



# Improvement and Recovery Plan

## Plans on a Page

October 2025

Version	Date	Author	Changes
4.1	29/09/2025	Dan Dredge	Final Draft





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Located in north-west Surrey, approximately 15 miles from central London, Spelthorne is a diverse and well-connected borough that combines urban convenience with scenic landscapes. The borough includes the towns of Staines-upon-Thames, Ashford, Sunbury-on-Thames, Stanwell and Shepperton, offering a mix of riverside living, green spaces, and historic charm. With excellent transport links via the M25, M3, and Heathrow Airport, Spelthorne is a desirable location for residents and businesses alike. The area benefits from a strong local economy, active communities, and access to cultural and recreational amenities.

### Government Intervention

Spelthorne Borough Council is undergoing a period of significant transformation in response to a formal intervention by the Secretary of State for Housing, Local Government and Communities. This intervention, announced in May 2025, follows a series of financial and governance challenges that have accumulated over recent years. The Council has now developed a comprehensive Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP) to address these issues and set a clear path toward sustainability, transparency, and organisational renewal.

The IRP is the Council's formal response to the Directions issued under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999. It brings together the findings of the Best Value Inspection, the Grant Thornton audit, LGA Peer Review and the CIPFA Capital Assurance Review, and sets out a structured programme of reform. The plan is designed to be a living document, evolving in line with

the Council's improvement journey and the wider context of Surrey Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

### Strategic Themes and Objectives

The IRP is structured around five strategic themes, each representing a core area of improvement. These themes provide a framework for targeted action and measurable progress

#### 1. Finance

The Council is committed to achieving long-term financial sustainability through disciplined planning, effective governance, and transparent reporting. This includes addressing significant budget gaps, reducing external borrowing, and strengthening financial oversight. A credible multi-year financial strategy will be developed, supported by improved reporting, enhanced technical capacity, and a renewed focus on affordability and risk.

#### 2. Commercial

Spelthorne will reduce its exposure to commercial risks while maximising the value of its property assets. A unified commercial strategy will be introduced, supported by stronger governance, improved procurement, and better data management. The Council will also prepare for unitarisation by aligning commercial activity with strategic priorities and community needs.

#### 3. Regeneration and Housing

The Council will develop realistic and credible plans for

its regeneration sites, increase housing provision, and reduce reliance on temporary accommodation. This includes assessing the viability of Knowle Green Estates, finalising the Local Plan, and strengthening partnerships with developers and Registered Providers. The aim is to deliver balanced, sustainable communities and meet housing targets effectively.

#### 4. Governance

A renewed governance framework will rebuild trust, improve decision-making, and embed a culture of transparency and collective ownership. The Council will strengthen its audit and risk functions, clarify roles and responsibilities, and ensure that decisions are evidence-based and timely. A robust risk management framework will be introduced, supported by improved reporting and training.

#### 5. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

In preparation for the transition to a unitary authority, the Council will align services, data, and governance structures. This includes harmonising systems, preparing for statutory changes, and supporting staff through the transition. The LGR programme represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reshape local government in Surrey, and Spelthorne is committed to playing a leading role in this transformation.



## Delivery and Oversight

Effective delivery of the IRP requires structured programme management and robust oversight mechanisms to ensure progress is tracked and objectives are met.

To manage the complexity of the IRP, a dedicated Programme Management Office (PMO) has been established. The PMO will oversee delivery using the Council's existing PRINCE2-based frameworks, supported by best practice documentation, governance processes, and structured change control procedures.

Each theme within the IRP has been developed through collaborative workshops, resulting in detailed problem statements, desired outcomes, and actionable objectives. All Directions and recommendations are aligned to one or more of the strategic themes and will be monitored through regular reporting. Each theme includes a defined set of objectives, workstreams, and milestones to track progress and ensure accountability. The themes are interdependent and cannot be delivered in isolation, requiring coordinated planning and integrated delivery across the programme.

## Plans on a page

Plans on a Page (POAPs) have been created for each theme, providing a concise visual summary of priorities and activities. These will be used to track progress and ensure alignment with the intervention directions.

An IRP Board, chaired by the Lead Commissioner, has been established to provide strategic oversight. Progress will be reported regularly to both the Corporate Policy and Resource Committee (CPRC) and the Commissioners.

A dedicated IRP Risk Register will ensure that risks are identified and managed proactively.

## Engagement and Resources

Effective engagement with Members, staff, and stakeholders is central to the success of the IRP.

The Council is briefing Members through regular sessions and engaging staff via internal communications and monthly meetings. A communications plan will ensure that residents, partners, and businesses are kept informed throughout the improvement journey.

Financially, the Council has allocated £750,000 to support the intervention for the period up to 31/03/26. Further resources may be required to deliver the IRP, particularly in areas where internal capacity is limited.

Support from other Surrey councils, contractors, and the Local Government Association will be sought where appropriate, funded through a Transformation Fund.

The IRP sets out a clear and ambitious roadmap for Spelthorne Borough Council to recover, improve, and prepare for the future. It reflects a shared commitment to change, a recognition of the challenges ahead, and a determination to deliver better outcomes for residents and communities.



Approach

The successful delivery of Spelthorne Borough Council’s Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP) will depend on several critical factors. These include:

- The interdependencies between the themes within the plan
- The availability of sufficient financial resources
- The ability to recruit or procure appropriately skilled staff within the required timescales
- Effective decision-making within the updated governance framework
- Clear, consistent political direction and prioritisation
- The need to prioritise appropriately

In addition, external factors such as Local Government Reorganisation or the application of Section 24 Directions present potential risks to progress and will need to be actively monitored and managed.

Risk Management

The IRP is underpinned by a structured risk framework that enables the Council to identify, assess, and respond to risks in a timely manner. An initial set of risks has already

been identified, and these will be reviewed and updated regularly as the programme evolves.

Levels of Risk Oversight

- Operational risks identified and managed by each theme’s working group, focusing on delivery risks specific to their area.
- Strategic and cross-cutting risks, escalated to the central programme risk register, maintained by the Programme Management Office (PMO).

The programme risk register is reviewed at each meeting of the Improvement and Recovery Board. In addition, risk updates are incorporated into regular reports to the Audit Committee and Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, ensuring councillors maintain oversight of key issues and mitigation strategies.

Alignment with Corporate Governance

The IRP’s risk management approach is fully integrated with the Council’s corporate governance framework:

- The programme risk register feeds into the Council’s strategic Corporate Risk Register, which is owned by the Corporate Leadership Team and reviewed quarterly.

- Risks associated with the IRP are subject to the same scrutiny and assurance processes as other major programmes, including periodic review by the Audit Committee, Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and Full Council.
- The PMO ensures consistency in risk reporting, supports the development of proportionate mitigation plans, and tracks their effectiveness.

Monitoring

A live risk register will be maintained and updated throughout the IRP. Each risk will be assessed for likelihood and impact, with escalation where exposure exceeds tolerance.

Risks will be managed through proportionate controls, regular oversight, and clear ownership. Opportunities, assumptions, and early warning indicators will also be tracked to support timely action.

A high-level risk register has been included on the following slides.

Key Risks	Capacity and resources	Dependence on external support	Pace of Change	Governance and political direction
	Delivery of the first year of the plan relies on having the right skills and capacity in areas such as financial management, commercial expertise, and programme delivery. While resource requirements have been identified, securing them depends on timely approvals and may be constrained by external financial controls such as a Section 24 Direction	Key elements of the plan, particularly in finance and commercial themes, rely on consultants and contractors. Although steps are being taken to up-skill existing staff, there remains a risk of over-reliance if internal capability is not built quickly enough.	The Council must deliver change at significant speed, while also maintaining service standards and staff morale. This challenge is heightened by the uncertainty created by Local Government Reorganisation, which may divert focus or alter priorities.	Effective delivery requires consistent decision-making, prioritisation, and political direction within the updated governance framework. Any uncertainty or delays in this area could slow progress across the programme.

Risks				
Risk Title	Description	Mitigation Actions	Owner	RAG
Capacity and Pace	The IRP demands rapid, coordinated change across multiple areas. Timelines are tight and interdependent. While debt reduction is a core part of the IRP, it competes for limited capacity alongside Section 24 (as part of LGR), the Heathrow DCO process, housing pressures (including asylum seekers and HMOs), and the Local Plan refresh. Limited officer capacity increases the risk of delays and missed benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run a consistent delivery cycle through the PMO to identify blockers early and coordinate decisions across themes, helping to prevent delays and misalignment.</li> <li>Use the Improvement and Recovery Board to hold SROs accountable for progress and escalate slippage or resource pressures to CPRC, ensuring timely corrective action.</li> <li>Prioritise critical tasks and allocate resources to high-impact workstreams, so that limited capacity is focused where it delivers the greatest value.</li> <li>Deploy external support (e.g. contractors or partners) where internal skills or capacity are limited, maintaining delivery momentum and avoiding bottlenecks.</li> </ul>	Daniel Mouawad (SRO LGR)	R
Resourcing and Affordability	Financial constraints and ongoing budget gaps may limit the Council's ability to procure the specialist capability needed, risking slippage across the IRP's front-loaded milestones and undermining financial sustainability. Additionally, some services are heavily engaged in statutory and day-to-day work, creating pressure that could impact delivery and morale, leading to attrition risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use IRP finance workstreams to identify skill gaps and plan targeted recruitment or interim appointments, ensuring the right expertise is available when needed.</li> <li>Ring-fence IRP resources and apply change control, protecting delivery-critical funding and ensuring that the £0.75m.</li> <li>Classify eligible workstream elements as transformation projects to enable capitalisation and funding via capital receipts, easing pressure on revenue budgets.</li> <li>Align capability planning with strategic goals and implement wellbeing and retention support, helping to sustain morale and reduce turnover during high-demand periods.</li> </ul>	Terry Collier (SRO Finance)  Daniel Mouawad (SRO LGR)	R
Programme Delivery and Assurance	Without consistent governance and reporting, delivery issues may go undetected, causing missed milestones or key outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply PMO standards for issue/risk logs, dependency mapping, and change control, ensuring that risks are tracked and managed systematically.</li> <li>Integrate programme oversight with the Corporate Risk Register and Audit Committee, embedding assurance into formal governance processes.</li> <li>Use the IRP Board to monitor delivery and escalate concerns, enabling early intervention and maintaining programme discipline.</li> <li>Report progress publicly to Commissioners and committees, reinforcing transparency and external challenge to keep delivery on track.</li> </ul>	Daniel Mouawad (SRO LGR)	R
Interdependencies and Sequencing	The Improvement Plan sees a wide range of interdependencies between the various themes. These range from the strategic and overarching down to the specific. Without appropriate management of interdependencies and the sequencing between these, there is a risk that delivery of the plan could be negatively impacted, or some themes/workstreams could become unviable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate direct communication between SROs to ensure dependencies are actively managed and not overlooked.</li> <li>Identify and monitor interdependencies early, allowing for proactive adjustments to sequencing and avoiding clashes.</li> <li>Use the IRP Board to oversee changes and ensure alignment across themes, reducing the risk of disruption from poorly sequenced activities.</li> </ul>	Daniel Mouawad (SRO LGR)	R

Risks

Risk Title	Description	Mitigation Actions	Owner	RAG
Financial Sustainability	Failure to deliver the IRP’s financial reforms, including the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), debt reduction strategy, and audit improvements risks undermining the Council’s ability to exit intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver MRP policy updates, treasury strategy revisions, and refreshing reserves approach and strategy to ensure compliance and strengthen financial resilience.</li> <li>• Publish draft accounts and reduce audit findings. improving transparency and supporting recovery credibility.</li> <li>• Initiate structured debt reduction and service reconfiguration, enhancing the Council’s financial position and sustainability.</li> <li>• Refresh the reserves strategy to reflect asset disposals, replacing long-term sinking fund modelling with a more relevant and responsive financial planning approach.</li> </ul>	Terry Collier (SRO Finance)	R
Organisational Engagement, Morale and Performance	The scale and pace of the IRP, combined with uncertainty from Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), may negatively affect staff morale and performance. This could lead to retention challenges and reduced output across the organisation. Additionally, if councillors and staff do not clearly understand what the IRP is delivering or why, it may result in low engagement and lack of buy-in, further impacting delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver regular, clear communications and engagement activities to explain IRP progress, priorities, and expected outcomes.</li> <li>• Use multiple channels to build understanding and support across all levels of the organisation.</li> <li>• Provide wellbeing support and targeted retention incentives to maintain morale.</li> <li>• Reprioritise workloads to reduce pressure and sustain performance.</li> </ul>	Daniel Mouawad (LGR)	A
Governance and Decision-Making	Effective delivery depends on consistent decision-making, prioritisation, and political direction within the updated governance framework. Any uncertainty or delays in these areas could slow progress across the programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed the updated governance framework across the programme, ensuring decisions are made consistently and aligned with priorities.</li> <li>• Use the IRP Board to provide strategic direction and resolve uncertainty, maintaining momentum and clarity.</li> <li>• Establish clear escalation routes and decision protocols, reducing delays and enabling timely action on emerging issues.</li> </ul>	Linda Heron (Governance)  Daniel Mouawad (LGR)	A



# Improvement & Recovery Governance Workstreams

Council Committee Meetings

Improvement & Recovery Board

Commercial Governance Programme Board

Finance Programme Board

Governance Programme Board

LGR Programme Board

Communications & Engagement

Commercial

Regeneration & Housing

Finance

Governance

Local Governance Reorg

Lead Cllr  
CMMR  
SRO  
PM

Cllr Nicholls

Mervyn Greer

Coralie Holman

Daniel Dredge

Cllrs Williams/Doran/Gibson

Deborah McLaughlin

Karen Sinclair/Heather Morgan

Daniel Dredge

Cllr Nichols/Cllr Button

Peter Robinson

Terry Collier

Daniel Dredge

Cllr Sexton

Lesley Seary

Linda Heron/Lee O'Neill

Daniel Dredge

Cllr Sexton

Lesley Seary

Daniel Mouawad

Daniel Dredge

Commercial Property Rationalisation Plan

Commercial Governance

People, Systems & Data Management

Commercial Strategy

Procurement Process & Contract Management Review

Regeneration and Housing Confidence

KGE Future Resolution

Balanced Housing Mix

Thriving Communities and Infrastructure

Reduce Reliance on Temporary Accommodation

Minimum Revenue Position (MRP)

Sinking Fund Strategy

Audit & Accounts

Systems & Data

Capacity & Capability

Medium Term Financial Plan

Decision Making Process Review

Assurance and Risk Management

Good Governance

Culture of Continuous Improvement

Data Collection/Sharing

HR Rationalisation

Financial Rationalisation

Systems and Contracts

Elections & Governance

Change Management

Culture Change



**Strategic Aim:** To achieve financial sustainability through disciplined planning, effective governance, and transparent reporting

Relevant Directions

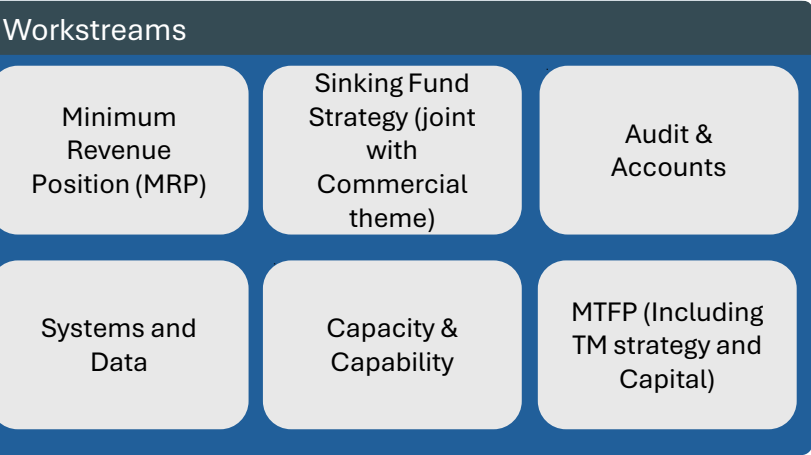
- A plan to achieve financial sustainability and to identify and close any short and long-term budget gaps across the period of its medium-term financial plan (MTFP), including a robust multi-year savings plan that reflects the costs and risks identified in the BVI report and by external auditors.
- A plan to ensure the Authority’s capital, investment and treasury management strategies are sustainable and affordable, including an asset rationalisation programme for assets and commercial investments.
- A comprehensive and strict debt reduction plan, demonstrating how overall capital financing requirement and external borrowing will be reduced over a realistic but expedient timescale, reducing debt servicing costs.
- A plan to review and update the sinking fund, taking a long-term view of potential risks and financial consequences with accurate income and expenditure forecasts, and with adequate provisions made for future costs.
- A plan to ensure the Authority is complying with all relevant rules and guidelines relating to the financial management of the Authority, including updating the minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy.
- A plan to reconfigure the Authority’s services commensurate with the Authority’s available financial resources.
- A plan to strengthen the Authority’s financial and commercial functions, and to secure improvements in risk management, governance and the internal audit function, with the guidance and to the satisfaction of the Commissioners.

Outcomes

- Robust financial governance structure
- Sustainable financial legacy
- Strengthened finance team capability and readiness
- Clear and accessible financial reporting
- Full understanding of the Council’s financial position
- Engaged and informed political leadership

Governance

- Corporate Policy and Resources Committee (decisions, progress updates tbc)
- Improvement and Recovery Board monthly progress reporting
- MAT (decisions, progress updates tbc)
- Lead Commissioner, Lead Councillor, SRO fortnightly meetings



Roles

- Lead Councillor – Cllr Lawrence Nichols
- Lead Commissioner – Peter Robinson
- SRO – Terry Collier
- PM – Ola Owolabi/Leigh Street
- Consulted - Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives, all Commissioners
- Informed – all Councillors, all staff

Timeline

Short

MRP policy  
Sinking Fund review  
Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Medium

Minimise adverse audit findings  
Financial Governance & Reporting

Long

Immediately prior to LGR obtain unqualified audit opinion for 25/26 Statement of Accounts

## Finance Workstreams

Workstream	Activity	Due
Minimum Revenue Position (MRP)/Treasury Management Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent assessment of investment property useful economic lives by Knight Frank for revised MRP calculations</li> <li>Independent report to recommend revised Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy that will meet statutory requirements, and be acceptable to External Auditors, Commissioners and MHCLG</li> <li>Update the budget model to reflect MRP changes and address those consequences</li> <li>Updated TM Strategy to reflect impact of reprofiled loans. loan discounts and impact on MTFP</li> <li>Set tight borrowing limits as part of Treasury Management Strategy 2026-27</li> </ul>	<p>Completed July 25</p> <p>Completed August 2025</p> <p>End of November 2025</p> <p>End of November 2025</p> <p>Feb 2027</p>
Sinking Fund Strategy (Joint with Commercial theme)	<p>a) Undertake a comprehensive review of the sinking funds reserves strategy and modelling assumptions and form a revised view on the purpose of the sinking funds in light of the MRP and Treasury Management Strategy changes</p> <p>i) Working with Assets create base portfolio model on modelling software and load first 5 years income and expenditure data</p> <p>ii) Finance to be trained on modelling tool and make initial projections for years 5 to 15</p> <p>b) Update sinking funds strategy and assumptions to clarify purpose, drawdown triggers, and ensure alignment with the broader financial approach</p>	<p>End of November 2025</p> <p>Completed August</p> <p>Completed August 2025</p> <p>End of November 2025</p>
Audit & Accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent review of the single entity and group accounts and disclosure checklist</li> <li>Recruit interim specialists to support completion of accounts</li> <li>Publish a draft Statement of Accounts</li> <li>Achieve a significantly reduced number of Audit Findings for 2024-25 accounts</li> <li>Achieve a clean external audit opinion for 2025-26</li> </ul>	<p>Completed June 2025</p> <p>Completed Jun/Jul 25</p> <p>Completed 16 September 2025</p> <p>February 2026 (draft AF report expected Jan 26)</p> <p>February 2026</p>
Systems and Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure modelling tool system is fully implemented, and the property database is up to date</li> <li>Review all funding streams to ensure clarity and sustainability</li> <li>Update the budget model to reflect investment income, growth, savings, pay pressures, and other key variables, ensure model reflects accruals accounting</li> </ul>	<p>Completed August 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p>

## Finance Workstreams

Workstream	Activity	Due
Capacity & Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the financial team restructure and ensure appropriate resourcing is in place</li> <li>• Undertake skills gap assessment and training, specifically with the Business Partnering team</li> <li>• Work with Surrey councils to share specialist support</li> <li>• Recruit quality interim resources to fill team and shared gaps, specifically treasury management</li> <li>• Provide training to group heads to ensure they own their budgets and savings plans</li> <li>• Provide councillors with training and guidance to support informed decision-making</li> <li>• Establish a governance framework with defined roles and shared ownership</li> <li>• Strengthen financial and commercial functions by embedding improvements in governance, risk management, and internal audit</li> <li>• Ensure that the Financial Reporting Working Group is appropriately resourced to enable it quickly to provide guidance and link to training to officers in reporting delivered under Governance theme</li> </ul>	<p>March 2026</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>TM -Completed Aug to come into effect October August 2025</p> <p>November 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p> <p>See Governance theme</p> <p>See Governance theme</p>
MTFP (including TM strategy and Capital strategy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve presentation of MTFP reporting</li> <li>• Ensure impact of MRP, TM, investment property surplus, sinking fund provision, accounting changes, grant assumptions and pressures are reflected in an updated MTFP so a clear budget gap is established and owned</li> <li>• Set up MTFP engagement sessions with MAT +, Leadership group, all members and all staff</li> <li>• Develop a credible and deliverable strategy to achieve long-term financial sustainability</li> <li>• Ensure capital, investment, and treasury management strategies are affordable and aligned with financial capacity</li> <li>• Start to implement a structured debt reduction plan</li> <li>• Reconfigure services to operate within a sustainable financial envelope</li> <li>• Develop a clear understanding of Local Government Funding Reform and its implications</li> </ul>	<p>September 2025</p> <p>September 2025</p> <p>Sept/Oct 2025</p> <p>November 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p> <p>February 2026</p> <p>December 2026 (provisional settlement)</p>

# Commercial Theme on a Page

**Strategic Aim:** To prepare the council for unitarisation by reducing its exposure to commercial risks whilst maximising the Best Value of its property assets and protecting the public purse

Relevant Directions	Outcomes	Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A plan to develop a comprehensive commercial strategy, with clear approaches to its investment and regeneration portfolios, including exit strategies for the commercial investments.</li><li>• A plan to strengthen the Authority's commercial functions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Good commercial governance</li><li>▪ Aligned skill set and capability to deliver</li><li>▪ Functioning and sustainable asset portfolio</li><li>▪ Informed decision-making that appropriately balances risk and reward</li><li>▪ Consistent and compliant contract management and procurement framework to achieve best value for money</li><li>▪ Collective ownership and delivery across members and officers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Corporate Policy and Resources Committee (decisions, progress updates)</li><li>▪ Commercial Assets sub committee</li><li>▪ Improvement and Recovery Board monthly progress reporting</li><li>▪ MAT (decisions, progress updates tbc)</li><li>▪ Lead Commissioner, Lead Councillor, SRO fortnightly meetings</li></ul>

Workstreams			Roles
Commercial Property Rationalisation Plan	Commercial Governance	People, Systems and Data Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Lead Councillor – Cllr Lawrence Nichols</li><li>▪ Lead Commissioner – Mervyn Greer</li><li>▪ SRO – Coralie Holman</li><li>▪ PM - TBC</li><li>▪ Consulted - Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives, all Commissioners</li><li>▪ Informed – all Councillors, all staff</li></ul>
Commercial Strategy	Procurement Process and Contract Management Review	Sinking Fund Strategy (joint with Finance Theme)	

Timeline	Short	Medium	Long
	<p>Develop a property rationalisation plan to reduce debt and deliver best value.</p> <p>Analyse portfolio data to optimise asset performance.</p>	<p>Formulate a commercial strategy aligned with Council principles.</p> <p>Establish robust commercial processes via governance frameworks and protocols.</p> <p>Implement governance to oversee transactions and ensure compliance.</p> <p>Strengthen workforce through targeted resourcing, where required</p> <p>Systems and data practices enable informed decision-making.</p> <p>Improve procurement consistency and contract management</p> <p>Develop procurement pipeline</p>	<p>Extend commercial processes and procedures set out within the commercial strategy to all Council commercial based activity</p>



## Commercial Workstreams

Workstream	Activity	Due
Commercial Property Rationalisation Plan	• Develop a comprehensive property rationalisation plan to support debt reduction, optimise asset utilisation and maximise value for money.	December 2025
	• Conduct thorough analysis of the portfolio, including valuations and market trends, to maximise asset values.	December 2025
Commercial Governance	• Establish robust commercial processes and procedures to ensure all Asset based commercial activities are effective, appropriate, and informed by implementing a Commercial Governance Framework and Commercial Protocol.	March 2026
	• Extend commercial processes and procedures set out within the commercial strategy to all Council commercial based activity	LGR
	• Implement strong governance frameworks to oversee all commercial transactions and ensure compliance with appropriate frameworks.	March 2026
Commercial Strategy	• Formulate a cohesive commercial strategy that aligns all commercial decisions with principles consistent with the Council's vision and mission.	March 2026
People, Systems and Data Management	• Ensure the implementation of appropriate systems and data management practices to support informed decision-making.	March 2026
	• Strengthen workforce capabilities through effective resourcing, where required, plus training, and upskilling initiatives.	March 2026
Procurement Process and Contract Management Review	• Review and enhance procurement processes to ensure they deliver desired outcomes in a timely and consistent manner across the organisation	Jun 2026
	• Develop and maintain a dynamic procurement pipeline to streamline procurement activities	Jun 2026
	• Develop and maintain a consistent contract management approach across the Council to ensure appropriate oversight in delivering best value for money	Jun 2026
	• Embed best practices, foster a strong culture of value, and drive quality across all areas of procurement and contract management, supported by robust governance throughout the entire commercial lifecycle.	Sep 2026
Sinking Fund Strategy (Joint with Finance theme)	a) Undertake a comprehensive review of the sinking funds reserves strategy and modelling assumptions	End of November 2025
	i. Working with Assets create base portfolio model on modelling software and load first 5 years income and expenditure data	Completed August 2025
	ii. Finance to be trained on Argus model and make initial projections for years 5 to 15	Completed August 2025
	b) Update sinking funds strategy and assumptions to clarify purpose, drawdown triggers, and ensure alignment with the broader financial approach	End of December 2025

# Regeneration and Housing Theme on a Page

**Strategic Aim:** To develop a strategy for the Council’s regeneration sites which provides realistic and deliverable plans , increases the provision of housing and minimises the use of temporary accommodation, supported by partner engagement and commercial marketing to accelerate delivery. Assess the viability of and undertake an options appraisal for Knowle Green Estates company

Relevant Directions	Outcomes	Governance
<p>A plan to develop a comprehensive commercial strategy, with clear approaches to its investment and regeneration portfolios, including exit strategies for the commercial investments and realistic and deliverable strategies for regeneration sites.</p> <p>A realistic plan to deliver housing numbers outlined in its Local Plan and assess the viability of Knowle Green Estates, developing a business case and future options for the company and the housing it currently manages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Trusted regeneration and housing delivery</li><li>▪ Resolved future for KGE</li><li>▪ Balanced housing offer for all</li><li>▪ Healthy, settled communities with infrastructure that enables thriving places</li><li>▪ Reduce reliance on temporary accommodation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Environment and Sustainability Committee</li><li>▪ Business, Infrastructure and Growth Committee</li><li>▪ Improvement and Recovery Board monthly progress reporting</li><li>▪ MAT (decisions, progress updates)</li><li>▪ Lead Commissioner, Lead Councillor, SRO fortnightly meetings</li></ul>

Workstreams	
Regeneration & Housing Confidence	Balanced Housing & Community Infrastructure
Reduce Reliance on Temporary Accommodation	KGE Future Resolution

Roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Lead Councillors – Cllr Howard Williams, Cllr Gibson, Cllr Doran</li><li>▪ Lead Commissioner – Deborah McLaughlin</li><li>▪ SRO – Heather Morgan/Karen Sinclair</li><li>▪ PM - TBC</li><li>▪ Consulted - Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives, all Commissioners</li><li>▪ Informed – all Councillors, all staff</li></ul>

Timeline	Short	Medium	Long
	<p>Produce phased asset disposal strategy</p> <p>Appoint experts to develop Staines Masterplan</p> <p>Adoption of the Local Plan</p> <p>KGE Business plan viability assessment completed</p> <p>Council decision on KGE future</p> <p>Timeline development of affordable Housing SPD</p> <p>Conduct peer review</p>	<p>Phased asset disposal strategy - Implement Phase 1&amp; Phase 2</p> <p>Adopt Spelthorne Design Code and review schedule</p> <p>Community engagement programme for Staines Masterplan</p> <p>Adoption of Staines Master Plan</p> <p>Implementation of KGE strategic decision</p> <p>Convene quarterly working group for Local Plan delivery</p> <p>Create programme to advance development of allocated sites</p> <p>Engage agents to market sites and accelerate housing delivery</p> <p>Proactively engage landowners &amp; developers to promote opportunities</p> <p>Complete consultation and formally adopt affordable housing SPD</p> <p>Begin targeted review of Infrastructure Delivery Plan</p> <p>Develop action plan following temporary accommodation review</p>	<p>Phased asset disposal strategy - Phase 3 Implementation</p>

Workstream	Activity	Due
Regeneration and Housing Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Produce a phased asset disposal strategy for Housing Regeneration sites which are aligned with the Development Delivery Strategy and Commercial-led asset rationalisation plan, to achieve best value and support Council priorities.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Implement Phase 1</li><li>Implement Phase 2</li><li>Implement Phase 3</li></ul></li><li>Adopt the Spelthorne Design Code, and undertake a 6-month review of effective implementation and report to E &amp; S Committee</li><li>Develop Staines Masterplan<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Appoint experts to develop a Staines Masterplan to support housing and regeneration, and agree timelines for delivery</li><li>Implement a community engagement programme for the Staines Masterplan that balances statutory duties with meaningful resident input, while supporting the Council’s wider commercial strategy and realistic plans for regeneration.</li><li>Adoption of the Staines Master Plan</li></ul></li><li>Adopt the Local Plan</li></ul>	Dec 2025
		Mar 2026
		Mar 2027
		Mar 2028
KGE Future Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Business Plan &amp; 30-year viability assessment completed to inform strategic options for the future of the company</li><li>Council decision on KGE future, based on business plan and viability outcomes</li><li>Implementation of agreed KGE strategic decision, with governance and delivery plan in place</li></ul>	Jun 2026
		Nov 2025
		Mar 2026
		Jun 2026
Balanced Housing and Community Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Convene a quarterly working group to proactively bring forward delivery of Local Plan site allocations in years 1–5, supporting the Council’s ambition to meet housing targets.</li><li>Develop a programme, agreed by members, to advance the development of council-owned sites allocated for housing.</li><li>Engage agents to proactively market the sites to accelerate housing delivery.</li><li>Proactively engage with landowners, developers and registered providers on a quarterly basis, following adoption of the Local Plan, to promote housing site opportunities.</li><li>Set out a clear timeline for developing an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) once the Local Plan is adopted, incorporating a commuted sums policy to enable delivery of affordable housing on new developments and support regeneration site viability.</li><li>Complete consultation and formally adopt the SPD to provide a consistent framework for affordable housing delivery on new developments and guide investment decisions across regeneration portfolios.</li><li>Begin a targeted review of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan to ensure infrastructure investment is aligned with growth priorities in the adopted Local Plan and supports the delivery of regeneration sites.</li></ul>	Dec 2025
		Mar 2026
		June 2026
		Mar 2026
Reduce Reliance on Temporary Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Engage a qualified external adviser, from MHCLG, to conduct a desktop peer review of the Council’s approach to reliance on temporary accommodation, with a specific remit to identify opportunities for best value.</li><li>Develop and implement a focused action plan based on the review’s findings, prioritising service improvements that also deliver financial savings, such as reducing reliance on high-cost temporary accommodation, streamlining processes, and enhancing early intervention strategies.</li><li>Implement findings from this action plan</li></ul>	Nov 2025
		Jan 2026
		Mar 2027

# Governance Theme on a Page

**Strategic Aim:** Rebuild trust, collective working and transparency by: strengthening governance and improve decision making, ensuring decisions are collectively owned and evidence based; developing a collective understanding of both risk appetite and the risks facing the Authority; developing a culture of learning through strong audit and external challenge.

- Relevant Directions**
- A plan to overhaul the governance arrangements within the Authority with regards to decision-making, capacity and skills, aiming to increase transparency, scrutiny and effectiveness of the committee system to ensure that collective responsibility is taken for the Authority’s decision-making.
  - A fully costed programme of cultural change to rebuild trust between officers and members and ensures both Members and Officers understand their respective roles and the way in which the Authority and its activities are regulated and governed.
  - A plan to strengthen the Authority’s financial and commercial functions, and to secure improvements in risk management, governance and the internal audit function, with the guidance and to the satisfaction of the Commissioners

- Outcomes**
- Timely, collective confident decisions: ownership, transparency and accountability
  - Confidence that the risks facing the Authority are being actively managed and sound transparent decisions are being made
  - Sound governance and good internal controls
  - A culture of continuous improvement

- Governance**
- Corporate Policy and Resources Committee (decisions, progress updates tbc)
  - Improvement and Recovery Board monthly progress reporting
  - MAT (decisions, progress updates tbc)
  - Lead Commissioner, Lead Councillor, SRO fortnightly meetings

- Roles**
- Lead Councillor – Cllr Joanne Sexton
  - Lead Commissioner – Lesley Seary
  - SRO – Linda Heron/Lee O’Neill
  - PM - TBC
  - Consulted - Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives, all Commissioners
  - Informed – all Councillors, all staff



- Timeline**
- Short**
- Improve decision-making and reporting processes
  - Enhance report clarity and accuracy
  - Engage stakeholders in process redesign
  - Embed change through structured planning
  - Establish consistent risk frameworks and appetite
  - Promote shared understanding of risks
  - Deliver risk and assurance training
  - Ensure regular reviews and governance forums

- Medium**
- Hold regular governance meetings (Statutory Officers, MAT)
  - Implement and review Audit Committee recommendations
  - Provide governance and risk training to leaders
  - Run Councillor awareness sessions
  - Monitor audit actions and decision-making culture
  - Align performance with strategic priorities
  - Deliver IRP updates
  - Improve Annual Governance Statement process and tracking

- Long**
- Deliver IRP updates



## Governance Workstreams

Workstream	Activity	Due
Decision making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review with all stakeholders the current process of developing reports to Committees to identify the weaknesses, and areas that need to change to address the issues and the concerns to lead to improvements</li> <li>Collaboratively develop a new end to end process for decision making which addresses issues identified ensuring stakeholders are engaged at the right time and that all options are explored as part of the process to improve collective ownership, trust and transparency of decisions</li> <li>Follow up audit of committee system to review opportunities for improvement of scrutiny and decision making</li> <li>Review and develop report template to ensure content is relevant, comprehensive and clear to include financial, legal and risk assessments to ensure members can make rounded decisions</li> <li>Improve the accuracy and quality of report writing to ensure that information is accurate and presented clearly to enable good decision making and provide assurance to Councillors</li> <li>Develop a change management plan to embed the new process and report template into good practice across the organisation</li> <li>Carry out a review of committee reports with input from stakeholders to assess impact of changes</li> </ul>	<p>January 2026</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>February 2026</p> <p>September 2025</p> <p>October 2025</p> <p>November 2025</p> <p>April 2026</p>
Assurance and Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a risk framework that includes risk appetite to ensure consistency in risk management throughout the organisation</li> <li>Develop a clear shared understanding of all risks facing the Authority with active management and mitigation of risks across the organisation</li> <li>Ensure that a programme of assurance and risk training is rolled out to Councillors and officers</li> <li>Ensure that all key programmes include a risk register which is regularly reviewed</li> <li>All Committees to receive and regularly review risks for which they are responsible</li> </ul>	<p>January 2026</p> <p>March 2026</p> <p>March 2026</p> <p>December 2025</p> <p>April 2026</p>

Workstream	Activity	Due
Good governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put in place arrangements for MAT / MAT+ to receive and discuss key aspects of assurance and governance on a regular programmed basis – to include monthly budget monitoring, regular performance review of KPIs, complaints monitoring, internal audit recommendations, monitoring and management of key programmes, risk management, monitoring of key issues in AGS</li> <li>Ensure that regular Statutory Officer meetings take place with clear agendas and minutes</li> <li>Ensure regular (at least quarterly) meetings take place between MAT and the Head of Internal Audit</li> <li>Implement recommendations from the external review of the Audit Committee</li> <li>Carry out a further independent review of governance and the Audit Committee to assess effectiveness of changes made following the review</li> <li>Training and awareness to be organised for senior staff on good governance, risk management and internal control</li> <li>Awareness sessions for all Councillors on the role of the Audit Committee, good governance, risk management and internal control</li> <li>Audit Committee to produce an Annual Report to Council timed to be considered by Council as part of the AGS process.</li> <li>Ensure progress on recommendations made in internal audit reports are regularly monitored by MAT and reported to Audit Committee with effective commentary from lead officers</li> <li>Review the effectiveness of the changes to internal audit to ensure the improvements are being delivered and the results are materialised</li> <li>Review and refresh the Council's Corporate Strategy in light of the IRP, ensuring effective prioritisation of actions and resourcing for the remainder of the council's sovereignty</li> </ul>	October 2025
		October 2025
		October 2025
		April 2026
		September 2026
		March 2026
		April 2026
		March 2026
		October 2025
		March 2026
		February 2026
Culture of Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Periodically review the organisation's decision-making culture and effectiveness of the changes made to inform further changes that are required to meet acceptable standards</li> <li>Review and monitor the implementation of recommendations from audits and reviews</li> <li>Group and service performance monitoring should support and be linked to the Council's strategic priorities and underpinned by a robust performance management framework</li> <li>Ensure IRP is delivered and provide 6 monthly reports to Commissioners</li> <li>Review and improve process for developing the Annual Governance Statement and ensure issues raised are tracked, monitored and addressed</li> <li>Ensure complaints, comments and feedback are regularly reviewed and lessons learned are fed back into service improvement plans</li> <li>Carry out an annual self-assessment against the CIPFA financial management code</li> </ul>	First review March 2026
		First review January 2026
		March 2026
		April 2026/October 2026/April 2027
		April 2026
		November 2025
		November 2026

# Local Government Reorganisation Theme on a Page

**Strategic Aim:** To provide a stronger long-term foundation for high-quality local government services, stronger accountability, enhancing economic growth and more responsive local governance.

Relevant Directions	Outcomes	Governance
To actively work with Commissioners on the work with other councils in the Surrey area for unitary local government and on implementing any such proposals later agreed upon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Deliver all information requested by the Programme Management Offices</li><li>▪ Delivery of work/activity required by Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) programme.</li><li>▪ Alignment of systems and contracts where opportunities exist/arise</li><li>▪ Workforce prepared/in best place for transition to new unitary authority</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Corporate Policy and Resources Committee (decisions, progress updates tbc)</li><li>▪ Improvement and Recovery Board monthly progress reporting</li><li>▪ MAT (decisions, progress updates tbc)</li><li>▪ Lead Commissioner, Lead Councillor, SRO fortnightly meetings</li></ul>

Workstreams			Roles
Data Collection/Sharing	HR Rationalisation/ Alignment	Financial Rationalisation/ Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Lead Councillor – Cllr Joanne Sexton</li><li>▪ Lead Commissioner – Lesley Seary</li><li>▪ SRO – Daniel Mouawad</li><li>▪ PM - TBC</li><li>▪ Consulted – Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives, all Commissioners</li><li>▪ Informed – all Councillors, all staff</li></ul>
Systems and Contracts Rationalisation/ Alignment	Elections and Governance	Change Management, Training and Support	

Timeline	Short	Medium	Long
	<p>Data gathering between Boroughs &amp; Districts prior to and post- confirmation of new unitary authorities</p> <p>Establishment of voluntary Joint Committee by end of year</p>	<p>Structural Change Order</p> <p>Formal Joint Committee set up for new unitary</p> <p>Elections for Shadow Authority</p>	<p>New unitary authority ‘goes live’ April 2027</p> <p>Spring 2027 or 2028 - Mayoral elections and Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) ‘go live’, with preparations for establishment of the MSA taking place throughout 2026 - 27, or Surrey joins MSA with neighbours</p>

## Local Government Reorganisation Workstreams

Workstream	Activity	Due
Data Collection/Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a structured data collection framework through Borough/District PMOs to support Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), ensuring coverage of all key service areas and enabling consistent, high-quality data to inform transition planning.</li> <li>Begin detailed data collection and rationalisation via the new unitary PMO once the structure of the new authorities is confirmed, ensuring coverage of all core service areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Commenced Continue until October 2025</p> <p>Oct 2025 – March 2027</p>
Financial Rationalisation/Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with partner S151 officers to align and share organisational data, systems, and financial policies, with progress monitored periodically</li> <li>Reconcile finance systems to ensure accuracy and consistency, in line with standard local government audit practices.</li> <li>Align key financial policies across transitioning authorities to ensure consistency and compliance with statutory requirements.</li> <li>Achieve a clean audit opinion for the 2025–26 Statement of Accounts, in accordance with expectations under the IRP Finance theme.</li> <li>Review and update the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to incorporate asset rationalisation, savings, and efficiency measures, ensuring alignment between the IRP Commercial and Finance themes to support efforts to reduce the budget gap.</li> <li>Continue service improvement initiatives to enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness, with outcomes assessed periodically.</li> </ul>	<p>Through to March 2027</p> <p>March 2026</p> <p>Oct 2026</p> <p>End Jan 2027</p> <p>Oct 2025</p> <p>Through to March 2027</p>
HR Rationalisation/Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver HR workstreams including workforce transition, recruitment, and redundancy processes, ensuring compliance with employment legislation and best practice.</li> <li>Reconcile HR/Payroll systems to accurately reflect the current workforce and ensure job descriptions are up to date and appropriately documented.</li> <li>Compile a list of employees retained by the Council but not currently on the establishment and identify any required actions.</li> <li>Confirm or unwind temporary staffing arrangements prior to generating the TUPE list, ensuring clarity and accuracy.</li> </ul>	<p>All To Be Confirmed (TBC)</p>



## Local Government Reorganisation Workstreams

Workstream	Activity	Due
Systems and Contracts Rationalisation/Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a review of all organisational contractual and non-contractual arrangements, identifying opportunities for alignment or termination.</li> <li>• Pursue alignment of contracts when opportunities arise, prioritising those that support operational efficiency and service continuity.</li> <li>• Prevent cliff-edge contracts by ensuring continuity planning for services transitioning to the new unitary authority</li> <li>• Identify relevant systems specialists and implement plans for systems alignment and data transfer across authorities.</li> </ul>	<p>TBC</p> <p>TBC</p> <p>Through to March 2027</p> <p>TBC</p>
Elections and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for and implement Section 24 Direction by establishing governance protocols, developing consent procedures, reviewing financial commitments, and ensuring staff are informed of restrictions, in line with best practice for managing spending controls during transition.</li> <li>• Participate in the development of the new Joint Committee, contributing to governance and operational planning</li> <li>• Participate in the development of the Structural Change Order, providing input and feedback through appropriate channels.</li> <li>• Undertake the Shadow Unitary Authority elections, ensuring legal compliance and operational readiness.</li> <li>• Facilitate the transition for Mayoral elections, including planning, communications, and stakeholder engagement.</li> </ul>	<p>October 2025</p> <p>Oct 2025 – March 2026</p> <p>March 2026</p> <p>May 2026</p> <p>TBC</p>
Change Management, Training and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a training and support programme to help staff prepare for opportunities arising from LGR, with feedback and engagement monitored periodically.</li> <li>• Implement a communication strategy to proactively manage risks and minimise surprises, ensuring regular updates and stakeholder involvement.</li> </ul>	<p>Through to March 2027</p> <p>Through to March 2027</p>

