

## Notice of Meeting

# Environment & Transport Select Committee



**Date & time**  
**Thursday, 10**  
**January 2013**  
**at 10.00 am**

**Place**  
Ashcombe Suite,  
County Hall,  
Kingston upon  
Thames, Surrey  
KT1 2DN

**Contact**  
Tom Pooley or Andrew Spragg  
Room 122, County Hall  
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**Chief Executive**  
David McNulty

**If you would like a copy of this agenda or the attached papers in another format, eg large print or braille, or another language please either call 020 8541 9068, write to Democratic Services, Room 122, County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN, Minicom 020 8541 8914, fax 020 8541 9009, or email [thomas.pooley@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:thomas.pooley@surreycc.gov.uk) or [andrew.spragg@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.spragg@surreycc.gov.uk).**

**This meeting will be held in public. If you would like to attend and you have any special requirements, please contact Tom Pooley or Andrew Spragg on 020 8541 9122 or 020 8213 2673.**

### **Members**

Mr Steve Renshaw (Chairman), Mr Mark Brett-Warburton (Vice-Chairman), Mr Victor Agarwal, Mr Mike Bennison, Mr Stephen Cooksey, Mr Chris Frost, Mrs Pat Frost, Simon Gimson, Mr David Goodwin, Mr Geoff Marlow, Mr Chris Norman, Mr Tom Phelps-Penry, Mr Michael Sydney and Mr Alan Young

### **Ex Officio Members:**

Mrs Lavinia Sealy (Chairman of the County Council) and Mr David Munro (Vice Chairman of the County Council)

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Select Committee is responsible for the following areas:

#### **Environment**

- Strategic Planning
- Countryside
- Waste
- Economic Development & the Rural Economy
- Housing
- Minerals
- Flood Prevention

#### **Transport**

- Transport Service Infrastructure
- Aviation
- Highway Maintenance
- Community Transport
- Local Transport Plan
- Road Safety
- Concessionary Travel

## **PART 1** **IN PUBLIC**

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

### **2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 8 NOVEMBER 2012 & 10 DECEMBER 2012**

(Pages 1  
- 16)

To agree the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

### **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests from Members in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting.

#### **Notes:**

- In line with the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, declarations may relate to the interest of the member, or the member's spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom the member is living as husband or wife, or a person with whom the member is living as if they were civil partners and the member is aware they have the interest.
- Members need only disclose interests not currently listed on the Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
- Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of any interests disclosed at the meeting so they may be added to the Register.
- Members are reminded that they must not participate in any item where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

### **4 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

To receive any questions or petitions.

#### **Notes:**

1. The deadline for Member's questions is 12.00pm four working days before the meeting (Friday 4 January 2013).
2. The deadline for public questions is seven days before the meeting (Thursday 3 January 2013).
3. The deadline for petitions is 14 days before the meeting (Thursday 27 December 2012)

### **5 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE**

There are no responses to report.

### **6 RECOMMENDATION TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

(Pages  
17 - 26)

The Committee is asked to monitor progress on the implementation of recommendations from previous meetings, and to review its Forward Work Programme.

### **7 SURREY HIGHWAYS - NEW CARRIAGEWAY INVESTMENT PLAN**

(Pages  
27 - 44)

**Purpose of report:** Policy Development and Review

To provide Committee Members advance notice of the recommendations to adopt Five Year Investment Plan for carriageways from April 2013, and provide detail on reasons behind the recommendations and how the programme will be delivered in practice.

- 8 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND COORDINATION OF THE WORK OF UTILITIES COMPANIES TASK GROUP** (Pages 45 - 82)

**Purpose of report:** Policy Development and Review

This report will set out the recommendations of the Utilities Task Group. This Task Group was set up in order to consider how Surrey County Council can work better with utilities companies in order to improve the coordination of streetworks and the quality of repair works, and thereby minimise the resultant disruption and problems.

- 8a SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PERMIT SCHEME** (Pages 83 - 96)

To consider whether Surrey County Council should proceed with a permit scheme in collaboration with East Sussex County Council, prior to submission of the proposed scheme to the Department for Transport for approval.

- 9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held at 10am on 6 March 2013.

**David McNulty  
Chief Executive**

Published: Friday, 21 December 2012

**MOBILE TECHNOLOGY – ACCEPTABLE USE**

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**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 8 November 2012 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Monday, 10 December 2012.

**Elected Members:**

- \* Mr Steve Renshaw (Chairman)
- \* Mr Mark Brett-Warburton (Vice-Chairman)
- \* Mr Victor Agarwal
- \* Mr Mike Bennison
- \* Mr Stephen Cooksey
- \* Mr Chris Frost
- \* Mrs Pat Frost
- \* Simon Gimson
- \* Mr David Goodwin
- A Mrs Frances King
- \* Mr Geoff Marlow
- \* Mr Chris Norman
- \* Mr Tom Phelps-Penry
- A Mr Michael Sydney
- \* Mr Alan Young

**Ex officio Members:**

Mrs Lavinia Sealy, Chairman of the County Council  
Mr David Munro, Vice Chairman of the County Council

**In attendance**

John Furey, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

**61/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies for absence were received from Frances King and Michael Sydney.

**62/12 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 19 SEPTEMBER 2012 [Item 2]**

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

**63/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

There were no declarations of interests.

**64/12 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]**

There were no questions or petitions to report.

**65/12 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]**

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. There were two responses to report, the response to the Committee's recommendations for the Winter Service Development for 2012/13, and the response to the Committee's recommendations for the Operation of Civil Parking Enforcement in Surrey.
2. It was queried by Committee whether any efforts were to be made to reclaim money previously accrued by on-street parking enforcement. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the County Council would not be seeking to do this.

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

None.

**66/12 RECOMMENDATION TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 6]**

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Forward Work Programme had been updated to include two new items for March, an item on Surrey Flood Strategy and an item on the SKANSKA Street Lighting Contract.
2. The Committee noted that a representative from May Gurney would be attending in January 2012 as part of the 6 Month Update on the Highways Maintenance Five Year Programme.
3. The Committee noted the progress of the Utilities Task Group, which was beginning to prepare recommendations for consideration. SCC's proposed Permit Scheme would also be considered by the Utilities Task Group.
4. The Committee were informed that the Highways Maintenance Prioritisation Task Group would meet in December 2012 before concluding their work and presenting it to Select Committee.

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

None.

**67/12 HIGHWAYS TRANSFORMATION BRIEFING [Item 7]**

**Witnesses:** Jason Russell (Assistant Director, Highways)  
Mark Borland (Projects and Contracts Group Manager, Highways)  
Jonathan White (May Gurney)

John Furey (Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport)

### **Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. Jason Russell introduced the report, which provided an update on the Surrey Highways Transformation Project.
2. The key proposals for the Project would be presented to Cabinet in February 2013 with implementation in April 2013. The proposals were to be presented to Cabinet in three papers, covering the May Gurney contract, the proposed permit scheme and a third paper addressing the future of the Materials Laboratory at Merrow.
3. The Officer stated that the May Gurney paper would propose changes to inspection regimes and review the priority network. The Committee raised concerns about the potential impact of these changes. It was noted however that the main safety concerns on the network had been addressed and this was reflected by the fact that the number of insurance claims had decreased.
4. The Officer outlined the intended development of a five year Maintenance Programme. This would make Surrey the first local authority to put such a programme into effect. It would grant greater clarity on investment and potentially create a minimum saving of 15% in the overall cost of highway Maintenance. The recommendation to Cabinet by officers would be that the capital created as result of this saving should be reinvested in highway repair. Officers stated that the development of a five year plan would enable a notice period of three months for non-emergency work.
5. The Committee were informed that there would be work undertaken to measure investments against outcomes. The criterion for measuring this were still in the process of being defined. It was also reported that a number of Key Performance Indicators were in the process of being developed.
6. The Committee were informed that 25 parish councils had expressed an interest in managing their highways. Proposals were being drawn up, and it was felt by officers that the benefit of these changes would ensure that highways management was more responsive to detail on a local level.
7. The Committee asked for further clarification with regards to the comments about an increase in customer satisfaction contained within the report, and asked what measures were being put in place to ensure this trend continued. Officers responded that it was problematic trying to identify the key drivers behind customer satisfaction, as trends demonstrated a disjunction between investment and satisfaction. Highways were consulting with peers in the SE7 Group in order to develop strategies to improve customer satisfaction.
8. Members raised a question around the need for more flexible working in order to minimise the economic impact of roadworks. Officers responded that efforts were made to target work around off-peak hours in order to minimise disruption, however it was necessary to offset this against the rises in cost as result of imposing less flexible working patterns.

9. Members raised concerns about the current levels of staffing, and how the Transformation Project would feed into addressing these. The officers responded that the issues around workload management for staff were being addressed through a process of mapping which skills were required. Further to this, work was in place to address issues created by the current IT systems. The emphasis was that the problems with workload were connected with process rather than levels of staffing.
10. Members questioned whether there was a strategy in place to shorten lead-in times for roadworks. Officers outlined that shorter lead-in times had a significant impact in incurring costs. It was expressed that the primary focus was on providing works at a lower cost. The Committee expressed that Members should be Committee that members should be advising officers as to the public's expectation in terms of deciding the appropriate balance between response times, within the budget framework. It was noted that the lead time and cost implications were varied and it was agreed that this would be covered in the January 2013 report.
11. The Committee discussed communications with the public with regards to roadworks. It was suggested that contractors should take responsibility for informing residents of roadworks, particularly when works were being carried out within a short period of one another.
12. The Committee discussed how Highways intend to manage public expectations around Highways schemes. There was a discussion around the Highways Roadshows that had been conducted in October 2012. The Committee felt that the Roadshows risked raising public expectations too high and could have benefited from Member input prior to public engagement. It was felt that there would need to be a stronger commitment around working together with Members to provide an integrated and holistic approach to directing and communicating the work of the Highways Transformation Project. Officers responded that they would consult fully with Members before any future public engagement activities.
13. The Committee queried how Highways would manage a five year plan with Government setting budgets on an annual basis. Officers stated that the changes within budgets were historically minimal while also acknowledging that a five year plan would allow a greater management of risk.
14. The Committee raised the question of how residents and Local Committees would communicate with the 5 year plan. The suggestion was made that a clear communications strategy would be developed in conjunction with Local Committees. The Committee expressed the view that there was a clear need to involve both Local Committee members and Community Highways Officers.
15. There was a discussion around the identification of key priorities in relation to project outcomes. It was noted that there will be work in place to develop and define these.



16. The Committee were informed of the Laboratory & Materials Review. A question was raised as to the benefits of keeping a materials laboratory. The Assistant Director explained that private professional laboratories focused more on development of the highway network rather than on a local level, and often tended to be risk adverse. It was also expressed that within such a context, external partners found trading partnerships with the public sector highly desirable.
17. There was a discussion around the relationship between the Highways Transformation Project and the Localism agenda. The Assistant Director explained that the County Council would act as the strategic Highways authority; however opportunities were being developed for both Borough and District Councils and Parish and Town Councils to develop collaborative working. It was raised that there would need to be work done to ensure that there was clarity about the responsibilities of each of the three tiers.

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

None.

**Recommendations:**

None.

**Select Committee next steps:**

The Select Committee will scrutinise the Highways Transformation Project in January 2013 covering the concerns raised by the Committee, in advance of a formal report being submitted to Cabinet in February 2013.

**68/12 FLOOD MANAGEMENT - CONSULTATION RESPONSE [Item 8]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:** Deborah Fox (Strategy and Commissioning Team Manager)  
Mark Howarth (Flood & Water Strategy Manager)  
Jason Russell (Assistant Director, Highways)

John Furey (Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment)

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Strategy and Commissioning Team Manager outlined the scope of the public and Member consultation in relation to Draft Surrey Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The Committee praised the breadth and scope of the consultation.
2. There was a discussion around the new responsibilities Surrey County Council would be taking on in relation to flood risk management in its capacity of lead local flood authority. It was noted that Surrey would be one of the first Local Authorities to publish a draft Flood Risk Management Strategy.

3. There were questions raised regarding the advice provided by the Environment Agency in the planning process. It was expressed that this often proved inconsistent. This created an extra difficulty as planning applications could not be refused as a flood risk if the Environment Agency has not raised any objections. The Committee also raised concerns that there was no change to insurance risk after flood management developments.
4. The Strategy and Commissioning Team Manager briefly outlined the development of a drainage approving body and the intention to look at how this would be implemented. Proposals for this would be developed for March.

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

None.

**Recommendations:**

- a) That the Select Committee support the publication of the draft Surrey Flood Risk Management Strategy.
- b) That officers proactively develop a draft policy whereby Districts and Boroughs are required to receive advice from the County in its capacity as Lead Local Flood Authority regarding planning and developments in flood risk areas.

**Select Committee next steps:**

The Select Committee will consider the Surrey Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and proposals for a drainage approving body at its meeting in March 2013.

**69/12 TREE MAINTENANCE [Item 9]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:**

Lucy Monie (Operations Group Manager)  
Jason Russell (Assistant Director, Highways)

John Furey (Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment)

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Operations Group Manager updated the Select Committee following the Committee's previous recommendations in relation to Tree Maintenance.
2. There had been little take-up from District & Borough Councils with regards to responsibility for tree maintenance. It was questioned whether District & Boroughs were able to request a tree survey from Surrey County Council if needed. Although the Local Authority currently provided a survey, this is not a condition survey but still satisfies the requirements of the Well Maintained Highways code of

practice. It was stated there would be a difficulty around resourcing any changes to this process without clear evidence of the cost benefits.

3. The view was expressed that measures of success from Epsom and Ewell and Woking could be used to determine the possibility of devolving responsibility for tree maintenance to other Boroughs and Districts. It was noted however that Epsom and Ewell currently paid comparatively more money on insurance than the County.
4. It was noted that the current emphasis on policy was around risk management, with identified pollarding programmes and general maintenance on a limited basis. Officers acknowledged that there was currently a large gap with regards to the level of service achieved by the management of risk and carrying out general maintenance across the network.
5. The Committee asked what work was being undertaken to address the significant tree maintenance backlog that had been reported by local officers. The Operations Group Manager responded that the current contractor was working to respond primarily to those with the greatest risk, with the backlog being addressed gradually when the resources were available. The Committee asked as to the process whereby Members would be able to highlight local issues. Any request would need to be directed to the Community Highways Officer or send the request to the Councillor's inbox.
6. The Committee discussed the possibility of identifying approved external contractors to undertake bespoke work. There was a further discussion of identifying suitable guidelines for this work to be undertaken. The Operations Group Manager identified that local teams funded vegetation gangs and would investigate the possibility of this being expanded to include tree maintenance.

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

None.

**Recommendations:**

- a) To more proactively engage on the potential for devolvement of tree maintenance, within contractual constraints, identifying opportunities to increase levels of interest across the Districts and Boroughs and/or other potential interested parties including Local Committees.
- b) To identify longer term actions/plans to achieve potential devolvement including enhancing the existing survey on an area by area basis or by amending current maintenance regime where feasible.

**Select Committee next steps:**

That a further report on tree maintenance, to include information on further work towards devolvement and the current backlog of work be considered by the Committee at its meeting in March 2013.

## **70/12 REVIEW OF THE ENGLISH NATIONAL CONCESSIONARY SCHEME [Item 10]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:** Paul Millin ( Travel and Transport Group Manager)

John Furey (Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment)

### **Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Travel and Transport Group Manager outlined the current arrangements for the administration of the English Concessionary Travel Scheme. It was requested that Committee noted that the Department of Transport had released a new cost calculator. This was going to have an estimated impact of £280,000 increase in spend for 2013/14. The Travel and Transport Group Manager also asked the Committee to note that the estimated cost of the enhanced scheme offered by Surrey was £150,000 and not £250,000 as stated in the report.
2. The Committee queried the split in cost for the enhanced scheme. The Travel and Transport Group Manager reported that the split was one third going towards companion passes, with the remaining two thirds going towards providing disabled passengers with transport before 9.30am.
3. It was suggested that Surrey could consider a separate scheme whereby a 'hospital pass' was issued to residents who needed to attend medical appointments prior to 9.30am, should the start time of concessionary fare operation be moved to a later part of the day. Officers responded that this would be unworkable, and that need to attend medical appointments would have to be taken into account as part of the overall concessionary fare scheme.
4. The Committee asked what expenditure went towards publicity to promote the scheme. The cost for this promotion had been produced in partnership with the Boroughs & Districts as part of the transition in responsibility.
5. The Committee expressed that there was a need to consider a change in the current criteria, as there was some inconsistency between Borough & Districts in how the scheme was administered. The Committee identified that it would like to see an increased emphasis on the burden of proof in time for the renewal of the scheme in 2014/15.

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

None.

**Recommendations:**

- a) To consider the 2013/14 scheme offer to Surrey residents and pass the views of the Select Committee to Cabinet at its meeting to be held on 27 November 2012.
- b) To review Surrey's offer for the 2014/15 ENCTS enhanced scheme provision including the criteria and documentation required for a Disabled Persons and Companion Pass, and time restrictions. A report will be presented to Cabinet during summer 2013.

**Select Committee next steps:**

The Committee will consider a report on the 2014/15 English National Concessionary Scheme in summer 2013.

**71/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 11]**

The next meeting of the Committee will be on 10 January 2012.

Meeting ended at: 1.00 pm

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**Chairman**

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**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 1.30 pm on 10 December 2012 at Committee Room C, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 10 January 2013.

**Elected Members:**

\* Mr Steve Renshaw (Chairman)  
\* Mr Mark Brett-Warburton (Vice-Chairman)  
A Mr Victor Agarwal  
A Mr Mike Bennison  
\* Mr Stephen Cooksey  
A Mr Chris Frost  
\* Mrs Pat Frost  
\* Simon Gimson  
A Mr David Goodwin  
A Mrs Frances King  
\* Mr Geoff Marlow  
\* Mr Chris Norman  
\* Mr Tom Phelps-Penry  
\* Mr Michael Sydney  
\* Mr Alan Young  
\* Mr Steve Cosser

**Ex officio Members:**

Mrs Lavinia Sealy, Chairman of the County Council  
Mr David Munro, Vice Chairman of the County Council

**In attendance**

John Furey, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

**72/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies were been received from Mike Bennison, Victor Agarwal, David Goodwin and Chris Frost. Steve Cosser acted as substitute for Mike Bennison.

**73/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 2]**

There were no declarations of interests.

**74/12 CALL IN: CABINET MEMBER DECISION OF 21 NOVEMBER 2012 [Item 3]**

**Witnesses:**

Frank Apicella, Surrey Highways  
John Butcher, County Councillor  
David Hollingsworth, Neighbourhood Inspector, Elmbridge

### **Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman of the Environment & Transport Select Committee introduced the witnesses and explained how the call-in meeting would be structured. Each witness would be provided with five minutes to provide a statement. The Members who called in the decision would have the opportunity to speak for five minutes between them, and Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment would also have an opportunity to speak for five minutes. The Committee would be able to ask questions after each speaker.
2. The Chairman of the Environment & Transport Select Committee read the following statement:

“As you are all aware, we are here today to consider a call-in of the following Cabinet Member decision:

‘That the Elmbridge Local Committee request for a reduction of the current speed limit on the A245 Stoke Road, Stoke D’Abernon, from its existing 40 mph, to 30 mph, between the existing 30 mph limit near Leigh Hill Road to a suitable point just east of the Chelsea Football Club training ground, not be endorsed.’

I would like to make clear from the outset that this call-in will not be considering the actual decision-making process and I will now set out the reasons for this.

It has been brought to my attention that concerns have been raised as to whether the Cabinet Member has the power to refuse to agree a change in a speed limit that has been requested by a Local Committee. I have been advised by Legal and Democratic Services that this is very much the case.

Under the Scheme of Delegation, the Surrey County Council Constitution grants Local Committees the delegated power to set speed limits on roads in their area. However, the Scheme of Delegation also states quite clearly that the Cabinet Member has the power to determine whether to endorse a speed limit proposed by a Local Committee that is in disagreement with the advice of police and local officers. If the speed limit in such a situation is not endorsed by the Cabinet Member, the speed limit cannot be implemented. The requirement of the Cabinet Member’s endorsement for such a proposal is also detailed in the Council’s Speed Limit Policy.

This was the case with Stoke Road. Elmbridge Local Committee decided that the speed limit should be reduced from 40 mph to 30 mph. However, this is in disagreement with both police and local officers who are of the view that the speed limit should remain at 40 mph. Therefore, the Cabinet Member was required to consider endorsement of the proposed reduced speed limit.

On the 21 November the Cabinet Member decided not to endorse the decision of the Elmbridge Local Committee and it was within his power to do so. The Cabinet Member could have gone against the advice of the police and local officers should he wished, though this would have been in contrast to previous practice that the final endorsement of a speed limit be in agreement with the view of the police and local officers.



On this basis, the process behind the Cabinet Member's decision was sound and will not form part of today's discussion.

The Committee is instead asked to consider quite simply whether they agree or disagree with the Cabinet Member's decision not to endorse the proposed speed limit reduction on Stoke Road. I will shortly ask the Members who called in the decision to make their case and explain to the Committee why they feel the decision should be reconsidered.

Following discussion of the call-in, the Select Committee will be required to decide whether they support the Cabinet Member decision or wish to refer it back for reconsideration. Should the Committee choose the former, then no further action will be taken and the decision will come in to force following today's meeting. Should the Committee choose the latter, the Cabinet Member will be required to reconsider the decision within seven working days of today's meeting."

3. The Members who had called in the Cabinet Member's decision were then invited to speak to the Committee. One Member expressed the view that the road in question was not wide enough to take fast vehicles, and that it was the sole exit point for five residential roads. The other two Members also raised that they felt that a Local Committee was best placed to recognise local circumstances and therefore make appropriate decisions in relation to speed-limits in their areas. It was stated that the decision had been taken on two previous occasions, and that the former portfolio holder for Transport & Environment had informally agreed to lower the speed limit after the Local Committee had approved the change in June 2011. It was noted that the reasons behind this not being implemented were outlined in the papers that accompanied the Cabinet Member's original decision.
4. The Councillor for Elmbridge – Cobham was invited to present his views to the Committee. The Committee were informed that the Member had attended the Cabinet Member's Individual Decision Making meeting on 21 November 2012, and that he felt he had not been given an opportunity to express his views in relation to the decision. The Member stated that he believed the accident statistics were out of date and referred to a traffic incident on 15 November 2012 involving three cars. The Committee was informed that the location of the Chelsea Football Club training grounds created a potential risk, as people tended to congregate around the area. Also highlighted was the location of several allotments close to the road.
5. The Surrey Police representative introduced himself and explained that he was acting as a substitute for Graham Cannon, Police Road Safety and Traffic Officer. The Committee was informed that Surrey Police were first contacted in February 2011 to conduct an average speed assessment of the road in question. Surrey County Council agreed with the assessment and its recommendation a speed limit of 40mph. Following the Local Committee decision in June 2011 Surrey Police drove the route with a representative from Highways in order to further assess the road. Surrey Police reported to the Committee that there had been 4 speed-related collisions on the road in the previous 3 years. They further advised that a speed limit of 30mph was unlikely to

be self-enforcing, and that they would not guarantee that they would be able to allocate the necessary resources to enforce the limit.

6. Surrey Police informed the Committee that the change in speed-limit would require the current repeater signs to be removed. These would not be replaced with new signage, as it was not in line with Government legislation to do so. This would create the effect of removing a visible reminder of the speed-limit to motorists and thus cause additional safety concerns. It was stated that the statistical data indicated that motorists were driving the road at speeds over 30mph currently, though the average speed had been recorded as below 40mph.
7. The Committee queried if the advice by Surrey Police was guided by whether or not it was felt that the limit could be enforced. The Surrey Police representative clarified that it would be a question of managing resources in an appropriate way. It was stated to Committee that Surrey Police were unlikely to enforce the limit as a consequence of resourcing issues; however, they would undertake occasional checks if specifically requested to do so.
8. Members raised a question regarding the impact of reducing the speed limit in relation to motorists' perception of the road. The Surrey Police representative outlined that roads had a natural perceived speed, and that lowering the speed-limit could create the potential to have a reverse effect, causing people to accelerate to a speed they felt comfortable with. It was reiterated that this should be taken into consideration alongside the removal of any visual reminder of the speed-limit.
9. The Surrey Police representative reported to Committee that although they would raise no formal objection to a change in the speed-limit, they would advise against it. Members asked for further clarification on this point. The Surrey Police representative informed the Committee that their standard procedure was only to raise a formal objection in exceptional circumstances.
10. The Committee invited Frank Apicella from Surrey Highway North East Area Team to speak. He outlined a number of improvements that had been implemented along the route which had resulted in a marked effect on the personal injury accident record at the crossroads junction of Blundell Lane and Station Road, which had been regarded as the most dangerous part of the route. The Committee were informed that these improvements had reduced the number of accidents from 15 to zero over the last three years, and that there had been no accidents in 2012 up to August.
11. The Committee was informed that a change in speed-limit would mean that it was necessary to remove two Vehicle Activated Signs, as these could not be re-calibrated to the new speed limit and would need to be used elsewhere. Members challenged the consideration of the cost-implications of this, and stated that this should not be a factor in the case of public safety. It was reiterated that the removal of repeater signs would also remove the visual reminder of the limit to motorists, which could potentially reduce road safety along the route. This would

mean that the area covered by the current 30 mph limit would not be differentiated by signage. The environment of the road did not suggest to drivers that a 30 mph limit was appropriate, and it was therefore likely that drivers would travel at a higher speed as a result. The Committee discussed whether the Local Committee would need to direct further work to alter the character of the road, and the feasibility of implementing this.

12. One Member raised a question as to whether the number of residential properties along the road had been in factor in the advice given by the Local Highways Manager. It was stated that the speed limit policy takes residential properties into account when assessing speed limits.
13. The Cabinet Member for Transport & Environment was invited to speak to the Committee. Officers were asked to confirm that the Cabinet Member was required to undertake the role of arbitrator in the event of a discrepancy between the decision made by a local committee and advice from officers. The Cabinet Member outlined that in this instance he had actively sought further information, as indicated in the Committee papers. This had included a site visit on 15 November, and The Cabinet Member had agreed with officers that the change in speed limit would not be in keeping with the character of the road. It was also stated that the Cabinet Member had undertaken thorough discussions with the Local Member in advance of the Cabinet Member Independent Decision Making Meeting on 21 November.
14. The Committee was informed by the Cabinet Member that he had given consideration to the views of officers, Police and Local Members. It was stated that the reduction in fatalities on the road over the past three years indicated that previous issues had largely been resolved, and that Police advice that they would not prioritise the enforcement of a new speed limit was also taken into consideration.
15. Members questioned whether the Cabinet Member had considered providing a further recommendation to the Local Committee on this occasion, as a precedent had been established for this to happen in some instances. The Cabinet Member stated that he had not. One Member raised a question as to whether the Cabinet Member felt that the process of delegation had been correct in the case of the decision. The Committee was informed that the Cabinet Member felt that there was a need for an independent view on such occasions where the decision by local committees and advice from officers and police had been different.
16. The Chairman provided a brief summary of the views presented at the meeting, and asked the Committee to consider whether any new information had been provided that would suggest the Cabinet Member decision had been incorrect. A vote was taken, 7 to 3 in favour, that the Select Committee resolve to support the call-in and refer the Cabinet Member decision back for reconsideration.

**Resolved:**

That the Select Committee refers the decision of the Cabinet Member, made on 21 November 2012, not to endorse the Elmbridge Local Committee's request for a reduction of the current speed limit on the A245, Stoke Road, Stoke D'Abernon, from its existing 40 mph, to 30 mph, between the existing 30 mph limit near Leigh Hill Road to a suitable point just east of the Chelsea Football Club training ground, back to the Cabinet Member for reconsideration.

**75/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 4]**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be at 10.00am on 10 January 2013.

Meeting ended at: 3.30 pm

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**Chairman**

## Environment and Transport Select Committee Work Programme

**10 January 2013**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Why is this a Scrutiny Item?</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Additional Comments</b>
10/01/13	6 Month Update – Highways Maintenance Contractor/ Highways Maintenance Five Year Programme	This report will provide an update regarding the mid-year performance of the Council's Highways Maintenance Contractor May Gurney. This follows up on previous reports considered by the Committee. The performance of the Highways Maintenance Contractor is a high priority for both Members and residents. This item will also consider the Highways Maintenance Five Year Programme and lead-in times for	Mark Borland	
10/01/13	Recommendations of the Improving the Quality and Coordination of the work of Utilities Companies Task Group (Utilities Task Group)	This report will set out the recommendations of the Utilities Task Group. This Task Group was set up in order to consider how Surrey County Council can work better with utilities companies in order to improve the coordination of streetworks and the quality of repair works, and thereby minimise the resultant disruption and problems.	Thomas Pooley	
10/01/13	SCC Permit Scheme	To consider whether Surrey County Council should proceed with a permit scheme in collaboration with East Sussex County Council, prior to submission of the proposed scheme to the Department for Transport for approval.	Lucy Monie	

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**6 March 2013**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Why is this a Scrutiny Item?</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Additional Comments</b>
06/03/13	Recommendations of the Countryside Task Group	This report will set out the recommendations of the Countryside Task Group which was set up in order to explore concerns surrounding the management of the Surrey's Countryside Estate and its financial sustainability.	Jacqui Hird	
06/03/13	Surrey Flood Strategy	To consider Surrey's agreed Flood Strategy, following consultation with the Select Committee on 08/11/12.	Deborah Fox	
06/03/13	SKANSKA Street Lighting Contract	To consider a report outlining progress to date on the SKANSKA Street Lighting Contract following its 3 year anniversary in February 2013.	Paul Wheadon	
06/03/13	Draft Surrey Rail Strategy	To receive a presentation on the key areas of consideration with regards to Surrey's proposed Rail Strategy. The final strategy will be submitted to the Committee in June 2013.	Lee Mcquade	Presentation
06/03/12	Highways Peer Review	To comment on a recent peer review undertaken by Surrey Highways	Jason Russell	

Item 6

## Environment and Transport Select Committee Work Programme

### To be scheduled:

- Surrey Rail Strategy
- Surrey Hills Trademark Licence Agreement
- Review of Concessionary Fares 2013/14
- Update report of the CIL Task Group

### Task and Working Groups:

Group	Membership	Purpose	Reporting dates
Countryside Management Task Group	Simon Gimson (Chairman) Mark Brett-Warburton Michael Sydney Stephen Cooksey	To develop a countryside management strategy that incorporates sound governance principles, is financially sustainable and promotes partnership working.	6 <sup>th</sup> March 2013
Community Infrastructure Levy Task Group	Mark Brett-Warburton (Chairman) Chris Norman Pat Frost	To consider the question:  <i>“What does the County Council need to do to develop effective plans for the Community Infrastructure Levy in conjunction with its District and Borough partners?”</i>	An interim report was considered by the Committee on 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2012.  An update report will be submitted to the Committee in March 2013.
Prioritisation of Highways and Highways Structures Maintenance	Steve Renshaw (Chairman) Pat Frost Mr David Goodwin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make best use of limited capital funding to maintain the condition of highways and highways structures in their current state, ideally aiming for improvements.</li> <li>• To address concerns raised by Members regarding the prioritisation system for Highways Maintenance</li> <li>• To determine an effective means of prioritising Highways Structures Maintenance.</li> </ul>	An interim report was considered by the Committee on 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2012.  Following consultation with the Task Group in December 2012, the Highways Maintenance Five Year Programme will be submitted to the Committee on 10 <sup>th</sup> January 2012

## Environment and Transport Select Committee Work Programme

Improving the Quality and Coordination of the work of Utilities Companies	Pat Frost (Chairman) Mike Bennison Stephen Cooksey Michael Sydney	The standard of work of utilities companies, and the disruption caused by uncoordinated road works is a major problem nationally. Hence, the intended outcome of the review is to improve the quality of work being done on Surrey's roads and reduce congestion faced by Surrey's residents.	10 <sup>th</sup> January 2012
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## Environment & Transport Select Committee Actions and Recommendations Tracker - November 2012

1.	31/05/12	Water Management	That a policy be drafted on integrated water management, which sets out what Surrey County Council can and will do, in working with partners to address the challenges and risks facing Surrey in this regard.	Cabinet	<p>This was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 24 July 2012.</p> <p>A response from the Cabinet was submitted to the Committee at its meeting in September 2012.</p> <p>An item on the consultation response to SCC's draft flood strategy was considered by the Committee in November 2012.</p> <p>SCC's final flood strategy will be considered by the Committee at its meeting in March 2013.</p>	6/03/13
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2.	01/03/12	Interim Report of the Highways Maintenance Prioritisation Task Group	<p><b>Recommendations to Cabinet</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) To adopt the proposals for a three system approach to Highways Maintenance Prioritisation, as set out at Annex B to this report.</li> <li>ii) To endorse the milestones and objectives of Project Horizon, as detailed in Annex B.</li> <li>iii) To support officers to develop an Invest To Save project to support the automation and optimisation of the asset prioritisation process.</li> <li>iv) To provide the full budgetary requirement in order to enable the development of more efficient, joined up ICT systems for Asset Management and Maintenance Prioritisation.</li> <li>v) That a communications plan for the new system of highways maintenance prioritisation be developed and shared with the Select Committee.</li> </ul>	Cabinet	<p>A response from the Cabinet was considered at the April 2012 meeting of the Select Committee.</p> <p>A draft version of the Highways Maintenance Five Year Programme was submitted to the Task Group for comment in December 2012.</p> <p>The Highways Maintenance Five Year Programme will be considered by the Committee at today's meeting.</p>	Complete
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4.	15/09/12	Countryside Estate: Surrey Wildlife Trust's Asset Management Plan	<p>a) That the Select Committee approve the AMP and a response be sent to SWT once the Members Asset Panel has made its comments. This should also release the additional income as set out in the Cabinet Report of 30 March 2010.</p> <p>b) That SWT be required to set up the Sinking Fund by December 2011</p> <p>c) That the County Council and SWT work together to identify the assets that are a financial liability, or are no longer required to fulfill a public service role, or do not provide a return on capital, and ensure the potential to let out buildings is maximised, and that a three to five year income generation plan is created.</p> <p>d) Governance arrangements need to be put in place for the Sinking Fund to ensure that money is appropriately applied to the fund and that any issues are highlighted at an early stage.</p> <p>e) The AMP needs to be regularly reported to SCC with annual reports to the Partnership Committee, including a regular update on the proposed use of income from property to support management of the Estate supported by relevant performance indicators.</p> <p>f) That the size and constitution of the Partnership Committee be reviewed as noted in 37/11.</p>	Surrey Wildlife Trust	<p>Following the April 2012 meeting of the Select Committee a Task Group scoping document was submitted to the Council Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee in July 2012.</p> <p>The Task Group's work is currently underway and it will report its findings to the Committee in March 2013.</p>	06/03/13
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5.	19/07/12	Forward Work Programme and Recommendations Tracker	Officers to circulate details of the new Highways communications plan with Members of the Committee.	Jason Russell	This is included as part of the update on The Highways Maintenance Five Year Programme at today's meeting.	Complete
6.	19/09/12	Surrey Hills Trademark Licence Agreement	That the Select Committee scrutinises the effectiveness of the Trademark Licence Agreement at a future meeting.	Rob Fairbanks	A suitable date will be determined for this item once income from the Trademark Licence Agreement has been generated.	Ongoing
7. Page 24	08/11/12	Flood Management – Consultation Response	<p>a) That the Select Committee support the publication of the draft Surrey Flood Risk Management Strategy.</p> <p>b) That officers proactively develop a draft policy whereby Districts and Boroughs are required to receive advice from the County in its capacity as Lead Local Flood Authority regarding planning and developments in flood risk areas.</p>	Deborah Fox	SCC's final flood strategy will be considered by the Committee at its meeting in March 2013.	6/03/13
8.	08/11/12	Tree Maintenance	<p>(a) To more proactively engage on the potential for devolvement of tree maintenance, within contractual constraints, identifying opportunities to increase levels of interest across the Districts and Boroughs and/or other potential interested parties including Local Committees.</p> <p>(b) To identify longer term actions/plans to achieve potential devolvement including enhancing the existing survey on an area by area basis or by amending current maintenance regime where feasible.</p>	Lucy Monie	The Committee will consider a further update on Tree Maintenance at its meeting in March 2013.	06/03/12

9.	08/11/12	Review of the English National Concessionary Scheme	<p>a) To consider the 2013/14 scheme offer to Surrey residents and pass the views of the Select Committee to Cabinet at its meeting to be held on 27 November 2012.</p> <p>b) To review Surrey's offer for the 2014/15 ENCTS enhanced scheme provision including the criteria and documentation required for a Disabled Persons and Companion Pass, and time restrictions. A report will be presented to Cabinet during summer 2013.</p>	Paul Millin	The Committee will consider a report on the 2014/15 English National Concessionary Scheme in summer 2013.	Summer 2013
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**Environment & Transport Select Committee**  
 10 January 2013

**Surrey Highways – New Carriageway Investment Plan**

To provide Committee Members advance notice of the recommendations to adopt Five Year Investment Plan for carriageways from April 2013, and provide detail on reasons behind the recommendations and how the programme will be delivered in practice.

**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

1. The highway network condition is measured nationally by the Road Condition Index (RCi), available via Department for Transport (DfT) website, with each highway authority required to assess its road network using predefined engineering assessment and methodology. The RCi classifies the entire road network into three categories:
  - Green – good road condition
  - Amber – in need of maintenance but not critical
  - Red – road in critical condition
2. Nationally the RCi advises that in the UK average of **10%** of the local road network was classified in the red zone, the worst category. However, the average in Surrey was significantly higher, with **17%** of the network classified as poor.
3. Data confirms that although Surrey County Council (SCC) is maintaining high speed SPN1 and SPN2 in generally good condition, the road condition in low speed residential and rural areas is relatively poor leading to overall negative resident satisfaction with highways, see table below:

Category	Road Length (km)	% of Road classified as Red	UK Average Road Conditions Index
Principal Network (SPN1)	620	7%	5%
Non Principal Network (SPN2 & SPN3)	1025	10%	8%
Unclassified (SP4a & SPN4b)	3207	<b>21%</b>	<b>16%</b>

4. Over the next five years, SCC has allocated £18m a year to replace roads classified as critical (red). In 2010 cost savings as part of the new May Gurney

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contract enabled the authority to increase the amount of road replaced to 65km per year (i.e. 1.3%). On current projections it would take a minimum of 13 years to repair the structural backlog of poor roads.

5. A road assessment in 2010 determined it would require a one off cash injection of £200m to remove the historic 17% backlog of worst roads, a funding level not achievable in an era of austerity in public finances. However, equally it was accepted that the status quo was not an acceptable option.
6. In 2011 Surrey Highways therefore launched "Project Horizon" a joint partnership with Surrey Highways, May Gurney, materials manufacturers and industry leaders to investigate radical options to fundamentally address the historic backlog and improve overall road condition without the need for £200m funding investment.
7. The outcome of this review will be submitted to Cabinet in February, this report provides an early review of the project cost and quality solutions which are intended to ensure that 10% of the worst roads are replaced in five year period.

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**DETAIL:**

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**Cost Saving Solution One - Longer Term Planning**

8. The primary aim of Project Horizon was to increase the amount of kilometre of critical (red) road replaced each year from 60km to 100km, without a significant increase in funding.
  9. This would enable 10% of the network to be replaced in a five year period, improving productivity and reducing the time it would take to repair the structural backlog from 13 to 8 years.
  10. As part of the project a series of workshops were held with highway specialists to identify a number of common factors which they felt restricted them in their ability to provide efficiencies within rates:
    - No guarantee of work volume meaning that opportunity is limited in agreeing bulk purchasing arrangements and fixed prices with suppliers.
    - No continuity of workload throughout the year which results in a higher level of staff downtime risk being priced.
    - No visibility of workload restricts effective input into annual programmes and sequencing of works. A direct result of this is that higher transport costs are anticipated due to inefficient working and these are subsequently reflected in pricing.
    - Unfavourable payment provisions limit ability to manage cash flow and thereby offer better payment terms to suppliers in return for better prices.
    - Unpredictability of bitumen prices means that specialists cannot obtain long term fixed price arrangements with suppliers of surfacing materials.
  11. The primary savings opportunity identified from the review was the therefore the cost benefits in moving to a fixed **five year** works programme, rather than
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12. A tender exercise was therefore undertaken with May Gurney's supply chain to confirm what level of discount would be provided if Surrey moved to a five year investment plan of fixed schemes.
13. The tender exercise confirmed that a fixed five year programme would save **11%-12%** on existing contract rates.

### **Cost Saving Solution Two - New Materials & Improved Road Design**

14. The project team also spend considerable time researching the market and working with material manufacturers to identify new innovative materials.
  15. An early win of this new design process has been the opportunity to identify a new material for low speed residential roads, with Aggregate Industries proposing a new product "Superflex" to be used as the standard material for these road types.
  16. Superflex has been used in the Highways Agency strategic network and piloted in one other local authority, and this has led to the following key benefits:
    - Improved moisture resistance, keeping water out over longer period that ultimately creates potholes
    - Extending road life with minimum 10 year design warranty
    - The material solution can be constructed faster leading to reduced construction time and disruption to the network
    - Adopting Superflex as the standard County material for low speed roads will realise a further **1% to 3%** over the five year period
  17. In addition to the use of Superflex, a number of additional design opportunities have been identified that could potentially lead to further cost savings and/or condition improvements
    1. **Road Strength** – a number of Surrey roads were not built for existing traffic volumes. The current limited design process does not allow time for traffic volume to be fully considered in replacement. However, the increased design time as schemes would be planned over five year period, will enable highways to explore strengthening specific roads based upon existing or projected traffic volume, leading to less costly defects and extending road life.
    2. **Surface dressing frequency.** The standard network demands the intervention of specialist surface treatments every 7 years. This equates to two intervention cycles throughout a 20 year lifespan. By increasing construction depth and using more durable materials, the road life can be extended and the frequency of required intervention reduced.
    3. **Concrete Roads** – defective concrete roads can be noisy and disruptive to local residents, however, they are equally the most expensive roads to repair. Longer term planning will enable the authority to identify and exploit new opportunities to reduce the cost of replacing concrete roads.
    4. **Drainage** – surface water is the greatest cause of road defects,
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increased planning will enable officers to assess all road conditions and implement solution that will not only replace road surface but will remove the constant build up of surface water.

18. The savings opportunities above have opportunity to provide a further **1%** in value engineering savings.

### **Cost Saving Solution Three - Improved Site Management Productivity**

19. The existing process leads to a large amount of unproductive time, with surfacing gangs standing around waiting for schemes to commence. A new process will therefore be implemented from April to increase gang productivity. A key part of new process is the adoption of a new "Vehicle Relocation Policy".
20. One of the greatest on-site delays is parked cars preventing the road being re-surfaced. Gangs sometimes have to wait up to two hours until the owner of the vehicle is located, and in worst case scenario scheme can be aborted, e.g. owner on holiday, this can lead to abortive costs of between £5 - £20k.
21. An alternative solution is to implement a "Vehicle Relocation" policy which is currently delivered in other Highway Authorities. Under this policy May Gurney will be provided permission to re-locate parked cars to the nearest available street.
22. May Gurney will be required to provide one week's advance warning prior to removing cars and will be fully responsible for any damage caused as a result of relocation. Police & SCC Contact Centre will also be informed of the new location of any cars, which will normally be placed in the adjacent street.
23. The above policy, in tandem with improved road management and working restricted hours, is estimated to save **1% to 2%** over the five year period, which will be re-invested in Surrey network.

### **Cost Saving Solution Four - Improved Waste Management**

24. Like all industries, the costs of managing waste is a key issue for Surrey Highways, with two key cost drivers:
- **Hazardous Material** – Prior to 1980 the majority of roads were built using coal tar which is now classified as hazardous waste by the Environment Agency. It cannot be recycled and can only be disposed of at a limited number of specialist facilities. In 2012/13 Surrey spent over £0.8m removing tar from roads.
  - **Landfill Waste** It is estimated that under the current way of working Project Horizon would generate road planings waste in excess of 300,000 tonnes over the 5 year period, all incurring landfill waste tax.
25. The Project Horizon team have therefore explored identified a number of alternative innovative solutions to each cost area:
- 1) **'Tar Remediation'**. The process employs enzyme technology which neutralises harmful 'poly aromatic hydrocarbons' contained within the tar bound planings. The resulting product is a neutral aggregate which can be recycled and is expected to reduce disposal costs by up to 10%-20%.

- 2) **Waste Income** – opportunity to re-sale planings generated from roads in a variety of recycled base, binder and surface course materials. There is also an opportunity to explore new income streams outside of highways including construction and international markets;
  - 3) **Mobile Asphalt Plants** - this can be erected a short distance from the resurfacing scheme and produce and supply recycled asphalt materials direct to the site, with massively reduced transport and haulage costs.
  - 4) **'In situ' road recycling** involves using specialised heavy machinery to recycle existing road surface (to varying depths) and mixing with new material to enable it to be relaid as a new strengthened road surface. Costs savings of up to 30% per scheme has been identified and comparable road life up to 20 years..
26. The alternative processes detailed above will not be suitable for all roads, however, the fixed five year programme provide the opportunity for Surrey Highways to work as part of the SE7 to exploit the potential savings in a new waste management policy.
27. This could lead to not only an improved solution for the environment via reduced waste and vehicle movements, but also deliver a further **2% to 5%** cashable saving that could be re-invested in the highway network.

**Quality Improvements**

28. In addition to cashable savings, the five year programme will also deliver the following non-cashable savings:

	<b>Existing Process</b>	<b>Problem</b>	<b>Future Process</b>
<b>Improved Programme Management</b>	Surrey Highways schemes delivered in order of prioritisation, with scheme delivered in descending order of priority until annual budget is reached.	Scheme is planned one month before delivery, with little time for effective planning.  Consequently programme is rarely adhered to, with works requiring constant updates.	Enabling all schemes to be delivered as part of single five year Investment Plan, enable all works to be published 12 months in advance and allow at least three months effective planning for each scheme
<b>Improved Communication Plan</b>	Schemes are published one month in advance of delivery	There is no strategic communication plan. Residents are not aware of "investment plan" for their area and there is no effective notice period	Implement new Strategic Communications Plan for all major resurfacing – see <b>Annex One</b> for draft plan

<b>Supporting Local Employment</b>	Schemes are ordered and committed individually	Local highway companies have no opportunity to plan or manage cash flow	5Y programme enables Specialists to establish better material sourcing and place their plant and vehicle on longer term leasing arrangements.  Allow companies to not only protect existing Surrey workforce but enable them to grow and bid for new work
<b>Apprentices</b>	Schemes are ordered and committed individually	Lack of security prevents firms investing in employee training and apprentices.	As part of five year plan an additional <b>12 apprentices</b> will be employed as part of highway supply chain.

### Impact on Asset Prioritisation Policy

29. The implementation of a new five year investment programme will have impact on the existing policy for how highways schemes are prioritised for work.
30. In particular, Members will no longer have the ability to nominate three schemes each year, with all schemes pre-agreed in 2012. To mitigate the impact of the change in policy, officers have delivered the following actions:
- I. **Member Task Group** – officers have worked with Member Task Group to ensure new Asset Prioritisation Policy is fit for purpose
  - II. **Increased Local Funding** – officers are working with the Cabinet and Corporate Leadership Team to explore how additional funding could be transferred to local committees to support local prioritisation. In 2012/13 this resulted in an additional one off £2m increase in local committee allocation
  - III. **Fit for Purpose Programme** – Officers have undertaken one of the largest consultation exercises in the country to ensure the five year investment programme, meets both the needs of both the asset and the local community. This has involved a significant dialogue with residents, local committees and key stakeholders. See **Annex B** for full details of how the investment programme has been developed and planned for delivery over five year period.
31. The five year programme will also be reviewed annually to ensure it is reflective of any major changes in carriageway condition, for example, as a result of severe weather. Any changes to programme will be fully communicated to local members.

## **CONCLUSION & SUMMARY**

32. Surrey County Highway network is below the national average for road condition, with a 13 year backlog of major structure repairs.
33. To take proactive steps to resolve the situation. Project Horizon was launched with the specific aim of using existing funds to replace a minimum of 10% (480 km) of road within five year period and enable the structural backlog to be removed within 8 year period.
34. Project Horizon will report to Cabinet in February with recommendation on:
- Adopting a Five Year Investment Programme
  - Implementing new innovative materials& road design process
  - Adopting new vehicle relocation policy & improved on-site procedures
  - Developing a new regional waste management plan
35. The adoption of the recommendations will deliver opportunity to release cashable savings which can be re-invested in network and deliver increased number of schemes. The savings are represented as discounts against existing contract rates, with a minimum and maximum savings depending on how well the savings are exploited.

<b>Saving Area</b>	<b>Minimum Discount</b>	<b>Stretch Discount</b>
Guaranteed Five Year programme	11.00%	12.0%
Improved Road Design	1.0%	4.0%
Vehicle Relocation Policy	1.0%	2.0%
Improved Waste Management	2.0%	5.0%
Total	<b>15.00%</b>	<b>23.00%</b>
<b>Estimated Savings (based upon existing budget)</b>	<b>£14m</b>	<b>£21m</b>

36. The Highway Road Map will fundamentally change the balance in how Surrey Highways maintain the county's network. It will transform from providing a reactive fire fighting service to delivering a strategically planned investment plan, with improved communications and planning.
37. Over a five year period the Investment Plan will enable the authority to replace nearly 500km of road network and the majority of the worst roads in Surrey

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**

38. Recommendation to adopt new Five Year Investment Plan (Operation Horizon) submitted for approval to Cabinet in February 2013.

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### **Contact Officer:**

Mark Borland, Group Manager Projects & Contracts, 0208 541 7028

### **Annexes:**

Annex One: Investment Plan Communication Plan  
Annex Two: Programme Consultation & Development

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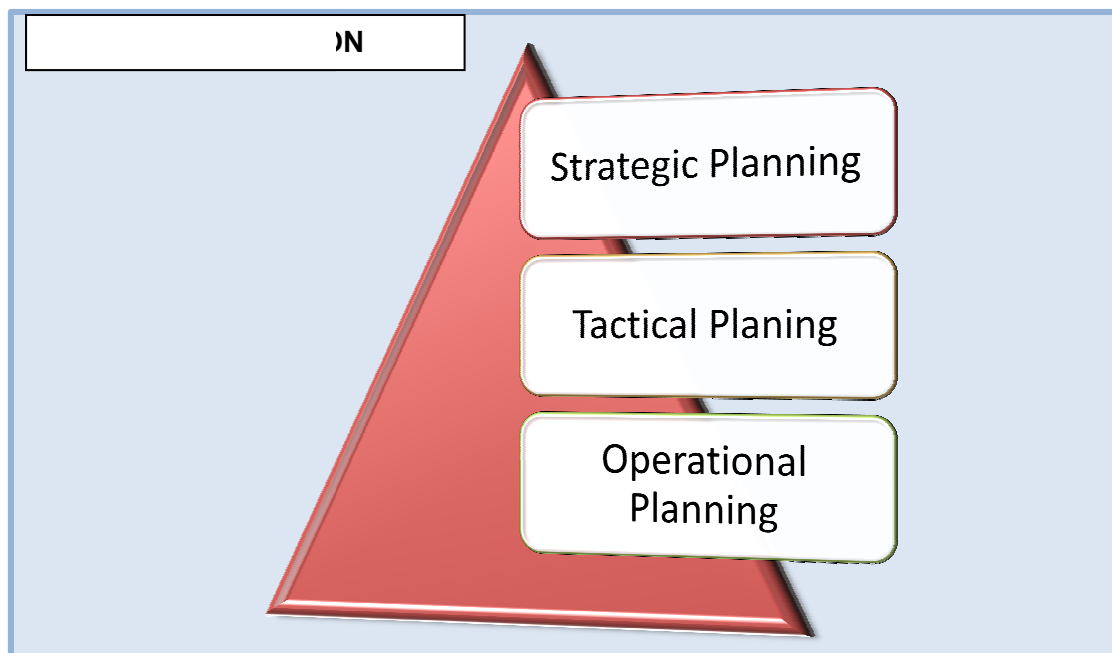
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**Environment & Transport Select Committee**  
10 January 2013

**Surrey Highways – New Carriageway Investment Plan**

**ANNEX A: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

The Five Year Investment Plan will be supported by a clear communications plan, segmented into three distinct areas:



The purpose of the strategic plan is to ensure that residents, Members and key stakeholders are aware of the level of investment in their local area and provided 12 months notice of work. The plan is composed of three elements

- I. All Investment activity will be marketed under the banner "Operation Horizon – Investing in Your Community". At the start of each financial year a pdf brochure will be published confirming:

- Proposed schemes by ward,
  - Estimated dates and treatments (details only estimated quarter work expected)
  - Total amount invested in the network since start of programme
  - Planned investment over the remaining years of programme
  - Information on what works will involve
  - Benefits of scheme
  - Who to contact for further information
2. A new enhanced web page will be launched providing improved information and support relating to highway re-surface works.
  3. A dedicated Road Works Desk will be created as part of the County Council Contact Centre support to field general calls on road works.



The purpose of tactical planning is to ensure that all key stakeholders are provided prior warning of specific schemes affecting their specific area and that planning is in place to ensure works complement local community events and facilities (e.g. schools). The tactical plan will be delivered according to specific timescales

- **Three Months Prior** to each scheme being delivered, key stakeholder groups, local county and divisional members will be fully informed of all planned works for their area, to ensure the proposed diversion and dates meet local needs.
- **Two Months Prior** - a site visit will also be held with all businesses and public services with over 50 employees directly impacted by works.
- **One Month Prior** – advance warning notices and signs placed for major schemes. All signs will be under Operation Horizon banner. For smaller schemes two weeks notice will be provided.
- **One Week Prior** – letters issued to all local residential and commercial properties confirming nature of works and impact on their daily activity.



The purpose of operational tactical planning is to ensure that directly impacted residents and Members are fully aware of works happening in real time in the area. This will ensure that any delays or cancellations to programme are communicated to all stakeholders at the earlier opportunity.



To key systems will be implemented to support Operational Planning:

- **New Members' Portal** will be launched to enable county and districts councillors to review Operation Horizon programme in real time from their home PC or laptop. The programme will be updated daily and will ensure Members are fully aware of all planned carriageway schemes in the area, with clear knowledge of proposed dates and any changes without the need to contact officers in person.
- **Enhanced Contact Centre Support** – SCC contact centre will be provided with real time access to the programme.
- **New Roadworks Desk** – a dedicated Roadworks desk will be created to act as a first line support for Members and second line support for any calls SCC Contract Centre cannot resolve.



At the end of each financial year a public report will be submitted to Environment & Transport Select Committee and Local Committees confirming programme successes and lessons learned from the previous year.

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**Environment & Transport Select Committee**  
10 January 2013

**Surrey Highways – New Carriageway Investment Plan**

**ANNEX B: PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT**

**INTRODUCTION**

An engineering assessment of the 4800 km of Surrey County Council highway network confirmed that **17%** of the network is classed as “poor”, where the road surface and/or base has failed with large number of potholes or general defects.

To remedy the situation a specific project (Project Horizon) was instigated to develop a Highway Investment Plan which would enable a minimum of **10%** of the worst roads to be replaced, based upon budget estimates (incorporating projected saving) this delivers a programme of approximately 1200 road schemes.

To ensure the programme content was fair and equitable to all areas of the county, while meeting both local and asset need, a formal process was instigated to develop and deliver the programme, see sections below.

**SECTION ONE: PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT**

To ensure parity across the council, the project team was set two clear objectives:

- by the end of the five year investment period, all Districts and Boroughs had to have approximately 10% of their network length replaced as part of the surfacing programme.
- All roads had to be justified on an asset basis, i.e scored as poor or failing by engineering assessment

Using the objectives above, the programme was then developed over 12 month period in five stages.

## Stage One: Machine Survey

A machine assessment was undertaken using engineering principles to identify the worst 10% of roads in the county. The engineering machines assessed the texture and resistance of the carriageway, with each road scored according to the council set asset prioritisation policy.

This exercise identified the worst 1000 roads requiring treatment based upon machine survey. The 1000 sites were then validated by a visual inspection, as a result of inspection a number of schemes were removed from programme, e.g. because they were more suitable for surface dressing solution rather than full resurface. Tandridge and Waverley did score slightly higher due to the number of reported potholes and insurance claims received in previous 24 months.

Following visual validation the scheme list below was then produced:

	<b>Total Network Km</b>	<b>Total Network Km to be Replaced as part of programme</b>	<b>% of Network Replaced 2013 - 2018</b>
<b>Elmbridge</b>	<b>402.6</b>	<b>22.45</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Epsom</b>	<b>213.8</b>	<b>9.64</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Guildford</b>	<b>683.7</b>	<b>77.42</b>	11%
<b>Mole Valley</b>	<b>532.2</b>	<b>51.21</b>	10%
<b>Reigate &amp; Banstead</b>	<b>492.2</b>	<b>41.68</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>281.2</b>	<b>19.71</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Spelthorne</b>	<b>281.4</b>	<b>17.75</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Surrey Heath</b>	<b>378.1</b>	<b>37.53</b>	10%
<b>Tandridge</b>	<b>525.5</b>	<b>68.79</b>	13%
<b>Waverley</b>	<b>755.9</b>	<b>85.25</b>	11%
<b>Woking</b>	<b>308.8</b>	<b>24.37</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4855.4</b>	<b>455.80</b>	

## Stage Two: Public Consultation

An inherent weakness of the machine survey is that due to space constraints the machine cannot survey all roads, for example cul-de-sacs and narrow lanes. To support the machine survey a ten week public consultation process was therefore launched. This was to enable residents to nominate their worst roads that had perhaps been missed through machine survey. The consultation process was completed using both site visits via a road show and online media.

The road show visited 20 locations throughout the council detailed below:

1. Spelthorne General Assembly,	11. Camberley Town Centre
2. Woking Town Centre	12. Epsom Town Centre
3. Godalming, Waverley	13. Walton on Thames
4. Reigate Town Centre	14. Farnham Town Centre
5. Redhill Town Centre	15. Cranleigh Town Centre
6. Egham Town Centre	16. Staines Town Centre
7. Dorking Town Centre	17. Chertsey Town Centre

8. Leatherhead Town Centre	18. Haslemere Town Centre
9. Guildford Town Centre	19. Banstead Town Centre
10. Oxted Town Centre	20. Guildford Vision Event

The road-shows were very well attended, with an average of 80 visitors per event, resulting in over 1,600 residents engaging face to face with the project team.

A website and local press campaign was also undertaken to ensure any residents who could not attend the road-show in person could email the dedicated email address and submit their own road nominations.

Through the road shows and website engagement the team received **987 road nominations** to be included in programme.

These road nominations were then put forward as part of stage three to five below.

### **Stage Three: Local Committee Engagement**

The outputs from stage one (machine survey) and stage two (resident survey) were then presented to each Local Committee for them to provide comment, support and provide any additional roads not captured in the above process.

Councillors were provided opportunity to comment and challenge produced lists

### **Stage Four: Officer Validation**

The draft programme including machine sites, resident nomination and local committee nominations were then provided to programme team, local area team and inspectors to provide further validation. This removed schemes which were already planned for delivery in 2012/13, and also added schemes gathered from constant resident complaints or continual defects via potholes that had not been originally identified

### **Stage Five: Site Inspection**

All schemes and data provided in stage one to five was then collated into single programme and all sites had visual inspection by trained engineer. This final inspection was used to develop final programme detailed in **Appendix One**. (N.B Appendix still under construction and will not be available until mid January)

This resulted in a number of schemes being removed for example if road did not warrant full reconstruction and only required limited treatment, e.g. surface dressing or was on private road, see **Appendix Two**. (N.B Appendix still under construction and will not be available until mid January)

## SECTION TWO: PROGRAMME RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

To maximise resource and cost efficiency the programme has been segmented into five specific work streams. Following a full tender exercise three Specialist Contractors have been awarded (via the SCC/May Gurney Partnership) for each work stream. See table below:

Work stream	Marshalls	Aggregate Industries	Tarmac	Colas / Stabilised Pavements
<b>Surfacing Works</b> To replace road base and surface with high volume road asphalt	<b>Year 1 – 5</b> 1 x Gang working 12 months per annum	<b>Year 1 – 5</b> 2x Gangs working 6 months per annum (Apr – Nov)	<b>Year 1 – 5</b> 1 x Gang working 12 months per annum	
<b>Patching &amp; Haunching Works</b>	<b>Year 1 – 5</b> 1 x Gang working 5 months per annum (Apr – Aug)	n/a		
<b>Civil Works</b> To replace drainage, iron work and deliver new road re-surface	<b>Year 1</b> 1 x Gang working 8 months per annum (Apr to Jan)  <b>Year 2</b> 2 x Gang working 8 months per annum (Apr to Jan)  <b>Year 3-4</b> 3 x Gang working 8 months per annum (Apr to Jan)  <b>Year 5</b> 2 x Gang working 8 months per annum (Apr to Jan)	n/a		
<b>Concrete Base &amp; Surfacing</b> Specific works to repair/replace concrete roads		<b>Year 2 - 3</b> 1 x Gang working 6 months per annum		
<b>Concrete Base &amp; HRA</b> Specific works to replace concrete roads which have Hot Rolled Asphalt		<b>Year 3</b> 1 x Gang working 6 months per annum		
<b>HRA Only</b> Works to replace existing Hot Rolled Asphalt	<b>Year 3-4</b> 1 x Gang working 6 months per annum	n/a		
<b>Recycling In-Situ</b> To replace road material with deep or shallow recycled material				<b>Year 2 - 5</b> 2x gang working 3 months per annum (May – Jul)

The programme division of work will play to the strengths of each specialist. Marshall Surfacing has the capacity to carry out a large amount of civil works whereas Aggregate Industries prefer purely resurfacing. As a further improvement the programme will also be delivered using principle below:

- Creating a separate work stream for Hot Rolled Asphalt surfacing. This is due to the specific plant required for laying HRA, with HRA delivered in the milder months of the year, due to material type and longer durations in laying.
- Combining overlay, major surfacing and resurfacing as a work type, as the plant required is the same, and there is no impact on the specialists in moving between one and another.
- Grouping all night works in a district together so that a gang can finish the normal programmed work within normal hours, then switch to a nightshift on a Monday, complete the programme of night work and then switch back to a dayshift on a Monday. This reduces the downtime caused by moving between nightshift and dayshift. Carrying out the night works in the summer months due to higher temperatures.
- The available resource of each Specialist was also taken into consideration. Marshall Surfacing for example, indicated that they could run a maximum of 5 civil gangs. The programme ensures that this is not exceeded.
- The Patching and Haunching work, which is allocated to Marshall Surfacing, has been programmed to be carried out during April/May/June/July of each year.
- All concrete roads have been moved to year 2, to enable effective design solution to be developed.

### **SECTION THREE: PROGRAMME TIMESCALES**

Subject to cabinet approval of programme, the project team will in February use the programme resource plan in section two to develop dates for each scheme, this will confirm:

- Expected month for year 1 schemes
- Expected quarter for year 2 schemes
- Expected year for all remaining schemes

The Draft Programme will be developed to ensure that all districts and boroughs receive surfacing work from year one of the programme.

The Draft Programme will then be submitted to the March Local Committee for comment, to advise any specific scheme they would like to be brought forward. Not all requests will be able to be accommodated due to resource constraints, but the project team will work to ensure any critical comments are captured as part of programme.

Following programme approval, the communication plan detailed in Annex One will be implemented and programme communicated to wider stakeholders.





Environment & Transport Select Committee  
10 January 2013

**Task Group Report: Improving the Co-ordination and Quality of Work of Utilities Companies in Surrey**

**Purpose of the report:** Policy Development and Review

The Select Committee is asked to endorse the recommendations of the Task Group, which seek to improve the co-ordination and quality of work of utilities companies in Surrey.

**Introduction:**

1. This report sets out the recommendations of the Task Group established to improve the co-ordination and quality of work of utilities companies in Surrey.
2. The Task Group was instigated to improve the standard of, and level of disruption caused by, utility company street works in Surrey. From the outset the Task Group's key objectives were:
  - i) To establish how the Council can work more effectively with utilities companies to better communicate and co-ordinate street works.
  - ii) To improve the standard and quality of work carried out by utilities companies.
3. The review also considered the viability of the introduction of a permit scheme to co-ordinate all works on Surrey County Council's highway.
4. The Task Group's Membership was as follows: Mrs Pat Frost (Chairman), Mr Mike Bennison, Mr Stephen Cooksey and Mr Michael Sydney.

**Background:**

5. Under the provisions of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) and Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA), the County Council has the following duty to manage its road network:

*“It is the duty of a local traffic authority to manage their road network with a view to achieving as far as is reasonably practicable the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority’s road network”.*

6. Similarly, the NRSWA makes utilities companies (“works promoters”) wholly responsible for the management of their street works. They have the right to place, inspect, maintain, adjust, repair, alter, change position or remove apparatus in highways maintainable at the public expense.
7. The NRSWA also gives the County Council the duty to use its “best endeavours” to co-ordinate the execution of works of all kinds in the streets for which it is responsible. Specifically, it is required to consider the interests of safety, minimise inconvenience to persons using the street and protect the structure of the street and the integrity of apparatus on it.
8. Therefore, the County Council has an interest and responsibility in overseeing the work carried out by utilities companies on Surrey’s highways and in challenging these companies to improve the quality of their work.
9. Surrey County Council’s Street Works team has made significant progress in recent years to improve the Council’s controls in this regard. However, problems surrounding utility maintenance works and reinstatement works remain. Inspecting and rectifying problematic or substandard reinstatement works by utilities companies has a significant revenue cost implication for the Council and issues with traffic disruption and congestion can result from problematic road works. Local Government Association figures estimate that this costs the taxpayer approximately £218 million per year<sup>1</sup>. Concerns have also been raised by Members and residents that there is a widespread perception the maintenance works of utilities companies are conducted without sufficient prior consultation and arrangement with the Council.
10. In order to alleviate these issues, the Environment and Transport Select Committee convened a Task Group of Members to look at the subject in depth and form a number of recommendations to assist the Council in better co-ordinating works carried out by utilities companies on the County’s highways.

#### **Structure of the Review:**

11. The Task Group met on seven occasions between September and December 2012 and considered a number of different subjects, including communication, co-ordination, reinstatements, areas with special conditions and permit schemes. These matters are all addressed within this report.
12. In order to fully gauge Member perception of the issues surrounding street works carried out by utilities companies in Surrey, a survey was sent to County Councillors, Borough & District representatives and Parish Council representatives. These responses were used to inform the review and a

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<sup>1</sup> LGA media release, 12 December 2012.

summary is contained within this report in paragraphs 21 to 25. A full analysis is attached at annexe C.

13. A press release was issued at the start of the review which publicised the work of the Task Group. This was featured in local papers, local radio stations and on Council websites. Members of the public were encouraged to submit their views to a dedicated street works inbox and postal address to inform the review. The Task Group also received two letters of support from senior Surrey MPs. A full analysis of these responses is included in annexe C.
14. As part of the evidence gathering process, the Task Group interviewed a number of witnesses from six utilities companies. Members and officers felt that their evidence would be of significant importance to help the Council understand the challenges the companies themselves faced when carrying out street works in Surrey.
15. The Chairman of the Task Group was keen to stress that this review was not to be a “utility knocking exercise” but rather, an opportunity for the Council and utilities companies to work co-operatively to inform a series of recommendations that would assist both parties in delivering more effective and better co-ordinated street works to the benefit of Surrey’s residents.
16. The Task Group also interviewed street works officers from Kent and Hampshire County Councils, who provided evidence of their experiences with different street work management systems.
17. A full list of witnesses interviewed by the Task Group is attached at annexe B.

<b>Consultation:</b>
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18. As the disruption caused by utilities companies’ street works impacts significantly upon residents, the Task Group felt it would be important to consider the views of members of the public in the context of this review. Key to the formation of successful recommendations would be proposals that prioritised the needs of residents.
19. A survey was also sent to Surrey Councillors. Local Members are a valuable source of knowledge in this regard as they are well-placed to present the concerns of their residents.
20. The information gathered from both the survey and public comments helped to direct and shape the work of the Task Group in a manner that aimed to put the views of the public at the forefront of any recommendations. A full analysis of these responses is attached in annexe C, though a summary of key themes and findings is included below.

## **Surrey Councillors:**

21. The majority of local authority representatives surveyed felt that communications from utilities companies in advance of street works taking place and during the works were poor. Respondents called for better local targeting of information about planned street works, including giving direct notice to local households and businesses, and putting notices in local papers. Greater detail, including contact details and accurate timescales for work were requested. There was also strong support for using Councillors, and in particular Parish Councils, as a resource in communicating street works carried out by utilities companies in Surrey.
22. While a significant number of Councillors rated the management of street works, including tidiness and traffic management as poor, this view was less strongly emphasised at the local level. The need for traffic management to be responsive to different traffic flows at different times of day was also highlighted.
23. The quality of reinstatements was broadly regarded as poor. This attitude was less strongly stated at the local level, although it is worth noting that the majority of Parish and Borough/District respondents did not rate reinstatements as good. Councillors highlighted the deterioration of some reinstatements over time and suggested a need for better checks and enforcement.
24. Common issues raised by residents in the form of complaints included the quality of reinstatements, inadequate communication, the time taken for works to complete and the lack of visible progress by contractors.
25. Further comments from local authority representatives highlighted the need to improve co-ordination of works and proposals regarding permit and penalty schemes. Surrey MP respondents also backed the use of permit or penalty schemes to incentivise utility companies to carry out their works quickly and with minimal disruption.

## **Public Responses:**

26. The majority of responses from the public commented on a lack of post-works inspection. Many felt that interim reinstatements were often inadequate and that this led to an increase in road maintenance work by the Council. The view was also expressed that sites were often left untidy, or equipment left behind after works had been completed. Several respondents indicated that they were in favour of closer regulation of utility company repairs by the Council.
27. Other concerns raised by the public included:
  - The number of different works being carried out in the same area within a short period;
  - The increase in commuting time as a result of street works;
  - Works being left unattended for significant amounts of time; and
  - A lack of clear information about who was responsible for work sites.

28. Public responses to the consultation frequently expressed that they were in favour of a review.
29. Overall, a number of central themes emerged with regards to responses from Surrey Councillors and the public. This included improvements to communication, co-ordination and the quality of reinstatements. As a result, these key areas were all subject to significant consideration by the Task Group.

<b>Communication:</b>
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30. Core to any recommendations that seek to improve the quality of work of utilities companies is communication. This is important because it is a valuable resource in the management of public perception and expectation. If for example, residents are made aware of planned works in advance, they have time to consider how the impact on their daily activities can be minimised, such as by planning different routes to work.
31. Communication is also important from an “internal” perspective. To ensure that street works are co-ordinated effectively, both the County Council and utilities companies must engage in active dialogue so that one knows what the other is doing. Both parties have statutory and discretionary responsibilities in this regard; however the Task Group was of the view that there is scope for improvement.

**Statutory and Discretionary Responsibilities:**

32. The effective co-ordination of street works is essential to guarantee safety, minimise disruption and protect the structure of the street. The NRSWA gives Street Authorities the duty to co-ordinate works and grants them powers to achieve this, such as the power to give directions as to the timing of street works, the power to give directions as to the placing of apparatus and the duty of statutory undertakers to co-operate with the Street Authority.
33. The NRSWA also states that wherever “reasonably practicable”, Street Authorities should aim to avoid traffic disruption, works on recently surfaced or reconstructed streets and planned works within a short period of earlier works. In cases where works are likely to cause significant traffic disruption, the Council is able to make a request for works to take place during off-peak hours, weekends and for 24 hour periods.
34. Works sponsors have the statutory responsibility to display information boards at every site, giving the name of the organisation carrying out the works and a contact telephone number which can be used in cases of emergencies. Other details, such as why the work is taking place and how long the works are likely to go on for, are discretionary.
35. Utilities companies interviewed by the Task Group also outlined the discretionary efforts they make to minimise the disruption caused by street works. This included letter drops, “drop in centres” on local high streets, meetings with Surrey’s Street Works Team and use of social media to inform residents of upcoming works. Similarly, Surrey’s Street

Works Team also carries out discretionary communications in the form of Member information bulletins, information releases and notices on the Council's website. The Task Group welcomed these approaches and felt that such practice should be encouraged wherever possible.

### **Improving Communication to Residents:**

36. Although the Task Group noted that utilities companies had processes in place for giving residents prior warning of upcoming street works, the survey results analysed in annexe C and comments received from members of the public strongly suggested that communication in relation to street works was poor.
37. A key area for improvement identified by the Task Group was the Surrey County Council website. At present there are information pages in relation to general street works, but none that specifically detail utilities companies' works in Surrey. There is also no "quick link" heading on the Council's "report it online" page with regards to utility works. The introduction of both of these resources would give residents a single, easy to access source of information detailing any upcoming works in their area. This would reduce the need for residents to contact the Council directly for information relating to street works and help keep them better informed.
38. The Task Group also felt that if the Council were to improve its communication procedures in relation to street works, it would be prudent to take advantage of social media. As noted in paragraph 35, utilities companies are already doing this and using applications such as Facebook and Twitter to update residents as to the progress of works would be a cost effective and efficient way of keeping residents informed.
39. A further issue frequently raised by Councillors with regards to communication was that residents often complained that reports submitted to the Council of poor quality street works went unacknowledged. Surrey County Council has a clear Customer Promise that requires customer queries to be acknowledged and responded to within a reasonable timescale, and the Task Group felt that in the context of street works reporting, this commitment should be adhered to wherever possible.

### **Improving Internal Communication:**

40. To assist in the running of its street works functions, the Council's Street Works Team uses Symology, a system that holds the register of all street works in Surrey. It also includes a mapping system to assist in the co-ordination of works. This system has the potential to show conflicts where works with overlapping dates occur in the same street and within the vicinity of other works.
41. Symology is a key resource that gives officers general information about street works in Surrey. However, the Task Group noted a key weakness in the system in that it is not currently linked to the Surrey County Council Contact Centre. This is usually the first point of contact for members of

the public who have queries in relation to street works. Because staff at the Contact Centre do not have direct access to the information contained within Symology, most public queries in relation to street works either have to be passed on to the highways department or responded to at a later date. To make this process more efficient and customer focused, the Task Group was of the view that Symology should be linked to the Contact Centre, subject to the cost of purchasing the required additional user licenses.

42. A further resource used by the County Council is Elgin, a web-based information service which publishes current and planned street works and is available to view by the public. To enable Councillors to better communicate upcoming works to residents, it is also suggested that automatic “areas of interest” alerts be set-up on Elgin, that inform Members of significant works in their area.
43. As stated in paragraph 36, improvements to communication around street works is of key concern to both residents and Councillors. Therefore, the Task Group proposed that a clear and accessible street works communications policy be developed by the County Council, incorporating the suggestions above.

#### **Reporting and Monitoring of Reinstatements:**

44. Key to the management of street works is the monitoring of reinstatements. As part of its work the Task Group felt that it would be essential to analyse the powers that the County Council has with regards to incentivising utilities companies to carry out high-quality road repairs upon the completion of works.
45. As illustrated by results from the Task Group’s survey, and the first-hand experience of Surrey Councillors, a key concern of both Members and residents is that reinstatements carried out by utilities companies are of a poor standard and often require revisiting for repair and remedial works, causing further disruption to those who use the highway. The Task Group was therefore keen to consider this issue fully to ensure that any recommendations aimed at improving the situation would have a clear customer focus.

#### **Setting the Scene - Current Legal Powers and Obligations:**

46. Section 72 of the NRSWA empowers the County Council, as the Street Authority, to carry out investigatory works to check whether the company responsible (“statutory undertaker”) has complied with the duties placed on it in respect of reinstatement of the street.
47. Section 75 of the NRSWA requires the statutory undertaker to pay the Street Authority a prescribed fee in respect of each inspection of works carried out by the authority. A large proportion of these inspections consist of a random sample at specified stages of works. The number of sample inspections undertaken per utility company is based on 30% of the average number of works carried out over the preceding three years.

48. The determining criteria for defects are dependent upon the type of inspection undertaken. If it concerns the signing, lighting and guarding at a site then the Department for Transport (DfT) document Safety at Street Works and Road Works specifies that layout, traffic management, signage and protective equipment must be considered. If it concerns the reinstatement at a site the DfT document Specification for Reinstatement Openings in the Highway (SRoH) specifies that type of material, depth of material, compaction requirements, surface profile and verge reinstatement requirements are the key measurables.
49. The NRSWA states that a fee of £50 to recover costs can be charged to utility companies for all sample inspections undertaken by a Street Authority. If an inspection is undertaken following a third party report and a defect found, a fee of £68 may be charged to the Works Promoter. If defective reinstatements are identified during any inspection, a £47.50 fee is raised to cover officer time for each officer visit made to the site to check the defect has been rectified. Timescales for such inspections are laid out in the Code of Practice for Inspections 2002 (CoP).
50. The Street Authority also has power under section 72(1) of the NRSWA to carry out investigatory works such as core sampling, measurement of texture depth and material sampling. If these works confirm a defect then a charge of £122.75 may be imposed on the Works Promoter.
51. Where inspections show that a statutory undertaker is consistently underperforming, the Street Authority is able to issue an Improvement Notice, which requires the undertaker to improve the quality of its works and records the Authority's dissatisfaction with the undertaker's performance.

#### **Incentivising High Quality Reinstatements:**

52. The Task Group felt that the current fees charged to Works Promoters for defects found upon inspection were too low and did not incentivise utilities companies enough to carry out high quality reinstatements. Members held the view that in particular, the £50 fee charged for sample inspections was barely sufficient to cover the cost of the Council carrying out the inspection in the first place.
53. However, it was noted that an increase to this fee would require legislative changes which the current political climate may not support, and that the fee had only recently been raised from £25 in 2009. The Task Group therefore felt that a request for another increase so soon after this would be unlikely to succeed.

#### **More Effective Reporting:**

54. Although the NRSWA grants the County Council the right to inspect utility company street works, the Task Group felt that the application of this power was inflexible. The 30% sample inspection figure often had to be split on a 10/10/10 basis between inspections during the works, immediately upon completion of works and at the end of the period when the utility company's guarantee of the works expires (usually two years).



This does not allow a targeted approach that would provide more effective reporting and monitoring. Specifically, if it was known that a utility company frequently left a street work site in poor condition upon the completion of works, the NRSWA wouldn't allow the Street Authority to apply the majority of its 30% inspections at the completion phase in order to target its resources at what it regarded to be the key issue. The Task Group was therefore of the view that provision should be made for a more flexible application of inspections.

55. It was also felt that utilities companies were too reliant upon the Street Authority to inform them of defects. At present there is no requirement for these companies to carry out inspections of their own works. It is frequently the case that a defect will not be noticed and dealt with by a utility company until the Street Works Team reports it to them. To promote greater accountability and responsibility for their actions, the Task Group felt that utilities companies should be encouraged to carry-out in-house inspections of their own works.
56. The Task Group was also of the view that the quality of reinstatements could be improved through the setting of strict timescales for the repair of works deemed to be defective following inspection. At present works sponsors are only required to repair defects within a "reasonable" timescale. This is open to interpretation and again, does not provide proper incentive for utilities companies to carry out repairs at the earliest opportunity.

#### **Encouraging Change through a Joined-up Approach:**

57. The above issues are not unique to Surrey and are also likely to impact upon other local authorities. In order to bring about change the Task Group felt that rather than being "a single voice", the County Council should lobby utility company regulators with the support of others. This would ideally be done via the South East Seven (SE7) initiative and the Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee (HAUC). The former would be an effective driver for change as the Council already has an established relationship with the SE7. The initiative is also becoming well established through its work on other projects and would therefore be a high profile body whose views would very much be listened to. HAUC would also be an effective body to work with as it has been lobbying government and regulators for a number of years to bring about improvements to utility company works on the highway.
58. A key goal which lobbying via the SE7 and HAUC could achieve would be consideration of utilities companies' street works performance when regulators set prices. As highlighted in paragraph 52, current inspection fees do not adequately encourage utilities companies to consistently implement high quality reinstatements. However, if the regulators took inspection results into account when they set prices, this would be highly likely to financially incentivise utilities companies to improve their performance.
59. The Task Group was also of the opinion that a similar concept could be pursued at a more 'local' level in Surrey. Specifically, that the award of

future contracts for works on the County's highways takes utilities companies' performance into account. If for example, a company statistically proven to have experienced high rates of reinstatement inspection failure were to bid for a contract, the assessment of their bid would seriously consider their poor track record in this regard. Again, this would financially incentivise utilities companies to carry out high quality street works, as poor performance would result in them potentially losing future contracts.

60. The collation of data that would inform these decisions would also be of importance, and the Task Group was informed of current efforts by the Council's Street Works Team to embrace smarter working methods, including the use of handheld technology. This allows officers to report issues on site and helps to make the monitoring of street works sites more efficient. On this basis the Task Group supported the Street Works Team's efforts to employ smarter working practices.

### **The Local Perspective:**

61. As reflected in the results of the Task Group's Councillor survey, a positive rate of response was received from representatives of local community organisations, including Parish and Town Councils. This level of interest was borne out of the fact that poor quality reinstatements have a significant impact on towns and villages.
62. The Task Group was made aware of a willingness on the part of Districts and Boroughs, Parish and Town Councils, and known community organisations, to assist in the inspection and reporting of reinstatements. The Task Group was therefore of the view that these groups could be utilised as a valuable resource in this regard. Because they are at the "grass roots" level and represent those who experience the problems associated with poor quality reinstatements first hand, they will be motivated to report defects as soon as they arise and will have the local knowledge to monitor key areas.
63. By having these additional "eyes and ears" on the ground to report reinstatement defects, there is potential for the Street Authority's time and manpower to be redistributed elsewhere for additional support on other priorities. It is important to note however, that these groups would very much be used as an additional third party reporting resource as opposed to a replacement for Street Authority inspections.
64. For such a system to work successfully the County Council would need to ensure that there are adequate resources available at the local level. Therefore, the Task Group proposed that officers further explore the viability of implementing a process whereby Boroughs and Districts, Parish and Town Councils, and known local community organisations, can report and monitor the quality of reinstatements in their local areas to the Street Authority.

## **Viability of a Permit Scheme:**

65. In February 2013 Surrey County Council's Cabinet will decide whether Surrey adopts a permit scheme in conjunction with East Sussex County Council to apply to all works on the Council's highway. This scheme is relevant to the work of the Task Group and as a result, the Group was asked to consider its merits and shortcomings.

### **Overview:**

66. Part 3 of the TMA includes provision for Street Authorities to apply to the DfT to become a Permitting Authority. This would enable the Authority to operate a permitting system for the management of its street works. Under such a system, all works promoters, including Surrey Highways, would be required to apply for a permit to carry out works on the highway, specifying a particular timescale in which these works are to be completed. The cost of a permit would depend on where and when the works are due to be carried out. For example, a permit for works on a main road during peak hours would come at a greater charge than a permit for works on a B road outside of peak hours. These charges could be used to cover the cost of operation of the scheme but could not be profit making.

67. Surrey currently operates a noticing system whereby works promoters advise the Street Authority of their intention to carry out works. These notices are divided in to four basic types:

- Immediate notices - for emergency works. Notice is required within two hours of work commencing;
- Major works - for works taking place over a period in excess of 11 days. Three months notice is required;
- Standard works – for works taking place for a period between four and ten days. Ten days notice is required; and
- Minor works – for works taking place for a period of up to three days. Three days notice is required.

### **The View of Witnesses:**

68. To help establish the advantages and disadvantages of permit schemes, the Task Group interviewed Street Works officers from Kent and Hampshire County Councils, who operated a permit scheme and noticing system respectively.

69. The Task Group was informed that Kent had experienced a number of benefits in the management of its street works following the implementation of a permit scheme. This included better control and knowledge of activity and performance on the highway, excellent data to monitor performance, spot trends and take early remedial action, and better engagement with works promoters. Furthermore, in its first year of operation the scheme resulted in a 26% reduction in street works-related complaints and an additional 15% reduction in the second year, despite

an increase of 15% in work volume. There was also an increase from 75% to 80% of first time reinstatements.

70. The Task Group was also informed of the benefits of a robust noticing system. Hampshire County Council's Street Works Team expressed the view that if co-ordinated effectively, such a system could achieve the same results as a permit scheme. A Street Authority's use of the "duty to co-operate" power under the NRSWA is a key element in the monitoring of street works, and ultimately allows local authorities to refuse noticed works if they are dissatisfied with the proposals. The Task Group also noted that Hampshire's noticing system currently saw similar levels of over runs to permit schemes and that customer satisfaction in relation to street works management in Hampshire was in the top ten nationally.
71. The utilities companies interviewed by the Task Group were all broadly opposed to the introduction of a permit scheme in Surrey. They shared the view that an effective noticing system could achieve the same results as a permit scheme, and felt that their own internal monitoring processes were robust enough to help ensure that works were completed on time and to a high quality.

#### **The View of the Task Group:**

72. Although the Task Group recognised that there were benefits to both permit schemes and noticing systems, Members were of the view that the introduction of a permit scheme would be the most effective way to bring about improvements to the management of street works in Surrey.
73. One of the main advantages of a permit scheme would be that conditions could be attached to permits, placing clear constraints on the dates and times of activities and the way in which work is carried out. The Task Group was of the view that the use of such conditions was a key benefit in operating a permit scheme, giving utility companies clear instruction as to Surrey's expectations of their works.
74. Overrunning works were highlighted as a key concern for residents in the Task Group's survey, and as a result it was felt that this would be an important issue to tackle. Two senior Surrey MPs also contacted the Task Group, suggesting that Members investigate how the Council could impose fines on companies responsible for overrunning works more effectively, and how the Council could go about implementing a lane rental scheme. Although DfT guidance states that a Local Authority cannot implement a lane rental scheme without first adopting a permit scheme, the Task Group supported the idea of a lane rental scheme in principle, and considered this factor when deciding to approve the adoption of a permit scheme for Surrey's highways.
75. To make the operation of issuing permits or licenses as efficient as possible, the Task Group also suggested that the possibility of creating one single point for the issue of street work licenses be explored.
76. The Task Group was of the view that a permit scheme would bring about a number of improvements to the management of Surrey's street works,

in particular to co-ordination. The use of attached conditions could also enhance the concept of joint working, with works promoters being encouraged to carry out works at the same time through reduced permit costs. These were all key concerns raised by residents and Councillors, and the Task Group felt that a permit scheme would be the most effective way to address such issues.

#### **Areas with Special Conditions:**

77. A key topic of interest for the Task Group was the impact that street works and reinstatements have upon the street scene in areas with “special conditions”, such as Conservation Areas. 4,291 roads in Surrey are designated Conservation Areas, a figure which represents 22% of the Council’s total highway network. With such a high proportion of the County’s roads deemed as such, the management of street works in these areas was regarded as a priority by the Task Group.

#### **Reinstatements:**

78. Reinstatements of excavations undertaken by utilities companies are addressed by the SRoH. However, this document makes no specific reference to works in areas with special conditions. Provision is made for reinstatements in general, advising that existing materials (“modules”) should be lifted carefully and stored for re-use, and that a limited stock of modules should be retained by Local Authorities to be used by utilities companies as required.

79. Members expressed concern at instances seen first-hand, and complaints received from residents, that despite the provisions of the SRoH, materials used in reinstatements by utilities companies in areas with special conditions were often “inappropriate” and did not match existing surfacing. Again, the SRoH advises that coloured surfacing shall be permanently reinstated with like materials, though Members felt that this provision had not proved sufficient to date in incentivising utilities companies to regularly carry out reinstatements using “like for like” materials.

80. Representatives from the utilities companies interviewed by the Task Group presented the challenges they faced in using appropriate materials for reinstatements in areas with special conditions. Although these companies made significant efforts to, wherever possible, replace materials “like for like”, in some cases this was very difficult from both a financial and practical perspective. For example, finding replacement Setts or cobbles for roads that were originally laid in the 1800s, or reinstating roads for which the Local Authority has used expensive materials from abroad, often made sourcing suitable replacements very difficult.

81. The Task Group took this view into account and agreed that when the Council surfaces roads using specialist materials, consideration should be given to the ability of utilities companies to replace these materials at a reasonable cost when they carry out reinstatements. However, Members also felt that in some cases utilities companies did not make reasonable

attempts to use acceptable alternatives to existing materials, with tarmac as opposed to modern Setts being used on cobbled roads in some cases. To help resolve this issue the Task Group felt that the County Council should follow the advice given by the SROH and explore the potential for collating a limited central store of specialist surfacing materials for use in areas with special conditions that could be made available to utilities companies on a cost basis. This would seek to enable swifter and more appropriate reinstatements in Conservation Areas.

82. Although the use of appropriate materials for reinstatements was not just a concern isolated to Conservation Areas, Members felt that this issue was sometimes caused in part by the numerous tiers of subcontractors used by utilities companies. It was accepted by Members and officers that the “lower down the chain” the work got, the slimmer the margins were for profit. This had the inevitable effect of not necessarily encouraging the completion of high quality works. Officers advised that current legislation allowed for utilities companies to be accountable to the County Council for the work and actions of their contractors. This requires utilities companies to very carefully consider the merits and shortcomings of the use of subcontractors prior to the commissioning of works.
83. Further concerns raised to the Task Group were issues surrounding interim reinstatements in areas with special conditions. Although the utilities companies interviewed by the Task Group stated that significant time and resource was put in to implementing reinstatements first time, the SROH allows for temporary surface replacement and states that:
- “An interim reinstatement can be carried out that conforms to the prescribed standards until the permanent reinstatement is completed, which should be within six months”.*
84. Interim reinstatements are a particular problem in Conservation Areas because they will most likely not match the surrounding pavement by their very nature. The Task Group also noted that the Council had experienced a number of instances whereby utilities companies had failed to return to sites within the prescribed six month period to carry out the necessary permanent works. It was therefore felt that the Council should take steps to encourage the use of first time reinstatements in areas with special conditions.
85. The Task Group was also informed of a “rent a jointer” scheme. This would encourage companies to plan and complete works in a timely fashion, by requiring them to pay for the use of jointers when installing and maintaining electrical cabling. The introduction of such a scheme would be particularly timely in the context of a current national incentive to install high speed broadband across the country and the associated electrical connections to cabinets required. Given the broad scale of this project, it is likely that there will potentially be high levels of disruption to Surrey’s highways, and the Task Group was therefore of the view that a “rent a jointer” scheme should be supported in order to encourage the swift completion of such works.

### **Improved Use of Existing Reference Systems:**

86. An additional way that the quality of materials used by utilities companies in areas with special conditions could be improved is greater use of the Surrey County Council Gazetteer. The Gazetteer is a reference system used in the co-ordination of street works. It includes information such as street name and type, ownership, reinstatement categories, special designations, and special restrictions.
87. The Gazetteer does not at present include details of specialist requirements for areas with special conditions. The Task Group felt that subject to cost, the Gazetteer should be updated to include data relating to the specialist surfacing requirements in these areas. Furthermore, if utilities companies were given access to this information in advance of works, they would be better prepared for sourcing specialist materials and have sufficient time to plan for its procurement in their budgets.
88. Overall planning could be further enhanced by improved information-sharing between the County Council and utilities companies. A key issue raised by members of the public was that a road would be disrupted for a period of time by one set of works, and then a matter of days or weeks later the road would be closed again for another, separate set of works. The Task Group appreciated the frustration that this level of disruption and inconvenience causes residents and believed that where possible, utilities companies should be given better sight of the Surrey County Council street works programme at an earlier stage to encourage joint planning and working, with the aim of minimising inconvenience to road users. Encouragingly, the utilities companies interviewed by the Task Group were very supportive of this proposal and of the opinion that this could vastly improve the co-ordination of street works in Surrey.
89. The Task Group was also of the view that information regarding works should be shared with the relevant Local Member. As reflected by responses to the Councillor survey, Local Authority representatives were very much in favour of being used as a resource to communicate this information to residents. Being “on the ground” and in regular contact with local people, Councillors are an effective means of informing residents of upcoming works.

### **Inspections:**

90. A further way the quality of reinstatements in areas with special conditions could be improved would be to retain high numbers of inspections of such works. Current resource levels in Surrey County Council’s Street Works Team are designed to match sample inspection quantities and investigatory (third party report) inspections, both with associated defect inspections, major site monitoring, over-run scrutinising and customer enquiries.
91. At present, Surrey County Council’s Street Works Team has a number of officers on fixed-term contracts. Following their introduction, the number of inspections of utility company street work sites carried out has doubled, resulting in a higher number of overrunning works being challenged and a

significant reduction of outstanding queries on the Highways Service's Maximo system. This additional resource has significantly improved the Council's monitoring of utility company street works.

92. Therefore, it is suggested that a review into resource levels in the Street Works Team be considered, in particular with regards to the nature of officer contracts, to ensure that the current levels of site inspections can be maintained.

### **Improving Street Works in Areas with Special Conditions:**

93. In order to tie together the Task Group's recommendations regarding Street Works in areas with special conditions, it is proposed that a Surrey County Council "Code of Conduct" be drawn up, building on the best practice proposals outlined above. This should specifically include reference to:

- The encouragement of first time reinstatements in areas with special conditions;
- That wherever possible, statutory undertakers carefully remove and store existing materials found on site, with a view to replacing them upon the completion of works; and
- That statutory undertakers engage in greater communication with Local Members when carrying out works in their area.

94. Furthermore, the Task Group suggested that the Surrey County Council Highways Term Contract with regard to works in areas with special conditions be reviewed and adjusted as required, in-line with these recommendations.

<b>Conclusions:</b>
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95. After considering the views of residents, Councillors, utilities companies and officers, the Task Group concluded that there were a number of actions the County Council could undertake to work more effectively with utilities companies and improve the quality of street works in Surrey, with the ultimate goal of minimising the disruption caused to residents and road users. These actions can all be placed in to the following categories:

- Communication
- Monitoring and Reporting
- Adoption of a Permit Scheme
- Improved working in areas with special conditions

96. Recommendations relating to the above and how they can be achieved are set out in further detail below.

### **Financial and value for money implications:**

The recommendations put forward in this report will assist the Council in achieving value for money by improving the co-ordination of, and level of disruption caused by, street works in Surrey. This will reduce the negative



financial impacts poorly-run street works have upon businesses, residents and the highway asset itself.

### **Equalities Implications:**

No negative implications identified, however better planned and delivered utility works would improve any interaction that less able groups may experience at street work sites.

### **Risk Management Implications:**

No negative implications identified. In addition to statutory duty requirements, the public has an expectation on the Council to effectively manage road works which creates a reputational risk. The recommendations put forward in this report will further assist the Council in achieving its statutory duty and managing risks by improving the co-ordination of, and level of disruption caused by, street works in Surrey.

### **Implications for the Council's Priorities or Community Strategy:**

As detailed under "financial and value for money implications", the report's recommendations would have a positive impact upon the Council's Corporate Strategy objectives to deliver value and quality to Surrey's residents. The recommendations aim to place stricter controls on works promoters to complete their works on time and to a high standard.

<b>Recommendations:</b>
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**Recommendation 1 - That a clear and accessible internal and external communications policy with regards to the publicising of street works is developed, to include:**

- a) Clearer and easier to access information on the Surrey County Council website in relation to street works, including specific pages detailing utilities works in Surrey.
- b) A Utility Works "quick links" heading on the Council's "report it online" page.
- c) Greater use of social media.
- d) A commitment to adhere to the Council's Customer Promise, with all public reports to be acknowledged and responded to, within a reasonable timescale.
- e) The linkage of Symology to the Surrey County Council Contact Centre to improve the efficiency and speed at which general street works enquiries are dealt with.
- f) Automatic "areas of interest" alerts to be sent the relevant Local Member by the Elgin system, to enable Members to better communicate the commencement of works to residents.

**Recommendation 2 – That the process for monitoring and reporting the quality of street works be made more cost effective and efficient for the County Council, and have greater incentive for utilities companies to complete their works on time and to a high standard. Specifically:**

- a) That Surrey County Council, in conjunction with South East 7 members and the Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee, lobby utility company regulators and the Department for Transport on the following issues:
- That utility company street works performance be taken into account when setting prices;
  - That Street Authorities be granted greater flexibility in the allocation and use of inspections at various stages of street works;
  - That utility companies be encouraged to carry out in-house inspections of their own works; and
  - That a timeline for the repair of defective works be set, with penalties to be applied in cases of non-compliance.
- b) That the award of future contracts for works on the County’s highway takes into account the statistical street works performance of the companies concerned.
- c) That current efforts by Surrey County Council’s Street Works Team to embrace new handheld technology and smarter working methods be supported.
- d) That the role of Boroughs, Districts, Parish and Town Councils and other known community organisations in the inspection and reporting of reinstatements be further explored by officers.

**Recommendation 3 – That proposals to introduce a “common” permitting scheme with East Sussex County Council, to co-ordinate all works on the Surrey County Council Highway, be endorsed.**

- a) It is also suggested that the possibility be explored for the creation of one central point in the Highways Service for the issuing of street works licences.

**Recommendation 4 – That the processes around the planning, monitoring and execution of street works, particularly including areas with special conditions such as Conservation Areas, be made more effective and robust, through implementation of the following proposals:**

- a) That a Surrey County Council ‘Code of Conduct’ for street works be drawn up, building on best practice, with specific reference to the following:
- The encouragement of first time reinstatements in Conservation Areas;
  - That wherever possible, statutory undertakers carefully remove and store existing materials found on site, with a view to replacing them upon the completion of works; and
  - That statutory undertakers engage in greater communication with Local Members when carrying out works in their area.

- b) That where possible, utilities companies be given better sight of the Surrey County Council works programme at an earlier stage, to enhance joint planning and improve the overall co-ordination of works.
- c) That the Surrey County Council Gazetteer be updated to include all details relating to areas with special conditions/surfaces.
- d) That a review into resource levels in the Street Works Team be considered, in particular with regards to the nature of officer contracts, to ensure that the current levels of site inspections can be maintained.
- e) That when the County Council plans major road schemes, sufficient consideration be given to the materials used, so that they will give a similar aesthetic effect to the surrounding area but also enable utilities companies to reasonably source suitable replacements for reinstatements.
- f) That the potential for the collation of a limited central store of specialist surfacing materials by Surrey County Council be explored, containing materials that can be ordered on behalf of utilities companies on a cost basis, as required, to enable swifter and more appropriate reinstatements in Conservation Areas.
- g) That the promotion of “rent a jointer” schemes be supported, with particular reference to the forthcoming High Speed Broadband rollout.
- h) That the content of the Surrey County Council Highways Term Contract with regard to highway repairs, particularly including areas with special conditions, be reviewed and adjusted as required, in-line with the recommendations outlined above.

<b>Next steps:</b>
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Following consideration by the Select Committee, the Task Group’s report will be submitted to the Cabinet meeting of 5 February 2013 for approval.

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**Sources/background papers:**

- DfT document: Specification for Reinstatement Openings in the Highway
- New Roads and Street Works Act (1991)
- New Roads and Street Works Act Code of Practice for Inspections, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (2002)
- Traffic Management Act (2004)

Annexe A – Glossary of terms

Annexe B – List of witnesses/consultees

Annexe C – Survey analysis

**Glossary of terms:**

CoP – Code of Practice for Inspections (2002)

DfT – Department for Transport

HAUC – Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee

NRSWA – New Roads and Street Works Act (1991)

SE7 – South East Seven

SRoH – Specification for Reinstatement Openings in the Highway

TMA – Traffic Management Act (2004)

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**Witnesses interviewed by the Task Group:**

- BT Openreach
- Hampshire County Council
- Kent County Council
- Morrisons
- Southern Gas Networks
- Sutton and East Surrey Water
- Thames Water
- UK Power Networks

**Consulted:**

- Borough and District Representatives
- County Councillors
- Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee
- Members of the public
- Parish and Town Councils
- Surrey Association of Local Councils

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## The Co-ordination and Quality of Work of Utilities Companies in Surrey: Survey Analysis

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Environment and Transport Select Committee established a Task Group in September 2012 to review the issues caused as a result of utility companies conducting works on the County's highways. The Task Group sought collect the views of County Councillors, Borough and District representatives and Parish Clerks through the use of a survey. Members of the public and Surrey MPs were also invited to send comments for consideration by the Task Group.
- 1.2. In particular, the Task Group sought information on communications by utility companies, the quality of streetworks, the quality of reinstatements, and how improvements could be achieved.
- 1.3. This report presents an analysis of the information collated from the stakeholders listed above. There were a number of open questions included within the survey so there has been some interpretation of responses and the analysis here simply aims to highlight some of the themes identified.
- 1.4. The information given was confidential to the Task Group and personal identities are not included in the report.

### 2. Main Findings

- 2.1. The main findings of this analysis of the information collated from stakeholders are:
  - The majority of local authority representatives surveyed felt that communications from utilities companies in advance of streetworks taking place and during works were poor.
  - Respondents called for better local targeting of information about planned streetworks, including giving direct notice to local households and businesses, and putting notices in local papers. Greater detail, including contact details and accurate timescales for work, was also requested.
  - There was strong support for using Councillors, and in particular Parish Councils, as a resource in communicating streetworks carried out by utilities companies in Surrey.
  - While a majority of County Councillors rated the management of streetworks, including tidiness and traffic management as poor, this view was less strongly emphasised at the local level. The need for traffic management to be responsive to different traffic flows at different times of the day was highlighted.

- A majority of County Councillors also viewed the quality of reinstatements as poor. This attitude is less strongly stated at the local level, although it is worth stating that the majority of Parish and Borough/District respondents did not rate reinstatements as good. The majority of responses from the public also commented on inadequate reinstatements and the need for post-works inspection. Local authority representatives highlighted the deterioration of some reinstatements over time and suggested a need for better checks and enforcement by Highways Officers.
- Local authority representatives outlined some of the common issues raised by residents through complaints. These included the quality of reinstatements, inadequate communications (including no prior notice and poor signage), the time taken for works and the lack of visible progress by contractors.
- Further comments from local authority representatives highlighted the monitoring and enforcement responsibilities of the Highways department, the need to improve co-ordination of works and proposals regarding permit and penalty schemes. Surrey MP respondents also backed the use of permit or penalty schemes to incentivise utility companies to carry out their works quickly and with minimal disruption.

### 3. Collecting Views

- 3.1. A questionnaire was circulated to all County Council Members on 25 September 2012. Members were invited to respond online via SurveyMonkey or by downloading a form which could then be emailed or sent back by hard copy. A reminder was sent out on 19 October and the survey closed on 26 October 2012. In total, 28 responses were received from 80 Members, which represents a 35% return.
- 3.2. A questionnaire was also circulated to Borough and District Chief Executives, Borough and District portfolio holders (where relevant), and Parish Council Clerks who were asked to respond on behalf of their councillors. While there were no responses from Chief Executives, three of the 11 Portfolio holders returned a questionnaire, representing a 27% return. There were 21 responses from the 81 Parish Council Clerks, which represents a 26% return.
- 3.3. The standard return rate for a postal questionnaire is 14% so the responses from the County Councillors, Parish Council Clerks and Borough/District representatives reflects a higher than average return. As only three responses were received from the Borough and District Councils, the data has been collated with the Parish Council data to give a 'local perspective'.
- 3.4. Members of the public were invited to send comments independent of the survey through a press release which was picked up by a number of local and national media outlets including the BBC, Surrey Herald and an article on the Surrey County Council website. Fifteen responses were received and these are analysed in detail

under section 7.

- 3.5. All Surrey MPs were invited to submit comments and responses were received from Michael Gove (MP for Surrey Heath and Secretary of State for Education) and Chris Grayling (MP for Epsom and Ewell and Secretary of State for Justice).

#### 4. Communications

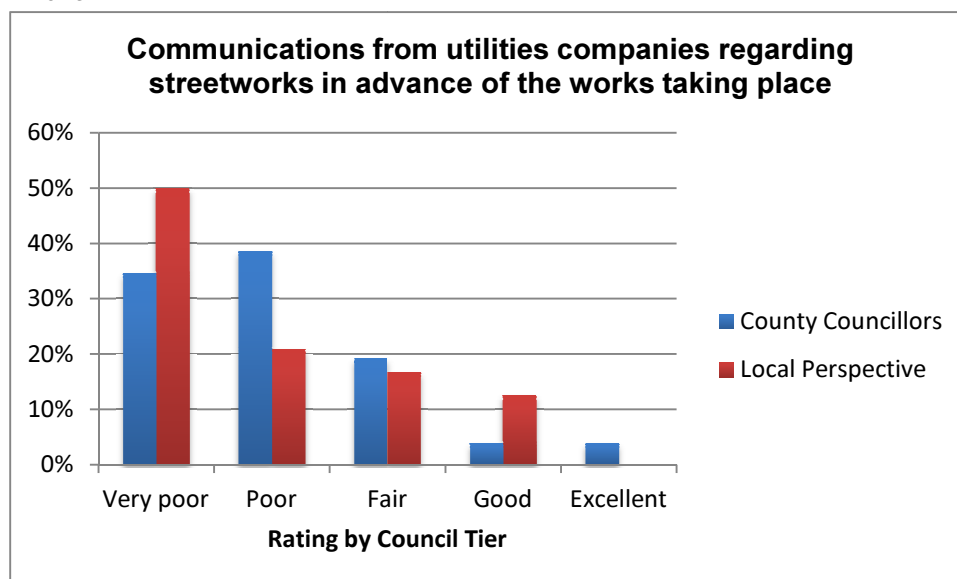
##### 4.1. Rating Existing Communications

- 4.1.1. Respondents were first asked about communications from utilities companies to their council and to local residents. They were asked to rate communications both prior to works taking place and during works on a scale of 1-5 (1 being poor, 5 being excellent). This scale has been specified below as relating to the typical scale: 1=very poor; 2=poor; 3=fair; 4=good; 5=excellent.
- 4.1.2. A clear majority of respondents rated the communication to the Council and residents from utilities companies regarding streetworks in advance of the works taking place as poor or very poor. This included 73.1% of the County Councillor respondents and 70.8% of Parish and Borough/District Council respondents. Two County Councillors did not respond to this question.
- 4.1.3. The detailed analysis is given in Table 1, while Chart 1 clearly shows that the opinion of the majority is that communications in advance of works taking place is poor.

**Table 1**

<b>Q1a On a scale of 1-5 (1 being poor, 5 being excellent), how would you rate the communication to the Council and residents from utilities companies regarding streetworks in advance of the works taking place?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>County Councillors</b>	34.6% (9)	38.5% (10)	19.2% (5)	3.8% (1)	3.8% (1)
<b>'Local Perspective'</b>	50.0% (12)	20.8% (5)	16.7% (4)	12.5% (3)	0% (0)

Chart 1



4.1.4. The picture regarding communications during streetworks is very slightly improved. There are fewer County Councillors who rate communication as poor during than in advance of the works (61.6% down from 73.1%). However, they have been more likely to give the middle rating (up to 34.6% from 19.2%) suggesting that communications during works isn't considered as being good. Two County Councillors did not respond to this question.

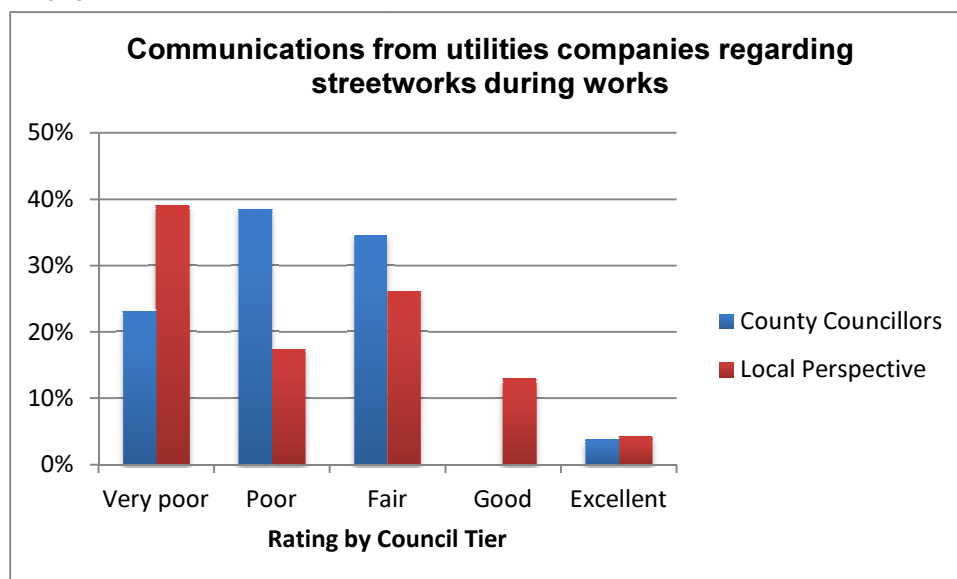
4.1.5. Just over half (56.5%) of Parish and Borough/District respondents rated communications during works as poor or very poor (down from 70.8% who rated communications in advance of works as poor). One 'local respondent' did not answer this question.

4.1.6. The detailed analysis is given in Table 2, while chart 2 shows that there is a slightly more even spread of opinion from very poor to fair, although very few respondents view communications during works to be good.

Table 2

Q1b On a scale of 1-5 (1 being poor, 5 being excellent), how would you rate the communication to the Council and residents from utilities companies regarding streetworks during works?	1	2	3	4	5
County Councillors	23.1% (6)	38.5% (10)	34.6% (9)	0% (0)	3.8% (1)
'Local Perspective'	39.1% (9)	17.4% (4)	26.1% (6)	13.0% (3)	4.3% (1)

Chart 2



- 4.1.7. Respondents were asked to provide any further comments about communications from utilities companies. Eleven County Councillors responded to this request. Six indicated that communications were always poor. A few of the responses highlighted the difficulties for residents in finding out about streetworks and some suggested that more information could be provided to County Councillors from the Highways Service. One Member highlighted the fortnightly Highways Bulletin which gives some information about upcoming streetworks but asked that this be expanded to include information on what type of works they were, how much of a road would be affected or whether a road closure would be involved. The Member also pointed out that the start date given is often a guesstimate.
- 4.1.8. Sixteen Parish and Borough/District Councils responded to this request. None mentioned receiving notice from utilities companies although a few did receive Council updates or used the Council website for information about planned or ongoing works. There was a general view that more information could be provided on planned utilities works both in advance and during the works being carried out. It was suggested that the information provided was often too vague to be of use e.g. better information on how long works will take, the use of postcodes could help roads to be identified in rural areas more easily. There was concern expressed about the lack of communications channels with the utilities companies during works. While there was mention of signs not being visible, one respondent highlighted a case where the utilities company ignored requests for contact or referred residents to the County Highways Service.

## 4.2. Improving Communications

- 4.2.1. Respondents were then asked if they had any specific suggestions as to how communication to the Council and residents from utilities companies regarding streetworks could be improved.
- 4.2.2. Twenty-two County Councillors responded to this query with a variety of options for improvement. One of the most commonly mentioned options was a need for better local targeting of information (by six or 27% of respondents). This could include giving direct notice to households, putting notices in local newspapers, shops etc, or using elected representatives, including Parish Councils. Better information about timescales for streetworks was also mentioned in just over a quarter of responses (six). There were also calls for accurate and updated advance notice signs which don't always appear at present. A number of Councillors mentioned the use of IT solutions, from ensuring that information on the Council website is up to date and accurate to allowing residents to be updated when activity is planned for certain roads.
- 4.2.3. Just over half of the 22 Parish and Borough/District Councils who responded to this question (12) requested that they be given advance notice of non-emergency utilities streetworks in order to pass on information. Nearly half (9) also mentioned the need for local targeting of information and 23% (5) highlighted the need for better information on timescales, as well as the need to keep to published timescales.

## 4.3. Councillor Involvement in Communications

- 4.3.1. Respondents were asked whether Councillors could be better used as a resource in communicating streetworks carried out by utilities companies in Surrey. This was strongly supported by County Councillors with 60% saying "yes" and also at Parish and Borough/District level with 79.2% of respondents saying "yes". Three County Councillors did not answer this question. See Table 3 for the figures.

**Table 3**

<b>Q3 Do you think that Councillors could be better used as a resource in communicating streetworks carried out by utilities companies in Surrey?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>County Councillors</b>	60.0% (15)	40.0% (10)
<b>'Local Perspective'</b>	79.2% (19)	20.8% (5)

- 4.3.2. Respondents were asked to make any further comments. Eighteen County Councillors made further comments. While 15% (4) Members expressed the view that communicating such information is an officer role, 42% requested advance notice so that they could disseminate information within their area.

4.3.3. Twenty-one Parish and Borough/District Councils made further comments. The majority of respondents (16 or 76.2%) mentioned that if they were provided with accurate and updated information, they would be able to disseminate the information via local networks. 14% (3) of respondents also suggested that if notice was given early enough in advance, they would be able to provide local information to the utilities companies and improve the decision making process.

## 5. Quality of Streetworks

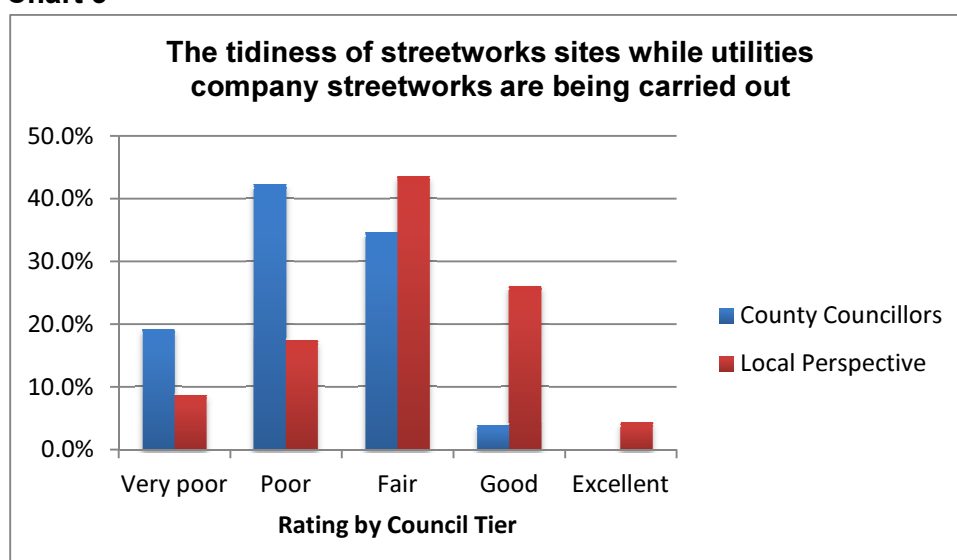
### 5.1. Management of Streetworks

5.1.1. Respondents were asked to rate the tidiness of utility company streetworks sites as works are being carried out on a scale of 1-5 (1 being poor, 5 being excellent). A majority (61.5%) of responding County Councillors felt that the tidiness of streetworks sites was poor. Two County Councillors did not respond to this question. However, there was a more even spread of responses at the local level, with 26.1% of Parish and Borough/District Councils rating tidiness of sites as poor but 30.4% rating this aspect as good. One respondent did not answer this question. Table 4 gives a breakdown of the figures and Chart 3 demonstrates the spread of responses at the local level.

**Table 4**

<b>Q4a On a scale of 1-5 (1 being poor, 5 being excellent), how would you rate the tidiness of streetworks sites while utilities company streetworks are being carried out in Surrey?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>County Councillors</b>	19.2% (5)	42.3% (11)	34.6% (9)	3.8% (1)	0.0% (0)
<b>'Local Perspective'</b>	8.7% (2)	17.4% (4)	43.5% (10)	26.1% (6)	4.3% (1)

**Chart 3**

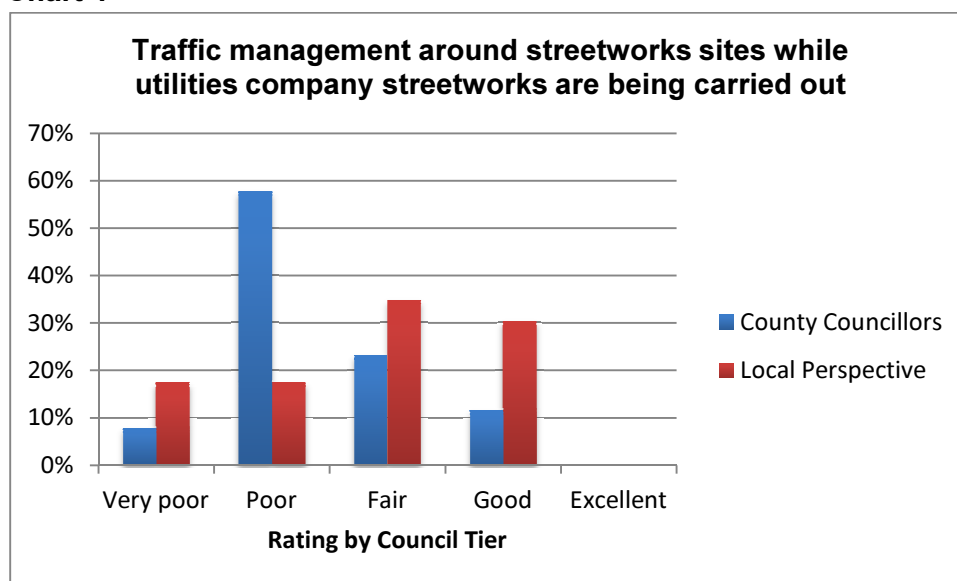


5.1.2. In response to the question of how respondents would rate the traffic management around streetworks sites while utilities company streetworks are being carried out in Surrey, there was a similar pattern to the previous question. A majority (65.4%) of County Councillors rated traffic management during streetworks as poor. Again, two County Councillors did not respond to this question. At the local level, while 34.8% of Parish and Borough/District Councils rated traffic management as poor, almost as many (30.4%) rated this as good. One respondent did not answer this question. A breakdown of the figures can be seen in Table 5 and the spread of responses can be seen in Chart 4.

Table 5

Q4b On a scale of 1-5 (1 being poor, 5 being excellent), how would you rate the traffic management around streetworks sites while utilities company streetworks are being carried out in Surrey?	1	2	3	4	5
<b>County Councillors</b>	7.7% (2)	57.7% (15)	23.1% (6)	11.5% (3)	0.0% (0)
<b>'Local Perspective'</b>	17.4% (4)	17.4% (4)	34.8% (8)	30.4% (7)	0.0% (0)

Chart 4





5.1.3. Respondents were asked to make further comments on the management of streetworks while they are being carried out. There were ten responses from County Councillors, which raised a variety of issues, including: patchy reinstatements; variable quality of streetworks management with larger works tending to be better managed than smaller works; streetworks sites causing traffic problems which are left unattended for long periods; traffic lights are not phased to reflect the time of day or traffic volumes; messy footway works which are dangerous for pedestrians; and lack of co-ordination between utility companies and Surrey Highways.

5.1.4. There were 16 responses from Parish and Borough/District Councils. 44% (7) of responses mentioned problems with traffic management, including the need to be responsive to different traffic flows at different times of the day. It was suggested that by using local knowledge, better traffic management decisions could be taken. 31% (5) of responses mentioned untidiness. It was requested that mud, debris and any materials not being used be cleared away regularly.

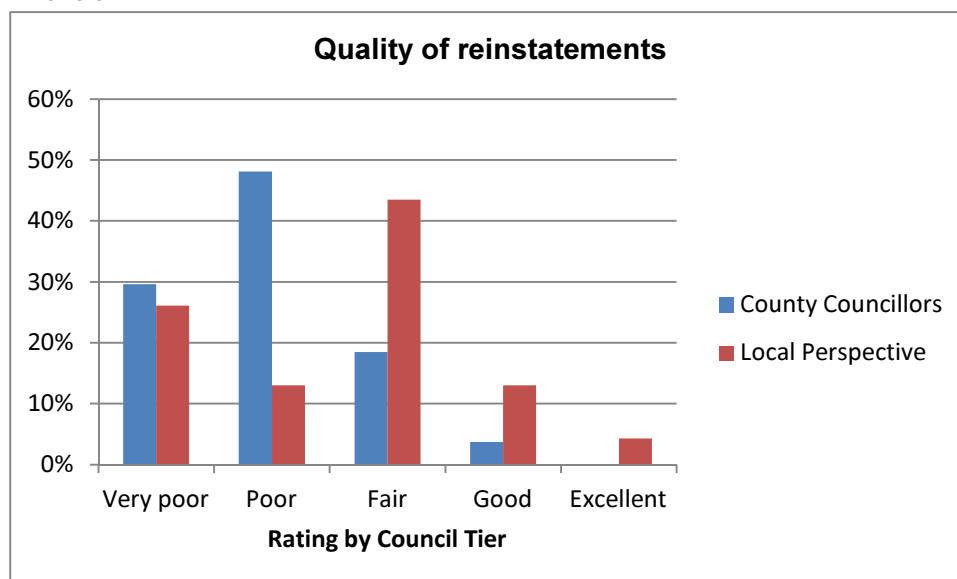
## 5.2. Quality of Reinstatements

5.2.1. Respondents were asked to rate the quality of reinstatements upon completion of utility company streetworks in Surrey. A clear majority (77%) of County Councillors viewed reinstatements as poor, whereas a slim majority (43.5%) of Parish and Borough/District Councils rated reinstatements as midway between poor and excellent. 39.1% of local respondents rated reinstatements as poor. One County Councillor and one local respondent did not answer this question.

**Table 6**

<b>Q5 On a scale of 1-5 (1 being poor, 5 being excellent), how would you rate the quality of reinstatements upon completion of utility company streetworks in Surrey?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>County Councillors</b>	29.6% (8)	48.1% (13)	18.5% (5)	3.7% (1)	0.0% (0)
<b>'Local Perspective'</b>	26.1% (6)	13.0% (3)	43.5% (10)	13.0% (3)	4.3% (1)

Chart 5



5.2.2. Respondents were asked to make further comments on the quality of reinstatements. Sixteen County Councillors made further comments all of which relate to the variable quality of reinstatements. A quarter of these Councillors (4) specify problems relating to the deterioration of reinstatements over time. 44% (7) of comments concern a perceived need for better checks and enforcement by Highways Officers. A request for better information for residents on when a reinstatement will take place and who the contacts are, harks back to the responses on poor communications from utilities companies.

5.2.3. Thirteen Parish and Borough/District respondents made further comments on the quality of reinstatements. Again comments related to the variable quality of reinstatements with some respondents suggesting that major contractors were better at reinstatement than smaller developers. Two respondents highlighted problems with temporary reinstatements that are left indefinitely. 38% (5) of local respondents also highlight the problems with deteriorating reinstatements, with potholes and subsidence becoming a particular issue. Two local respondents also raise concern about local features which communities have campaigned for or financially sponsored not being replaced e.g. quiet, non-skid surfaces and character lamp standards.

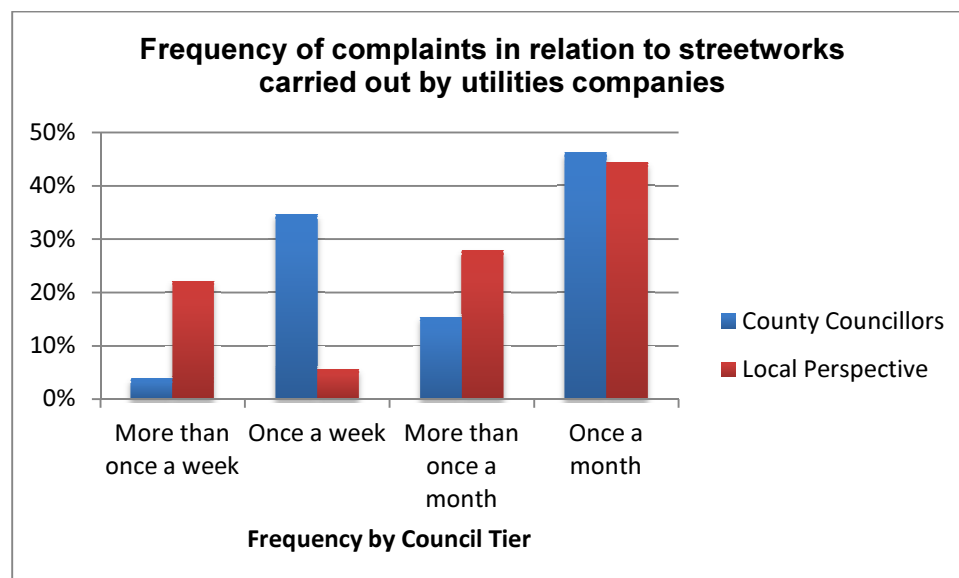
### 5.3. Complaints

5.3.1. Respondents were asked to estimate how frequently they receive complaints from residents in relation to streetworks being carried out by utilities companies in Surrey. While there was a range of responses from once a month to more than once a week, over 40% of all respondents (46.2% of County Councillors and 44.4% of local respondents) stated that they receive complaints once a month. Two County Councillors and six local respondents did not answer this question.

Table 7

Q6 On average, how frequently do you receive complaints from residents in relation to streetworks being carried out by utilities companies in Surrey?	More than once a week	Once a week	More than once a month	Once a month
County Councillors	3.8% (1)	34.6% (9)	15.4% (4)	46.2% (12)
'Local Perspective'	22.2% (4)	5.6% (1)	27.8% (5)	44.4% (8)

Chart 6



5.3.2. Respondents were then asked what were the most common issues raised through complaints by residents. Seventeen County Councillors responded with a variety of issues. 53% of these responses (9) highlighted the quality of reinstatements and 41% (7) mentioned inadequate communications, including no prior notice and poor signage, as cause for complaints. The time taken for works and the perceived lack of progress by contractors were both mentioned by 29% (5) of County Councillor respondents as common issues raised through complaints. Councillors also highlighted: the quality and untidiness of streetworks; not removing signs and debris following works; traffic management; poor working practices such as not using protective helmets/goggles; a lack of regard for pedestrian safety; and a lack of co-ordination between utilities companies in scheduling streetworks.

- 5.3.3. Of the 24 local responses about complaints, 29% (7) relate to the frequency of complaints. Many point out that complaints come only when there are streetworks taking place in the local parish/borough/district. One Parish Clerk states that they have never received complaints about streetworks carried out by utilities companies. Previous responses indicate that they have had relatively few streetworks taking place within their parish area over recent years. One Borough/District Portfolio holder suggests that generally residents know that highways are a county matter and so complaints are directed at that level.
- 5.3.4. With regard to issues raised through complaints, the comments of Parish Clerks and Borough/District representatives mirror those of County Councillors. 37% (9) highlighted the quality of reinstatements and 29% (7) mentioned inadequate communications, including no prior notice and poor signage. Other issues mentioned include: time taken for the work; lack of visible progress; traffic management; not removing signs and debris following works; a lack of regard for pedestrian safety; and a lack of co-ordination between utilities companies in scheduling streetworks. Two respondents stated that utilities companies not taking action on complaints from residents was a source of complaints then directed at them.

## 6. Good Practice

- 6.1. Respondents were asked if they have any examples of good practice from their division/ward that could improve the communication and co-ordination of streetworks carried out by utilities companies in Surrey.
- 6.2. Nineteen County Councillors responded to this query, although 58% (11) of these responses were to state that they did not have any examples of good practice to share. Two responses could be categorised as suggestions rather than examples – that Members be used better to communicate information about upcoming streetworks, and that utilities companies be fined for not tidying up following streetworks. One Member highlighted their own good practice in emailing resident associations with information from the Highways Bulletin. Five Councillors identified good practice in their area related to good communications, including local targeting of information through letters to affected households and the utility manager calling on local residents. Comments included:

“SGN were excellent in Haslemere ... recently in terms of holding meetings with ‘all parties’ and maintaining an ongoing dialogue for the completion of the works”.

“Skanska’s replacement of the old yellow street lights. Their work has been exemplary, from notifying residents to finishing and making good”.

- 6.3. Twenty-one Parish and Borough/District Councils responded to this query, although again 38% (8) of responses were to state that they did not have any examples of good practice. Four responses could be categorised as suggestions - that communications be improved between all parties and that bureaucracy not place unnecessary restrictions on contractors or prevent necessary communications with affected businesses. Five respondents highlighted examples of good communications, including advance notice through the Highways department, advance and detailed signs in location, and exchanges of information between all parties. Two respondents mentioned utilities companies and the Highways department addressing complaints quickly and efficiently. One respondent highlighted the good practice within their parish of using a variety of communications technologies to forward information about streetworks.
- 6.4. Respondents were asked if they had any further comments that they would like to be considered. Twelve County Councillors made further statements. Five raised the role of the Highways department, requesting contact details, asking that Members be told who authorised utility streetworks, and highlighting the enforcement responsibilities of the department. Five Members also suggested imposing permit and penalty schemes to ensure that works are completed quickly and are completed to a good quality. The need for better co-ordination of works and good communications were also raised.
- 6.5. Eleven Parish and Borough/District Councils made further comments. Four respondents highlighted the role of the Highways department in communicating to affected residents and businesses, and its responsibilities in regard to monitoring and enforcement. Three respondents proposed permit and penalty schemes such as the reintroduction of "road renting" rules to speed up works. Other comments included the need to improve co-ordination between utilities companies and across boundaries, the need to improve communications between all parties, the length of time that some works take and the lack of visible progress, and the need for contractors to remove signs and debris at the end of a project.

## **7. Public Feedback**

- 7.1. Members of the public were invited to feed views into the review through the use of a press release and an article on the Surrey County Council website. Fifteen responses were received. A summary of the responses is given below and reflect the issues raised by County Councillors, Parish Council Clerks and Borough/District Portfolio holders.
- 7.2. The majority of responses from the public commented on a lack of post-works inspection. Many felt that patch repairs were often inadequate and that this led to an increase in road maintenance work by the Council. It was also highlighted that sites were left untidy, or equipment was left behind after the works had been completed. Several of the respondents indicated that they were in favour of closer regulation of utility company repairs by the council, including a standard application and post-works inspection procedure.

7.3. Other concerns raised by public responses included:

- The number of different works being carried out in the same area within a short period.
- The increase in commuting time as a result of streetworks.
- Works being left unattended for significant amounts of time.
- The lack of clear information about who was responsible for the site.

7.4. One respondent highlighted that works were often extended without suitable warning, therefore creating a further impact on delays caused by traffic management. Areas identified as subject to significant delays included Ewell and Ash.

7.5. Public responses to the consultation frequently expressed that they were in favour of a review.

## **8. MP Comments**

8.1. All 11 Surrey MPs were invited to submit comments to the Streetworks Review and responses were received from Michael Gove (MP for Surrey Heath and Secretary of State for Education) and Chris Grayling (MP for Epsom and Ewell and Secretary of State for Justice).

8.2. Chris Grayling highlighted the lack of a mechanism to encourage contractors to complete planned works within their estimated time frame, which has led to significant over-runs on a number of occasions. He asked that the task group investigate what powers exist for the county to impose a penalty system so that contractors can be charged for over-runs in some circumstances.

8.3. Michael Gove stressed his support for the 'lane rental' schemes piloted by the department for Transport, which would also provide an incentive for utility companies to carry out their works quickly and with minimal disruption.



Environment and Transport Select Committee  
10 January 2013

**Proposal for the Introduction of a Permit Scheme under the  
Traffic Management Act 2004**

**Purpose of the report:** Policy Development and Review

The Select Committee is asked to comment on the proposed introduction of a permit scheme for Surrey, prior to consideration by Cabinet in February 2013.

**Introduction:**

1. Surrey County Council is committed to reducing congestion and disruption caused by road works. To assist in achieving this outcome the authority is proposing the introduction of a permit scheme, within current legislative requirements, which would provide an improved alternative to regulating and coordinating road works on Surrey's road network.
2. A decision as to whether the Council will adopt a permit scheme will be taken by Cabinet in February 2013. Prior to this the Select Committee is asked to consider the attached report (**annexe A**) and provide comment.

**Recommendations:**

- a) That the Select Committee endorses the proposal to introduce a permit scheme for Surrey, subject to a successful consultation outcome and successful application to the Department for Transport; and
- b) That the Select Committee comments on the proposal to introduce a permit scheme for Surrey, prior to Cabinet decision in February 2013.

**Next steps:**

Following consideration by the Select Committee, a decision as to whether a permit scheme will be adopted by Surrey County Council will be taken by Cabinet in February 2013.

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**Sources/background papers:**

None.



<b>Section 151 Finance cleared on:</b>	<b>xx/xx/12</b>
<b>Strategic Director cleared on:</b>	<b>xx/xx/12</b>
<b>Cabinet Member cleared on:</b>	<b>xx/xx/12</b>

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**DATE: 5 FEBRUARY 2013**

**REPORT OF: MR JOHN FUREY, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT**

**LEAD OFFICER: TREVOR PUGH STRATEGIC DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE**

**SUBJECT: TACKLING TRAFFIC CONGESTION - INTRODUCTION OF A ROAD WORKS PERMIT SCHEME**



## **DRAFT PAPER**

### **SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Surrey County Council (SCC) is committed to reducing congestion and disruption caused by road works. To assist in achieving this outcome the authority is proposing the introduction of a permit scheme, within current legislative requirements, which would provide an improved alternative to regulating and coordinating road works on Surrey's road network.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that:

1. Surrey County Council introduces a Permit Scheme as set out in this report subject to a successful consultation outcome and a successful application to the Department for Transport (DfT).
2. Further authorisation on the details of the Permit Scheme be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport in consultation with the Assistant Director Highways.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In practice there are limited controls available under current legislation for the local authority to control the coordination of road works. The introduction of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) was intended to give more powers to local authorities to do this and has provided a range of different measures which includes permit schemes. It is recommended that the authority take advantage of the new powers to introduce a permit scheme under the TMA in order to increase our control of road works. This greater control would also allow for increased integration of utility works with those road works promoted by the Council. The overall aim of the permit scheme being to contribute more effectively to minimising congestion across the whole of the road network in Surrey.

## **DETAILS:**

### **Introduction**

1. It is estimated that currently over 40,000 excavations take place annually in the County to enable various types of road and street works to be carried out. These excavations can cause considerable inconvenience to residents and businesses and substantial delays to traffic. Effective coordination is therefore essential to minimise disruption whilst allowing works promoters the necessary time and space to complete their work.
2. Highway Authorities have a duty to co-ordinate all works on the highway under the New Roads & Street works Act 1991 (NRSWA). Under the current regulations, Statutory Undertakers (SU) are only required to notify the Highway Authority when they need to undertake repairs or improvements to their apparatus. Other than co-ordinate their works with other SUs and the Council's own schemes, the NRSWA provides limited powers to the Council as highway authority to control the way in which the works are completed. For example under a notification process the Council has limited control of when works start and finish, which can also hinder our capability to inspect works in progress, and also limits opportunities to promote integration or joint working.
3. The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) places a new Network Management Duty on all Highway Authorities in England. This Duty is defined in Section 16(1) of the TMA:

*'It is the duty of a local traffic authority to manage their road network with a view to achieving, so far as may be reasonably practicable having regard to their other obligations, policies and objective, the following objectives:*

*i) Securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network; and,*

*ii) Facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority.'*

### **Options and Impact**

4. Under Part 3 of the Act, highway authorities can apply to the Secretary of State to operate a Permit Scheme as an alternative to the notification system of the NRSWA. Permit schemes differ from existing powers for managing activities on the street in a number of key respects:
  - (i) rather than informing the highway authority of their intentions, SUs will need to book occupation of the highway for specified periods and for a specified purpose;
  - (ii) conditions which impose constraints on the dates and times of activities and the way that work is carried out can be attached to permits by the highway authority;
  - (iii) the highway authority's control over variations to the permit conditions, particularly time extensions, should give a greater incentive to complete activities on time.

5. Under the current legislation there is therefore the opportunity to invoke greater powers to manage works and activities on the highway and so the Council has two options. To maintain the current process of formal notification or to introduce a permit scheme and apply further powers to improve coordination.
6. Benefits have already been seen from Permit Schemes which are already in operation across London and in Kent County Council. The report on the first year of operation of the London Permit Scheme (LoPS), which as 'Tranche 1' was operated by 17 London Boroughs and Transport for London (TfL) highlighted ;
  - a. An increase of 147% in the number of recorded days of disruption saved through collaborative working, from 726 days to 1793 days
  - b. An increased discipline amongst Highway Authorities in recording their own works, leading to a 237% increase in formally recorded works, providing more opportunity for collaboration and better public information through the 'Londonworks' website.
  - c. A 17% reduction in the volume of works undertaken (compared against a 7% reduction in non-permitting London Authorities at that time)
  - d. Better quality of works information available to make considered coordination decisions
  - e. Delivery of a large percentage of the expected benefits for average journey time and journey reliability times
7. The success of LoPS has seen other Boroughs join the scheme and the final 'Tranche 4' of LoPS will mean that all London Boroughs operate LoPS from March 2013 onwards.
8. The Kent CC Permit Scheme was the first scheme introduced outside of London, commencing shortly after LoPS. Benefits outlined in the first year of operation included;
  - a. A 26% reduction in complaints about 'congestion and Coordination
  - b. A significant reduction in the volume of 'street works enquiries' from the public
  - c. In excess of 1500 total number of days saved as a result of collaborative working (monetised benefit to travelling public of c£1m)
  - d. 5% increase in the number of 'first time' reinstatements (75% to 80%)
  - e. Significant cultural change in respect of pre-planning and coordination of works – especially of Kent CC's own highways works, limiting disruption and providing safer roadworks.
9. A recent Environment and Transport Select Committee Task Group has considered the introduction of a permit scheme as part of a wider overview of utility works. The merits and shortcomings of a permit scheme were explored

and the recommendation made, by the Task Group, to endorse the introduction of a permit scheme in Surrey.

10. Although Highway Authorities are not obliged to introduce a Permit Scheme, if they do the legislation requires permits to be issued for all works on the highway that involve excavation, whether they are road works undertaken by their own contractors or SUs street works. This means that utility works and works promoted by this council will be treated in exactly the same way in terms of coordination and setting conditions.
11. Under a permit scheme any works promoter who wishes to carry out any registerable activity in a road or street must obtain a Permit from the relevant Permit Authority operating a scheme first. The Permit allows the promoter to carry out the specified activity and will set out the location, start and finish dates, duration and any specific conditions that may be required. The permit scheme does not apply to work promoters that are not statutory authorities (e.g. developers, building firms and domestic drainage companies) and in these cases street works will continue to be applied for through an application for a Street Works Licence under section 50 of NRSWA.
12. The NRSWA requires highway authorities to administer the works notification system at their own expense, with charges only being applied for inspections, defective reinstatements or over-running works. Although permit schemes are not intended to generate revenue for highway authorities, they are expected to cover their reasonable costs incurred in running the scheme through charging a permit fee. The regulations outline the maximum level at which an authority can set their fees and fees will only apply to utility works. Fees cannot be charged for issuing a permit for a highway authority's own works, neither can the costs involved in issuing these permits be off-set against the fee income.
13. In order to operate a permit scheme the Council must apply to the Department of Transport to do so. The permit scheme will then be established by an individual order in the form of a statutory instrument.
14. In terms of future potential for further control over road and street works via the operation of a lane rental scheme, the current legislation requires that the local authority operate a permit scheme prior to considering the introduction of a lane rental scheme. It should be noted that the lane rental option is currently being piloted in Kent & Transport for London (TfL) and the DfT will review the success of these schemes before considering a wider application.

## **Proposal**

15. The proposal for Surrey County Council is to introduce a permit scheme which has been developed as a common scheme in conjunction with East Sussex County Council (ESCC). The common aspect of the scheme relates to a single set of rules that would apply in running the scheme in the individual authorities and increases the potential for compliance by shared or regional works promoters. Each participating authority in a common scheme would act independently in operating the scheme and would remain financially independent in terms of the fee structure
16. It is proposed the permit scheme being operated by the Council would be given the title of the South East Permit Scheme (SEPS). Applying a wider

title than just the authority name enables other authorities in the region to join this common permit scheme in the future should they be interested. This approach has been used for various other permit schemes across the country and provides further opportunity for consistency across a region and thereby compliance by works promoters.

17. The SEPS has been prepared by representatives from both SCC and ESCC in accordance with the statutory duties in the TMA and the objectives are to:
  - a. Provide an environment to help each of the Permit Authorities operating the SEPS to meet their network management duty,
  - b. Support us in seeking to minimise disruption and inconvenience by encouraging good practices, mutual and collaborative working arrangements and a focus on co-ordination and getting it right,
  - c. Encourage a high emphasis on safety for everyone including site operatives and all other road users with special emphasis on people with disabilities,
  - d. Emphasise the need to minimise damage to the structure of the highway and all apparatus contained therein,
  - e. Provide a common framework for all activity promoters who need to carry out their works in the applicable region,
  - f. Treat all activities covered by the scheme and activity promoters on an equal basis.
  
18. In operating a permit scheme, officers will be required to consider the content and potential impact of permit applications from works promoters, and challenge or give approval to the application. In coming to a decision various aspects will be considered including, but not limited to, the following;
  - a. The road network capacity
  - b. The scope for collaborative working arrangements
  - c. The optimum timing of activities from all aspects
  - d. The effect on traffic, in particular, the need for temporary traffic restrictions or prohibitions
  - e. Appropriate techniques and arrangements, particularly at difficult road junctions and pinch points
  - f. The working arrangements required in protected and traffic sensitive streets, and streets with special engineering difficulties
  
19. Where there are identified difficulties, officers will discuss these with the works promoter and, where possible, agree an acceptable way forward. In doing so the Council may elect to include specific conditions in a permit to ensure the work is carried out in such a way as to minimise disruption and inconvenience particularly to local businesses and residents.

20. The SEPS will require that permit applications are necessary for all statutory authority promoted works being carried out on the highway. Given the constant volume of works being carried out across the network it is not feasible to apply the same level of scrutiny to every permit application that the council would receive. On this basis, and in accordance with other operational permit schemes, permit applications for the more disruptive works on main roads and traffic sensitive streets will receive more scrutiny and be charged a 'permit fee'.
21. Whilst SCC currently has officers reviewing road works notices under the present legislation, the increased scrutiny required for incoming permits will necessitate the recruitment of additional officers. This identified increase in resource level follows good practice by other authorities operating a successful permit scheme. Additional officer and system costs will be met by the fee income generated by a permit scheme and although we do not know the exact level of resource required at present it is estimated that an additional eight full time members of staff will be required to process permit applications as described. The additional resource requirement is subject to consultation outcomes and the DfT response and will be confirmed following the finalisation of the SEPS.
22. In order to proceed with the permit scheme proposal, the cost benefit of a introducing a permit scheme was calculated. This was achieved by used traffic modelling software in order to determine the impact on traffic resulting from works on the highway. Based on the current levels of work, the estimated cost of congestion associated with road works was calculated at £98.8m per annum across the county. By introducing a permit scheme in Surrey it is estimated that annual benefit of a 4.4% reduction in road works will be achieved, which equates to a £6.7m saving in congestion per annum. This compares favourably with other permit schemes already in operation, such as the London permit scheme which reported approximately £2.7m in congestion saved in its first year (2010).
23. The aim would be for the Permit Scheme to be fully operational in Surrey as soon as possible but no later than April 2014. The start date for the scheme for SCC will be based on the following programme;
- a. Start of formal consultation – 28 November 2012,
  - b. Submission by ESCC & SCC to the DfT – March 2013
  - c. DfT approval anticipated – June 2013
  - d. Recruitment/Training/IT preparations\* – July – Dec 2013
  - e. Implementation of the scheme\* – Jan 2014

\* subject to receiving DfT approval in June

<b><u>CONSULTATION:</u></b>
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24. Prior to introduction of a permit scheme a full statutory consultation must be undertaken as required in the Traffic Management Act Permit Schemes (England) Regulations 2007. Informal consultation was carried out during

summer 2012 and the finalised SEPS is currently undergoing a formal consultation phase, due to be completed in Feb 2013.

25. Formal Consultation continues for a 12 week period with all interested parties via the SCC website, specifically targeted at key stakeholders, including;

- DfT
- National Joint Utilities Group
- Local Government Association
- All Utility Companies who work in SCC
- All neighbouring Authorities
- All District and Borough Councils within SCC
- All Parish Councils within SCC
- Environment Agency
- Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
- Royal Association For Deaf People
- Royal National Institute for the Blind

Subject to the response from the formal consultation the permit scheme will be finalised for submission to the Secretary of State.

#### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

26. In addition to statutory duty requirements, the public have an expectation on the authority to efficiently manage road works. It is intended that the implementation of a permit scheme would enable SCC to make a more significant improvement in this area compared to continuing the current notification process.

27. Sufficient time will need to be allowed for prior to a go live date to ensure planning and resource provision are adequate to be able to implement a permit scheme successfully.

#### **Financial and Value for Money Implications**

28. The operation of the Permit Scheme will require SCC to employ additional staff to the Street Works team (current estimate x8 FTE ), along with retraining of existing staff in both the Street works team and internal departments who are responsible for ordering works on the highway. Additional set up costs will also include revisions to IT systems and hardware required for the additional staff. The Cost Benefits Analysis completed for DfT submission estimates total scheme start up costs at £140k.

29. It is anticipated that this annual expenditure will be covered by the permit charges levied against Statutory Undertakers for their approved activities on the Highway, including recovery of the scheme start up costs in year one of operation. The proposal should therefore have no impact on the current revenue budget for this service area. Authorities operating permit schemes are required to carry out an annual review of their permit fees, to ensure the scheme remains cost neutral, neither creating surplus income, nor creating budgetary pressure.

30. Authorities are required to complete the DfT's 'Permit Fee Matrix' as part of the formal submission of the scheme to the DfT. to calculate the level of each

category of permit fee. This 'matrix' – a complex spreadsheet – derives the permit fees using; staff costs, a 'man hours' calculation of the officer time required to complete the additional scrutiny required to operate a permit scheme, and generic percentage rates to cover other operational costs applied to scheme. The DfT have set a Maximum fee applicable to each category of permit. Annual permit income is currently estimated at £1,137,605 per annum - based on previous year's volume of works, multiplied by proposed permit fees by activity type.

31. The table below shows the Proposed SCC Permit fee levels, against the DfT maximum permitted fee and the year 1 Kent CC permit fees\*;

Street Category	Permit Type	SCC proposed fee	DfT Maximum Fee	Kent CC year 1 fee*
Cat 0-2 & TS Streets	Prov. Advance Auth.	£83	£105	£87
Cat 0-2 & TS Streets	Major	£216	£240	£225
Cat 0-2 & TS Streets	Standard	£127	£130	£130
Cat 0-2 & TS Streets	Minor	£58	£65	£65
Cat 0-2 & TS Streets	Immediate	£52	£60	£57
Cat 3-4 Non TS Streets	Prov. Advance Auth.	£66	£75	£73
Cat 3-4 Non TS Streets	Major	£141	£150	£146

\*Note that Kent CC have confirmed that having reviewed their permit scheme fees, they intend to lower the fees for future years, having had surplus income in year 1 operation of their scheme.

32. A requirement of operating a permit scheme for street works is that the scheme should be cost neutral. It is a requirement that annual financial reviews of the scheme are completed, comparing permit fee income against operating costs. Any year-on-year imbalance should be redressed by either increases or reductions in the level of permit fees levied in the subsequent year, as required.
33. Operation of a permit scheme does not reduce SCC's opportunity to apply charges for non compliance to Statutory Undertakers, such as over running works or defective reinstatements. The scheme introduces potential additional non compliance charges, such as breaching the conditions of a permit, however such income is dependent upon Statutory Undertaker performance and can be subject to fluctuation.
34. Income derived from completion of 'sample' on-site inspections of Statutory Undertaker's works is unaffected by the operation of a permit scheme.

<b>Section 151 Officer Commentary</b>
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35. TBC



**Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer**

36. On becoming a Permit Authority, SCC may not cease to operate the scheme without first consulting all interested parties and then applying to the Secretary of State to revoke the scheme.
37. The authority will be scrutinised to ensure that our operation of the scheme shows parity between internal operations and those of external agencies such as Utility companies.

**Equalities and Diversity**

<p>Information and engagement underpinning equalities analysis</p>	<p>SCC is proposing to apply to the DfT to operate a permit scheme to manage road works and street works on the public highway. SCC has reviewed the legislation and considered our options with our partner Authority; East Sussex CC.</p> <p>Following informal engagement and consultations with DfT and other stakeholders such as Utility Companies and Neighbouring Authorities, a 12 week formal consultation process with all stakeholders – including the general public, is being undertaken on the operation of the scheme.</p> <p>The anticipated outcome of the operation of a permit scheme is better planned and executed road works – improving safety around these works and minimising disruption to residents, businesses and the general public.</p>
<p>Key impacts (positive and/or negative) on people with protected characteristics</p>	<p>Fewer and safer work sites generally, should result in; the elderly, pregnant women or those with a disability who may be less mobile, those people in wheelchairs or using buggies/pushchairs, or those who have limited vision, encountering fewer difficulties in using the highway.</p> <p>No key negative impacts have been identified for people with protected characteristics.</p>
<p>Changes you have made to the proposal as a result of the EIA</p>	<p>No changes proposed</p>
<p>Key mitigating actions planned to address any outstanding negative impacts</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated</p>	<p>None</p>

**Other Implications:**

38. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report
Climate change	No significant implications arising from this report
Carbon emissions	Set out below.

#### **Climate change/carbon emissions implications**

39. A negative consequence of increasing road congestion is that it damages the environment. The main consequences are the impacts on air quality through the emission of greenhouse gases and the waste of valuable energy resources from vehicles waiting in traffic queues. Whilst the primary cause of this problem is the increasing number of road journeys by private vehicles causing the demand to travel to exceed the road network capacity at peak times of the day, the occurrence of works on the network exacerbates this by restricting the available capacity.
40. The SEPS scheme will have a positive impact on these environmental issues by minimising any loss of network capacity caused by street works in order to reduce the occurrence of congestion. This will be achieved by improved coordination between works promoters, better planning of works, placing conditions on how and when works take place and improved enforcement.

#### **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

41. Timeline as follows:
- Consultation responses to the proposed SEPS will be reviewed and the document amended where considered appropriate.
  - The finalised SEPS and supporting documents will be submitted to the DfT.
  - Following approval from the DfT (anticipated June 21013), preparation will commence and implementation date agreed and formally published.
  - Implementation of the permit scheme, anticipated to be no later than April 2014.
  - Annual review of the permit scheme, adjustment as necessary.

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#### **Contact Officer:**

Name, post title and telephone number. Lucy Monie, Operations Group Manager, 02085419896

#### **Consulted:**

Traffic & Streetworks Team,

Assistant Director for Highways, Jason Russell  
Director for Environment & Infrastructure. Trevor Pugh  
Cabinet Member John Furey  
Environment & Transport Select Committee, Utilities Task Group Members

Utility companies that work across the region,  
Local authorities in the South East region  
SCC highway works promoters

**Annexes:**

EIA

**Sources/background papers:**

- Traffic Management Act 2004
  - Traffic Management Permit Schemes (England) Regulations
  - New Roads & Streetworks Act 1991
  - London Permit Scheme
  - Proposed South East Permit Scheme
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