

# Monitoring of Revised Improvement and Recovery Plan

## Background

The latest version of the Council's Improvement & Recovery Plan (IRP) was approved by CPRC (Corporate Policy and Resources Committee) in February 2026 and presented to Audit Committee in February 2026.

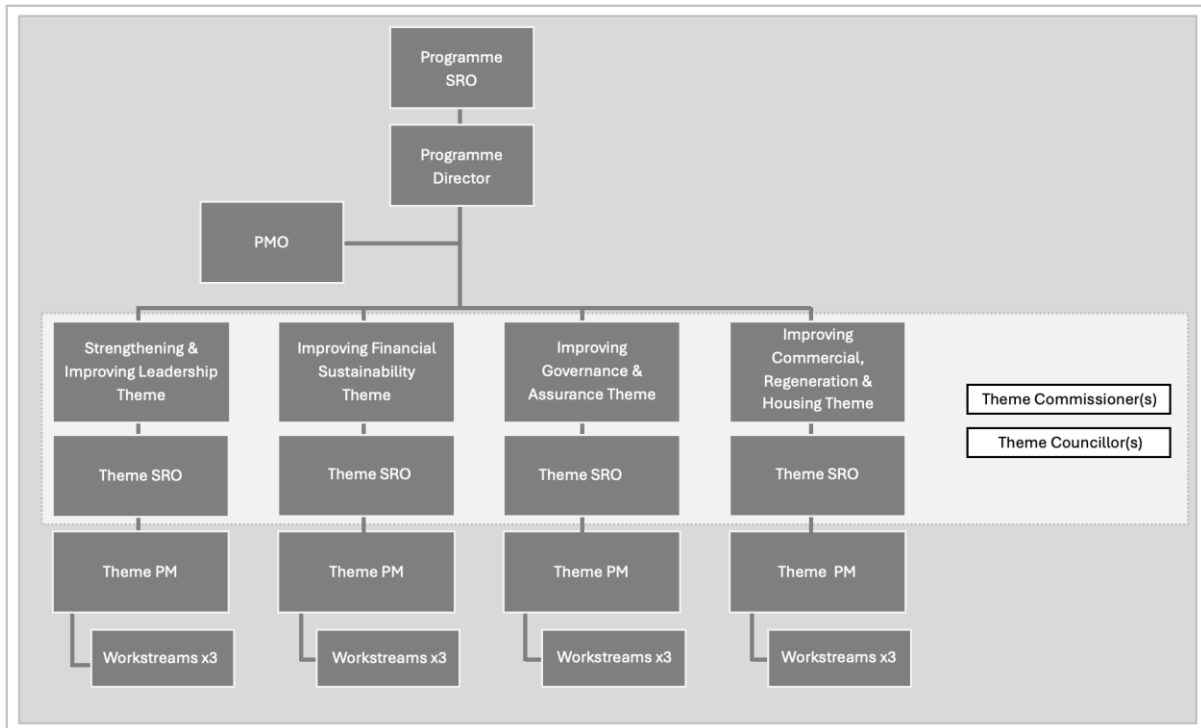
This latest version of the IRP is structured around 4 Themes, which are represented by the coloured icons in Figure 1, below. The individual Themes are then each divided into 3 workstreams, with the focus for each workstream described by the bullet points below the coloured icons in Figure 1.



Figure 1. IRP Themes

## Programme governance

The programme organisation (how the IRP programme is structured) is shown in Figure 2, below, and this highlights the key programme roles and the relationships between them.



**Figure 2. Programme organisation**

The key roles shown in Figure 2 are described in Table 1, below.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Role description</b>
Programme SRO (Senior Responsible Officer)	The person ultimately accountable for the delivery of the IRP. This is the Council's Chief Executive Officer.
Programme Director	Responsible for the day-to-day management and coordination of the IRP programme.
Theme SRO (Senior Responsible Officer)	Accountable for delivering Theme objectives and ensuring the associated Workstream outputs collectively deliver intended outcomes and benefits. Theme SROs will engage other officers from across the Council, as required, to support delivery of their Theme and Workstream objectives.
Theme Commissioner	Provide independent statutory challenge and assurance, testing progress against the Government's Directions.
Theme Councillor(s)	Provide political insight and democratic oversight for their Theme and the associated Workstreams.
Theme PM (Project Manager)	Support Theme SROs by coordinating delivery activity, maintaining workstream plans, and ensuring progress is tracked and reported.
PMO (Programme Management Office)	Supports SROs and Theme Project Managers by maintaining plans, monitoring performance and providing consistent reporting.

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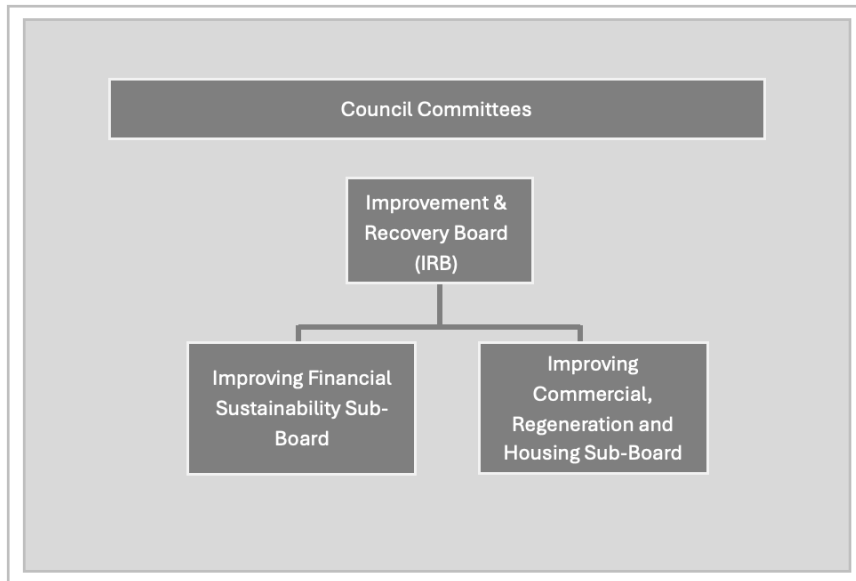
**Table 1. IRP programme roles**

The above information is taken from a draft IRP Roles and Responsibilities document that is currently being reviewed by key stakeholders, including the Chair of the Audit Committee, ahead of being finalised.

### **Improvement and Recovery Board (IRB)**

Programme progress is overseen by the Improvement & Recovery Board (IRB). There are then sub-boards to the IRB for some Themes, as shown in Figure 3, below. Boards meet monthly and are attended by a mix of Officers, Commissioners and Members.

The membership of IRB includes the Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Conservative Group and the Leader of the Labour Group (and Chair of Audit Committee) with the IRB meeting chaired by the Lead Commissioner.



**Figure 3. Improvement and Recovery Board structure**

The Improvement & Recovery Board is not a formal decision-making board. Key decisions continue to be made via the Council’s existing decision-making structure and Committees. Once a direction is set, the IRB ensures that delivery remains on track, intervening where required if progress is at risk or off track.

As shown in Figure 3, there are currently two IRB Sub-Boards, one for the Improving Financial Sustainability Theme and another for the Improving Commercial,

Regeneration and Housing Theme. These meetings focus on their respective Themes, monitoring progress, helping to identify and mitigate delivery risks and escalating issues to the IRB where required. To date, formal sub-boards have not been established for the other 2 Themes, although there has been regular engagement of the relevant Councillors and Commissioners by Officers. These arrangements will be reviewed following the recent Council elections.

## High priority areas

With less than 10 months remaining until Spelthorne Borough Council transitions to be part of West Surrey Council, the Council has identified the high priority outcomes that will be the focus during this period. These were agreed by CPRC in April 2026 as part of the Council's 6-month report to Commissioners and are shown in Table 2, below.

<p><b>Theme 1: Strengthening and Improving Leadership</b></p> <p>1.1 To fully engage with and support the Surrey LGR programme through to Vesting Day (1 April 2027), by providing the requested information and undertaking the activities assigned to the Council in the forthcoming Surrey LGR plan. This will include continuing to lead the Procurement and Contracts Theme.</p>
<p><b>Theme 2: Improving Financial Sustainability</b></p> <p>2.1 To produce an updated MTFs (Medium Term Financial Strategy) for the period FY27/28 to FY29/30 to be approved by the Council by the end of December 2026. The updated MTFs will reflect the latest forecast financial position at the time of being developed.</p> <p>2.2 Develop and agree a savings plan for the current financial year (FY26/27) and then deliver the plan to achieve a minimum of £1m of in-year, recurring annual savings (rather than one-off savings) this financial year.</p> <p>2.3 Develop and agree a savings plan for the financial year (FY27/28) aligned to West Surrey and agreed with the West Surrey Section 151 Officer (once appointed).</p> <p>2.4 Produce final accounts for the last financial year (FY25/26) that when audited will address the 5 key recommendations highlighted by the External Auditors following a review of the FY24/25 annual accounts.</p> <p>2.5 Develop and agree a plan with the West Surrey Section 151 Officer (once appointed) to produce the accounts for the current financial year (FY26/27).</p>
<p><b>Theme 3: Improving Governance and Assurance</b></p> <p>3.1 Develop and implement an effective Governance and Assurance framework, that includes risk management.</p>
<p><b>Theme 4: Commercial, Housing and Regeneration</b></p> <p>4.1 Develop an updated Commercial asset disposal strategy and programme to include timeline and target values to be achieved, and delivery of the disposal programme to achieve financial targets quarter by quarter.</p>

4.2	Develop and agree a Commercial strategy for the Council with CPRC by end April 2026.
4.3	Complete a review / appraisal of options/issues/liabilities for BP site by end of FY2627.
4.4	Develop and deliver a plan with the aim of disposal of the Council's regeneration sites by the 31 March 2027.
4.5	Develop and get approval for the Staines Master Plan that will help shape the future of Staines and deliver high-quality development. Staines Master Plan to be agreed by Council in Autumn 2026.
4.6	Demonstrate a clear reduction in spend on temporary accommodation quarter on quarter over the next 12 months and aim to reduce by at least half the use of nightly paid accommodation by the end of the current financial year (FY2627).
4.7	Get agreement on the future of Knowle Green Estates (KGE) by the end of December 2026.
4.8	Develop and agree a 3-year plan to deliver the housing number agreed in the Local Plan. Plan to be approved by Council in October 2026.

**Table 2. IRP High priority outcomes, as agreed by CPRC, April 2026**

## Plans on a Page

During April 2026, to support progress monitoring and reporting, the programme developed a series of 'Plans of a Page' covering all the high priority outcomes, as listed above. These are in the process of being finalised and will then provide a baseline from which future change can be reported.

An example Plan on a Page, for priority 2.4 from the above table (Table 2), can be found in Appendix A1.

These outline the logical flow of the activities intended to deliver the target outcome and show key, interim milestones. As well as being used to track progress, these plans are intended to make it easier for the IRB and the relevant sub-boards to understand the work and enabling them to provide constructive input and challenge.

The other purpose of these plans is to facilitate forward focussed discussions on governance assurance, which should help to identify key delivery risks early so suitable mitigations can be implemented where possible.

## Monitoring of progress

In addition to developing the Plans on a Page, the status of key elements of the programme are now RAG rated. This is done at the Theme, Workstream and Deliverable level, with items RAG rated (colour coded) in line with the criteria shown in Table 3, below.

RAG rating	Definition
RED	<b>Slipped.</b> Progress is behind schedule and needs corrective action.
AMBER	<b>At risk.</b> Work is at risk of slipping behind schedule. Also used where delivery plans are not yet agreed.
GREEN	<b>On track.</b> Delivery is in line with the agreed plan.
BLUE	<b>Complete.</b> Records when work has been delivered.

**Table 3. RAG ratings**

The RAG status for each Workstream is determined based on the progress of the individual deliverables within the Workstream. Based on the May 2026 Improvement and Recovery Board (IRB) update most areas were rated as Amber (at risk), mainly due to Plans on a Page still being finalised to align with the latest IRP.

One workstream was rated as Red ahead of the May 2026 IRB meeting, and this was due to a lack of agreement on targets relating to plans to reduce the number and cost of households in Temporary Accommodation. Targets have since been agreed.

It is important to note that these RAG ratings are used to assess delivery progress – that is progress in line with the agreed plan - they not currently assess the status of the target outcome or improvement.

While some outcomes are more easily measured – *delivery of financial savings and a reduction in the Council's debt* - others are less measurable, for example *improvement in the quality of decision making*. Work is underway to enable outcomes (improvement) to be measured for the less tangible elements of the IRP.

## **Risk management**

While progress is being made across the programme there is still significant risk associated with the delivery of the Council's IRP programme, and the achievement of the desired outcomes and improvement.

The RAID (Risks, Issues, Assumptions, Dependencies) log for the programme was reviewed by Internal Audit in March 2026 and has been updated to reflect the feedback received.

The programme risks are currently being reviewed and updated to reflect the Council's agreed higher priority outcomes, from above. The Plans on a Page are helping to highlight key delivery risks and the Council's governance assurance arrangements will help ensure that the Council is managing risk effectively.

## **Programme communications**

To keep all Councillors updated on progress with the Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP), there is a dedicated item on the Improvement and Recovery Board (IRB) agenda to discuss and agree the key messages to be shared with wider stakeholders. These key messages are then fed into the Chief Executives monthly Councillor Briefing email and staff communications.

From April, IRB action notes are circulated to IRB attendees with 5 working days of the meeting and once agreed are then shared with the Audit Committee.

## **Recent achievements**

The following describes the Council's key achievements in relation to Improvement and Recovery Plan since the latest version of the plan was last presented to Audit Committee in February 2026:

- The Finance team produced the draft Outturn Report for the previous financial year (FY2025-26) on-time, and as we understand it ahead of most, if not all, other Surrey Councils. This is a key step in the process to secure an improved Audit Report for FY2025-26.
- Savings opportunities have been identified that will deliver the (at least) £1m in-year savings target for the current Financial Year and these were shared with Councillors at a briefing session on 11 May.
- A new Commercial Strategy for the Council was approved by CPRC in April 2026.
- Delivery plans have been agreed and agents engaged for both the Commercial and Regeneration asset disposal activities. While this is an important step in the process there remains a lot of work to do to ensure the plan delivers the desired outcomes.
- In line with the Council's target to reduce the number and cost of households in temporary accommodation, there was a 22% reduction in the nightly accommodation numbers between January 2026 and April 2026. Targets for further reductions have now been agreed, and an action plan is in place.
- The Council has developed a new Governance and Assurance Framework that defines how decisions are made, risks are managed, and accountability is maintained across the organisation. This is used to support good corporate governance and ensure that public money is spent responsibly and transparently. The Framework includes a Governance Assurance Register focussed around 12 Governance Assurance Areas (GAAs). The first 6 GAA

reports (including one relating to IRP delivery) were reviewed by the Audit Committee on 19 May with the next 6 due to be presented to the Committee in June.

- Recent changes to the Council's management team (MAT) and extended management team (MAT+) meetings designed to increase the focus on assurance have now been applied to a full cycle of these meetings. A subsequent review has led to the development a set of core principles designed to further improve future meetings.
- The Council submitted its latest 6-month update report on the Improvement and Recovery Plan (IRP) to Commissioners in April, having been presented to the Improvement & Recovery Board (IRB) and Council earlier in the month. The report highlighted the work done to-date to address the Directions, and as mentioned above, included a set of higher priority outcome areas that the Council intends to focus on during the remainder of this financial year. The progress report from the Council will be one source of information which the Commissioners will use to inform their 6-month progress letter to the Secretary of State which is anticipated will be published by MHCLG in the summer.

## APPENDIX A1: Example Plan on a Page

The following is an example Plan on a Page showing the plan to address the recommendations from the Council's external auditors following their audit of the Council's FY2024-25 accounts. This was for the period up to the end April 2026.

