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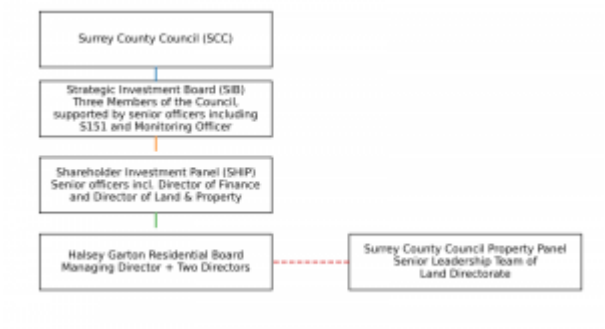
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# Surrey Council reviews property sales as it signs off business plans for own firms

10 March 2026




Surrey County Council has signed off the latest business plans for two companies it owns as it tries to strengthen its finances during a difficult period for local government.

The council's Strategic Investment Board approved the 2026/27 plans for property company Halsey Garton Residential and recruitment firm Connect2Surrey on March 9. In a meeting mostly held in private (part 2) for commercial sensitivity reasons, the board also heard an update from the property data organisation TRICS Consortium Ltd, in which the council holds a smaller share.

## What it means

Essentially, the council is reviewing how companies it owns or part-owns will operate over the next year and whether they can continue to bring in money.

Like many local authorities, Surrey County Council is under growing financial pressure, with rising costs and less support from central government. These companies are meant to help generate income and support council services.

Officials say the plans should help improve transparency and ensure the council keeps a close eye on how its investments perform.

## Possible property sales

One of the biggest issues discussed was what to do with homes owned by Halsey Garton Residential. The council is considering the pace at which it sells off properties in the company's housing portfolio, and board members were asked to give direction on how quickly those homes should be sold.

That decision is partly being driven by changes to housing legislation coming into force in May 2026, which could affect how easily properties can be sold if they are currently occupied by tenants.

Selling homes more quickly could help the council bring in money sooner, but it also carries risks, including market uncertainty, reputational concerns and the challenge of completing sales before major local government changes take effect.

## Financial pressures behind the move

Council officers warned the authority is operating in a "very challenging financial environment". Future funding reforms mean the council is expected to receive less support from central government, leaving it increasingly reliant on council tax and other income streams.

Investment companies like Halsey Garton Residential and Connect2Surrey are intended to help support the council's long-term finances, even if profits do not come immediately.

## What happens next

The council will keep monitoring the performance of the companies over the coming year, with a half-year review planned later in 2026.

In the meantime, councillors are expected to continue weighing up how quickly to sell properties owned by Halsey Garton Residential. This decision could affect the council's finances and its property portfolio going forward.

Emily Dalton LDRS

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