to be through increasing the published fee. Heads of Service review fees and charges annually to ensure any increases are achievable and report to policy committees for approval.

3.2.8 To maximise external funding and partnership opportunities, for example submitting grant applications as opportunities arise.

3.3 Officers will maintain engagement with policy chairs and members throughout the budgeting process, and budget forecasts and assumptions will continue to be reviewed and updated throughout the process.

3.4 Delivery of previously agreed additional income/savings totalling £30,000 within this Committee are also required for a balanced budget to be achieved for 2025/26:

Table 1 – Summary of Previously Agreed Additional Savings Target for 2025/26		2025/26
		£000
Review of Borough Beautification (flowers and planting)	Env	30
Total		30

3.5 Furthermore, owing to the Council’s projected budget deficit, for any additional new revenue growth items (i.e. service enhancements resulting in increased net expenditure) supported by policy committees, the committee or Council will need to identify how these can be fully funded from existing budgets.

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

4.1 Equality Impact Assessment

4.1.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4.2 Crime & Disorder

4.2.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4.3 Safeguarding

4.3.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4.4 Dependencies

4.4.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4.5 Other

4.5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to set a balanced budget each year, demonstrating how planned expenditure on services will be fully funded.

4.5.2 Should the Council not progress the proposed budget strategy and fail to achieve a significant net reduction in its cost of services, and/or the savings identified in Table 1, there is a clear risk that reserves will continue to diminish with the Council eventually becoming unable to set a balanced budget.

4.5.3 Financial risk assessments will be completed with service estimates for this Committee in January 2025 and for Council in February 2025.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 Financial implications are set out in the strategic financial planning report to Strategy & Resources Committee of 23 July 2024.

5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** It is important that the budgets target recommendations be agreed to maintain the future financial health of the Council.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility to set a balanced budget each year.

6.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- Effective Council.

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

7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None for the purposes of this report.

7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None for the purposes of this report.

7.5 **Partnerships:** None for the purposes of this report.

8 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- 2025/26 Strategic Financial Planning report to Strategy & Resources 23 July 2024.

Other papers:

- Budget Book 2024/25.
- [Medium Term Financial Plan 2024-28](#)

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URGENT DECISIONS

Head of Service: Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services
Report Author Andrew Bircher
Wards affected: (All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no) No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:
Appendices (attached):

Summary

To report to the committee the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the urgent decisions taken and the reasons for those decisions, since the last meeting of the committee.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To report to the committee the decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

2 Background

- 2.1 The scheme of delegation sets out that the Chief Executive and Directors are authorised to take decisions on grounds of urgency regarding matters which would otherwise be reserved for determination by a Committee or Council. A matter can be deemed urgent if, in the reasonable opinion of the officer concerned, a delay would seriously prejudice the interest of the Council or of the public and it is not practicable to convene a quorate meeting of the relevant decision-making body in sufficient time to take the decision.

2.2 Since the last meeting of the Committee, three urgent decisions have been taken by the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Chair, Cllr Liz Frost, and published in Member News in line with the Council's Constitution, Appendix 2, Paragraph 3.1. iii. The decisions are set out below:

2.2.1 **Decision 132** – Amend the tennis court booking scheme over the school holidays at councillors' request.

2.2.2 **Urgency reason for decision 132** – At the time of taking the decision the papers had already been published for the original date of the next committee meeting.

2.2.3 **Decision 137** – Temporary relocation of Business Parking permits for a company to relocate to the Ashley Centre Car Park

2.2.4 **Urgency reason for decision 137** - This is due to anti-social behaviour which has caused damage to some of the staff / company cars and allowed the company to relocate its parking. The decision could not wait until the next committee as action was needed straight away to tackle the issue and avoid further damage.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None arising directly from this report

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None arise from this report

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None arise from this report

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None arise from this report

3.5 Other

3.5.1 none

4 Financial Implications

4.1 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Finance are consulted as part of the urgent decision-making process.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 **Legal Officer's comments:** Legal are consulted as part of the urgent decision-making process.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- N/A

- 6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not 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:** N/A

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- None.

Other papers:

- None.
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