

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00am on Thursday 30th June 2011 at County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames.

The Select Committee will confirm these Minutes at its next meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

**Members:**

- \* Mr. Steve Renshaw (Chairman)
- \* Mr. Mark Brett-Warburton (Vice-Chairman)
- \* Mr. Mike Bennison  
Mr. Stephen Cooksey
- \* Mr. Will Forster
- \* Mrs. Pat Frost  
Mr. Chris Frost
- \* Mr. John Furey
- \* Mr. Simon Gimson
- \* Mr. David Goodwin  
Mrs. Frances King  
Mr. Geoff Marlow
- \* Mr. Chris Norman
- \* Mr. Tom Phelps-Penry
- \* Mr. Michael Sydney

**Ex officio Members:**

Mrs. Lavinia Sealy (Chairman of the Council)  
Mr. David Munro (Vice-Chairman of the Council)

**Other Members Present:**

x Cabinet Member for Environment - Dr Lynne Hack  
x Cabinet Member for Change and Efficiency - Mr Tim Hall  
x Cabinet Member for Transport - Mr Ian Lake

\* = Present

x = Present for part of the meeting

**PART 1**

**IN PUBLIC**

**16/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Councillors: Mr Stephen Cooksey, Mr Chris Frost, and Mrs Frances King.

Mr John Orrick was appointed as a substitute for Mr Stephen Cooksey.

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The Chairman stated that he would like to urge group Whips to arrange effective substitution for absent Members in order to prevent poor attendance at future meetings of the Committee.

### 17/11 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011 (Item 2A) and 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011 [Item 2B]**

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the meetings of the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011 and 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011 were agreed by the Committee as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

### 18/11 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chairman Mr Steve Renshaw declared a personal interest in agenda item number 8 "*Community Recycling Centre Performance Update*" as the report referred to specific proposals affecting his division.

Mr Mike Bennison declared a personal interest in agenda item number 8 "*Community Recycling Centre Performance Update*" as he is the Chairman of the Council's Elmbridge Local Committee.

Mr Will Forster declared a personal interest in agenda item numbers 7 "*Interim Report of the S106/Community Infrastructure Levy Task Group*" and 8 "*Community Recycling Centre Performance Update*" as he is a Member of the Woking Local Committee.

### 19/11 **QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

No questions or petitions were received.

### 20/11 **RESPONSE FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE**

The Scrutiny Officer tabled a paper, which detailed the decisions made by the Cabinet in respect of the following items:

- i) "*Home to School/College Transport Policies Including the Provision of Transport to Denominational Schools*" – As considered by the Cabinet at its meeting of the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2011.
- ii) "*On Street Parking Charges*" – As considered by the Cabinet at its meeting of the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2011.

#### **Actions/further information to be provided:**

None.

## 21/11 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKING

The Chairman advised the Committee of the following changes to the Work Programme:

- *“Proposals for Highway Maintenance and Construction”* – this item was listed for the June 2011 meeting of the Committee but would instead be considered as a bulletin item.
- *“White Lining and Road Markings”* – this item was to be brought forward to the September 2011 meeting of the Committee, as it was to consider process, rather than an assessment on the performance of the new contractor, which would be premature.
- A Member requested that the Committee consider flyboarding and flyposting. The Vice-Chairman suggested combining this with advertising on roundabouts. The Chairman agreed to discuss this matter further with the Member.
- The Chairman suggested that depending upon its outcome, either a bulletin or Committee update could be provided on the Sustainable Transport Fund application.
- *“Freight Transport Initiative”* – the Chairman advised that the Committee would consider this.
- *“Integrated Demand Management”* and *“Traffic Lights”* were two further items, which the Chairman was considering for possible future scrutiny.

## 22/11 INTERIM REPORT OF THE S106/COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY TASK GROUP

**Witnesses:** Paul Druce – Principal Infrastructure & Agreement Officer, Environment and Infrastructure, and Dominic Forbes – Planning and Development Group Manager, Environment and Infrastructure.

The Committee considered a report, which outlined the work undertaken to date by the Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy Task Group. A summary of the key points raised during the discussion of this item is provided below:

- Officers agreed that arranging match funding for Section 106 agreements had been a problem for the Council in the past, and this had led to large sums of money being held but not spent. However, systems were now in place to actively seek out funding sources when requests were made. Members were advised that the new system meant that when moneys were secured they would be integrated within the Council’s Capital Spending Programme. A more strategic view had been adopted by looking forward with Borough and District Councils with regard to significant developments proposed within their Local Development Framework strategies.
- Elmbridge Borough Council used the Planning Infrastructure Contributions (PIC) system, which was based upon a simple tariff structure. Officers had previously used an automated system to respond to requests under the PIC system, however, several appeals from developers had been upheld and this

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meant the requests subsequently had to be considered individually. The PIC system was due to be replaced by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

- A Member queried what role Members could play in influencing decisions over the allocation of developer contributions, and in response, Officers advised that this was intended to be addressed at a forthcoming Rapid Improvement Event (RIE). However, this was not a straightforward process as the procedures for Member involvement varied across the Borough and District Councils.
- A Member declared a personal interest in the item, as he was a Member of the Planning Committee of Guildford Borough Council.

10:20 Dr Lynne Hack entered the meeting at this point.

- Members were advised that CIL placed a greater emphasis on Member involvement, as it required the completion of an infrastructure schedule, and Members would be involved in identifying necessary works when compiling the schedule.
- It was noted that CIL needed to be introduced in 2014 and whilst the RIE was welcomed, there was a need for greater leadership in this regards, particularly at the CEO level and the political level, to include leaders and portfolio holders.
- Councillor John Furey declared a personal interest in the item, as he was a Member of Runnymede Borough Council's Planning Committee.
- A Member commented that the County Council should work to improve its relationships with District and Borough Councils on this issue, and added that there should be clarity over what funding was available, what hadn't been collected, and what funding was at risk of being lost, with an accompanying timeframe. In response, Officers clarified that a timetable including only current applications could be submitted to Local Committees, but it was observed that some Local Committees preferred to also receive details of outstanding historic applications.
- Officers advised that Section 106 requests were being integrated into the Educational Capital Spending Programme, which would provide a more robust system for processing educational contributions.
- The Chairman commented that the RIE would be a significant moment whereby it would be possible to work towards greater consistency amongst departments and across authorities, and added that a report would need to be brought to the Committee detailing its findings either in September or November 2011.
- The Chairman advised that whilst the task group had met specifically with Waverley Borough Council, the RIE was to involve the other District and Borough Councils.
- The Chairman suggested that a seminar be held after the RIE to inform and involve Members in developing its findings and to help shape any change in the terms of reference for the Task Group.

### **Actions/further information to be provided:**

None.

**Resolved:**

- a) The interim findings of the S106/CIL Task Group be noted and the proposals to address those issues for which immediate resolution is required be noted.
- b) That the terms of reference and duration of the S106/CIL Task Group be reviewed once the outcomes of the Council's Rapid Improvement Event are known.
- c) That there was a need for greater leadership in this regard at both the CEO level and the political level, to include leaders and portfolio holders in both the County Districts and Boroughs

**Select Committee next steps:**

To receive an update on the findings of the Rapid Improvement Event to either the September or November 2011 meeting of the Committee, depending upon their content.

Councillor Dr Lynne Hack left the meeting after consideration of the above item.

23/11 **COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTRE PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

**Witnesses:** Ian Boast – Head of Waste and Sustainability, and Justin Foster – Contract Performance Analyst, Waste Contract and Infrastructure Team.

The Committee considered a report from the Infrastructure and Contract Team Manager, Waste and Sustainability, which updated the Committee on the performance of and developments at Surrey's Community Recycling Centres (CRCs).

- A Member queried what percentage target was in place for the rate of recycling at CRCs and how this would be met, given that the performance in the municipal year of 2010/2011 had fallen to 57%. In response, Officers advised that a target of over 70% recycling was in place for the CRCs, and that the recent dip in performance had been due to two factors, notably, sorting of waste and staffing levels which had now been addressed. Officers were confident that the level of 64% recycling which was achieved in 2009/2010 could be matched or exceeded in the current municipal year.
- In previous years the top performing sites in the County had achieved percentage-recycling rates in the high 60's and low 70's at a time when the performance target was 57%.
- Officers were confident that the level of recycling could continue to increase through additional work in two key areas;
  - i) Working to better segregate materials at sites. In addition, Officers were considering the further separation of residual waste.
  - ii) Adjusting the level of staffing at sites in order to assist the public in segregating materials.
- Whilst the above was true, concern was also raised as to the degree of site accessibility. A Member queried the driving time and distance estimates provided in the report, and the Chairman asked how Officers defined a

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'reasonable' distance from a CRC, and how far away communities should be from such a site. In response, Officers advised that the distances and travel times to CRCs within the County were consistent with those of other nearby counties, and that the travel estimates had been taken from a combination of Google Maps and AA Routeplanner.

- Officers clarified that the development of a new CRC at Leatherhead was expected to disperse traffic from nearby sites and reduce congestion and problems associated with excess traffic and Heavy Goods Vehicles.
- Officers advised that across the County there was a second tier of recycling facilities known as "Bring Sites". As the sites were unmanned, it was possible that traders might abuse these facilities, and also that users of the sites might not recycle correctly.
- Members were informed that the Surrey Waste Partnership was considering the level of waste and recycling facilities provision across the County as a whole, and the Council would be working with the Partnership to address the issue of the distances to and accessibility of such sites. In response, the Chairman reiterated that it was important to clarify what constituted a reasonable distance to travel to a recycling facility, what facilities should be provided, and how it should be resourced.
- Whilst officers did not feel there was a link between the percentage recycling rate and level of access to CRCs, this was disputed by members, particularly with the current price of fuel.
- Additional opportunities were being sort for recycling wood, mattresses and carpet. At present these were expensive materials to recycle, but the technology in this area was improving and costs were being driven down.
- Adequate staffing was important to achieve a high recycling rate, as busier sites sometimes struggled to ensure all visitors correctly segregated their waste, and the Slyfield CRC was cited as an example of a busier site having poorer recycling performance.
- A Member drew attention to the south of Tandridge where he claimed the nearest CRC was a 90 minute round trip. Officers advised that an agreement was in place for Surrey residents to use some sites in Sussex and Kent, which were near the County border.
- A Member requested better signage is put in place at CRCs to advise the public of the Permit Scheme for vans and trailers. In addition, a Member suggested that the scheme be advertised through Surrey Matters.
- To date an extended opening hours pilot at the CRCs had not seen a significant increase in usage, with core hours remaining between 10am and 4pm.

11:40 Councillor Tim Hall entered the meeting at this point.

- Sita were operating a successful scheme for young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEETS) to work at CRCs and 45 were currently employed through this scheme, whilst 5 had secured permanent contracts. The Government funding for this scheme had ceased, but Officers were hoping to continue with it.
- A Blackberry smartphone application to identify traders abusing sites had been successfully developed in house, which had helped to achieve a 9,000 tonne reduction in waste, which would have cost the Council approximately £750,000 to dispose of.

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

None.

**Resolved:**

- a) **To note the success of the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETS) Scheme.**
- b) **To note the contents of the report.**
- c) **That officers would consider the comments from members and review levels of accessibility across the county.**

**Select Committee next steps:**

To receive a further update on CRC performance in 6 months time.

24/11 **PRELIMINARY FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT FOR SURREY**

**Witnesses:** Mark Howarth – Drainage Asset Team Leader, Operations, Highways and Countryside, and Peter Agent - Asset Planning Group Manager, Surrey Highways.

The Committee considered a report from the Drainage Asset Team Leader, which outlined to Members a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for Surrey (PFRA), and the background to the assessment process.

A summary of the key points raised during the discussion of this item is provided below:

- Members were advised that it was a statutory requirement under the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 to produce the assessment, which was a high level strategic document concerning ground water, but not rivers. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) had provided the models to be used to assess flood risk under this method.
- A Member drew attention to a particular Water Company which he highlighted as having poor attendance at a local flooding forum, as he felt that this was hindering efforts to safeguard against flooding. In response, Officers advised that whilst some companies were cooperative, this was not true of them all, but the company cited by the Member was beginning to provide the Council with more information and the Council was continuing to work with them.
- A Member referred to new systems to counteract flooding, which he claimed were being used in some new developments, and queried their effectiveness. In response, Officers clarified that such measures would slow down surface water in order to help prevent flash floods, rather than making matters worse.
- A Member commented that they were aware of developments being constructed in areas, which regularly flooded. He queried how the Council worked with the Environment Agency to address concerns over new developments. In response, Officers clarified that the Council responded to planning applications with reference to the Council's own data and were engaged on a local level, whereas the PFRA was a high level strategic document.

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- Officers commented that whilst there were some discrepancies between some of the maps included in the PFRA, this was because a wide variety of data formats had been received and used to inform the PFRA.

### **Actions/further information to be provided:**

None.

### **Recommendations (to Cabinet):**

- That the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment be agreed and confirmed to the Environment Agency by 19<sup>th</sup> August 2011 for inclusion in their River Catchment Basin Area Reports to the European Commission.

### **Select Committee next steps:**

None.

## 25/11 REPORT OF THE WINTER MAINTENANCE TASK GROUP

**Witnesses:** Peter Agent – Asset Planning Group Manager – Surrey Highways.

The Committee considered the report of the Winter Maintenance Task Group, which outlined to Members the findings and recommendations of the Task Group to date.

A summary of the key points raised during the discussion of this item is provided below:

- Members queried how many of the Surrey District and Borough Councils had taken up the Council's offer of providing hand held grit spreaders. Officers clarified that in the municipal year of 2010/2011 9 of the 11 Councils had taken up this offer, and so far in the current municipal year four of the 11 Councils had expressed an interest. The Chairman added that he felt it was important for the Chief Executive and the Cabinet to support this initiative in order to encourage the participation of the District and Borough Councils. It was agreed that were the two Boroughs who had not taken up the offer in 2010/2011 wish to do so in 2011/2012, then this should be supported.
- Concerns were raised regarding the removal of non compliant grit bins and how this would be communicated across rural areas, particularly with regard to those bins, which had been purchased by Parish Councils and private individuals and were at risk of being removed from the Highway. Officers advised that local Members would be engaged directly when grit bins were identified for removal
- Officers advised that a list of around 80 contractors had been drawn up which included some farmers. Work was underway to establish what equipment each contractor had and how it could be deployed locally. Highways Officers had engaged with the Council's Legal Officers in order to draw up a transparent rate of pay for contractors, which operated, on a sliding scale depending upon the level of support provided by the contractor.
- Several Members expressed opposition to the recommendation to remove low scoring grit bins from the Highway, however, the Chairman advised that this recommendation had been made to the Cabinet in September 2010 and that it was subsequently adopted as policy. The Chairman added that not all



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Community Highways Officers and local Members had met to discuss and map grit bins in their divisions, and stressed that this needed to take place. Concern was expressed that this had still not been effected to date, given both the September and January reports and there needed to be better co-ordination between the different highways departments.

- Several Members expressed a concern that grit bins that they had purchased from their allocations of Locally Determined Funding might be removed from the highway if they were considered to have a low score on the grit bin scoring criteria. In response, the Chairman advised that under the proposals of the Task Group, grit bins purchased by local Members under Locally Determined Funding schemes would not be removed and did not need to meet any criteria of compliance to remain.
- Some Members felt that privately purchased grit bins should not be removed from the highway, as they could be purchased at a cheaper rate than the bins provided by the Council. Also, in some instances Parish Councils were said to have arranged for these bins to be serviced independently of the Council. In response, Officers advised that it was important to assess grit bins as they do not provide the most efficient and effective use of valuable resources and, also, so that asset data and maintenance schedules can be updated and managed with the contractor. Whilst some of these bins might be serviced independently, if there was an accident relating to these bins, the liability and reputational risk for them still lay with the County Council. Further to this it was clarified that the County Council intended to brand its grit bins in order to make it clear that they were the responsibility of the Council. It was added that some Parish Councils had also branded grit bins which they had purchased.
- Several Members felt that the removal of all grit bins from P1 gritting routes could be problematic, as there were parts of P1 routes, which still required the use of a grit bin in order for gritting lorries to be able to pass. Consequently, several Members suggested amending the recommendation concerning the removal of grit bins from P1 routes, so that local Community Highways Officers would only carry this out subject to the completion of a safety assessment.
- The Cabinet Member for Transport added that he felt the Council's winter preparedness showed a significant improvement over 2/3 years previously, and thanked the Task Group for its report. He added that it was necessary for the Communications Team to effectively communicate the process and reasoning behind removing low scoring grit bins.
- The Vice-Chairman commented that some people living in rural areas were not able to access P1 or P2 routes during a snow or ice event, and that he felt that the public should be better educated about how little grit was needed to treat a road, in order to reduce grit wastage.
- A Member felt that the report did not draw attention to supporting the role that could be played by 4x4 Vehicle Clubs. The Chairman pointed out that this was not a matter for E & T and was already under consideration by the Communities Select Committee as it was a matter of social mobility..
- In response to several queries from a Member, Officers clarified that District and Borough Councils had been contacted in order to jointly discuss and produce priority schedules for footway maintenance during severe weather events. . It was noted that, whilst the Council is liable for highways as a

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whole, in some instances District and Borough Councils are prepared to assist with the task of clearing footways and this should be encouraged. It was acknowledged by Members and Officers that some residents and businesses may have been deterred from clearing footways because of the risk of litigation. However, Officers clarified it was unlikely that people would be at risk of litigation unless their efforts made a footway more dangerous. Furthermore, a Member encouraged shopkeepers to clear their shop frontages.

- It was noted that progress in agreeing arrangements with the District and Borough Councils had not been as swift as would have been wished. Therefore there was a need for greater leadership in this regards at both the CEO level and the political level, to include leaders and portfolio holders.
- The Chairman informed the Committee that several responses to the report had been received from Local Committee Chairman, and provided a summary of the key points to the Committee;
- It was suggested that the public should be issued with gritting salt from Community Recycling Centres. However, the Chairman commented that gritting salt was widely available from retailers including DIY stores and builders' merchants, enabling self sufficiency.
- It was suggested that the Council could bid for all terrain vehicles, which were being disposed of by the Ministry of Defence.
- Waverley Borough Council had previously not taken up the County Council's offer of handheld grit spreaders but was now keen to do so.
- It was necessary for the County, District and Borough Councils to make it clear through their communications, including websites, of the responsibilities of the various tiers of Local Government concerning gritting and highway maintenance.

12:40 Councillor Tim Hall left the meeting at this point.

### **Actions/further information to be provided:**

To advise the Communities Select Committee that the issue of how to support 4x4 Vehicle Clubs to assist during winter events, remained insufficiently clear..

### **Resolved:**

### **Recommendations (to Cabinet):**

#### **Gritting Routes**

- a) That Cabinet agrees extending the P1 precautionary salting network by approximately 172 Kms (at an approximate cost of £210,000).
- b) That Cabinet agrees the provision and use of two alternative vehicle types on a trial basis during the 2011/12 winter season, to facilitate access to isolated communities and/or locations of restricted width (at an approximate additional cost of £35,000). The evaluation process and trial areas to be agreed by Surrey County Council and May Gurney, primarily in the Oxted and Haslemere areas.

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- c) That Cabinet agrees Surrey should purchase an additional 2,450t of salt at summer rates to maximise countywide capacity at 16,850 tonnes (at an approximate cost of £78,000).
- d) That Cabinet agrees to provide 40 tonnes of salt (two lorry loads) supplied direct to those Borough and District Councils which are committed to assisting with snow and ice clearance works on the public highway (at an approximate cost of £21,000).

### Grit Bins

- e) That Cabinet have a choice of the following and agrees those criteria and a priority for the removal and re-use of grit bins. In addition, that members should identify locations that meet the criteria within their communities and discuss these with their local Community Highway Officer in order to gain approval for retention and relocation:
  - i. Those grit bins currently sited on the P1 precautionary salting network (saving approximately £37,000)
  - ii. Those grit bins sited on any future extension of the P1 precautionary salting network, subject to the outcome of individual safety assessments carried out by Community Highways Officers (saving approximately in the range of £3,000 to £11,000)
  - iii. Those grit bins with a score less than 75, (saving approximately £44,000) or
  - iv. Those grit bins with a score > 75 but < 100 points (saving approximately £ 15,000)
  - v. By 7 votes FOR with 5 votes AGAINST with 0 abstentions, those grit bins located on highway land but not highway maintained (saving approximately £4,000).
- f) That Cabinet confirms any unauthorised and unidentified grit bin placed on the public highway will be removed, without notice, to the nearest depot. Also, that the owner of an unauthorised grit bin that is identifiable should be given one week's notice to relocate their grit bin to a new site off the public highway. Local Members must be informed of individual bin removals within their division.
- g) That Cabinet agrees to the purchase of 1500 chips and six hand held scanner devices to enable real time management information of our extensive grit bin asset (at an approximate cost of £7,000).
- h) That Cabinet agrees a revised charge and endorses only the currently approved process for the provision and maintenance of a 'private' grit bin on the public highway (at a total cost of £1,000 for a 4 year period).

### Farmers/Contractors and Equipment

- i) That Cabinet approves the creation of a well distributed 'pool' of 50 farmers/contractors across Surrey, from the 85 who have expressed an interest (at an approximate cost of £60,000 based on 2 days activity for all 50).

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- j) That Cabinet approves the purchase of a further 10 snow ploughs for distribution to farmers/contractors without this basic equipment in order to facilitate a well distributed resource 'pool' across the county (at an approximate cost of £28,000).
- k) That Cabinet delegate approval of the Surrey Winter Service Plan 2011/12 to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Assistant Director, Operations, Highways, and Countryside.
- l) That Cabinet supports the Task Group and the Environment and Transport Select Committee, and a report be provided on May Gurney Winter Service preparation to be submitted to the meeting on 10 November 2011.
- m) That Cabinet agree the Winter Task Group should reconvene in March 2012 to review Winter Service Operations and trials during the 2011/12 winter season and then report back to Cabinet (and ETSC) in or around June 2012. The Task Group will then either confirm completion of their involvement in the review and scrutiny of winter service activities at present or identify where and when further improvement is desirable, with costs for Cabinet approval.

### **Select Committee next steps:**

- i) To consider a report regarding May Gurney Winter Service preparation at the meeting of the Committee to be held on 10 November 2011.
- ii) To reconvene the Winter Task Group in March 2012 to review Winter Service Operations and trials during the 2011/2012 Winter season.

### **26/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at 10:00am in Committee Room C.