

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS BOARD** held at 10.30 am on 8 September 2016 at Ashcombe, County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Board at its meeting on Wednesday, 19 October 2016.

**Elected Members:**

- \* Mr David Harmer (Chairman)
- Mr Bob Gardner (Vice-Chairman)
- \* Mrs Nikki Barton
- \* Mr Mike Bennison
- \* Mrs Natalie Bramhall
- \* Mr Stephen Cooksey
- \* Mrs Pat Frost
- \* Dr Zully Grant-Duff
- Mr Ken Gulati
- \* Mr Peter Hickman
- \* Mr George Johnson
- \* Mr Richard Wilson
- \* Mrs Victoria Young
- \* Mr Ian Beardsmore
- \* Ms Denise Turner-Stewart
- Mr John Furey
- Mr Mike Goodman

**In attendance**

Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning  
John Furey, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding

**MEETING STARTED 10:30 IN THE ASHCOMBE SUITE**

**1/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Ken Gulati and Bob Gardner. Michael Sydney substituted for Bob Gardner.

**2/16 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 14 JULY 2016 [Item 2]**

The minutes from the last meeting held on 14 July were agreed accurate record of the meeting.

**3/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

There was no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

**4/16 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]**

There were no questions or petitions.

**5/16 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE BOARD [Item 5]**

There were no responses to report.

**6/16 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 6]**

The Chairman advised the Board that EP2 on the recommendation tracker read as achieved, this was in regards to it being added to the FWP in December, however the update/report from the Transport Group Manager was still outstanding. In addition, the Chairman reminded the board that the link regarding EP3 was circulated, however upon Members' request it would be re-circulated.

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding advised the Board that the update on road safety improvements on Bridge Street would not be ready as the forward work plan suggests, as it was still a work in progress, however an interim report would available in due course.

**Actions:**

Re-circulate the link showing the network map of current levels of provision/passenger usage at each Surrey train station, to Members.

**MEETING WAS SUSPENDED 10:35AM**

**MEETING RESUMED IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 10:47AM**

**9/16 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [Item 9]**

*As a result of an incident, Mike Bennison left the meeting at 10:47am due to a medical emergency.*

The Board agreed item 10 to be taken into Part 2, by virtue of paragraph(s) 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information).

## **PART TWO - IN PRIVATE**

### **10/16 RISK MANAGEMENT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE DIRECTORATE [Item 10]**

#### **Declarations of interest:**

None.

#### **Witnesses:**

Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning  
John Furey, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding  
Jason Russell, Assistant Director for Highways and Transport  
Ben Skipp, Change Consultant

#### **Key point raised during discussion:**

1. The Chairman of the Board introduced the report by giving a laymans view of why it would be a good idea, for the Members' interests, to have an awareness of how the Directorates assess and cover off perceived risks to the Council's services. The Chairman explained that the Officers had provided a selection of the most significant risks from the Risk Register.
2. The Chairman further advised Members that risk management was a tool that enables the Council to work out how resources could be used to maintain functions and improve the services.
3. The Chairman mentioned perception of risk may vary as Officers and Members might have differing views. The Chairman further explained the nature of this risk management item was to capture these differences.
4. The Chairman indicated that Officers would, with Members input, judge where resources would be allocated, where relevant. One Member expressed concern with regards to where resident views were considered and whether they will have an input in the allocation of resources. The Chairman explained that this concern was not a risk issue but rather a problem that could be looked at separately.
5. The Assistant Director for Highways and Transport assured Members that Officers would be thinking of the outcomes the service would be trying to deliver and assess the risks against those, contributing to improved resident experience.
6. The Officer added that the registers provided in the meeting had been reviewed recently as steps had been taken to mitigate some of the risks the service previously had, and in some cases the risk scoring had improved.

7. The Board were informed of the two categories of risks, strategic and operational. The Assistant Director for Highways and Transport addressed Members on how the different levels of management engaged with these two types of risks, which in turn ensured they were dealt with effectively and robustly.
8. Members sought clarification on whether Local Committees could engage with Officers in regard to operational risk mitigation. The Officer agreed that day-to-day operational risks/concerns could benefit from Member involvement at Local Committees if they wanted to pursue this. The Officer welcomed a discussion with Chairmen of the Local Committees.
9. The Officer outlined capability and skills as one of the challenges the Council was facing, informing the Board that budget cuts and the competition from the private sector was having an impact on recruitment. Members acknowledged there was a staffing issue and indicated that this needs to be addressed, without the staff nothing would be implemented.
10. The Board were informed that on a short term basis consultants and agency staff were being deployed as a result of poor staff retainment, whilst the service worked on making Surrey a more competitive employer in the industry.
11. A Member queried the process the Council takes when carrying out risk management and whether it was the same as other counties. Officers explained Surrey's approach was good practice and more robust, undertaking a number of operations to support this.
12. A Member voiced the opinion that risk management should be implemented geographically and resources should not be directed in places where it is not needed. Officers reminded the Board that not all parts of the county are the same and resources are directed where it is needed, thus engaging with local committees might prove useful to determine where "hot spots" were.
13. Members highlighted an absence of countryside related risks in the register and sought more information on this. Officers pointed out that only the top risks were provided in the meeting, and that the full register would be available to the Board or the Countryside Member Reference Group, and the Board were assured that these were not forgotten.
14. One Member indicated that simpler terminology would be easier to understand, as the report was very technical. The Chairman agreed the report was complex and recognised the difficulty in understanding the report and suggested more work to be done in this regard should a similar exercise be repeated.

**Recommendation:**

- a) For the Assistant Director for Highways and Transport to provide the board with the full risk registers for the E&I directorate, including 'Countryside' related risks.

**Actions:**

None.

**12/16 PUBLICITY FOR PART TWO ITEMS [Item 12]**

It was agreed that non-exempt information may be made available to the press and public, where appropriate.

**MEETING WAS SUSPENDED 11:42AM**

**MEETING WAS RESUMED IN THE ASHCOMBE SUITE - 11:48AM**

**8/16 REPORT OF THE WINTER MAINTENANCE TASK GROUP [Item 8]**

**Declarations of interest:**

None

**Witnesses:**

Dan Squibb, Asset Planning Team Manager  
Jason Russell, Assistant Director for Highways and Transport  
John Furey, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The chairman of the winter maintenance task group introduced the report by informing the board that the matter was looked at in detail, reviewing the options provided in the report trying to save £340k against the budget. The chairman was clear that reaching that figure was not deliverable and felt a wider input from the Board would be more appropriate than the group to make direct recommendations.
2. The chairman asked members whether they wanted to support reducing P1 route length. Members unanimously agreed against the reduction which had a saving value of estimate of £48,000 (per route 52km).
3. Officers were asked whether the saving option in relation to the thermal mapping would be a capital or revenue cost, as an upfront cost of £115k was required. The assistant director of highways and transport informed the board that it would be a revenue cost as it would be an investment option. It was also highlighted that the initial cost would not be a saving against the £340k target and would be sought from the corporate centre which would be returned when the £150k is saved in the following year.

4. The chairman indicated that subject to the upfront cost being taken from the investor's pot rather than the highways budget for the thermal mapping, would the board support this recommendation. The Board agreed that the thermal mapping option would be a savings option that would be supported, sharing the view that it would return long term gains.

5. A member highlighted the point that the saving options provided would not deliver the £340k saving as they would not achieve the figure that needed to be reached. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding advised members that if the saving was not found here, it would have to be found somewhere else in the budget.

6. The next saving reviewed by the board was the removal of one mini salting vehicle. The asset planning team manager informed the members that two mini salting vehicles were originally procured but removing one would save £15,700. The board did not approve of the removal of one mini salting vehicle and showed support in favour of the two salting vehicles to remain, to support the County.

7. With regards to the grit bins, the board did not support option one which was not to fill any bins on the network. Although it was clarified that grit bins were not a statutory requirement, members supported the health and safety benefit of grit bins and did not approve of this saving.

8. The asset planning team manager updated the board on option two, which was to only fill the bins that have salt below a certain level and said this saving option was no longer available as it was already carried out. There was a suggestion that some investigations into under 50% fill happening, but it wouldn't be possible to judge a saving until after this winter. In addition, the board did not advocate option 3 which was to increase the scoring criteria for bins to remain on the network.

9. Members debated that option 7, to discontinue district and borough salt provisions, would be counterproductive as it was very popular throughout the county to have it continued. The board encouraged to have this remain, for a safety measure as the salt was primarily used for footways.

10. The board were updated on the farmers plough maintenance saving option, which has been committed to for this financial year and is no longer an option to follow. Members agreed that this was sensible as it was a small cost against the potential risks.

11. The chairman concluded that the board would support the thermal mapping option and the remaining saving options were not appropriate possibilities. The chairman indicated, as the £340k saving was not achieved, officers would have to seek this elsewhere in the budget and that the Board would be interested to receive details in due course.

### **Recommendations:**

The Economic Prosperity, Environment and Highways board recommends;

- a. That Officers continue to develop a financial plan for the Thermal Mapping proposal, to ensure a significant saving is returned against the initial revenue expenditure, albeit in future financial years.
- b. That Cabinet considers more acceptable means for generating savings from the Environment and Infrastructure budget in order to obtain the £340,000 target for this financial year.

### **Actions:**

None.

### **7/16 UPDATES FROM MEMBER REFERENCE GROUPS AND TASK GROUPS [Item 7]**

The Chairman of the Basingstoke Canal Task Group explained to the board that there was nothing to report or sensible to advise. The board requested an update on the progress and why no information has been forthcoming since the last meeting.

The board were informed of the Surrey Wildlife Trust agreement with the County Council, which was approved by Cabinet earlier this year. Members indicated for the Countryside Management MRG to request an update from the Cabinet Member on the progress of the agreement and why it hasn't been signed yet.

Members were advised that the finance sub-group meeting would be postponed until the finance department agreed the budgetary process with Cabinet and a date would be organised between the sub-group and officers when this was finalised.

The chairman notified the board that two member reference groups were newly created. One was mentioned in the forward work plan under the incorrect title as 'Local Plan MRG' but was meant to read 'Waste Local Plan MRG'. The other newly formed MRG was mentioned as the 'Surrey Waste Partnership Future' and would be examining how the county could move to one single organisation for waste purposes and that members would be meeting with officers on Friday 23 September to discuss this.

### **11/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 19 OCTOBER 2016 [Item 11]**

The next meeting of the Economic Prosperity, Environment and Highways Board will be held on Wednesday 19 October at 10:30 am in the Ashcombe suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames.

Meeting ended at: 12.53 pm

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**Chairman**