

MINUTES of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.30 am on 10 September 2014 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Monday 27 October 2014.

Elected Members:

- * Mr David Harmer (Chairman)
- * Mr Mike Bennison (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mrs Nikki Barton
- * Mrs Natalie Bramhall
- * Mr Mark Brett-Warburton
- * Mr Stephen Cooksey
- * Mrs Pat Frost
- * Mr David Goodwin
- * Mr Ken Gulati
- * Mr Peter Hickman
- * Mr George Johnson
- * Mr Adrian Page
- * Mr Michael Sydney
- * Mr Richard Wilson
- * Mrs Victoria Young

In attendance

Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member For Environment and Planning
John Furey, Cabinet Member For Highways, Transport and Flooding

57/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies had been received from Ken Gulati, Pat Frost and Victoria Young.

Chris Pitt substituted for Ken Gulati.

58/14 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 17 JULY 2014 [Item 2]

These were agreed as a true record of the previous meeting.

59/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were none.

60/14 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were none.

61/14 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]

- A response to the interim report on the flooding task group was included in the agenda pack. The Chairman explained that the final report of the flooding task group would be brought back to the next Select Committee meeting in October.

62/14 RECOMMENDATION TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 6]

- The Chairman explained that the Select Committee had been instructed by COSC to set up a finance sub group to look at the budget for the coming year. The sub group would focus on how the overall revenue budget for E&I could be met.
- The sub group would need to be politically balanced; current members of the group included the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Richard Wilson, Michael Sydney and Stephen Cooksey. The sub group still required another member from another of the political groups. This would be discussed at the end of the meeting.

63/14 SURREY HIGHWAYS - PROJECT HORIZON YEAR 1 REVIEW [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Mark Borland (Works Delivery Group Manager)
Jason Russell (Assistant Director, Environment & Infrastructure)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Works Delivery Group Manager gave a brief overview of the report highlighting that in year one of Project Horizon targets had been met, totalling savings of £4.4 million. The savings made in year 1 would be put back into year two of the project.
2. Members commented on the positive feedback they had received from residents in relation to the work being carried out.
3. A member of the committee queried why Reigate and Banstead had not had much resurfacing work done in comparison to some of the other District and Boroughs. The member went onto further explain that residents had also complained about the condition of Redstone Hill in Redhill and asked what would be done to address these concerns. The Works Delivery Group Manager stated that Reigate and Banstead had the second largest resurfacing programme in place. The first years of the programme would focus on roads in the main strategic network with local roads being a focus in the latter years of the programme. The project had a resource constraint which meant that only certain roads could be resurfaced at certain times.

4. The Works Delivery Group Manager clarified that Reigate and Banstead BC had agreed to years 1 and years 2 of the programme. With reference to Redstone Hill, it was explained that all roads resurfaced in the programme had a ten year guarantee which was covered by the contractor.
5. Some members commented on the need for road closure signs to be removed straight after work had been completed.
6. A member queried whether minor roads with busy traffic periods were covered as part of the project. The Works Delivery Group Manager explained that the project would work on a range of roads which would also include D roads. Members were asked to let the Works Delivery Group Manager know if there were any roads they thought should be included as part of the project.
7. In a recent audit report it was stated that the first year of Project Horizon had operated at a cost of 170%. The Works Delivery Group Manager explained that the bad weather which had affected the county had meant that an additional £10 million had been included in year 1 of the project spend. This money was part of the total budget for the programme and had been bought forward due to safety reasons.
8. It was explained that tar was found on some of the roads included in the project. This would need to be taken to landfill but was very costly. Until a cheaper alternative for disposing of the tar is found, these roads would be moved further back in the project. The Assistant Director, Environment & Infrastructure anticipated that savings would increase as the programme developed.
9. Concerns were raised around the damage to roads and utilities as a result of the work being done. It was explained that ground radars were now being used to get a better idea of the location of utilities when resurfacing a road. For residents affected by the resurfacing work, measures were put in place to ensure access was achievable. Vulnerable residents were given controlled access to and from their properties whilst other residents were sent a letter explaining alternative routes whilst the work was ongoing.
10. It was recognised that some residents were unhappy with the lack of communications around resurfacing work and road closures. The Works Delivery Group Manager explained that in some specific cases resurfacing work had not been done for 40-50 years, this in turn made the resurfacing work complex especially as some utilities infrastructure and communication was lacking.
11. It was clarified that the vibrations being used on the roads met UK standards and would not harm buildings.
12. Schemes where project horizon could support cycling provision had been identified and would be developed going forward.
13. It was explained that if a utility company had done work on a road and had subsequently dug it up, it was the responsibility of the utility

company to return the road to the state they found it in. The services relationship with utility companies had improved greatly especially with the introduction of the permit scheme. It was recognised that more work had to be done with utility companies going forward.

Recommendations:

The Select Committee noted and commented on the first year delivery of Project Horizon and the update on the Year 2 programme.

Actions/Further information to be provided:

For the Assistant Director to send the Chairman a note considering how legislation in relation to utility companies could be changed for the benefit of the local authority.

Committee Next Steps:

None.

64/14 GULLY CLEANING UPDATE [Item 8]

Witnesses:

Lucy Monie (Network & Asset Planning Group Manager)
Jason Russell (Assistant Director, Environment & Infrastructure)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The report was introduced by the Network & Asset Planning Group Manager who gave an update on the highway gully cleaning programme to date.
2. Some of the members commented on how gulleys in their division had not been cleaned or emptied for years. This had led to many complaints from residents and local councils.
3. Some members recognised that the figures included as part of the targeted cleaning programme would seem unacceptable to residents.
4. The Network & Asset Planning Group Manager explained that 129,000 gulleys were planned to be cleaned as part of the 2014/15 programme. If gulleys had not been cleaned this could be due to a number of reasons including parked cars blocking gulleys and gulleys being incorrectly mapped.
5. It was explained that the contractor Conway had been undertaking gully cleaning work for a year now and relied on Surrey's data to complete this work correctly.
6. District and Boroughs had been approached with regards to gully cleaning. It was recognised that each district and borough operated differently.
7. Members queried whether a map of all the gulleys in Surrey was available. The Network & Asset Planning Group Manager explained that this data was mapped and available but work was being done to ensure a stable ICT solution was in place so mapping was available to the public.

8. Members recognised that schedules and maps for gulley cleaning were not easily accessible on the public website. It was explained that this information was available on the public website but conversations could take place after the meeting to find out what specific details members were after.
9. It was queried whether roads could be booked for gulley cleaning. The Network & Asset Planning Group Manager stated that gulleys were cleaned road by road and conversations were ongoing with district and boughs around how best to deal with parked cars.
10. The Chairman asked for the Network & Asset Planning Group Manager to provide a one page summary on what information is available to members around gulley cleaning. Members can then include their input on what other information they think should be made available.
11. The Assistant Director, Environment & Infrastructure explained that gulley's were part of the wider highway network and had been affected by recent flooding.
12. It was recognised that the reporting system in place for public who wanted to report a gulley was inadequate. It was stated that work was being done with local area teams to look for ways to deal with the communication issues at hand.
13. The Chairman asked that the Network & Asset Planning Group Manager report back to local committees on what was happening to the flow of gulley related information held in the reporting system.

Recommendations:

The Select Committee noted and commented on the progress of the gulley cleaning programme.

Actions/Further information to be provided:

The Chairman asked for the Network & Asset Planning Group Manager to provide a one page summary on what information was currently available to members around gulley cleaning.

Committee Next Steps:

None.

65/14 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WINTER MAINTENANCE TASK GROUP [Item 9]

Witnesses:

Simon Mitchell (Maintenance Plan Team Leader)
Jason Russell (Assistant Director, Environment & Infrastructure)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. It was explained that the Task Group had reported to Cabinet in September 2013 with various recommendations which were approved, however there had been no snow in 2013.
2. The Maintenance Plan Team Leader explained that the county had one of the most modern gritting fleets in the country which spread salt in targeted locations at efficient rates.
3. Although Elmbridge BC had not signed up to the snow clearing statement of understanding, it was recognised that they were very helpful in assisting with snow clearing operations.
4. The footways given priority for snow clearance were chosen as a result of the Surrey Priority Network prioritisation review - this had been done in partnership with districts and boroughs.

Recommendations:

The Environment and Transport Select Committee agreed the following recommendations;

- a) The 2013/14 Gritting Route Network be maintained for the 2014/15 winter season while also incorporating minor amendments resulting from member, resident and officer feedback.
- b) Beare Green Depot remains available as a key resource for use during severe weather events.
- c) Communities are permitted to purchase additional grit bins at a total cost of £1,009 for a 4 year period while Parish Councils and other statutory bodies may be licensed to install grit bins on the public highway.
- d) At the end of the initial 4 year period those additional grit bins that meet with the appropriate criteria score (100 points plus) be transferred to the core winter service. Those grit bins that do not meet that criteria score but are serviceable, be offered extended agreements at a total cost of £709 per bin for a further 4 year period.
- e) A Business Case be prepared to support the capital replacement of 7 existing weather stations for installation by 2019 at an estimated cost of £154,000.
- f) The Highways Cold Weather Plan 2014/15, included at Annex 1, be approved.
- g) Approval of any future amendments to the Highways Cold Weather Plan be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding and the Assistant Director.

Actions/Further information to be provided:

None

Committee Next Steps:

None

66/14 LOCAL TRANSPORT REVIEW [Item 10]

Witnesses:

Paul Millin (Travel and Transport Group Manager)
Peter Wylde (Programme and Commissioning Project Manager)
Mike Goodman (Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The report was introduced by the Travel and Transport Group Manager who explained that the review would look at a number of elements including back office changes, renegotiating bus contracts and local support for concessionary travel. The review would also consider local bus withdrawals as part of the consultation.
2. Members agreed that the communication plan should explain to the public what the consultation was about and the main reasons for it. The Cabinet Member explained that the directorate was under pressure to make a saving of £2 million and would ensure this message was made clear during the consultation.
3. The Travel and Transport Group Manager explained that £10,000 had been set aside to deliver the consultation and the communications strategy that would go along with it. The only other costs related to officer time.
4. The Committee was informed that there was a strand in the review to look at investment, which could potentially include the installation of real time information at more bus stops.
5. A number of key partners including SALC (representing parish councils) and bus operators had been approached before the consultation. It was explained that during the last bus review concessionary fares were not looked at in detail.
6. The local transport review member reference group was vital to shaping the proposals that would go to Cabinet in spring 2015. Social media would also be used to inform residents of the consultation.
7. The Programme and Commissioning Project Manager explained that private workshops were scheduled with local committees to discuss possible changes to buses in each local area.
8. The Chairman stated that officers should ensure the consultation was accessible and understandable to members of the public. It was

important that only information that was relevant to the public was included as part of the consultation.

9. Members asked that officers ensure that rural areas were given serious consideration during the consultation process, especially with the lack of public transport these areas faced.
10. The Chairman asked for members of the committee to speak to local members in their division and make them aware of the local transport review and encourage them to attend any parish/local committee meetings where this issue would be discussed.

Recommendations:

- a) Authorise officers to carry out wide-ranging consultation on proposed transport changes with partners, stakeholders and the wider public during the period October 2014 to January 2015.
- b) At a further meeting in spring 2015, Cabinet consider proposals for change which take into account views expressed in the consultation.

Actions/Further information to be provided:

None

Committee Next Steps:

For the final report on the Local Transport Review to come back to the Environment and Transport Select Committee in April 2015.

67/14 SURREY WILDLIFE TRUST [Item 11]

Witnesses:

Mike Goodman (Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning updated the committee on the ongoing situation with Surrey Wildlife Trust. It was stated that the Countryside Management Member Reference Group had an overview of the ongoing issues with Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT). Members of the committee would be sent previous Countryside Management Member Reference Group reports to renew their knowledge on the issues at hand.
2. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning agreed to organise a seminar for the committee to discuss the ongoing situation with SWT.
3. A member of the committee raised concerns around timber issues on landholdings held by SWT and questioned the possibility of having a wood fuel house. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning

explained that details for a wood hub were currently being worked on through the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's). Any other specific issues would be answered by officers at the seminar.

Recommendations:

None

Actions/Further information to be provided:

- For the Scrutiny Officer to send the Committee previous Countryside Management Member Reference Group reports
- For the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning to organise a seminar for the committee to discuss the ongoing situation with SWT.

Committee Next Steps:

None

68/14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 12]

The next meeting of the Select Committee will be on 27 October 2014.

Chairman