



Annual
Governance
Statement
2023-2024

Date: July 2024

Executive Summary

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council are committed to delivering on the themes that emerged from the long term vision of the Borough, also known as [Future40](#). The themes form the core of our [Four Year Plan 2020-2024](#), they are:



We continue our drive to work as efficiently and effectively as possible towards these priorities, and in developing our new corporate plan, reviewing our services, assets and other sources of income. Yet we remain adaptable to changes in government legislation and other external factors.

Central to our success, is having a robust foundation of good governance and sound financial management. Our local [Code of Corporate Governance](#) outlines our governance arrangements and systems of internal control, which provides assurance that we are meeting the CIPFA principles of good governance.¹

Each year the Council is required to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The AGS describes how our corporate governance arrangements, as set out in the local code, have been working. This AGS gives assurances on compliance for the year ending 31 March 2024 and an update on the most recent Statement of Accounts.

¹ CIPFA (2016) Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework, 2016 Edition. CIPFA: London.

Review of the Effectiveness of the Council's Governance Framework

Governance can be defined as comprising “the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved. The fundamental function of good governance in the public sector is to ensure that entities achieve their intended outcomes while acting in the public interest at all times.”² Governance includes processes, procedures, policies, administrative systems, legal arrangements and so forth, “through which [an organisation’s] objectives are set and pursued in” their environmental context, while “ensuring that stakeholders can have confidence that their trust in [the organisation] is well founded.”³

Throughout the year, the Council regularly reviews the effectiveness of its governance arrangements, through performance reporting, Internal and External auditing, and the activities of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee. In addition, the AGS is informed by senior management governance assessments, including by statutory officers, and the controls outlined in the Code of Corporate Governance, which outlines the Council’s assurance framework.⁴ Together these practices ensure there is regular corporate oversight, and that our governance arrangements remain effective.

The AGS incorporates the continuous assessment of our governance arrangements throughout the last year, and identifies areas where we can improve.⁵ This approach seeks to manage risks to the Council’s governance, and ensure we are doing things in the right way and delivering value for money, yet our operating environment is continually changing and evolving. Therefore, we strive to deliver continuous improvement in-line with the seven “Best Value” themes,⁶ and have added a new Best Value assessment within the “Rational for AGS Assurance Opinion” section.



² IFAC and CIPFA (2014) *The International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector*, p. 2. Online available: https://www.ifac.org/flysystem/azure-private/publications/files/IFAC-CIPFA-International-Framework-Good-Governance-in-Public-Sector-Exec-Summary_0.pdf [last accessed 30/05/2023].

³ The Chartered Governance Institute UK & Ireland (2022) *What is corporate governance?* Online available: <https://www.cgi.org.uk/about-us/policy/what-is-corporate-governance> [last accessed 18/04/2023].

⁴ CIPFA (2023) *Developing an effective assurance framework in a local authority*, December 2023. Online available: <https://www.cipfa.org/cipfa-thinks/briefings> [last accessed 22/06/2024].

⁵ See the following sections: “Rationale for the Statement’s Assurance Opinion” and the “Action Plan”.

⁶ HM Government (2024) *Best value standards and intervention: a statutory guide for best value authorities*, Dept. for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. Online available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-value-standards-and-intervention-a-statutory-guide-for-best-value-authorities/best-value-standards-and-intervention-a-statutory-guide-for-best-value-authorities#best-value-powers> [last accessed 31/05/24].

Effectiveness Assessment

This Statement's appraisal shows that we generally have a sound foundation of governance, systems of internal control and risk management in place. However, there are some areas where we can further improve. These areas may impact our ability to manage risks effectively and achieve our aims and objectives. We are aware of these issues and have plans in place to address them.

The Council is also aware of other issues which are not within our control that could affect our financial position, such as inflationary pressure, insurance claims, appeals (such as for planning) and other matters.

Compliance with CIPFA Financial Management Code

CIPFA published its first edition 'Financial Management Code' for local authorities in October 2019. CIPFA considers that compliance with this Code is mandatory for all local authorities although such compliance is not specifically mandated by statute. The code is essentially a best practice guide to financial management in the local authority sector. It covers the following areas:

- The responsibilities of the chief financial officer and the leadership team (including members).
- Governance and financial management style.
- Medium to long term financial management.
- The annual budget.
- Stakeholder engagement and business plans.
- Monitoring financial performance.
- External financial reporting.

Officers have undertaken an assessment of the council's compliance with the Code and in general terms the council's arrangements meet the recommended standards.

Subsidiary Company

The Council has one subsidiary company – Epsom & Ewell Property Investment Company Ltd (EEPIC) – a 100% wholly owned trading company of the Council. It was set up in September 2017 to provide the Council with the flexibility to undertake commercial trading activities in property investment. In accordance with Government guidance introduced in April 2018, no further out of Borough property investment acquisitions have been made. As the sole shareholder of EEPIC, the Council ensures strong governance through regular meetings of the Shareholder Sub-Committee. It approves EEPIC's Annual Business Plan and receives an Annual Review each November as provided by the Shareholder Agreement. In addition to its role as shareholder, the Council is also EEPIC's lender with separate governance

provided through Strategy & Resources Committee for loan agreement matters. EEPIC Board Meetings are held quarterly with quarterly management and finance monitoring reports submitted to the Council's S151 Officer to ensure loan monitoring compliance. As a property investment company holding property investment assets for income generation, the key risks to EEPIC are tenancy void periods i.e. tenant default or tenant failure to renew at lease expiry. To mitigate these risks, EEPIC holds long term leases (the shortest lease in the portfolio doesn't expire until 2036) and quarterly management reporting ensures Directors are kept fully informed of tenant matters. All Directors are senior officers of the Council, and all have received appropriate training.

Statutory Assurances

Several officers at the Council hold [statutory roles](#), which are established in legislation and have specific responsibilities. It is important that assurances from these officers are included in this AGS to support its conclusion on the Council's governance arrangements.

1. Head of Paid Service

The Head of Paid Service is responsible for the overall corporate and operational management of the Council. These responsibilities have been considered within the context of this statement and the Head of Paid Service can confirm that proper arrangements have been put in place for the overall operation and management of the Council.

The Head of Paid Service has no significant concerns to report and continues to evolve the senior management structure and organisational strategy to align responsibilities and resources to deliver the Council's ambitions and priorities.

In yet another challenging year for the Council the organisation continues to deal with the significant and increasing service and economic pressures we face, which are exacerbated by the ongoing cost of living crisis. Governance arrangements are improving and there has been a continued and sustained focus on performance and risk management.

The organisation underwent a Corporate Peer Challenge at the end of the 23/24 financial year and we are currently putting together the action plan in response to the final report. The results were very positive with eleven recommendations of where we could build in improvements. In addition to the usual coverage, the areas of Housing (including temporary accommodation costs), Risk and Governance were included in the review at the organisation's request.

The ongoing job market upheaval means there are often numerous employment options available to potential candidates and in some cases the Council has found it difficult to recruit to specialist posts. However, job turnover has slowed significantly in the last twelve months and most key posts are filled, with all but one of the Senior Leadership Team now being permanent appointments. The recruitment campaign for that remaining post begins in June 2024 and there are interim arrangements still in place which are working well.

The Council is working with other Surrey authorities on financial resilience and collaborative initiatives, alongside any partnership opportunities with other organisations, which will continue alongside a review of our statutory and discretionary services during 24/25 and beyond.

2. Chief Financial and Section 151 Officer

The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs. The Chief Finance Officer confirms that the Council's arrangements conform to Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the Council complies with CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in Local Government (2016). While the Council has robust financial management arrangements in place, it is important to note that the 2024/25 budget was again produced in the context of prevailing economic uncertainty, particularly in relation to interest rates, inflation, local government finances and the impact of a potential recession. The uncertain economic outlook causes increased uncertainty within the Council's finances and demonstrates the ongoing importance of finding efficiencies and holding sufficient reserves to enable the Council to manage the risks it faces.

During 2023/24 the Council approved its Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-28, which aims to deliver corporate priorities while addressing the future budget gap (projected at c.£0.5m per annum) to maintain the financial health of the organisation. Financial risk remains elevated however, particularly with regard to service demands, the major Town Hall relocation project, inflationary pressures, pay, homelessness demands, income streams and commercial property income. Provision has been made to manage risks as far as possible, but these remain areas of concern that will continue to be monitored.

As identified by the Chief Executive, the Council continues to work with other Surrey authorities on financial resilience, collaborative initiatives and partnership opportunities, alongside a review of our statutory and discretionary services during 24/25 and beyond.

3. Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer (Head of Legal Services – which includes oversight of the Council's Democratic Services and Election Team) is required to report to the Council in any case where it appears that any proposal, decision, or omission by the authority has given rise to or is likely to or would give rise to any contravention of any enactment, rule of law or code of practice or maladministration or injustice in accordance with Sections 5 and 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. (In May 2023, a new permanent Monitoring Officer was appointed, following a period when the role had been filled via an outsourced basis).

During the course of the last year, the Council's Constitution and in particular its Scheme of Delegation was reviewed and updated, which has improved the processes for decision-making by officers; work to review the constitution in other areas continues.

As identified by both the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, any proposed collaborative work with other Surrey authorities and the proposed review of the Council's statutory and discretionary services shall require further work to ensure that any changes proposed either comply with or amend the current governance arrangements in place so as to ensure compliance with any relevant legal requirements.

4. Internal Audit Annual Opinion⁷

I am satisfied that sufficient assurance work has been carried out to allow me to form a reasonable conclusion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment.

In my opinion frameworks of governance, risk management and management control are **reasonable** and audit testing has demonstrated controls to be working in practice.

Where weaknesses have been identified through internal audit review, we have worked with management to agree appropriate corrective actions and a timescale for improvement.

5. External Audit

On 10 May 2024, external auditors Grant Thornton provided an unqualified (i.e. favourable) opinion on the Statement of Accounts 2022/23, and have not identified any significant weaknesses in our: governance arrangements, financial sustainability, or our economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The external audit of 2023/24's Statement of Accounts commenced in Summer/Autumn 2024.




Note: this is based on the most recent audit report provided by Grant Thornton Ltd ([2022/23 audit](#)). Grant Thornton define governance as: "Arrangements for ensuring that the Council makes appropriate decisions in the right way. This includes arrangements for budget setting and management, risk management, and ensuring the Council makes decisions based on appropriate information."

⁷ Please note our Internal Audit function is delivered by the Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP), operated by Hampshire County Council. This paragraph is a direct quote from the *Annual Internal Audit Report & Opinion 2023-2024*, prepared by SIAP's Deputy Head of Partnership. It will be available in the [committee papers for this meeting](#) (once the agenda is published). The meaning of "reasonable" is defined in sections 3 and 4 of the annual report.

Rational for this Annual Governance Statement's Assurance Opinion





This section highlights the factors that contribute to our overall assurance opinion, in addition to Internal Audit's annual opinion.



The first section focuses on the actions that relate to CIPFA's principles of good governance, while the second section presents actions that fall within the seven Best Value themes. Note, there will be some cross-pollination of actions between both sections, as certain actions will be applicable to both a CIPFA principle and a Best Value theme. Both sections use the following traffic light icon descriptors.


Definition ⁸	Description
<p style="text-align: center;">Adequate</p> 	<p>There are sound policies and processes in place that are working effectively across services, which provide for good governance arrangements and support compliance with requirements of the CIPFA Principle, and the achievement of the Council's Best Value aims and objectives.</p> <p>There may be minor areas for continuous improvement, but these do not represent a significant or material risk to the Council's overall governance framework.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Some development or areas for improvement</p> 	<p>Whilst there are policies and processes in place, there are some areas that remain a challenge for the Council or require further improvement, which may impact the effectiveness of elements of the Council's governance arrangements, compliance with the CIPFA principle and the achievement of the Council's Best Value aims and objectives. The Council has an action plan in place to address challenges and improvement matters.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Key development or many areas for improvement</p> 	<p>We have identified significant challenges in relation to the policies and processes, which may impact the effectiveness of elements of our governance arrangements, compliance with the CIPFA principle and achievement of our Best Value aims and objectives. We have implemented plans for corrective actions to manage these risks.</p>

⁸ We have referred to [Basildon Council's criteria](#) to inform this section's assessment (last accessed 02/06/2023).


Please note: the items included in the table below are controls, processes etc. that have changed in the year, that is, where we improved or identified an area to improve. It is therefore not a list of all the governance arrangements we have in place. For a full list and further detail on our arrangements and assurance framework, please see our [Code of Corporate Governance](#).

Core CIPFA governance principle	Overall assessment	What's working well	Where we can improve
A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We reviewed and updated our Scheme of Delegation. II. We received a “Reasonable” assurance rating for our counter-fraud framework. III. The Councillors’ Code of Conduct has been reviewed and updated. IV. We have improved our complaints handling governance and reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Our People Framework and associated policies require finalising, and are being progressed by the People & OD Service. II. We are making minor updates to our Whistleblowing Policy. III. We are continuing to review and update our Health and Safety policies and continuing inspections to identify any gaps in practice. IV. We have reviewed our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework, which will be published externally in July 2024.
B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We completed a Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge. II. We take a report on complaints to every meeting of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We are investigating ways to create a corporate repository for all our resident engagement activities to provide a better overview of this work.
C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We made the decision to move our Town Hall to a more appropriate building. II. We have started work on a new climate change strategy, to ensure our activities remain effective. III. The Annual Plan 2024-2025 has been agreed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We need to develop a new long term corporate plan and are setting up facilitated workshop sessions with committee Chairs and senior managers to move forward with this.
D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. The Medium Term Financial Strategy 24-28 was approved. II. We approved an Arts, Heritage & Culture Strategy, and have delivered several activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Our community development plan is being reviewed, given delays to actions due to the additional workload created by government refugee support schemes.



		<p>III. A governance framework has been established for our Town Hall move project, and consultants appointed to provide expert support and capacity.</p>	
<p>E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it</p>		<p>I. A permanent Director of Environment, Housing and Regeneration has been appointed.</p> <p>II. New IT equipment has been issued to officers and councillors.</p> <p>III. Officers continue to participate in and complete management training courses.</p>	<p>I. Recruitment to HR roles is taking longer than anticipated.</p> <p>II. A permanent appointment process for the Director of Corporate Services post is currently underway.</p> <p>III. We are updating our IT policies and implementing the IT Strategy actions to progress our governance aims in this area.</p> <p>IV. We will review our councillor training programme to ensure councillors have the tools to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.</p>
<p>F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</p>		<p>I. We have had a positive outturn with regard to our finances, and treasury income has increased significantly.</p> <p>II. The Risk Management Strategy was reviewed and updated in November 2023.</p> <p>III. Our risk management was audited in the year and received "Reasonable" assurance.</p> <p>IV. New performance and risk software has been procured to enhance our performance framework.</p>	<p>I. There are 2 red risks on our Corporate Risk Register and 5 on our committee risk registers. For the most recent updates on these risks please see our Quarter 4 Corporate Performance Report.</p> <p>II. We are looking to source further Data Protection Officer resource.</p>



G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Internal and External Audit have reported to Audit & Scrutiny Committee throughout the year. II. The Internal Audit Plan for 2024-2025 was agreed by Audit & Scrutiny Committee. III. A new Intranet for officers has been launched, which enables corporate information to be shared more effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We are making minor updates to our Whistleblowing Policy.



Seven Best Value Themes⁹

Best Value theme	Overall assessment	What's working well	Where we can improve
1. Continuous improvement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. A LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) was undertaken. II. The Town Hall move is the catalyst for transformation of our ways of working (e.g. more digitally enabled and more sustainable). III. We have improved our communications with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. IV. CIPFA principles of good governance feature in this Statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We are developing an improved officer and councillor training offer. II. We are building an improvement plan from the recommendations made in the CPC report.

⁹ HM Government (2024) Best value standards and intervention: a statutory guide for best value authorities, Dept. for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. Online available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-value-standards-and-intervention-a-statutory-guide-for-best-value-authorities/best-value-standards-and-intervention-a-statutory-guide-for-best-value-authorities#best-value-powers> [last accessed 31/05/24].

		<p>V. Strategy & Resources Committee agreed to undertaken risk management workshops in 24/5 to further embed and define our risk appetite.</p> <p>VI. Governance improvement actions are included in the final section of this Statement.</p> <p>III. Oflog's data explorer performance indicators will be incorporated into our new performance management system. Please note the most recent data published on the data explorer runs to 2022, since which our planning performance has improved substantially.</p>	
2. Leadership		<p>I. Our financial accounts audits are up to date.</p> <p>II. All statutory officer posts are filled with permanent appointments.</p> <p>III. We have an agreed Annual (Corporate) Plan for 2024/5.</p> <p>IV. Performance and risk management is regularly reviewed by the corporate leadership team, policy committee Chairs and Audit & Scrutiny Committee.</p>	<p>I. We need to develop a new long-term corporate plan and are setting up facilitated workshop sessions with committee Chairs and senior managers to move forward with this.</p> <p>II. We are developing an improved officer and councillor training offer.</p> <p>III. We need to appoint a permanent Director of Corporate Services, and are in the recruitment process.</p>
3. Governance		<p>I. We have reviewed and updated our Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>II. The councillors' Code of Conduct has been reviewed and updated.</p> <p>III. We have a Whistleblowing Policy in place.</p> <p>IV. We have a risk-based internal audit plan, with regular progress reports brought to Audit & Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>V. Specialist consultants have been appointed to assist in the Town Hall move.</p>	<p>I. We are developing a new Workforce Strategy and updating our HR policies.</p> <p>II. We will ensure our new long-term corporate plan is outcomes focused.</p> <p>III. We are going to review the scrutiny element of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee and consider whether the current approach is the most effective.</p>

		VI. Performance and risk information is regularly reported to the Corporate Leadership Team and councillors.	
4. Culture		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We have launched a new staff intranet, which includes “Community” channels. II. We have a Whistleblowing Policy in place. III. We have a gifts and hospitality policy. IV. Staff turnover is on target. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We are developing a new Workforce Strategy and updating our HR policies. II. We have engaged additional resource to lead our Workforce Transformation which will address how, when and where we work.
5. Use of resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Established budget setting and monitoring processes in place that include councillor oversight. II. Strategic Asset Management Plan in place. III. We are working on a developing a multi-year programme of prioritised service reviews. IV. IT Strategy and roadmap in place. V. We are preparing a programme which will review income generation from the council’s venues. VI. The council’s subsidiary company EEPIC has appropriate governance and risk management in place, and it currently provides a healthy return on investment subject to market risks. VII. We are proactive with our treasury management investment, which provides a return that is above target. VIII. Positive financial internal audit reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We must make planned budget savings to reduce our reliance on reserves and have included two actions in our Annual Plan 2024/25 to progress this: setting a balanced budget (Action 1) and delivering a sustainable budget plan by conducting service reviews (Action 2).

6. Service delivery		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Service plans, including service risks and performance indicators are produced each year. II. We have reviewed and updated our complaints procedures. III. Performance is regularly reviewed by the Corporate Leadership Team and councillors. IV. We're updating our procurement documents ready for the implementation of the new Procurement Act. V. We have an internal Borough profile that provides relevant insight data, which we will turn into a public facing document in 2024/5. VI. Our External Audit reports contain a review on economy, efficiency and effectiveness. No significant gaps were identified in the last audit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We are investigating ways to strengthen our approach regarding obtaining resident feedback on our services.
7. Partnerships and community engagement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We have worked effectively with a local partner on delivering government grants and supporting refugee schemes and homelessness prevention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. We need to deliver a new long-term corporate plan and are setting up facilitated workshop sessions with committee Chairs and senior managers to move forward with this. II. We will be developing a new governance framework that captures all our partnerships and clearly outlines their benefits.

Action Plan

2022-2023 Action Plan

Issues identified	Action to be taken	Due date	Status	Commentary for Amber and Red actions
To develop a new Medium Term Financial Strategy, in support the Council's annual service objectives and to maintain and improve the Council's financial resilience [Finance]	Strategic Financial Planning report to Strategy & Resources (July 2023) Budget/MTFS report to Full Council (February 2024)	29 Feb 2024	Completed	
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) [Place Development]	Review and update CIL policies and procedures (inc. Neighbourhood CIL).	31 Dec 2023	Completed	
Information governance [Policy & Corporate Resources]	Establish officer information governance scrutiny and oversight group.	30 Sep 2023	Completed	
IT Strategy [IT]	Approval of IT Strategy with associated funding and implementation plan.	30 Sep 2023	Completed	
PSN Certificate [IT]	Complete PSN health check (May 2023) and any remedial actions that result.	31 Mar 2024	Amber	Work is progressing and will complete next year, hence action carried forward. Revised due date 31 March 2025 .
IT policies [IT]	Review and update IT policies as necessary.	31 Mar 2024	Amber	A new Head of IT was recruited in March 2024. The new Head is aware which policies still require updating, hence this action will

				continue into next year. Revised due date 31 December 2024 .
Human resources [People & Organisational Development]	Enhance the resilience of the People & Organisational Development Service by recruiting vacant posts and continuing with multi-role training for new team members.	31 Mar 2024	Amber	A permanent HR&OD Business Partner role is currently out to advert with support from recruitment agency to seek a wider and experienced pool through proactive methods. A permanent HR Advisor role is also currently out to advert, with interim support in place. Permanent Head of People & OD starting in June 2024. All roles expected to be filled across summer 2024. Revised due date 30 September 2024 .
Development Management [Place Development]	Review the Development Management transformation project to ensure the council is no longer under 'threat of designation'.	30 Sep 2023	Completed	
Recruitment and retention [All Services / People & Organisational Development]	Review and enhance recruitment and retention policies and procedures for key roles across the council.	31 Mar 2024	Amber	The policies and procedures are being reviewed as part of the People Framework. Due to scope of the project to create and update these employment policies, the timescale will need to be extended due to the capacity of the HR team and is timescale for completion is dependent on the recruitment of the HR roles. Revised due date 31 March 2025 .
The Local Plan [Place Development]	Ensure there is adequate resourcing in place to ensure the Local Plan is	31 Mar 2024	Completed	

	progressed in the most efficient way possible.			
Health and safety [All Services / Policy & Corporate Resources]	Continue to gather assurance on the effectiveness of health and safety management across all council services and venues.	31 Mar 2024	Completed	
Officer schemes of delegation [Legal Services]	Review, and update as required, the officer schemes of delegation.	30 Sep 2023	Completed	
Homelessness [Housing & Community]	Review governance arrangements around the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy.	31 Mar 2024	Amber	Amber rating due to the full report on homelessness featuring in the 9 July 2024 meeting of the Community & Wellbeing Committee, rather than March.
Business continuity [Policy & Corporate Resources]	Review and update as necessary all team's business continuity plans.	31 Mar 2024	Completed	

2023-2024 AGS Action Plan

Actions cover the timespan from July 2024 – March 2025.

Issues identified	Action to be taken	Due date
<i>Carried over from 2022-2023 AGS:</i> Human resources [People & Organisational Development]	Enhance the resilience of the People & Organisational Development Service by recruiting vacant posts and continuing with multi-role training for new team members.	30 Sep 2024
<i>Carried over from 2022-2023 AGS:</i> Recruitment and retention [People & Organisational Development]	Review and enhance recruitment and retention policies and procedures for key roles across the council.	31 Mar 2025
<i>Carried over from 2022-2023 AGS:</i>	Review and update IT policies as necessary.	31 Dec 2024

IT policies [IT]		
<i>Carried over from 2022-2023 AGS:</i> PSN Certificate [IT]	Complete PSN health check (May 2023) and any remedial actions that result.	31 Mar 2025
Document Management Software [Finance]	Procure new software to enhance the revenues and benefits service.	31 Dec 24
Biodiversity Net Gain [Place Development]	Implement the Biodiversity Net Gain policy requirements.	31 Jul 24
Public Protection Inspections [Housing & Community]	Review resourcing in statutory Environmental Health services, including discretionary activities.	31 Mar 25
Audit & Scrutiny Committee [Legal & Democratic Services]	Review the Audit & Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference.	31 Mar 25
Corporate Plan [Policy & Corporate Resources]	Produce a new long-term corporate plan.	31 Mar 25
Resident Engagement [Policy & Corporate Resources]	Develop a corporate record of the Council's resident engagement activities.	31 Mar 25
Data Protection Officer [Policy & Corporate Resources]	Source additional Data Protection Officer capacity.	31 Oct 24
Councillor Training [Legal & Democratic Services]	Review and enhance the councillor training and development programme.	31 Mar 25

Executive Confirmation

The Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee and Chief Executive both recognise the importance of good governance and sound financial management. They pledge their commitment to address the matters highlighted in this AGS, and to further enhance our governance arrangements to enable delivery of our [Annual Plan 2024-2025](#). Further, they confirm they have been advised of the implications of the governance review by senior management. In addition, they are assured that the Audit & Scrutiny Committee are satisfied that the steps outlined in this document will ensure that our governance arrangements remain fit for the future.

Signed on behalf of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council:¹⁰

SIGNED

**Chair of Strategy & Resources
Committee**

Date: 21/11/24

SIGNED

Chief Executive

Date: 21/11/24

¹⁰ The hand-signed copy is stored in the Town Hall.