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Democratic Services



STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Tuesday 27 January 2026 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. King'.

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

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

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

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

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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 fifth working day before the day of the meeting. For this meeting this is **Noon, Tuesday 20 January 2026**.

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 26 January 2026**.

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. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2026 (Pages 5 - 20)

This report introduces the draft Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 and seeks approval of the Statement prior to its presentation to Full Council and subsequent publication on the Council's website.

4. PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2026-27 (Pages 21 - 36)

This report provides:

- a progress update on the current (previously approved) financial year 2025-26 planned maintenance programme;
- and requests approval for next year's planned maintenance programme for the financial year 2026-27.

5. COUNCIL TAX EMPTY PROPERTY AND SECOND HOME POLICY (Pages 37 - 48)

This report proposes:

- (1) The removal of the Council Tax one month empty and unfurnished exemption from 01 April 2026. This means that once a property becomes empty and substantially unfurnished, 100% of the Council Tax will remain payable, from the date the property becomes empty.
- (2) Introduction of the 100% Empty Home Premium on properties which have been empty and substantially unfurnished for longer than 1 year, from the 01 April 2026
- (3) Introduction of a 100% premium for all second homes from 01 April 2027, in line with the governing legislation.

6. REVENUE BUDGET AND FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27 (Pages 49 - 62)

This report sets out estimates for income and expenditure on services in 2026/27 and recommends fees and charges for which this Committee is responsible, with the new charges being effective from 1 April 2026.

7. EPSOM AND EWELL EMPLOYMENT HUB (Pages 63 - 78)

Consideration of options regarding funding the Epsom and Ewell Employment Hub for 2026/27

8. URGENT DECISIONS (Pages 79 - 82)

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

9. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 83 - 92)

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 November 2025 (attached) and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Pages 93 - 94)

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.

EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT

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

Summary

This report introduces the draft Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 and seeks approval of the Statement prior to its presentation to Full Council and subsequent publication on the Council's website.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Agree that the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 is referred to Full Council for approval.
- (2) Nominate and Authorise the Head of People and Organisational Development to include the returning officer fees, when received.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Pay Policy Statement sets out the Council's policy regarding remuneration in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 and associated statutory guidance. The purpose of the statement is to provide transparency regarding the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees.
- 1.2 The Pay Policy Statement 2026/27 requires approval from the Strategy & Resources Committee prior to being presented to Full Council for approval and subsequent publication on the Council's website.

1.3 Once approved by Full Council, the Pay Policy Statement will come into effect on 01 April 2026 and will be subject to annual review.

2 Background

2.1 Pay Policy Statement

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

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

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

2.1.3 The information contained in the Statement is current as at 10th December 2025.

2.1.4 The Statement also contains reference to the agreed pay award of 3% from April 2026. The Council's Employee Pay and Reward Procedure has been updated to reflect the 2026/27 pay award which was agreed by Full Council on 9th December 2025.

2.2 Election Fees

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

2.2.2 Appendix 2 sets out the current Surrey Returning Officer fees and charges for 2026/27 (to follow).

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

3 Key points to note/Summary of changes

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

The agreed 3% uplift from April 2026 has been applied to the 2026/27 figures below.

Post	2025/26: Bottom of salary range (£ per annum)	2026/27: Bottom of salary range (£ per annum)	2025/26: Top of salary range (£ per annum)	2026/27: Top of salary range (£ per annum)
Chief Executive	£133,636	£137,645	£155,019	£159,669
Director	£95,019	£97,869	£111,509	£114,855

3.2 Pay Multiples (ratios)

3.2.1 There has been a slight reduction to the pay multiple (ratio) between Chief Officers' pay and the pay of all other employees. The ratio between the bottom of the lowest pay scale and the top of the Chief Executive pay scale is 1:6.

3.3 Gender Pay Gap

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

3.3.2 For the purpose of this report, the Council's mean Gender Pay Gap as at 31 March 2024 is -5.8%. As in previous years, the negative Gender Pay Gap is primarily due to the majority of front-line operatives being male and some senior management roles being held by females. This positions the council favourably in terms of women's pay.

3.4 Policy on lowest paid

3.4.1 The Government has confirmed that the national living wage will rise from £12.21 to £12.71 from April 2026.

3.4.2 EEBC has committed to mirror the Real Living Wage promoted by the Living Wage Foundation as the minimum hourly rate at which an employee should be paid. The current Real Living Wage rate for outside of London is £13.45 per hour. This will be implemented from April 2026.

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

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

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

4.3 Safeguarding: None arising from the contents of this report

4.4 Dependencies: None arising from the contents of this report

4.5 Other: None arising from the contents of this report

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The 3% increase has been factored into the 2026/27 budget, as agreed at Full Council.
- 5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The pay proposals in this report are factored into the Council's budget for the 2026/27 financial year.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 The key provisions concerning pay accountability are cited in the body of this report. Approval of the Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 is an *in principle* decision and the report must be referred to Full Council for resolution.
- 6.2 The deadline for approval is 31 March 2026, this being the preceding financial year to which the Statement relates. The Localism Act also requires the Council to publish its approved Pay Policy Statement.
- 6.3 **Legal Officer's comments:** Under section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council must prepare a pay policy statement for each financial year. The Pay Policy Statement must set out the Council's policies for the financial year relating to (a)the remuneration of its chief officers, (b)the remuneration of its lowest paid employees and (c)the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers (section 38(2) Localism Act 2011).
- 6.4 Section 39(1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires that the Pay Policy Statement must be approved by resolution before it comes into force. Each Pay Policy Statement must be prepared and approved before the end of the 31 March immediately preceding the financial year to which it relates (section 38(3) Localism Act 2011). As soon as is reasonably practicable after approving or amending a pay policy statement, the Council must publish the statement or the amended statement in such manner as it thinks fit (which must include publication on the Council's website) (section 38(5) Localism Act 2011).

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** Effective Council
- 7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None arising from the contents of this report
- 7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None arising from the contents of this report
- 7.5 **Partnerships:** None arising from the contents of this report

8 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy Statement 2024/25, Strategy & Resources 25 January 2024
- Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy Statement 2024/25, Full Council 13 February 2024
- Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy Statement 2024/25, Strategy & Resources 25 March 2025

Other papers:

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



Pay Policy Statement

2026/27

Version number: 9
Date: December 2025

Tracking

Policy Title	Pay Policy Statement 2026/27		
SLT sign off			
Committee	Strategy & Resources Full Council	Date approved	
Review due date	12 months	Review completed	
Service	People & Organisational Development		

Revision History

Revision Date	Revisor	Previous Version	Description of Revision
March 2019	Head of HR & OD	Version 2	Updated for 2019-20
January 2020	Head of HR & OD	Version 3	Updated for 2020-21
January 2021	Head of HR & OD	Version 4	Updated for 2021-22
January 2022	Head of HR & OD	Version 5	Updated for 2022-23
January 2023	Head of People & OD	Version 6	Updated for 2023-24
January 2024	Head of People & OD	Version 7	Updated for 2024-25
February 2025	Head of People & OD	Version 8	Updated for 2025-26
December 2025	Head of People & OD	Version 9	Updated for 2026-27

Document Approvals

Each revision requires the following approvals:

Sponsor Approval		Name	Date
S&R	Version2		2 April 2019
Full Council	Version 2		30 April 2019
S&R	Version 3		30 January 2020
Full Council	Version 3		13 February 2020
S&R	Version 4		28 January 2021
Full Council	Version 4		16 February 2021
S&R	Version 5		27 January 2022
Full Council	Version 5		15 February 2022
S&R	Version 6		26 January 2023
Full Council	Version 6		14 February 2023
S&R	Version 7		25 January 2024
Full Council	Version 7		13 February 2024
S&R	Version 8		25 March 2025
Full Council	Version 8		28 March 2025 (UD)
S&R	Version 9		27 January 2026
Full Council	Version 9		tbc

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7	The publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of Chief Officers
8	Pay multiple (ratio) between Chief Officers' pay and all other employees
9	Election fees
10	Gender Pay Gap
11	Policy on employing someone who has taken redundancy
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13	Policy on lowest paid

1. Introduction and background summary

1.1 In line with the Localism Act 2011 the Council is required to publish an annual pay policy statement which has been approved by full Council. The information is set out under headings which have been prescribed by the Localism Act and relates to 2026/27 financial year.

2. Purpose

2.1 The statement sets out the levels of remuneration for the Council's senior officers as well as a general approach to pay which is lifted from the Council's Employee Pay & Reward Procedure.

2.2 The information set out in the pay policy statement meets the requirements of the legislation and details the relationship between those employees who are lowest paid and Chief Officers.

2.3 The policy statement outlines the following key areas:

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

3. Level and elements of remuneration for each senior officer

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

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

3.2 For the purposes of this policy statement, all references to "Chief Officers" is taken to include the Chief Executive and Directors. Their 2026/27 salary scales are set out in the table below:

Post	Bottom of salary range p.a.	Top of salary range p.a.
Chief Executive	£137,645	£159,669
Director/	£97,869	£114,855

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

- Payment into the pension scheme if the employee has opted in and pays into the required employee contribution rate. The employer's contribution will be 17% of pensionable pay, from 1st April 2026.
- Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive monthly allowance of 4% of basic salary in respect of subsistence and other expenses, thereby reducing administration and providing a cap on the cost.
- Payment of up to two annual subscriptions to professional institutions where this is an essential requirement of the role. The cost of memberships varies but most are around £200.
- Allowance for the requirement to have a car for the effective performance of duties. The amount varies according to the role of the individual.

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

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

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

4. Remuneration of Chief Officers on recruitment

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

5. Increases and additions to remuneration for each Chief Officer

- 5.1 Cost of living pay increases for all staff are considered in line with the Council's Pay Policy, which has been revised for 2026. The Pay Policy is agreed in consultation with the Staff Consultative Group, which is made up of employee representatives and is the body which the Council consults with on terms and conditions of employment and other employee related matters.
- 5.2 Based on a recommendation by Full Council, a 3% cost of living increase will be applied to the pay scales in a one year pay deal for 2026/27. The 3% increase has been factored into the 2026/27 budget, as agreed at Full Council in December 2025.
- 5.3 When determining pay awards we take into account financial affordability as well as the increase in cost of living for all staff.
- 5.4 All employees (including Chief Officers) may be awarded a single increment on the salary scale annually. This is dependent on satisfactory performance with no automatic progression through grades. All employees are expected to perform their duties to a satisfactory standard to progress through the grade.
- 5.5 Once an employee reaches the top of their salary scale there is no opportunity for further progression, however, any cost of living increase will apply.

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

- 6.1 Our Managing Workforce Change policy sets out a consistent method of calculating redundancy pay which is applied to all redundant employees including Chief Officers.

- 6.2 The level of redundancy pay is calculated on a x1.5 multiplier of weekly earnings. The Council does not apply the maximum limit on earnings when calculating a week's pay for redundancy payment purposes. The payment is intended to recompense employees for the loss of their livelihood and provide financial support whilst they seek alternative employment.
- 6.3 The Council has a Local Government Pension Scheme Discretions Policy which is applicable to all employees, including Chief Officers.

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

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

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

- 8.1 The pay of all employees is set according to the Council's pay scales. There is a fixed relationship between each point on each of the grades. There are no predefined pay ratios between different groups of employees or specific posts.
- 8.2 The bottom of our lowest pay scale is £25,246 and the top of the Chief Executive scale is £159,670. This is a pay multiple of 1:6. Please note that these figures are based on pay scales and not actual salaries.
- 8.3 The figure above is within the maximum ratio 1:20 identified as a maximum pay multiple in the Hutton Review of Public Sector Pay.
- 8.4 As at 30 November 2025 the mean average pay for employees other than Chief Officers was £37,327; therefore currently the ratio of mean average pay of other employees to mean average Chief Officer pay (using maximum possible on pay scale) was 1:4

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

9. Election fees

- 9.1 Fees in respect of the role of Returning Officer for borough and county elections are paid separately from and in addition to the relevant Officer's salary package. The amount payable varies according to the size of the electorate and number of postal voters and is calculated as set out in the

attached Election of County/Borough/Parish Councillors in Surrey: Scale of Returning Officer's Fees and Charges – 2026/27 (Appendix 2- to follow).

- 9.2 The process for agreeing this fee structure is coordinated by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. Once issued, consultation is undertaken with Surrey Chief Executives.
- 9.3 Payments for employees below Chief Officer level for Local Election duties are made in accordance with the same scale.

10. Gender Pay Gap Information

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

11. Policy on employing someone who has taken redundancy

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

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

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

13. Policy on lowest paid

13.1 From April 2026 the Council has committed to ensuring the pay rates of employees mirror the national 'Real Living Wage' as determined by the Living Wage Foundation, as a minimum level of pay. From 1 April 2026 the minimum pay rate the Council will pay will be £13.45 per hour.

PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2026-27

Head of Service:	Mark Shephard, Head of Property and Regeneration
Report Author	Tony Foxwell, Mark Shephard
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Current year progress 2025-26 Appendix 2 – Proposed works for 2026-27

Summary

This report provides:

- a progress update on the current (previously approved) financial year 2025-26 planned maintenance programme;
- and requests approval for next year's planned maintenance programme for the financial year 2026-27.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) To note the progress and anticipated spend at the end of the current year 2025-26 as shown in Appendix 1.
- (2) To note the additional emergency works raised and carried out in the 2025-26 planned maintenance programme.
- (3) To approve the 2026-27 planned maintenance programme at an estimated cost of £757,000 as set out in Appendix 2, to be funded from planned maintenance budgets and the Planned Maintenance Reserve.
- (4) To nominate and authorise the Head of Property and Regeneration to make changes within the 2026-27 planned maintenance programme to cover unforeseen matters (such as tender price variances) of up to, but not exceeding £20,000 per change, in accordance with Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders.

(5) To agree to transfer the unspent budgets back to the Planned Maintenance Reserve at the end of the 2026-27 financial year.

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 Ensuring the Council's property assets are protected and maintained is essential in meeting its health & safety obligations and providing fit for purpose working environments.

2 Background

2.1 At its meeting on 28 January 2025, this Committee agreed to fund the planned maintenance programme in the sum of £535,000.

2.2 This figure is formed from the £230,000 given this year to fund the planned maintenance, with the remainder of up to £305,000 (dependent on actual spend) taken from the Planned Maintenance Reserve.

2.3 It should be noted that the budgets were derived in December 2024 and the following spend analysis (against last year's budget) takes account of forecasted expenditure up to the end of March 2026 i.e. over one year later.

3 Update on 2025-26 planned Maintenance Works (Appendix 1)

3.1 *Horton Country Park Workshop & Boxing Club asbestos roof replacement* - deferred from last year as limited resources prevented it being undertaken last summer. This year, the budget was increased to allow for a temporary roof to protect equipment in the Boxing Club and Lower Mole Workshop while the work proceeded. Additional works were required to remove power cables fixed to the underside of the roof and additional support provided to the ridge area to strengthen the roof structure.

Budget £140,000 Spend £147,000 Work completed

3.2 *Epsom Playhouse replacement air conditioning to auditorium* – following discussions with a specialist consultant, a new design was proposed which incorporates cooling to the air handling units and new quiet air conditioning system. The revised proposal cost far exceeds the original £40k approved budget and a Capital Bid has been submitted for next financial year 2026-27. £9k has been spent on the revised design with future spend paused pending outcome of Capital Bid.

Budget £40,000. Spend £9,000 Awaiting Capital Bid

3.3 *Epsom Playhouse Internal redecoration to foyer and additional lights* - carried out in August 2025 (theatre shut down period) and completed with additional lighting and new feature pendant light in foyer.

	Budget £30,000	Spend £29,000	Work completed
3.4	<i>Alexandra Recreation Ground main pavilion internal redecoration</i> - decorations were carried out to changing rooms, toilets and external windows and to the front elevation.		
	Budget £15,000	Spend £6,000	Work completed
3.5	<i>Auriol pavilion intruder alarm & fire detection upgrade</i> - intruder and fire alarm upgrade no longer required. Job cancelled.		
	Budget £20,000	Spend £0	Work not required
3.6	<i>Longmead Depot fire panel replacement</i> - the works were carried out last year under routine maintenance. Budget reallocated to Beaconsfield Wall.		
	Budget £15,000	Spend £0	Work completed
3.7	<i>Poole Road Pavilion internal redecoration</i> - decorations to hallway corridors, toilets, changing rooms, corridor floor and replaced carpets in hallways and Harriers Club room.		
	Budget £20,000	Spend £16,000	Work completed
3.8	<i>Bourne Hall Garages re-roofing</i> – following detailed inspection, previous repairs carried out a few years ago are lasting well and remain serviceable. As the future of this area is unknown, works no longer considered a requirement. Budget reallocated to Beaconsfield Wall.		
	Budget £15,000	Spend £0	Work not required
3.9	<i>Ewell Court House external lighting replacement</i> - the external lighting to the perimeter of the building was installed temporarily after the fire in 2013 and was starting to fail. Replaced with LED lighting.		
	Budget £15,000	Spend £15,000	Work completed
3.10	<i>West Ewell Allotments asbestos garage roof replacements</i> - asbestos roof panels removed and replaced with new metal profile panels. Repairs to garage doors carried out.		
	Budget £20,000	Spend £20,000	Work completed
3.11	<i>Ashley Centre Car Park Staff Office internal redecoration</i> - staff declined the works as it would be too disruptive.		
	Budget £5,000	Spend £0	Work not required
3.12	<i>Hard surfaces resurfacing</i> – ongoing potholes, trip hazards and defective surface repairs raised by street care inspections and public. Major works at Auriol Park, Horton Country Park Car Park, and repairs carried out to Poole Road pathways and localised repairs to other locations.		

Budget £50,000 Spend £60,000 Work completed

3.13 *Walls and Fences (Council owned)* - throughout the year ongoing dangerous and defective areas are reported which must be repaired on an urgent basis under Health & Safety. Dangerous concrete post and panel fence at Long Grove Park repaired and rebuilt to boundary between properties and Park. Cemetery boundary walls repair amongst other locations repaired.

Budget £40,000 Spend £48,000 Work completed

4 Regulatory Works

Asbestos Surveys, inspections, labelling, removal & encapsulation - yearly inspections carried out including removal works to Bourne Hall.

Budget £10,000 Spend £9,000 Work completed

4.1 *Fire Risk Assessments* - changes taking effect due to the Building Safety Act in March 2022. Legislation requires fire risk assessments to be carried out annually. Fire Strategy surveys, fire door surveys, fire compartmentation surveys and yearly fire risk assessments undertaken.

Budget £60,000 Spend £65,000 Work completed

4.2 *Remedial Electrical Works* - legislative electrical testing requirement to be carried out every 5 years. Repairs undertaken to Clocktower, Town Hall, Bourne Hall Lodge and Epsom Playhouse.

Budget £20,000 Spend £10,000 Work completed

4.3 *Energy efficiency* - lighting upgraded on upper level of Longmead Depot.

Budget £10,000 Spend £10,000 Work completed

4.4 *Water efficiency* - replacement meters (leased), repairs, and upgrades to reduce usage and any leaks.

Budget £5,000 Spend £2,000 Work completed

4.5 *Watercourses* - works carried out to steams, waterways and the Great Pond to prevent flooding.

Budget £5,000 Spend £3,000 Work completed

5 Emergency Works

5.1 *Beaconsfield Wall (Listed)* – commenced last financial year but due to delays in requiring additional listed building consent for new supporting buttress, the works were paused and not completed until this year. The budget was not carried forward and as a listed wall, it has been included under emergency works.

	Spend £26,000	Work completed
5.2	<i>Bourne Hall Banqueting Suites</i> - removal of old defective suspended grid ceiling and renew the existing damaged ceiling which could no longer be repaired.	
	Spend £20,000	Work completed
5.3	<i>Epsom Playhouse</i> - installation of cooling to dimmer room. Following the Capital works to install the new lighting dimmers, the electrical room was overheating and required cooling to protect the new equipment from overheating.	
	Spend £7,000	Work completed
5.4	<i>Bourne Hall</i> - replacement of high-level blinds above reception. Budget reallocated from unused Ashley Centre Car Park office decorations and the remainder from unused Longmead Depot fire panel works budget.	
	Spend £10,000	Work completed
5.5	<i>Stoneleigh Parade Garages</i> – essential repairs undertaken for garages to be income generative.	
	Spend £4,000	Complete by end of March 2026

6 Summary

- 6.1 It is expected that the 2025/26 Budget of £535,000 will not be fully spent and allowing for actuals and commitments, the spend is forecast to be around £516,000.
- 6.2 The remainder of £19,000 can be returned to the Planned Maintenance Reserve. The purpose of the Planned Maintenance Reserve is to even out unforeseen budget over and underspends from year to year.

7 Proposals

- 7.1 The proposed planned maintenance works for 2026-27 are shown on Appendix 2 and listed below.
- 7.2 *Bourne Hall* – works to remove existing asbestos ceilings to Library offices and toilets. These will be replaced with new suspended ceilings complete with new lighting. The works will also prepare the ceilings for a new energy efficient aircon/heat pump heating installation with cassettes mounted to the ceiling. Budget £90,000
- 7.3 *Bourne Hall* - external decorations as previous decorations carried out over 10 years ago. These should be undertaken every 5 years to keep and maintain the listed building in good condition. Budget £90,000

- 7.4 *Bourne Hall* - works to spiral staircase as openings in railings are too wide for modern Health & Safety standards. New rails to be installed to match existing with listed building consent. Budget £20,000
- 7.5 *92 High Street (commercial property portfolio)* - investigate and repair damp issues and redecorate affected areas. The existing tenant has raised concerns about rising damp and as the commercial lease is due to expire March 2026, it will present the ideal opportunity to carry out investigative and remedial works. Budget £30,000
- 7.6 *Fencing repairs to allotments* - moved from Capital programme as deemed to be revenue. Budget increased to allow for inspection of all allotment fencing and undertake repairs. Budget £80,000
- 7.7 *CCTV replacements* - replace analogue cameras and hard drives with new digital equivalents. Issues raised with the existing CCTV systems under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation. Many systems old and suffering from poor picture quality. Require upgrading to a digital system to maintain compliance with GDPR legislation. Budget £100,000
- 7.8 *Community & Wellbeing Centre* - external decorations as recommended under the Asset Management 10-year planned maintenance programme. Budget £10,000
- 7.9 *Longmead Depot* - external decorations as recommended under the Asset Management 10-year planned maintenance programme. Budget £40,000
- 7.10 *Epsom Clock Tower* - repair clock mechanism and jet wash externals as listed in 10-year plan. Budget £10,000
- 7.11 *Epsom Playhouse* - Myres studio redecoration (last redecorated over 15 years ago). Budget £7,000
- 7.12 *Epsom Playhouse* - upgrade poor condition upper bar toilets to compliment recent upper bar refurbishment. A refresh would assist the promotion of upper bar area to hirers. Budget £30,000
- 7.13 *Epsom Playhouse* - alterations to fire alarm system, zones and call points in auditorium. Technical staff require greater flexibility when isolating zones in auditorium. Budget £15,000
- 7.14 *Ashley Centre* - concrete repairs required as various areas beginning to de-bond and spall. Must be addressed to ensure concrete does not pose future Health & Safety risk from falling onto public/vehicles. Budget £15,000
- 7.15 *Hard surfaces* – ongoing Health & Safety repairs to hard surfaces, resurfacing, potholes, trip hazards and defective surfaces. Budget £60,000

7.16 *Walls and fences* – ongoing Health & Safety reported emergency repairs to walls and fences carried out throughout the year. Budget £50,000

8 Regulatory Works

8.1 *Asbestos* – ongoing surveys, inspections, labelling, removal & encapsulation. Must be carried out annually under legislation. Budget £10,000

8.2 *Fire Risk Assessments* – ongoing inspections, repairs and upgrades. Annual legislative requirement due to changes which came into effect due to the Building Safety Act in March 2022. Budget £60,000

8.3 *Remedial electrical works* - raised after legislative electrical condition surveys which must be carried out every 5 years. Budget £20,000

8.4 *Energy efficiency* – ongoing replacement meters, repairs and upgrades to reduce carbon footprint. Monitoring via meters help determine high usage and issues with M&E plant. Budget £10,000

8.5 *Water efficiency* – ongoing replacement meters, repairs and upgrades to reduce usage and repair leaks. Monitoring highlights leakages and high usage. Budget £5,000

8.6 *Watercourses* - emergency clearance of Council responsible streams and waterways. These works prevent flooding and ensure free flowing waterways. Budget £5,000

8.7 Committee is asked to approve these proposed works for 2026-27, at an estimated cost of £757,000 to be funded by the standard annual planned maintenance budget of £230,000 and the remainder of £527,000 to be taken from the Planned Maintenance Reserve.

8.8 The proposed works are considered necessary as they comprise of either:

- Essential maintenance items or,
- required to meet statutory and / or commercial tenant lease obligations.

8.9 Approval is also sought to allow officer authority to make changes within the programme up to, but not exceeding £20,000, to cover variances that arise when obtaining quotes that may be higher or lower than the proposed budget.

9 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

9.1 Equality Impact Assessment

- 9.1.1 Various works have an impact on the running of operational buildings and works will be managed to minimise impact.
- 9.2 Crime & Disorder
 - 9.2.1 None
- 9.3 Safeguarding
 - 9.3.1 None
- 9.4 Dependencies
 - 9.4.1 None
- 9.5 Other
 - 9.5.1 None

10 Financial Implications

- 10.1 The financial implications are set out within the proposals above.
- 10.2 It is anticipated that the proposed works for 2026/27 can be undertaken without causing a breach of the Council's 5% VAT partial exemption limit. Quarterly forecast calculations will be produced to monitor the ongoing taxation position throughout the year.
- 10.3 The planned maintenance budget for 2026/27 stands at £230,000. The proposed 2026/27 maintenance programme, at an estimated cost of £757,000, is £527,000 higher than the budget. This difference will need to be funded from an alternative source.
- 10.4 The Planned Maintenance Reserve is the usual source of additional funding for planned maintenance expenditure exceeding the annual budget. The table below shows the balance at the start of the year, forecast movements within the year, and a forecast balance position as at 31 March 2026.

Opening Balance at 1 April 2025	375,597
Earmarked for the 2025/26 programme	(305,000)
Unspent in 2025/26	19,000
Emergency fencing at Ashley Centre car park	(32,000)
Transfer from Interest Equalisation reserve	500,000

Budgeted contribution in 2025/26	200,000
Forecast balance as at 31 March 2026	757,597

10.5 Using £527,000 of this reserve to fund the 2026/27 planned maintenance programme would leave a forecast balance of £230,597 at 31 March 2027.

10.6 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The Council has reviewed key reserves and repurposed funding to support the maintenance programme in 2026/27.

11 Legal Implications

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

12 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

12.1.1 Effective Council

12.1.2 Work with partners to reduce our impact on the environment and move closer to becoming carbon neutral.

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

12.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** Various projects within the programme are energy saving and will have a positive effect on climate change by reducing carbon emissions.

12.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** The scope of works within the planned maintenance programme for 2025/26 and the proposed works for 2026/27 contribute to the achievement of the Council's objectives for sustainability.

12.5 **Partnerships:** None

12.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** The Council remains under a statutory duty to achieve Best Value and ensure services can be delivered from well maintained, fit for purpose properties until LGR Vesting Day on 1 April 2027.

13 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Strategy & Resources Committee 28 January 2025 – [Planned Maintenance Programme 2025-26](#)

APPENDIX ONE: PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME UPDATE 2025-26

Location	Proposed Works	£000's	Comment/Justification	Forecast spend	Update
Horton Country Park Workshop & Boxing Club roof	The existing asbestos roof has been leaking in the Lower mole workshop and boxing club and is asbestos. Replace with insulated aluminium roof panels.	140	This job has been deferred from last year as unable to carry out in summer due to lack of resources, budget lifted to allow for temporary roof to protect equipment in boxing club and lower Mole workshop whilst work.	147	Additional works were required to remove power cables fixed to underside of roof and additional support at ridge area to strengthen roof to fix roof panels which caused slight to overspend. Works complete.
Epsom Playhouse Theatre	Replace air conditioning to auditorium	40	Two units have failed at the rear of the auditorium and remaining unit noisy and very old and inefficient. New units will be quieter and more energy efficient.	9	After discussions with a specialist consultant, new design incorporates cooling to the air handling units and new quiet air conditioning for cooling and heating cost far exceeds the budget set and new proposal submitted in Capital bid for 2026-27. £9k spent on consultant's design works. No more spend.
Epsom Playhouse Theatre	Internal redecoration to foyer and additional lights	30	Foyer has not been redecorated in over 10 years and following new bar refurbishment, foyer is looking shabby. After theatrical lights removed in refurb foyer needs additional lighting.	29	Works completed with additional lighting and new feature pendant light in foyer
Alex Rec Main Pavilion	Internal redecoration	15	Mould growth and damp on walls all internal areas require	6	Decorations carried out to changing rooms toilets and

			decoration, last decorated 10 years ago.		external windows and to the front elevation. Works complete.
Auriol pavilion	Intruder alarm & fire detection upgrade	20	Equipment 24 years old and requires replacement.	0	Moved to playhouse dimmers cooling emergency works and Bourne Hall blinds. Intruder and fire alarm upgrade no longer required. Job cancelled.
Longmead Depot	Replace fire panel	15	Fire panel end of life, additional wiring required to reposition by entrance.	0	Was carried out last year on maintenance no longer required, Budget put towards Beaconsfield Wall. No more spend.
Poole Road Pavilion	Internal redecoration	20	Main hall requires redecoration stains after roof leaks last year and corridors haven't been redecorated in over 20 years.	16	Decoration to hallway, toilets, changing rooms, painted corridor floor and replaced carpets in hallways and harriers club room. Complete
Bourne Hall Garages	Re-roofing	15	Roofing in poor condition and area is used to store museum antiquities.	0	Works no longer required. No spend. Use budget for Beaconsfield wall.
Ewell Court House	External lighting replacement	15	External lighting to building failing and due for replacement.	15	External lighting to perimeter of building was installed temporarily after the fire in 2013, old and starting to fail, replaced with LED.
West Ewell Allotments	Replace asbestos garage roofs with metal profile roofing.	20	Removing this asbestos will waterproof the garages and remove EEBC liabilities to manage asbestos.	20	West Ewell garages asbestos roof panels removed, and new panels provided.

Ashley Centre Car Park Office	Internal redecoration	5	Redecorate office due every 5 years, Ashley centre car park gets very dirty with car exhaust fumes.	0	The Office staff declined the works as would be too disruptive. Job cancelled.
Hard surfaces	Health & Safety repairs to hard surfaces.	50	Resurfacing, potholes, trip hazards and defective surfaces.	60	Ongoing repairs raised by street care inspections and the public / insurance requirements. Major works at Auriol Park, Horton Country Park Car Park, Poole Road pathways amongst other various locations.
Walls and Fences	Emergency repairs to Council owned walls and fences.	40	Throughout the year dangerous and defective areas are reported which have to be repaired on an urgent basis under Health & Safety.	48	Dangerous concrete post and panel fence at Long Grove Park repaired and rebuilt to boundary between properties and Park. Cemetery boundary wall repairs. No more spend.
Regulatory works					
Asbestos	Surveys, inspections, labelling, removal & encapsulation	10	Legislative must be carried out annually.	9	Yearly inspections and works to Bourne Hall.
Fire Risk Assessments	Inspections for F.R.A, and repairs and upgrades following Inspections.	60	Changes coming into effect due to the Building Safety Act in March 2022. Legislative must be carried out annually.	65	Carried out Fire Strategy surveys, fire door surveys, fire compartmentation and yearly fire risk assessments.
Remedial Electrical works	Condition inspections and remedial works.	20	Legislative must be carried out every 5 years, 16 buildings require testing this year so many more remedial works anticipated.	10	Yearly remedials repairs carried out to Clocktower, Town Hall, Bourne Hall lodge, Playhouse.
Energy efficiency	Replacement meters, repairs, and upgrades to reduce carbon footprint.	10	Monitoring via meters helps determine high usage and issues with plant.	10	Budget used to upgrade lighting on upper level of the Depot
Water efficiency	Replacement meters, repairs, and upgrades to	5	Monitoring highlights leakages and high usage	2	Yearly leasing and repairs costs

	reduce usage and repair leaks				
Watercourses	Emergency clearances of streams and waterways.	5	These works prevent flooding and ensure free flowing waterways	3	Works carried out to the Great Pond winter clearance to prevent flooding.
	Total	535			
Emergency Works					
Beaconsfield Wall	Rebuilding of listed wall job was in 2024-25 years planned maintenance programme.	0	The wall is listed and must be reinstated in approved manner to satisfy heritage requirements and building regulations.	26	The budget was not carried forward from previous year as we expected to complete the works last financial year, but due to unexpected conservation requirements was not completed until this year.
Bourne Hall Banqueting Suites	Removal of old defective suspended ceiling and renew.	0	The existing suspended ceiling was damaged and can no longer be repaired; after fitting new windows we took the opportunity to replace whilst area was free.	20	Budget moved from Playhouse air con budget to cover these works.
Epsom Playhouse	Installation of cooling to dimmer room.	0	After the Capital works to install the new dimmers. The electrical room was overheating and required cooling to protect the new equipment from overheating.	7	Budget moved from Longmead Depot fire panel works not required.
Bourne Hall	Replacement of high level blinds above reception.	0	Old blinds were removed for window replacement and were not in a good condition to reinstall.	10	Budget moved from Ashley car park office decorations and the remainder from Longmead Depot fire panel works.
Stoneleigh Parade Garages	Repairs to brickwork and garage doors.	0	Required to enable garages to be rented out for revenue.	4	Budget moved from Auriol alarm to cover cost.
				516	

APPENDIX TWO: PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2026-27

Location	Proposed Works	£000's	Comment/Justification
Bourne Hall – Library offices and toilets	Remove all asbestos ceilings, replace with new suspended ceilings complete with new lighting	90	These works are to make safe areas in library offices which still have asbestos ceilings and in preparation for new Heating installation in the form of aircon/heat pump cassettes mounted to ceiling
Bourne Hall	External decorations	90	Should be carried out every 5 years, has not been externally decorated for 10 years, as a listed building we are required to keep it in good condition
Bourne Hall	Works to spiral staircase as openings in railing too wide for modern standards. New rails to be installed to match existing with listed building consent.	20	Health & Safety works to prevent children falling through gaps in railings to perimeter of spiral staircase.
92 High Street	Investigate and repair damp issues and redecorate.	30	The existing tenants have raised concerns about rising damp and lease is due to expire March 2026, which is a good time to carry out investigative and remedial works.
Fencing repairs to allotments	Replacement and repairs to boundary fencing at allotments.	80	Various repairs required and was moved from Capital programme as deemed to be revenue.
CCTV replacements	Replace old analogue cameras and hard drives with new digital units.	100	Issues raised with our existing CCTV systems under GDPR. Many system old and require upgrading for a digital system and compliance with regulations.
Community & Wellbeing Centre	External decorations	10	Listed in 10-year plan
Longmead Depot	External decorations	40	Listed in 10-year plan
Epsom Clocktower	Repair clock mechanism and jet wash externals	10	Listed in 10-year plan
Epsom Playhouse	Myres studio redecoration	7	Has not been redecorated for over 15 years

Epsom Playhouse	Upgrade upper bar toilets	30	These are in poor state after refurbishment of upper bar, an uplift would help with promoting the area for hirers.
Epsom Playhouse	Alterations to fire alarm system, zones and call points in auditorium.	15	Issue raised by technical staff when isolating zones in auditorium.
Ashley Centre concrete repairs	Various areas debonding and spalling require addressing otherwise large sections could potentially fall onto public if no action taken.	15	These repairs requested by car parks team and ongoing repairs to maintain our assets.
Hard surfaces	Health & Safety repairs to hard surfaces.	60	Resurfacing, potholes, trip hazards and defective surfaces.
Walls and fences	Emergency repairs to walls and fences.	50	Throughout the year dangerous and defective areas are reported which must be repaired on an urgent basis under Health & Safety.
Regulatory works			
Asbestos	Surveys, inspections, labelling, removal & encapsulation	10	Legislative must be carried out annually.
Fire Risk Assessments	Inspections for F.R.A, and repairs and upgrades following Inspections.	60	Changes coming into effect due to the Building Safety Act in March 2022. Legislative must be carried out annually.
Remedial electrical works	Condition inspections and remedial works	20	Legislative must be carried out every 5 years.
Energy efficiency	Replacement meters, repairs, and upgrades to reduce carbon footprint.	10	Monitoring via meters helps determine high usage and issues with plant.
Water efficiency	Replacement meters, repairs, and upgrades to reduce usage and repair leaks	5	Monitoring highlights leakages and high usage.
Watercourses	Emergency clearances of streams and waterways.	5	These works prevent flooding and ensure free flowing waterways.
Total		757	

COUNCIL TAX EMPTY PROPERTY AND SECOND HOME POLICY

Head of Service:	Cagdas Canbolat, Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer)
Report Author	Siobhán Gavigan
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/a
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 - Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Empty Property and Second Home Policy

Summary:

This report proposes:

- (1) The removal of the Council Tax one month empty and unfurnished exemption from 01 April 2026. This means that once a property becomes empty and substantially unfurnished, 100% of the Council Tax will remain payable, from the date the property becomes empty.
- (2) Introduction of the 100% Empty Home Premium on properties which have been empty and substantially unfurnished for longer than 1 year, from the 01 April 2026
- (3) Introduction of a 100% premium for all second homes from 01 April 2027, in line with the governing legislation.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to recommend that Full Council:

- (1) **Approve the recommended changes to how Council Tax is levied on Empty properties, as set out in Appendix 1, with effect from the 1 April, 2026.**
- (2) **Approve the recommended changes to how Council Tax is levied on Second Homes in the Borough, as set out in Appendix 1, with effect from 1 April, 2027.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 These changes will support EEBCs policy of bringing empty properties in the borough, back into use.

- 1.2 It will also bring in additional Council Tax income for Epsom & Ewell BC, Surrey CC and Surrey Police for the 2026/27 Financial year to support the delivery of council services
- 1.3 It will align EEBC policy with the other East Surrey authorities in preparation for Local Government Reform.

2 Background

- 2.1 Since 2013, councils in England have had the power to charge additional council tax on long-term empty homes after 2 years. In April 2024, the empty homes Council Tax Premium was strengthened so that councils can charge the premium on homes that have been empty for 1 or more years.
- 2.2 A long-term empty home is defined as a home which is both unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of at least 1 year. The property must be occupied, or substantially furnished, for a continuous period of at least six weeks in order for it to reset the length of time it has been empty for, and its liability for a long-term empty premium.
- 2.3 Properties occupied periodically (commonly referred to as second homes) are defined as properties which are substantially furnished and have no resident (i.e. not a person's sole or main home).
- 2.4 Where individuals own multiple homes, but the homes are let out or occupied by someone as their main home, it will not be considered as a second home for the purposes of the premiums and as such will not be liable for the premium.
- 2.5 The Council Tax system provides a number of specific exemptions from council tax. The exempt classes are set out in the Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) Order 1992. A dwelling that is exempt from council tax is not liable for a premium. Where a dwelling is no longer eligible for an exemption but remains no one's sole or main residence, it may become liable for a premium. In the case of an empty home, it may become liable for a premium after it has been empty for a continuous period of 1 year. This time frame begins when the dwelling first becomes empty rather than when an exemption ends. A second home may become liable for the premium as soon as the exemption ends.
- 2.6 The government has made regulations to provide a number of exceptions to premiums which are explained in the attached policy. These exceptions apply from 1 April 2026.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

- 3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 The changes outlined in this report will not specifically impact people within the protected characteristics.

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 arise from this report

4 Financial Implications

4.1 There is no additional cost in making these changes but will raise additional income for EEBC

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** I can confirm that the financial implications of this proposal have been considered. The introduction of the Council Tax premium for long-term empty properties and second homes is expected to generate additional income for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Surrey County Council, and Surrey Police. This supports the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy and is in line with the changes made by other D&Bs in Surrey.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 The changes to Council Tax Regulations are contained within:

- Sections 11a, 11b and 11c of the Local Government Finance act 1992
- The Levelling-up and regeneration Act 2023
- The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012
- The Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012
- The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings and Consequential Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024

- 5.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 amends the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The effect being that for financial years beginning on or after 1 April 2025 a billing authority may by determination increase council tax by 100% where there is no resident of a dwelling, and the dwelling is substantially furnished. A determination must be made at least one year before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates. As a result, the new charge cannot come into effect before 1 April 2027.
- 5.3 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 amends the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The effect being that for financial years beginning on or after 1 April 2024 a “long term empty dwelling” can be a property that (a) has been unoccupied, and (b) it has been substantially unfurnished for a period of one year rather than the current 2 years.
- 5.4 This Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report and to make recommendations on to Full Council.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:
 - Effective Council
- 6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** Not applicable for the purposes of this report
- 6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** Not applicable for the purposes of this report
- 6.5 **Partnerships:** Not applicable for the purposes of this report
- 6.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** Implementing these policy changes locally, will bring Epsom & Ewell BC in line with our other East Surrey Partners, who have already made the changes.

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- None

Other papers:

- None



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Council Tax Empty Property and Second Home Policy

Version Number 1
November 2025

	Title	Date Approved	Signature
Head of Service	Director of Corporate Resources (S.151)		
Strategic Leadership Team	Chief Executive		
Committee	Strategy and Resources		N/A

Revision History

Revision Date	Revisor	Previous Version	Description of Revision

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Introduction

Since 2013, councils in England have had the power to charge additional council tax on long-term empty homes after 2 years. In April 2024, the empty homes council tax premium was strengthened so that councils can charge the premium on homes that have been empty for 1 or more years.

Additionally, from April 2025, councils have powers to charge a premium of 100% additional council tax on second homes.

A long-term empty home is defined as a home which is both unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of at least 1 year. The property must be occupied, or substantially furnished, for a continuous period of at least six weeks in order for it to reset the length of time it has been empty for, and its liability for a long-term empty premium.

Properties occupied periodically (commonly referred to as “second homes”) are defined as properties which are substantially furnished and have no resident (i.e. not a person’s sole or main home).

Where individuals own multiple homes, but the homes are let out or occupied by someone as their main home, it will not be considered as a “second home” for the purposes of the premiums and as such will not be liable for the premium.

The council tax system provides a number of specific exemptions from council tax. The exempt classes are set out in the Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) Order 1992. A dwelling that is exempt from council tax is not liable for a premium. Where a dwelling is no longer eligible for an exemption but remains no one’s sole or main residence, it may become liable for a premium. In the case of an empty home, it may become liable for a premium after it has been empty for a continuous period of 1 year. This time frame begins when the dwelling first becomes empty rather than when an exemption ends. A second home may become liable for the premium as soon as the exemption ends.

The government has made regulations to provide a number of exceptions to premiums. These exceptions apply from 1 April 2025.

Premiums encourage bringing properties back in to use and the additional income is used to fund services as part of the council tax collection.

Premium Charges

From 1 April 2026 the premiums that apply in Epsom & Ewell are:

a) Where no exception applies, long-term empty homes (Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished):

- Empty more than 1 year 100% premium
- Empty more than 5 years 200% premium

- Empty more than 10 years 300% premium

A property must be occupied, or substantially furnished, for a continuous period of at least six weeks in order to reset the amount of time it has been empty for.

b) Where no exception applies, properties occupied periodically (Second Homes – substantially furnished and have no resident):

- 100% premium for the whole time the property meets the definition.

Exceptions that apply to all premiums

From 1 April 2026 the following statutory exceptions where a premium will not apply where either a) or b) above are otherwise met are listed below:

Class E – Armed Forces Accommodation

Definition: Property would be the main home of someone who lives elsewhere in accommodation provided by the Secretary of State for Defence for the purposes of armed forces accommodation, and which for that individual is job related.

Prohibition: The exception will apply as long as the definition is met.

Class F – Annexes used as part of the main home

Definition: Property that forms part of a single property that includes another property that is being used by a resident of the other property as part of their main residence. (e.g. annexes used as part of main home)

Prohibition: The exception will apply as long as the definition is met.

Class G* - Actively marketed for sale

Definition: Property that is being marketed for sale of a freehold or leasehold for a term of 7 years or more, at a price that is reasonable for the sale of that property, or where an offer to purchase has been accepted but has not yet been completed.

Prohibition: The exception will apply for up to 1 year from the date it meets the definition and will end either when the 1 year period has ended, when the dwelling has been sold or when the dwelling is no longer actively marketed for sale. A further period under class G cannot apply unless the property has been sold to a different owner. See 'Discretionary exceptions' for details where the 1 year may be extended.

Class H*- Actively marketed for let

Definition: Property that is being marketed for let under a tenancy on terms and conditions, including the proposed rent, that is reasonable for the letting of that property or where an offer to rent has been accepted but the tenancy has not started.

Prohibition: The exception will apply for up to 1 year from the date it meets the definition and will end either when the 1 year period has ended, when the dwelling has been let or when the dwelling is no longer actively marketed for let. A further period under class H cannot apply unless the property has been let for a continuous

period of at least 6 months since the exception last applied. See 'Discretionary exceptions' for details where the 1 year may be extended.

*** Actively marketed for sale or let (Class G and Class H)**

There are a number of factors the council will take into consideration when assessing whether a dwelling is being actively marketed for sale or let. These may include:

- whether the dwelling is clearly advertised for sale or let
- whether the dwelling is being marketed at a fair market value
- whether there are any artificial barriers on the dwelling preventing sale/let
- whether the dwelling has an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- whether the owner is taking any other reasonable steps to market the dwelling for sale or let

Class I – Following Probate

Definition: Property that is or was previously under exempt class 'F' (following death).

Prohibition: The exception will apply for up to 1 year from the date probate is granted or letters of administration are issued, running concurrently with any class 'F' exemption. A further period under class I cannot apply unless the property has been subject to a further exempt class 'F' period. The exception ceases to apply if the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Epsom & Ewell.gov.uk property is transferred to the beneficiaries or is sold or let. See 'Discretionary exceptions' for details where the 1 year may be extended.

Exceptions that apply only to long term empty premiums (substantially unfurnished)

Class M – Require or undergoing major repairs or structural alterations

Definition: Property that requires or is undergoing major repairs or undergoing structural alteration to render it habitable.

Prohibition: The exception will apply for up to 1 year from the date it meets the definition. Where major repairs are completed in less than 12 months, the exception will still apply to the dwelling for up to 6 months or until the end of the 12 months, whichever is sooner. The exception cannot apply again unless the property has been sold. If the dwelling is substantially furnished and becomes a second home without a resident, then this exception will end. See 'Discretionary exceptions' for details where the 1 year may be extended.

Exceptions that apply only to second home premiums (substantially furnished and no resident)

Class J – Job related homes

Definition: Property is unoccupied as the qualifying person is required to live

elsewhere in England, Scotland or Wales in job related accommodation provided by a person's employer for the purposes of performing their work. It must be necessary for the duties of employment to live in that specific property (for example, headteachers for boarding schools who are required to live in school accommodation). Needing to be located nearer to a place of work would not be eligible.

Prohibition: The exception will apply as long as the definition is met.

Class K – Caravan pitches and boat moorings

Definition: Property that consists of a pitch occupied by a caravan, or a mooring occupied by a boat.

Prohibition: The exception will apply as long as the definition is met.

Class L – Seasonal Homes

Definition: Property where occupation is restricted by a planning condition that:

- a) Prevents occupancy for a continuous period of at least 28 days in any 1 year; or
- b) specifies that the dwelling may be used for holiday accommodation only; or
- c) prevents occupancy as a person's sole or main residence.

Prohibition: The exception will apply as long as the definition is met.

Discretionary Exceptions:

End of tenancy

From time to time, a tenant may decide to accept a new tenancy before their current one has expired. In such cases, they may be liable for council Tax on both properties. If one tenancy is a furnished let and the tenant is not resident in the furnished property, it would immediately attract a second home premium. The council may use its discretion to not apply the second home premium in this situation for a maximum period of 1 month.

Extension to time limited exceptions (Class G, H, I, M)

For the time limited statutory exceptions Class, G, H & I the council may extend the exception where the property continues to meet the original exception conditions for up to a further 12 months where it is clear from the specific circumstances that the taxpayer has genuinely been trying to bring the property back in to use as a sole/main residence throughout the whole exception period. In order to consider an extension the property must meet at least one of the following:

- An offer of sale(s) has fallen through during the exception period through no fault of the vendor. Evidence must be provided.
- The property is restricted for sale/let only to certain demographics (for example, retirement properties above a certain age).
- There is a legal difficulty or issue which is preventing the sale or letting of the property. Evidence detailing the reasons preventing sale or letting must be provided.

- The sale or letting is being delayed by the actions of a public body. Full details must be provided. Awaiting a planning decision or an appeal against a planning decision will not be considered as reason to grant an extension.

Any extension will be time limited based on the specific circumstances and will be for a maximum of 12 months. Only one extension will be considered, so the maximum total exception period will be 2 years from the start of the original exception.

Class M

For properties that require or are undergoing major works or structural alterations an extension may only be considered where works commenced during the original exception period. Any extension will not result in the total exception period expiry date being more than 12 months after the major repairs or structural alteration works commenced or 6 months after works are completed, whichever is soonest. The maximum total exception period will be 2 years from the start of the original exception.

Other exceptions

The council may also consider a time limited exception in other circumstances where the property does not meet the classes above and the reason it is empty is exceptional, unforeseen and beyond the taxpayer's control.

Change in Circumstances

The council may need to revise the decision to grant an exception to the premium if it becomes aware that the circumstances of an applicant have materially changed. Individuals must immediately advise the council of any change in circumstances affecting the decision within 21 days of the change.

Failure to do so may result in the exception being revoked in full.

Fraud

The council will not tolerate any taxpayer falsifying their records or providing false evidence. A person(s) who provides false information or makes false representation in order to benefit from an exception may be guilty of fraud under the Fraud Act 2006.

The council will use all available tools to identify potential fraud. If you are awarded an exception, you are consenting for the council validating the exception with any appropriate organisations. If you do not consent to the sharing of the information in the application, the exception may be deemed invalid.

Appeals

If an individual believes they have been inappropriately charged a premium on their dwelling, they should contact us.

If the individuals are not satisfied with our response, they may be able to appeal to the Valuation Tribunal.

REVENUE BUDGET AND FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27

Head of Service:	Cagdas Canbolat, Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer)
Report Author	Sue Emmons, Chief Accountant
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Fees and Charges 2026/27

Summary

This report sets out estimates for income and expenditure on services in 2026/27 and recommends fees and charges for which this Committee is responsible, with the new charges being effective from 1 April 2026.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Recommend the 2026/27 service estimates for approval at the budget meeting of Full Council on 10 February 2026, amended since the publication of the draft budget book, as set out in table 4.6;
- (2) Recommend the 2026/27 fees and charges, as set-out in Appendix 1, for approval at the budget meeting of Full Council on 10 February 2026;
- (3) Agree the Council Tax Discount bands for 2026/27, as set-out in section 7.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The recommendations will enable the Council to meet its statutory duty to set a balanced budget for 2026/27.

2 Background

- 2.1 In February 2025, Full Council agreed an updated four-year Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2027/28 (MTFS). The MTFS aims to maintain the financial health of the Council whilst delivering the priorities in the Corporate Plan. The MTFS was further revised in light of further information, as reported to Strategy & Resources Committee in July 2025.
- 2.2 The figures in this report reflect the provisional local government finance settlement for 2026/27. The figures in this report reflect the work undertaken by budget managers and finance staff to identify any changes in resourcing requirements, and the provisional local government finance settlement for 2026/27.
- 2.3 Service estimates for this Committee are included in the draft Budget Book 2026/27 that has been made available to all Councillors.
- 2.4 Estimates have been prepared on the basis that existing services to residents are maintained.
- 2.5 To allow the Council to determine the budget and Council Tax in February, the Committee estimates have been presented as follows:-
 - 2.5.1 The Budget Book contains the service estimates for 2026/27.
 - 2.5.2 Unavoidable cost increases and income reductions are reflected in the estimates.
 - 2.5.3 Recommended increases to fees and charges have been included within the Budget Book and the income estimates.
- 2.6 All increases in charges are subject to approval by the Committee/Council.

3 Forecast Outturn 2025/26

- 3.1 Before considering the revenue estimates for 2026/27, this section provides a summary of the forecast outturn for the current financial year 2025/26.
- 3.2 The probable outturn specifically for Strategy & Resources Committee is a favourable variance of £500,000 which is shown in the following table. The key reasons for the major variances are explained in the subsequent paragraphs.

Strategy & Resources Committee	Published Budget	Current Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn Q2	Forecast Variance
Service Group	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Democratic & Civic	765	778	778	0
Corporate Functions	830	830	830	0
Corporate Financial Management	947	749	249	(500)
Tax Collection & Benefits	1,259	1,313	1,313	0
Land Charges	22	22	22	0
Land & Property	(3,137)	(3,260)	(3,260)	0
Local Economy	74	74	74	0
Community Safety	117	120	120	0
Contracts - Building Control	106	106	106	0
Employee & Support Services	347	(27)	(27)	0
Strategy & Resources Committee	1,330	706	206	(500)

3.3 Two contingencies held to mitigate corporate risks within the council have been identified as available to be ringfenced to offset pressures within other services within the council. These represent a favourable variance of £400,000.

3.4 Despite a recent drop in Bank of England interest rates, income from Treasury Management is forecast to overachieve by £100,000 as a result of good treasury management and fixed term deposits, secured when rates were higher.

4 Proposals for 2026/27 Budget

4.1 The service estimates for 2026/27 are included in the draft budget book, circulated to councillors in January.

4.2 Since the draft budget book was published, an overstatement of grant income within housing has been identified. The grant funding for Rough Sleeping has been included within the main Homelessness Prevention Grant for 2026/27, which led to the sum of £42,970 being included twice within the service estimates for Community & Wellbeing Committee.

4.3 At its meeting on 13 January 2026, Community & Wellbeing Committee agreed to recommend to Full Council, service estimates which were £42,970 higher than stated within the Draft Budget Book and committee papers, so that the final figures considered by Full Council represent the correct amount of grant due to be received.

4.4 Given the pressure on expenditure budgets within housing, to offset the £42,790, an equal reduction has been made to the corporate contingency, which sits within Strategy & Resources committee. Consequently, the service estimates being presented to this committee are £42,790 lower than presented in the draft budget book.

4.5 This committee is therefore being asked to recommend to Full Council in February, the service estimates set out in the final column of the table below. To illustrate the change to the estimates as a result of the reduction in corporate contingency, the original figures as detailed in the draft budget book have been included within the shaded column of figures.

4.6 A summary of the Committee's service estimates for 2026/27 is shown in the following table. The shaded column agrees to the draft budget book, and the end column reflects the changes following the use of £42,790 of corporate contingency, and which represents the service estimates committee are being asked to recommend:

Strategy & Resources Committee	Published Budget 2025/26	Original Base Position 2026/27	Revised Base Position 2026/27
Service Group	£'000	£'000	£'000
Democratic & Civic	765	811	811
Corporate Functions	830	843	843
Corporate Financial Management	947	1,152	1,109
Tax Collection & Benefits	1,259	1,570	1,570
Land Charges	22	27	27
Land & Property	(3,137)	(3,700)	(3,700)
Local Economy	74	74	74
Community Safety	117	99	99
Contracts - Building Control	106	106	106
Employee & Support Services	347	365	365
Strategy & Resources Committee	1,330	1,347	1,304

4.7 The following table comprises a summary of the main changes to the Committee's proposed budget for 2026/27 compared with the published budget for 2025/26. The shaded column agrees to the draft budget book, and the end column reflects the changes following the use of £42,790 of corporate contingency.

Strategy & Resources Committee		Budget £'000	Budget £'000
Published Budget 2025/26		1,330	1,330
Service Group	Change		
All	Variations in pay, pension (IAS19) & support service recharges	68	68
Democratic & Civic	Increase in member & mayoral allowances	23	23
Corporate Financial Management	Removal of budgeted revenue contribution to capital	(500)	(500)
Corporate Financial Management	Increase to inflationary and corporate contingencies	590	547
Corporate Financial Management	Projected change in interest income	125	125
Tax Collection & Benefits	Change in contribution from business rates equalisation reserve*	129	129
Tax Collection & Benefits	Change in estimated housing benefit payments and recovery	85	85
Land & Property	Premises efficiency savings in 2026/27	(230)	(230)
Land & Property	Removal of budgeted contribution to planned maintenance reserve	(200)	(200)
Land & Property	Increased rental income from rent reviews	(79)	(79)
Community Safety	Funding from Surrey Police for CCTV usage	(23)	(23)
Employee & Support Services	Reduced provision for pay award for 2026/27	(96)	(96)
Employee & Support Services	Removal of government grant to support increased NI costs	125	125
Employee & Support Services	Electricity efficiency savings	(25)	(25)
All	Sundry variations	25	25
Base Position 2026/27		1,347	1,304

*There is no transfer to/from the Collection Fund Equalisation Reserve currently budgeted. The statutory business rates projections are submitted to central government in late January, and at that stage any requirement to transfer to or from the Collection Fund Equalisation Reserve will only be confirmed. This figure remains provisional until that time.

5 2026/27 Budget Position

- 5.1 The forecast budget gap for 2026/27 at the start of the budget setting process was £1.928 million. Following confirmation of grant funding for the Council in 2026/27, including increased Extended Producer Responsibility grant of £1.078 million, the Council has managed to produce a balanced budget.
- 5.2 This proposal does not resolve the budget deficit for future years.
- 5.3 The demand for homelessness services continues to pose a risk to the Council's financial position. Whilst an injection of £750,000 of additional funding for nightly paid accommodation costs has been included in the budget 2026/27, any further increase in demand for the service could result in an adverse position. The Council has a Homelessness Strategy & Action Plan with the aim of tackling and preventing homelessness in the borough.

6 Fees and Charges 2026/27

- 6.1 Fees and charges within the remit of this Committee are set out in Appendix 1.
- 6.2 In February 2018, the Committee confirmed that the Chief Finance Officer should have delegated authority to vary fees and charges for items generating income under £1,000 per annum and/or for one-off items not included in the fees and charges schedule.
- 6.3 Charges at the Town Hall for room hire and associated officer time fees have been raised between 6% and 8%, to reflect increased inflationary pressures.
- 6.4 Three land charge search fees have been removed for 2026/27 as providing this information has now been taken over by HM Land Registry. These were the LLC1 Charged at £35, the Parcel Fee (LLC1) charged at £12 and the Assisted Personal Search/LLCR charged at £0.80. The budgeted income for those fees was £7,000, and this has been transferred to the budget for the other fees, keeping the total annual income budget for land charges at £102,000.

7 Council Tax Income Discount Scheme 2026/27

- 7.1 In November 2020, Strategy & Resources Committee agreed to replace the previous means-tested Local Council Tax Support with a simpler, income-banded Council Tax Discount scheme.
- 7.2 Income bands and discounts are subject to member approval each year. For 2025/26, bands have been uprated in line with the Council's scheme rules;

7.2.1 Income bands have been uprated by 1.7% (and rounded up to whole figures), which is the DWP benefit uprating figure for 2025/26.

7.3 Council tax discounts range from 80% for households in income band A, to 40% for those in income band D.

7.4 The Council Tax Income Discount scheme, which commenced in 2021/22, was established following a detailed analysis of the Council's working age caseload requiring financial support and was based on similar discount schemes run by other local authorities.

7.5 The income bands are considered appropriate for the current caseload and, having been increased by the September CPI figure, are in line with the increase in national social security benefits.

7.6 Since the scheme cost falls on the local council tax payer, it was not designed to change the bands (other than by inflation) or discount percentages on an annual basis, and this assumption has been used when setting council tax.

7.7 Pensioners continue to receive support through the Council Tax Reduction scheme set by central government and are not affected by this scheme.

7.8 The Council's Local Care Leavers Discount remains in place and is unaffected by the Council Tax Income Discount scheme.

7.9 The proposed income bands for 2026/27 are shown in the following table, which members are asked to agree. 2025/26 comparatives are shown in the subsequent table.

2026/27		Household Type & Monthly Income			
Council Tax reduction percentage	Passported	Single, no children	Couple, no children	Lone parent/Couple with one child	Lone parent/couple with two or more children
Band A – 80%	Relevant Benefit	£0.00 - £426.00	£0.00 - £795.00	£0.00 - £1,039.00	£0.00 - £1,348.00
Band B – 65%	N/A	£426.01 - £638.00	£795.01 - £1,022.00	£1,039.01 - £1,234.00	£1,348.01 - £1,583.00
Band C – 50%	N/A	£638.01 - £751.00	£1,022.01 - £1,217.00	£1,234.01 - £1,369.00	£1,583.01 - £1,943.00
Band D – 40%	N/A	£751.01 - £1,525.00	£1,217.01 - £1,1925.00	£1,369.01 - £2,337.00	£1,943.01 - £3,793.00

2025/26		Household Type & Monthly Income			
Council Tax reduction percentage	Passported	Single, no children	Couple, no children	Lone parent/Couple with one child	Lone parent/couple with two or more children
Band A – 80%	Relevant Benefit	£0.00 - £401.00	£0.00 - £748.00	£0.00 - £978.00	£0.00 - £1,269.00
Band B – 65%	N/A	£401.01 - £614.00	£748.01 - £984.00	£978.01 - £1,188.00	£1,269.01 - £1,525.00
Band C – 50%	N/A	£614.01 - £723.00	£984.01 - £1,172.00	£1,188.01 - £1,318.00	£1,525.01 - £1,871.00
Band D – 40%	N/A	£723.01 - £1,469.00	£1,172.01 - £1,854.00	£1,318.01 - £2,251.00	£1,871.01 - £3,654.00

8 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

8.1 Equality Impact Assessment

8.2 The report in itself does not give rise to any EIA implications.

8.3 Crime & Disorder

8.3.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

8.4 Safeguarding

8.4.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

8.5 Dependencies

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

8.6 Other

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

Service	Risk	Budget Estimate 2026/27	Risk Management
Land and property rental income	High: Loss of tenants and commercial rental income.	Total Budgeted Income EEBC £3,752k Budgeted EEPIC Dividend Income £1,380k	Monthly monitoring including analysing income against target continues. This includes regular budget monitoring reports in line with Financial Regulations

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 The draft Budget Book 2025/26 is highly detailed; therefore, any questions or queries should be sent to relevant officers in advance of the committee meeting wherever possible.
- 9.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The proposals set out in this report enable the Council to meet its statutory duty. The estimates have been prepared in accordance with the Council's financial regulations and reflect the provisional local government finance settlement for 2026/27.
- 9.3 Through a combination of confirmed grant funding, efficiency savings, and prudent financial planning, a balanced budget has been achieved for 2026/27. However, significant financial challenges remain which underlines the need for ongoing work to identify sustainable savings and income generation opportunities.
- 9.4 The budget includes provision for known service pressures, including homelessness, which remains a key financial risk. While additional funding of £750,000 has been allocated to mitigate rising costs, demand volatility could still impact the Council's financial position. Other risks include reliance on commercial property income and interest rate fluctuations, which will require close monitoring throughout the year.
- 9.5 The estimates are robust and the reserves are adequate for 2026/27. However, the Council must continue to maintain strong financial discipline.

10 Legal Implications

- 10.1 The Council is under a statutory obligation to produce a balanced budget and to comply with its policy on equalities.

10.2 Although there are no direct legal implications arising from this report, decisions taken about the budget will impact the services which can be delivered. In the event of any impact, there will need to be an equalities impact assessment in relevant cases.

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

11 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- Effective Council.

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

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

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

11.5 **Partnerships:** Many services are provided by the Council without the direct involvement of other agencies. There is, however, an increasing role for partnership working with others to achieve mutually agreed objectives. The benefits and risks need to be assessed in each specific case to ensure that value for money is secured and the Council's priorities are delivered in the most efficient and effective manner.

11.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** While the current Medium Term Financial Strategy has been prepared on a three-year basis, the assumptions underpinning 2027/28 and beyond will require close monitoring, as they are likely to change while Surrey implements LGR which will be in place by 1 April 2027. The figures presented here does help to form an important reference point for East Surrey unitary authority.

11.7 The council will ensure that its planning assumptions are regularly reviewed and that emerging risks are clearly understood to support a smooth transition to the new unitary authority.

11.8 However, it's important to note that Local Government Reorganisation continues to present a strategic risk for the Council and necessary arrangements are put in place to address the emerging financial and other risks.

12 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- [2026/27 Strategic Financial Planning report to Strategy & Resources – 15 July 2025.](#)

Other papers:

- Draft 2026/27 Budget Book.

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Service	Charged At	Description	Unit	2025/26	2026/27	% Change
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Town Hall

Room Hire

Hirer			£	£	
Standard	Atrium (Evening 18:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	110.00	117.00	6.4%
Standard	Committee Room 1 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	70.00	75.00	7.1%
Standard	Committee Room 2 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	59.00	63.00	6.8%
Standard	Council Chamber (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	110.00	117.00	6.4%
Commercial	Atrium (Evening 18:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	226.00	240.00	6.2%
Commercial	Committee Room 1 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	138.00	147.00	6.5%
Commercial	Committee Room 2 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	105.00	112.00	6.7%
Commercial	Council Chamber (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	226.00	240.00	6.2%
Community	Atrium (Evening 18:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	58.00	62.00	6.9%
Community	Committee Room 1 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	33.00	35.00	6.1%
Community	Committee Room 2 (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	29.00	31.00	6.9%
Community	Council Chamber (Mon-Fri 08:00 to 24:00)	Per hour	58.00	62.00	6.9%

Staff Hire

All	Support officer	Per hour	77.00	82.00	6.5%
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Miscellaneous Sales

All	Radar key	Each	8.50	9.00	5.9%
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Land Charges

All	Additional enquiries: (per hour or any part of)	Per enquiry	43.50	45.50	4.6%
All	Con29O Optional - highway enquiries	Per enquiry	28.50	31.00	8.8%
All	Con29O Optional - Other enquiries	Per enquiry	20.00	21.00	5.0%
All	CON29R	Per search	210.00	225.00	7.1%
All	Con29R component	Per question	3.50	3.50	0.0%
All	Parcel Fee (Con29R)	Per parcel	30.00	31.50	5.0%

Legal

All	Agenda - EWDC	Per copy	10.50	11.00	4.8%
All	Agenda - NJMC	Per copy	10.50	11.00	4.8%
All	All other Committee and Council Agendas	Per copy	10.50	11.00	4.8%
All	Authentication Service	Per request	20.00	21.00	5.0%

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EPSOM AND EWELL EMPLOYMENT HUB

Head of Service:	Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
Report Author	Rod Brown
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Social Impact Report of EEHub Appendix 2 - Exempt

Summary

Consideration of options regarding funding the Epsom and Ewell Employment Hub for 2026/27

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Determine which funding option from those set out in section 5 of this report for the financial support of the Epsom and Ewell Employment Hub in 2026/27(A, B, C or D) is preferred
- (2) Agree that the Council continues the delivery arrangements with Surrey Life Long Learning to deliver this initiative.
- (3) Nominate and authorise the Head of Housing and Community, in consultation with the Director of Environment Housing and Regeneration and the Chair of Community and Wellbeing Committee, to enter into a legal agreement with Surrey Life Long Learning to deliver this initiative.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Epsom and Ewell Employment Hub (the EEHub) does not have identified funds for operating after the end of March 2026. If no funding was secured for the next financial year, before March 2026 the charity operating the existing service would need to consider redundancies that might be required.

2 Background

- 2.1 Since April 2020 the Council has supported an employment hub, offering support to help residents into employment, education and training. Since its inception the service has been delivered, on behalf of the Council, by Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership (SLLP) a local charity active in employment support.
- 2.2 Initially the service was operated as Epsom and Ewell Skills Hub delivering services virtually, due to COVID, but subsequently in a vacant shop unit in the Ashley Centre. Following securing external DWP funding the Hub operated with the support of the DWP as an employment service restricted for young people aged 18-24 years, as the Epsom and Ewell Youth Hub.
- 2.3 Following marked improvements in local youth unemployment, DWP funding ceased in 2023. From August 2023 the Council utilised funding from the UK Prosperity Fund to support a service providing a wider range of employment support to residents of all ages across the borough and the hub became the Epsom and Ewell Hub (EEHub).

3 Current position

- 3.1 The EEHub operates from an otherwise vacant rent-free office unit on the second floor at Global House in the Ashley Centre where they meet their clients and provide support. Access to the services of EEHub is free. The EEHub offers a wide range of support to residents to gain confidence and develop key skills required to prepare them to succeed in employment and be the best they can be.
- 3.2 Residents can approach the service directly, or more commonly are referred into the service by the local Job Centre Plus or other partners.
- 3.3 The service employs a small team of three dedicated staff, alongside other partners who deliver complementary services such as Work Well (helping to get long term sick back into employment) and other training schemes such as Multiply, a mathematical skills programme.
- 3.4 The EEHub actively supports local businesses and the local economy. The EEHub have held a number of jobs fairs in Global House. These events have been successful in enabling local employers to access local employees, with the EEHub actively preparing and supporting their clients to succeed. These job fairs have often focussed on a particular sector such as health and social care, or local retailers.
- 3.5 The work of the EEHub is supported by a Steering Group, chaired by the Council's Head of Housing and Community and includes local stakeholders such as NESCOT, the local Job Centre Plus, Epsom BID and other key partners.

4 Review of current performance

- 4.1 The EEHub approaches their work with service users with great empathy and understanding. Often the barriers to employment or training result from missed opportunities in education, frequently involving other factors such as a low levels of personal confidence, poor mental health and physical disabilities and neurodiversity.
- 4.2 Over the last five years, the hub has developed highly valued relationships with businesses, NESCOT, and DWP Job Centre work coaches. This valuable network of relationships is fundamental to the ability of the EEHub to be able to help service users into employment or training.
- 4.3 The impact of EEHub has recently been documented using the Wellbeing Valuation method (endorsed by HM Treasury), with an estimated value of total social impact through the Epsom & Ewell Hub of £4.32 million between 2022/23 and 2024/25. This social impact report is available in Appendix 1.

5 Future options

- 5.1 DWP have not identified this borough as being a priority for further Youth Hub funding.
- 5.2 The cost of operating the hub is mainly associated with staffing levels although energy costs are also high and paid for by SLLP. SLLP have identified a range of future delivery options for continuing operation of the EEHub, all based on delivery at the existing Global House venue but with a range of staffing levels.
- 5.3 The anticipated outputs achievable will depend on the staffing levels within the hub, with Option A being the closest to current staffing levels. The options providing more staffing resources enables the Hub to engage with more people seeking help and minimise any waiting times to access the service. Greater resourcing will also enable delivery of a wider programme of events and engagement with more local businesses.
- 5.4 Considerations of future funding for the EEHub might have implications for those staff employed by SLLP. Consequently the four options being presented for the future funding of the EEHub are in Table 1 in exempt Appendix 2.

6 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

- 6.1 Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1.1 Supporting local households living on lower incomes will be significantly influenced by their unemployment status and resulting unaffordable housing costs.
- 6.2 Crime & Disorder
 - 6.2.1 None
- 6.3 Safeguarding
 - 6.3.1 None
- 6.4 Dependencies
 - 6.4.1 Access to existing vacant office space provided by The Ashley Centre. Indications are that the existing arrangements for the use of 2nd floor Global House by SLLP for the EEHub will continue for a further 12 months.
- 6.5 Other
 - 6.5.1 None

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The Council has provided the EEHub with £160,000 in 2025/26, funded by a contribution from the Corporate Project Reserve, as agreed by S&R on 28 January 2025.
- 7.2 Should funding of the EEHub be agreed for 2026/7 it is anticipated this would need to also be achieved through the Corporate Project Reserve, due to a lack of other funding options. The current uncommitted balance of corporate project reserve stands at c.£2.12m following the decision at S&R on 11 November 2025 to transfer in £1m each from the PIE and collection fund equalisation reserves.
- 7.3 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** We will be able to fund the service up until March 2027 but any decision post vesting day will be determined by the shadow and / or new unitary authority.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Council has power to provide grants to voluntary and community sector organisations under the general power of competence set out in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 8.2 Any grant will be made in accordance with the requirements of subsidy control legislation where applicable.
- 8.3 The grants set out within this report are not subject to the Council's Contract Standing Orders. (Section 4 and 10 EEBC CSO).

8.4 The delivery of the Hub will be managed through an agreement between the Council and delivery partners.

8.5 Legal Officer's comments:

8.6 Members will note the funding previously provided by this Committee last year (see para 7.1). This proposal is to provide further funding to SLLP directly from Council funds rather than passing through central government funding, the Council must consider the impact of The Subsidy Control Act 2022 (the Act) when considering such a decision.

The Act governs the provision of financial support by public authorities in the UK. Under the Act, procedures must be followed for most subsidy awards. However, minimal financial assistance (MFA) allows subsidies to be granted with fewer formalities.

8.7 MFA is limited by a financial threshold that cannot be exceeded by a recipient. This threshold is cumulative, meaning that separate awards must be aggregated to calculate whether a recipient has exceeded it. The threshold is set at £315,000 and includes income received via other subsidies. This means that SLLP can receive small cumulative subsidies up to the threshold without triggering the need for a more extensive assessment under the subsidy control rules.

There is a formal MFA process that the Council is required to comply with. The Head of Housing and Community has been advised about the process previously and what is required and shall be expected to ensure that this is complied with.

9 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

9.1 Council's Key Priorities:

From the 2020-24 corporate plan this proposal would support Safe and Well and Opportunity and Prosperity. It is not specifically included in the current strategic priorities for the council.

9.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not 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:** The EEHub thrives on the effective partnerships between the council, SLLP, DWP, Businesses, NESCOT and many other partners.

9.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:**

- 9.6.1 Each of the five districts and boroughs within the East Surrey unitary boundary either currently operate or intend to start operating an employment hub or Youth Hubs.
- 9.6.2 Over the last 5 years the EEHub has developed mature relationships and connections with both local businesses as well as with key partners including NESCOT and the Epsom BID. Should the EEHub close at the end of the current financial year, staff will either be made redundant (liability is with SLLP) or reallocated to other projects and the existing EEHub would be dismantled.
- 9.6.1 It is anticipated work around economic and employment support would continue within the new East Surrey unitary council.
- 9.6.2 Should EEHub cease operating it will take time and investment to regain the current level of influence and effectiveness. From the experience with starting the EEHub, it would be anticipated to take at least 6 months to rebuild a similar hub approaching that which currently

10 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Skills hub January 2020 <https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MID=771#AI5468>
- Youth Hub January 2021 <https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MID=969#AI6444>
- 2nd year Youth Hub July 2022 <https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=214&MID=1399#AI8259>

Other papers:

- None

2025

Epsom & Ewell Hub

Impact Report

Enhancing employment and learning opportunities to unlock potential

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surrey lifelong
learning partnership

Epsom
& Ewell 
Employment Opportunities & Training


EPSOM
&
EWELL
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Agenda Item 7
Appendix 1

Generating social impact

Social impact measurement provides a method for placing a value on outcomes related to people's wellbeing. This method assigns pounds and pence figures on services that do not hold a market value through being bought and sold. The services provided by Epsom & Ewell Hub, which support individuals to gain better paid employment, source training and volunteering opportunities that improve confidence and independence.

Between 2022-2025,
total investment of:
£ 480,000

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Resulted in a total of:
£4,320,000

This means that every £1 invested in Epsom & Ewell Hub services generated £9 in social impact.

£1
=
£9

Activities and events influence an individual's wellbeing, monetary values can be placed to measure the success of social interventions resulting in a positive outcome - this can be broken down as:

70.4%	£3,042,280
24.6%	£1,063,680
5%	£216,000

generated through gaining employment (incl. full-time, part-time and self-employed)

generated through general and accredited training

generated through volunteering placements

Breakdown of our impact between 2022 - 2025

£4.32m

of social impact generated through Epsom & Ewell Hub services

£9

of social impact generated for every £1 invested in the Epsom & Ewell Hub

1,319

engagements into the jobs and training service

48

support to access work experience or volunteering opportunities

235

positive job outcomes

1,357

training outcomes

surrey lifelong
learning partnership

Epsom & Ewell 
hub
Employment Opportunities & Training

*“My interview went so well! The practice we did really helped, and I felt very prepared and confident.
Thank you so much for that - I got the job ! ”*
- **Nicole (Hub service user)**



Employment Support - Annual Breakdown

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Engagements in service

Job outcomes

Training outcomes

Work experience / volunteering

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Engagements in service	252	493	574
Job outcomes	86	61	88
Training outcomes	193	257	689
Work experience / volunteering	12	17	19



Agenda Item 7
Appendix 1

Daniel's Story

D was introduced to the Hub through a recommendation from a previous participant. Although he had strong qualifications and experiences, he was unsure which career path to follow. Together we explored his interests and values, supported by career quizzes and a detailed job search, which helped him discover new possibilities and clarify what mattered most to him.

With this insight, D refined his CV to highlight his strengths, achievements, and unique hobbies, which gave his application real character. The process boosted his confidence and helped him feel proud of what he had accomplished. Over several phone sessions, we then focused on interview preparation, using coaching, reflection, and the STAR method to help him communicate his experiences clearly while letting his personable nature shine through.

D soon secured an interview for a warehouse role. He approached it with enthusiasm, performed brilliantly, and received glowing feedback from the interviewer, who praised his professionalism and maturity. He was offered the role and has since gone on to interview successfully elsewhere, receiving multiple job offers. When he reached out for guidance on choosing between them, we encouraged him to consider which opportunities best aligned with his goals and values, ensuring the decision remained his.

"I'm nervous about starting the new job, but honestly, so glad you're here if I need some advice"
-Daniel



Jackie's story

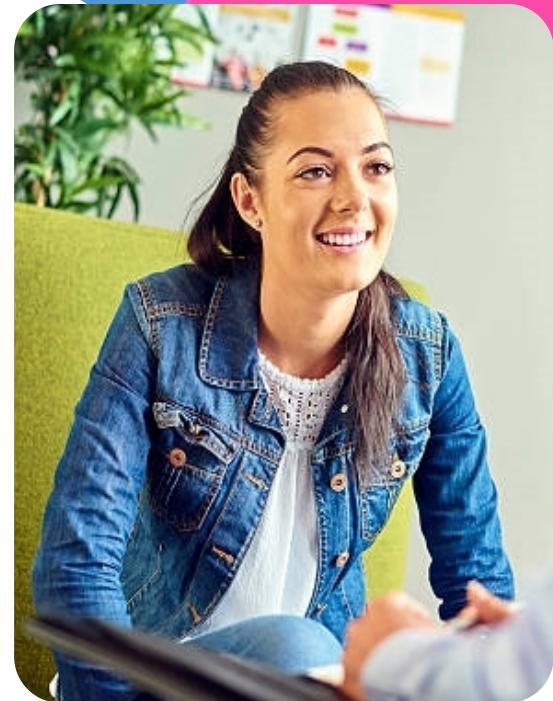
J was introduced to the Epsom Hub at the Nescot Careers Fair. At the time, she had been out of work for 18 years while caring full-time for her daughter, which left her lacking confidence and under high stress.

With support from an advisor, J created a new CV, identified transferable skills from her caring role, and explored career options that fit around her responsibilities. She attended a Successful Mums event, which helped her recognise the value of her home management skills, and enrolled on the Multiply project to build confidence in numeracy. She also received digital support to improve her job search skills.

J joined the Music Harmony project, which boosted her wellbeing and confidence, leading her to become an active choir member performing locally. She also accessed free counselling at the Hub, gaining practical techniques to manage stress and balance work aspirations with caring duties.

Through regular engagement with the Hub's holistic support, J now feels ready to apply for work and is exploring roles or apprenticeships in schools.

**“Great speaking to you today as always,
I’m forever grateful for your help”**
- Jackie



Calculating Social Impact

Social impact measurement provides a method for placing a value (in pounds and pence) on outcomes related to people's wellbeing. The social impact figures in this report have been produced using data from the Housing Association Charitable Trust (HACT) social value bank and the evaluation framework detailed in the [Valuing Digital Inclusion report](#), by Just Economics for BT (June 2014).

Outcome measures relating to the wellbeing benefits of employment, training and volunteering were identified and financial proxy figures for these outcomes applied to the outputs recorded by the Epsom & Ewell Hub. Appropriate 'deadweight' reductions were also applied throughout the calculations to counter the 'would some of it happened anyway' argument. Wellbeing Valuation is in HM Treasury's Green Book, the UK Government's core guide to policy evaluation, where monetary values are placed on things that do not have a market value through being bought and sold.

This framework has therefore been used to estimate that £4,320,000 of social impact was generated through Epsom & Ewell Hub service delivery between 2022/23 to 2024/25. In addition, a ratio of investment to social impact has also been estimated using project costs for the delivery and administration of the Hub service over the three-year period, totaling £286,769.

Epsom & Ewell Hub Impact Report 2022 - 2025

To find out more about the work of Epsom & Ewell Hub, please get in touch using the details below:

Epsom & Ewell Hub
Global House, 2nd Floor, 1 Ashley Avenue, KT18 5AD
01372 282101
epsomandewellhub@surreyllp.org.uk

Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership seeks to improve learning opportunities, learner engagement and progression in Surrey, particularly for those who have missed out on learning in the past. To find out more about the work of SLLP, visit <https://surreyllp.org.uk>

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URGENT DECISIONS

Head of Service: Andrew Bircher, Assistant Director of Corporate 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 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 decision taken since the last meeting of the committee.

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 To report to the committee any decision taken by the Chief Executive and / or 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, one urgent decision has been taken by the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration in consultation with the Chair, Cllr Neil Dallen, and published in Member News in line with the Council's Constitution, Appendix 2, Paragraph 3.1. iii. The decision is set out below

2.2.1 **Decision 158** – Finalisation of contract for Rainbow Leisure Centre

2.2.2 **Urgency reason for decision 158** – The final negotiations on the details of the Leisure centre needed to be concluded prior to the meeting of this committee. Details of the decision were considered commercially sensitive and were restricted. Councillors can ask for details of the report by contacting Executive support.

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 No issues arising directly from this report

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None

4 Financial Implications

4.1 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Comments about the financial implications were added to the urgent decision form.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 **Legal Officer's comments:** Comments about the legal implications were added to the urgent decision form.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- The retender of the Leisure Centre was a council priority.

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

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

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None arising directly from this report.

6.5 **Partnerships:** The new operator of the leisure centre is an important partner for the Council

6.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** The contract negotiations will be concluded prior to any key dates for LGR

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- N/a

Other papers:

- N/a

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Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 11 November 2025

PRESENT -

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

In Attendance: Councillor Alex Coley, Councillor Julie Morris and Councillor Bernie Muir

Absent: Councillor John Beckett and Councillor Jan Mason

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive), Victoria Potts (Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration), Andrew Bircher (Assistant Director of Corporate Services), Cagdas Canbolat (Director of Corporate Services (S151)), Piero Ionta (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Sue Emmons (Chief Accountant) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

32 CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The Committee resolved with 6 votes for and 1 abstention to:

Appoint Councillor Hannah Dalton to act as the Chair and Councillor Neil Dallen to act as the Vice Chair for this meeting of the Committee.

33 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

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

34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Commercial Property Update

Councillor Neil Dallen, Other Interest: Councillor Neil Dallen declared that he had received a letter from Steve Whiteway on behalf of the organisation.

35 TOWN HALL MOVE

The Committee received a report setting out that in May 2025 Full Council agreed to reverse the decision over the relocation of the civic office to 70 East Street and the Council Chamber to Bourne Hall, in light of Local Government Reorganisation. Alternative interim solutions had been investigated and the report presented four options and their associated costs for utilising the existing town hall building(s).

The following matter was considered:

- a) **Fire Risk Assessment.** In response to a Member question regarding the proposed £430k spend, the Head of Property and Regeneration explained that prior to the Local Government Reorganisation decision to move to 70 East Street the fire risk assessment had several criteria that needed to be complied with. The Fire Authority was happy for these not be undertaken because of the move. The Head of Property and Regeneration reassured committee that the building was safe but there was work needed around fire compartmentalisation of the old town hall to ensure it remained safe for the future.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Approve Option 1 for implementation as the best value option**
- (2) Approve a capital budget of up to £517,200 for the delivery of Option 1.**
- (3) Nominate and authorise the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration, in consultation with the S151 officer, to approve all necessary project expenditure and release of funds from budget/reserves (up to the approved limit above) through to completion and delivery.**
- (4) Nominate and authorise the Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration, in consultation with the S151 officer and Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee to approve expenditure up to the deferred liability limit (set out in para 2.5 as £477,500) and release of funds from budget/reserves, where necessary, to be able to undertake urgent works.**

36 STAFF PAY AWARD

The Committee received a report providing information and options for a recommendation to Council for a staff pay award for 2026/27.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Additional day leave.** A Member asked if option 2 included the proposed additional day leave. The Assistant Director for Corporate Services

confirmed that the additional day leave was applicable to all options in the report.

b) **Real Living Wage.** A Member asked for clarification on how the National Living Wage was to be funded and its inclusion in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The Director for Corporate Services confirmed that this was already part of the MTFS as reported to committee in July 2025 and that the Real Living Wage would be funded from contingencies as part of the MTFS.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Recommend to full council a pay award for staff for 2026/27 based on option 2 – a 3% pay award (as set out in section 5 of the report).**
- (2) Recommend to full council that funding is approved to support the implementation of the Real Living Wage from April 2026.**

37 REVIEW OF RESERVES

The Committee received a report presenting a review of reserves and recommending prudent reserve balances to ensure sound management of the Council's finances.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the new assumptions made for Property Income Equalisation, Collection Fund Equalisation and Interest Equalisation Reserves.**
- (2) Reappropriate identified reserves into Corporate Projects and Maintenance Reserves to support council priorities.**

38 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes and Restricted Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 25 September and authorised the Chair to sign them.

39 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

During the Committee's debate on Item 7 of the agenda (EEBC 2025-2027 Strategic Priorities 3 & 4), the Committee considered that due to the sensitivity of the information contained within the appendices to the report, an exclusion of the Press and Public would be necessary in order to enable effective debate on the matter in question.

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.

40 EEBc 2025-2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 3 & 4

The Committee received a report which outlined the progress made on the Council's 2025-2027 property related Strategic Priorities 3 and 4.

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) 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.**
- (9) Note the findings of the completed Community, Operational and Commercial asset reviews.**
- (10) Note that if a report comes to transfer assets it will be supported with a full business case.**

41 CLEANING CONTRACT

The Committee received a report regarding the extension of the cleaning contract covering all council venues.

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 resolved with 6 votes for and 1 abstention to

- (1) Note the intention of officers to award the extension of contract to Churchill Contract Services Ltd for cleaning services for Epsom and Ewell Council for the next two years, being the final contract extension allowable under the current contract;**
- (2) Approve the contract spend as set out in paragraphs 2.9 and 2.10 of the report and**
- (3) Nominate and authorise the Head of Property and Regeneration to take forward the necessary steps to complete the extension of the contract.**

42 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY UPDATE

The Committee received a report considering options for the future use of an existing commercial property.

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 resolved:

With 6 votes for and 1 abstention to:

- (1) Agree to Option 3 as recommended in paragraph 7.4 of the report to negotiate a new lease at the appropriate level of rent to reflect the mixed community and commercial uses being undertaken at the site.**

With 6 votes for and 1 vote against to:

- (2) Agree a budget of up to £10,000 to cover any potential external commercial agent fees and legal fees.**
- (3) Nominate and authorise the Head of Property & Regeneration to take forward the necessary steps to progress the chosen option.**

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 9.00 pm

COUNCILLOR HANNAH DALTON (CHAIR)

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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 07– Epsom and Ewell Employment Hub Appendix 2
The report deals with information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Committee and third parties.
Item 09 – Restricted Minutes of Previous Meeting
The report deals with information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Committee and third parties.

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