


Notice of Meeting

Cabinet- Supplementary Agenda



<u>Date and Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Web:</u>
Tuesday, 25 February 2025 2.00 pm	Council Chamber, Surrey County Council, Woodhatch Place, 11 Cockshot Hill, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 8EF	Huma Younis or Sarah Quinn huma.younis@surreycc.gov.uk or sarah.quinn@surreycc.gov.uk	Council and democracy Surreycc.gov.uk  @SCCdemocracy

Committee:

Natalie Bramhall, Clare Curran, Kevin Deanus, Matt Furniss, Marisa Heath, David Lewis, Sinead Mooney, Mark Nuti, Tim Oliver and Denise Turner-Stewart
Maureen Attewell, Steve Bax, Paul Deach and Jonathan Hulley

4 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

a MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

(Pages
1 - 6)

There are eight Member questions. A response from Cabinet is attached.

b PUBLIC QUESTIONS

(Pages
7 - 8)

There is one public question. A response from Cabinet is attached.

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

(Pages
9 - 12)

The following reports have been received:

- A. Alternative Provision Report (Children, Families, Lifelong Learning And Culture Select Committee). A response from the Cabinet is included.
- B. Customer Transformation Programme Update (Resources and Performance Select Committee). A response from the Cabinet is included.
- C. Unit4/MySurrey Stabilisation Board Report (Resources and Performance Select Committee). A response from the Cabinet is included.

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Thank you for your co-operation.

QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

Cabinet and most committees will consider questions by elected Surrey County Council Members and questions and petitions from members of the public who are electors in the Surrey County Council area.

Please note the following regarding questions from the public:

1. Members of the public can submit one written question to a meeting by the deadline stated in the agenda. Questions should relate to general policy and not to detail. Questions are asked and answered in public and 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 an 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.

CABINET – 25 FEBRUARY 2025**PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Members' Questions:****Question (1) Catherine Powell**

Please can the Cabinet advise if alternatives were considered for the MFR proposed at Trumps Farm, Chertsey given that this isn't a particularly central location in Surrey? Can the Cabinet Member also advise:

- a. If waste generation locations, transportation distances from the Districts and Borough and Waste Transfer Station locations were considered in selecting Trumps Farm for the MFR & whether they can share the analysis.
- b. If Local Government Reorganisation has been considered in determining this location and if there is a risk that additional facilities may be required.

Reply:

- a. An alternative site assessment was undertaken at the early stages of the planning process. This was in addition to two site searches previously conducted in 2008 and 2020 for the Waste Local Plan.

The criteria for the assessment was as follows:

- MRF's need to be positioned to minimise distance from source of waste arisings therefore reducing transport impacts.
- Location of a MRF in the north-west Surrey, closest to most waste arisings would maximise the potential for direct deliveries by district and borough collection vehicles and reduce the need for transfer and bulking material using articulated vehicles.
- Maximising direct deliveries would allow space to be freed up in existing transfer stations for commercial waste.
- Availability of a site - likelihood that SCC could acquire the site for development.
- Suitability – a site of sufficient size and located within the NW Surrey search area.
- Deliverability – likelihood of securing planning permission for a MRF by means of its size, scale and layout.

Consequently, Trumps Farm was identified as the most suitable and deliverable site for an MRF. An Alternative Site Assessment Report is included within Annex 1: Surrey MRF Outline Business Case.

- b. Local Government Reform has been considered in relation to the Outline Business Case presented here. The size of the proposed facility is appropriate to provide capacity for Surrey's dry recycling now and into the future and it is very unlikely that there would be a business case to develop

any further MRF capacity beyond what is proposed at Trumps Farm and the existing facility at Leatherhead.

In the event that Surrey was split into a number of unitary authorities, that were responsible for waste disposal, the continued use of strategic waste management facilities such as the MRF and anaerobic digestion plant would be managed through inter authority agreements.

Natalie Bramhall
Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure
21 February 2025

Question (2) Catherine Baart

The land covered by the proposed Land Management policy includes Surrey's highway verges. How does the current increased verge cutting programme, and suspension of new Blue Heart verge applications until February 2026, align with Policy 1 of the proposed Land Management policy ("Protecting Nature: we will enhance biodiversity by protecting natural habitats and creating connections between them")?

Reply:

The number of urban grass cuts for this year has been set at six, maintaining the same frequency as in 2024. As you may be aware, many of our residents appreciate well-maintained verges, which enhance the overall appearance of the streetscape. However, the County Council is also dedicated to recognising the environmental value that highway verges can offer, particularly in terms of biodiversity. For this reason, the review of the Blue Heart scheme is approaching completion.

All existing Blue Heart verges will remain in place where they are supported; there are no plans to remove any previously agreed sites. The updated approach will be finalised in the spring, with the goal of confirming it long before February 2026. This will allow us to further enhance biodiversity by establishing a clear policy for site selection, which we believe will make a significant impact. In parallel with the Blue Heart scheme, we are examining ways to improve the management of conservation verges within the highway network, ensuring they play a more active role in supporting biodiversity.

Marisa Heath
Cabinet Member for Environment
21 February 2025

Question (3) Catherine Baart

Currently the majority of Surrey farms owned by the county council produce milk or meat. In the vision for Land Management by 2050, do you envisage the Council supporting its tenant farmers to move away from meat and milk production and into growing vegetables, legumes and fruit (soil type permitting?) to align better with the 10 Policies?

Reply:

The Council is actively working with its tenant farmers to support their transition to a new way of farming in order to benefit from the many different new approaches to land management and food production. It recently held its third farming network event with tenant farmers to explore subjects such as the adoption of regenerative farming techniques, applying for Environmental Land Management Grants, water pollution and Biodiversity Net Gain.

As a landlord, the Council remains open to requests for any changes in business model from tenants that are based on viable business plans and appropriate investment funding. SCC currently does not have a policy to move away from meat and milk production.

Marisa Heath
Cabinet Member for Environment
21 February 2025

Question (4) Catherine Baart

With the advent of Procurement Act 2023 there is a requirement to move from “Most Economically Advantageous Tender” to “Most Advantageous Tender”. How does this change from MEAT to MAT impact the council’s practical implementation of “Best Value” (Local Government Act 1999)?

Reply:

Since 2004 the methodology associated with evaluating tenders in public procurement in the UK has been Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT). The introduction of the Procurement Act (2023) replaces this with Most Advantageous Tender (MAT). Both methodologies use a combination of factors (award criteria) to evaluate bids submitted in a competitive procurement procedure. Most commonly this will be price and the quality of the goods, services or works being procured and is expected to remain so under MAT.

Many procurement professionals do not see a distinct difference in what was allowed by MEAT and what is being proposed by MAT. Since 2014/15 (the start of the previous regulatory public procurement regime) it has been more common to see an extension of these criteria in MEAT to include things such as social value and environmental sustainability. However, key here is that the change to MAT is accompanied by powerful commentary aimed at changing culture and mindset in public procurement that the use of award criteria that achieve wider policy and mission-led public service goals can and should be used.

The Council’s statutory duty of delivering “Best Value” can be defined further in that a Council must demonstrate that it is making arrangements that are economic, efficient and effective with a regard to securing continuous improvement – the core aim of the Best Value duty. Criteria used to evaluate tenders, whether that be using

the MEAT or MAT methodology will always contain a level of regard to these in a way that is relevant and proportionate to the contract and the aims of objectives of the Contracting Authority (i.e. the Council). The change from MEAT to MAT should not therefore impact the council's ability to deliver Best Value as per the Local Government Act, but it does encourage budget holders, stakeholders and decision makers to consider what value should mean against a broader set of potential outcomes, for example whole-life costs and environmental externalities that might have otherwise have longer-term cost implications that were not considered against the costs suppliers are proposing through the tendering process.

The changes in the Procurement Act should also be taken more broadly when considering the impact on Best Value, for example greater focus on performance management of suppliers and transparency thereof is also a potentially powerful tool for demonstrating longer term Best Value and continuous improvement.

David Lewis
Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
21 February 2025

Questions (5,6,7,8) Steven McCormick

With regard to Item 10, A Land Management Framework and Policy for Surrey County Council Owned Land:

- 1 Can consideration be given in this item and policy specifically to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Land Banking options please? There are discussions in progress with the cabinet member and I would like to ask that the proposed policy be updated to include a section on BNG, Land Banking in relation to SCC property please.
- 2 Under community engagement can I ask a specific mention is included that the related/impacted Divisional member is folded into discussions on land that may be in their division being considered under this proposed policy?
- 3 Do we know what the scope of buildings owned by SCC that may fall into the land management policy area are please?
- 4 Is there any way we can include a reference or consideration to Community Asset Transfer and Best Value considerations in this policy to facilitate / support this possible route?

Reply:

- 1 The Land Management Framework and Policy outlines how SCC will look at its land to provide a range of outcomes, including BNG. For example, the SCC Land and Property and Natural Capital teams are already working closely together to assess the potential for BNG on SCC land to use for its own capital projects.

- 2 Divisional Members will be contacted at the appropriate time to be briefed on proposals for the use of land within their Division. This will be made clearer in the policy.
- 3 The Land Use Framework and Policy only covers land based assets, not buildings.
- 4 The Land Use Framework and Policy covers the use of SCCs land in relation to commercial and operational uses, including items such as BNG. Community Asset Transfer does not fall within the remit of this policy and would need to be covered separately in a specific policy that would cover the transfer of land and buildings.

Marisa Heath
Cabinet Member for Environment
21 February 2025

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CABINET – 25 FEBRUARY 2025**PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Public Questions:****Question (1): Gareth Leighton**

A recent Coroner's report stated that: "A failure by Surrey County Council ... to ensure that [a Young Person]'s Education, Health and Care Plan contained sufficient and updated information about [risks of harm], such as to enable the [education establishment] ... to understand and meet [their] consequential needs and manage the consequential risk." Could the Cabinet describe what process changes and monitoring have been implemented by the office of the Chief Executive to ensure that identified risks of harm, the consequential needs, risks and funding required to mitigate against these risks and needs are fully and accurately documented in all SCC EHCPs to prevent further tragic cases and ensure no other Surrey young person with an EHCP becomes the subject of a Coroner's report?

Reply:

Surrey County Council has been fully committed to take action to ensure that tragic cases such as the case referred to in this question are prevented as far as possible. An internal review of this case has confirmed that the young person's Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) did refer to historic suicide ideation history, and that education needs, outcomes and provision were appropriate for the majority of time that the plan was in place. Nevertheless, the EHCP needed to strengthen the self-harm and suicide ideation references as these concerns became more prevalent. The EHCP was not updated to include current levels of concern as the relevant information was not shared between health and education at that point.

Actions that have been put in place since this tragic death which include all guidance to the SEND service to ensure that children who are at risk of self-harm have this concern clearly recognised, and that provision stipulates the need for a risk assessment and safety plan. Training has been provided to SEND staff regarding how to escalate safeguarding concerns.

Health colleagues attend multi-agency moderation meetings to ensure that the most up to date health information is known to the SEND service and is accurately reflected in an EHCP. There is a single central IT system which enables education to be aware of social care involvement where there are safeguarding risks. There is a Designated Social Care Officer who provides a link between the SEND service and Social Care and leads a team who assess the care needs of children so that safeguarding work can be undertaken if required for children not otherwise open to Social Care.

Across the county council there is greater awareness about links between ASD and suicide ideation through mandatory training for all staff. We are determined to do all that we can to avert such tragic deaths, however, sadly despite these measures it may not always be possible to prevent a young person's death by suicide.

Clare Curran**Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning****25 February 2025**

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CABINET- 25 FEBRUARY 2025**CABINET RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE**

Item under consideration: Customer Transformation Programme Update

Recommendations:

- The select committee welcomes work to drive efficiencies at the council so as to improve contacts with our residents and preserve financial sustainability to protect services, but voices caution about the challenges to delivering robust benefits for Surrey residents, and has concerns about the lack of clear project end targets entailed by the Dynamic Customer Operating Model.
- The select committee also voices caution about the potential impacts of engaging in expensive and complex programmes in the face of possible Local Government Reform (LGR) and its as yet unknown effects on the council, though notes that Cabinet already plans undertake complex planning for the possible impacts of LGR.
- The select committee RECOMMENDS that Cabinet revisit the funding Customer Transformation Programme in light of the uncertainties of Local Government Reform to ensure that any future spending and investment continues to benefit Surrey residents and/or any new future Authorities, and that any new or revised proposal comes before this select committee for scrutiny before a Cabinet decision is made.

Cabinet Response:

Cabinet is grateful to the Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Resources and Performance Select Committee for their recognition of the work to drive efficiencies, enabling improved contact with customers and financial sustainability. Cabinet is particularly grateful for the Committee's ongoing scrutiny input into the programme, and recognition of the challenges in delivering robust benefits, including in the context of Local Government Reform.

Cabinet accepts the recommendations made by the Committee, which the Committee has noted are in the context of Cabinet's complex planning for the possible impacts of Local Government Reform.

Work is underway by officers to evaluate the work contained in the original plan for Customer Transformation in the current context, and to feed this into Cabinet's consideration of future spending and investment in preparation for Local Government Reform.

Denise Turner-Stewart
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities
18 February 2025

CABINET- 25 FEBRUARY 2025

CABINET RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE

Item under consideration: Unit4/MySurrey Stabilisation Board Report

Recommendations:

- The select committee welcomes the continued prioritisation of work underway to keep resolving issues with Unit4 through contract negotiations and changes to governance and acknowledges the lessons learned, but remains concerned about the number and nature of outstanding issues, the cost and impacts to the council and its staff, and the nature of the original specification used when procuring the system.
- The select committee RECOMMENDS that officers update the select committee approximately 3 months from now (or at the most appropriate time, such as at the end of the Stabilisation phase) on the progress in resolving the remaining issues with Unit4, the performance and capacity of the system, and the effectiveness of the new governance arrangements.
- The select committee RECOMMENDS that Cabinet consider undertaking a review to understand and evaluate the likely impacts of any Local Government Reform (LGR) on the use of the Unit4 system to deliver the core financial functions of any future Authorities, as part of its planned wider work on how IT infrastructure would change due to LGR, and that the results of any review are shared with this select committee.

Cabinet Response:

Cabinet is grateful to the Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Resources and Performance Select Committee for their recognition of the work of the Stabilisation Board on the Unit 4 system, supporting processes, and the work undertaken to address the audit actions. Cabinet is also grateful to the Committee for their ongoing scrutiny of this work and recognition of the challenges in stabilising the platform, working with the supplier in the resolution of outstanding issues in an effort to deliver the benefits originally envisaged when the system was procured.

Cabinet accepts the recommendations made by the Committee, particularly in light of the possible impacts of Local Government Reform and welcomes the opportunity for an additional review within the next 3 months for scrutiny on system performance, stability and capacity, and the revised governance arrangements.

Cabinet is also grateful to the Audit and Governance committee for their review and scrutiny of the work and suggests that in future, updates on this topic are offered once to avoid duplication.

David Lewis
Cabinet Member for Resources
20 February 2025

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