

Cabinet- Supplementary Agenda



Date & time
Tuesday, 25
October 2022 at
2.00 pm

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

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Chief Executive
Joanna Killian



We're on Twitter:
@SCCdemocracy

4 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

a Members' Questions

(Pages 1
- 2)

There are two member questions. A response from Cabinet is attached.

b Public Questions

(Pages 3
- 6)

There are three public questions. A response from Cabinet is attached.

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

(Pages 7
- 10)

The following two reports have been received from the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee. A response from Cabinet is attached.

A. A Skills Plan for Surrey

B. Greener Futures Climate Change Delivery Plan (2021 – 2025)

Joanna Killian
Chief Executive
Monday, 24 October 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.

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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 OCTOBER 2022**PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Members Questions****Question (1) Catherine Baart – Earlswood and Reigate South**

What will be the maximum home to school transport time possible for a pupil in Surrey attending one of the 5 proposed Alternative Provision sites? Was the placing of Alternative Provision sites across Surrey *as a whole* considered in this consolidation, as an opportunity to minimise the probability of long daily school runs, noting in the consultation “concerns were raised the negative impact of AP pupils needing to travel long distances, or out of county, on attendance and future long-term outcomes”?

Reply:

In March 2021 Cabinet endorsed the Alternative Curriculum Pathways and Reintegration Support Strategy which set out an ambition and plan for alternative learning pathways, reintegration with school, time limited periods of support and a strong outreach offer so not all children need to travel to an Alternative Provision (AP) site. In addition, it sets out a commitment to learning environments that are high quality inclusive environments and increased capacity, which is the focus on the current Cabinet paper.

The nature of transport congestion in Surrey and the very long distances of many journeys means that travelling times can vary greatly, so it is not possible to give a definitive maximum journey time. However, as an indication, the furthest that pupils would have to travel to their closest Primary or Secondary phase AP site would be in the South West Quadrant, where the journey from Haslemere GU27 to the Wey Valley College GU2 is approximately 14.5 miles or 30 minutes in travel time.

Government guidance is that best practice suggests that the maximum each way length of journey for a child of primary school age to be 45 minutes and for secondary school age 75 minutes.

The placing of Alternative Provision sites across Surrey as a whole, has been an important consideration in this consolidation, with geographical spread across the county for both Primary and Secondary phase AP places. The areas in which new AP provision will be located, at different key stages, have been decided to align with the forecast needs, and the 44 additional places will mean that more Surrey pupils requiring AP will be able to access high quality maintained provision, in many cases closer to home.

The Capital development therefore will contribute to providing high quality AP provision and represents an opportunity to minimise the likelihood of long daily school runs.

Clare Curran
Cabinet Member for Education and Learning
25 October 2022

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Question (2) Catherine Baart – Earlswood and Reigate South

The paper on A COUNTY STRATEGY FOR HOUSING, ACCOMMODATION AND HOMES: states: “Promoting economic growth across the county requires appropriate housing growth as part of a place-based approach to attracting investment and job opportunities.” Given the constraints of achieving net zero carbon for the county by 2050, what % of growth is targeted for Surrey over the next 10 years, and what % increase in population and housing does this equate to?

Reply:

Housing, accommodation and homes across the county are a key determinant of and make a significant contribution to all of the Council’s strategic areas of focus: growing a sustainable economy from which everyone can benefit, reducing health inequalities, thriving and empowered communities and a greener future, as well as the underlying principle of no-one left behind.

While clearly interrelated and to a degree interdependent, due to extraneous factors and dynamic and uncertain conditions, there is no straightforward correlation between economic growth, population and housing, whereby one will **equate to** another.

The One Surrey Growth Board set a target in 2021 to grow the Surrey economy’s GVA (Gross Value Added) by 18% by 2030, relative to the position in 2019 when the Surrey economy generated £47bn. Clearly more recent global and national events will impact upon the achievement of this forecast.

The Council’s clear ambition in its strategic work, in partnership with others, on housing, alongside sustainable economic growth, climate change and net zero, infrastructure (including digital), housing and skills, is to develop and/or support the conditions required for all Surrey residents to be able to live well and achieve their full potential. This will best be achieved by working to balance the forecast economic growth of 18%, with forecast population growth of 0.98%. The Housing, Homes & Accommodation Strategy Evidence Base has not identified or proposed a target for house building in Surrey. The most recent Housing Delivery Test set by Central Government had housing targets for local authorities, with different levels of performance by each of the districts and boroughs against this government target.

Sinead Mooney
Cabinet Member for Children and Families
25 October 2022

CABINET – 25 OCTOBER 2022

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Public Questions**Question (1): Malcolm Robertson**

Over the years I have had several discussions with Surrey officers and Members over whether the incinerator and anaerobic digester at Charlton Lane, Shepperton are value for money.

Both processes have now been in operation for some time, so would you please tell me - from the date of the start of each operation (please specify), how much electricity has been generated by each process, the quantity of waste supplied to each plant, how much gasoil has been used in each case, together with the quantities of materials used for filtration and to prevent pollution.

Reply:

The Eco Park development at Charlton Lane is an important contributor to meeting the strategic waste objectives of Surrey County Council as set out in the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy. The anaerobic digester and gasifier at the Eco Park treat waste which would otherwise be landfilled (or incinerated elsewhere) and both facilities generate electricity in the process.

As well as avoiding landfill, the Eco Park generates enough electricity to power 4000 homes, and the Council is also benefitting from the sale of electricity. Also, now that the Eco Park is fully operational, the Council's contractor, Suez, will be seeking to re-engage with the local community to support positive reuse and recycling initiatives and sponsor community events and ensure open and transparent engagement with the local community and local community representatives.

In term of your specific requests for information, the most readily available information we have is for the period 3 January 2022 to 31 August 2022 as follows:

Gasifier item	Quantity
Tonnes of waste into Pre treatment	26,595T
Tonnes of RDF into gasifier	18,322T
Electricity generated	10,824 MWh
Electricity exported	5,835 MWh
Rate of Urea usage	10.05 Kg per tonne of RDF
Rate of lime usage	6.48 Kg per tonne of RDF

Anaerobic digester item	Quantity
Tonnes of food waste received	19,271T
Electricity generated	7,314 MWh
Electricity exported	4,823 MWh

Reagent usage

Not available

During this period 670,466 Litres of fuel oil were used for both the anaerobic digestion back up boiler and for start-up of the gasification plant. There is no separate metering and therefore it is not possible to split usage between each facility.

Natalie Bramhall
Cabinet Member for Property and Waste
25 October 2022

Question (2): Jenny Desoutter

The importance of trees for climate health and biodiversity is undisputed yet many species of UK trees are facing unprecedented threats from drought and disease, locally in particular from ash dieback.

Dealing with ash dieback is often represented as being primarily a health and safety issue for humans, whereas in fact, given that ash trees make up approximately 20% of our tree cover, it is primarily a massive calamity for climate change and biodiversity: it will take a long time before even 1.2 million newly-planted trees can even begin to restore tree cover to former levels, let alone increase carbon capture.

SCC's ash dieback programme is scheduled to start this autumn. Can SCC assure us that in planning to address any perceived potential Safety issues posed by ash dieback, you will adopt a sensitive and proportionate approach which prioritises climate health and protection of biodiversity; and that you will

a) seek to conserve diminishing wildlife habitat and biodiversity in the face of this natural tree calamity by undertaking meaningful ecological assessments prior to any felling to minimise adverse impacts on associated species and ecological disturbance; and

b) appropriately and transparently balance potential short-term risk to individual humans - or their property - (the Tree safety Council assess risk of accident to humans from trees as 1 in 20 million, or 1 in 10 million in a public place) against longer-term certain benefits to the environment from retaining established, functioning trees for as long as possible, even if living with disease, and in particular by avoiding compounding the release of carbon through use of heavy machinery which not only removes affected trees, but also results in further counterproductive carbon release through soil disturbance and damage to ancillary undergrowth?

Reply:

Ash Dieback on Highways

The effect of ash dieback is significant and far reaching. Ash mortality is already having an impact on highway management across Surrey, and we are working extremely hard to keep the roads safe. However, we also recognise the impact that ash dieback and the associated loss of habitat is having on our ecosystem services, including potential disturbance to the carbon stock and we have amended our approach to ensure it is focused on low intervention and clear steps before any decision making on removal of trees.

By adopting this low intervention tree policy, the very nature of the way we manage trees on the highway seeks to minimise any felling. This ensures that we are targeting individual trees and groups which are at the highest risk of failure and allows for the retention of ash trees which are less hazardous. It should be noted that the number of trees being removed this year as part of the ash dieback programme is estimated to be just 0.0027% of the overall number of trees on the highway network.

Where infected trees can be left in situ without risk to the highway they will be allowed to decay, providing valuable standing and ground level deadwood habitat and locking carbon back into the soil. This has the added benefit of reducing the carbon footprint and cost of SCC Highways' tree management service. We understand that it is better to leave a tree to decay than to transport machinery to cut it down and remove it.

Any net change to the carbon flux will depend largely on the rate of natural regeneration, as vegetation regrows in place of the removed ash tree. Succession of natural regeneration will also provide an opportunity for diverse habitat creation and linkages. However, as noted above, we are also working with the Natural Capital team to identify planting opportunities on the highway network for additional trees.

Where trees do have to be removed, we commit to being extremely cautious to ensure that protected species are not harmed and that any impact to surrounding habitat is minimised. The operations have been timed so that the bulk of work can be carried out during the winter, outside of the nesting season. Notwithstanding this, all our contractors are aware of the legislation protecting wildlife and careful checks are made both prior to and during felling operations to ensure that protected species are not harmed.

Ash Dieback in the Countryside Estate

Ash Dieback Disease is wide spread across the Council's Countryside Estate and has significantly increased the risk to public from tree failure. SCC has a legal obligation to safeguard the public visiting our sites and manage the risk resulting from Ash Dieback appropriately.

All areas of our Countryside Estate with significant numbers of Ash have been surveyed by qualified arboriculturists and recommended interventions have been made that take into account a range of issues, including the potential impacts on habitats and species. For all work:

- Appropriate ecological surveys to be undertaken to identify protected and vulnerable species and assess potential negative impacts from tree safety work. The Council is in the process of recruiting an additional member of staff to undertake ecological surveys and support our work programmes.
- There will be regular liaison with Natural England and the Forestry Commission on the tree safety work programme to gain any necessary consents required for particular sites and packages of work, but also to ensure any other issues that might not be apparent are picked up.
- A strong partnership approach will be taken with our contractors to establish the most sensitive way to undertake work

- There will be high level officer sign off before work begins.

Marisa Heath
Cabinet Member for Environment
25 October 2022

Question (3): Paul Kennedy

Further to the email from the Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety serving notice that Surrey County Council would be withdrawing from local community engagement through its Local and Joint Committees in Surrey boroughs and districts, please can you confirm:

- a) the identities and contact details of the new Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) who we have been informed are now active across the county and working closely with communities to co-ordinate Surrey County Council's work more coherently around local geographies and help communities set their own priorities;
- b) whether, and if so where, Surrey County Council will be maintaining a public register of the CLOs' activities as well as the exercise of county councillors' delegated decisions and annual funding allocations, so that these can be effectively scrutinised by the public and secure the Cabinet Member's hoped-for strengthening of Surrey County Council's relationship with its residents and partners?

Reply:

A Community Link Officer (CLO) has been aligned to each District and Borough to work with local communities. The CLOs will initially focus their time in the 21 key neighbourhoods identified by the Health and Wellbeing Board. CLOs will work closely with County Councillors, District and Borough Officers and wider partners to develop deeper conversations with our communities, to understand their priorities and to help them to shape their local areas. As part of this new approach to community engagement, District and Borough councillors are encouraged to work with their County Councillor. To further support this work, public facing webpages are being developed and will be launched shortly with all CLO contact details.

The council is committed to ensuring that decisions taken and allocations made are done transparently and publicly reported through appropriate and agreed channels. This includes our website. CLOs will continue to discuss with residents and partners how best to share information on engagement work happening locally.

Denise Turner-Stewart
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety
25 October 2022

CABINET- 25 OCTOBER 2022**CABINET RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES,
ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE****Recommendations:**

The Select Committee:

1. Agrees that private sector employers (large, medium and small) should take the lead in improving skills with important roles for public sector organisations (Universities, Schools, NHS, Surrey County Council, Districts and Boroughs etc.) but these need robust definition and clarity of their input.
2. Accepts the ambitions of the Plan and the eventual Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) but needs assurance that a robust performance measurement system will be put in place to monitor progress and to adjust the strategy if evidence so requires.
3. Appreciates the inevitably limited role that Surrey County Council will play in the plan but argues that its practical role as one of the key procurers and deliverers of services, as well as of strategic leadership be better defined.
4. Requests that the final version of this report to Cabinet on 25 October 2022 addresses the aforementioned points.

John O'Reilly

Chairman of the Communities, Environment & Highways Select Committee

Response:

1. It is right that employers are put at the heart of the skills system – ultimately it is the challenges they face with skills and recruitment that can undermine the economic growth we want to see in Surrey. However, as the Plan makes clear and as you have identified, it is also right that they must take greater responsibility for ownership of the skills activity that they want to see within the system to help drive both productivity and growth. The Plan now makes clear their responsibilities and where there are expectations of ownership from businesses to drive this forward. This will be further reinforced through the upcoming Surrey Skills Summit, a core aim of which is to create a sense of responsibility and accountability for activity amongst all partners in the room, including businesses of all sizes.
2. The Skills Plan builds in progress measures to ensure that we are capturing the impact we are having against each of the four objectives. These measures are a mixture of those we have direct control over (i.e. number of people supported through a specific skills intervention) and more contextual factors, such as long-term unemployment and economic inactivity rates. The latter are factors we can look to influence through the work we are doing but are also impacted by wider economic conditions.

The Plan is fully intended to be a living document and we expect that it will have to adapt to both business need and to economic conditions in the future. Whilst we will want to make progress on all the activity set out in the Plan, if the economic conditions require then we will re-prioritise activity to deliver against what will have the most impact for both businesses and our residents.

The Plan's progress will be reviewed at key points including on an annual basis and an update report will come back to the Committee each year.

3. Surrey County Council (SCC) has primarily developed this Plan in recognition of our role as a key influencer and enabler in Surrey's skills system. We are able to convene partners and offer a 'One Surrey' voice, working with our skills providers, businesses, Surrey's 11 districts and boroughs, anchor institutions and all our people to help drive change across our skills system. It is this responsibility for strategic system leadership which is at the heart of the County's role in the Surrey Skills Plan.

However, we recognise that SCC is also a significant employer, spender and service provider in the regional economy, and as such plays a key direct role in creating opportunities for residents. Examples include the work we are doing to utilise our apprenticeship levy through direct employment or transfers to local businesses, and through our approach to social value through procurement which supports employment and skills outcomes. We recognise the size and scale of our organisation is a positive and we must harness this to help create high quality opportunities for our residents. In light of this, and the feedback from the Committee, we have strengthened this role for SCC within the Plan itself and have committed to developing our own internal action plan to maximise our role within the County.

4. The report for Cabinet has taken all of this feedback into account and been amended accordingly.

Matt Furniss
Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth
25 October 2022

CABINET- 25 OCTOBER 2022**CABINET RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS****Recommendations:**

The Select Committee:

1. Welcomes the substantive progress already achieved, particularly at Surrey County Council level, made over the last 12 months to meet our net zero carbon target by 2030. It commends the work of officers and the active involvement of the Greener Futures Member Reference Group.
2. Supports the proposed amendments to the Delivery Plan contained in Paragraph 16. The intention to work even closer with Surrey's Districts and Broughs is applauded.
3. Is concerned that the new government's commitment (both in policy and funding) to climate objectives may be waning (energy crisis, de-regulation to promote growth, and possible public spending reductions) may seriously impede Surrey as a whole from achieving net zero by 2050, despite vigorous lobbying by the Council and others. The Strategy may have to be adapted should these fears be realised.
4. Recognises that significant behavioural change by residents on vehicle usage, low carbon measures and active/sustainable travel has yet to take place and that while the Council itself inevitably can only play a limited role, it should intensify its efforts in this regard.
5. Reiterates its support for Carbon budget to be developed alongside the Council's financial budget.
6. Appreciates that RAG status to measure the success of a project within the constraints applied to that project is helpful for internal management purposes. However, asks that in case of Climate Change the RAG status against the 2025, 2030 and 2050 targets be included in all future reporting as these would be more useful for external communication and understanding.

John O'Reilly

Chairman of the Communities, Environment & Highways Select Committee

Response:

We welcome the recommendations from Select Committee, and we accept recommendations 1 to 5. With regards to recommendation 6, changes have been made to the Climate Change Delivery Plan Assessment to more clearly show the relationship between Local Authority actions and how these impact upon meeting the net-zero targets. In future assessments of the Climate Change Delivery Plan we will ensure that it is clearer that when we are reporting a positive RAG status for a scheme or action that is delivered by the Council that this does not always reflect a positive outcome overall. Where this type of situation occurs we will also try to identify opportunities to address gaps in emission reductions.

Marisa Heath

Cabinet Member for Environment

25 October 2022

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