



COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE (SPECIAL MEETING)

Tuesday 17 June 2025 at 7.10 pm, or at the rising of the previous Special Meeting of the Community and Wellbeing Committee (whichever is the later)

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 Community and Wellbeing Committee meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Councillor Clive Woodbridge (Chair)
Councillor Bernice Froud (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Rob Geleit
Councillor Graham Jones

Councillor Rachel King
Councillor Bernie Muir
Councillor Humphrey Reynolds
Councillor Kim Spickett

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

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

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

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

Public information

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

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

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

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

Exclusion of the Press and the Public

There are matters scheduled to be discussed at this meeting that would appear to disclose confidential or exempt information under the provisions 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

Questions and statements from the public are not permitted at this Special meeting of the Committee. [Annex 4.2](#) of the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Operating Framework sets out which Ordinary meetings of Committees are able to receive public questions and statements, and the procedure for doing so.

Filming and recording of meetings

The Council allows filming, recording and photography at its public meetings. By entering the Council Chamber and using the public gallery, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings.

Members of the Press who wish to film, record or photograph a public meeting should contact the Council's Communications team prior to the meeting by email at: communications@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

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. 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.

2. RELATE FUNDING 2025/6 (Pages 5 - 14)

This report considers options for future funding arrangements for RELATE Mid and East Surrey for 2025-2027.

3. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Pages 15 - 16)

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Committee may pass a resolution to exclude the public from the Meeting 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.

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RELATE FUNDING 2025/6

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 RELATE service data Appendix 2 Funding options (Exempt)

Summary

This report considers options for future funding arrangements for RELATE Mid and East Surrey for 2025-2027.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) To agree funding arrangements for RELATE Mid & East Surrey for 2025-2027 as detailed in:
 - a) Option 1 as detailed in Exempt Appendix 2,
 - OR
 - b) Option 2 as detailed in Exempt Appendix 2

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Council faces significant financial pressures, and the on-going financial support provided to charities and voluntary organisations needs to be reviewed periodically.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council provides support to a range of voluntary organisations in the borough. These organisations provide valuable support directly to our residents, helping to maintain and improve the quality of life.

- 2.2 RELATE Mid & East Surrey (RELATE) occupy a building owned by the Council at 92B High St, Epsom and benefit from a full (100%) discount on the commercial cost of the lease.
- 2.3 RELATE benefit from a notional grant of £19,710 per annum.
- 2.4 The Council receives an income of £1,294 per annum from RELATE which is the cost reimbursement of Relate using the Council's cleaning contractor at the premises.
- 2.5 RELATE provide relationship counselling and mediation services to residents of Mid and East Surrey. They have services located in Reigate and Epsom.
- 2.6 In their 16th January 2025 decision, this Committee considered the future funding arrangements for five voluntary organisations active within the borough, including RELATE
- 2.7 Before the January 2025 committee, each voluntary organisation had been approached and asked for information relating to their activity and impact on borough residents over the last year. Four of the organisations provided the requested information apart from RELATE.
- 2.8 At the January 2025 Committee meeting, the committee decided to withdraw financial support from RELATE with a charge for full commercial rent to commence from 1st April 2025.

3 Post January 2025 Committee

- 3.1 Shortly after the Committee meeting in January 2025, the previously requested details outlining the support provided by RELATE for borough residents was received. An updated version of these details has been submitted by RELATE as part of this report and is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 In light of this new information, Delegated Authority utilising the Urgent Decision (UD) procedure, in consultation with the Committee Chair, was obtained to postpone the January 2025 decision relating to RELATE. This was to enable a review of that part of the decision, in light of the new information received, so as to minimise any hardship and uncertainty for RELATE during the period of this review. The UD was uploaded to Member News as usual, where it can still be viewed by Members
- 3.3 UD154 included Delegated Authority to the Head of Housing and Community to make a fresh decision, in consultation with the Chair of Community and Wellbeing. During consultation, it was decided that the UD would be used to postpone the implementation of the previous decision giving time for the matter to be reconsidered by the originating Committee.

- 3.4 The information provided by RELATE is set out in Appendix 1. This outlines the impact the service has on borough residents, including the provision of free and discounted services provided by the organisation. There is also information on the calculation of social impact RELATE has within the borough and a description of the impact that any increased costs might have on the service.

4 Proposal

- 4.1 This report sets out two options regarding the future funding arrangements for RELATE for the period 2025- 2027. The details for each option are contained in Appendix 2 which is Exempt.

4.2 Option 1

The Committee is asked to approve the proposed support for RELATE as set out in Option 1 in Exempt Appendix 2

4.3 Option 2

The Committee is asked to approve the proposed support for RELATE as set out in Option 2 in Exempt Appendix 2

- 4.4 Exempt Appendix 2 is a restricted item.

5 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

5.1 Equality Impact Assessment

- 5.1.1 Whilst acknowledged that withdrawing the financial support offered to RELATE could have an impact on the borough's residents in respect of the support they can access, this report is concerned with the provision of financial support to RELATE and not the provision of the service. As such, there are no EIA considerations directly as a result of this report.

5.2 Crime & Disorder

- 5.2.1 RELATE provides services which interface with a range of statutory services and domestic abuse services and Community Harm and Risk Management meetings (CHaRMM).

5.3 Safeguarding

- 5.3.1 RELATE offers front line services which includes identification and management of safeguarding concerns.

5.4 Dependencies

5.4.1 None

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 Like many voluntary organisations, RELATE often work with residents who interact with the Council on a regular basis. The support offered by RELATE to our residents has both direct and indirect financial benefits on the Council and the residents themselves.
- 6.2 Such benefits would include prevention of homelessness through support, referral and relationship counselling. Also RELATE will provide health and wellbeing support, including managing emotional and relationship issues.
- 6.3 The financial implications of either option can be contained within existing Council budgets.
- 6.4 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** The financial implications are detailed within the body of the report.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council has the 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. All grants are in accordance with subsidy control legislation where applicable.
- 7.2 The Council must enter licenses, funding agreements and other agreements in respect of any notional and direct awards.
- 7.3 Any decision to continue to grant financial support to RELATE would not be subject to the Council's Contract Standing Orders (section 4 and 10 EEBC CSO).
- 7.4 **Legal Officer's comments:** Legal implications are set out within the report.

8 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 8.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:
- Effective Council
 - Safe and Well
 - Smart and Connected
- 8.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

- 8.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** none
- 8.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None
- 8.5 **Partnerships:** RELATE are part of the “Third Sector” that support the local community through delivery of services.
- 8.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** None

9 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- [Community & Wellbeing Committee, 16 January 2025 – Voluntary Sector Funding 2025-2026](#)

Other papers:

- None

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Purpose of Report

Relate Mid and East Surrey is a non-profit providing affordable counselling and mediation services to local residents, supporting mental health, family stability, and community wellbeing. Many of the clients we support are on low incomes, referred by GPs, schools or local services. As part of our local partnerships, we also deliver subsidised in-school and in-person counselling and Workshops to students in Epsom, ensuring children and young people can access timely mental health support at a critical stage in their development.

We work closely with local agencies including domestic abuse services, GP surgeries, schools, housing teams, and social care to provide joined-up support for individuals and families facing complex challenges. Our counselling and mediation services are often a key part of wider safety and recovery plans, especially where there are issues of domestic abuse, trauma, or family breakdown. These partnerships ensure that residents receive timely, appropriate help, and that public services are supported in achieving the best outcomes for vulnerable people.

Year	Quarter	Service Hours delivered	Free/Subsidised Hours Delivered	% (of free or subsidised hours)
2023-24	Apr-Jun	594	594	100
	Jul-Sep	457	455	100
	Oct-Dec	1424	763	54
	Jan-Mar	1433	821	57
TOTAL		2475	1812	73%
2024-25	Apr-Jun	596	596	100
	Jul-Sep	1105	687	62
	Oct-Dec	1235	602	49
	Jan-Mar	883	598	68
TOTAL		3819	2483	65%

Access and Affordability

We operate a concessions/bursaries scheme to ensure that those facing financial hardship are not excluded from accessing counselling. Subsidised and free sessions are allocated based on a combination of self-declared income, personal circumstances (such as benefits, caring responsibilities, or young dependents), and clinical need. We prioritise individuals and families who would otherwise go without support.

To make this possible, we actively fundraise year-round through grants and local partnerships. Demand for subsidised places continues to grow, and meeting that need relies on keeping our core delivery costs - including premises - as low and sustainable as possible.

Over 75% of our clients receive subsidised counselling, with fees typically ranging from £0 to £28 per session, depending on financial circumstances. We use a transparent, needs-based system to determine eligibility, ensuring that no one is turned away due to cost. A small percentage of clients pay the full-cost rate (£60-£100) based on their financial circumstances, and this income is reinvested directly into our bursary fund to help subsidise sessions for those who cannot afford to pay.

Our Social Value to Epsom

Using HACT Social Value Bank methodology, relationship support can generate £6–£11 of social value for every £1 invested. Based on this model, our free and subsidised services from the Epsom premises generate an estimated £250,000–£500,000 in social value annually by:

- Reducing pressure on GPs, CAMHS, and mental health services
- Supporting students' mental health and reducing school exclusions
- Helping families avoid breakdown and costly social care intervention
- Promoting wellbeing, employability, and community stability

We are proud to be a trusted partner in strengthening the emotional wellbeing of Epsom's residents. The continued support of the Council enables us to reach those who are most in need, before they fall into crisis, creating a stronger, more resilient community.

Financial Context

In 2024–25, we have taken proactive steps to stabilise our financial position by reviewing contracts, reducing non-essential spend, and improving efficiency. While early signs are encouraging, we are continuing to monitor progress and expect a clearer position by the end of Q3. Any further cost increases at this stage will jeopardise our charity's ability to remain open and to continue service provision.

Feedback from clients in 2025

I was in a very bad place when I started the counselling but in 5 months things have turned round, and I now feel like a new chapter of my life is starting and I can look to the future with confidence.

The independence of our counsellor and the sensitive handling of questions and interactions was essential to me opening.

A big thumbs up for <Counsellor>. She was fantastic with how she dealt with me and my wife and has made a big difference to our relationship going forward. I most certainly look at things in our relationship somewhat differently now.

<Counsellor> has been absolutely fantastic with myself and my husband and is very gifted at what she does. It was a great experience - thank you!

Thank you so much <Counsellor> for your support and being so understanding. In the short time we have seen you, we have made so much progress, and we are very grateful.

I found the experience very helpful

The therapist was very helpful & empathetic to our situation

We're very grateful for the help from relate, in particular <Counsellor> was amazing, she was very compassionate showing thoughtfulness and understanding throughout

Our counsellor <Counsellor> was absolutely brilliant. From the first moment we met her, we both felt like she really listened and got to know us and our situation. She helped us through the most difficult period of our lives and for this we will be eternally grateful. Thank you <Counsellor>. You are amazing

Drew me out of my mechanism of shutting down and allowed me to feel comfortable to talk about things that have happened in the past. Mum has noticed a change in me and how I am on a day-to-day basis.

Very happy with the service received and good advice

<Counsellor> was a fantastic therapist. She made me very at ease and was able to give me insight and perspective I had not considered before. I feel much more confident now and know my options. Thank you all

We tried a couple of Relate Counsellors, and a couple outside of relate, but <Counsellor> (who we had most of our sessions) was by far the most effective, observant, empathetic and solution-oriented counsellor of them all, and we made all our notable progress with her.

We found the counsellor, <Counsellor>, to be absolutely great, and talked us through how we could help ourselves.

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EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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The following documents are included on the agenda and have not been published as they contain exempt information:

Item 2: RELATE Funding 2025/6 – Appendix 2
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This Appendix deals with information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Committee and third parties.
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