

END POVERTY PLEDGE

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Wards affected: (All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no) No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:
Appendices (attached):

Summary

This report considers whether to recommend to Full Council that the council makes the End Poverty Pledge (EPP) and agrees supporting the general statement and associated commitments.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Recommend to Full Council to sign the End Poverty Pledge, including agreeing the general statement and specific commitments set out in section 4 of this report.
- (2) Recommend to Full Council to nominate and authorise the Chief Executive to sign the Poverty Pledge on behalf of the council.

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The End Poverty Pledge is intended to encourage organisations to make a commitment to help people in their communities who are struggling with financial insecurities.
- 1.2 The council has an important role to help those residents experiencing poverty and committing the Council to the End Poverty Pledge requires a decision by Full Council.

2 Background

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- 2.1 The Good Company are a significant Epsom based local charity who are encouraging organisations within the borough and across East Surrey, to raise awareness of poverty, including of how organisations might impact on those living in poverty and how services they provide offer essential support on which people living in poverty rely. The guide to EPP is here: <https://goodcompany.org.uk/end-poverty-surrey/>
- 2.2 The Good Company have a long history of working with people living in poverty. This includes practical measures such as Food Banks and Food Pantry, as well as the Epsom and Ewell Poverty Truth Commission in 2024/5 [Poverty Truth Commission – Good Company](#).
- 2.3 Although relatively affluent, there is a wide range of deprivation across the borough and significant numbers of Borough residents use the Food Bank or Food Pantry. There is a 7-year difference in life expectancy across the 14 borough wards, with Ruxley, Court and Town wards consistently being the poorest performing areas. Outcomes for health are mainly affected (80%) by non-clinical issues (wider determinants) of which, socioeconomic factors contribute towards 40% of all health outcomes.
- 2.4 The council has a long history of active involvement supporting the most vulnerable within the borough, including adopting a Health and Wellbeing Strategy, delivery of community development initiatives, community services and financial support of key voluntary organisations such as Age Concern, Citizens Advice Bureau.

3 Current position

- 3.1 The End Poverty Pledge has been signed by an increasing number of organisations including local charities along with Surrey County Council, Mole Valley District Council and Surrey Heartlands NHS.
- 3.2 The End Poverty Pledge is intended to represent a commitment to tackling poverty and supporting those living in poverty. The Pledge includes a commitment to take action around three key themes of Leadership, Culture and Accountability.
- 3.3 As a minimum, the End Poverty Pledge requires those taking the pledge to sign up to commit to an action under each of the three themes. The nature of these commitments is for the council to determine and are not prescribed. The EPP website includes a corporate self-assessment tool to support organisations wanting to raise the profile of poverty [EPP Self-Assessment Discussion Guide](#)
- 3.4 Consultation with respect to the proposals in the End Poverty Pledge has occurred with relevant council services.

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4 Proposal

- 4.1 Full Council are asked to agree to the signing of the End Poverty Pledge which is agreeing to the general statement as set out in 4.2 below and making three further specific commitments, under three corporate themes of: leadership, culture and accountability as set out in 4.3 below.

4.2 General statement

As an organisation, we commit to do what we can to work towards a poverty-free future in Surrey:

We will show respect and compassion to anyone who is struggling financially

We will look at how our own actions can make life easier for people in financial hardship and help lift them out of poverty.

We will join in wider efforts to raise awareness and tackle poverty in our local community.

4.3 Specific commitments

The proposed specific pledges are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Details of the specific commitments

End Poverty Pledge Theme	Commitment
LEADERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To offer training to all staff to raise awareness of poverty, so that staff are better able to support residents struggling with financial hardshipImplementation of the Real Living Wage for all council staff from April 2026.
CULTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To explore how a review of the practical ways Bourne Hall could be made more accessible and welcoming to those living in poverty.
ACCOUNTABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Add Poverty as a criterion to be considered as part of the Equality Impact Assessment undertaken on all Epsom and Ewell Borough Council policies.

- 4.4 Training to raise staff awareness around poverty would ideally utilise resources associated with Epsom and Ewell Poverty Truth Commission and The Good Company.
- 4.5 A commitment for the council to pay the Real Living Wage from April 2026 was made by Full Council on 9th December 2025 and is a clear expression of the intent of council to support those living in poverty.

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- 4.6 Bourne Hall is a significant community building in the borough. In addition to the café and space for people to meet, Bourne Hall also provides a wide range of community services which are available for all residents. Because of this significant community role, the review of accessibility to Bourne Hall from the perspective of those living in poverty could be achieved by involving those with lived experience of living in poverty. Officers will explore whether this can be achieved in coordination a voluntary organisation such as The Good Company.
- 4.7 Consideration of the impact on those in poverty when making council policies can be effectively achieved by including poverty as a criteria in the existing Equalities Impact Assessments for council policies. This would help strengthen consideration of the impact of policies on residents in poverty.

5 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

5.1 Equality Impact Assessment

5.1.1 The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from being discriminated against on the basis of 9 protected characteristics in the workplace and in wider society. The new Government has committed to enacting Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 in England, making it a duty of all public bodies to consider the needs of those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage in all decision-making. This duty is already required in Wales and Scotland. Signing and enacting the pledge will put the council ahead of the curve of this development nationally.

5.1.2 The proposals set out in this report are related to supporting those residents experiencing poverty, any impact from supporting the recommendation would have a positive impact on equality.

5.2 Crime & Disorder

5.2.1 The proposals set out in this report are related to supporting those residents experiencing poverty, any impact from supporting the recommendation would have a positive impact on crime and disorder.

5.3 Safeguarding

5.3.1 The proposals set out in this report are related to supporting those residents experiencing poverty, any impact from supporting the recommendation would have a positive impact on safeguarding.

5.4 Dependencies

5.4.1 Working effectively with voluntary organisations within the borough.

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6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 Existing budget allocations are considered satisfactory to meet the financial implications from these proposals.
- 6.2 Any possible future changes or actions resulting from the signing of the End Poverty Charter, general statement and the supporting commitments would need to be subject to separate decision making, including identification any of required budget and be supported with a business case
- 6.3 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising from the commitments within this proposal
- 7.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

8 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

- 8.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:
- From the 2020-24 corporate plan this proposal would support Safe and Well and Opportunity and Prosperity. It is not specifically included in the current strategic priorities for the council.
- 8.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is not included within the current Service Delivery Plan.
- 8.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** None.
- 8.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** Supporting residents who are vulnerable because of their poverty would be consistent with the objectives of the Epsom and Ewell Community Safety Partnership.
- 8.5 **Partnerships:** With respect to supporting residents living in poverty, the council relies on effective partnerships with a number of key voluntary organisations, including The Good Company, Citizens Advice, Age Concern Epsom and Ewell.
- 8.6 **Local Government Reorganisation Implications:** There are no direct implications arising from this proposal.

9 Background papers

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

Previous reports: None

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Other papers:

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