

## STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Tuesday 11 November 2025 at 7.30 pm

**Place: Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall**

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

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

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair)  
Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor John Beckett  
Councillor Kate Chinn

Councillor James Lawrence  
Councillor Jan Mason  
Councillor Lucie McIntyre  
Councillor Humphrey Reynolds

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive

For further information, please contact [democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk) or tel: 01372 732000

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

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

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

## Public information

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

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

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

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

## Exclusion of the Press and the Public

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

## Questions and statements from the Public

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

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

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

Questions must be received in writing by Democratic Services by noon on the fifth working day before the day of the meeting. For this meeting this is **Noon, Tuesday 4 November**.

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 10 November**.

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

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

## **AGENDA**

### **1. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

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

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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. TOWN HALL MOVE (To Follow)**

### **4. STAFF PAY AWARD (To Follow)**

### **5. REVIEW OF RESERVES (To Follow)**

### **6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 16)**

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes and Restricted Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 September 2025 (attached) and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

### **7. EEBC 2025-2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 3 & 4 (Pages 17 - 34)**

This report outlines the progress made on the Council's 2025-2027 property related Strategic Priorities 3 and 4.

### **8. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Pages 35 - 36)**

The Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to pass a resolution to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

### **9. CLEANING CONTRACT (Pages 37 - 42)**

The report has not been published as it deals with information in relation to the financial or business affairs of the Council or a third party.

### **10. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY UPDATE (Pages 43 - 74)**

The report has not been published as it deals with information in relation to the financial or business affairs of the Council or a third party.

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**Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 25 September 2025**

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**PRESENT -**

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair); Councillors John Beckett, Kate Chinn, James Lawrence, Lucie McIntyre and Humphrey Reynolds

In Attendance: Councillor Alex Coley and Councillor Julie Morris (Items 19 - 24 only)

Absent: Councillor Jan Mason

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive), Andrew Bircher (Assistant Director of Corporate Services), Cagdas Canbolat (Director of Corporate Services (S151)), Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Ian Mawer (Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development), Andrew McGuire (Head of IT), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Sue Emmons (Chief Accountant), Alex Awoyomi (Principal Solicitor), Oliver Nelson (Public Protection Manager) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

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**19 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

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

**20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members made the following declarations in relation to items on the agenda for the meeting:

Epsom and Ewell Community Infrastructure Levy - Annual Funding Awards 2025

Councillor Hannah Dalton, Other Interest: Councillor Hannah Dalton declared that she had supported a CIL bid that had not been selected by the CIL Working Group for inclusion in this item but that it did not affect her ability to engage in the Committee's conversation on the report.

Epsom and Ewell Community Infrastructure Levy - Annual Funding Awards 2025

Councillor Kate Chinn, Other Interest: Councillor Kate Chinn declared that she had supported the submission of one of the CIL bids.

Epsom and Ewell Community Infrastructure Levy - Annual Funding Awards 2025

Councillor Lucie McIntyre, Other Interest: Councillor Lucie McIntyre declared that she signed (supported) one of the bids that was presented to the Committee but that she did not feel it would have any effect on the conversations or discussions to be held by the Committee.

Epsom and Ewell Community Infrastructure Levy - Annual Funding Awards 2025

Councillor Neil Dallen MBE, Other Interest: Other Interest: Councillor Neil Dallen informed the meeting that he had declared an interest in Neighbourhood project 1 (3rd Epsom Scouts community building) when it was considered by the CIL Working Group as he was involved in scouting, and had not participated in the debate at that meeting. Councillor Neil Dallen declared that he would not participate in the Committee's debate on the same item.

## 21 REVISED COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Committee received a report asking it to note the outcome of the consultation and to consider the adoption of a revised compliance and enforcement policy.

The following matter was considered:

- a) **Renters Rights Bill.** The Public Protection Manager informed the Committee that the Renters Rights Bill was in the final stages of Parliamentary consideration and may necessitate further changes to the Compliance and Enforcement Policy within the next 12 months. If this was the case any required amendments would be brought back to the Committee for consideration. In response to a question from a Member, the Committee was informed that officers recommended proceeding with adoption of the Policy at the present time, given that consultation on it had already been undertaken and the potential delay before the Bill's effects are realized.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Agree to adopt the revised Compliance and Enforcement policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.**
- (2) Agree to nominate and authorise the Head of Housing and Community to make any future amendments of an administrative nature (updates to legislation, role changes, constitutional changes).**

## 22 LAHF3 - REVIEW

The Committee received a report seeking approval to utilise £50,000 of the funding allocated to the LAHF3 programme, in order to facilitate the renovation of a Town & Country Housing (TCH) property in Epsom and thereby ensure the property can continue to be utilised for settled accommodation by applicants nominated from the Council's housing register.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Legal Agreement and Investment Protection.** The Head of Housing and Community informed the Committee of a correction to paragraphs 5.1 and 7.2 of the report as TCH had requested that a Council veto on the future sale of the property be excluded from the legal agreement. The Committee was informed that the legal agreement would ensure the council's £50,000 investment is repaid, with an uplift reflecting any increase in property value, should the property be sold in the future.
- b) **Programme Delivery and Risk of Repayment.** In response to a question from a member, the Head of Housing and Community informed the Committee that any unspent funds would be returned to the Ministry on a pro-rata basis. The Committee noted that current property purchases had been at or below the per-unit funding allocation and that as a result there was not a risk of having to return funds which had been used.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Authorise the sum of £50,000 from the funding allocated to the LAHF3 programme, to be spent to facilitate the renovation of a 3-bedroom Town & Country Housing property in Epsom.**
- (2) **Nominate and authorise the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration to negotiate and sign the relevant legal agreements associated with the Grant, further to consultation with the Chair of Strategy and Resources and the Council's chief financial and chief legal officers.**

## 23 PLANNING SOFTWARE PROCUREMENT

The Committee received a report setting out the case for renewing the Council's planning software contract with Idox Software Ltd. The IDOX Uniform system currently in use supports a wide range of essential planning and regulatory functions.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Base budget definition.** In response to a question from a Member, the Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer informed the Committee that this item was included in the current year's budget.
- b) **Procurement timeframe.** In response to a question from a Member, the Head of ICT informed the Committee that procurement planning for this contract had begun prior to the announcement of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), and that at time the intention had been to remain with this supplier. The Committee was also informed that discussions with other authorities were ongoing to ensure alignment post LGR.
- c) **Award of contract.** In response to a comment from a councillor, the Chair and Head of ICT reassured the Committee that the circumstances for the award of this contract were different to those of the award of the HR software contract.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Approve the procurement of the Uniform software suite from IDOX Software Ltd for a further three years.**

**24 EPSOM AND EWELL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY - ANNUAL FUNDING AWARDS 2025**

The Committee received a report presenting the recommendations of the CIL Working Group.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Gibraltar Recreation Ground Strategic CIL project – revenue money.** The Chair informed the Committee that there was a prerequisite requirement of £500,000 revenue funding for this project. The Chair informed the Committee that this matter would not be discussed at this meeting, but that it would be presented to a future meeting of the Committee if the Strategic CIL funding was approved by the Committee.
- b) **Strategic Bid 2 – ANPR Surrey Police.** Members of the Committee debated the funding request from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for this project. Members expressed the view that this project should be funded by the PCC, but noted that if the Council did not contribute to it this might not take place. The Committee noted the CIL Member Working Group's recommendation that partial funding of up to 50% be granted subject to PCC funding for the remaining amount.
- c) **Strategic Bid 4 – Parks recreation and play for young people and families.** In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development informed the Committee that following the meeting of the CIL Working Group it had been confirmed that there was no match funding for this project. Accordingly, it's scoring of 8 remained unchanged from that allocated by the Working Group.

In response to a question from a Member, the Chair informed the Committee that the scope of project covered 8 parks within the Borough.

- d) **Strategic project 5 (Gibraltar Recreation Ground – Centre of Sporting Excellence).** Members of the Committee debated the scope of this project and whether there was a possibility of it conflicting or competing with the proposed Hook Road Arena Centre of Sporting Excellence. In response to a question, the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development informed the Committee that the Local Plan was currently going through the process of examination and that the Hook Road Arena dwellings and sporting facilities were not due to be delivered within the first 5 years of the Plan, if approved.

In response to a question regarding the delivery of a Gibraltar Recreation Ground Centre of Sporting Excellence, the Chair informed the meeting that he thought it was likely that this would continue after Local Government Reorganisation, but that it was not possible to guarantee due



to the number of unknowns. The Committee noted that the Gibraltar Recreation Ground project would require both planning permission and provision of revenue funding before it could proceed.

- e) **Neighbourhood project 2 (Cattle Arch/Under-Rail Tunnel).** In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development informed the Committee that the project proposed works to the highway land under the tunnel, but not to the structure of the tunnel, which was owned by Network Rail. It was noted that the ownership of the highway land would be confirmed if the project was approved by the Committee.

The Committee considered each project individually, and accordingly:

Unanimously resolved:

- (1) To approve Strategic project 1 (Ash Dieback Essential Safety Works and Treescape Restoration).**

With an initial tie of two votes for, two votes against and one abstention, the committee resolved via the Chair's casting vote:

- (2) To approve Strategic project 2 (ANPR Surrey Police).**

Unanimously resolved:

- (3) To approve Strategic project 3 (B284 Ruxley Lane, West Ewell, Epsom - Road Safety Scheme).**
- (4) To approve Strategic project 4 (Parks recreation and play for young people and families).**

With one vote for, two votes against, three abstentions and the Chair not voting resolved:

- (5) That Strategic project 5 (Gibraltar Recreation Ground – Centre of Sporting Excellence) is not approved.**

With six votes for and one abstention resolved:

- (6) To approve Neighbourhood project 1 (3rd Epsom Scouts Community Building).**

Unanimously resolved:

- (7) To approve Neighbourhood project 2 (Cattle Arch/Under-Rail Tunnel).**
- (8) To approve Neighbourhood project 3 (Wheels for Epsom)**
- (9) To approve Neighbourhood project 4 (Horton Country Park Path Restoration)**

**(10) To approve Neighbourhood project 5 (The Library of Things)**

**(11) To approve Neighbourhood project 6 (Linden Bridge School – Road Safety Outside School Scheme)**

**25 CHARITABLE TRUSTS**

The Committee received a report requesting it to consider the future operation of the Chuter Ede Trust Funds and the Elizabeth Welchman Trust Fund.

The following matter was considered:

- a) **Name of funds.** In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director of Corporate Services informed the Committee that a request would be made to the Charity Commission for approval to transfer the funds to the Epsom and Ewell Community Fund for uses similar to their original purpose. It was hoped that would enable the funds to be ringfenced with a name associated to their original source.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Support investigation into the transfer of the assets of the Chuter Ede Trust Funds to the Epsom and Ewell Community Fund.**
- (2) Authorise the closure of the charity trust funds with the Charity Commission, if the Charity Commission approve the transfer.**
- (3) Authorise spending the remaining balance of the Elizabeth Welchman fund and thereafter Authorise the closure of the charity trust fund.**
- (4) Nominate and authorise the Assistant Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services and Head of Legal Services to take all necessary steps to bring into effect the recommendations resolved by this Committee.**

**26 GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIONS**

The Committee received a report providing details of two government consultations responded to since the last meeting.

The Committee asked that it's thanks to officers for their work to respond to the consultations be recorded.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the consultation responses.**

## 27 TITLE RESTRICTION - SOUTHFIELD PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Committee received a report asking it to consider a request from Surrey County Council to release its land from a Land Registry title restriction registered by EEBC to protect the former EEBC land from non-educational use.

The following matters were considered by the Committee:

- a) **Risk of future disposal.** In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Property and Regeneration informed the Committee that it was his understanding that if an Academy ceased to exist, any land granted to it by an Education Authority would returned to that authority.
- b) **Reason for urgent decision.** In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Property and Regeneration informed the Committee that the Committee's decision on this matter was considered to be urgent to enable the completion deadline of 1 October 2025 to be met.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Approve the proposal to terminate the Pre-Emption Agreement and thereby remove the restriction from Surrey County Council's Land Registry title.**

Note: In the opinion of the Chief Executive and in accordance with the [Paragraph 14.2 of Annex 4.6 of the Operating Framework \(Overview, Audit and Scrutiny\)](#) the decision on this item was considered to be urgent and was not subject to call-in.

## 28 COUNCIL REFERRED MOTION

The Committee received a report presenting a Motion referred to it at the Meeting of the Full Council on 22 July 2025.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Proposed amendment.** Councillor James Lawrence **PROPOSED** and Councillor Kate Chinn **SECONDED** the following amendments to the recommendation of the report:

*“(1) Reduce the property income equalisation reserve to £5.9 million and the interest equalisation reserve to £600K with the surplus being allocated to capital reserves.*

*(2) Urgently dispose of 70 East street and any underperforming council owned commercial properties identified in the forthcoming asset review and the capital receipts to be paid into capital reserves.*

*(3) Proactively use our increased capital reserves for an accelerated 2026/27 capital programme to address needs in the EEBC Building Asset Management Plan 2020 to 2030.*

Following consideration, the Committee voted on the proposed amendment. There were 2 votes for and 4 votes against the proposed amendment and accordingly it was **LOST**. The Committee then returned to the consideration of the substantive recommendation contained within the report.

The Committee resolved with five votes for, 1 vote against and 1 abstention to:

- (1) Note the Motion and agree that no action be taken on any of the items within it, having considered the advice as set out in the report.**

## 29 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes and Restricted Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 15 July and authorised the Chair to sign them.

## 30 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

The Committee unanimously agreed the motion as set out by the Chair.

## 31 FACILITIES MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

The Committee received a report requesting it to agree to take forward the renewal of a facilities Management contract.

The matters that were considered by the Committee in relation to this item following the exclusion of the Press and Public is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted minute.

Following consideration the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Approve the extension of contract to Rydon Maintenance Ltd for the facilities management at Epsom and Ewell Council for the next two years, being the final contract extension allowable under the current contract; and**
- (2) Nominate and authorise the Head of Property and Regeneration to take forward the necessary steps to complete the award of contract.**

*The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 9.06 pm*

COUNCILLOR NEIL DALLEN (CHAIR)

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## **EEBC 2025-2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 3 & 4**

<b>Head of Service:</b>	Mark Shephard, Head of Property and Regeneration	
<b>Report Author</b>	Mark Shephard	
<b>Wards affected:</b>	(All Wards);	
<b>Urgent Decision?(yes/no)</b>	No	
<b>If yes, reason urgent decision required:</b>	N/A	
<b>Appendices (attached):</b>	Appendix 1	- Exempt Briefing Note
	Appendix 2	- Exempt EEPIC Review

### **Summary**

This report outlines the progress made on the Council's 2025-2027 property related Strategic Priorities 3 and 4.

### **Recommendation (s)**

#### **The Committee is asked to:**

- (1) Note the update and progress made as set out in the report below.**
- (2) Note that the Town Hall remains in operational use.**
- (3) Agree that the Council remains actively engaged with regard to potential future funding streams and opportunities in relation to progressing its pipeline of potential development sites.**
- (4) Agree that 70 East Street is declared surplus to operational requirements.**
- (5) Agree that 70 East Street is marketed for sale with a budget provision of up to £10,000 for associated upfront costs.**
- (6) Nominate and authorise the Head of Property & Regeneration to take forward the necessary steps to place 70 East Street on the market.**
- (7) Note an Exempt 70 East Street marketing progress report will be brought back to this Committee's meeting on 27 January 2026.**
- (8) Note the findings of the completed EEPIC review.**

## 1 Reason for Recommendations

- 1.1 The Council faces significant financial pressures and has a statutory obligation under s123 Local Government Act 1972 to seek Best Value from its land and property assets.
- 1.2 The recommendations represent the outcome of the work undertaken to date (and reported below) demonstrating the Council's commitment to its s123 statutory obligation.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 At its 6 May 2025 meeting, Full Council approved seven Strategic Priorities to be delivered in 2025-2027. The revised Priorities replaced the Council's Four Year Plan and focused its strategic delivery in the context of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) timescales.
- 2.2 This report covers the property related Priorities 3 and 4, which stated:

***Priority 3: Investigate future options for the existing Town Hall, 70 East Street***

*Outcome: To develop a business case for options around the future redevelopment of the Town Hall site ahead of site being released from operational use via LGR. To combine other council owned sites as necessary to support a business case for a possible Joint Venture.*

***Priority 4: Carry out and complete major Asset Review***

*Outcome: To Review key council owned property assets, including EEPIC, Bourne Hall, Playhouse and C&W Centre but excluding commercial assets on long term leases, to understand market values. Identify assets that could transfer to a new local governance entity (subject to the creation of new entity/ies) and likely revenue/maintenance costs for that new entity.*

- 2.3 Full Council, as part of its approval of the 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities, further agreed that in light of LGR, the proposed office move to 70 East Street would no longer be proceeding.
- 2.4 70 East Street had previously formed part of the Council's income generating commercial property portfolio and now remains vacant, with no income stream being generated and vacant costs being incurred.
- 2.5 To ensure the 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities could be delivered swiftly alongside business as usual and existing commitments, support was provided by an external specialist property consultant.

## 3 Strategic Priority 3: Investigate future options for the existing Town Hall, 70 East Street

### Existing Town Hall

- 3.1 Alternative uses for the Town Hall site, including the potential to dispose of the property as either a standalone asset or as part of a development package have been explored. This is now with a view to the site becoming surplus to operational requirements in the future subject to LGR.
- 3.2 The Council's external specialist property consultant held conversations with both Homes England and the government's One Public Estate programme (promoting the more efficient use of publicly held assets), to explore opportunities for funding or broad support.
- 3.3 The outcome of those discussions was that while there is support available to assist residential (including affordable) development, consideration needs to be given to delivery timelines (in the context of LGR) and also the critical mass delivered i.e. support favours those sites capable of delivering large scale regional housing development.
- 3.4 However, with further funding announcements in the year ahead expected to coincide with greater clarity around the delivery of LGR, officers will continue to remain engaged with external partners.
- 3.5 Local Housing Associations were also approached to informally assess their appetite to deliver affordable housing on either a conversion or new build basis on the Town Hall site.
- 3.6 Their feedback was consistent in that the conversion of older properties for affordable housing stock is often not viable and not their preferred approach at this time. Further, the location and constrained nature of the site would not lend itself to larger, family style accommodation, where there is currently most need. The option remained a future possibility but was not considered a likely prospect at the current time.

Package of sites

- 3.7 The Council's external property consultant also considered whether there was scope to incorporate the Town Hall site into a wider package of development sites and to explore the potential for Joint Ventures or similar approaches.
- 3.8 In light of the Council decision to remain within the existing Town Hall, it remains required for operational purposes and cannot currently be declared as surplus. Accordingly, a detailed business case around future options for the Town Hall site has not been prepared.
- 3.9 Instead, it is conceivable that the new Unitary Authority will deem the Town Hall site surplus when it is considered in the context of all the existing civic site holdings it will inherit from former neighbouring Boroughs and Districts.

- 3.10 Alongside the Town Hall site, a number of other property assets were considered which are either surplus to operational requirements (70 East Street) or have the potential to be declared surplus in the future.
- 3.11 The key assets considered included:
- 70 East Street
  - Hope Lodge Car Park
  - Upper High Street Car Park
  - Hook Road Arena
  - Hook Road Multi-Story Car Park (MSCP)
- 3.12 The above sites could potentially form a package of development/disposal sites and various routes to market were explored including Joint Ventures.
- 3.13 Despite the above sites potentially offering c500 new dwellings, the feedback from external partners was similar to the Town Hall site; that is, the comprised potential package of sites remain small in scale when compared on a regional basis afforded at a Strategic Authority level (i.e. whole of Surrey).
- 3.14 Taking account of external partner feedback and the LGR timescale, it is considered that pursuing a Joint Venture or similar at this time would not be a prudent approach.
- 3.15 Therefore, it is recommended that the Council remain actively engaged about future funding streams and continue to prepare its pipeline of disposal projects to support the forthcoming Unitary Authority.

#### 70 East Street

- 3.16 As a former office building requiring a comprehensive refurbishment, 70 East Street would require significant upfront capital investment. The local commercial letting market is not considered favourable and reletting a building of this size and condition would be extremely challenging.
- 3.17 To undertake an office to residential conversion would also require significant upfront capital investment and is best suited to a specialist developer, better equipped to manage rising construction costs in a subdued residential property market.
- 3.18 Given the site is vacant and creating a revenue pressure, it is recommended 70 East Street be prepared for sale and marketed as soon as possible to ensure the Council can continue to meet its s123 Best Value obligation.

- 3.19 It is further recommended a budget of up to £10,000 is allocated for any upfront marketing costs that may be incurred. These might include erecting a for sale board, EPC certificate, specialist trade journal advertising or any other incidental expense that might be reasonably incurred. This can be funded from the agreed Strategic Priorities Reserve.
- 3.20 An Exempt Briefing Note is attached at Appendix 1 and is commercially sensitive as it contains confidential pricing analysis and marketing strategy.
- 3.21 An Exempt report will be brought back to this Committee in January 2026 providing an update on marketing progress. The report will be confidential as it will include commercially sensitive information about prospective purchasers and marketing strategy.

#### **4 Strategic Priority 4: Carry out and complete major Asset Review**

- 4.1 The review considered every land / property asset held by the Council and identified those which were capable of transferring to a new local governance entity.
- 4.2 The approach taken by the Council's external property consultant involved a high-level review of all Council owned assets, including those held for investment and for operational reasons.
- 4.3 Under the review, the Council's land / property assets were categorised as either:
- Commercial Assets – commercial land / property held directly by the Council (in the name of EEBC) and indirectly by the Council through EEPIC (assets held outside Borough by the Council owned Epsom & Ewell Property Investment Company).
  - Operational Assets – service delivery assets e.g. depot, Town Hall, car parks, cemetery, etc
  - Community Assets – Bourne Hall, Epsom Playhouse, allotments, parks / amenity land, local nature reserves, toilets etc
  - Surplus Assets – Including assets currently surplus as well as those potentially surplus in the future.
- 4.4 The review concluded that commercial and operational / service delivery assets should be retained and transferred to the new Unitary Authority. This included assets held under EEPIC.
- 4.5 The review indicates that it would not be in the Council's financial interests to consider current disposals of EEPIC assets. Attached Exempt Appendices 1 and 2 refer to EEPIC and are confidential as they contain commercially sensitive financial analysis including holding strategy.

- 4.6 Surplus assets were considered for future disposal and have already been considered in paragraphs 3.7 – 3.21.
- 4.7 Community assets are available to be considered for transferring to a new local governance entity and assets held for ‘community’ purposes and/or which might be considered appropriate for a Community Transfer were identified.
- 4.8 A comprehensive review of these assets was undertaken with a particular focus (as requested by Strategic Priority 4) on;
- Bourne Hall, Ewell
  - The Epsom Playhouse
  - Community & Wellbeing Centre
- 4.9 The above are significant community assets and work was undertaken to better understand the implications of holding the assets in any new local governance entity which is linked to *Strategic Priority 1: Explore and implement future local governance (i.e. Town / Community Council)*.
- 4.10 Following the review, a comprehensive, detailed asset database was created containing information about all assets. Work continues to refine the database to support the transfer of assets as part of LGR.

## **5 Property Assets All Member Briefing**

- 5.1 The Council’s external specialist property consultant delivered an all member briefing on 24 September 2025 providing an independent overview of the work undertaken and outcome of Priorities 3 and 4.
- 5.2 The Head of Property & Regeneration provided members with an update on the EEPIC (Epsom & Ewell Property Investment Company Ltd) review element of Priority 4.
- 5.3 Following the briefing, members have access to a recording for those unable to attend the presentation at the time.

## **6 Risk Assessment**

Legal or other duties

### **6.1 Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1.1 Not applicable

### **6.2 Crime & Disorder**

6.2.1 Not applicable

### **6.3 Safeguarding**

6.3.1 Not applicable

6.4 Dependencies

6.4.1 None

6.5 Other

6.5.1 None

## 7 Financial Implications

7.1 70 East Street remains vacant with no income stream being generated and vacant costs being incurred. This includes cost of business rates, interest / debt payment and other maintenance costs of the building.

7.2 The Council faces significant financial pressures, and a disposal would ensure the Council is taking all steps to mitigate a financial liability.

7.3 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** There is work to do in order to address the financial challenges facing the Council in the 2026/27 budget. The scale of the pressures means that incremental changes will not be sufficient. We must undertake a comprehensive review of our financial strategy, including looking at vacant assets which are currently costing the Council in maintenance cost.

7.4 Furthermore, the proposed budget of up to £10,000 for professional fees is proportionate and justified when we consider the potential value of the asset.

## 8 Legal Implications

8.1 The Council has a statutory obligation under s123 Local Government Act 1972 to seek Best Value from its land and property assets.

8.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None arising from the content of this report.

## 9 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- *Priority 3: Investigate future options for the existing Town Hall, East Street*
- *Priority 4: Carry out and complete major Asset Review*

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

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

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

9.5 **Partnerships:** None

9.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** In the event a purchaser is not forthcoming, 70 East Street will transfer to the new Unitary Authority.

## 10 Background papers

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

### **Previous reports:**

- EEBC Strategic Priorities 2025-2027, Full Council 6 May 2025  
<https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=146&MId=1627>

### **Other papers:**

- None



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**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Committee may pass a resolution to exclude the public from the Meeting for Part Two of the Agenda on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The following documents are included on Part Two of the agenda and have not been published:

Item 06 – Minutes of Previous Meeting Appendix 1 (Restricted Minutes of Previous Meeting)
The document deals with information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Committee and third parties.
Item 07 – EEBC 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities 3 & 4 Appenidix 1 and Appendix 2
The documents deal with information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Committee and third parties.
Item 09 – Cleaning Contract
The report deals with information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Committee and third parties.
Item 10 – Commercial Property Update
The report deals with information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Committee and third parties.

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