

COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING - 10 DECEMBER 2013

MINUTES of the meeting of the Council held at the Council Chamber, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN on 10 December 2013 commencing at 10.30 am, the Council being constituted as follows:

David Munro (Chairman)
Sally Marks (Vice-Chairman)

Mary Angell		David Ivison
W D Barker OBE		Daniel Jenkins
Nikki Barton		George Johnson
Ian Beardsmore		Linda Kemeny
John Beckett		Colin Kemp
Mike Bennison		Eber Kington
Liz Bowes		Rachael I Lake
* Natalie Bramhall		Stella Lallement
Mark Brett-Warburton		Yvonna Lay
Ben Carasco	*	Denise Le Gal
Bill Chapman		Mary Lewis
Helyn Clack		Christian Mahne
Carol Coleman		Ernest Mallett MBE
Stephen Cooksey		Peter Martin
Steve Cossier		Jan Mason
Clare Curran		Marsha Moseley
Graham Ellwood		Tina Mountain
Jonathan Essex		Christopher Norman
Robert Evans		John Orrick
Tim Evans		Adrian Page
Mel Few		Chris Pitt
Will Forster		Dorothy Ross-Tomlin
* Pat Frost		Denise Saliagopoulos
* Denis Fuller		Tony Samuels
John Furey		Pauline Searle
Bob Gardner		Stuart Selleck
Mike Goodman		Nick Skellett CBE
* David Goodwin	*	Michael Sydney
Michael Gosling		Keith Taylor
Zully Grant-Duff		Barbara Thomson
Ken Gulati		Chris Townsend
Tim Hall		Richard Walsh
* Kay Hammond		Hazel Watson
David Harmer		Fiona White
* Nick Harrison		Richard Wilson
Marisa Heath		Helena Windsor
Peter Hickman		Keith Witham
* Margaret Hicks		Alan Young
David Hodge		Victoria Young
Saj Hussain		

*absent

76/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Bramhall, Mrs Frost, Mr Fuller, Mr Goodwin, Mrs Hammond, Mr Harrison, Mrs Hicks, Ms Le Gal, Mrs Marks (am only) and Mr Sydney

77/13 MINUTES [Item 2]

Two amendments to the minutes were requested:

- (i) Item no. 70/13, the name of the Children and Education Select Committee was corrected.
- (ii) Item no. 74/13, re. the recorded vote - the name of Mrs Selleck was corrected to Mr Selleck.

The minutes of the County Council held on 15 October 2013, as amended, were submitted, confirmed and signed.

78/13 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS [Item 3]

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- Mr Michael Gosling and Dr Joe McGilligan were recently awarded NHS Partnership / System Leader of the Year as part of the NHS Leadership Recognition Awards 2013.
- Ms Mary Hendrick, from Adult Social Care was recently named as runner up in the Guardian's Public Servant of the Year Award 2013 for her work with People with Learning Disabilities. In recognition of this outstanding achievement, the Chairman presented her with a certificate from the Council.
- That he had asked the Vice-Chairman of the Council to chair a task group, with representatives from the three largest political groups, to review the Standing Orders relating to the Council and committee processes in the Council's Constitution. He said that, as part of this work, all Members would be surveyed for their views and that the aim was for the report to be considered at the County Council's AGM in May 2014.
- That Members would also shortly be surveyed on the timings for future Council meetings and their views on the current lunchtime arrangements.
- The Chairman's reception would be a summer event, rather than at Christmas and this would be a gala occasion and opportunity to thank partners and others. He also reminded Members that their Christmas lunch was on Thursday 19 December.
- Long Service Awards – he was pleased to attend and give awards at two separate events: for staff that had completed 25 years service and also for those staff who had completed 40 and 45 years service with Surrey County Council.
- The lunchtime speaker was Dr Helen Bowcock, the current High Sheriff.

79/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 4]

There were none.

80/13 LEADER'S STATEMENT [Item 5]

The Leader made a statement. A copy of his statement is attached as Appendix A.

Members were invited to make comments, ask questions and made the following points:

- The campaign to tackle litter was welcomed
- That residents were concerned about the on-going Surrey Fire & Rescue Service dispute. The Leader confirmed that he did respond, in confidence, to residents' correspondence.
- An invitation to state what quality of Nelson Mandela's he most admired. He said that it would be to lead by example.
- Praise that he was working for fairer funding for Surrey and that the Government should be reminded of Surrey's needs and the efficiencies made by the County Council over the last four years.

81/13 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL PROGRESS REPORT: JULY - DECEMBER 2013 [Item 6]

The Leader presented the Surrey County Council Progress Report – July - December 2013, the ninth of the Chief Executive's six monthly reports to Members.

Two Members made the following comments:

- The Cabinet Associate for Children, Schools and Families drew attention to examples of where technology had been used to improve the way that the County Council worked – such as Patchwork, currently being implemented through Shift to support the Surrey Family Support Programme and also being tested out in Mole Valley – another example of partnership working.
- The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care congratulated the Leader for the excellent report and highlighted the work of the Employability team who helped people with learning disabilities to secure paid employment, voluntary work or work experience. He hoped that the County Council would be able to provide increased employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report of the Chief Executive be noted.
- (2) That the staff of the Council be thanked for the progress made during the last six months.
- (3) That the support for the direction of travel be confirmed.

82/13 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME [Item 7]

Notice of 22 questions had been received. The questions and replies are attached as Appendix B.

A number of supplementary questions were asked and a summary of the main points is set out below.

(Q2) Mr Robert Evans made reference to the Conservative election leaflet of Mrs Saliagopoulos and suggested that there was a discrepancy between their policy and her campaign literature. **Mr Beardsmore** said that the proposed changes would result in the response times in the Spelthorne area being longer. **Mr Norman** said that overall Surrey Fire & Rescue provided a top quartile performance.

The Cabinet Member for Community Services informed Members that no decision had yet been made in relation to the arrangements for the Spelthorne area. The feedback from the consultation was being analysed and would be discussed at the Communities Select Committee prior to the Cabinet's decision. She also confirmed that she was willing to discuss the matter with Mr Beardsmore outside the meeting. She also referred to the fire which had occurred at Ewell Court House in the early hours of the morning and the excellent response of the Surrey Fire & Rescue Service. Mr Kington, local Member for Ewell Court, Auriol and Cuddington made a statement in relation to this incident and this was attached as an annex to the minutes.

(Q3) Mr Cooksey asked the Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and the Environment whether there was a timescale, including completion, for the footway programme. The Cabinet Member referred to the permit scheme, launched on 11 November 2013, which would enable the Council to control the work of utility companies and confirmed that all utility repairs to pavements would be inspected. **Mrs Coleman** asked if Members could also see the survey results. The Cabinet Member said that the information would be shared with local committee chairman and therefore Members should contact them.

(Q4) Mrs Windsor expressed surprise that Skanska was fulfilling its contract, given the issues with unlit bollards and the length of time taken for repairs. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment said that maintenance of the bollards was part of the Highways Budget and he accepted that there were issues with the current arrangements. **Mr Walsh** also asked the Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment for his views on how Members could smarten up their local areas. He suggested that this was a matter for local committees and reminded Members to use their local allocations before the end of this financial year.

(Q5) Mr Essex requested details of the County Council's policy and procedures for assessing potential school sites in the Green Belt. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment said that he already had this information. **Mrs Coleman** considered that the last line of the response relating to land being restored and reverted to its former condition was incorrect. The Cabinet Member said that the County Council had an agreed minerals and aggregates plan. Also, the EU had recently praised the Council for the quality of restoration of these sites.

(Q6) Mrs Coleman said that she had recently visited one of the county's largest libraries and asked the Cabinet Member for Assets and Regeneration Programmes if he was aware that the hearing loop did not work and the staff had not been trained on its use and the equipment was not being maintained. She requested that the

person responsible for equalities investigated her concerns and that these issues were resolved.

Other Members raised issues with microphones in meeting rooms and in particular, in the Council Chamber. The Cabinet Member for Assets and Regeneration Programmes promised to investigate their concerns and report back.

(Q10) Mr Beardsmore considered that the response from the Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment did not answer the first part of his question. The Cabinet Member disagreed and said that the response was clear.

(Q11) Mr Kington highlighted the success of Epsom and Ewell Schools and asked the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning, who agreed, to promote their success in the media. **Also, Q11, Mr Barker** asked the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning about next year's plans for school places in his area. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the County Council was on track to provide 3000 additional school places for September 2014 and she offered to discuss his specific concerns outside the meeting.

(Q13) Mr Essex asked the Cabinet Member for Community Services if charges were the same as 'costs' – she agreed to confirm and respond outside the meeting.

(Q15) Mr Cooksey considered that the response had not provided clarification to his question. The Leader disagreed and said that all Conservative Local Committee Vice-Chairmen were aware that their role included liaison with the Highways Area Manager because this was seen as the best value for money.

(Q16) Mrs Lallement asked the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning whether it was a statutory requirement to monitor safeguarding of children in non-maintained schools. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the County Council did not have a statutory duty or the authority to enter independent schools to inspect safeguarding procedures. She also informed Members that this area had recently been discussed at the Children and Education Select Committee and that she was considering arranging a briefing on safeguarding for all Members.

(Q19) Both Mr Kington and Mr Ivison highlighted their concerns over the length of time taken to implement the parking review proposals. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment said that his written response set out the reasons and said that he would be reviewing the situation in the New Year.

83/13 STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS [Item 8]

There were three statements by Members:

- Mrs White in relation to a community library at Kings College, Guildford (Appendix Ci)
- Mr Young in relation to road closures for the Prudential Ride-London cycle race
- Mr Kington in relation to fire at Ewell Court House (Appendix Cii)

84/13 ORIGINAL MOTIONS [Item 9]

ITEM 9 (i)

Under Standing Order 12.3, the Council agreed to debate this motion.

Under Standing Order 12.1, Mr Robert Evans moved the motion which was:

'This council recognises the huge contribution made to the County by its employees.

Members are therefore concerned to learn that the Council retains over 6000 people on 'zero hours contracts' and resolves to end this practice.

Furthermore the Council recognises that the cost of living in Kingston and Surrey is one of the highest in the country. The Council notes that the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson has stated that 'paying the London living wage is not only morally right, but makes good business sense' and that he has called for an updated figure of £8.80 an hour.

This Council, therefore, resolves that the London Living Wage should be the minimum paid to any person, directly or indirectly employed by Surrey County Council.'

The motion was formally seconded by Mr Essex.

Mr Evans said that:

- There were two parts of the motion: (i) zero hours contracts, (ii) London living wage but that both parts were about Surrey County Council being a better employer.
- Surrey had pockets of poverty and food banks were opening up in the county and this motion was a modest attempt to improve the matter for the poorer people living in Surrey.
- That 'zero hours contracts' had been rebranded by the County Council as 'bank contracts' and employees on these contracts were only paid for the hours actually worked and were expected to be available as/when the Council required them – he urged Members to decide today to end this practice.
- On the London living wage, he quoted hourly rates and also referred to the salary paid to Surrey's apprentices and said that paying the London living wage made good business sense, was morally right and was supported by the Mayor of London and also the Prime Minister.

Mr Martin responded and made the following points:

- That the motion was in three parts and that the Conservatives would endorse the huge contribution made to the County by its employees.
- The County Council had 1900 staff on the bank but when schools were included, the figure rose to nearly 6000, which was about 18% of the workforce.
- Bank staff covered vacancies and the practice worked well for covering unplanned activities.
- These contracts were part of the flexible working policy, many people preferred this way of working and the practice could be in both parties interest.

- The County Council used bank contracts responsibly and staff on these contracts were paid the same hourly rate as permanent staff in the same position but just paid for the hours that they worked. They were also entitled to the same basic terms and conditions of employment as permanent staff on a pro-rata basis.
- These arrangements made good business sense and he did not support ending this practice.
- Referring to the 'living wage', he said that there were three different rates in the UK for the living wage.
- When considering wages, it was important to consider the whole package and that the pension scheme, together with other staff benefits should be factored into the equation.
- Raising the living wage in Surrey to the rate paid for the London living wage would cost the County Council £2m.
- That the Council had spent £750K on apprenticeships and work experience opportunities.
- Finally, he said that recent pay settlements had favoured those on the lowest pay scales and he urged Members to reject that part of the motion referring to zero hours contracts and the London living wage.

Seven Members spoke on the motion, with the following points being made:

- That the County Council's staff were valued, however, there was concern that Members were being asked to make policy 'on the hoof', with no allocated budget and therefore, agreeing to this motion could have an impact on other budgets.
- It was the right thing to do and was similar to a motion put forward by the Liberal Democrats during the last Administration.
- There was evidence from the Mayor of London that it was beneficial to pay the London living wage.
- That wages, particularly in the north of the county were influenced by London salaries but it was important to continue with the county council's current position in relation to wages.
- That Surrey County Council did not receive the same funding as London councils – if it did, council tax could be reduced. However, as it stood, services in Surrey would have to be cut if this motion was agreed.
- The Conservatives would always take the long term view and would balance delivery of services with the cost of staff.
- The People, Performance and Development Committee regularly looked at staff salaries and benefits at their meetings.
- This motion was about sharing benefits fairly.
- Disappointment that a high percentage of public sector and voluntary organisations used zero hours contracts.
- The difficulty of obtaining a mortgage for those people on zero hours contracts
- Members were urged to end this practice now and then work out the detail including its funding.

Mr Robert Evans requested a recorded vote on the motion and 10 Members stood in support of this request.

The Chairman informed Members that he had received a request to split the motion into three parts and to vote separately on each section.

On the first part of the motion, Members voted unanimously in support of:

‘This Council recognises the huge contribution made to the County by its employees.’

On the second part of the motion, relating to ‘zero hours contracts’, the following Members voted for it:

Mr Beardsmore, Mr Beckett, Mr Cooksey, Mr Essex, Mr Robert Evans, Mr Forster, Mr Hickman, Mr Jenkins, Mr Mallett, Mrs Mason, Mr Orrick, Mrs Searle, Mrs Watson, Mrs White

The following Members voted against it:

Mrs Angell, Mr Barker, Mr Bennison, Ms Bowes, Mr Brett-Warburton, Mr Carasco, Mr Chapman, Mrs Clack, Mrs Coleman, Mr Cosser, Mrs Curran, Mr Ellwood, Mr Few, Mr Furey, Mr Gardner, Mr Goodman, Mr Gosling, Dr Grant-Duff, Mr Gulati, Mr Hall, Mr Harmer, Miss Heath, Mr Hodge, Mr Hussain, Mr Ivison, Mr Johnson, Mrs Kemeny, Mr Kemp, Mr Kington, Mrs Lake, Mrs Lay, Mrs Lewis, Mr Mahne, Mrs Marks, Mr Martin, Mrs Moseley, Mrs Mountain, Mr Munro, Mr Norman, Mr Page, Mr Pitt, Mrs Ross-Tomlin, Mrs Saliagopoulos, Mr Samuels, Mr Selleck, Mr Skellett, Mr Taylor, Ms Thomson, Mr Townsend, Mr Walsh, Mr Wilson, Mrs Windsor, Mr Witham, Mr Young and Mrs Young

There were two abstentions:

Mrs Barton and Mrs Lallement

Therefore, the second part of the motion was lost.

On the third part of the motion, relating to ‘the London Living Wage’, the following Members voted for it:

Mrs Barton, Mr Beardsmore, Mr Cooksey, Mr Essex, Mr Robert Evans, Mr Forster, Mr Jenkins, Mr Johnson, Mr Kington, Mrs Lallement, Mr Mallett, Mrs Mason, Mr Orrick, Mrs Searle, Mrs Watson, Mrs White

The following Members voted against it:

Mrs Angell, Mr Barker, Mr Bennison, Ms Bowes, Mr Brett-Warburton, Mr Carasco, Mr Chapman, Mrs Clack, Mr Cosser, Mrs Curran, Mr Ellwood, Mr Few, Mr Furey, Mr Gardner, Mr Goodman, Mr Gosling, Dr Grant-Duff, Mr Gulati, Mr Hall, Mr Harmer, Miss Heath, Mr Hodge, Mr Hussain, Mr Ivison, Mrs Kemeny, Mr Kemp, Mrs Lake, Mrs Lay, Mrs Lewis, Mr Mahne, Mrs Marks, Mr Martin, Mrs Moseley, Mrs Mountain, Mr Munro, Mr Norman, Mr Page, Mr Pitt, Mrs Ross-Tomlin, Mrs Saliagopoulos, Mr Samuels, Mr Selleck, Mr Skellett, Mr Taylor, Ms Thomson, Mr Townsend, Mr Walsh, Mr Wilson, Mr Witham, Mr Young and Mrs Young

There were four abstentions:

Mr Beckett, Mrs Coleman, Mr Hickman and Mrs Windsor

Therefore, the third part of the motion was lost.

RESOLVED:

This Council recognises the huge contribution made to the County by its employees.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned for lunch at 12.45pm and resumed at 2.15pm with all those present who had been in attendance in the morning session except for Mrs Barton, Mr Bennison, Mr Brett-Warburton, Mr Ellwood, Mr Tim Evans, Ms Heath, Mr Hickman, Mr Kemp, Mrs Lake, Mrs Moseley, Mr Norman, Mr Young and Mrs Young.

ITEM 9(ii)

Under Standing Order 12.3, the Council decided it wished to hear further before agreeing whether or not to debate this motion.

Mr Cooksey made a short statement giving reasons why the motion should not be referred. He considered that it was important for the Council to have the opportunity to discuss this issue and not just the Cabinet. He had proposed the motion because the stated intention was that the County Council was not proposing any changes to its home to school transport policy for 2015. It was his view that the current policy provided little flexibility and that officer decisions were based on the rigid application of this policy.

The Leader made a short statement stating that it would be inappropriate to debate this matter because the consultation on the County Council's Home to School Transport Policy was still on-going. He considered that the outcome of the consultation should be reported firstly, to the Children and Education Select Committee and then to Cabinet.

14 Members voted for debating the motion today but 39 Members voted against debating it today. There were three abstentions.

Therefore, it was:

RESOLVED:

That this motion be referred to the Cabinet, for determination. Under Standing Order 12.6, the Cabinet must report back to County Council at the earliest appropriate meeting.

ITEM 9(iii)

Under Standing Order 12.3, the Council agreed to debate this motion.

Under Standing Order 12.1, Mr Ian Beardsmore moved the motion which was:

“This Council agrees to re-establish a Surrey-wide Youth Council at Surrey County Council to include representatives of young people from all eleven Boroughs and Districts in order to:

- (a) give Surrey young people the opportunity to debate and influence the County

Council's policies.

and

(b) to enable Surrey young people to be represented on the national Youth Parliament.'

The motion was formally seconded by Mrs Searle.

Mrs Kemeny moved an amendment, which was tabled at the meeting. This was formally seconded by Mrs Curran.

The amendment was as follows (with additional words underlined and deletions crossed through):

~~'This Council agrees to re-establish a Surrey-wide Youth Council at Surrey County Council to include representatives of young people from all eleven Boroughs and Districts in order to:~~ supports the establishment of a County-wide youth democracy platform to include representatives of young people from our schools and colleges working alongside existing provision in Surrey's Boroughs and Districts, in order to:

- (a) give Surrey young people the opportunity to debate and influence the County Council's policies.
and
(b) to enable Surrey young people to be represented on the national Youth Parliament.'

Both Mr Beardsmore and Mrs Searle agreed to accept the amendment to this motion and therefore, it became the substantive motion.

Seven Members spoke on the substantive motion, with the following points being made:

- The motion was about giving young people the opportunity to contribute to shaping the County Council's policies.
- Praise for the excellent youth council in Mole Valley.
- Increasing the involvement of youth people in democracy was an important issue and thanks to officers for enabling the development of youth democracy in the Epsom and Ewell area.
- Pleased that the amendment had been accepted by the Liberal Democrats.
- The substantive motion was not supporting the reinstatement of a youth parliament (dissolved in 2012).
- This administration had seen an outstanding transformation of youth services during the last two years. In particular, the reduction in NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and young people had contributed to the shaping of Surrey's employability plan.
- Surrey's youth service was 'Value for Money' and work on youth democracy had started over the summer. It was expected that elections for representatives on the national Youth Parliament would be held on-line and it was planned that youth councillors would meet on-line as well as face to face.
- A higher expectation, with full inclusion and involvement in shaping the Council's policies for youth democracy was needed.

- Young people were brought up and were conversant with technology and therefore the on-line platform was the right way forward.
- Confirmation that both those Surrey young people that studied outside the county and also NEETS would be included and represented.
- The importance of investing in young people because they were the future of local government.

After the debate, the substantive motion was put to the vote and it was:

RESOLVED (unanimously):

This Council supports the establishment of a County-wide youth democracy platform to include representatives of young people from our schools and colleges working alongside existing provision in Surrey's Boroughs and Districts, in order to:

- (a) give Surrey young people the opportunity to debate and influence the County Council's policies.
- and
- (b) to enable Surrey young people to be represented on the national Youth Parliament.

ITEM 9(iv)

Under Standing Order 12.3, the Council agreed to debate this motion.

Under Standing Order 12.1, Mr Will Forster moved the motion which was:

'Noting the start of the badger cull in Somerset and Gloucestershire and the possibility that DEFRA may roll out the badger cull across the rest of the UK, Council agrees not to allow the badger cull to take place on any of its county owned land, given that the science is not proven nor conclusive that a cull of badgers is the answer to eradicating Bovine TB from the countryside.'

Council agrees that more research should be undertaken by Government and the scientific community to find more effective and cheaper vaccinations for badgers and cattle to help eradicate this disease from the countryside.'

The motion was formally seconded by Mrs White.

Mr Forster said that:

- The case for badger culling was not proven and he did not want it to be allowed on any County Council owned land.
- Badgers were not a threat to human health because milk was pasteurised.
- The cull had not worked in Gloucestershire or Somerset.
- This motion was similar to one recently agreed by Hampshire County Council, where it had been supported by all political groups.
- Previously, this Council had agreed to protect the countryside.

Mr Furey responded and made the following points:

- That the Government Minister had confirmed that research would continue and an independent report had been commissioned.
- There was a target to eradicate the Bovine TB within 25 years.

- The National Trust had not ruled out culling of badgers on their land.
- A reference to the article in Surrey Nature about badgers.
- Clarification of the legal aspect relating to culling.

Six Members spoke on the motion, with the following points being made:

- Concern re. the logistics of organising a cull as badgers crossed boundaries.
- If Hampshire County Council had supported a similar motion, then why couldn't this County Council adopt a similar approach.
- The vaccine option may be cheaper but it was not an easy solution.
- The importance of further research - when considering this issue, there was no role for politics or sentiment, the decision must be based on scientific results.
- Members should be mindful of any decision made by the Government relating to badger cullings and the County Council may not have the authority to override the Government.
- There had already been a 10 year study on Bovine TB / Badgers, progress was being made and most Members who spoke considered vaccination the preferred option.
- This issue was of concern to residents and there was currently a petition relating to this topic on the Surrey County Council website.

After the debate, the motion was put to the vote with 12 Members voting for it. 40 Members voted against it and there were no abstentions.

Therefore, the motion was lost.

ITEM 9 (v)

Under Standing Order 12.3, the Council agreed to debate this motion.

Under Standing Order 12.1, Mr Peter Martin moved the motion which was:

'This Council fully supports the successful launch of its recent apprenticeship programme in helping the County's young people get a foot in the world of work but recognises that there is much still to be done.

The Council therefore calls on all Members to discuss and encourage the setting up of apprenticeships with their local businesses, Districts, Boroughs, Parishes and relevant partners.'

Mr Martin made the following points:

- Surrey's apprenticeship programme was a scheme that the Council was proud of, with 200 apprenticeships created within 100 days just over 2 years ago.
- In 2012, the programme was doubled and this year the County Council had invested £750K in the programme and had a target of 500 apprenticeships.
- This year, there had been four successful youth employment events in Surrey.
- The number of NEETS had fallen dramatically over the last two years.
- The County Council was 'practising what it preached'. For example, the procurement team were having an increased focus on delivering apprenticeships through their supply base, with one of the County Council's

key contractors, Babcock 4S committed to employing 35 apprentices this financial year.

- Finally, he commended the motion to Council and asked for all Members' help in engaging with the programme.

The motion was formally seconded by Mrs Angell who referred to all Members being Corporate Parents. She also said that a number of new initiatives concerning apprenticeships in Children Services would be shared with the Looked After Children teams.

Mr Essex moved an amendment at the meeting (formally seconded by Mr Robert Evans) which was to add an additional paragraph to the original motion so that it read:

'This Council fully supports the successful launch of its recent apprenticeship programme in helping the County's young people get a foot in the world of work but recognises that there is much still to be done.

The Council therefore calls on all Members to discuss and encourage the setting up of apprenticeships with their local businesses, Districts, Boroughs, Parishes and relevant partners.

This Council also resolves to ensure that all those carrying out duties in the Council previously undertaken by those in positions held by Surrey County Council employees should be paid at least the Surrey County Council's minimum wage.'

Mr Essex confirmed his support of the apprenticeship scheme and said that the County Council needed a commitment that apprenticeships were in addition to jobs currently available.

Three Members spoke and made the following points:

- It was important to ensure that young people are paid appropriately and also properly trained.
- This motion was not about the minimum wage and the amendment was beyond the remit of the Council.
- In response it was agreed that the amendment strengthened the motion.

The amendment was put to the vote, with 13 Members voting for and 42 Members voting against it. There was one abstention.

Therefore, the amendment was lost.

Returning to the original motion, the Deputy Leader said that there was widespread agreement for the motion. He also suggested that if Members required administrative support to contact businesses that they contact the Assistant Director for Young People.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

This Council fully supports the successful launch of its recent apprenticeship programme in helping the County's young people get a foot in the world of work but recognises that there is much still to be done.

The Council therefore calls on all Members to discuss and encourage the setting up of apprenticeships with their local businesses, Districts, Boroughs, Parishes and relevant partners.

85/13 REPORT OF THE CABINET [Item 10]

The Leader presented the reports of the Cabinet meetings held on 22 and 30 October and 26 November 2013.

(1) Statements / Updates from Cabinet Members

The Cabinet Member for Children and Families tabled a statement relating to Maureen Giles, the Headteacher of Surrey's Virtual School, who retired on 18 December 2013 (Appendix D).

(2) Recommendations on Policy Framework Documents

A Youth Justice Strategic Plan

The Cabinet Member for Children and Families highlighted the key points from the Youth Justice Strategic Plan. In particular, that Surrey continued to be a very low user of custody, the Restorative Youth Justice programme had delivered outstanding results and was nationally recognised and that the numbers of entrants to the youth justice system had fallen dramatically over the last two years.

She thanked both staff for their work and also Mrs Hammond who had previously had responsibility for this area in her former portfolio.

RESOLVED:

That the Youth Justice Strategic Plan, as set out in Annex1 to the submitted report, be agreed.

(3) Reports for Information / Discussion

The following reports were received and noted:

- Public Service Transformation
- Fairness and Respect Strategy 2013 - 2018

RESOLVED:

That the report of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 22 and 30 October and 26 November 2013 be adopted.

86/13 REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE [Item 11]

The Chairman of the Planning and Regulatory Committee presented the report of his committee. He confirmed that the proposals were agreed unanimously by the Planning and Regulatory Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the following revisions to the Scheme of Delegation be approved:

Planning

P1 – amend to state “Where fewer than 5 objections have been received and no request has been made by the local member or a member of the Planning & Regulatory Committee for the application to be determined by that Committee, to determine planning applications for minerals, waste development and County Council development which comply with the development plan and national policies”.

P2 – amend to state “Where fewer than 5 objections have been received and no request has been made by the local member or a member of the Planning & Regulatory Committee for the application to be determined by that Committee, and after consultation with the Chairman or, in his/her absence, Vice-Chairman of the Planning & Regulatory Committee, to determine planning applications for minerals, waste development and County Council development which do not comply with the development plan and national policies”.

P6 – amend to state “To determine all details pursuant applications (applications relating to a previously granted permission) irrespective of the number of objections unless a request has been made by the local member or a member of the Planning & Regulatory Committee for the application to be determined by that Committee”.

P7 – amend to state “(i) To determine whether county development applications and minerals and waste applications constitute a ‘non material amendment’ within section 96A of the TCPA, and (ii) To determine such applications, irrespective of the number of objections, unless a request has been made by the local member or a member of the Planning & Regulatory Committee for the application to be determined by that Committee.”

87/13 AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION [Item 12]

RESOLVED:

That the amendments to the Scheme of Delegation, as set out in the submitted report, be approved.

88/13 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CABINET [Item 13]

No notification had been received from Members wishing to raise a question or make a statement on any of the matters in the minutes, by the deadline.

[Meeting ended at:3.45pm]

Chairman

LEADER'S STATEMENT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

Chairman,

Today the Council will consider the Chief Executive's latest six-monthly report. And fellow Members, I hope you are as delighted as I am to read of the significant progress that the Council has continued to make over the past six months.

This progress has been made in the face of huge cuts to our budgets by Government. In fact, between 2010 and 2015 local government funding will have been cut by 43% in real terms – that's more than twice the level of cuts experienced across government as a whole!

That's why, as Leader of the County Council and as Chairman of the County Council's Network, I've been campaigning for a fairer funding future for Surrey - and I'm confident that Government is starting to listen.

In the past 3 years, we've maintained our vital services whilst saving **over £200m** - and we are on track to deliver **another £63m of savings this year!**

However, we must never be complacent. As we enter the New Year, not only are we faced with even more reductions in our grant funding, we have to cope with continued pressure on our already stretched services and residents who want, and expect, more from us.

In Surrey, we need to save **£250m over the next 5 years**. It will be a huge challenge. But my Cabinet is ready for that challenge and we are **confident in our future**.

We are confident because we are improving the services that matter to our residents and already delivering on the corporate priorities we set just six months ago.

We are delivering on improving the County's roads. Our highways teams resurfaced 107 roads between April and September this year. Laid end-to-end these major repairs would run 40 miles – that's the distance from London to Reading!

We are delivering on providing school places. This September we provided every one of the 2,852 school places that was required in Surrey – that's the equivalent of seven new primary schools and six times what was required just five years ago.

And we are delivering on creating apprenticeships. In fact, just last week I was delighted to announce that Surrey has already passed the 300 mark, well over half way towards meeting our target of creating 500 new apprenticeships by April next year.

Fellow Members, we want to keep Surrey a great place for people to live, work and bring up their families. **We want to keep Surrey special.**

As many of you are aware, residents have been telling us how annoyed they get when they see litter in the streets, or on the sides of the road, ruining our beautiful countryside. Unfortunately, there is a small minority who drop bottles and cans from their cars, carelessly discard their take away wrappers or fail to clean up after their pets. This lack of consideration for others impacts upon the wellbeing of our residents. That's why today, the 11 Leaders of the District and Boroughs and this Council are launching a Surrey-wide campaign to combat litter in our County. It will build on the excellent work already undertaken by District and Borough Councils, to ensure that we achieve our aim of providing a clean environment for residents and businesses.

As part of this work, we've been listening to residents, to find out more about their views on litter. Working together as One Team through education, co-operation, and where necessary enforcement, this is an area where we can really make a difference.

Chairman, **I am confident in our future**. And the thing that gives me the most reason to be confident is the team we have here in Surrey – the staff, the Members and our Partners. You may have read that in his latest 6 month report, the Chief Executive states that,

“Day in, day out the combined efforts of our colleagues makes a significant impact on the lives of residents.” **I couldn't agree more!**

So I want to take this opportunity, once again, to put on record my appreciation to all the staff, Members and Partners who have worked tirelessly this year for the benefit of the residents of Surrey, in sometimes very difficult circumstances.

Chairman, Winston Churchill said,

“A pessimist sees the challenge in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every challenge.”

Yes, there are challenges ahead but in those challenges lie opportunities. And working together, I am confident that we can maximise these opportunities for the benefit of Surrey residents as we approach 2014.

Finally I want to end by wishing all Members, staff and their families, a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year

David Hodge
Leader of the Council
10 December 2013

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

TUESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2013

**QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED UNDER THE PROVISIONS
OF STANDING ORDER 10.1**

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

(1) MR GRAHAM ELLWOOD (GUILDFORD EAST) TO ASK:

During recent bouts of unusually heavy rainfall, many drains have inevitably become overloaded leading to localised flooding exacerbated by the heavy seasonal falling of leaves.

When fielding residents' complaints (an example of which was sent to you), I have had to apologise for the abrupt responses they have received from Highways telling them that, effectively, nothing can be done because of the rota system unless the issue is considered an emergency. This, I am informed, is only when a residents property (not just land) is affected.

In appreciating the restraints imposed upon us all by limited budgets and the knock on effect to manpower and equipment, I would like to feel we could strive to be a little more flexible when, as happened to one of my elderly residents, their garage was being flooded.

Could we not, therefore, have a little more leeway in future as to what is classed as an emergency and thus is dealt with speedily please?

Reply:

The service operates an Immediate Response Service which aims to keep users of the highway safe from serious injury or fatality. This is the most appropriate method when surface water is running from the highway on to private land and there is a risk of internal flooding to a property. The call handler will determine the priority and arrange for a team to attend the location, going to the most serious risk first. This could mean a road traffic accident will take precedence, although in general, flooding to a property internally receives high priority.

In the main, prioritisation works well but during extreme weather conditions when there is a high demand, response times may be affected. For example during the recent storm on 28 October 2013, the service received 601 calls compared to a normal monthly volume of about 500. When drains are overloaded during extremely heavy rainfall, it may be that a tanker is sent to extract as much surface water as possible, but on occasions, the volume of water exceeds the capacity of the tanker. Where the drain is blocked we would attempt to free the blockage to remove the flooding risk.

Disruption to the scheduled drain cleaning reduces efficiency so to avoid causing delays in non-emergency situations, the response for blocked drains would be to programme a jetting vehicle to attend the location at the earliest available time.

CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

(2) MR ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK:

Would the Leadership now accept that the case for reducing the fire service provision in Spelthorne is not proven on response times, the capacity of the London Fire Service to respond or on any value for money analysis?

Reply:

The consultation on the proposal to make changes to the fire and rescue cover in the Spelthorne area closed on the 4 November 2013 - the Select Committee will scrutinise the feedback and the Service's response on the 15 January 2014 and the Cabinet will receive the final paper for decision on the 4 February 2014.

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service provides a top quartile performance, bottom quartile cost service to all residents and communities in Surrey. The Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority Public Safety Plan provides a framework to deliver transformational change based on an effective, efficient and equitable provision of fire and rescue cover response wherever you are in Surrey.

The provision of fire and rescue cover across Surrey has been validated using external, independent consultants utilising 10 years of historical incident data to examine geographical and temporal demands and incident locations. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service performance against the agreed response standard is consistently very good. This is evidence to the fact that by analysing historical trends to set performance outputs, we can intelligently inform future deployment configurations. Current incident attendance performance is matching and regularly exceeding our predicted performance which provides the assurance that our planning assumptions, using Surrey fire and rescue resources only, were correct. We are also supported when and where necessary by fire engines from other authority areas under formal agreements. The Service will continue to deliver the overall value it can add when considering service provision through its collaborative work with key partners across the Council and in other organisations in order to create strong, safe and prosperous communities. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service will always seek to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised. Our 10 year framework, the Public Safety Plan, is one example of how we will ensure that we deliver value for money for the communities of Surrey having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

(3) MR STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK:

Has the County Council carried out a condition survey of its pavements and footways, and if so what percentage of Surrey's pavements were assessed as being in a poor condition? What percentage of Surrey's pavements and footways assessed as poor were resurfaced or repaved since 31 March 2013 to date?

Reply:

The County Council is currently progressing the fourth and final year of its initial Footway Network Survey (FNS) with 78% of the network finished. The remainder should be substantially complete by June next year.

The FNS records each footway section in one of the following four categories; as new; aesthetically impaired; functionally impaired or structurally impaired. Functional and structural impairment are considered for maintenance and can therefore be considered in poor condition. Current information indicates that approximately 23% of the footway network is in this category.

The countywide footway programme for 2013/14 includes 3.4 kms of reconstruction and 21.5 kms of slurry seal. Reconstruction treatment is generally used where the footway condition is very poor and slurry may be used elsewhere to enhance an otherwise sound construction and prevent further deterioration. Current analysis indicates approximately 44% of the reconstruction programme addressed footways in a poor condition.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

(4) MRS HELENA WINDSOR (GODSTONE) TO ASK:

In the light of the persistent failure to repair damaged and unlit bollards on major A roads, could the Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment advise if Skanska is fulfilling the terms of its contract with Surrey County Council.

Reply:

Due to restricted budget, the maintenance and replacement of illuminated signs and bollards is undertaken on a strict priority basis with safety at its core. Consequently, whereas all street lighting faults will be immediately repaired within guaranteed response times, repairs to signs and bollards will only be completed if they meet our prioritisation policy, with each scheme reviewed on a case by case basis. Monthly performance reviews, therefore demonstrate that Skanska continue to meet all their required contract timescales. However, we fully appreciate that the funded level of service is not able to meet user expectations, with some repairs not completed, due to budget constraints, until the following financial year.

There are also of course specific issues which can cause delay. For example, in a recent case on the A22 in Godstone, works were prioritised and the bollard replaced. However, a secondary unforeseen power fault occurred, which subsequently delayed overall repair timescales. It is regrettable but inevitable that repairs undertaken on an aging asset will from time to time reoccur but these are minimised wherever possible

However, Surrey Highways continue to keep service and performance levels for signs and bollards under review. In 2013 an intensive performance and quality review was completed, resulting in improvements to the ordering process and business reporting. Further improvements are now planned to improve the online fault reporting system to enable enhanced feedback to residents after they have reported a fault.

Signs and bollards will also be considered as part of the councils wider highway asset strategy review. This strategy will be developed over the next 12 - 24 months and will enable Members to determine the level of priority and service they wish to allocate to this specific area, when compared to other competing asset pressures such as carriageway resurfacing, drainage and footpath replacement.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

(5) MR JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:

Please provide Surrey County Council's policy and procedure for the assessment of potential sites and selection of the most appropriate sites, where major new developments are proposed on the Green Belt.

Reply:

The County Council works with Boroughs and Districts to assist them in the identification of sites through their Local Plan site allocation process to meet identified needs, with a particular focus on infrastructure and service impact from the County Council's perspective.

In respect of the County Councils' Mineral Plan 2011 and Waste Plan 2008, there are sites already allocated in the Green Belt for mineral extraction or waste management. The County Council as Mineral and Waste Planning Authority will assess any planning applications relating to these sites against the policies in these plans, against relevant government policy and guidance and with regard to any other material consideration. In doing so, it will take account of the views of the relevant Borough or District, other consultees and local residents. It should be noted that Green Belt policy alone does not presume against mineral working as it is a temporary use and the land can be restored and revert to its former condition.

CABINET MEMBER FOR ASSETS AND REGENERATION PROGRAMMES

(6) MRS CAROL COLEMAN (ASHFORD) TO ASK:

Bearing in mind that one in six people have a hearing loss, and that approx 160,000 people in Surrey have a moderate or severe hearing loss, will Surrey County Council install working loop systems, and the appropriate signage to let people know that one is fitted and where it is, in all of their buildings where these members of the public interact with us? For example, in Surrey's Libraries, and wellbeing centres, and provide training for the staff in those buildings that would need to interact with those members of the public?

Reply:

In our main Corporate Buildings we have hearing loops in all of our receptions and in dedicated meeting rooms. Outside of the dedicated meeting rooms, we have signage informing visitors and staff of this facility.

The hearing loops are maintained on a regular basis. We work in close relationship with members of several organisations to test the loops and take advice from various associations on the situation of the loops.

In several of our buildings we also supply a portable hearing loop for use in one-to-one meetings. On the Surrey County Council web page under 'Contact Us' there are published numbers, a minicom number, and SMS (mobile texting) number. Please find the link. <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/contact-us>

In the wider buildings portfolio, we have installed hearing loops in the main public building access sites such as main libraries. At library sites in particular, there has been great partnership working and training of staff on the loop system so aiding its use. At Adult Learning sites we also have converter units available for use. These provide assistance whilst not the same as a hearing loop provision.

CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

(7) MRS FIONA WHITE (GUILDFORD WEST) TO ASK:

In the light of the recent report by HMRC that they have identified that of the employers in the social care sector they have investigated, 48% of 183 employers have paid workers below the minimum wage, has he checked with HMRC to ensure that no companies who have contracts with Surrey County Council are on that list? If not, will he do so immediately and make sure that all the Council's contracts for the provision of care are monitored to ensure that they are not flouting the rules including making illegal reductions for uniforms, not paying for travel between jobs, time spent in training or any other deductions?

Reply:

The recent HMRC report referred to in the question also included the following statement:

On 1 October 2013 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills introduced new rules for publicly naming and shaming employers who fail to comply with National Minimum Wage (NMW) legislation. The revised scheme will remove previous restrictions so that any employer who breaks minimum wage law can be named. The new criteria for naming will apply to enquiries that HMRC begin on or after 1 October 2013. Therefore none of the employers included in this review will fall to be considered for naming under the new criteria

*NMW enforcement - social care sector evaluation 2013
HMRC Report dated November 2013*

Given this we are unable to obtain names of employers investigated by HMRC.

However, we can assure you that Surrey County Council do not condone or encourage payments below the National Minimum Wage. We try in earnest to ensure all providers of social care services comply with appropriate legislation and do not make payments below the National Minimum Wage contrary to that legislation. We take all practical steps to ensure that providers comply with relevant legislation and endeavour to monitor performance of services rendered at all times insofar as is reasonably possible.

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

(8) MRS STELLA LALLEMENT (EPSOM WEST) TO ASK:

What has Surrey County Council been doing to ensure the safeguarding of children under 5 years old who spend most of their time with their carers at home, i.e. children under 5 years old who neither attend a school nor a nursery and who are rarely (if ever) taken to their local GP by their carers for health checks or any other reason? How does SCC ensure the safeguarding of those children who have no contact with the universal services which could identify them as children in need?

Reply:

Families receive a Health Visitor visit following a new birth. Advice is given as appropriate including often signposting to local support.

The majority of families do not need to come into contact with the Local Authorities and access universal services as when they need to do so.

Surrey County Council has established a network of Children's Centres across the county to provide a range of services for all families with a child(ren) under five. The Children's Centres work in partnership with Health Visitors to provide support and advice to parents and to identify those families in greatest need. Health Visitors make contact with all parents with a new born child and would signpost the parent to their local Children's Centre or make a referral if they felt that they would benefit from services but are not likely to make contact themselves. Children's Centres employ Outreach Workers who can visit families at home. As this is a universal service, families frequently take up the services and support offered. Where staff in the Children's Centre are concerned about the development of the child or more importantly, where there are concerns that the child might be at risk, the Centre would contact Children's Services to raise their concern.

Should a family not wish to engage with any universal services, it is their right not to do so. A lack of engagement with services does not automatically suggest that the under fives are Children in Need. Groups of people from different cultures may well have different support networks. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility thus children who may be at risk and are within strong communities would hopefully be identified and families supported.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

(9) MRS HAZEL WATSON (DORKING HILLS) TO ASK:

At the Cabinet meeting on 26 November 2013, the Leader of the Council admitted that the five year commitment to hold the Ride London cycle event which involves significant road closures affecting many Surrey residents and businesses was a "verbal agreement" between himself and the Mayor of London. In view of this:

- a) Does the Leader of the Council agree with me that this verbal agreement was not in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 as amended, or the County Council's Constitution and Standing Orders, and that it is undemocratic and not lawful because it did not allow councillors or members of the public to scrutinise or challenge it before the decision and it does not adequately protect the County Council's interests?

- b) Will the Leader of the Council confirm that such verbal agreements will never be entered into again by a Leader of the Council?

Reply:

Mrs Watson does not seem to understand that a verbal agreement is just that. She has already been told by Mrs Clack that this item is going to Cabinet on 17 December 2013, the papers for which were published yesterday. I would like to refer Mrs Watson to these papers and now consider the matter closed.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

(10) MR IAN BEARDSMORE (SUNBURY COMMON AND ASHFORD COMMON) TO ASK:

If the proposed incinerator at Charlton goes through, can the Cabinet Member clarify two points:

Firstly, approximately 6% of bottom ash is non ferrous metals, recent incinerators recycle this. Will Surrey do this, as paragraph 25 of the Cabinet report on the 30 October 2013 is unclear?

Secondly, it is claimed enough electricity will be sold to the grid to power 8000 homes, who will get this money?

Reply:

The gasification plant will be fuelled using a prepared refuse derived fuel. Metals will therefore be separated from the waste during the production of the refuse derived fuel and prior to the waste being gasified. These metals will be sent for recycling.

Electricity income is received by SITA but is used to reduce the council's contract payments to SITA based on an agreed financial model.

CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

(11) MR TIM HALL (LEATHERHEAD AND FETCHAM EAST) TO ASK:

May I commend the Cabinet Member, as well as the County's teachers and Head teachers for all their hard work following the recent announcement that nine out of ten Surrey pupils attend a state secondary school rated 'outstanding' or 'good'. Would the Cabinet Member also update the Chamber on progress in planning for the 16,000 extra places needed by 2018?

Reply:

Firstly, I would like to thank Mr Hall for his comments regarding the excellent results achieved by the local authority's secondary schools, in which 90.2% of pupils are attending schools which are judged to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, and in which 67.2% of students gained 5 A*-C grades including English and Maths in July's GCSE examinations. I will pass on his comments on behalf of the Council to the Chair of our Secondary Phase Council and I am sure they will be much appreciated.

With regard to planning for new school place provision, the County Council has experienced a 666% increase in pupil place requirements since 2011 and a twofold increase this past year, when provision when 2882 new places were made available.

Our multi service delivery team, comprising Schools and Learning, Property, Planning, Procurement, and Transport, Planning and Development have risen to this challenge and it is an indication of their professionalism that the County Council has been able to deliver the places to meet our statutory obligations, on time and within projected budgets.

The model and plans for delivery of the whole school place programme to 2018 are in place and are the subject of continuous review and improvement. Recent workshops and a peer challenge have identified a number changes to ensure our processes remain efficient and effective, and that we have the correct level of skills and resource to drive value and quality of service for the community and ratepayers of Surrey.

CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

(12) DR ZULLY GRANT-DUFF (REIGATE) TO ASK:

Following the Government's recent announcement of a £40m investment in specialist local support services, and giving women the 'right to ask' if their partner has a violent past, can the Cabinet Member tell the Chamber what this County Council does to help prevent life-shattering domestic abuse?

Reply:

The County Council makes a significant contribution to the prevention of domestic abuse and the care and support of survivors. A great deal of the Council's work on domestic abuse is done in partnership with others (the Police, district and borough councils, Health, voluntary organisations and the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner) with the intention of getting whole county responses, making the best use of a range of skills, knowledge and experience, as well as making efficient use of our resources. I will now briefly describe some of the actions that the County Council is taking.

Surrey County Councils' Community Safety Team, part of the Customers and Communities Directorate, has led on the development and creation of a new multi-agency, five year, domestic abuse strategy for the County. The Strategy was signed off by the multi-agency Community Safety Board for Surrey at its September 2013 meeting. The Community Safety Team is now leading on the development of an annual action plan that will deliver the aims of the Strategy and provide the focus for all multi-agency activity on Domestic Abuse. A key part of this work will be to build strong links with other multi agency Boards (Safeguarding, Health & Wellbeing) to ensure we are all working together on a single but comprehensive action plan to deliver and improve services to those affected or at risk of domestic abuse.

The Council provides over half the funding to the Outreach Providers, a consortia of voluntary organisations who provide support and assistance to the victims and survivors of domestic abuse in the County. This service has over the past three years provided services to over 3,500 people a year.

The Council provides financial support to the refuge services in Surrey who provide secure housing support to those people fleeing domestic abuse.

The Council contributes to the multi-agency training programme which offers both generalist and specialist training to staff in the Council and its partner agencies to equip staff with the skills and knowledge they require. The training offer is currently being renewed and a foundation e-learning package will be introduced.

As an employer the Council has a policy to support and assist those of its employees are affected by domestic abuse and where it can take action against those employees who are perpetrators of this crime.

Surrey County Council has won a national award for the work its libraries are doing to support vulnerable people. The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) has recognised the library service for an initiative to help people affected by domestic abuse. The free scheme gives access to computers in a safe place so abusers cannot monitor or track them. Information about local and national services is also available and workshops are held to build the confidence of people who have experienced abuse.

Working with its partners, the County Council contributes to campaigns and publicity that aim to raise awareness of domestic abuse, its effects and impact and information on support and advice services. The website 'Surrey Against Domestic Abuse' which contains a wide range of information was created and hosted by the County Council.

Finally, but by no means least, is the support that is provided by the Council as part of its day to day work. For example, the work undertaken by social workers working with families and individuals, the role of the Youth Support Service providing advice and informal education to young people in our communities and the guidance and signposting offered by our Contact Centre. These examples are the tip of an iceberg. However, I am sure the Chamber can be assured that the County Council makes and will continue to make a significant contribution to the prevention of domestic abuse, the care and support of survivors and in working with our partners we aim to reduce the incidents and the harm to our communities caused by domestic abuse in Surrey.

CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

(13) MS BARBARA THOMSON (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK:

How much does each CRB check cost this Council, what can be done to help volunteers meet these costs, and does the Cabinet Member feel these represent good value for money?

Reply:

- CRB checks are now called DBS checks. The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) merged to form the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

- The Disclosure and Barring Service charge £26.00 for a standard check and £44.00 for an enhanced check. **There is no DBS charge for volunteers.**
- The council acts as an "umbrella body" for the DBS and arranges for the completion, checking and submission of DBS enquiries through an online system, built for the council, that reduces the DBS response time from six weeks to an average of five days.
- The council charges £9.00+VAT admin fee per check for this service for external bodies in addition to the DBS checking fees described above. The £9.00 charge is not levied for Surrey County Council employees or Surrey County Council volunteers.
- Surrey County Council volunteers therefore are not charged by the DBS, nor are they charged by Surrey County Council.
- The council conducts just over a 1,000 checks per year for external bodies.
- The council conducts approximately 6,000 checks each year for Surrey County Council employees and volunteers working with the council.

CABINET MEMBER FOR ASSETS AND REGENERATION PROGRAMMES

(14) MR JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK: (2nd question)

Please can you confirm how long the Surrey County Council owned Longmead Adult Education Centre on Holland Close, Redhill, and the former Youth and Community Centre on Noke Drive, Redhill have been vacant and the plans and expected timing for Surrey County Council's future use of these buildings?

Reply:

I can advise that Longmead Adult Education Centre was transferred to Surrey County Council in 1945 from what was then the Reigate Corporation. The building has been vacant for approximately five years to facilitate a joint development opportunity in partnership with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. Unfortunately, that scheme is now not progressing due to a third party commercial operator withdrawing. Surrey County Council will be working up proposals for the site during 2014.

The Youth and Community Centre at Noke Drive was acquired by Surrey County Council in 1961 and was closed a number of years ago. The building is in a dilapidated state and all efforts to let the building have failed due to the high costs to bring it back into a usable condition. Cabinet are due to consider redevelopment opportunities, including a business case, during 2014.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

(15) MR STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK: (2nd question)

In September, Mole Valley members were informed that the Leader of the Council had unilaterally forbidden any member of the Highways officers' team from participating in any meeting of local Highways Forums thereby removing one of the most significant elements that made Forums operate so successfully.

I believe that residents are due an explanation of this action and its consequences and therefore would like to ask:

1. Under what constitutional authority was the Leader of the Council acting in imposing this ban?
2. Was the Chairman of the Local Committee or any other Mole Valley County Councillor consulted before the decision was taken and, if they were, what was their response?
3. Have any officers been formally invited to attend any Highways Forum meeting in Mole Valley since the ban was imposed and if so under what circumstances were the invitations issued?

Reply:

It is my belief that Mr Cooksey's question stems from a misunderstanding. I think that Mr Cooksey is referring to the content of an email from me, addressed to James Painter, Jane Last and John Lawlor, and copied to Yvonne Rees, Helyn Clack, Nick Skellett, Sally Marks, Michael Sydney and John Furey, dated 24 May 2013.

This email was sent following a unilateral decision by the Conservative Group of Tandridge District Council not to allow their District Members to serve on the local committee, but to hold individual meetings by ward/division, to address local highway issues. I was concerned that this would not be a good use of officer time, would lead to additional costs, and is not a value for money process. I am surprised that Mr Cooksey is unaware that the Local Committee Vice-Chairman has the role of liaison with the Area Manager as this is seen as best value for money.

CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

(16) MRS STELLA LALLEMENT (EPSOM WEST) TO ASK: (2nd question)

What is Surrey County Council doing to ensure the safeguarding of children in non maintained schools?

Reply:

Surrey Children are educated through a range of provisions in and out of County determined by assessed need.

The "state" now provides education through a varied school system including Academies, Maintained school etc.

Additionally many parents choose to privately educate their children. This may be in day schools or boarding - these establishments are generally not state funded.

For those children with assessed and statemented SEN they will be educated in establishments appropriate to level and type of need. Once more there are state and independent special schools, though here places at either type of school are usually funded by the local authority.

Non maintained schools are special schools independent of local authorities but with a long standing recognition as designated specialists by the Department for Education. For the purposes of this question they are like independent schools.

The Local Authority has an important role to play in safeguarding children who attend all schools within Surrey. Independent schools have a statutory duty to appoint a Designated Senior Person for Child Protection who is required to undertake formal training by either the local authority or other external provider. This person, often referred to in Surrey as the Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO) is trained in identifying risk indicators of significant harm and how to make referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Services or other agencies. They are also given contact details of the lead officer for safeguarding children in the local authority who is able to offer advice and guidance.

Surrey County Council has a Group which deals exclusively with children who attend Non Maintained Special Schools in Surrey and who are placed by the Local Authority in "out of county" schools. The Group responds to adverse Ofsted inspections and reports regarding safeguarding or education concerns. The Group is chaired by Mr Julian Gordon-Walker, Head of Safeguarding, has multi agency representation, and has clear lines of reporting and robust procedures in place. Schools who come to notice receive monitoring visits to examine safeguarding policies and procedures and inspection of residential provisions.

The Group intend to inspect all 87 Non Maintained Special Schools used by Surrey County Council over a three year cycle and have so far carried out 18 in this year, with 12 more identified over the next two terms.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

**(17) MS BARBARA THOMSON (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK:
(2nd question)**

Having had several metal road signs stolen in my division, can the Cabinet Member advise the Chamber on the use of plastic signage?

Reply:

In 2010 Surrey Highways undertook a full technical review of its signage design policy as a result of higher rate of thefts due to the increased in scrap value in the secondary market place,

As a result of this review, all metal signs were removed from Surrey County Council design specifications and are thus no longer used in either sign replacements or new traffic schemes. All signs, since December 2010, are thus composed of a

recycled BCP (plastic/aluminium) Composite Panels, the BCP Panel provide the same lifespan as the older metal signage but have no scrap value.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

**(18) MR JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:
(3rd question)**

Will Surrey County Council follow Kent County Council's example and organise training events for parish councils in areas where there applications for unconventional gas and oil exploration and extraction, so that they are able to make informed responses to consultations?

Reply:

Officers have clarified the position with their counterparts at Kent County Council who confirm that no training events on unconventional oil and gas exploration and extraction have been organised for Parish Councils by the Authority. However, Kent County Council has recently carried out training for Members of the Planning Committee on unconventional hydrocarbons. Similar training will be organised for members of the Surrey Planning and Regulatory Committee at an appropriate time. Parish Councils and the public can access training information, if requested. Surrey has anticipated public interest and provided information on unconventional hydrocarbons on our web site, but the Authority is not required to do so as part of the planning process.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

**(19) MRS STELLA LALLEMENT (EPSOM WEST) TO ASK:
(3rd question)**

The time it takes for parking review proposals to be discussed, go through consultation, approved and implemented is a major concern for many Surrey residents. Will the Cabinet Member agree to review procedures to massively cut the delays involved?

Reply:

The Surrey parking team deals with regular parking reviews in ten of the Surrey district and boroughs. These can sometimes be quite large involving many stakeholders and complex issues but the process of having a single parking review enables more to be done for less. Each review involves changing the traffic orders that define the parking restrictions and this needs to be done correctly in accordance with the law to ensure enforcement can be carried out confidently. The parking team also respond to around 7000 enquiries each year from the public and councillors, as well as approximately 500 disabled bay applications.

Parking reviews follow a process that is defined by the road traffic regulation act. This means that for each review a series of steps must be followed. These are:

- initial assessment and discussion with Members
- committee approval
- preparation of legal documents

- statutory consultation
- review of objections with Members
- detailed design and works ordering
- implement Traffic Regulation Order/signs and lines

The team aims to carry out reviews expediently. However, the number of sites in the review combined with difficult locations where additional consultation is needed can often mean the process takes longer than some Members may desire. Parking can be a contentious subject and it is essential that any changes are properly considered and not rushed through in haste to satisfy what can be minority local vocal concern.

The parking team will continue to work with local committees to achieve the right balance between speed, cost and flexibility for reviews, and I will review the situation in the New Year.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

(20) MR JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK: (4th question)

This spring, Surrey County Council passed a motion to defend the Green Belt. How many developments on the Green Belt has Surrey County Council sought planning permission for since that motion was passed (19 March 2013) and how many of these have been awarded and declined planning permission?

Reply:

The attached list gives all the planning applications since 19 March 2013 related to Surrey County Council sites in the Green Belt, indicating which ones have been approved or pending a decision together with the reasons for the applications and a brief assessment in terms of green belt policy. In total, fifteen applications have been made of which eight have been permitted and seven yet to be determined. Most of the developments relate to our role in supporting existing schools located in the green belt to provide appropriate and accessible school facilities and to cater for additional school places.

Two new primary schools are being proposed in the green belt - both yet to be determined:

- a new 420 place primary school in Redhill.
- a new 630 place primary school in Esher. This involves the demolition of an existing and smaller school.

The issue in both these cases will be whether there are very special circumstances to warrant making an exception to Green Belt Policy. Those circumstances will largely relate to the need for school places and lack of alternative sites within the urban area.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

(21) MR JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK: (5th question)

Please confirm why the waste contract variation was made at an Extraordinary Cabinet meeting on 30 October 2013 rather than brought to the Environment and Transport Select Committee and then to either the Cabinet Meeting one week earlier on 22 October 2013 or in November, when the stated aim of making the decision at the time was 'to confirm the mechanism for varying the contract in an open and transparent way' (minutes of meeting of 30 October 2013 meeting, as included as item 114/3 of this council meeting)?

Reply:

The report to Cabinet clearly set out why the matter had to be dealt with when it was.

Cabinet's decision in July 2013 was predicated on a final decision following swiftly, using powers delegated at that time. The extended planning timetable resulted in some changes which the Leader decided should be reported to a Cabinet meeting as an update, before the variation was contractually completed. This was clearly more transparent than taking a decision using the delegated powers available. However, because of the time that had elapsed, there was a very narrow window available in which to secure the costs and terms previously agreed with subcontractors M+W, and to demonstrate progress consistent with the assurance the Council has given to DEFRA.

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

(22) MR JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK: (6th question)

The minutes of the Extraordinary Cabinet meeting on 30 October 2013 state that 'Option 1... would contribute to the Council's ambitious recycling target.'

Is it possible to confirm why the decision to build an anaerobic digestion plant is only currently considered to be made alongside building of a gasification plant (before the ecopark they had never been proposed together) and whether an Option to build an ecopark without the gasification plant has not been considered.

Reply:

The Council requires facilities for processing both food waste and residual waste. Co-locating these facilities on the same site has several advantages compared with separate stand-alone facilities. These advantages include the sharing of infrastructure such as site roads, weighbridges and grid connections and reduced transport impacts for example where district and boroughs are delivering food and residual waste on the same vehicle.

Building a single processing facility on the site, either a gasification plant or an anaerobic digestion plant was not considered as an option.

ANNEX

Type	SCC Property	Area	Planning Status	Details/Reason for application	Associated 'Green Belt' Planning Implications/Comments
Education					
1	Land at Broadwater School, Summers Road, Godalming, Surrey GU7 3BW	Waverley	Planning Application No: WA/2013/0970 Application Date: 24/05/2013 Current Status: PERMITTED July 2013	Accessibility improvements comprising construction of external brick lift shaft and installation of external ramps.	Not inappropriate development in the Green Belt because not a disproportionate extension to existing buildings
2	Land At Tillingbourne Junior School, New Road, Chilworth, GU4 8NB	Guildford	Planning Application No: GU/13/P/00801 Application Date: 02/05/2013 Current Status: PERMITTED July 2013	Erection of two storey modular classroom block comprising 6 classrooms and ancillary facilities; associated external works; demolition of two existing 'HORSA' classroom buildings (780 Sq m)	Not inappropriate development in the Green Belt due to replacement building not being materially larger than buildings to be demolished
3	Land at Woodfield School, Sunstone Grove, Merstham, Surrey RH1 3PR	Reigate & Banstead	Planning Application No: RE/P/13/00878 Application Date: 10/05/2013 Current Status: PERMITTED July 2013	Single storey extension to enlarge two existing classrooms (64 sq m)	Not inappropriate development in the Green Belt because not a disproportionate addition to existing building
4	Land at Earlswood Junior School, Brambletye Park Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 6JX.	Reigate & Banstead	Planning Application No: RE/P/13/01380 Application Date: 10/7/2013 Current Status: PERMITTED September 2013	Construction of new classroom block comprising five classrooms, alterations and extensions to play areas and associated external works; demolition of one existing classroom.	Very special circumstances of need to meet clear local demand which cannot be accommodated on a site outside Green Belt, clearly outweigh harm to Green Belt. Minimal impact on its openness and amenity
5	Land at Woodmansterne Primary School, Carshalton Road, Banstead, Surrey SM7 3HU	Reigate & Banstead	Planning Application No: RE/P/00886 Application Date: 07/05/2013 Current Status: PERMITTED July 2013	Installation of modular classroom building comprising three classrooms and ancillary facilities; associated hard surface surrounds and removal of existing	Need amounts to very special circumstances which clearly outweigh harm due to inappropriateness.

				demountable classroom unit.	Location and height of building, an removal of demountable unit, reduce loss of openness
6	Land at Limpsfield Grange School, Bluehouse Lane, Oxted, Surrey RH8 0RZ	Tandridge	Planning Application No: TA2013/857 Application Date: 05/04/2013 Current Status: PERMITTED August 2013	Construction of a single storey double modular classroom building.	Not inappropriate development in the Green Belt since replacement building not materially larger than that being demolished
7	Land at The Weald C of E Primary School, Newdigate Road, Beare Green, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 4QW	Mole Valley	Planning Application No: MO2013/0844 Application Date: 04/06/2013 Current Status: PERMITTED August 2013	Construction of extension to playground for a temporary period of five years.	New hard play area considered appropriate development in the Green Belt provided openness preserved. Limited impact on openness. Fence is inappropriate development. Very special circumstances of it being ancillary to hard play area clearly outweigh harm to Green Belt.
8	Land at Witley C of E Infant School, Church Lane, Witley, Godalming, Surrey GU8 5PN -	Waverley	Planning Application No: WA/2013/1655 Application Date: 03/09/2013 Current Status: Not yet determined	Demolition of existing timber outhouse and retaining wall, and construction of new retaining wall and boiler house.	Officers' report being drafted
9	Land at Esher C of E High School, More Lane, Esher, Surrey, KT10 8AP	Elmbridge	Planning Application No: EL/2013/4177 Application Date: 19/09/2013 Current Status: Not yet determined	Installation of open sided shade sail canopies with polyester fabric roofs.	Officers' report being drafted
10	Land at Wonersh and Shamley Green Infant School, Guildford	Waverley	Planning Application No: WA/2013/1732 Application Date: 14/08/2013	Erection of a detached single storey building together with car	Officers' report being drafted

	Road, Shamley Green, Surrey GU5 0RT		Current Status: Not yet determined	park and alterations to access to provide four new junior classrooms and an increase in pupils from 90 to 210 following demolition of existing HORSIA building	
11	Land adjoining Arran Way, Esher; land at Grove Farm, Arran Way and Cranmere Primary School, The Drive, Esher	Elmbridge	Planning Application No: EL/2013/1469 Application Date: 08/03/2013 Current Status: Not yet determined	Erection of new single storey Primary School (630 places) and Nursery (26 places) together with provision of parking for staff (37 spaces), cycle and scooter parking with access off Arran Way; layout of outdoor play areas and sports pitches and landscaping; demolition of existing Cranmere School buildings (other than caretaker's bungalow) and removal of hardstanding at The Drive; alterations to Arran Way associated with provision of dedicated footpaths for proposed school	Officers' report being drafted
12	Land at Grove Farm (part), off Arran Way, Esher, Surrey, KT10 8BE	Elmbridge	Planning Application No: EL2013/4366 Application Date: 17/10/2013 Current Status: Not yet determined	Laying out of car park to provide 15 spaces for residents of Arran Way with associated landscaping to replace those spaces lost as a result of the proposed development for a replacement primary school on land at The Drive, Esher reference	Officers' report being drafted
13	Existing skateboard park and open land north of Battlebridge Lane, Redhill, Surrey RH1 3LG	Reigate & Banstead	Planning Application No: RE13/01841 Application Date: 17/10/2013 Current Status: Not yet determined	Erection of new two storey 2 form of entry primary school (420 places) and nursery (26 FTE places) together with provision of 29 parking spaces, 3 disabled user parking spaces, 8 staff cycle spaces, 62 cycle/scooter spaces for pupils; access off Battlebridge Lane; laying out of outdoor hard and soft play areas and	Officers' report being drafted – the likely issues will surround whether there are <i>very special circumstances</i> with the proposal to warrant an overriding of Green Belt Policy and those circumstances will largely revolve around the need

				landscaping (2265m ²)	for school places.
Traveller Sites					
1	Land at the former Downs Traveller Site, Tupwood Lane, Caterham, Surrey CR3 6ET	Tandridge	<p>Planning Application No: TA/2013/1403 Application Date: 12/08/2013</p> <p>Current Status: Not yet determined</p>	Remediation, restoration and change of use of former local authority traveller site to public access countryside	This application is restoring a site to open countryside that was previously used by travellers therefore there is a benefit arising from it in respect of impact on the Green Belt as it is restoring open character
2	Land to the south west of Littleton Lane Traveller Site, Old Littleton Road, Shepperton, Middlesex, TW17 0NF	Spelthorne	<p>Planning Application No: SP/13/0092 Application Date: 07/06/2013</p> <p>Current Status: PERMITTED September 2013</p>	Temporary use of land as local authority managed traveller site comprising ten pitches for the duration of works to reconstruct existing permanent traveller site on adjoining land.	Proximity of temporary site to existing one and role of former in modernising the latter, constitute very special circumstances which outweigh the slight harm to the Green Belt

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS

I wanted to take this opportunity of letting all Members know about an initiative in my Division of which I am very proud.

Kings College, Guildford, launched its literacy campaign in January 2013 as a critical part of its drive to raise standards and ensure the best possible outcome for every one of the young people who attend the College. As you would expect, developing a culture of reading through the school community is an essential part of that campaign.

The Chairman of the Park Barn and Westborough Community Association is a governor at the College and, through discussions with the Association, the College became aware that the mobile library service had been withdrawn and that the wider community no longer had access to a mobile library. The main library in the centre of Guildford Town is still open but the journey there by bus is far from simple and getting up North Street to return a lot of books and back again with the new lot requires considerable physical strength. Parking in Guildford is a work of art and expensive which discourages people from going there unless they have to.

Another strand to this is that the new Principal of Kings College, Kate Carriett, had decided that it would be better for the College if her office was in the main corridor at Kings rather than in the rather isolated location almost in a small wing of its own. She decided that such a large room should not be wasted and, because it is separate from the main part of the College, she offered it as a community room.

The College and the Community Association agreed that one of the uses of the new room would be to house a library for the wider community. It brings together the College and the wider community and both can benefit from it.

I would also like to take an opportunity to thank Surrey's Library Service and Helen Leech, in particular. Although, they didn't learn of the venture until most of the planning and work had been done, they responded very quickly and positively once they became aware of it with support, advice and encouragement.

The new Community Library was formally launched on 6 December. Well over 500 books have been donated by the public. Members of the public with no immediate connections with the College have contacted them to offer donations. Students from years 8 to 13 have helped in their spare time with cataloguing etc. Older students have had the chance to use this as part of their community service for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and members of the public have already volunteered to help. Another tribute here for Kate Phillimore, who works at Kings College and has really taken on the organisation role.

On the launch day, there was a queue of people waiting to come in to the Library. The ages ranged from older people who are probably pensioners right down to families with small children. There is an excellent section for children's books with a special kinderbox for picture books and some brightly coloured bean bags. I was there as well and everyone I spoke to agreed that it was a really good venture.

I am really proud of the positive way that the community and the college have come together to respond positively following the withdrawal by Surrey of the mobile library service. I hope that all Members will join with me in congratulating them.

Mrs Fiona White, Local Member for Guildford West , 10 December 2013

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS

At 02.53 this morning the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service was called to a fire which had taken hold in Ewell Court House, a Grade II listed building that is the community centre for one third of my Division of Ewell Court, Auriol and Cuddington.

Two pumps arrived within seven minutes but the incident was such that six pumps were on site within ten minutes and within fifty minutes it was upgraded to a ten pump incident – four from London and six from Surrey – plus water carriers and command support.

Despite the efforts of Surrey Fire and Rescue 70% of the roof was destroyed by the fire, 20% of the top floor was destroyed by the fire, 80% of the first floor has suffered heat damage and the effects smoke and water and 100% of the ground floor has been damaged by water. However, the rear of the building including flats, a children's nursery and Ewell Court Library appear to be safe from damage. ***[Unfortunately since this statement was delivered, water damage has been found in Ewell Court library].***

I would like to record my thanks to Chris Gill and Mark Barrett who were in command at the start of the incident and to Dan Quinn who assumed command from 8.00am, and also to all fire personnel who attended the blaze throughout the night, and who were still on site as I left for this Council Meeting earlier today.

For my community this fire means we now have to find temporary accommodation such activities as a Ewell Court RA Bingo Club and Charity Quiz Night, Indoor Bowls and the Women's Institute. But these events will continue in local venues and church halls. And, in the not too distant future, and with the support of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, SCC and crucially local residents, Ewell Court House including the library will once again be at the heart of what goes on in the Ewell Court community.

Eber Kington

Local Member for Ewell Court, Auriol and Cuddington

10 December 2013

CABINET MEMBER STATEMENT

Maureen Giles

I would like to take this opportunity to say a few words about Maureen Giles, the Headteacher of Surrey's Virtual School, who retires on 18 December.

The Surrey Virtual School is not a teaching institution, rather a way of bringing together all the information on children and young people who are cared for by the local authority, as if they were in a single school. In this way, their progress can be closely tracked and supported, so that interventions can be targeted in a more strategic way.

Surrey decided to create a virtual school in 2009, well before it became a statutory duty of local authorities. Maureen was appointed in 2009, in the same year as myself, and she quickly proved herself an exemplary colleague.

Maureen has been a visionary champion for all our Looked After Children (LAC), whether they are placed inside Surrey or attending schools in other local authorities.

She has always promoted educational achievement, and has demanded that the improvement of the outcomes and life chances of LAC become a priority for schools, carers and social workers. Maureen has fought hard to ensure all our children and young people have access to the best possible education, and are given every chance to progress, and to realise their individual potential.

Under her leadership, the Virtual School has grown, and gone from strength to strength. The Virtual School organises and provides training for designated teachers in schools, school governors, social workers, foster carers, and a range of partner agencies.

Thanks to Maureen systems are now in place so the Virtual School is informed every single morning if any pupil is absent from their school, this has led to significant improvements in attendance as schools themselves are immediately more aware, and any fixed term exclusions have an immediate response to prevent any further escalation.

Maureen has worked closely with Children's Services on placement stability, and encouraged carers to be actively involved with the educational attainment of their foster children.

Children in care will have previously experienced neglect and abuse, and may suffer with poor mental health and challenging behaviours. This makes them prone to exclusion from school.

Maureen set up a working protocol with schools, so that in the event of a LAC being at risk of permanent exclusion, a member of staff from the virtual school would work with the inclusion team (and SEN team, if appropriate) and the school, until a suitable educational offer is in place. No child in care to Surrey has been recorded as permanently excluded from their school, either in Surrey or another local authority for the past three years.

Maureen has worked closely with the Department for Education, and is widely recognised as a highly respected Headteacher of one of the first virtual schools in England.

I am sure that Members will want to pass on to Maureen both their thanks for all her hard work on behalf of the LAC in Surrey, and their best wishes for a happy retirement.

Mary Angell
Cabinet Member for Children and Families
10 December 2013