

# Cabinet - Supplementary Agenda

**Date & time**

Tuesday, 25  
January 2022 at  
2.00 pm

**Place**

Council Chamber,  
Woodhatch Place, 11  
Cockshot Hill, Reigate,  
Surrey, RH2 8EF

**Contact**

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**Chief Executive**

Joanna Killian



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**Cabinet Members:** Natalie Bramhall, Clare Curran, Kevin Deanus, Matt Furniss, Marisa Heath, Sinead Mooney, Mark Nuti, Tim Oliver, Becky Rush and Denise Turner-Stewart

**Deputy Cabinet Members:** Maureen Attewell, Steve Bax and Rebecca Paul

## **4 PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

### **b Public Questions**

(Pages 1  
- 2)

The deadline for public questions is seven days before the meeting (18 January 2022).

## **5 REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES , TASK GROUPS, LOCAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL**

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To consider any reports from Select Committees, Task Groups, Local Committees and any other Committees of the Council.

- A. Scrutiny Of 2022/23 Draft Budget And Medium-Term Financial Strategy To 2026/27 (Report of the Council's Select Committees)

**Joanna Killian**  
**Chief Executive**  
Monday, 24 January 2022

## QUESTIONS, PETITIONS AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

The Cabinet will consider questions submitted by Members of the Council, members of the public who are electors of the Surrey County Council area and petitions containing 100 or more signatures relating to a matter within its terms of reference, in line with the procedures set out in Surrey County Council's Constitution.

### Please note:

1. Members of the public can submit one written question to the meeting. Questions should relate to general policy and not to detail. Questions are asked and answered in public and so cannot relate to "confidential" or "exempt" matters (for example, personal or financial details of an individual – for further advice please contact the committee manager listed on the front page of this agenda).
2. The number of public questions which can be asked at a meeting may not exceed six. Questions which are received after the first six will be held over to the following meeting or dealt with in writing at the Chairman's discretion.
3. Questions will be taken in the order in which they are received.
4. Questions will be asked and answered without discussion. The Chairman or Cabinet Members may decline to answer a question, provide a written reply or nominate another Member to answer the question.
5. Following the initial reply, one supplementary question may be asked by the questioner. The Chairman or Cabinet Members may decline to answer a supplementary question.

## MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND FILMING – ACCEPTABLE USE

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Use of mobile devices, including for the purpose of recording or filming a meeting, is subject to no interruptions, distractions or interference being caused to the PA or Induction Loop systems, or any general disturbance to proceedings. The Chairman may ask for mobile devices to be switched off in these circumstances.

It is requested that if you are not using your mobile device for any of the activities outlined above, it be switched off or placed in silent mode during the meeting to prevent interruptions and interference with PA and Induction Loop systems.

*Thank you for your co-operation*

**CABINET – 25 JANUARY 2022****PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Public Questions****Question (1): Daniel Hill**

Surrey County Council's recent Survey concluded that 70% of people disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposal for a new GRT transit site to be built within the Surrey Hills area of outstanding natural beauty.

Additionally, the statistics show between 2018 and 2020 there were 483 GRT unauthorised encampments in Surrey most of them were in the west of the county with Guildford having 40. This compares with Tandridge Council the least affected area with only 13.

Would Tim Oliver and Surrey County Council consider supporting an alternative location. Which is not only more suitable brownfield land but is also more cost effective for the GRT transit site currently being proposed for Pendell Camp?

**Reply:**

The Pendell Camp transit site scheme has been developed in partnership with all District and Borough Councils including Tandridge, and Surrey Police. This is a county working together, to not only to address unauthorised encampments, but also to ensure that the needs of the Traveller community are more widely met.

The GRT community is entitled to the same services as those in the housed community, including the right to occupy premises that are fit for use. This includes accessible accommodation and facilities. By providing a transit site in Surrey, the transient GRT population will have the opportunity to access healthcare and social services. The provision of power and hot water facilities will help to provide essential temporary respite from the rigours of lives spent on the road. It has been identified that there is demand for these facilities in both the East and West of the county.

With regards to the landscape, a Landscape and Visual Assessment has been undertaken and submitted in support of the planning application. The report concluded that *"the effects of the Proposed Development .... would not result in substantial harm to landscape character beyond the Site boundary, nor would there be substantial detrimental effects to visual amenity across a wide area. The Proposed Development would not result in the alteration or loss of any landscape features or elements important to landscape character."*

Furthermore, and most significantly, at present this site is contaminated and polluted by historical waste dumping. Without this investment this pollution will not be resolved.

The investment is in no way detrimental to the area; it will result in remediating and improving the site's natural environment.

At this time, Surrey CC is unable to comment on the viability of other potential GRT sites across Surrey and therefore cannot comment on a private individual's proposal.

**Natalie Bramhall**  
**Cabinet Member for Property and Waste**  
**25 January 2022**

CABINET- 25 January 2022

**CABINET RESPONSE TO THE SCRUTINY OF 2022/23 DRAFT BUDGET AND  
MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY TO 2026/27**

5

**Cabinet Response to Recommendations:**

1. Recommendation: Cabinet is asked to consider creating a parallel carbon budget (carbon impact of the total budget) in 2023/24 to be set alongside the financial budget so the carbon emission implications of decisions as well as the financial implications can be scrutinised. **(Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee)**

**Response:** The Greener Futures Team is developing the capacity to monitor the Council's carbon emissions, and also has access to tools that allow estimates to be calculated for projects such as new infrastructure and buildings. As such, it should be possible to provide an estimated carbon impact for the 23/24 budget.

The Council will continue to take direct action on environmental sustainability for future generations as part of the Carbon Net Zero targets set for 2030 and 2050. The Council has brought in expertise to better understand and report on carbon impacts of the Capital Programme and to set established processes for assessing capital plans and capturing necessary information for business case scrutiny and benefits realisation. This will include a member of the Greener Futures team being part of CPP.

2. Recommendation: The Cabinet Member for Transport & Infrastructure to provide evidence in the final budget to assure the committee that the additional capacity planned for the Planning Enforcement Team is adequate and realises additional revenue in terms of recovered costs. **(Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee)**

**Response:** The proposed budget increase of £125K provides additional capacity to increase the planning enforcement team from its current team of 2xFTE posts. It allows for expansion which will enable a higher profile, proactive service that can carry out greater levels of enforcement activity by way of an additional senior officer and appropriate regrading of the existing team members. The increase in budget will also provide for additional legal support that will be required when pursuing cost recovery.

In addition, a plan for further action has been outlined and is in the process of being fully costed to ensure its robustness. This would include further capacity by way of technical support and legal support which are required at appeals and in court, as well as proactively bringing together enforcement authorities – which is often a core issue in delivering effective enforcement action. This would also include provision

for additional Counsel advice to support enforcement cases and allow for direct action.

3. Recommendation: The Community, Environment and Highways Select Committee seeks assurances from the Cabinet that the final 2022-23 budget has adequate resources allocated to support the high priority action plans and intended outcomes in relation to:
  - a. Climate Change and Greener Futures Delivery Plans;
  - b. A shift to Local Transport Plan 4 and active travel; and
  - c. Recommendations of the Greener Futures Reference Group previously presented to Cabinet

**(Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee)**

**Response:** Cabinet can confirm that the resources in the 22/23 budget are sufficient to take the action needed in this coming financial year to achieve the aspirations set out in the Greener Futures Delivery Plan, which was developed with the input of the Greener Futures Reference Group and which accepts many of the recommendations made to Cabinet – as captured by both the ETI core budget and the transformation funding of £1.7m that is proposed for the Greener Futures programme. As set out in the Delivery Plan itself, there is a clear need over the medium to longer term for the Council to attract and leverage funding from partners and Government, and the budget for ETI includes staffing whose role it will be to develop a more consistent and robust approach to such external funding.

In respect of Local Transport Plan 4, which includes a shift to more active travel as a core principle, the budget contains sufficient resource for 22/23 to deliver the immediate priorities identified in the Plan; again further investment is being made through our Rethinking Transport transformation programme. However, as with Greener Futures, it is recognised that there are investment needs that the Government and others will need to provide investment to ensure that the full aspirations of the LTP are met over the medium term. Again, it is anticipated that the Council will leverage external investment with the resources identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

4. Recommendation: Cabinet is requested to ensure that a comprehensive, representative, and early budget consultation with residents and key stakeholders should form an integral part of the Council's annual budget setting process with findings communicated to all Members and made available to Select Committees with draft budget papers. The initial budget consultation process should conclude first before a draft budget is presented to the Council's Select Committees. The deadline for this year's call for evidence for example could have been extended from 28 December 2021 to allow residents and stakeholders more time to comment and engage after the festive and the New Year period. **(Resources and Performance Select Committee)**

**Response:** For the 2022/23 budget setting process, we adopted a two-stage approach to consultation and engagement:

- **Stage One - Working with a market research company to gather insight from a representative sample of over a thousand residents on the principles we should adopt in developing our budget.**
- **Stage Two – Consulting with residents and other stakeholders on proposals in the draft budget once it was agreed by Cabinet in November 2021.**

**The results from the first stage of engagement were important in shaping the final budget. In line with residents' priorities, most of the Council's spend, and the proposed increase in council tax, is allocated to services that support some of the most vulnerable adults and children in Surrey, including an increase in mental health investment of almost £8m.**

**The summary results from the first engagement exercise were included as an annex to the Draft Budget ahead of engagement with Select Committees in December 2021, available with the other draft budget papers to inform the scrutiny process.**

**For the second stage, we responded to the Select Committee's concerns by extending the budget consultation closing date from 28 December 2021 to 7 January 2022. This enabled more stakeholders to share their views to provide further useful insight to help set the final budget.**

5. **Recommendation:** Cabinet to ensure that the effect of Council borrowing result in a real return, particularly any commercial borrowing which ought to cover return on its investment. **(Resources and Performance Select Committee)**

**Response:** The delivery of planned benefits – both financial and non-financial – of the Capital Programme will be closely monitored throughout the year and across the MTFS through rigorous governance. Depending on the scale and nature of the project, assurance on the delivery of benefits may sit with Capital Programme Panel, the Benefits Board and/or Major Projects Board. A significant amount of planned borrowing relates to schemes in the capital pipeline, which would be subject to an approved business case prior to commencement. Projects will be tracked for delivery against plans over the implementation period and into operational delivery.

**For the commercial portfolio, Strategic Investment Board and Shareholder Investment Panel review the performance and forecasts of the companies in which funds have been invested, in order to maintain oversight and ensure that the delivery of the commercial purpose to make a return on investment is maintained.**

**Officers will produce an annual statement of benefit realised, and expected future benefit, from the commercial portfolio. This will complement work under way to track longitudinally the benefits of past investment decisions, recognising that the financial impact of investments often has a long tail following the initial investment decision.**



6. Recommendation: Cabinet to ensure that an assessment is undertaken of all Surrey's borough and district council's council tax support offers to ensure any increase in Surrey County Council's share of Council Tax is affordable to all residents. **(Resources and Performance Select Committee)**

**Response:** Finance have been engaging with the eleven District and Borough councils to understand the nature and scope of their local council tax support schemes. There is some degree of local variance, particularly amongst the schemes for working age residents where each council has flexibility to set their own definition of vulnerable people and their own criteria for the level of support available.

The criteria which determine whether households or individuals qualify for support tend to be based on income levels, the composition of the household, the level of savings and value of property, and the level of other financial support received. As an overview, there is a general range of support available of between 70% to 100% of the council tax bill, depending on those locally set criteria.

Increases are understandably difficult in the context of wider pressures on household finances, however the investment funded by additional council tax is aimed specifically at supporting the delivery of services to vulnerable people and investing in the mental health of residents. The Council will continue to engage with Government to make the case for equitable and sustainable funding for services, but we recognise that difficult decisions locally are necessary to secure the Council's long-term ability to deliver resident priorities and support vulnerable people.

7. Recommendation: To further support collaborative working, to avoid any silos and to ensure proper oversight and effective budget scrutiny next year, the Cabinet is requested to ensure that the Budget Task Group (with all Select Committee representation) will be provided with:
- a) Regular in-year and up-to-date finance monitoring updates throughout the year - particularly when there are significant and material changes - to be assured that assumptions made and expectations derived from the budget 2022-23 and MTFS 2026-27 (where relevant) will be met in practice;
  - b) Early communication and understanding of 2023-24 draft budget with high-level assessment of effect on residents;
  - c) Meaningful details about the budget efficiencies with overarching Budget Impact Assessments (including any impact on, for example, service delivery, residents, corporate and organisational priorities, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion matters and staffing) be provided to Select Committees and the Budget Task Group where appropriate before the draft budget is formally presented to all Select Committees. This should happen earlier than November 2022 to ensure Members have sufficient time to understand, make further enquires and add real value to the scrutiny process; and



**Response:** Responding to recommendations a) to c) together, we are committed to engaging Select Committees as early as possible in scrutinising the budget, including progress in delivering the budget. A monthly finance update is reported to Cabinet on a monthly basis and therefore available to scrutiny throughout the year. The Budget Task Group receives regular updates on in-year budget delivery as well as progress in planning the following year's budget. This year, Members were presented with information on efficiencies in the week that Cabinet Draft Budget papers were published. Efficiencies were not finalised until very close to the publication date, particularly due to increased demand pressures seen over the course of the summer, requiring additional work throughout the budget process.

We will also continue to engage Select Committees on the context that shapes our budget, such as the planning assumptions we make on the Council's strategic environment, funding projections and other relevant information.

The recent trend of single-year funding settlements from Government and the commitment to a fundamental review of funding is likely to mean continued uncertainty in how much support we get from Government and through the business rates system. This will make early definition efficiency requirements problematic, however we will continue to share with Select Committees as soon as the Cabinet have reached agreed proposals.

As we develop our new approach to financial sustainability – the Twin Track programme – all Members, including Select Committees, will be engaged as opportunities are shaped and developed. The proposals will form the foundation of the next phase of the Council's transformation and programmes of work to realise efficiencies, deliver priorities, and maintain the organisation's financial resilience.

- d) Commentary and comparison of corporate costs of the Council with similar Local Authorities.

**Response:** Finance and Performance Insights are looking to develop a benchmarking network with closest comparator local authorities in order to enhance cost comparison information for corporate services to provide insight and inform decisions.

Consideration will be given to external organisations who provide commentary and data. Historic experience of using such materials is that further intelligence on specific authorities is required to enable like for like comparisons to be made. It is therefore considered more appropriate to develop networks, where relationships can be built, robust comparisons made and inconsistencies investigated and understood.

Tim Oliver  
Leader of the Council  
25 January 2022

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