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East Surrey appointing its Chief Executive

27 July 2026



The new East Surrey council is poised to confirm its first permanent chief executive in the latest step towards the authority's creation next spring.

East Surrey Shadow Authority, the body overseeing the new council's setup, has selected Interim Head of Paid Service Adam Chalmers as its preferred candidate for the role.

Mr Chalmers currently serves as Elmbridge Borough Council's chief executive, the council's most senior salaried officer. He is also recommended for appointment as Returning Officer for East Surrey Council.

He comes with more than 20 years of experience in local government, having previously held senior roles at Horsham District Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

East Surrey Shadow Authority leader Steve Wotton said: "I am pleased to announce that Adam Chalmers is being recommended as our preferred candidate for chief executive of East Surrey Council, subject to formal agreement by full council.

"He combines a strong track record of delivering results with a genuine commitment to public service, and I believe he is the right person to lead East Surrey Council as we prepare for this exciting new chapter and beyond."

Councillor David Lewis, Conservative group leader on the Shadow Authority, said: "The creation of East Surrey Council is one of the most significant changes to local government in a generation, and it is important that we have experienced leadership in place.

"Adam brings a wealth of knowledge and a strong understanding of local government, and I am pleased to support his appointment as we work together to deliver the best outcomes for residents and communities."

Mr Chalmers' appointment will be subject to approval by East Surrey's full council at a meeting on July 29.

East Surrey Shadow Authority is tasked with forming the new East Surrey Council before it takes over management of the area's local government services in April 2027.

Surrey County Council and the county's 11 district councils will all be abolished at that point, with services transferred to the new West and East Surrey councils.

East Surrey Council will cover the areas that currently fall under Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, Mole Valley, Reigate & Banstead, and Tandridge district councils.

James Moules Local Democracy Reporter

Adam Chalmers (Credit: East Surrey Shadow Authority)

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