

Appendix 1 – Background information & CGR Terms of Reference

12.1 Epsom & Ewell Borough Council ('EEBC') is one of the few District / Borough Councils within Surrey that is unparished. In light of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), which would see EEBC merged into a larger unitary council, or councils, with Surrey County Council and neighbouring District and Borough Councils, Full Council (on 6 May 2025) adopted a Strategic Priority for 2025-27 to explore the creation of parish / community councils.

12.2 A community council is a form of parish council which serves a community (another name for a parish). A parish or community should have its own sense of identity, with strong, clearly defined boundaries tied to ground features. Parish and community councils are the same in terms of their powers and abilities (they can also be styled neighbourhood or village councils).

12.3 The powers of community councils are designed to enable them to manage local issues and represent the interests of their communities effectively. Community councils can play a role in local governance by providing various community services and facilities. The following are examples of services that may be provided by community councils. It is not envisaged that any community council created would have these responsibilities from the start other than allotments:

- Allotments (transferred at the outset)
- Bus shelters
- Local crime prevention initiatives
- Street lighting
- Maintenance of roadside verges
- Community transport schemes
- Sport and recreation facilities
- Tourism
- Community councils also have the authority to acquire, appropriate, and dispose of land. They can acquire land by agreement, compulsorily acquire land, appropriate land for different uses, and dispose of land, subject to certain conditions and procedures.

12.4 The first key step in exploring whether to create parish councils is for a principal council, in this case Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, to hold an initial public consultation to gather the views of those who live, work or have an interest in the Borough. This is also known as the Phase 1 consultation. The report to which this Appendix is attached details the outcomes of this consultation (in particular at Appendix 2).

12.5 The key stages in a CGR are as follows (with a status update in **bold**):

- Seeking approval to start CGR by way of a full council resolution (to include the Terms of Reference for the review) - **COMPLETED**
- Initial public consultation - **COMPLETED**
- Analysis of feedback to create a draft proposal – **THIS REPORT**
- A follow-up public consultation regarding the final proposal – **NEXT STEP, IF RECOMMENDATION 1 IS AGREED**
- Further analysis leading to final recommendations to full council – **FUTURE STEP**
- The making of the Reorganisation Order – **FUTURE STEP**
- Finalising any precept; updating the register of electors & scheduling elections – **FUTURE STEP**

12.6 Further to the decision to establish an East Surrey and West Surrey unitary council to replace Surrey County Council and the 11 district and borough councils, Members should note that elected representation in the Epsom and Ewell Borough Council will decrease from 40 councillors (5 SCC and 35 EEBC) to 10 councillors across 5 Divisions.

12.7 In October 2025, Government announces that, subject to Parliamentary Approval:

12.7.1 There shall be two new unitary councils in Surrey: East Surrey Council (comprising the east part of SCC, Mole Valley, Tandridge, Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell and Reigate & Banstead) and West Surrey Council (comprising the west part of SCC, Guildford, Waverley, Woking, Surrey Heath, Runnymede & Spelthorne);

12.7.2 Elections to each new Shadow Authority will take place on 7 May 2026, then in 2031 and four yearly thereafter;

12.7.3 Wards in each new Unitary Council will be as per the new Local Government divisional boundaries for Surrey County Council with 2 unitary Councillors elected per ward, leaving West Surrey Council to have 90 Councillors across 45 wards and East Surrey Council to comprise 72 Councillors across 36 wards;

12.7.4 A section 24 Direction will be forthcoming in due course, which is likely to require the existing Councils to obtain consent from the new Councils before entering contracts or disposing of assets. This is likely to be implemented around 30 June 2026.

Terms of Reference

Community Governance Review

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council

June 2025

Introduction

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council has resolved to undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR) under the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, to consider the emparishment of all or part of the current area of the Borough. This is consequential of Local Government Reorganisation which will see the formation of one or more unitary authorities for Surrey, and the abolition of the existing eleven District and Borough Councils and single County Council within Surrey.

Legal Framework

In undertaking this review the Council will be guided by:

- Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- the relevant parts of the Local Government Act 1972
- Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued in accordance with section 100(4) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 by the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in March 2010
- Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008
- Local Government Finance (New Parishes) Regulations 2008

What is a Community Governance Review (CGR)?

A CGR is a review of the whole or part of the Borough to consider one or more of the following:

- Creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes
- Constituting, retaining or dissolving parish councils
- The naming of parishes and the style of new parishes
- The electoral arrangements for parishes (the ordinary year of election, council size, the number of councillors to be elected to the council, and parish warding), and
- Grouping parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping

Why undertake a Community Governance review?

A CGR provides an opportunity for principal authorities to review and make changes to community governance within their area. Such reviews can be undertaken when there have been changes in population or in reaction to specific, or local, new issues to ensure that the community governance for the area continues to be effective and convenient and it reflects the identities and interests of the community.

The government has emphasised that ultimately, recommendations made in a CGR ought to bring about improved community engagement, more cohesive communities, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services.

If the current proposals for local government reorganisation in the county proceed, eleven existing District and Borough councils will be dissolved in April 2027. At present there are no parishes in the whole of Epsom and Ewell Borough, and if the Borough Council is dissolved there will be no lower tier of local government below that of the new unitary authority. This will affect democratic engagement and representation and may influence the way local services are provided.

The Council decided on 26 June 2025 to conduct a CGR for the whole of Epsom and Ewell to establish the appetite, desire and suitability for potential parish council formations in the Borough.

Considerations of a Community Governance Review

Section 93 of the 2007 Act requires the Borough Council to consider the need to secure that community governance within the area under review will be:

- a) reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area; and
- b) effective and convenient.

In doing so the review will take into account:

- a) the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion; and
- b) the size, population and boundaries of the local community.

Scope of this Review

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council has resolved to undertake a CGR to consider whether there is a desire and need to create one or more civil parishes and associated parish council(s) for the whole area of the existing Borough.

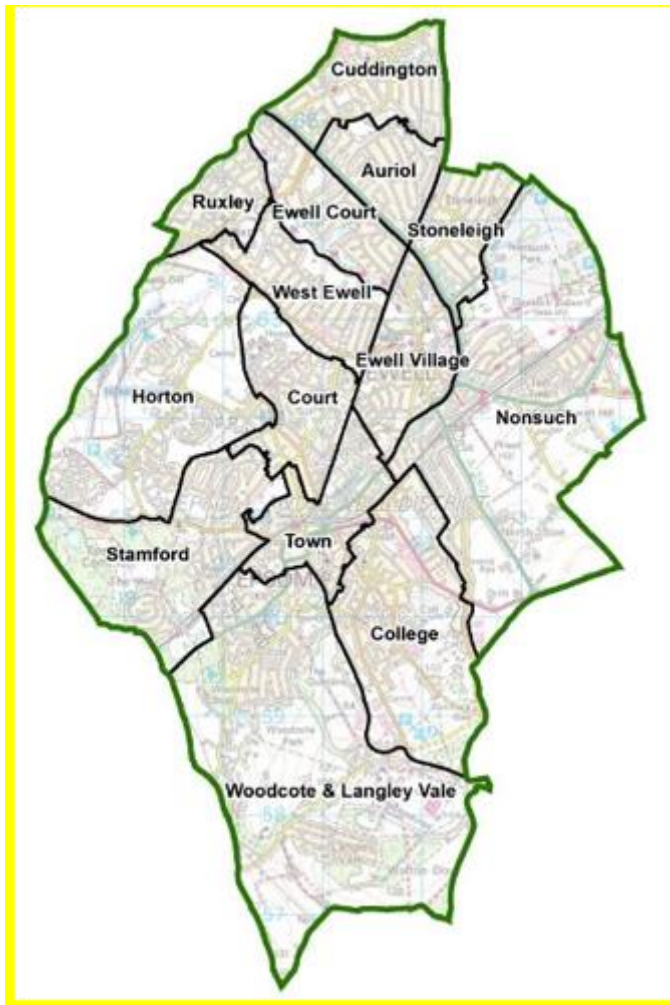
The preferred option of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council is to create either one or two parishes, each with a parish council, to be named a “Community Council”, covering the whole of the current area of the borough.

This review seeks to ascertain the most appropriate boundary alignment and governance arrangements for any such new parishes. The area of Epsom and Ewell includes the following current wards:

	<i>Wards</i>	<i>Electorate (1 May 2025)</i>	<i>Households (1 May 2025)</i>
1	Auriol	3,406	1,713
2	College	5,122	2,857
3	Court	4,614	2,654
4	Cuddington	4,960	2,726
5	Ewell Court	3,631	1,932
6	Ewell Village	3,352	2,102
7	Horton	3,315	1,901
8	Nonsuch	5,265	2,497
9	Ruxley	3,648	2,101
10	Stamford	3,661	1,915
11	Stoneleigh	3,645	1,830
12	Town	5,268	3,973
13	West Ewell	5,027	2,703
14	Woodcote & Langley Vale	4,509	2,533

In conducting this review, the Council will consider the electorate forecasts for the next five years. These forecasts will be based on planned developments within the Borough and will also consider any forecasts relating to demographic trends.

If parish councils are not established across the whole area of the existing Borough, then the only tier of local government that electors in unparished areas will be represented by will be the new unitary authority for that area.



Who will undertake the community governance review?

The review will be carried out by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. In the event that, for whatever reason, the review cannot be completed by the 1 April 2027, then the successor authority to the Borough Council may complete and implement the review.

The conduct of the review will be overseen by the Borough Council, with all formal decisions required by the legislation being made by the Borough Council in line with the Council's constitution.

The review will comply with the legislative and procedural requirements set out in the 2007 Act, as well as statutory guidance. This includes guidance produced jointly by

the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) and issued under section 100 of the 2007 Act. This review will follow the approach set out in these Terms of Reference, including the following indicative timetable

Timetable for review

Date	Action
26 June 2025	Council to approve Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review
July – September 2025	Formal initial Community Governance Review consultation – with residents and other consultees as noted below
October – November 2025	Consideration of responses and drafting of recommendations
January 2026 – March 2026	Further public consultation on Draft Recommendations
March – May 2026	Formulation and publication of final recommendations
May – June 2026	Final recommendations to be considered by Full Council
May – June 2026	Reorganisation Order made
June – December 2026	Consequential matters
May 2027	Parish council elections to be held under any new arrangements that may be decided.

This document is being published on our website at: www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk and a printed copy may be viewed at the Town Hall, The Parade, Epsom, KT18 5BY during normal business hours.

Consultation

Before publishing final recommendations, in line with legislative requirements, the Borough Council will seek and take full account of the views of local people. The Council will comply with legislative requirements by,

- a) consulting local government electors for the area under review;
- b) consulting any other person or body (including a local authority or elected representative) who appears to the council to have an interest in the review;
- c) informing Surrey County Council of the review, and sending it a copy of this Terms of Reference document;
- d) taking into account any representations received in connection with the review.
- e) the Council will also be pleased to receive comments from any other person or body that wishes to make representations; any such person that makes

representations during the initial invitation to submit proposals will be invited to make comments in respect of the draft proposals.

When taking account of written representations the Council is bound to have regard to the need to secure that community governance within the area under review is:

- a) reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area;
- b) effective and convenient.

In order to ensure that this review is conducted transparently, as soon as practicable the Council will publish its recommendations and take such steps as it considers sufficient to ensure that persons who may be interested in the review are informed of the recommendations and the reasons behind them. This will consist of two phases of consultation. The first will seek the initial views and desires of local residents, groups and stakeholders, and will form the basis of the draft recommendations. The second phase will seek views upon those draft recommendations, to allow final recommendations to be formed.

Consultation and awareness raising will consist of various communication methods, such as direct mailings, media posts (digital and printed), in person workshops where viable, and each will explain how residents and stakeholders can submit their views.

The value of local councils

Local parish councils play an important role in terms of community empowerment at a local level and we want to ensure that local governance in the area of the existing Borough Council continues to be robust, representative and enabled to meet the challenges that lie before it.

Parish councils have a key role to play in representing the views and promoting the needs of the borough's local communities and neighbourhoods and every opportunity should be afforded to them to express such views to the new unitary authority prior to any decisions taken which might affect local circumstances.

Other (non-parish) forms of community governance

The Council is required by law to consider other forms of community governance. There may be other arrangements for community representation or community engagement in an area, including area committees, neighbourhood management programmes, tenant management organisations, area or community forums, residents' and tenants' associations or community associations, which may be more appropriate to some areas than parish councils.

The Council will be mindful of such other forms of community governance in its consideration of whether parish governance is most appropriate. However, the Council also notes that what sets parish councils apart from other kinds of

governance is the fact that they are a democratically elected tier of local government with directly elected representatives, independent of other council tiers and budgets, and possessing specific powers for which they are democratically accountable.

Parish boundaries

The Council considers that 'natural' settlements, or settlements as they are defined in the Local Development Framework, should not in normal circumstances be partitioned by parish boundaries. The Council considers that the boundaries between parishes should where possible either reflect the 'no-man's land' between communities represented by areas of low population or by identifiable physical barriers. These physical barriers might include natural boundaries such as rivers or man-made features such as railways or roads. In the event of emparishment the council will endeavour to select boundaries that are, and are likely to remain, easily identifiable as well as taking into account any local ties which might be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

Electoral arrangements and councillor representation

An important part of the Review will be to consider the 'Electoral Arrangements' and this will cover how a council is constituted for any parish established by this review, comprising the following:

- The ordinary year in which elections are held;
- The number of Councillors to be elected to the council;
- The division (or not) of the parish into wards for the purpose of electing Councillors;
- The number and boundaries of any such wards;
- The number of Councillors to be elected for any such wards; and
- The name of any such wards.

The Local Government Act 1972 states that ordinary election of Parish Councillors shall take place every fourth year. However, parish elections may be held in other years to coincide with the cycle for the principal Council, so that the costs of elections can be shared. If the Review finds that it will be appropriate to hold an election for Parish Councillors, for a newly formed parish, at an earlier date than the next scheduled ordinary elections, the terms of office of any newly elected Parish Councillors will be so reduced as to enable the electoral cycle to revert to the normal cycle in the area at the next ordinary elections.

The number of Parish Councillors for each parish council must not be less than five. There is no maximum number and there are no rules relating to the allocation of Councillors. There are, however, guidelines produced both by the National Association of Local Councils and by the Aston Business School and the Council will

be mindful of these during the review. The Government's guidance is that "each area should be considered on its own merits, having regard to its population, geography and the pattern of communities."

Consequential Matters

A Reorganisation Order may cover any consequential matters that appear to the Council to be necessary or proper to give effect to the Order. These may include:

- The transfer and management or custody of property;
- The setting of precepts for new parishes;
- Provision with respect to the transfer of any functions, property, rights and liabilities;
- Provision for the transfer of staff, compensation for loss of office, pensions and other staffing matters.

In these matters the Council will be guided by the 2007 Act and the Regulations that have been issued under it, including the Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008 and the Local Government Finance (New Parishes) Regulations 2008

Regulations regarding the transfer of property, rights and liabilities require that any apportionments shall use the population of the area as estimated by the Proper Officer of the Council as an appropriate proportion. The Regulations regarding the establishment of a precept for a new parish require the Council to calculate the first anticipated precept for a newly constituted parish council and for the amount of that precept to be included in the Reorganisation Order.

How to contact us

If you would like to say how you view potential future arrangements under these Terms of Reference, please respond to the online consultations on the Epsom and Ewell Borough Council website:

The survey will also be available in other formats, please email cgr@epsom-ewell.gov.uk or call 01372 732000