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East Surrey is still going ahead – so what happens next?

25 September 2026



Readers may have seen the recent national news that the Government has stopped or paused Local Government Reorganisation in several parts of England. Understandably, some people have asked me: **does this mean Surrey is stopping too?**

The simple answer is **no**. Surrey is going ahead.

The Government has confirmed that its review of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) does not affect the decision already taken for Surrey. We are further down the road: elections for the new East Surrey and West Surrey councils took place in May, and we are now working towards the new councils formally taking over on **1 April 2027**.

For us locally, East Surrey Council will bring together Epsom & Ewell, Elmbridge, Mole Valley, Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge, alongside the relevant services currently provided by Surrey County Council.

Until 1 April, residents should continue to use their existing councils as normal. Behind the scenes, however, there is a huge amount of work taking place.

Since being elected in May, my fellow councillors and I have been serving on the Shadow Council. In plain English, our job is to **build the new council before it takes over**. This includes bringing together services, staff, budgets, buildings and systems, while making sure essential services continue without disruption.

As the Shadow Cabinet Executive Member responsible for Adult Social Care and Health, I am particularly focused on services supporting older and Disabled people, carers and some of our residents.

We also need to be open about the **financial challenge ahead**.

The Government is changing how councils are funded, with more emphasis on levels of need and deprivation. This will mean significant financial pressures for our area over the coming years. At the same time, demand and costs are rising, particularly in adult social care and children's services.

Creating one council gives us opportunities to reduce duplication, work more efficiently and make better use of public money. But reorganisation will not magically solve every financial problem.

That is why I believe we must be completely open with residents. If difficult decisions have to be made, you deserve to know **why**, what choices we have, how much they cost and what they could mean for local services.

We must also listen. East Surrey will be a large council serving different communities. Epsom and Ewell must continue to have a strong local voice.

There is still a lot of work ahead between now and 1 April. I hope through these regular articles to explain what is happening in clear, plain English – the progress we are making, the challenges we face and, most importantly, **what it all means for you, your family and our wider community.**

David Buxton OBE

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