

Recommendation	Action(s)	Owner(s)	Timescale
1	<p>Create a shared vision for Epsom and Ewell, be clear what your priorities are and deliver these over a five-year period. <i>The council needs to build a shared narrative of the place and develop its vision and priorities around this, which in turn should drive the council's financial strategy. The vision should articulate Epsom and Ewell's 'story' setting out a shared vision which is collectively owned by staff, members and partners and clearly shows how stakeholders are working collaboratively together to address the challenges the community faces and which celebrates key successes along the way. It is important that the council is inclusive and listens to the whole community, and proactively engages with the silent majority particularly residents in marginalised groups not just those who are the most vocal, in developing the vision, and demonstrates a 'one council' approach where members and officers understand their distinctive but complementary roles in achieving the council priorities and collaboratively lead the council together.</i></p>		
	1.1	Establish a task and finish group to develop the corporate priorities into a five-year plan, which is linked to the Corporate Transformation Programme, Place narrative and the plan to address the shortfall in funding.	CEx/Group Leader Sept 2024
	1.2	Develop a Place narrative for the borough alongside a vision which can be used internally and externally.	Task and Finish group March 2025
	1.3	Revisit Future 40 and agree which areas continue to be corporate priorities.	Task and Finish group March 2025
	1.4	Consult with officers and members.	CEx/Task and Finish group May 2025
	1.5	Consult with a cross-section of residents and interested parties on the five-year plan and Place narrative.	CEx July 2025
2	<p>Create capacity for strategic political and managerial leadership. <i>There has been a lack of strategic leadership capacity over time, both politically and managerially, and a lack of officer capacity in some areas which has inhibited the council's ability to be proactive and look at the bigger picture. Clear prioritisation, and realistic dates given for implementation, for example of audit recommendations, would help to manage capacity issues and alongside consideration of building some of this capacity back in. It is important the Chair of the RA Majority Ruling Group continues to champion for the borough, influence and lobby on the council's behalf around issues which impact on Epsom and Ewell residents, such as housing, and this relies on senior members' willingness to deputise in the political leadership space in her absence.</i></p>		
	2.1	<p>As part of the Workforce Transformation project, focus on creating officer capacity through new ways of working and ensuring leadership roles at all levels are operating in the optimal way. Continue to explore succession planning and development opportunities for all staff.</p> <p>Link these actions to the Corporate Transformation Programme.</p> <p>See 3.3 below</p>	<p>Workforce Transformation Lead/HR Ongoing</p> <p>Programme Manager</p>
3	<p>Governance needs to be reviewed to empower the political leadership of the authority, considering the uniqueness of Epsom & Ewell. <i>All members should take ownership of the wider vision and priorities and use their local connections to clearly articulate and communicate the pressures facing the borough to residents. This is a role for all members not just a few, this is even more important when the political 'leadership' of the authority doesn't, under the current system of governance, have the powers that would normally be invested in the executive function. The Monitoring Officer should be supported to continue his work in reviewing the council's constitution.</i></p>		
	3.1	Political leadership to explore its current governance model and consider if it wishes to adopt a different model.	Political Leadership Dec 2024
	3.2	Continue the work already agreed to review parts of the constitution in 2024/25.	Monitoring Officer & CWG April 2025
	3.3	Refresh of the member development programme, identify those members who wish to take on more strategic roles and put in place development opportunities to support that.	Political Group Leaders Dec 2024
4	<p>Training for members and officers needed to improve understanding of roles and responsibilities and increase skills and capacity.</p>		

	<p><i>A high performing council has a shared vision and a 'one council' approach where members and officers understand their distinctive but complementary roles in achieving the council priorities and collaboratively lead the council together. There is a need for a better shared understanding of the separate but complementary roles and responsibilities of members and officers. Urgently improve the member development programme, which as a minimum should include finance, audit and scrutiny to ensure members fully understand the full extent of their governance role. A full programme of staff learning and development activity should be underpinned by a workforce strategy that identifies what skills the organisation needs for the future, as well as embedding the basics. Senior officers should be up skilled to operate at a more strategic level. There is a need to invest in updating the digital and technical skills of the organisation and a structured programme to roll this out should be developed as part of the council's transformation programme.</i></p>			
	4.1	Establish a member task and finish group to develop a member development programme.	Political Group Leaders	Sept 2024
	4.2	Establish a task and finish group from those members elected for the first time in May 2023 to review Member Induction and feedback on how to shape the programme for May 2027 and work with officers on the review.	Political Group Leaders/Dem Services	Sept 2024
	4.3	<p>i. Create a programme of staff and member briefing on the roles and responsibilities of different teams and departments to develop an understanding of each other's work, issues, work pressures and ways of working.</p> <p>ii. Incorporate an input from members around the role of a ward councillor, committee Chair/Vice Chair and the political leadership function.</p> <p>iii. Incorporate an input around legal and corporate responsibilities of statutory and proper officers.</p> <p>iv. Highlight the distinct operational and political leadership roles and how this works together in a true 'one council' ethos.</p> <p>v. The Workforce Strategy will be developed as part of the Workforce Transformation Programme and will include any new skills required to enable progression of the corporate priorities, once finalised.</p>	CEX/HoS/Group leaders	<p>April 2025 (i – iv)</p> <p>Dec 2024</p>
	4.4	Develop and put in place a structured programme to increase the digital and technical capability of the organisation (officers and members).	Workforce Transformation Lead/Dem Services/IT	April 2025
	4.5	<p>Continue the programme to upskill senior officers and members to operate at a more strategic level.</p> <p>Progress 'Top Team' work with LGA.</p>	CEX/Workforce Transformation/ Chair RA Group	Dec 2024
	4.7	Offer member mentoring.	Political Group Leaders	Dec 2024
	4.8	Understand the financial implications of funding the proposed member and officer programme.	S151	Dec 2024
5	<p>Streamline and strengthen the council's decision-making process, ensuring that consensus is built.</p> <p><i>There is frustration and confusion around the lack of transparency through the decision-making process, coupled with a lack of clarity around which items for decision should go to the senior leadership team and which should go to committee chairs. It is important to demonstrate each stage of how the council builds consensus through its decision-making process, by first considering whether the final decision will be made at committee or council, then clearly mapping out each step to develop the final report. This should be communicated to all staff and members. A number of key mechanisms for maintaining good standards are flagged in the Annual Governance Statement as 'areas for improvement', this should be addressed as a matter of urgency.</i></p>			
	5.1	Create a process which lays out the steps for committee reports to come to committee or full council.	Statutory Officers	Sept 2024

	5.2	Put in place a programme of work which addresses the areas flagged in the Annual Governance Statement as 'areas for improvement'.	Statutory Officers or Director of Corporate Services (DoCS)	Sept 2024
6	Longer-term financial position must be urgently addressed in relation to corporate priorities which need to be delivered. <i>The council has a strategy to address the challenge of the annual shortfall in funding, however it was not clear how effective this will be without clarity on the council's vision and corporate priorities. In balancing the budget, the council should look at innovative solutions to address its challenges. Opportunities for income generation, should be aligned with agreed priorities, and the council should make it clearer, what invest to save opportunities it is looking at. Difficult decisions about the future of non-statutory services, including the decision to stop or reduce the service may be needed. The full cost of the town hall move and determining what happens to the existing town hall and the financial implications of this, needs to be better understood by everyone in the organisation.</i>			
	6.1	As part of developing the five-year plan, link the Council strategy to address the challenge of the annual shortfall in funding to its vision and corporate priorities	CLT and Policy Chairs	March 2025
	6.2	Continue programme of work to review statutory and mandatory services.	Finance, CLT and Policy Chairs	Ongoing
	6.3	Progress options related to the Town Hall site.	Town Hall Working Group	Ongoing
	6.4	Progress agreed opportunities for income generation and economic development.	All Council	Ongoing
	6.5	Continue to investigate opportunities to decrease temporary housing costs.	Housing & Community	Ongoing
7	The council needs a shared organisational risk appetite. <i>The lack of shared understanding around corporate risk appetite across the organisation is inhibiting the council from making bold and innovative choices to tackle the challenges it faces. A corporate ambition to be more commercial needs to be underpinned by associated processes and organisational culture. The Asset Management Strategy under development, should make clear how retained assets will be maintained and improved.</i>			
	7.1	Carry out a review of the risk appetite of the organisation, from both members and officers, to understand what this now is, and create an updated framework to be adopted by consensus.	DoCS	March 2025
	7.2	Carry out the planned Asset Review, to understand how assets will be maintained and improved. Present outcomes to Policy chairs for discussion.	Property & Regeneration/Finance with Policy Chairs	June 2026
	7.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Undertake a review of local authorities outside of Surrey to understand how they have approached successfully being 'commercial' while balancing their appetite for risk. ii. Seek best practice from across the sector on guardrails to safeguard against unforeseen consequences. Seek advice of professional associations (e.g., Institute of Risk Management) 	DoCS	March 2025
	7.4	Put in place a programme for officers and members to take them through the cultural shift and approach towards risk.	CEX/HR/DoCS	Sept 2025
8	A properly resourced Corporate Transformation Programme is needed to deliver the council's vision and priorities. <i>The council is delivering a range of transformation projects across the organisation and there is an opportunity to consolidate all its transformational activity into one strategy which is shared with staff and members, so there is a broader understanding of the range of projects being delivered. It also provides an opportunity for senior managers to collectively ensure transformational activity taking place across the council is co-ordinated, duplication is minimised, capacity pressures are quickly identified, and that progress and impact is regularly tracked and evaluated. Building capacity in teams to deliver projects will be essential in doing this, and where the necessary, the council should bring this in on a short-term basis.</i>			
	8.1	Collate ongoing projects into a single Corporate Transformation Programme which includes all programmes, project owners, timelines and inter dependencies.	Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration (DoEHR)	Sept 2025

	8.2	Provide communication on what all the elements of our Corporate Transformation Programme are and quarterly updates on how they are being progressed and delivered.	DoEHR	Sept 2024
	8.3	Incorporate the Corporate Transformation Programme into the five-year plan.	DoEHR	Sept 2024
9	Maximise partnership working to help build capacity to deliver and promote Epsom and Ewell's interests on the wider stage. <i>To achieve greater partnership working, (both with community partners as well as looking at shared opportunities with neighbouring boroughs) partners need to understand what the council's vision and priorities are. The council needs to build a shared narrative of the place and develop its vision and priorities. It is important that the council focuses its valuable resource on the agreed priorities of the council and builds in more organisational resilience. This can be achieved by better cross service working, as well as partnership working with neighbouring boroughs and local partners.</i>			
	9.1	Refresh the approach to engagement with key stakeholders, identifying who, politically and corporately, will lead and co-ordinate engagement with each. Ensure the council engages with partners as "One Council" and that information is shared to aid consistency of understanding and activity.	CEX/Group Leader	Oct 2024
	9.2	Explore options to support the Place narrative.	CEX/Chair of Group/Policy Chairs	Jan 2025
10	Taking a more strategic approach to tackling the housing challenge and addressing all steps on the housing ladder. <i>The delivery of housing, including affordable housing through the new Local Plan is critical to solving the issue in the longer term. While there is a collective recognition there is a need to solve the housing crisis, the Council needs to articulate a clear direction, which is shared and understood by the political and managerial leadership and implement it. The council should be more assertive in working with its partners to find solutions. There is an opportunity to work with partners and other services across the organisation to create an early warning system for residents who may potentially become homeless. Further strengthened engagement across planning policy will also be vital to realising the council's ambition to reduce reliance on expensive temporary accommodation. There is a lack of strategic focus and capacity in the housing team to follow through on the biggest (prevention) options that will make the difference, as well as missed opportunities to reach out to partners for their contribution.</i>			
	10.1	Use data to create an early warning system for residents who may potentially become homeless.	Housing & Community/Revs & Bens	Ongoing
	10.2	Strengthen engagement across Planning Policy to support the council's ambition to deliver affordable housing and reduce reliance on expensive temporary accommodation.	Housing & Community/Planning Policy/Property/Finance	Ongoing
	10.3	Build and develop strong partnerships with internal and external stakeholders including housing associations and developers.	Housing & Community with Chair and Vice Chair of C&W	Ongoing
	10.4	Create strategic focus and capacity in the Housing team to follow through on prevention options and create opportunities to reach out to partners for their contribution.	Housing & Community	Ongoing
11	Options to decouple the Scrutiny and Audit function should be explored with scrutiny subsumed into policy committees. What the Peer team said: <i>Concerns raised about audit and scrutiny being diluted by being combined under one committee. CIPFA recommend that audit should be stand-alone as a committee as both audit and scrutiny have specific roles. It is important that the council gives early consideration in separating the audit and scrutiny functions with scrutiny subsumed into policy committees.</i>			
	11.1	Explore how audit and scrutiny is carried out in other councils with a committee system.	MO	Sept 2025
	11.2	Arrange a training for members and officers on committee system governance to understand the role of committees in proper scrutiny of policy.	CEx to ask CFGS to run this	Oct 2025
	11.3	Explore compliance with national legislation to ensure statutory requirements are met.	MO	Sept 2025
	11.4	Proposal put forward to members for decision.	MO/Constitution Working Group	Feb 2025 (Full Council)