

County Council Meeting – 15 December 2009

REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on 29 September, 3 November and 1 December 2009. Members are reminded that all reports have been circulated with the agenda for these meetings.

In accordance with the Constitution, Members can ask questions of the appropriate Cabinet Member, seek clarification or make a statement on any of these issues without giving notice.

The minutes containing the individual decisions for each meeting are attached as an Annexe to this report (minutes of 1 December meeting to follow). Cabinet responses to Committee reports are appended to the minutes. The report of the 29 September Cabinet meeting was considered by the Council on 13 October, however the minutes of this meeting are included in the attached Annexe. If any Member wishes to raise a question or make a statement on any of the matters in the minutes, notice must be given to Democratic Services by 12 noon on the day before the County Council meeting (Monday 14 December 2009).

For members of the public all non-confidential reports are available on the web site (www.surreycc.gov.uk) or on request from Democratic Services.

1. STATEMENTS/UPDATES FROM CABINET MEMBERS

A CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

To make a statement on the Annual Performance Assessment/Care Quality Commission Report on Adult Social Services for the year 2008/09.

2. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

3 November 2009

A CABINET DECISIONS CALLED IN – RIDE PEGASUS PILOT SCHOOL BUS SERVICE

1. At its meeting on 29 September 2009, the Cabinet had considered four options for contract termination in respect of the Ride Pegasus Pilot School Bus Service, and had agreed that Option 1, termination of the contract in July 2010, at the end of the current school year be approved for implementation. The Cabinet's decision had subsequently been called-in by the Transportation Select Committee.
2. The Transportation Select Committee had met on 21 October 2009 to consider the call-in and review the decision taken by Cabinet on 29 September. It had heard evidence from headteachers, governors and parents from the schools affected, local Members, the Cabinet Member for Transport and others, and had agreed that the Cabinet be invited to review its decision of 29 September to terminate the Pegasus contract in July 2010.

3. The Chairman of the Select Committee presented the Committee's report to Cabinet and asked that the Cabinet review its decision to terminate the contract in July 2010. The Cabinet also heard from local Members and a local Headteacher, all of whom requested that consultation be undertaken before a decision regarding the future of the service was taken.
4. The Cabinet considered the report of the Transportation Select Committee and the issues raised by the local Members and Headteacher, along with information from the Head of Transport for Surrey, in reviewing its original decision. The Cabinet acknowledged that the service was well liked, but that the current contract could not be made financially viable and any suggested savings would not allow costs to be covered. The need to make savings was acute and urgent and therefore there was not time to defer a decision. It would not be possible to extend the service to all schools in Surrey and the continuation of the current service was therefore inequitable. The Cabinet noted that officers would work with schools and parents to mitigate the effects of the withdrawal of the service. In addition, the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Head of Transport for Surrey had already met with local MPs and parents and such dialogue would continue.
5. While recognising the benefits and achievements of Ride Pegasus, the Cabinet was of the view that the pilot scheme should be ended and the contract terminated in a way that made best use of the County Council's resources. The Cabinet agreed therefore that the decision taken at the meeting on 29 September 2009 (Minute 242/09), that Option 1, termination of the contract in July 2010, at the end of the current school year be approved for implementation, be confirmed.

1 December 2009

B LOCAL COMMITTEE DECISIONS CALLED IN

6. In accordance with Article 6.07 of the Constitution (Call-in of Local Committee Decisions by the Cabinet), the Cabinet called-in the following decisions of the Surrey Heath Local Committee of 15 October 2009 in respect of Speed Limit Order Objections:
 3. Overruled the objections in relation to The Maultway and authorised the making of the permanent traffic regulation order in relation to this road to reduce the speed limit from 60mph to 40mph and that the corresponding changes be advertised for parts of Yockley Close and Redwood Drive.
 6. Upheld the objections in relation to the length of Red Road from A322 at Gordons Roundabout to Lightwater Road and authorised the advertisement of a new Permanent Traffic Regulation Order to propose a reduction of speed limit from 60mph to 50mph, and overruled the objections in relation to the length from Lightwater Road to The Maultway and authorised the making of the permanent traffic regulation order in relation to this length to reduce the speed limit from 60mph to 40mph and that the corresponding changes be advertised for part of Lightwater Road.

7. The decision had been called-in by the Deputy Leader as the decisions taken were contrary to Surrey County Council's speed limit policy, and the local committee does not have the authority to implement a decision that goes against council policy.
8. The Chairman of Surrey Heath Local Committee, together with Stuart MacLeod, presented the report. They set out the key points for the reduction in the speed limit on these roads.
9. The Cabinet Member for Transport tabled a response in which it was proposed that the speed limit policy be reviewed and considered by a future meeting of the Cabinet. The response attached as Annex A was agreed. A decision in respect of the specific speed limits, as detailed in paragraph 6 above, was deferred until the revised policy was agreed.
10. In accordance with Article 6.07(f), the decisions of the Cabinet are reported to the Council for information.

4 December 2009

Dr Andrew Povey
Chairman

LOCAL COMMITTEE DECISION – CALLED IN

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT RESPONSE TO THE DECISION OF SURREY HEATH LOCAL COMMITTEE

The decision made by the Local Committee is strictly speaking contrary to our agreed policy on speed limits. Because of this, my strong advice to Cabinet, based on guidance from Democratic Services, is that we cannot allow the decision to stand. To do so would be contrary to our agreed policies.

But I fully sympathise with the Local Committee on this occasion. We have said that local committees should have more discretion about our services. It is quite right that officers should advise members on whether a particular scheme is worthwhile or not. But it is also right that the committee should have the powers to reach their own decision, having listened to the advice from officers. This administration has said that localism is at the heart of our policies, and this is an opportunity to prove that we mean it.

I am therefore asking officers to develop a change to our policies to allow the Local Committee to do what they have asked to do. Clearly, this change of policies needs to be carefully considered. There can be no margin for error where road safety is concerned. Because of this I am asking officers to consult relevant stakeholders and members on how any new policy might be framed, before they report back to me and Cabinet Member for Community Safety. Any new policy may also need suitable safeguards to ensure that decisions on speed limits are properly assessed and justified.

This needs to be done quickly. We do not want to delay this any longer than it needs to. I would like a proposal to be brought back to us as soon as is practical, so that we can discuss and hopefully consider a new policy which may give more discretion to local committees.

I would also like this to be the first step in reviewing a suite of revised transport policies, which give more power and discretion to local people and to Local Committees. We will bring more proposals to you in coming months.

Ian Lake
Cabinet Member for Transport
1 December 2009