

Public Document Pack

EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSERVATORS

Monday 22 June 2026 at 6.00 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 Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Committee Members

Councillor Steven McCormick, the Council (Chair)
Jim Allen, Jockey Club Racecourses (the Company) (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Christine Cleveland, the Council
Andrew Cooper, Jockey Club Racecourses (the Company)
Simon Dow, Horserace Betting Levy Board (the Levy Board)
Simon Durrant, Jockey Club Racecourses (the Company)
Councillor Liz Frost, the Council
Councillor Bernice Froud, the Council
Councillor Kim Spickett, the Council
Councillor Clive Woodbridge, the Council

Yours sincerely



Clerk to the Conservators

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

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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

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

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AGENDA

1. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR

To appoint a Chair to the Conservators to hold office until the 31st of March 2027.

2. APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE CHAIR

To appoint a Vice-Chair to the Conservators to hold office until the 31st of March 2027.

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

The Conservators are asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Conservators' Meeting held on 26 January 2026 (attached) and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

4. MINUTES OF THE EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE, 16 MARCH 2026 (Pages 15 - 24)

To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 16 March 2026.

5. FINAL ACCOUNTS 2025/26 (Pages 25 - 40)

This report seeks approval of the Conservators' final accounts for the financial year 2025/26.

6. DERBY UPDATE 2026 (Pages 41 - 46)

To provide an update on this year's Derby Festival.

7. REVIEW OF CURRENT GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS (Pages 47 - 52)

This report asks the Conservators to consider whether any changes may be required to the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 to ensure the continued effective governance, management, and operation of Epsom and Walton Downs following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is due to be dissolved on 31 March 2027, with the new East Surrey Council assuming responsibilities and services from 1 April 2027.

This report invites the Conservators to initiate early discussion on whether amendments or clarifications to the Act, or associated governance arrangements, may be required to support a smooth transition and continuity of function.

8. REPAIR AND RENEWALS REVIEW (To Follow)

**Minutes of the Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSERVATORS
held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 26 January 2026**

PRESENT -

Councillor Steven McCormick (the Council) (Chair); Jim Allen (Jockey Club Racecourses (the Company)) (Vice-Chair); Councillor Christine Cleveland (the Council), Andrew Cooper (Jockey Club Racecourses (the Company)), Simon Dow (Horserace Betting Levy Board (the Levy Board)), Councillor Liz Frost (the Council), Councillor Bernice Froud (the Council), Councillor Kim Spickett (the Council) and Councillor Clive Woodbridge (the Council)

Absent: Simon Durrant (Jockey Club Racecourses (the Company))

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive), Sue Emmons (Chief Accountant), Samantha Whitehead (Interim Assistant Head of Service - Streetcare), Sarah Cliff (Senior Countryside Officer) and Phoebe Batchelor (Democratic Services Officer)

15 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on 3 November 2025 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Andrew Cooper provided Conservators with an update on the 6-furlong project. He explained that the project is planned to commence in the next month, and it is currently subject to final budgetary approval at the Jockey Club. The Chair noted the update and reminded the racecourse to ensure the works are communicated to relevant stakeholders and users of the Downs.

16 MINUTES OF THE EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Conservators received the Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 13 October 2025.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Receive and note the Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on the 13 October 2025.**

17 BUDGET 2026/27

The Conservators received a report seeking approval for the 2026/27 budget and the recommended precepts on the constituent bodies.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Safety equipment.** A Member of the Conservators asked where safety items and equipment, such as eye wash stations, fall under the budget. The Interim Assistant Head of Service & Streetcare Manager explained that safety equipment would fall under the budget line for general office expenses.
- b) **Maintenance of the grounds.** A Member of the Conservators queried why the maintenance of the grounds budget is being increased significantly. The Interim Assistant Head of Service & Streetcare Manager explained that some of the underspend in fuel was reallocated to grounds maintenance. She also explained that the demand for materials has caused prices to increase so it is a welcome increase for that budget line. The Chief Accountant explained that this was likely due to rounding and ensuring the total figure was a round number.
- c) **Local Government Reorganisation.** A Member of the Conservators queried how budget setting will be done going forwards, given the changes that will happen due to Local Government Reorganisation. The Chief Executive explained that she has formally put the Conservators arrangement into the LGR workstream, sitting under finance and property. She continued to set out that in terms of the budget for the shadow authority, there has to be a three-year Medium Term Financial Strategy produced for the new organisation, and this will be part of the budget setting process. Therefore, as long as it has been raised that the Conservators need to be considered, that will be picked up as part of the unitary budget. There is not information as to what this will look like yet as it will need to be considered by the legal team as to how the Conservators arrangement will continue going forwards, with fewer Councillors in the Epsom and Ewell area. The Chair informed the Conservators that any updates will be shared when they are available.
- d) **Vending on the Downs.** The Chair raised that the vending units have provided some welcome additional funding into the Conservators budget which has enabled some other items to be progressed. He highlighted the new budget line for bins, which is budgeting for roughly 10 new bins, and a new budget line for signage. The Chair informed the Conservators that there will hopefully be an additional vending unit starting in the Top Car Park from the beginning of February. He expressed thanks to officers for their help.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the latest income and expenditure position for 2025/26.**

- (2) **Approve the 2026/27 budget and the requested precepts, as set out in section 4 and Appendix 1 to this report.**

18 RISK REGISTER

The Conservators received a report presenting the risk register for Epsom and Walton Downs (EWD) for review and noting.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **EWDC16.** A Member of the Conservators raised that the inherent risk of EWDC16 should be 12 not 16 as set out in appendix 1. The Chair thanked the member for raising this and confirmed that the inherent risk number would be updated.
- b) **Headphones.** A Member of the Conservators raised that a current risk experienced on the Downs is people placing themselves at risk during training times by wearing headphones and not being aware or able to hear instructions of Downskeepers or racecourse staff. The Chair suggested that the risk is added to the risk register and welcomed input into how to articulate and mitigate the risk.
 - Simon Dow proposed a motion that headphone users on the Downs during training times was added to the risk register. The Chair seconded the motion.

The Conservators unanimously agreed the risk could be added to the risk register.

- c) **Safety of Downs users.** A Member of the Conservators suggested that signs could be used to convey the dangers of walking around the Downs during training times with headphones in. The Chair noted the comments. Another Member echoed the comments and raised that in some London parks there are signs which say no headphones. The Chair informed Conservators that there are some comms coming out soon about various topics, so this could potentially be folded in and included.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Review and note the strategic risk register located at Appendix 1.**

19 EPSOM DOWNS RACING SEASON 2026

The Conservators received a report informing them of dates of race meetings in 2026 and presenting a request from Jockey Club Racecourses for consent for race meetings and extensions to the periods permitted for fencing, as required by the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 and Epsom and Walton Downs Byelaws.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Fencing request.** A Member of the Conservators noted that the fencing requests around the Derby Festival are longer than requesting in previous years. The Vice Chair explained that as part of the Jockey Club's plans to rejuvenate the Derby, one of the things that has been looked at, is all the temporary structures that go up for the period of the Derby Festival. He explained that a new contractor has been hired this year who doesn't know the site. He also highlighted that previously it has always been a very, very tight build and having experienced it for the first time last year and spoken to the contractors, it would be greatly appreciated to have more time for the build. In that additional week, it would be about getting the new contractor used to the site and getting deliveries to arrive a little bit earlier. The Vice Chair explained that it's not necessarily something that the racecourse will request every single year, but it is necessary for 2026.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Note the dates of the 2026 racing season for Epsom Downs detailed in paragraph 2.1 of this report, and grant their consent to the following meetings in accordance with section 14 of the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984:**
- **Wednesday 1 July (Evening)**
 - **Thursday 9 July (Evening)**
 - **Thursday 16 July (Evening)**
 - **Thursday 30 July (Evening)**
 - **Sunday 27 September**
- (2) **Note that Jockey Club Racecourses has applied to Surrey County Council for the temporary suspension of Footpath 50 as detailed in section 4 of this report.**
- (3) **Consider and determine an application from Jockey Club Racecourses for consent under the Byelaw 2 (i) (a) to extend the fencing period for the Upper Tattenham Enclosure and Lonsdale Enclosure for 11 days to cover the period 11 May – 21 May 2026.**

20 DERBY 2026 UPDATE

The Conservators received an update on the arrangements for the Derby 2026.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Reinvigorating the Derby.** The Vice Chair re-emphasised that the Jockey Club is really focused on reinvigorating the Derby Festival and Epsom Downs Racecourse. He explained that they are planning to hopefully attract more people than attended the 2025 festival. He set out that the Jockey Club will be investing in marketing, the site, the structures, and the appearance of the racecourse, which has obviously slid over the years. He continued to explain that as a result, the Jockey Club have not requested to close the footpath tunnel that leads into the centre this year and it will be left open and accessible for the public and racegoers to get in and out of the racecourse. The Chair welcomed the comments and agreed to help and support in anyway necessary.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Note the update on the 2026 Derby arrangements from the Epsom Downs Racecourse.**

21 EVENTS ON THE DOWNS 2026

The Conservators received a report informing them of the current confirmed events on the 2025/26 Events Calendar for the Downs and seeking approval for two new events proposed to take place in 2026.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Amendment to 2026 Calendar.** The Interim Assistant Head of Service & Streetcare Manager raised that there is an additional event to be added to the 2026 event calendar. She informed the Conservators that the Banstead Rotary Club annual walk will be held on the 26th of April and will be no more than roughly 60 people, with 20 spectators and staff. She highlighted that it is classified as an A event, with low impact on the Downs and is run in support of local charities. She also raised that a request has been received from the RAC Club to use the Downs for parking. She explained that this request is the same as received in previous years and is currently being discussed. If approved, this would be on the 8th of July.
- b) **Declarations.** The Chair declared that he is a member of the Tadworth Athletic Club. Councillor Clive Woodbridge declared that he is a member of the RAC Club.
- c) **Banstead Walk.** A Member of the Conservators asked for the timings and day of the week for the Banstead Walk event so as to ensure it does not interfere with training times. The Interim Assistant Head of Service & Streetcare Manager confirmed that the event will be held on a Sunday, and it does not interfere with training as it will begin after training and conclude at 15:30.
- d) **Additional Events.** A Member of the Conservators flagged that any additional events on the Downs increase footfall and it is the Conservators

responsibility to consider the implications of allowing additional events to be held on the Downs. The Chair noted the comments and agreed that there is a delicate balance to be struck. The Interim Assistant Head of Service & Streetcare Manager highlighted that the Cancer Research Race for Life event no longer takes place on the Downs, and the two new applications are much smaller events. She explained that officers and Conservators would be reticent about bringing back or allowing such a large event again.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the Events Calendar for 2025/26.**
- (2) Approve the event request for the Andy Macfarlane Charity Walk as set out in Appendix 1.**
- (3) Approve the event request for The Oddballs – 2000 Perch event as set out in Appendix 2.**
- (4) Note the increase to fees and charges for Events on the Downs as set out in section 8 of this report.**

22 SCHEME FOR BBQS AT THE RACECOURSE REVIEW

The Conservators received a review of the use of barbecues during 2025 race meetings and an application from Epsom Downs Racecourse for the use of barbecues at events throughout 2026.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Sustainable Charcoal.** A Member of the Conservators flagged para 6.3.2 which talks about using sustainably produced charcoal and suggests the Jockey Club may want to look into it. The Member asked if the Jockey Club have looked into it and would they consider using it. The Vice Chair confirmed that the Jockey Club would certainly be considering it for the future and will ensure the sustainability team are made aware. Another Member suggested that the Jockey Club could use charcoal makers on Epsom Common. The Chair noted the comments.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the success of the Barbecue Scheme during 2025 race meetings.**
- (2) Grant Epsom Downs Racecourse permission to allow the use of barbecues at race meetings throughout 2026, namely Ladies Day, The Derby and the August Bank Holiday race meetings.**
- (3) Nominate and authorise the Clerk to the Conservators, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators, to consider and grant permission to any future**

continuation of the Barbecue Scheme, subject to no material issues or concerns having been raised during the preceding season.

23 CAR PARK MANAGEMENT

The Conservators received an update on the use of the Owners and Trainers and Derby Arms Car Parks by the Racecourse during 2025 and a request for permission for ad-hoc use in 2026.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Parking habits.** A Member of the Conservators asked if there was anything the racecourse will do to try and prevent cars from parking in car park when it is not one of the days of approved and genuine use. The Vice Chair explained that the usage of car park has dramatically reduced and was used for roughly 10 days last year. He explained that there was an issue with people breaking the bolts off the barriers, which the racecourse is trying to address as well. He stated that on those occasions when there's been no barrier up, that's when one or two cars would use that car park. He explained that it wouldn't be a racecourse car over there because they use the tarmac car park in the grandstand area and anyone else visiting the race course is encouraged to use that. He confirmed the racecourse is looking at the management of the gate on that car park to ensure that it's properly secured.
- b) **Car Park 3.** A Member of the Conservators asked which car park is the owners and trainers car park. The Vice Chair confirmed that the owners and trainers car park is car park number 3. The Member raised that the key to the safe operation of that as an additional car parking space is the efficiency and skill of the car park attendant. The Vice Chair noted the comments and agreed to address the matter.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Note the level of use by the Jockey Club of Car Parks 3 and 8 during 2025.**
- (2) **To approve an application by the Jockey Club to use these car parks during 2026 for ad-hoc events.**
- (3) **Approve the Car Park Management Operational Note as set out in Appendix 1.**
- (4) **Nominate and authorise the Clerk to the Conservators, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators, to consider and grant permission to any future continuation of the use of Car Parks 3 and 8, subject to no material issues or concerns having been raised during the preceding season.**

24 REINTRODUCTION OF GRAZING TO JUNIPER HILL

One of the three main objectives of the current five-year Epsom and Walton Downs Habitat Management Plan (2023-2028) is to draw up a project plan to reintroduce grazing to Juniper Hill.

At the Conservators meeting held on 23rd June 2025, it was agreed to progress the project, using robust fencing and for an implementation plan to be brought to the January meeting.

The Conservators received the implementation plan.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Funding.** The Senior Countryside Officer explained that there have been developments with funding the project. She raised that the project would get funding from Your Fund Surrey and the Downlands Trust.
- b) **Additional Costs.** A Member of the Conservators asked what the balance of costs is between going forward with the grazing project and the associated costs with implementing it or not proceeding with the project but having potentially higher costs longer term when it comes to managing the land. The Senior Countryside Officer explained that the grazing project will probably be more expensive at first, but the costs may balance in the future, and it will ultimately be a much better way of managing the rare habitat and land.
- c) **Queries.** A Member of the Conservators asked if the animals being referred to are sheep and if they will be checked daily. The Senior Countryside Officer confirmed that the animals would be sheep, and they would be checked daily by the countryside team, Downskeepers, or volunteers. A Member of Staff from the Downlands Partnership would check weekly on the sheep.
- d) **Hiring Sheep.** A Member of the Conservators asked why the sheep would be hired instead of purchased. The Senior Countryside Officer explained that owning a herd would not be as cost effective as we would only want grazing on the Downs for some months of the year. She explained that it would require much more resource and capacity to own sheep instead of hiring.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Support the reintroduction of grazing to Juniper Hill, subject to securing external funding for initial infrastructure and nominate and authorise the Senior Countryside Officer, in conjunction with the Clerk of the Conservators to progress this initiative to completion.**
- (2) **Agree recommendations as set out in the Implementation Plan.**

(3) Agree the timetable as set out in the Implementation Plan.

25 PROPOSAL TO LAY RUBBER SURFACE TO BRIDGE OVER UNDERPASS

The Conservators received a report presenting a proposal from The Jockey Club to replace the existing tarmac surface with a permanent black wet-pour rubber surface on the bridge over the underpass at Epsom Downs Racecourse, near the Rubbing House Public House. The proposal is seeking to improve safety for equine and pedestrian users and to provide consistency with existing rubberised surfaces elsewhere on the Racecourse.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Comms.** The Chair raised that it is important to get the communication about this works out to all users of the Downs. He invited Conservators to share the message widely.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Approve the proposal to lay a permanent black wet-pour rubber surface to the bridge over the underpass.**

The meeting began at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.00 pm

COUNCILLOR STEVEN MCCORMICK (CHAIR)

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MINUTES OF THE EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE, 16 MARCH 2026

Head of Service:	Jackie King, Chief Executive
Report Author	Phoebe Batchelor
Wards affected:	College Ward; Town Ward; Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward;
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Minutes of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 16 March 2026

Summary

To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 16 March 2026.

Recommendation (s)

The Conservators are asked to:

- (1) Receive and note the Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on the 16 March 2026.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Minutes of meetings of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee are presented to the Conservators for information and consideration. This report presents the Minutes from the meeting of the Committee held on 16 March 2026.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee was created following an undertaking made to the Select Committee of the House of Lords during the passing of the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984.
- 2.2 The Committee's Constitution was ratified by the Conservators on 24 April 2014, and sets its terms of reference as follows:
 - "To provide a means of regular consultation:

- on the future management and control of the tracks, rides, paths and areas for hack riding;
- on the rights of horse riders on Epsom and Walton Downs pursuant to Section 15 of the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 and the byelaws made under the Act; and
- on any other matters affecting the use and enjoyment of the Downs by the public.

2.3 The Constitution of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee sets out that the Minutes of Committee's meetings will be given to the Conservators for consideration.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

- None.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

- None.

3.3 Safeguarding

- None.

3.4 Dependencies

- None.

3.5 Other

- None.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 None for the purposes of this report.

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

5 Legal Implications

5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

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

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** Not relevant to this report.
- 6.2 **Service Plans:** Not relevant to this report.
- 6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None.
- 6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None.
- 6.5 **Partnerships:** None.
- 6.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** None.

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- None.

Other papers:

- [Constitution Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 Consultative Committee](#)

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Minutes of the Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 16 March 2026

PRESENT -

Councillor Steven McCormick (Chair); Simon Durrant (Epsom Downs Racecourse), Councillor Bernice Froud, Sarah Rayfield (British Horse Society) and Nigel Whybrow (Training Grounds Management Board)

In Attendance: Richard Balsdon (College Ward Residents Association), Jane Clarke (WERs), Nick Lock (Epsom Civic Society), James Vincenti (EDMAC), Roger Marples (EDMAC), Brian Burke (EDMAC)

Absent: Alex Stewart (Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society), Jim Allen (The Jockey Club (TJC)), Caroline Baldock (Epsom Equestrian Conservation Team) and Nick Harrison (Tattenham & Preston Residents' Association)

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive) and Phoebe Batchelor (Democratic Services Officer)

5 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 October 2025 and authorised the Chair to sign them, subject to the following amendment italicised below;

“Minute 4,

- f) **Hack Riders.** The representative from EDMAC raised a persistent issue with hack riders riding behind EDMAC Members, on the road parallel to the racecourse. *The representative raised that hack riders are also crossing EDMAC’s take off landing strip.* The representative highlighted that on the noticeboard content map, hack riders should not be there. The Chair agreed to look at the map with the representative and if hack riders are not supposed to be there, this will be communicated to the relevant contacts and stakeholders.”

6 ACTION TRACKER

The Committee received a report presenting an update on the Committee Action Tracker.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Conditions of Hack Canter Ride.** The Chair explained that the required work had been completed. This was confirmed by the Member from the Training Grounds Management Board. The Member explained that the Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society Member had been shown the work and was happy with the results.
- b) **Noticeboards on the Downs.** The Chair informed the Committee that the content has been finalised and signed off, and the prints are on order. He asked members and invited representatives to assist in putting up the printed content onto the noticeboards, once it arrives. The Chair thanked the Committee for their patience on this item.
- c) **Toilets on the Downs.** The Chair raised that there is a possibility of putting in a Community Infrastructure Levy application for funding for the project.
- d) **Events on the Downs.** The Chair stated that communication for events on the downs is greatly improved. He thanked officers for their efforts on this area.
- e) **Dog Walking.** The Chair informed the Committee that they are currently in the process of organising a pilot training and awareness scheme for dog walking on the downs, for Langley Vale residents, with a look to offer the scheme to a wider audience following the pilot scheme. Councillor Froud declared that she is a licensed dog walker and home boarded. The Chair noted the comment. The Chair raised that the relevant stakeholders will be consulted whilst the scheme is being planned.
- f) **Local Government Reorganisation.** The Chief Executive informed the Committee that the Council's legal team and operational services have been asked to create a briefing note on the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators and Consultative Committee. This note will then be submitted to the relevant workstream. This will fall under land, property, and legal. The Chair raised that currently the Conservators have six Epsom and Ewell Borough Councillors as part of their membership. He highlighted that with the new East Surrey Council; there is no certainty or guarantee that the councillors sitting on the Conservators going forwards will be from the local area.
- g) **Car Park Management Plan.** The Chair agreed to provide an update following the meeting. He explained that there are various car parks across the downs which are under the control of the Jockey Club and the Downskeepers, and the item on the action tracker is about managing their usage and time.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

(1) Note the status and update on actions listed in the Committee Action Tracker.

7 ISSUES RAISED BY THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Committee considered matters raised by Members.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Wood inspections.** Councillor Froud raised the issue of the current state of the Warren wood and the Langley Vale woodland. She queried if there is a management plan which includes regular inspection for the woodland areas. She raised that even if areas are trimmed, the cut offs are just thrown to one side and left to rot. The Chair noted the comments and agreed to provide a response and update following the meeting. He explained that the overall responsibility for the wood maintenance falls to the Borough Council and the Council's Tree Officer. The Chair agreed to look into scheduling works for later on in the year, as it would be difficult presently due to birds nesting.
- b) **Hedge cutting and trees.** The Member from the British Horse Society asked if people are using public rights of way or is it a situation of overall permissive access. The Chair confirmed that people are using public rights of way and bridleways. The Member raised that due to a change in the legislation for hedge and tree cutting, any adverse impact on public highways, including public rights of way, the works can go ahead. The Chair agreed to discuss the matter with the Council's Tree Officer.
- c) **Potholes.** The Chair reminded the Committee that it is important to report potholes so they can be logged and fixed by Surrey County Council. The Chair explained the Fix My Street website should be used to report potholes. Councillor Froud expressed frustration and concern about the number of potholes and the severity of them and the damage they can and have caused, namely on Grandstand Road. She also raised the difficulty with reporting potholes which are located on busy and fast roads. The Chair agreed to visit Grandstand Road and help report the potholes. The representative from College Ward Residents' Association raised the issue of the potholes and surface of the carparks on Grandstand Road and asked the Chair to also look at that when possible. The Chair agreed to do so and informed the Committee that additional budget was approved by the Conservators in January for Car Park Maintenance.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Consider the matters raised by members of the Committee as set out in this report.**

8 ISSUES RAISED FOR CONSIDERATION BY INVITED REPRESENTATIVES

The Committee discussed issues raised by invited representatives.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Litter.** The Chair informed the Committee that additional bins are being purchased and will be put on the Downs.
- b) **Signs.** The Chair confirmed that once he is aware of when the new signage and noticeboard content is being delivered, he will contact Consultative Committee Members and Invited Representatives to assist with installation.
- c) **Derby impact.** The representative from College Ward Residents' Association raised the recent comments in the press from the Jockey Club about reviving the Derby Festival. The representative highlighted the importance of taking into account the impact on the local community, especially when talking about increasing the turnout. The Member from the Jockey Club expressed hope that changes to the Derby would have a positive impact and supports the additional efforts to increase turnout, improve customer experience and really invest in and champion the festival. The Member highlighted that from a residents' perspective, the Derby Festival is a challenging time, but it is also a huge and historic event to be proud of. The Member made clear that it is not the Jockey Club's ambition to make the festival longer and spread out over the week, but it is keen to increase the attendance and improve the experience of the two scheduled days. He explained that local residents have nothing to be fearful or worried about.
- d) **Behaviour of attendees.** The representative from College Ward Residents' Association raised concerns regarding the behaviour of some of the attendees of the Derby. He explained that Cheltenham placed Portaloo's throughout the town and that could help avoid some instances of anti-social behaviour. The Member from the Jockey Club explained that some facilities are placed by the Tattenham Corner Pub and the Tattenham strait. He acknowledged the concerns and comments raised. The Chair raised that communication is important and Committee Members and invited reps can help get the word out and help manage and raise relevant concerns. The representative from EDMAC raised that the Jockey Club could use a new style app for giving more in detail information regarding the weather forecast and specific times. He also suggested that the Jockey Club contact the special constabulary for policing the event. The Member from the Jockey Club confirmed that Surrey and Sussex Police do have links with the special constabulary and ensure they have the right teams in the right areas.
- e) **Maintenance of Bunds.** The representative from College Ward Residents' Association raised concerns about the state of the bunds and the issue with fly-tipping and dumping in the car park nearby. He asked

what will be done with the soil that has been put in place and if there is a management plan for installing and maintaining the bunds. The Chair explained that the bunds have been put in place as a deterrent to dissuade people from mounting the curb and driving onto that area. He informed the Committee that the soil used has been taken from elsewhere on the Downs and there is a habitat management plan which the Council's Countryside Officer is actively engaged with. He acknowledged that there is work to do in tidying them up and explained that affected residents can be involved in what to do with the bunds.

- f) **Spoil Heaps.** The representative from Epsom Civic Society raised the ongoing issue of spoil heaps on the Downs. He explained that most of the materials are not natural to the Downs. He stated that if the materials are going to be reused, this should occur within a reasonable timeframe and not be left for years, and if it needs to be kept for years, then it should be kept in a tidy way. He expressed disappointment that when one of the spoil heaps was removed, a new one appeared immediately after. He asked for a list of what projects go with which piles and roughly when they will be completed. The Chair raised that first and foremost, the Downs is a training and working environment and there is mixed-use with the public. He explained that Nigel and the team are working hard to move additional mounds that have appeared and confirmed that the piles can be categorised as to where they have come from and what they are there for and the information will be shared. The Member from TGMB confirmed that the pile at Ebbisham Lane will be gone in the next 7-10 days, and a lot of the pile of all-weather material in the grass triangle is in the process of being moved over the next few weeks. He explained that the material in the top car park is all in use and there has always been material for training use stored there and this will continue. He accepted that it is untidy and explained that some of this is due to car park materials being stored and kept there too. He agreed to go round and identify the mounds and their uses. The representative from Epsom Civic Society suggested that when a project is commissioned and material is required or planned to be reused later, it should be within the project budget to ensure the mound is taken away rather than dumped. He did not accept the comment that it is acceptable to have the mounds left because the Downs is a working environment. The Chair informed the Committee that he has listened to comments and continues to raise the issue to TGMB and the Conservators and is making proactive steps to address the issue.
- g) **Litter Bins.** The representative from Epsom Civic Society welcomed the prospect of additional litter bins on the Downs. He suggested that bins are placed on the bottom road by the lower gallop track where the paths cross for those walking into the Langley Vale wood. The Chair noted the comment.
- h) **Runway damage.** The representative from EDMAC raised the ongoing issue of damage to the runway and highlighted that it is caused by both horses and people. He explained that horses should not be walking

across the runway and organised runs had been planned which crossed the runway section. The Chair informed the Committee that the issue can be shared on the Epsom Riders Facebook group to ensure that people are made aware there shouldn't be horses crossing the runway. He agreed to circulate a message into the group. He also agreed to raise the issue to any race events who are planning routes on the Downs.

- i) **Family Day.** The representative from EDMAC raised that the next open day has been scheduled for Monday the 4th of May. He informed the Committee that the 2025 event was a success, and this event will build off of that success.
- j) **Precepts.** The representative from College Ward Residents' Association asked for the percentages of the Conservators precept. The Chair confirmed that the precept is paid 60% by the Council, 30% by the Jockey Club (Epsom Racecourse), and 10% by TGMB.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Consider the matters raised by invited representatives as set out in this report.**

The meeting began at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.00 pm

COUNCILLOR STEVEN MCCORMICK (CHAIR)

FINAL ACCOUNTS 2025/26

Head of Service:	Cagdas Canbolat, Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer)
Report Author	Oana Merla, Accountant
Wards affected:	College Ward; Town Ward; Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward;
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – 2025/26 Revenue Account Appendix 2 – Financial Statements 2025/26 Appendix 3 – Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26

Summary

This report seeks approval of the Conservators' final accounts for the financial year 2025/26.

Recommendation (s)

The Conservators are asked to:

- (1) Receive the final accounts for 2025/26, subject to external audit.**
- (2) Consider and approve the Annual Governance Statements as set out in section 1 of Appendix 3 to this report.**
- (3) Consider and approve the Accounting Statements as set out in section 2 of Appendix 3 to this report.**
- (4) Confirm that the arrangements for the internal audit as set out in this report are effective for auditing purposes.**
- (5) Nominate and authorise the Chair and Clerk to sign the Annual Governance Statement and the Accounting Statements on behalf of the Conservators.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 To meet the statutory requirement for the Conservators to consider and approve the financial statements by 30 June 2026.

2 Background

- 2.1 This report represents the Conservators' final accounts for the year ended 31 March 2026.
- 2.2 The revenue account, attached at Appendix 1, details income and expenditure for the year compared to the budget.
- 2.3 The financial statements are attached at Appendix 2 and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, which requires approval of the Conservators, is attached at Appendix 3.
- 2.4 The Annual Governance and Accountability Return will be subject to external audit between July and September 2026

3 Revenue Account for 2025/26

- 3.1 Overall, net expenditure for the year was £482,700 compared to the original budget of £500,755 resulting in a surplus for the year and an increase in the working balance of £18,055.
- 3.2 At Q3, a surplus of £4,637 had been forecast. The year-end £18,055 surplus is mainly due to the following items:

Explanation of significant variances	Adverse/(Favourable) Variance £
Grounds Maintenance – Net reduction in running costs, mainly due to underspent fuel budget	(4,686)
Keeper's Hut – net reduction in running & maintenance cost, mainly due to electricity and building maintenance	(3,470)
Central Expenses – net reduction, mainly due to VAT payments and general running costs	(2,685)
Derby Travellers Caravan Site – increased expenditure	890
Income – increased income from catering licence and interest received	(8,104)

4 Repairs and Renewals Fund

- 4.1 The balance of the fund at 31 March 2026 was £26,351, as show in the following table:

Repairs and Renewals Fund	£
Balance brought forward 1 April 2025	23,287
Annual budgeted contribution from revenue to R&R Fund	2,000
Interest on balance (4.38% average interest)	1,064
Balance carried forward (uncommitted) 31 March 2026	26,351

5 Internal Audit

- 5.1 Since 1 April 2019, the Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP) has provided internal audit services to the Council and the Conservators, which includes completion of the internal Audit Report within the Conservator's Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The role and scope of SIAP is detailed with the Internal Audit Charter which was presented to the Council's Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 19 March 2026.
- 5.2 The 2025/26 Internal Audit Plan was submitted in March 2025 to the same Committee who act as an Audit Committee under the Council's constitution. The Audit & Scrutiny Committee receive quarterly audit progress reports and a year-end Annual Report & Opinion.
- 5.3 All financial transactions for the Conservators are processed through Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's financial systems and transactions recorded on the Council's financial management system.
- 5.4 SIAP makes the appropriate arrangements for the Annual Internal Audit Report section of the Annual Return to be checked and signed off, which was completed on 21/05/2026.

6 Annual Governance and Accountability Return

- 6.1 Smaller Bodies in England must complete an annual return, known as the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to the appointed External Auditor. PKF Littlejohn LLP have been appointed as the auditor to all relevant smaller authorities in Surrey for 5 years from 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2027. The AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2026 is attached at Appendix 3.
- 6.2 Any significant changes to the AGAR following external audit will be reported back to the Conservators.
- 6.3 Each smaller authority is now required by law to:

- 6.3.1 Prepare Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026 in the form required by proper practices (the relevant AGAR, Form 1, 2 or 3).
- 6.3.2 Approve and publish the unaudited AGAR including Accounting Statements by 30 June 2026.
- 6.3.3 Provide for the exercise of public rights.
- 6.3.4 Publish the audited AGAR, including the signed external auditor report by 30 September 2026.
- 6.4 With regard to the AGAR, the Conservators will note that:
 - 6.4.1 The detailed budget is submitted to the Conservators each year prior to contributions being levied from constituent bodies.
 - 6.4.2 Officers monitor the account as part of the Council's budget monitoring arrangements.
 - 6.4.3 The Treasurer presents a mid-year monitoring report to the Conservators.
 - 6.4.4 The Treasurer presents a year-end report to the Conservators (this report).
 - 6.4.5 All transactions are subject to the Council's financial management and internal control arrangements.
 - 6.4.6 The Council's financial processes and operational activity are subject to risk profile as part of the audit needs assessment.

7 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

- 7.1 A risk register is reported at least annually to the Conservators, most recently in January 2026.
- 7.2 The working balance stands at £89,075 at 31 March 2026. The 2026/27 budget includes provision for an annual contribution of £1,500 back to the working balance, to replenish this reserve over time. Together with the Repairs and Renewals fund, the working balance reserve provides sufficient financial cover to manage unexpected expenditure and risks.
- 7.3 Equality Impact Assessment
 - 7.3.1 None arising from the contents of this report.
- 7.4 Crime & Disorder
 - 7.4.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

7.5 Safeguarding

7.5.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

7.6 Dependencies

7.6.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

7.7 Other

7.7.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

8 Financial Implications

8.1 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** Financial implications are set out in the body of the report. If members have a detailed question(s) on the appended accounts, it is requested that these be submitted in advance where possible, to enable officers to investigate with the relevant budget manager. The next scheduled budget report to Conservators will be the 2026/27 mid-year monitoring report at November's meeting.

9 Legal Implications

9.1 There are no legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

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

10 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- Effective Council, Green & Vibrant

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

10.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None.

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

10.5 **Partnerships:** The Jockey Club, Training Grounds Management Board and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council are represented by Members on the Conservators committee.

10.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** The full impact of LGR on the operations of EWDC is yet to be realised. Once more information is available, it will be shared with the Conservators committee.

11 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- [Budget 2026/27 – \(26 January 2026\)](#)

Other papers:

- [Audit and Scrutiny Committee \(19 March 2026\)](#)

Agenda Item 5 Appendix 1

EWDC Outturn 2025/26

<u>2024/25 Outturn</u>		<u>2025/26 Budget</u>	<u>2025/26 Outturn</u>	<u>2025/26 Outturn Variance</u>
£		£	£	£
	<u>Grounds Maintenance</u>			
88	Maintenance of Grounds	227	534	307
2,328	Car Park Repairs	3,543	2,724	-819
15,773	Tree Maintenance Schedule	13,699	16,792	3,093
5,117	Fuel	10,825	4,905	-5,920
1,187	Spot hire of vehicles	1,223	0	-1,223
3,545	Transport Insurance recharge	3,651	3,651	0
0	Chemicals for weed control	458	334	-124
0	Disposal of Waste	0	0	0
34,480	Transport fleet SLA NJMC	35,514	35,514	0
4,151	Internal trade waste fees	4,084	4,084	0
66,670	Sub-Total	73,224	68,538	-4,686
	<u>Keepers Hut</u>			
3,355	Engineering and fabric recharges	3,389	3,429	40
0	Building and M&E maintenance	1,226	0	-1,226
1,526	Electricity	3,785	1,584	-2,201
908	Rates	1,061	973	-88
326	Water dispenser costs	330	439	109
170	TV Licence	175	175	-1
0	General office expenses	103	0	-103
1,145	Insurance recharges	1,179	1,179	0
7,429	Sub-Total	11,248	7,778	-3,470
	<u>Central Expenses</u>			
28,000	Additional pension contribution	28,000	28,000	0
3,096	Budgeted contribution to Repairs & Renewals Fund	2,000	3,064	1,064
12,111	EOY Contribution to Working Balance	0	0	0
706	Clothing & uniforms	700	666	-34
7,000	Budgeted Contribution to Working Balance	7,599	7,599	0
1,308	External Audit	1,686	1,260	-426
988	Miscellaneous expenses	1,165	1,029	-136
358	General office expenses	1,125	710	-415
23,727	VAT payments	26,504	23,764	-2,740
314,735	OS SLA recovery EWDC	324,177	324,177	0
23,540	Management costs SLA rec	24,246	24,246	0
1,420	Insurance	1,463	1,463	0
590	Internal audit	608	608	0
417,579	Sub-Total	419,273	416,588	-2,685
	<u>Derby Travellers Caravan Site</u>			
5,120	Contract Payments	4,640	5,530	890
5,120	Sub-Total	4,640	5,530	890
496,797	Gross Expenditure	508,385	498,434	-9,951

EWDC Outturn 2025/26

Income:				
-5,915	Hire charges	-2,900	-3,045	-145
-3,562	Interest on Balances	-2,060	-4,659	-2,599
0	Catering licences	-1,345	-6,780	-5,435
-1,150	Misc. income	-1,325	-1,250	75
-10,627	Income	-7,630	-15,734	-8,104
486,170	Net Expenditure	500,755	482,700	-18,055
Precepts:				
-291,700	Borough Council	-300,450	-300,450	0
-48,620	Training Board	-50,080	-50,080	0
-145,850	Epsom Racecourse	-150,225	-150,225	0
-486,170		-500,755	-500,755	0
0	Surplus (-) / Deficit in Year	0	-18,055	-18,055
44,310	Working Balance brought forward 1 April		63,421	
7,000	Add budgeted in year contribution to working balance		7,599	
0	Add agreed transfer from R&R fund		0	
12,111	Surplus/deficit for the year		18,055	
63,421	Working Balance carried forward 31 March		89,075	
20,191	Repairs & Renewals Balance brought forward 1 April		23,287	
1,096	Add Interest in year contribution to R&R Fund		1,064	
2,000	Contributions To (+) / Transfer from (-) R&R Fund		2,000	
23,287	Forecast Repairs & Renewals Balance carried forward 31 March		26,351	

Financial Statements 2025/26 (Subject to Audit)

EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSERVATORS
REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Income:-		
Interest on Balances	4	5
Other Income	7	11
Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Precept	292	300
Epsom and Walton Downs Training Board Precept	49	50
Epsom Down Racecourse Precept	146	150
	497	516
Expenditure:-		
Employees	28	28
Premises	24	26
Transport	13	12
Suppliers and Services	40	42
Third Party Payments	0	0
Support Services	380	391
	485	498
Deficit (-) / Surplus for the year	12	18
Budgeted Contribution to Working balance	7	8
Transfer from R&R fund to Working balance fund	0	0
Balance Brought Forward at 1 April	44	63
Balance Carried Forward at 31 March	63	89

Financial Statements 2025/26

EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSERVATORS
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2026

31 March 2025			31 March 2026	
£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000
	0	FIXED ASSETS		
		Plant and Equipment		0
		CURRENT ASSETS		
0		Debtors (General)	0	
139		Debtors (Epsom and Ewell B.C.)	160	
139			160	
		LESS: CURRENT LIABILITIES		
52	87	Creditors	44	115
	87			115
		Represented By:-		
		RESERVES		
	23	Repairs and Renewals Fund		26
	63	Working Balance		89
	87	Total Reserves		115

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To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £15 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/26

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.

2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**

- The **Annual Internal Audit Report must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
- **Sections 1 and 2 must** be completed and approved by the authority.
- **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.

3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2026**.

4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2026** Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:

- the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
- a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2026
- an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
- notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
- Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities **must** publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2026 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2025/26** approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2025/26** approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2026 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26

Agenda Item 5 Appendix 3

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments **must** be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2026
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) **must** be approved before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references, even where approved on the same day.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) **must** certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority **must** in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period which **must** be a single period of 30 working days for inspection (this excludes weekends and public holidays) which **must** include the first 10 working days of July.
- **You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor **must** be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- Additional costs may be incurred if additional audit work is required.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2025) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2026).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights which **must** be a single period of 30 working days for inspection (this excludes weekends and public holidays) which **must** include the first 10 working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2026**

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?		
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2026 been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

**Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2026, this authority’s internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2025/26 has been carried out in accordance with this authority’s needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.			
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.			
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.			
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.			
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.			
F. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority’s approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.			
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.			
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.			
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.			
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick “not covered”)</i>			
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.			
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .			
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .			
O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.			
P. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).
Date(s) internal audit undertaken Name of person who carried out the internal audit

DD/MM/YYYY DD/MM/YYYY DD/MM/YYYY ENTER NAME OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit  Date DD/MM/YYYY

*If the response is ‘no’ please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is ‘not covered’ please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, that:

	<i>Agreed</i>		<i>'Yes' means that this authority:</i>
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No*</i>	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.			<i>has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.</i>

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS


ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
			<i>Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.</i>
1. Balances brought forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies			<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts			<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs			<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments			<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments			<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward			<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments			<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets			<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings			<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?			<i>For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval.


Date

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2025/26 Agenda Item 5 Appendix 3

In respect of

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2026 and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2025/26

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2025/26

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2026

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

DERBY UPDATE 2026

Head of Service:	Jackie King, Chief Executive
Report Author	Phoebe Batchelor
Wards affected:	College Ward; Town Ward; Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward;
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Derby Update 2026

Summary

To provide an update on this year's Derby Festival.

Recommendation (s)

The Conservators are asked to:

(1) Note the update on the 2026 Derby from the Epsom Downs Racecourse

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 To update the Conservators on the 2026 Derby Festival.

2 Background

2.1 The Derby Festival took place from 5 - 6 June 2026.

2.2 Epsom Downs Racecourse have provided an update on the Festival's events, which is attached as Appendix 1.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None.

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None.

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

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

5 Legal Implications

5.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

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

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** Not relevant to this report.

6.2 **Service Plans:** Not relevant to this report.

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

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

6.5 **Partnerships:** None.

6.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** None.

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- [Epsom Downs Racing Season 2026](#)

Other papers:

- None.

THE DERBY FESTIVAL 2026

Summary

June 5th & 6th 2025, saw the Epsom Downs Racecourse Betfred Derby Festival take place, which included the 247th running of The Derby with Betfred continuing their sponsorship of The Derby Festival.

The two days were successfully delivered following almost a year of planning. Despite the wonderful dry spring, Epsom Downs Racecourse was unfortunately hit by extremely adverse weather the week before the Derby and on Derby Day. The extremely high winds and heavy rain in the week before the Festival, led to many operational challenges. Whilst Ladies Day was reasonably bright, the 'mini hurricane' that hit the Racecourse on Derby Day, changed the ground from Good to Soft to Soft before the Derby.

Despite the dreadful weather, the day was operationally successful with Christmas Day winning the Derby at odds of 7/1. The highlight of the day was the Official visit from the King & Queen who arrived just before 3pm and left around 5pm. This was incredibly dutiful of their Majesties, who had flown by helicopter in adverse weather, from a family wedding in Gloucestershire. Their support for the Derby is extremely beneficial for the race and for Epsom.

Build-up

Access to the Downs and our outer enclosures was kindly granted by the Conservators from May 11th. The build period was predominantly dry, and the development of the Temporary structures progressed as a good speed.

The Temporary Structures were all very different to those used in previous years. The Jockey Club conducted a Temporary Structure procurement tender and switched supplier from 'Arena' to 'Fews' for the provision of almost all of the temporary structures.

This year Epsom Downs Racecourse once again applied for the closure of Footpath 50 for a 3-week period, and this again proved to be much safer for all involved during the build-up, with significantly less issues raised to Surrey CC. For 2026, the Racecourse chose to leave the tunnel footpath open for the Derby Festival.

Epsom Downs Racecourse would like to once again thank the Racehorse Trainers and Downskeepers for their co-operation and who, once again, worked well alongside the Racecourse during the build-up period and indeed during the de-rig of the temporary structures. Almost every temporary structure was modified from previous versions and there were additional new features such as Lamp Post banners depicting

previous winners of The Derby on the roadside (approval provided by Surrey Highways), a refreshed footpath tunnel with a mural provided by Nescot College and a fabulous Community Zone in the centre of the course.

The Derby is like no other event, and the build schedule is based on limited time, so it does require all parties to work together during this period. The new contractors were heavily briefed on the Racehorse Training and Travelling community, as well as the importance of maintaining impeccable Health & Safety standards at all times.

Several Racehorse Trainers have commented on how the build was one of the smoothest they have experienced.

Traveller Camp

Unfortunately, as in 2025, a handful of caravans turned up before the Official Travellers camping area was due to open. They parked just off Old London Road on the Downs on Jockey Club owned land. Our on-site security monitored this group, and the council and Police spoke with those concerned. The process to move the camp on was started by the Racecourse and Council but they moved into the designated area on opening. I am not aware of any antisocial behaviour or damage caused by this group in this location, and this was confirmed by the Police.

Despite erecting No Parking/Private Property signage, fixing the gate posts, barrier and padlocks, earth moving and concrete blocks, the UE still gained access to the site, much to the frustration of the residents whose back gardens adjoined the area of land the UE was parked on. The Racecourse would like to see additional banks raised in this area before the end of this year to ensure it is as difficult as possible to get Caravans onto the land.

As in 2025, there were significantly fewer Caravans for the 2026 Derby Festival because of the clash with the Appleby Horse Fair. At the time of writing, the racecourse has received no complaints or reports of any incidents involving the Travelling Community Camp during the 2025 Derby Festival. There were however issues raised by the local residents in Langley Vale, who reported that younger people were firing catapults at their homes and cars. This report was passed to the Police.

All travellers left site by close of play Sunday 7th June. They did not clear up all of their rubbish but did leave the site in a respectable condition. The Appleby Horse fair will once again clash with the Derby Festival in 2027.

Royal Visit

Epsom Downs Racecourse was delighted to welcome the King and Queen to the racecourse on Derby Day. Despite attending a family wedding in Gloucestershire in the morning, their Majesties flew into Epsom Downs Racecourse at 3pm on Derby Day, before viewing the Derby contenders in the Parade Ring and presenting the trophy to the winning connections of Christmas Day. Their Majesties left the Racecourse by helicopter around 5pm.

Epsom Downs Racecourse was honoured to receive their Majesties. Their visit further elevated to the Derby on a national and international stage.

Ladies Day & Derby Day

Over the two days of the Derby Festival Epsom Downs Racecourse witnessed some fantastic racing action across 16 races. The Betfred Derby was won by Christmas Day and was trainer Aiden O'Brien's record-extending 12th Derby success and his fourth in a row. This is the only time in Derby history this feat has been achieved.

The Betfred Oaks was won by Thundering On, trained by Aidan O'Brien's son and ex-Jockey Joseph O'Brien. The third Group 1, The Coolmore Stud Coronation Cup, was won by Bay City Roller who provided his Trainer George Scott with his first Group 1 victory.

Conservators once again gave approval for BBQ's to be permitted within two locations on the Hill. Working alongside our cleaning provider, Surrey Fire & Rescue and an independent fire safety partner, I am pleased to report that there were no issues reported.

There was an unfortunate incident at the end of racing on Derby Day when a drunken brawl broke out amongst a few individuals in the Grandstand enclosure. One person was taken to hospital and currently remains there.

The Grandstand enclosure was sold out on both Ladies Day and Derby Day for the first time since 2022, contributing to an attendance of 48,261 over the 2 days, considerably up on 2025.

Breakdown

The breakdown of the site is on-going, but it is pleasing to hear that all gallops, access routes and areas of the golf course will be returned to stakeholders on-time and free of litter/temporary equipment. There was some damage to the golf course caused by joy-riders a few days before the Derby. This is being investigated.

This was my second Derby as General Manager and I would like to record my thanks on behalf of the whole team and wider Jockey Club for the support of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Surrey County Council, Reigate & Banstead Council, Surrey & Sussex Police, Surrey Fire & Rescue and Southeast Coast Ambulance Service.

Without all of us effectively working together we wouldn't be able to deliver an event of this size that showcases Epsom and Surrey to an international stage. It was a pleasure to be a part of the team to deliver a fantastic Derby Festival in 2026, which has been viewed as a great success despite the weather.

Jim Allen

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REVIEW OF CURRENT GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Head of Service:	Piero Ionta, Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer
Report Author	Phoebe Batchelor
Wards affected:	College Ward; Town Ward; Woodcote and Langley Vale Ward;
Appendices (attached):	None

Summary

This report asks the Conservators to consider whether any changes may be required to the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 to ensure the continued effective governance, management, and operation of Epsom and Walton Downs following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is due to be dissolved on 31 March 2027, with the new East Surrey Council assuming responsibilities and services from 1 April 2027.

This report invites the Conservators to initiate early discussion on whether amendments or clarifications to the Act, or associated governance arrangements, may be required to support a smooth transition and continuity of function.

Recommendation (s)

The Conservators are asked to:

- (1) Consider the potential implications of LGR changes for the governance and operation of the Conservators under the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984.**
- (2) Identify any areas within the Act, or associated governance arrangements, that may require amendment, clarification, or further review.**
- (3) Recommend to Full Council any proposed additions, amendments, or clarifications for comment by East Surrey Shadow Councillors representing Epsom and Ewell wards, to then be submitted to Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) for consideration.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The recommendations set out the necessary assessment and debate required so that the Conservators continue to operate effectively and lawfully following the abolition of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, and that governance arrangements remain clear and fit for purpose under the successor authority.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 ('the 1984 Act') provides the statutory framework governing the management and use of Epsom and Walton Downs. It establishes the Conservators and sets out their composition, powers, and responsibilities.
- 2.2 The Conservators are responsible for preserving the Downs and balancing public access with racehorse training and events.
- 2.3 The Act includes provisions relating to:
 - 2.3.1 Membership of the Conservators (including appointments by the Council and other bodies)
 - 2.3.2 Management and maintenance of the Downs
 - 2.3.3 Public access rights and restrictions
 - 2.3.4 Financial arrangements (including the setting of budgets and precepts)
- 2.4 Local government reorganisation in Surrey will result in the abolition of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council on 31 March 2027, with a new unitary authority (East Surrey Council – 'ESC') created to take on its functions.
- 2.5 This structural change raises questions about how references within the 1984 Act to "the Council" and related governance arrangements will operate in practice following transition.
- 2.6 Due to LGR, any existing council appointments will move from Epsom and Ewell Borough Council to East Surrey Council as of vesting day on 1 April 2027.
- 2.7 MHCLG have and continue to review any changes that require legislative actions to be taken to give effect to LGR. The current position is that any reference to Epsom and Ewell Borough Council within the 1984 Act shall simply be changed to East Surrey Council and that no further changes are necessary to deal with the transition that shall take place on vesting day (1 April 2027).
- 2.8 Therefore, Conservators are invited to debate if there are any specific request that they would like MHCLG to consider that it believed to be necessary to allow for the transition to East Surrey Council to be effective.

- 2.9 These requests will then be shared with East Surrey Council shadow councillors representing Epsom and Ewell wards for their comments before they are shared with MHCLG. MHCLG have indicated that they will only consider proposed changes that have the support of both the predecessor and successor councils.

3 Implications for the Conservators

- 3.1 The reorganisation may have implications including (but not limited to):

3.1.1 Membership and appointments

The Act specifies that a number of Conservators are appointed by the Borough Council. As of 1 April 2027, this shall become East Surrey Council.

3.1.2 Governance and accountability

Any references within the Act to the Borough Council's roles, responsibilities, or oversight will switch to East Surrey Council.

3.1.3 Financial arrangements

The current framework for funding, including budgeting and precepts, may require review to ensure continuity under the new authority. As noted above, any current requirement upon Epsom and Ewell Borough Council shall transfer to East Surrey Council unless changes are requested at this stage.

3.1.4 Staffing and operational support

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council currently supports the Conservators, including employing Downskeepers.

These arrangements for staffing and support services go beyond the current wording of the 1984 Act and are likely to require discussion with East Surrey Council as the successor authority during the shadow period.

3.2 Considerations for the Conservators

The Conservators may wish to consider:

- Whether the current wording of the Act remains appropriate following reorganisation.
- Whether any amendments or supplementary governance arrangements may be required, and if so, noting the reasons why such changes are necessary to aid the smooth transition between EEBC to ESC.

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

4.1 Equality Impact Assessment

4.1.1 None.

4.2 Crime & Disorder

4.2.1 None.

4.3 Safeguarding

4.3.1 None.

4.4 Dependencies

4.4.1 None.

4.5 Other

4.5.1 None.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 The proposed review is not expected, in itself, to give rise to any immediate additional financial commitments. However, Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) may have implications for the future funding, budgeting and financial governance arrangements of the Conservators.

5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** It will be important to ensure that any amendments or clarifications to the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 provide a clear and robust framework for financial accountability under East Surrey Council, maintaining continuity of funding and avoiding ambiguity in responsibility.

5.3 Any proposed changes with financial implications should be subject to further detailed assessment as part of the transition planning process to ensure affordability and alignment with the successor authority's medium-term financial strategy.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 Further to the Surrey (Structural Changes) Order 2026, the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (“the 2007 Act”) and associated transitional regulations, the basic position is that references to predecessor councils in legislation will generally transfer automatically to the new unitary authorities save for limited circumstances where specific amendments may be required through what is colloquially referred to as ‘mop-up legislation’ which is a supplemental statutory instrument made by Parliament adopting the same process used to make the Surrey (Structural Changes) Order.
- 6.2 The ‘mop-up legislation’ is used where provisions are location-specific, and where legislation includes fixed numbers relating to existing councils.
- 6.3 MHCLG have approached Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and all other councils across Surrey to seek clarity as to whether or not there are any issues that require addressing by way of ‘mop-up legislation’. In light of that request MHCLG will be spending the next few months looking to put together a suitable bill to go through Parliament later this year.
- 6.4 They have been clear that whilst they welcome any proposed changes that predecessor council may have, it is imperative that the proposed changes must be necessary to the smooth transition to the successor council and have the support of those councillors recently elected to those successor councils.
- 6.5 It should be noted that if any changes are proposed to byelaws, that these are unlikely to be considered as part of this process as there is a separate process for making changes, which there is insufficient time and resource to do prior to vesting day.
- 6.6 **Legal Officer’s comments:** Any relevant comments are included within the body of this report.

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 7.1 **Council’s Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:
- Effective Council
- 7.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 7.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None.
- 7.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** None.
- 7.5 **Partnerships:** As detailed in this report, any proposed additions, amendments, or clarifications to the Act recommended by the Conservators will require separate consideration by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and East Surrey Shadow Councillors prior to submission to MHCLG.

7.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** The implications of LGR are detailed in section 3 of this report.

8 Background papers

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

Other papers:

- [Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984](#)
- [Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators Byelaws](#)