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Democratic Services

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Tuesday 10 November 2026 at 7.30 pm

Place: Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall

Online access to this meeting is available on YouTube: Link to online broadcast

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

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair)
Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair)
Councillor John Beckett
Councillor Alex Coley
Councillor Kate Chinn
Councillor Shanice Goldman
Councillor Robert Leach
Councillor Humphrey Reynolds

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

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

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

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

Public information

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

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

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

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

Exclusion of the Press and the Public

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

Questions and statements from the Public

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

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

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

Questions must be received in writing by Democratic Services by noon on the fifth working day before the day of the meeting. For this meeting this is **Noon, 3 November 2026**.

A written copy of statements must be received by Democratic Services by noon on the working day before the day of the meeting. For this meeting this is **Noon, 9 November 2026**.

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

Filming and recording of meetings

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

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

AGENDA

1. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

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

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION (Pages 5 - 14)

This report shares with the committee the consultation request from Surrey Fire and Rescue Service on the proposed governance model and the Council's response to the consultation. The response has already been sent and published on Members' News, but it is shared here as required by the Constitution.

4. EXCEPTIONAL CIL-RELATED EX GRATIA PAYMENT POLICY (Pages 15 - 34)

An existing case and request for an ex-gratia payment has prompted consideration of whether the Council should adopt a general framework for exceptional Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) related ex gratia requests.

5. CONFERRING THE TITLE OF HONORARY FREEWOMAN (Pages 35 - 42)

The report invites the Committee to recommend conferring the title of Honorary Freewoman on:

1. Barbara Warwick
2. Judy Sarssam

in recognition of their eminent services to the Borough.

6. UPDATE FROM THE TOWN TWINNING WORKING GROUP (Pages 43 - 46)

This report provides updates from the Town Twinning Working Group and other recent developments. It proposes the closure of the Town Twinning Working Group following notification that the Bucha Epsom Association does not wish to proceed at the present time.

7. URGENT DECISION (Pages 47 - 52)

To report to the committee a decision taken by the Director of Housing, Environment and Regeneration on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

8. REQUEST FOR AN ITEM OF BUSINESS UNDER CPR 3 OF APPENDIX 5 OF THE CONSTITUTION: TO UPDATE THE COMMITTEE ON PROGRESS OF THE WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN ON EEBC STRATEGIC PRIORITY: HOOK ROAD ARENA (Pages 53 - 56)

This report informs the Committee of a request made under CPR 3 of Appendix 5 of the Constitution for an item of business to be included on the agenda.

9. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 57 - 70)

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the Ordinary and Extraordinary meetings of the Committee held on 14 July 2026 and Restricted Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Committee held on 14 July 2026 (attached) and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Pages 71 - 72)

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

EXCEPTIONAL CIL-RELATED EX GRATIA PAYMENT POLICY

Head of Service:	Victoria Potts, Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration
Report Author	Victoria Potts, Ian Mawer
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	n/a
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 - MHCLG Letter dated 25Th June 2026 Appendix 2 – Draft Exceptional Ex Gratia Payments Policy

Summary

An existing case and request for an ex-gratia payment has prompted consideration of whether the Council should adopt a general framework for exceptional Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) related ex gratia requests.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

(1) Note the contents of the Governments letter dated 25th June 2026 at appendix 1.

(2) Adopt the Exceptional Ex-gratia payments policy at appendix 2.

(3) Nominate and authorise the S151 officer to determine any request for a CIL Ex-gratia payment, in accordance with the Policy as adopted.

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 The Government's clarification of 25 June 2026 confirms that, where justified, collecting authorities may make ex gratia compensation payments from general funds in exceptional CIL cases where payment has already been made. The proposed policy gives the Council a consistent, transparent and auditable framework for considering such requests while protecting the integrity of the statutory CIL regime and the Council's General Fund.

1.2 The policy also provides safeguards against creating an automatic entitlement, treating lawful CIL as refundable, allowing double recovery, or making payments where deliberate or reckless conduct, commercial gain, insufficient evidence or the absence of significant hardship applies.

2 Background

Community Infrastructure Levy

2.1 Community Infrastructure Levy is a statutory charge on qualifying development. Exemptions for qualifying householder and self-build development depend upon the applicable statutory requirements and procedures being met. Where CIL is lawfully due, the Council cannot use a local policy to waive the liability or treat it as though it had not arisen.

2.2 CIL has been chargeable in Epsom and Ewell since 29 April 2014 and the income received has contributed towards the delivery of infrastructure in the borough. Since 2024, all CIL spending decisions have been made in accordance with the CIL Spending Protocol, the most recent version of which was approved by the Licencing and Planning Policy Committee in March 2025.

Concerns about householder development exemptions

2.3 There has been a national campaign in relation to self-builders and those extending their homes who had been left owing the money under CIL. This is because homeowners are usually meant to be exempt, but the application of the CIL Regulations have led to some householders being charged.

2.4 It is important to note that the CIL Regulations must be followed by CIL Charging Authorities and there is no discretion to waive charges. There are however opportunities at specific stages of the CIL process to challenge CIL liabilities.

Government clarification

2.5 On 25 June 2026, the Government wrote to CIL Charging Authorities about household developer exemptions. The letter recognised that some householders had incurred significant CIL charges following procedural errors or retrospective planning permission affecting development that had previously benefited from an exemption or was otherwise not liable. The letter states that collecting authorities may, where justified, make ex gratia compensation payments from their general funds in exceptional cases after payment has been made. Such payments are outside the CIL regime and are not a waiver or refund of CIL funds themselves.

2.6 The letter is explicit that such a payment:

a) is not a waiver or refund of CIL;

b) is made outside the statutory CIL regime;

c) comes from the authority's general funds; and

d) may be appropriate where the householder would have qualified for an exemption, but an administrative error prevented a valid claim and significant hardship resulted.

2.7 It is important to note that the letter makes it clear that there are no changes being made to the CIL Regulations and therefore authorities must continue to follow the regulations.

2.8 As set out in the letter any payments made will not come out of the CIL funds held by the Council, but they would be sourced from general funds.

2.9 It is important to note that there is no requirement for Charging Authorities to introduce a process for making ex gratia compensation payments from their general funds, it is at the discretion of each Charging Authority.

Local Case requesting review

2.10 The Council has had correspondence with a local resident who was subject to a CIL charge on their property because of specific circumstances leading to a retrospective planning permission being required to be submitted. The local resident felt that they had exceptional circumstances which warranted the Council's discretion when it came to applying the CIL charge.

2.11 However, The CIL Regulations were correctly followed in this case (retrospective permissions are not eligible for CIL relief) and the homeowner had already settled the CIL charge in full.

2.12 Following the publication of the government clarification letter referred to above, the homeowner has contacted the Council requesting that it consider an ex-gratia payment from council reserves.

Purpose and operation of the proposed policy

2.13 The proposed policy applies only to individual householder developers undertaking development primarily for their own residential occupation. It is time limited and will cease on 31 March 2027. It does not apply to unpaid CIL or create a right to payment.

2.14 An applicant must satisfy all gateway criteria before an application proceeds to substantive assessment by the S151 officer. These cover the applicant and original exemption, lawful payment, causation, exceptional circumstances, conduct, comparability of the completed development, significant hardship or injustice, alternative remedies, proportionality and the public interest.

2.15 The policy permits no payment, a limited payment, a substantial payment or, in the most exceptional circumstances, a payment equivalent to the CIL paid. Any award may be reduced for contributory responsibility, financial advantage or sums recovered from another party, and may not exceed the CIL actually paid.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 There are no equality issues for this report.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 There are no crime and disorder implications of this report.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 There are no safeguarding implications of this report.

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 There are no dependencies of this report.

3.5 Other

3.5.1 There are no other risks of this report.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 The Section 151 Officer should confirm that individual payments are affordable, lawful and consistent with the Council’s financial position and statutory duties before commitment.

4.2 **Section 24 considerations:** The proposed policy does not of itself trigger Section 24.

4.3 **Section 151 Officer's comments**: The proposed policy could give rise to future ex gratia payments where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated. As such payments are discretionary and cannot be quantified with certainty, there is a potential financial risk to the Council if the number or value of claims exceeds expectations. There is currently no dedicated budget for payments under this policy. Any award must therefore be funded from identified resources and remain affordable within the Council's overall financial framework.

4.4 Any payments should be subject to robust eligibility criteria, clear evidential requirements, and an appropriate approval process. Decisions should be made within an agreed financial framework and be funded from existing approved budgets or identified reserves, with no ongoing commitment created unless specifically approved by Members.

4.5 The policy may also create expectations for future compensation requests. It is therefore essential that decisions are fully documented and supported by a clear rationale demonstrating the exceptional nature of each case.

4.6 Subject to these controls, the financial risks arising from the adoption of the policy are considered to be manageable.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 CIL that is lawfully payable cannot be waived or refunded through this policy. Any award would instead be a separate discretionary compensation payment from the General Fund. The policy must identify and rely upon an appropriate legal power for expenditure, comply with public-law principles and be applied consistently on the evidence and may be considered in extraordinary situations. Decisions must be based on objective assessment and aligned with principals of fairness and rationality.

5.2 The Government letter of 25 June 2026 provides the relevant policy context but does not remove the need for the Council to establish its legal power, comply with governance requirements or assess each case independently. The policy as drafted therefore requires evidence on the balance of probabilities, written reasons, consideration of third-party remedies and safeguards against double recovery.

5.3 **Legal Officer's comments**: None other than as set out in the above report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- Effective Council: transparent, consistent and accountable decision-making and responsible stewardship of public funds.

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

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations**: Not applicable.

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications**: Not applicable.

6.5 **Partnerships**: Not applicable.

6.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications**: Not applicable as the Policy will run to 31st March 2027 only.

7 Background papers

7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows: None

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Matthew Pennycook MP
Minister of State for Housing and Planning

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

To: Leaders of CIL charging authorities in England
Cc: Chief Executives of CIL charging authorities in England

25 June 2026

Dear Leader,

Community Infrastructure Levy – Household Developer Exemptions

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced through regulations in 2010, enabling local planning authorities to secure funding which supports development by the delivery of community infrastructure – such as schools, green spaces and health facilities – needed to mitigate the cumulative impacts of development across the local authority's area. The Government remains committed to strengthening and improving the CIL regime, with over half of local planning authorities now charging CIL.

CIL is a set charge on most new development of 100 square metres or more, as well as on new dwellings of any size. It applies only in areas where a local authority has consulted on and approved a charging schedule setting out its levy rates, and has published that schedule on its website. The regulations prescribe clear procedures that must be followed in setting, charging and collecting CIL. Taken together, this provides certainty for local authorities, developers and communities about which development is liable for CIL, how much is due, and when payment is required.

Household Developer Exemptions

The CIL Regulations were amended in 2014 under previous governments to introduce exemptions for individuals who build their own homes, undertake large extensions to their existing homes, or construct residential annexes within the grounds of their own homes. To secure these exemptions, the regulations made at the time were clear that applicants must apply to the CIL charging authority and receive confirmation that the exemption has been granted before development commences. This requirement is intended to ensure that developers have clarity about their CIL liability – or any exemption that applies – prior to the start of the build. This is because CIL is payable on commencement.

While the CIL Regulations provide clarity on the criteria that must be met and procedures that must be followed to secure relief or an exemption, the Government is aware of some historic cases where householders have failed to obtain an exemption due to procedural errors, which may have been inadvertent or unintentional. In some instances, despite meeting the qualifying criteria, householders may not have followed the procedures set out in the regulations, and may not have applied for or received a CIL exemption before commencing development. In others, an exemption may not have been obtained because retrospective planning permission was granted

after further works had already begun on a development that had previously benefitted from an exemption or was otherwise not liable for CIL. The Government recognises that this has, in some cases, resulted in the imposition of significant CIL charges under the regulations.

Given the relevant regulations and procedures have been in place for over a decade under successive governments, there will naturally be a huge variance as to the reasons why procedural errors may have occurred. In some cases, individuals may not have been aware of their CIL liability until works had already commenced. The Government is aware that, beyond the requirement to publish a charging schedule, local authorities may have also taken different approaches to communicating how CIL operates in their area. In other cases, individuals may not have understood that procedural errors could result in the loss of eligibility for an exemption, or that such exemptions could not be secured for retrospective permission. There will also be significant variance between the types of householder developers themselves – some with higher levels of personal resources and access to professional advice, and others less familiar with regulatory and procedural requirements in the planning system. As a result, the circumstances and facts of each case will differ.

Within this context, the current Government is now proceeding to take action on two fronts. First, we are proposing to consult on amendments to be made to the CIL Regulations to ensure that these issues do not arise again in the future – recognising the need to improve the operation of the CIL regime going forwards.

Secondly, in recognition of the significant variance in the facts and circumstances of individual cases that will have occurred across many charging authorities since 2014, we are providing some clarity to local authorities over their existing discretion to take action as they see appropriate in specific cases.

Consultation on CIL Regulation Reforms

The Government is proposing to consult on a proposed package of targeted regulatory changes to make the operation of CIL clearer and more proportionate for householders and self-builders.

We are confident that these proposed changes will ensure that householders and self-builders who would otherwise be eligible for a CIL exemption are not faced with unexpected liability charges as a result of procedural errors in future.

We are working to publish the consultation as soon as possible. We will, of course, welcome views from the sector, particularly Local Planning Authorities and other interested parties to ensure we get these proposals right.

Historic Cases

Given the new regulations will only apply once they come into force, the Government recognises that local authorities may continue to receive concerns from those who will not be able to benefit from the changes – either because they have already received a CIL charge, or because they commenced development before the regulations are effective. There are some options available to local authorities in such circumstances.

First, we strongly recommend all authorities to review their local CIL guidance and communication methods to ensure any household developers in their area are aware of the current exemptions and the necessary procedures to access them.

Second, while charging authorities have a duty to collect CIL that is due, they continue to have a degree of discretion over the steps they take to do so and when. This includes considering what is reasonable and proportionate in any given case and the appropriate timescales for enforcement activity. It has been brought to the Government's attention that escalated enforcement actions, including threats of forced sale or criminal proceedings, have led to serious consequences for some individuals and families. Such action, or similar, is not required by the regulations without regard to local authorities' broader legal obligations – and the precise approach to CIL collection in any individual case will depend on the specific facts and circumstances. Exactly what enforcement steps to take, and when, to collect CIL in each case is a matter for the judgement of the authority concerned.

Third – where an authority feels this is justified – collecting authorities are able to make ex gratia payments of compensation from their general funds in exceptional CIL cases where payment has been made. Such payments would not constitute a waiver or refund of CIL, but rather a discretionary payment made from general funds, outside the CIL regime. These circumstances may arise where a charging authority considers that redress is appropriate because a householder developer would have been entitled to an exemption but, as a result of an administrative error, failed to claim it in accordance with the required procedure and now faces significant hardship as a consequence. There will be a range of considerations for local authorities in making such a decision, and in all cases, they should seek their own legal advice based on the facts and circumstances of individual cases.

Best wishes,



MATTHEW PENNYCOOK MP
Minister of State for Housing and Planning

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Exceptional CIL-Related Ex Gratia Payment Policy

1. Purpose and status

1.1 This policy establishes the circumstances in which Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (the Council) may consider making an exceptional ex gratia payment to a householder developer who has paid Community Infrastructure Levy. This policy runs until 31st March 2027 only.

1.2 Any payment made under this policy:

a. is made from the Council's General Fund;
b. is wholly separate from the statutory Community Infrastructure Levy regime;
c. does not constitute a refund, repayment, remission or waiver of CIL;
d. does not alter or invalidate any liability notice, demand notice, surcharge or other decision made under the CIL Regulations;
e. does not amount to an admission that CIL was incorrectly assessed or collected; and
f. does not establish an entitlement or binding precedent in relation to any other case.

1.3 The Council has a duty to administer and collect CIL in accordance with the applicable legislation. The fact that an applicant would have preferred a different outcome, or that the statutory rules have produced a severe financial consequence, does not of itself justify an ex gratia payment.

1.4 Payments under this policy are exceptional. There is no right to receive a payment, and each application will be determined on its individual facts and evidence.

1.5 There is no right of appeal.

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2. Scope

2.1 The policy applies only to individuals undertaking development primarily for their own residential occupation.

2.2 It may apply where:

a. the development originally qualified, or would clearly have qualified, for a statutory householder or self-build exemption;
b. that exemption was validly granted, or would have been granted had the relevant procedure been correctly completed;
c. CIL subsequently became lawfully payable because of an administrative or procedural

error, an unintended event, or the need for retrospective planning permission; and
d. the CIL has been paid in full to the Council and the CIL liability discharged

2.3 The policy does not apply to requests to waive unpaid CIL. The Council may consider collection, and enforcement matters separately under the CIL Regulations and its applicable recovery procedures.

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3. Gateway eligibility criteria

An application will proceed to substantive assessment only where **all** the following criteria are met.

3.1 Eligible applicant

The applicant must:

a. be the person who incurred and paid the relevant CIL liability, or their duly authorised personal representative;
b. have undertaken the development as a genuine householder or self-builder;
c. for self-build dwellings have intended the completed dwelling to be their principal residence for a period of at least 3 years following completion; and
d. not have undertaken the development primarily for sale, letting, investment or other commercial gain.

3.2 Original eligibility for exemption

The Council must be satisfied that, immediately before the relevant error or event:

a. the original development met the substantive requirements for an applicable CIL exemption;
b. the applicant had either secured the exemption or would have qualified for it had the correct procedure been followed; and
c. no other fact existed that would independently have prevented or withdrawn the exemption.

3.3 Lawful CIL payment

The relevant CIL must:

a. have been lawfully assessed under the CIL Regulations;
b. have been paid in full to the Council; and
c. not already have been repaid, credited, written off or compensated through another procedure.

3.4 Direct causal connection

There must be a clear and direct causal connection between:

a. the administrative or procedural error or unintended event;
b. the loss or unavailability of the exemption;
c. the requirement for a new or retrospective planning permission, where relevant; and
d. the resulting CIL payment.

An application will not qualify where CIL would have arisen in any event for reasons unrelated to the matter relied upon by the applicant.

3.5 Exceptional circumstances

The circumstances must be genuinely exceptional and materially different from the ordinary consequences of failing to comply with planning or CIL requirements.

Exceptional circumstances may include:

a. a significant and evidenced administrative error by the Council or another public body;
b. demonstrably incorrect or materially misleading written advice from the Council on which the applicant reasonably relied;
c. an unforeseen structural collapse or emergency requiring immediate action;
d. demolition or other works undertaken by a contractor outside the applicant's express instructions and without the applicant's prior knowledge;
e. an unexpected safety issue supported by contemporaneous professional evidence;
f. serious illness, bereavement or another acute personal emergency directly affecting the applicant's ability to manage the relevant procedure; or
g. another event outside the applicant's reasonable control that could not reasonably have been anticipated or avoided.

The existence of one of these circumstances does not automatically justify a payment.

3.6 Conduct of the applicant

The applicant must demonstrate that they:

a. acted honestly and in good faith;
b. took reasonable steps to understand and comply with the planning permission and CIL requirements;
c. appointed appropriately competent professional advisers and contractors where reasonably necessary;
d. did not instruct, authorise or knowingly permit development materially contrary to the approved plans;
e. contacted the Council promptly after becoming aware of the error or event;

f. stopped or modified works when reasonably instructed to do so;
g. cooperated fully in regularising the development; and
h. provided a complete and accurate account supported by available evidence.

3.7 Nature of the completed development

The development subsequently authorised or completed must be materially comparable with the originally exempt development.

In assessing this, the Council will consider:

a. the number and use of the dwellings;
b. gross internal floorspace;
c. scale, height, footprint and volume;
d. approved and completed design;
e. whether additional development value was created;
f. whether the change gave the applicant a planning or financial advantage; and
g. whether the completed development continued to serve substantially the same residential purpose.

Minor or unavoidable differences will not necessarily prevent an award. A material enlargement, additional dwelling or substantially different form of development will normally do so.

3.8 Significant hardship or injustice

The applicant must demonstrate that retaining the full financial consequence of the CIL payment would cause significant hardship or a manifestly disproportionate outcome.

The Council may consider:

a. the amount of CIL paid;
b. the applicant's household income, capital, savings and accessible assets;
c. unavoidable household expenditure and liabilities;
d. borrowing undertaken to pay the CIL;
e. the effect on the applicant's ability to retain or occupy their principal home;
f. any exceptional health, care or accessibility costs;
g. the effect on dependent household members;
h. whether the applicant obtained any corresponding increase in property value; and
i. any other reliable evidence of serious financial or personal impact.

The size of the CIL charge alone will not establish significant hardship.

3.9 Alternative remedies

The applicant must have taken reasonable steps to recover the loss from any person who may be responsible, including:

a. a builder or contractor;
b. an architect, planning agent or other professional adviser;
c. an insurer or warranty provider; or
d. another public or private body.

The applicant must disclose:

a. any complaint, claim, insurance notification or legal proceeding;
b. any settlement, compensation, insurance payment or other recovery received or expected; and
c. the reasons why any available recovery route has not been pursued.

The Council may defer its decision pending the outcome of another claim or require an undertaking dealing with any later recovery.

3.10 Proportionality and public interest

The proposed payment must be proportionate and represent a proper use of public funds, taking account of:

a. the nature and seriousness of the exceptional circumstances;
b. the relative responsibility of the applicant, their contractor, professional advisers and the Council;
c. the degree of hardship established;
d. any financial or planning benefit obtained by the applicant;
e. the availability of alternative remedies;
f. consistency with decisions in materially comparable cases;
g. the impact on the Council's General Fund; and
h. fairness to council taxpayers.

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4. Exclusions

An ex gratia payment will not normally be made in any of the following circumstances.

4.1 Deliberate or reckless conduct

Where the applicant, their agent or a person acting with their authority:

a. deliberately departed from approved plans;
b. commenced or continued works knowing that the necessary permission, exemption or approval was not in place;
c. knowingly demolished or altered works required to be retained;
d. ignored an express warning or instruction from the Council;
e. acted recklessly as to whether the development remained lawful or exempt; or
f. attempted to use retrospective permission as an alternative to obtaining permission before undertaking the works.

For policy purposes, the actions of a contractor will not automatically be treated as outside the applicant's control. The Council will consider the applicant's instructions, supervision, contractual arrangements and response after becoming aware of the contractor's actions.

4.2 Commercial development or gain

Where:

a. the development was undertaken primarily for sale, letting or investment;
b. the applicant is acting as a commercial developer, company or development vehicle;
c. more than one dwelling was created, unless the additional dwelling was expressly included within the originally exempt development;
d. the relevant change materially increased the development's sale value, floorspace or development potential; or
e. the applicant disposed of the property or ceased to occupy it contrary to the conditions associated with the original exemption.

4.3 Failure to take reasonable care

Where the loss of the exemption resulted from:

a. failure to read clear information supplied by the Council;
b. failure to respond to correspondence or statutory notices;
c. failure to submit a required form without a credible exceptional explanation;
d. poor management or supervision of contractors;
e. proceeding without appropriate structural or professional advice where such advice was reasonably necessary;
f. failure to clarify an obvious discrepancy in the approved plans; or
g. avoidable delay in notifying the Council.

A minor or understandable procedural error will not necessarily be excluded, but the Council will consider whether a reasonable householder in the same circumstances could have avoided the outcome.

4.4 Unsupported assertions

Where the application depends on an alleged collapse, emergency, contractor error, professional error, health event or other exceptional occurrence but is not supported by appropriate evidence.

Depending on the circumstances, evidence may include:

a. dated photographs or video;
b. building-control or site inspection records;
c. a structural engineer's report;
d. contractor records and witness accounts;
e. contemporaneous correspondence;
f. insurance documentation;
g. medical evidence limited to what is necessary to establish the relevant circumstances; or
h. invoices, contracts, method statements and site diaries.

4.5 No significant hardship

Where the applicant cannot demonstrate significant hardship or serious injustice, including where:

a. the payment can reasonably be met without threatening the applicant's home or essential living needs;
b. the applicant has sufficient accessible resources;
c. the financial impact is principally a reduction in expected profit or investment return; or
d. the applicant has received a corresponding financial advantage from the revised development.

4.6 Available alternative recovery

Where:

a. another person has accepted responsibility for the loss;
b. an insurance or contractual remedy is reasonably available but has not been pursued;
c. compensation has already been received; or
d. an award would result in double recovery.

The Council may make an exception where the alternative remedy is demonstrably ineffective, disproportionate or unavailable despite reasonable efforts.

4.7 Incorrect statutory challenge

Where the application is in substance:

a. an attempt to appeal or reopen a lawful CIL decision outside the statutory appeal process;
b. a disagreement with the CIL Regulations themselves;
c. an application to waive unpaid CIL; or
d. a request to disregard a lawful liability or demand notice.

4.8 Fraud, misrepresentation or non-disclosure

Where the applicant:

a. has supplied information that is false or materially misleading;
b. has omitted a material fact;
c. has falsified or altered supporting evidence; or
d. has failed to disclose compensation, insurance proceeds or another relevant recovery.

Suspected fraud may be referred for investigation.

4.9 Previous determination

Where the same application has already been determined under this policy, unless:

a. significant new evidence has become available that could not reasonably have been produced earlier; or
b. a material procedural error affected the original decision.

4.10 Late applications

An application made more than **12 months** after the applicant became aware of the relevant policy or basis for making a claim will normally be excluded unless there are exceptional reasons for the delay.

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5. Determining the amount

5.1 Meeting the eligibility criteria does not create an entitlement to the whole amount of CIL paid.

5.2 The Council may determine that:

a. no payment should be made;
b. a partial payment should be made; or
c. in the most exceptional circumstances, a payment equivalent to the CIL paid should be made.

5.3 In determining the amount, the Council will consider:

a. the applicant's contribution to the events;
b. the extent to which contractor or professional conduct caused the loss;
c. any Council error or misleading advice;
d. the degree of hardship;
e. any increase in the scale or value of the development;
f. sums recovered or recoverable from another party;
g. the applicant's actions to mitigate their loss; and
h. proportionality and fairness to council taxpayers.

5.4 Any award must not exceed the amount of CIL actually paid, less:

a. compensation or insurance proceeds received;
b. sums recovered from contractors or professional advisers;
c. any identifiable financial advantage arising from the changed development; and
d. any other amount necessary to prevent double recovery.

5.5 The Council may reduce an award to reflect contributory responsibility.

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6. Suggested decision categories

For consistent decision-making, the following categories may be used:

Category A: no payment

The applicant's deliberate, reckless or materially negligent conduct caused the liability, or hardship has not been established.

Category B: limited payment

Exceptional circumstances are established, but the applicant or their contractor materially contributed to the outcome, or the evidence of hardship is limited.

Category C: substantial payment

The event was predominantly outside the applicant's reasonable control, the applicant acted promptly and responsibly, the completed development remained materially comparable, and significant hardship is established.

Category D: payment equivalent to the CIL paid

Reserved for the most exceptional cases where:

- the applicant would otherwise have retained the exemption;
- the loss was caused wholly or overwhelmingly an unavoidable event;
- the applicant bears little or no responsibility;
- there was no material development or financial advantage;
- alternative recovery is unavailable; and
- retaining the full financial effect would cause severe hardship or manifest injustice.

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7. Evidence and burden of proof

7.1 The applicant is responsible for supplying sufficient evidence to support the application.

7.2 The Council will determine the application on the **balance of probabilities**.

7.3 The Council may obtain information from its planning, building control, CIL, finance, complaints and enforcement records.

7.4 The Council may seek independent professional advice where necessary.

7.5 Failure to supply reasonably requested information may result in the application being determined on the information available or being declined.

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Head of Service:	Andrew Bircher, Assistant Director of Corporate Services
Report Author	Andrew Bircher
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	no
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	n/a
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 - Consultation document, and Appendix 2 - Consultation response

Summary

This report shares with the committee the consultation request from Surrey Fire and Rescue Service on the proposed governance model and the Council's response to the consultation. The response has already been sent and published on Members' News, but it is shared here as required by the Constitution.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

(1) Note the report

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 The consultation response has already been sent and the consultation window is closed.

2 Background

2.1 The Council was consulted by MHCLG on a proposal to amend the governance arrangements for Surrey Fire and Rescue, arising from Local Government Reorganisation. It was proposed by the consultation that the current county wide fire and rescue service should not be split into East and West, but remain as a single entity. But as Surrey County Council would no longer exist going forward and Surrey Fire and Rescue was a service offered by the single unitary, a change would have to happen to put in place different governance arrangements if it was to remain as a single entity outside of Surrey County Council or East and West Surrey Councils.

2.2 A consultation document was shared with the council. A response was drafted and shared with the management team as well as the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy and Resources committee. The proposed response was not shared with all members prior to submission.

2.3 The final response was sent to meet the deadline of 31st July and shared on Members' News.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 The consultation response did not require and EIA, although the new service may carry one out

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 The consultation was about governance only

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 The consultation was about governance only

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 none

3.5 Other

3.5.1 none

4 Financial Implications

4.1 **Section 24 considerations:** There were no s24 trigger for the council in relation to responding to this consultation.

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments**: There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any future financial commitments or funding arrangements resulting from the proposed Strategic Authority would be subject to further detailed consideration and approval by the relevant Council.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 There were no legal issues affecting the Council as a result of this consultation

5.2 **Legal Officer's comments**: Named officers have delegated authority (CG2 – Appendix 2.1) to respond on behalf of the Council to all Consultations from Central Government, Surrey County Council and any professional body, after consultation with the Chair of any relevant Committee. A report to note this is then required to be bought to the next listed committee meeting sharing the response.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- Effective Council

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

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

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

6.5 **Partnerships**: Surrey Fire and Rescue service is an important partner

6.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications**: The consultation arose as a result of LGR

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- None

Other papers:

- None

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Background

Local government reorganisation in Surrey will take effect on 1 April 2027, resulting in:

- the abolition of Surrey County Council, which currently acts as the Fire and Rescue Authority; and,
- the creation of two new unitary authorities (West Surrey and East Surrey).

To ensure the continuity of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, a new governance arrangement must be in place to ensure that there is an authority to discharge fire and rescue services from 1 April 2027.

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government is consulting on the proposal to establish a Combined Fire and Rescue Authority for Surrey.

No final decision has been made, and the responses to this consultation will inform the Secretary of State's decision on whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

This consultation relates to fire governance in Surrey. The proposal relates to England only.

The proposal

The Secretary of State proposes the establishment of a Combined Fire and Rescue Authority for Surrey under Sections 2 and 3 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

- The new Combined Fire and Rescue Authority would cover the operational footprint of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service
- It would assume all functions currently executed by Surrey County Council in its role as the Fire and Rescue Authority
- The new authority would come into effect from 1 April 2027
- To ensure that the new Combined Fire and Rescue Authority can set a budget and council tax precept for the 2027/28 financial year, it is proposed that a shadow Fire and Rescue Authority is established in advance of 1 April 2027.

One alternative approach would be to transfer fire and rescue governance to a Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) for Surrey. This is a model that has been used in some parts of England to bring police and fire governance together under a single elected individual.

However, this approach is not considered feasible for Surrey. The Home Office has announced its intention to abolish PFCCs by the end of their current electoral cycle in 2028. In light of this, we do not believe that the PFCC model is a viable long-term governance arrangement.

Another alternative would be to have fire and rescue functions exercised by the Chief Constable, using existing legislation to allow closer integration between police and fire services.

However, this approach is also not considered appropriate for Surrey. The boundaries of police forces are currently subject to review, which creates uncertainty about the stability of this governance model. In addition, current government policy emphasises governance arrangements with clear democratic oversight and accountability. Transferring fire and rescue governance to the Chief Constable would not align with this policy.

Rationale

The government's current view is that this proposal is the most deliverable option to ensure continuity of governance and public service following local government reorganisation.

- The proposal maintains the governance of a single, county-wide fire and rescue service, avoiding fragmentation across the two new unitary authorities.
- Similar models have been implemented before, most recently in the case of Dorset and Wiltshire (2016) and Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (2021)
- The proposal is deliverable and ensures a new governance model will be in place by 1 April 2027.

Impacts

The proposal relates to the governance of fire and rescue services in Surrey, rather than the delivery of operational services. As such, we do not expect it to have significant direct impacts on businesses, the economy, or service users.
In line with the Better Regulation Framework, a proportionate assessment of impacts has been undertaken. This indicates that:

- The proposal is not expected to result in direct costs or savings to business. It does not introduce new regulatory requirements and is therefore not expected to have a material impact on the private or voluntary sectors.
- The proposal will change governance arrangements, with a new Combined Fire and Rescue Authority assuming responsibility for functions currently exercised by Surrey County Council. This may have implications for governance structures, funding arrangements, and decision-making processes, including the setting of the council tax precept.

Consultees

In line with Section 2(5) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, we are consulting the existing Fire and Rescue Authority (Surrey County Council), the new unitary authorities for West and East Surrey, and all the district and borough councils within Surrey.

We are also seeking views from other stakeholders considered appropriate, including the Chief Fire Officer of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service.

Consultation questions

Surrey County Council, which currently acts as the Fire and Rescue Authority, is being abolished and replaced by two new unitary authorities: West Surrey and East Surrey. Therefore, a new Fire and Rescue Authority needs to be established.

Question 1: Do you agree with establishing a Combined Fire and Rescue Authority for Surrey? If not, what alternative would you propose?

To ensure the continuity of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, and in the interest of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, the new Combined Fire and Rescue Authority must be in place by 1 April 2027.

Question 2: Do you consider the proposed transfer could have any negative implications for public safety, and if so, what mitigations would be required to ensure services are not adversely affected?

As Surrey County Council is being abolished, it will no longer have the legal ability to set Council Tax for Fire and Rescue in respect of 2027/28. Consequently, the new Fire and Rescue Authority would not be able to effectively execute its functions without precept income.

To ensure that the new Combined Fire and Rescue Authority can set a budget and Council Tax precept for the 2027/28 financial year, it is proposed that a shadow Fire and Rescue Authority is established in advance of 1 April 2027, through the provision of Section 60(2)(b) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

The shadow authority would operate on a temporary basis, planned for January to April 2027 when the new Combined Fire and Rescue Authority would be established. The shadow authority would be given limited functions necessary to prepare for the establishment of the new authority. Its membership would closely reflect the future arrangements for the new Combined Fire and Rescue Authority.

Question 3: Do you agree to the formation of the shadow authority?

Subject to Parliamentary timings, it might be possible to establish the shadow authority earlier than January.

Question 4: If this is the case, would establishing the shadow authority before January be beneficial?

Question 5: Are there any other considerations we should take into account?

Duration

This consultation will last for six weeks from 22 June 2026 to 31 July 2026.

In line with Cabinet Office Consultation Principles, we consider the six-week period to be proportionate. This is a targeted consultation with a group of stakeholders affected by the proposal.

Engagement with key stakeholders, including Surrey County Council, has been ongoing in advance of this consultation. Consultees will already be familiar with the proposal and the wider context of Local Government Reorganisation, and therefore will be able to provide informed responses within the consultation period.

We consider six weeks to be sufficient time for consultees to fully consider the proposal and provide informed responses, whilst also enabling policy development to progress in a timely fashion.

How to respond and make enquiries

To submit your response or make any enquiries about this consultation, please contact FireGovernance@communities.gov.uk.

Response on Surrey Fire and Rescue consultation from Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

Five questions were asked as part of the consultation:

Question 1: Do you agree with establishing a Combined Fire and Rescue Authority for Surrey? If not, what alternative would you propose?

Yes, in principle. The size and scale of an authority that covers the existing geography of Surrey makes sense and mirrors the current arrangements so would involve minimal disruption to operational structures. As the current arrangement for Surrey County Council is changing, the service cannot remain as it is. For some services within the footprint of Surrey there are considerations being given to "hosting" arrangements, with either Unitary authority providing service for the other part in this early transition phase. Given the long-term nature of this change establishing a stand-alone Fire and Rescue service makes sense, which could then service both unitary authorities and sit under a strategic mayoral authority, if one is established in due course.

However, there is no detailed information given on how a new governance model would work and whether it will, or need to be, democratically accountable, e.g. will there be a Fire and Rescue committee with key stakeholders (e.g. the two new authorities of East and West Surrey) as members who hold the Fire and Rescue service accountable; or an elected Fire and Rescue Commissioner, (noting the intended abolition of Police and Crime Commissioners).

If such structures are put in place, and given the fact that Police and Crime Commissioners are being disbanded, how will this proposed model be different, as they are taking a similar approach, e.g. police acting separately outside of a local authority? Have lessons been learned by the police example?

Question 2: Do you consider the proposed transfer could have any negative implications for public safety, and if so, what mitigations would be required to ensure services are not adversely affected?

It should not. As said in the consultation document this proposal considers the governance arrangements rather than the operational arrangements. Whatever is put in place however will need to ensure that there is transparency and accountability to the public about the fire and rescue service, as mentioned above.

Question 3: Do you agree to the formation of the shadow authority?

Yes

Question 4: If this is the case, would establishing the shadow authority before January be beneficial?

As soon as possible would be better to allow for the transition by April 2027 and would tie in with the LGR/FSA timetable.

Question 5: Are there any other considerations we should take into account?

What would the funding arrangements be for the new service?. No details are given on this. Would there be a separate precept collected through the council tax process? If so, there are potential impacts on the new Surrey authorities about collecting a new precept for the F&R service. This could involve additional resource, and consideration on how the money would be collected and distributed as well as feeding into the budget setting process in time for April 2027.

Changes may be required to ensure existing ICT systems in Unitaries can handle this change in the available time period before vesting day. Also there will need to be effective communications to ensure that residents don't see this as a significant increase in their council tax bill, but instead a transfer of funding from the legacy Surrey County Council to the new stand-alone service.

CONFERRING THE TITLE OF HONORARY FREEWOMAN

Head of Service:	Piero Ionta, Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer
Report Author	Tim Richardson
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Supporting statement for Barbara Warwick Appendix 2 – Supporting statement for Judy Sarssam

Summary

The report invites the Committee to recommend conferring the title of Honorary Freewoman on:

1. Barbara Warwick
2. Judy Sarssam

in recognition of their eminent services to the Borough.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

(1) Recommend that the Council places on record its deep appreciation of the eminent services to the Borough of Epsom and Ewell rendered by:

a. Barbara Warwick

b. Judy Sarssam

(2) That a Special Meeting of the Council be convened immediately following Full Council on 8 December 2026, at which members will be recommended to confer the title of Honorary Freewoman.

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 This report invites the Committee to consider conferring the title of Honorary Freewoman on:

a. Barbara Warwick

b. Judy Sarssam

1.2 It is customary for the Council to consider the possibility of the award of honours to persons who have given eminent services to the Borough.

1.3 A nomination for the aforementioned persons has been received by the Council's Chief Executive.

1.4 Supporting statements for both Barbara Warwick (Appendix 1) and Judy Sarssam (Appendix 2) are attached to this report.

2 Background

2.1 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows Local Authorities to appoint both Honorary Freemen/Freewomen and Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen. The criterion for appointment as Freeman or Freewoman is that an individual should be a "person of distinction" and have "rendered eminent service to the place or area". The criterion for appointment as an Alderman or Alderwoman is that an individual "should have rendered eminent service to the Council as [a] past Member of that Council". There is no bar on an individual being both an Honorary Freeman and an Honorary Alderman.

2.2 The Local Government Act specifies that both Honorary Freemen/Freewomen and Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen must be appointed at a Special Meeting of Council specifically convened for that purpose (so no other business can be transacted at such a meeting, with the appointment being endorsed by a two thirds majority of those Members in attendance at the meeting.

2.3 Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen have no 'legal or social precedence' but it is custom and practice that they are invited to all Civic ceremonial events. The Aldermen/Alderwomen have no right to attend meetings of the Council or its committees beyond those of the public, but the Council has recognised their attendance and allowing then to sit within the Chamber. The Aldermen/Alderwomen status does not carry with it any allowances or payments to which serving councillors are entitled.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 Not applicable

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 Not applicable

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 Not applicable

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 Not applicable

3.5 Other

3.5.1 Not applicable

4 Financial Implications

4.1 Section 249(4A) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that principal councils:

4.2 '. . . may spend such reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address, or a casket containing an address, to a person upon whom it has conferred the title of honorary alderman or honorary alderwoman.'

4.3 There are costs of preparing the traditional scrolls and a photographer for the ceremony. It is also customary for the Council to cover the cost of any hospitality provided for the newly elected Freewomen and a select number of guests. Hospitality will be held on a date to be confirmed in March 2027 at a Civic event held at Bourne Hall.

4.4 It is estimated that these costs will amount to £3,300 in total and will be met from existing budgets.

4.5 **Section 24** The estimated expenditure is below the applicable Section 24 consent threshold and will be met from existing approved budgets. No specific consent is therefore required.

4.6 **Section 151 Officer's comments**: The estimated costs of conferring the titles, including the preparation of the ceremonial scrolls, photography and associated hospitality, will be met from existing approved budgets.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 The formal decision to confer the status of Honorary Freewoman must be ratified by a Special Meeting of the Council.

5.2 **Legal Officer's comments**:

5.3 Under regulation 32(2) and 32(4) of the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) (No.2) Regulations 2008, on vesting day any honorary aldermen/alderwomen or honorary freeman/freewoman of this Council ("a predecessor council") become honorary aldermen/alderwomen or are admitted as an honorary freeman/freewoman of East Surrey Council.

Policies, Plans & Partnerships

5.4 **Council's Key Priorities**: This proposal does not engage any of the Council's Key Priorities.

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

5.6 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations** Not applicable.

5.7 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications**: Not applicable.

5.8 **Partnerships**: Not applicable.

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

6 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- None

Other papers:

- None

Barb Warwick - Freedom of the Borough Supporting Statement from Cllr. Clive Woodbridge

For more than five decades Barb Warwick has dedicated herself to voluntary service, charitable fundraising and support for veterans, patients, older people and local organisations. She has made an exceptional and sustained contribution to the Epsom and Ewell community since the 1990s when she moved into the area.

Barb's commitment to the Royal British Legion began in the late 1960s as a Poppy Appeal collector, going out with her father, and has continued throughout her life. When she moved to the Borough she continued as a collector for what was then the Ewell branch, and in 2012 became the Epsom and Ewell Poppy Appeal Organiser (PAO), a role she held until 2017. During her tenure she transformed the local appeal from a small operation involving around 20 volunteers into a borough-wide campaign involving more than ten times that number of volunteers.

Barb's involvement in the Poppy Appeal in Epsom and Ewell was extensive and wide ranging and included making up the collection rotas, arranging all the supplies to get to the various collecting locations, delivering and collecting tins, down to counting and banking the money collected. In this way Barb was directly instrumental and responsible for collecting around £500,000 from the Epsom and Ewell community during her time as PAO in support of the Poppy Appeal.

While she was PAO she was formally recognised for her achievements by the RBL at County level, being awarded the Atkinson Cup in 2017 for the PAO with the highest collection that year, and the High Sheriff Cup in 2019.

While she has now stepped back from taking the primary role in organising the Appeal, she still devotes a lot of time to helping organising the annual event and as a volunteer collector herself.

Since 2010, Barb has also played a leading role within the Epsom and Ewell Royal British Legion Branch, becoming Branch Chair in 2018 and serving on the RBL Surrey County Committee from 2020 to 2023. Her commitment to veterans goes beyond fundraising and organising events in connection with Remembrance Day. Barb is part of a small team which runs a monthly Veterans Hub to support over 40 veterans, serving and past, men and women, providing friendship, companionship and activities including indoor archery and model making, together with regular outings. She also arranges for partner agencies to attend and give veterans advice on various matters.

Barb has made an equally valuable contribution to local healthcare. Since joining the Guild of Friends of New Epsom and Ewell Community Hospital (NEECH) in 2017, she has served as membership secretary and, since 2020, as Chair. Following the closure of NEECH and the transfer of the service to Epsom Hospital as the Mary Seacole Unit caring mainly for dementia patients, Barb has continued to lead the running of the Guild and its fund for the benefit of patients and staff.

Her service to healthcare also includes four years as a trustee of Dyscover, the aphasia and stroke charity, where she served on the fundraising committee and continues to provide advice on community fundraising.

Barb has an outstanding record of charitable fundraising. Since 2016 she has organised regular quiz nights for many local charities. She has also chaired and served on several Mayoral charitable committees, including for Councillors Chris Long, Liz Frost and John Beckett, and has organised and supported several Mayor's Charity Balls and other civic fundraising events for other Mayors.

Her community service also includes serving as secretary of the Epsom Town Residents Association and as a 'Friend of Rotary'. Since 2011 she has run and supported numerous Epsom Rotary Club events and community projects, giving her time freely.

Each year Barb volunteers to collect for Epsom Rotary Club on their street Christmas collections and will always volunteer to collect on other occasions for the club when disaster strikes and collections are made in support of a particular relief fund. Barb is also responsible within Epsom Rotary Club for the welfare of ladies with a connection to the club, either as members/former members, or widows of members, and organises regular teas for these ladies.

Barb will volunteer to be a part of any event or initiative that Epsom Rotary Club runs and play an active role in the organisation. For example Barb has often taken the lead in seeking sponsorship for Club run events.

Most recently Barb was appointed chair of the Epsom and Ewell Community Fund, a local philanthropic fund that provides grants to charities and voluntary organisations across the borough and is part of the Community Foundation for Surrey.

Barb's contribution is remarkable not only for the funds she has helped raise, but for the people she has brought together, the organisations she has strengthened and the lives she has touched in an outstanding lifetime of voluntary service, community leadership and dedication to the people of Epsom and Ewell. The evidence shows that Barb Warwick has indeed rendered eminent service to the Borough of Epsom and Ewell and would be a fitting and well deserving recipient of the Freedom of the Borough.

Judy Sarssam – Freedom of the Borough Supporting Statement from Cllr. Neil Dallen

Epsom & Ewell Talking Newspaper (EETN)

Judy is the leading light for Epsom & Ewell Talking Newspapers, a free local news and magazine service for Visually Impaired residents of the borough, which has provided blind and partially sighted people in the Borough with local news and information fortnightly for over 50 years.

Judy was involved in EETN long before I became Mayor in 2018.

Judy leads a happy group of Volunteers who have a recording Studio at Swail House and are very proud of their completely free service which has been running for over 50 years. During the pandemic this same local team of dedicated Volunteers produced the EETN from their homes.

The complicated procedure required careful management and organised deadlines, to enable the free service and free postal distribution to continue.

Every two weeks, Visually Impaired People receive a wallet containing the Talking Newspaper on a memory stick, for which the charity can also provide an easy to use audio player.

People with a visual impairment often feel isolated and lose confidence to navigate the world outside their familiar home surroundings.

Judy Sarssam, Chair of EETN and herself visually impaired has said that being unable to read any longer is a huge loss. Happily audiobooks are available but unless the visually impaired person is computer literate the whole world of print is not accessible.

Conquest Art

Judy is the President and a trustee of Conquest Art which is a National Charity which provides art groups locally for individuals living with disabilities or long-term health issues.

She actively promotes the charity and has been heard on BBC Radio Surrey talking about the charity and its aims.

Conquest Art aim to help people who live with disability or long-term illness by providing Conquest Art groups around the country and encouraging many more people to come and join them. Their group members find fulfilment through joining in, whatever their level of ability and disability, and experience a sense of achievement and satisfaction from exhibiting their artwork.

Everyone is encouraged to create from their imagination, develop their own style and work at their own pace in a friendly, non-competitive atmosphere. This is important,

as a person's disability can sometimes affect their level of creativity but many who initially doubt their abilities are surprised at the results they achieve.

Using their simple methods, newcomers can soon get that first line or image on the page. From there they can develop their skills and try new ideas with help from the team volunteers. For members with particular needs we can provide specialist equipment such as head pointers, scented pens for the visually impaired or specially adjusted easels.

Again, Judy has been involved for many years and reminisces about Ursula, the Founder, who asked her many years ago, to try to steer Conquest Art, as much as possible, within the bounds of her ethos.

Summary

Judy Sarssam is an incredible lady who, despite her sight disability, has enriched the lives of many hundreds, if not thousands, of local residents of Epsom & Ewell through her dedication to both the Epsom & Ewell Talking Newspaper and to Conquest Art.

Her voluntary service and community leadership shows that Judy Sarssam has indeed rendered eminent service to the Borough of Epsom and Ewell and would be a fitting and well deserving recipient of the freedom of the Borough.

UPDATE FROM THE TOWN TWINING WORKING GROUP

Head of Service:	Piero Ionta, Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer
Report Author	Piero Ionta, Tim Richardson
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	None

Summary

This report provides updates from the Town Twinning Working Group and other recent developments. It proposes the closure of the Town Twinning Working Group following notification that the Bucha Epsom Association does not wish to proceed at the present time.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

(1) Note the update.

(2) Agree that the Town Twinning Working Group be dissolved.

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 The Strategy and Resources Committee agreed to create a Town Twinning Working Group at its meeting on 17 March 2026. The Working Group was requested to consider and explore the issues surrounding a proposal to establish a twinning agreement with the City of Bucha, Ukraine.

1.2 The Committee received an update from the Working Group at the meeting of 14 July 2026 and invited a further update for this meeting.

2 Background

2.1 Since the last meeting of this Committee, the Town Twinning Working Group held meetings on 23 July and 24 August 2026.

2.2 An update on the matters considered by the Working Group and further developments are provided below,

Withdrawal of proposal to twin with Bucha, Ukraine at the present time.

2.3 On 8 September 2026 the council was notified that the Bucha Epsom Association does not wish to proceed with the proposal to twin with Bucha, Ukraine at the present time. The Association expressed its thanks to the Working Group and officers for their time considering the proposal and indicated that it wished to wait until the vesting of East Surrey Council for the twinning arrangement to be explored.

Continuation of Twinning arrangements post 1 April 2027.

2.4 At its meeting of 24 August, the Working Group noted that it was hoped that the creation of Charter Trustees for Epsom and Ewell would enable the twinning arrangements between Epsom and Ewell and Chantilly to continue after the dissolution of the Council. An update from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG) was awaited to provide clarity on whether transitional arrangements to transfer twinning agreements to Charter Trustees would be provided within mopping-up legislation.

2.5 At time of writing this report, a response is still awaited; officers are of the view that whilst the existing arrangements will not automatically transfer into an arrangement with East Surrey Council, the area of Epsom and Ewell has sought Charter Trustees to be created after vesting day. Should a Charter Mayor be appointed, they will be able to continue to support the relationship and attend future visits if required.

Proposal to dissolve Working Group

2.6 Following notification that the Bucha Epsom Association does not wish to proceed with the proposal to twin with Bucha at the present time and that the arrangements for twinning with Chantilly post vesting day are not a decision for this Council, there is no business for the Town Twinning Working Group to consider. It is therefore proposed that the working group is dissolved. This has been shared with members of the Working Group who have expressed their support for this.

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 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

4.2 **Section 24 considerations:** There are no Section 24 implications in relation to the current town twinning arrangements and it is not anticipated that there would be any implications if arrangements continue as set out in this report.

4.3 **Section 151 Officer's comments**: There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any future expenditure will be subject to the identification of appropriate funding and the Council's established approval processes.

5 Legal Implications

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

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- Effective Council

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

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

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

6.5 **Partnerships**: The Working Group recognised the vital role that community groups provide in ensuring the success of town twinning arrangements and their potential to secure their future continuation.

6.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications**: Town twinning agreements held, managed or administered by the Council will end on 1 April 2027 unless they are adopted by a community group or East Surrey Council, directly or via Charter Trustees, as the borough area to which they relate along with the predecessor Council will cease to exist on that date. Twinning agreements that do not involve the Council should not be affected by vesting day.

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- Report to Strategy and Resources Committee, 14 July 2026.

URGENT DECISIONS

Head of Service:	Mark Shephard, Head of Property and Regeneration
Report Author	Victoria Potts
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 - Urgent decision form 164

Summary

To report to the committee a decision taken by the Director of Housing, Environment and Regeneration on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

(1) Note the urgent decision taken and the reasons for that decision.

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 To report to the Committee a decision taken by one of the Directors and / or the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

2 Background

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

2.2 Since the last ordinary meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee, one urgent decision has been taken by one of the Directors or the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Committee. The decision is set out below:

2.2.1 **Decision 164** – Gas contract renewal on 6 October 2026.

2.2.2 **Urgency reason for decision 164** – The Council's gas contract expired on 30 September 2026 and required renewal. Supplier prices were only valid for one day, meaning that the decision could not reasonably wait until the next scheduled committee meeting.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None arising directly from this report

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None arise from this report

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None arise from this report

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None arise from this report

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 **Section 151 Officer's comments**: Section 151 Officer was consulted as part of the urgent decision-making process. The decision enabled the Council to avoid higher out-of-contract gas rates and provided greater cost certainty during a period of market volatility.

4.2 **Section 24 considerations:** We agreed to proceed with the two-year option on value for money grounds, as it provided greater certainty. At the time this appeared to trigger Section 24, so we started discussions with East Surrey authority and began the process of taking the matter to the shadow council executive and agreed the timeline for shadow authority approval.

4.3 During that process, and after several technical discussions, we were then made aware by our peers in Surrey that we could in fact proceed under general consent, hence not requiring shadow authority approval. We therefore proceeded immediately to finalise the contract without further delay.

5 Legal Implications

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

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

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

- N/A

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

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

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

6.5 **Partnerships**: N/A

6.6 **Local government reorganisation (LGR) implications**: There are no implications from LGR for this report.

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- None.

Other papers:

- None.

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REFERENCE: DEC 164

EPSOM AND EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL

DECISIONS/ACTIONS TAKEN IN CONSULTATION WITH COMMITTEE CHAIR

Officer requesting authorisation: Tony Foxwell Date of request: 6 October 2026

Committee concerned: Strategy & Resources committee

Subject: Gas Contract Renewal

Reason why this decision/action cannot wait until the next scheduled committee: Prices only stand for one day.

When the decision/action is needed by: 6/10/26

Proposed action/decision:

1. To approve option 3, the two-year fixed term contract for the provision of gas.
2. To delegate authority to the Head of Property and Regeneration to finalise and agree the contract.

Background Information

EEBC gas contract is due to expire on 30/09/2026 and requires renewal.

The gas metered sites are:

- Town Hall
- Bourne Hall
- Community & Wellbeing Centre
- Playhouse(2no)
- Auriol park
- King Georges Field
- Horton Country park
- Ewell Court House (2no)
- Nonsuch (3no)

EEBC secured a 3-year contract in September 2023 with a supplier called SEFE based on an annual consumption of 2,125,536 kwh use at an estimated spend of £103,274.63 per annum.

We currently spend £165,706 per annum.

Energy costs are made up of several factors which contribute to the final energy cost, not just the unit price.

- the raw energy cost (or wholesale cost)
- the cost of transportation (or transmission & distribution)
- losses (or unbilled volumes)
- levies (or environmental and social obligation costs)
- metering costs (or supplier operating costs)
- the supplier's margin (or profit)
- VAT

The raw energy cost is generally only 35% of the actual bill.

These are still very volatile times with the war in Iran, and the closure of the strait of Hormuz has prevented gas tankers getting through, this in turn has increased gas and oil prices throughout the world.

Discussions have taken place with our energy consultant Inspired Energy regarding costs and proposals over the past month. The market is not in a good place with gas unit prices around 9p a unit, when we were previously locked in at 4.68p. As prices are still extremely high it would not be best value to lock into a fixed contract for a long period of time.

Finance consulted: Yes

Finance comments: As the current gas contract expired on 30 September 2026 a decision is required to avoid being charged at higher unit rates. In the current circumstances option 3 offers lowest financial risk and provides some certainty during a time of significant volatility in the current market.

Legal consulted: Yes

Legal comments: None

Considered the following (Para 3.2 Appendix 2 of the Council's Constitution).

Consultation views: N/A

Range of options considered: 4 options considered below.

There are various options to consider, all fixed option prices have been given by the current incumbent SEFE.

Option 1
A short-term fixed contract to take us up to April 2027 and then on to a flexible framework contract.

Option 2
A fixed contract for 12 months at 7.6 p/kwh unit price

Option 3 (Recommended)

A fixed contract for 24 months at a rate of 6.2 p/kwh unit price.

Option 4 - Do Nothing Option

If we do nothing we will go on a high out of contract rate of over 10.5p/kwh.

Staffing, financial, and legal implications:

As the current gas contract expired on 30 September 2026 a decision is required to avoid the Council being on significantly higher out of contract rates. Option 3 offers the cheapest unit rates than all the other options and ensures certainty.

In relation to s24, this decision falls within General Consent and no further approval is required from the Shadow Authority.

Policy framework, equalities, climate change or wellbeing implications: N/A

Risks: Financial risks considered.

Other guidance: N/A

Constitution, contract and financial procedures and regulations: This decision is in line with the council's constitution, contractual and financial procedures.

The need to secure Best Value: The council needs to balance between price certainty and market volatility. In the current circumstances option 3 offers lowest financial risk and certainty. We, therefore, recommend option 3.

Chair and/or Vice Chair consulted: yes Date: 6/10/26

Views of the Chair and/or Vice Chair:

Happy to support the urgent decision on gas prices / contract

Name: Neil Dallen Date: 6/10/26

Decision/action authorised by:

Signature:  Date: 6/10/26

REQUEST FOR AN ITEM OF BUSINESS UNDER CPR 3 OF APPENDIX 5 OF THE CONSTITUTION: TO UPDATE THE COMMITTEE ON PROGRESS OF THE WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN ON EEBC STRATEGIC PRIORITY: HOOK ROAD ARENA

Head of Service:	Victoria Potts, Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration
Report Author	Victoria Potts
Wards affected:	Court Ward;
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	Not applicable
Appendices (attached):	None

Summary

This report informs the Committee of a request made under CPR 3 of Appendix 5 of the Constitution for an item of business to be included on the agenda.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

(1) Note that a report regarding an update on progress of the work being undertaken on EEBC Strategic Priority: Hook Road Arena will be presented to its next meeting on 26 January 2027.

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 CPR 3.4 of Appendix 5 of the Constitution (Standing Orders relating to the Conduct of Committees, Sub-Committees, and Advisory Panels) sets out the procedure for any councillor who wishes to request that a particular item of business be included on the agenda of a meeting of the council's committees, sub-committees advisory panels and joint committees.

1.2 A request was submitted by Councillor Alex Coley on 26 October 2026 for the following item of business to be included on the agenda for the Strategy and Resources Committee on 10 November 2026:

"To update the committee on progress of the work being undertaken on EEBC Strategic Priority: Hook Road Arena."

1.3 The request meets the requirements of CPR 3.4. This report has been included on the agenda in accordance with the requirements of the CPR 3.

2 Update report

2.1 Due to pre-existing leave commitments and capacity constraints for both officers and the external consultant supporting this work, it has not been possible to produce a report on this matter between the date of receipt of the request for this item and the publication of this agenda. It is proposed that a report on this matter be presented to the next scheduled meeting of Strategy and Resources Committee on 26 January 2027.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 **Section 24 considerations:** 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 **Legal Officer's comments**: None for the purposes of this report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities**: None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

6.2 **Service Plans**: None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations**: None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications**: None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

6.5 **Partnerships**: None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

6.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications**: None for the purposes of this report. Comments will be provided in the subsequent report to this Committee.

7 Background papers

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

Previous reports:

- None.

Other papers:

- Appendix 5 of the Constitution

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Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 14 July 2026

PRESENT:
Councillor Neil Dallen (Items 1-6 and 8-9 only) (Chair); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair); Councillors John Beckett, Kate Chinn, James Lawrence (as nominated substitute for Councillor Alex Coley), Steven McCormick (as nominated substitute for Councillor Shanice Goldman), Phil Neale (as nominated substitute for Councillor Robert Leach) and Humphrey Reynolds

In Attendance:
Clare Chester (Consultant) (items 1-5 only) and Clare de Bathe (items 1-5 only)

Absent:
Councillor Alex Coley, Councillor Shanice Goldman and Councillor Robert Leach

Officers present:
Jackie King (Chief Executive), Cagdas Canbolat (Director of Corporate Services (S151)), Piero Ionta (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), Ian Mawer (Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

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1 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public submitted a written question prior to the meeting to which a written response had been given by the Chair and attached as a supplement to the agenda.

The member of the public asked a supplementary question at the meeting. The Chair informed the member of the public that written a response to the supplementary question would be provided following the meeting.

The committee received two statements from members of the public. One statement related to town twinning with Bucha, Ukraine and one statement related to the stepping stones and proposed footbridge over the Hogsmill River.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the committee made the following declarations in relation to items on the agenda:

Questions and Statements from the Public

Councillor Neil Dallen MBE, Other Interest: Councillor Neil Dallen declared that he knew Greg Sturmer and Roy Deadman, who had addressed the committee during this item, but that this did not affect his decision.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor James Lawrence, Other Interest: Councillor James Lawrence declared that he is a member of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee and that he would not be able to participate in any items considered at this meeting that were called in by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Phil Neale, Other Interest: Councillor Phil Neale declared that he is the Vice-Chair of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee and that it did not affect or predetermine any of his decisions at this meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Steven McCormick, Other Interest: Councillor Steven McCormick declared that he is a member of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee and that he would not be able to participate in any items considered at this meeting that were called in by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny.

Epsom and Ewell Community Infrastructure Levy - Annual Funding Awards 2026

Councillor John Beckett, Other Interest: Councillor John Beckett declared that he is a Surrey County Councillor and that several of the CIL bids related to Surrey County Council initiatives. Councillor Beckett declared that he did not have a personal or prejudicial interest in these items and that he would not withdraw from the debate upon them.

Epsom and Ewell Community Infrastructure Levy - Annual Funding Awards 2026

Councillor Neil Dallen MBE, Other Interest: Councillor Neil Dallen declared that he had an interest in a number of CIL bids and would recuse himself for this item and leave the room for it's duration.

Epsom and Ewell Community Infrastructure Levy - Annual Funding Awards 2026

Councillor Phil Neale, Other Interest: Councillor Phil Neale declared that he sat as a member of the Community Infrastructure Levy Working Group but was not predetermined on any of the schemes.

Epsom and Ewell Community Infrastructure Levy - Annual Funding Awards 2026

Councillor Steven McCormick, Other Interest: Councillor Steven McCormick declared that he is a Surrey County Councillor but that he had a clear and open mind to the CIL bids which related to Surrey County Council and was not predetermined.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the committee held on 17 March 2026 and the Chair signed them.

4 2025-26 PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN

The Committee received a report summarising the Council's provisional financial performance for 2025/26 and details the capital budgets to be carried forward for schemes where costs will be incurred in 2026/27.

The following matters were considered:

a) **Period covered by data – Hardwicks Yard.** In response to a question from a member, the Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer informed the committee that the provisional outturn report was backward-looking and covered the period to 31 March 2026. An update on Hardwicks Yard playground could be provided to the member following the meeting.

b) **Quarter 1 financial reporting.** In response to a question from a member, the Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer informed the committee that Quarter 1 financial reporting would be presented to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

c) **Capital programme underspend.** In response to a question from a member, the Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer provided the committee with an overview of the Section 24 requirements placed on the council as a result of Local Government Reorganisation. The committee was informed that a number of projects would not need shadow authority approval but that in cases where such approval was required, there were process to facilitate this.

d) **Temporary accommodation.** In response to a question from a member, the Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer informed the committee of the actions taken to address a past structural deficit in the budget for temporary accommodation. The Chair informed the committee

that the matter was reviewed regularly and would be brought back to the committee if necessary.

e) **Property acquisition.** In response to a question from a member, the Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer informed the committee that the council's facility to borrow money for property acquisitions was only used when the council decided to undertake an acquisition. There was no cost or charge to the council for having this facility available to it. Due to LGR, the council would not be undertaking any further property acquisitions.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved with 7 votes for and one vote against to:

(1) Receive the report on provisional financial outturn for 2025/26;

(2) Approve the carry forward £2.619 million budget for capital schemes to be added to the 2026/27 capital programme.

(3) Note that the provisional outturn position is subject to external audit. Should any material changes arise from the audit, these will be reported back to members.

(4) Agree to fund the 2025/26 adverse outturn position of £410,000 from the corporate projects reserve.

(5) Agree to fund the increased provision detailed in section 5.2 from the corporate projects reserve.

5 COMMUNITY ASSET REVIEW

The committee received a report outlining the progress made in respect of the Council's 2025-2027 Strategic Priority 4, in relation to Community Assets and Priority 7, relating to Bourne Hall Museum Service.

It was noted that appendix 5 to the report had been published as a supplement to the agenda and provided a year 2 business plan for Bourne Hall Museum.

The following matters were considered:

a) **Bourne Hall library.** In response to a question from a member, the Committee noted that LGR would provide new opportunities for integration with the library service.

b) **Bourne Hall Museum year 2 costs.** A member of the committee asked a question regarding the costs listed in Appendix 5 to the report for museum year 2. The Chief Executive informed the committee that the estimates for museum year 2 were presented to the committee for information and were not for decision at this time. The year 2 costs would be considered

by East Surrey Council at a later date if the committee approved the year 1 proposal at this meeting.

c) **Playhouse lighting.** A member of the committee asked a question regarding the works to the playhouse stage and house lighting, identifying that there was a difference between the information contained in Table 3 of Appendix 1 of this report and the 2025-26 Provisional Financial Outturn report earlier on the agenda. The Director of Corporate Services and S151 officer clarified that there was a typing error in Table 3 of Appendix 1 which should read "2025/26" rather than "2024/5". The officer would look into the matter and update the committee following the meeting if necessary.

d) **Playhouse charitable trust.** The committee noted that it was being requested to consider a direction of travel for the Playhouse at this meeting and that a decision on whether to fully approve the transition to a charitable trust operating model for the venue would be taken at a later meeting of the committee or East Surrey Council.

e) **Community and Wellbeing Centre.** A member of the committee asked a question regarding the Community and Wellbeing Centre site. The committee noted that the report proposed exploring the rationalisation of part of the site. The Chair informed the committee that this was unlikely to be completed before vesting day for East Surrey Council, but that the committee was being asked to provide a direction for East Surrey Council's future consideration.

f) **Motion to defer.** Councillor Steven McCormick PROPOSED and Councillor Kate Chinn SECONDED that the item be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

Following consideration of this motion, the committee resolved by the Chair's second vote in accordance with CPR 18.7 of Appendix 1 of the Constitution (with the previous voting being tied with 4 votes for and 4 votes against) that the motion was LOST. The Committee then returned to consideration of the recommendations contained within the report.

Following consideration of the above matters, the committee resolved by the Chair's second vote in accordance with CPR 18.7 of Appendix 1 of the Constitution (with the previous voting being tied with 4 votes for and 4 votes against) to:

(1) Note the updates contained within both this report and the Community Asset Review June 2026 (Appendix 2 to the report).

(2) Approve the strategic direction for the three key assets, namely;

(2.1) Bourne Hall, Ewell - development of an integrated civic and cultural hub held by a local authority, improving connectivity between the library, museum, café, events and community functions.

(2.2) The Playhouse, Epsom – commence preparatory transition work towards an independent charitable trust operating model, supported by targeted investment to improve flexibility, programming and commercial performance.

(2.3) Community & Wellbeing Centre, Ewell - partnership-led delivery model, with rationalisation of the site and consideration of future co-location opportunities where appropriate.

(3) Note the update on Bourne Hall Museum and approve the recommendation of the Community & Wellbeing Committee, for an initial investment of £125,000 in this financial year (Year 1) as set out in the attached business case (Appendix 3 to the report) and approve £125,000 for a further investment in year 2 that will be built into a future business case for the wider Bourne Hall, noting the requirements of the section 24 Local Government and Public Health Involvement Act 2007 direction.

(4) Agree to combine the workstreams supporting Priority 4 (Community Asset review) and Priority 7 (Museum Service Review) to achieve best value, best use of resources and to ensure a comprehensive and integrated approach.

(5) Agree a capital budget of £3m for capital investment to deliver critical works aligned to the priorities set out in the Community Asset Review, with a detailed business plan to return to the relevant Committee for approval, noting the requirements of the section 24 Local Government and Public Health Involvement Act 2007 direction

(6) Approve a budget of up to £80,000 to support the development of the detailed business plan for (5) above, noting the requirements of the section 24 Local Government and Public Health Involvement Act 2007 direction.

(7) Note a package of operational 'quick wins' will be delivered in line with the approach set out in the Community Asset Review, subject to resource and funding availability. Should further funding be required, this will be developed into a future funding request.

(8) To recommend to the East Surrey Shadow Authority that any consent required to comply with the section 24 direction be provided to any of the relevant budgetary decisions as set out above.

6 EEBC 2025-2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: HOOK ROAD CAR PARK UPDATE

The Committee received a report outlining the progress made in respect of the Council's 2025-2027 Strategic Priority 5 in relation to Hook Road (Utilities Site) Car Park redevelopment and recommending further specialist property development and regeneration advice be procured to represent the Council and provide a Best Value Assessment of the Utilities Site.

The following matters were considered:

a) **70 East Street.** In response to a question from a member, the Chair informed the Committee that 70 East Street had not been purchased by Laine Theatre Arts.

b) **Parking.** The Chair informed the committee that further work to consider residents' parking and Rainbow Centre car parking would be undertaken if the committee approved the recommendations of the report.

c) **Correction to report.** In response to a question from a member, the Head of Property and Regeneration informed the committee of a correction to paragraph 4.7 of the report with the wording "£250,000" corrected to "£150,000".

d) **Corporate Project Reserves.** In response to a question from a member, the Director of Corporate Services and s151 Officer informed the committee that the current level of the corporate project reserve was around £1.7m and that it had no minimum level. The Director informed the committee that the capital receipts reserve had a minimum level of £1m and that the working balance reserve had a minimum level of £1.5m

Following consideration, the committee resolved with 5 votes for, 1 votes against and 2 abstentions to:

(1) Note the update and progress made as set out in this report.

(2) Approve a budget of up to £100,000 to cover the cost of a Best Value Assessment, to be funded from the Corporate Projects Reserve.

(3) Nominate and authorise the Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration and Head of Property & Regeneration, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Chief Legal Officer, to take all necessary actions further to the above decisions being made that commit resources, as is necessary and appropriate.

(4) Note a report will be brought back to Committee at the earliest opportunity following completion of the work.

(5) Recommend to East Surrey Shadow Authority that they approve a budget of up to £100,000 to cover the cost of a Best Value Assessment.

7 EPSOM AND EWELL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY - ANNUAL FUNDING AWARDS 2026

In response to a question submitted to the Chair in advance of the meeting by a member of the committee, the Chair informed the committee that a report regarding Hook Road Arena would be presented to the next meeting of the Full Council.

The Chair left the meeting for the duration of the item and did not participate in the debate or vote on this item. The Vice Chair chaired the meeting for the duration of this item.

The committee received a report presenting strategic and neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) bids that had been recommended for approval by the CIL Member Working Group.

The following matters were considered:

a) **Correction to typographical error – Appendix 1:** The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development informed the committee of a correction to the first page of Appendix 1 to the report. The text "£144,000 awarded to fund the cost of the bridge and a 20% contingency." in the MWG Funding recommendation column of the table was corrected to read: "£144,000 awarded to fund the cost of the bridge including a 20% contingency."

b) **Correction to typographical error – Table 3:** The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development informed the committee of a correction to table 3 of the report. The bid request and MWG funding recommendation for Ebbisham Sports and Social Club's Facility improvement and sustainability project was corrected from "£13,622" to read "£13,662". This correction also amended the total neighbourhood CIL spending listed in the report from "£668,871" to "£668,911".

c) **Clarification of table 1 of report – New footbridge across the Hogsmill River.** The committee noted a clarification to table 1 of the report, that the proposed new footbridge across the Hogsmill River was not to replace the stepping stones.

d) **Strategic Project 1.** In response to a question from a member, the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development informed the committee that Surrey County Council had provided funding for an earlier stage of the project and had identified that match funding may be available from Active Travel England.

e) **Strategic Project 3 – amended wording to paragraph 4 of the report.** The committee agreed to amend the wording of the summary of Strategic Project 3 (New footbridge across the Hogsmill River) in paragraph 4 of the report to "Construction of a new footbridge across the Hogsmill River to provide a safer, more inclusive river crossing." The committee also agreed to amend the wording of the MWG funding recommendation for the project to ""£144,000 awarded to fund the cost of the bridge including a 20% contingency"

f) **Neighbourhood Project - St Martins School playground development.** In response to a question from a member, the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development informed the committee that he would highlight the recent removal of a playground facility from Wallace Fields school to the applicant.

Following consideration, the committee resolved with 6 votes for and 1 abstention to:

(1) Approve and ratify the funding recommendations of the CIL Working Group for each of the bids set out in paragraph 4 of the report, subject to the amendments to the wording of Strategic Project 3 – New Footbridge across the Hogsmill River which are detailed in bullet point e) of this Minute (above).

8 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS AND CHAIR OF THE SHAREHOLDER SUB-COMMITTEE

The Chair returned to the meeting prior to this item being considered by the Committee and chaired the meeting for the remaining items on the agenda.

The committee received a report asking it to agree the appointment of Members and a Chair to the Shareholder Sub Committee for the remaining period of the 2026-27 Municipal Year.

The Chair informed the committee that the nomination for the appointment of Councillor Shanice Goldman had been withdrawn and that accordingly a vote to select the members to be put forward for appointment was not required.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

(1) Appoint the following Members and Chair for the Shareholder Sub Committee: Councillors Neil Dallen (Chair), John Beckett, Kate Chinn, Alex Coley and Hannah Dalton.

9 UPDATE FROM THE TOWN TWINING WORKING GROUP

The Committee received a report presenting an update from the Town Twinning Working Group.

It was noted that a letter of support for town twinning with Bucha had been received from Helen Maguire MP.

The following matters were considered:

a) **Amendment.** Councillor Kate Chinn proposed and Councillor Steven McCormick seconded the following amended recommendations:

"1) To approve in principle the objective of establishing a twinning arrangement between Epsom and Ewell and the city of Bucha in Ukraine.

2) The council to ask the working group to take this forward and clarify who is able to initiate and administer the twinning (both Chantilly and Bucha) and identify how it could continue after vesting day.

3) To invite the Working Group to provide a further report to the next meeting of this Committee."

Following consideration, the committee resolved:

- with 3 votes for, 4 votes against and 1 abstention that the amendment to recommendation 1 was not agreed;

- with 6 votes for, 1 abstention and the Chair not voting that the amendment to recommendation 2 was agreed;

- with unanimous approval that the amendment to recommendation 3 was agreed.

Following consideration, the committee moved to the vote on the substantive recommendations (as amended) and resolved with 6 votes for, 1 abstention and the Chair not voting:

(1) To note the update from the Town Twinning Working Group.

(2) The council to ask the working group to take this forward and clarify who is able to initiate and administer the twinning (both Chantilly and Bucha) and identify how it could continue after vesting day.

(3) To invite the Working Group to provide a further report to the next meeting of this Committee.

The meeting began at 7.12 pm and ended at 9.50 pm

COUNCILLOR NEIL DALLEN (CHAIR)

Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 14 July 2026

PRESENT:
Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair); Councillors John Beckett, Kate Chinn, James Lawrence (as nominated substitute for Councillor Alex Coley), Steven McCormick (as nominated substitute for Councillor Shanice Goldman), Phil Neale (as nominated substitute for Councillor Robert Leach) and Humphrey Reynolds

Absent:
Councillor Alex Coley, Councillor Shanice Goldman and Councillor Robert Leach

Officers present:
Jackie King (Chief Executive), Piero Ionta (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

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10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in relation to items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

11 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

12 COMMERCIAL TENANT UPDATE

The Committee received a report presenting a request from Epsom & Ewell Property Investment Company Ltd (“EEPIC”) for the consent of the Council as its lender to vary a commercial lease.

Matters considered by the Committee relating to exempt information following the exclusion of the public are recorded in a separate not for publication restricted minute.

Following consideration, the committee unanimously resolved to:

(1) Approve the Company's request under its loan agreement to vary the lease at its Arlington Square, Bracknell property, subject to adhering and complying with any relevant implications of the section 24 direction.

(2) Recommend to the Shadow Authority to approve the Company's request under its loan agreement to vary the lease at its Arlington Square, Bracknell property.

(3) Recommend to the Shadow Authority to review its future options around the Arlington Square, Bracknell property.

The meeting began at 10.28 pm and ended at 10.53 pm

COUNCILLOR NEIL DALLEN (CHAIR)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
to the Local Government Act 1972.

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EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

The following documents are included on the agenda and have not been published as they contain exempt information:
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Item 09 – Restricted Minutes of previous meeting (14 July 2026)
The report deals with information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Committee and third parties.

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