

MINUTES of the meeting of the **COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 18 January 2021 at REMOTE MEETING.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Friday, 19 March 2021.

Elected Members:

- * Mr John O'Reilly (Chairman)
- * Mr Andy MacLeod (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mr Saj Hussain (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mrs Fiona White
- * Mr Keith Witham
- * Mr Mike Benison
- * Mrs Jan Mason
- * Mr Ken Gulati
- * Mr John Furey
- * Mr Paul Deach
- * Mr Jonathan Essex
- * Mr Mike Goodman

In attendance:

Natalie Bramhall, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change
Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport
Denise Turner-Stewart, Cabinet Member for Communities

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

None received.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: TUESDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2020 [Item 2]

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None received.

4 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

None received.

5 ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT [Item 5]

Witnesses:

Natalie Bramhall, Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Change
Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport

Katie Stewart, Executive Director – Environment, Transport & Infrastructure
Carolyn McKenzie, Director - Environment
Jo Diggins, Business Improvement & Quality Assurance Team Leader
Michelle Rowland, Business Intelligence Team Leader

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Executive Director introduced the report and explained that performance monitoring was an area of continuing development across the Council. Targets were due to be challenged and scrutinised by CLT and Cabinet Members to ensure that they were both realistic and ambitious. The Directorate had endeavoured to set stretch targets that were attainable in order to show improvement or decline in performance.

Meeting paused at 10:02 owing to webcasting problems

Meeting recommenced at 10:04

2. A Member questioned the relative value of the performance data in assessing the Directorate's performance given the circumstances faced in 2020/21 as compared with previous years. The Executive Director stated that it was still important to continue performance monitoring during the pandemic as the Directorate was expected to run its essential services. Covid-19 had impacted some indicators (waste services, for example) however a number of missed targets (such as flood risk) were reflective of the position and progress of the Directorate and the timing of capital investment. Some of the indicators were to be reviewed because of the continuing impacts of Covid-19.
3. A Member asked whether there could be a consistent mix of indicators (financial, quantitative and qualitative) for each theme. The Executive Director acknowledged that the Directorate needed to achieve a greater balance of indicators in future performance reports.
4. The Chairman noted that a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) expected in January 2021 were not yet available and asked when they would be delivered. The Business Improvement and Quality Assurance Team Leader responded that the pending indicators needed to undergo validation before they were shared widely. Some indicators were new and subject to ongoing work to ensure that the data collected was robust and accurate. The Directorate were hoping to deliver all outstanding performance results within the month.
5. A Member noted that there were few climate change targets included in the report. The Executive Director informed the Select Committee that these indicators were not yet established because it was important to ensure that they were meaningful and measurable. The Select Committee would return to this at its March 2021 meeting when scrutinising the Climate Change delivery plan.

6. A Member asked whether the Council would be undertaking a coordination role with districts and borough councils to tackle climate change. The Executive Director confirmed that the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan assumed a coordination role for the Council. The Delivery Plan looked at a range of partnership-wide actions.
7. A Member requested that future performance reports differentiate clearly between organisation climate change targets for Surrey County Council (for example, getting to net zero by 2030) and Surrey-wide climate change targets. Further to this the Director confirmed that there would be performance monitoring of the wider partnership and the Directorate was in the process of defining what those indicators would be. There would be climate change indicators for the Council as a business and organisation, alongside indicators that capture climate change measures across the whole of Surrey.
8. A Member commented that working from home had significantly impacted household waste and the target to reduce kerbside residual waste and queried whether the Council's target should be revised given the likelihood that working from home would continue post-pandemic. The Executive Director confirmed that the target was being reviewed and updated to account for the increase in home working. The priority of the Surrey Waste Local Plan was waste reduction and the Service was working closely with partners to ensure effective public messaging regarding the importance of reducing waste. The Cabinet Member added that the Service was working with partners to encourage residents to recycle more food waste, as this would significantly reduce the amount of residual waste. Engagement with district and borough councils regarding the rollout of recycling facilities at flats was underway and would ensure that all residents had the opportunity to recycle as much as possible.
9. The Member asked why there was a reduction in performance with regard to flood risk. The Executive Director explained that the targets were related to the Surrey Flood Alleviation Scheme and were a way of monitoring that programme and the level of investment. The targets did not capture the enforcement and maintenance work being done, and this would be made clearer in future performance reports.
10. A Member asked which borough in Surrey had achieved 'improvements in recycling and contamination' and asked how these developments would be emulated in other districts and boroughs. The Director – Environment stated that communication, behaviour change, and enforcement were key to the improvements achieved in Woking. Rollout of a communications and behaviour change programme was due in 2021 and the Director hoped that this would expand performance improvements in waste targets across the whole of Surrey.
11. A Member asked how the performance of the Council in achieving its carbon savings targets would be reported. The Director stated that the Directorate was developing 3-5-year science-based carbon budgets and explained that the reporting of target carbon savings would be against key areas that constitute Surrey's carbon footprint. The

Directorate was to produce a full annual report detailing the areas where the council achieved its carbon reduction targets, and areas of underperformance.

12. The Chairman queried why some performance indicators has low scores with regard to resident satisfaction. The Executive Director stated that it was a challenge to score highly with resident satisfaction, but it was positive that Surrey residents had high expectations of the service. The Directorate benchmarked against national community perception averages and performed well. The Executive Director stated that they would look further at benchmarking to give context for resident satisfaction indicators.

Actions:

- i. Select Committee to receive an update on the tree planning programme (Owner: Carolyn McKenzie, Director - Environment)

Recommendations:

- I. That a six-monthly review of the Environment Transport & Infrastructure Directorate's performance is added to the Select Committee's forward work programme for 2021/22.
- II. That benchmarking data is included where possible along with quantitative and qualitative information across each of the performance themes

6 SURREY INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport

Katie Stewart, Executive Director – ETI

Lee Parker, Director - Infrastructure Planning & Major Projects

Dawn Redpath, Director – Economy & Growth

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Executive Director stated that the Council was expanding its capital investment in infrastructure and emphasised the importance of the Surrey Infrastructure Plan (SIP) in achieving the council's ambition to deliver infrastructure to support sustainable growth. The 2017 infrastructure study had identified the level of investment needed to support intended growth and detected a significant funding gap and deliverability challenges. The Council had subsequently needed to develop a strategy that would bridge the funding gap whilst investing in sustainable infrastructure and adhering to the Council's climate change strategy, local transport plan and other organisation ambitions.
2. The Director – Infrastructure Planning and Major Projects stated that the proposed Prioritisation Framework for infrastructure projects would

be used to assess proposed schemes. The plan proposed an innovative approach to funding and financing and set out a number of objectives, each with a series of outcomes. Proposed schemes were to be scored against these outcomes using a simple scoring matrix. This new planned approach would provide a strong focus on outcomes and the deliverability of schemes.

3. A Member asked why and how each of the objectives were chosen for inclusion in the plan and whether this methodology was based on existing best practice. The Executive Director explained that the objectives were based on the prevailing Council strategies (for example, the climate change strategy and local transport strategy) and the SIP was designed to bring them together for development of an integrated framework, alongside the development of the Directorate's capital programme. The objectives were established in collaboration with the Cabinet, Surrey Future Steering Board, district and borough councils and other partners.
4. A Member questioned how the Prioritisation Framework methodology ensured that the scoring of schemes was evidence based. The Executive Director responded that SIP was underpinned by the 2017 Surrey Infrastructure Study which had examined a suite of objectives and outcomes that the council was trying to achieve. This helped to define the strategies and objectives of SIP. There was also a local level, formal consultation process for the development of infrastructure delivery plans.
5. A Member asked how the proposed schemes would be subject to democratic processes and inspection. The Executive Director stated that cabinet set desired outcomes from which officers developed the capital programme. The Prioritisation Framework was not intended to create a finalised, hierarchical list, rather was designed to highlight the schemes that were most likely to be delivered based on their outcomes set by the democratic process. This approach was intended to increase the transparency around the reasons behind why certain projects were on the capital programme. The Cabinet Member for Transport added that the prioritised list would form a recommendation to cabinet and elected members would be able to suggest changes and express their views thereafter.
6. The Select Committee inquired how SIP linked with the government's National Infrastructure Strategy and what was expected to be delivered in Surrey as a result of this national strategy. Previously, the Directorate was not in a position whereby it could respond in a timely manner to national infrastructure plans and priorities and the Executive Director was pleased that many of the council's strategies now reflected the direction of national strategy (such as sustainable growth). Once SIP was in place, the Council would be able to link up with the national priorities and make an evidence base to Government that Surrey was a good position to invest in as part of the national infrastructure strategy.
7. Government strategies were subject to change and the Member asked whether the SIP would enable the Council to react quickly to national policy changes. The Director explained that the purpose of SIP was to

avoid a clear ranking of schemes and to enable a much timelier response to national policy changes and Government funding opportunities with costed schemes that had already been through the democratic process and gained community support. The Director was confident that the new prioritisation framework would put the Council in a much stronger position going forward and indicate to government that it could respond positively when opportunities arrived.

8. A Member requested further information regarding the availability of staff to support the infrastructure project. The Executive Director stated that additional capacity had been created within the Major Projects and Infrastructure team to drive the infrastructure programme. Within this team, the Directorate was looking to establish a place-making function to focus on planning and intelligence gathering around the schemes, and to start developing the directorate's pipeline. The team would also increase the capacity to deliver the business cases and identify Government priorities.
9. A Member asked whether broadband coverage across Surrey would be prioritised going forward to meet the pressure of increased home schooling and working from home. The Executive Director stated that Covid-19 made attaining 100% broadband coverage for all Surrey residents increasingly important. A close working relationship between the Infrastructure Planning & Major Projects and the Economy & Growth teams would be critical to achieving this. The latter was working on the development of an additional infrastructure strategy and the Director – Economy & Growth stated the importance of looking at a place strategically and ensuring that digital infrastructure could be utilised to deliver against a variety of outcomes.
10. A Member asked what the cost would be of delivering all the schemes in Appendix 1 (*an initial list of schemes to be assessed using the SIP Prioritisation Framework*) over a 5-10-year period. The Executive Director responded that these figures were developed and would be provided with further detail in an update at a future meeting of the Select Committee.
11. A Member asked how the Council might ensure that it did not invest in schemes that contributed to its climate impact. The Executive Director stated that the Prioritisation Framework would ensure that new infrastructure was as green as possible. The Director – Environment was working closely with the Director – Infrastructure Planning & Major Projects, and others, to look at how capital programmes should be assessed to ascertain their likely carbon impact. The Director – Environment stated that the development of the SIP was informed by other strategies and linked closely with the new Local Transport Plan 4, which would have a significant focus on decarbonisation. The Executive Director assured Members that the aims of the Surrey Climate Change Delivery plan underpinned the SIP.
12. The Chairman asked whether the Council had looked at other Local Authorities' plans when developing the SIP. The Executive Director stated that the Council had taken a more innovative and strategic approach than other Local Authorities to put the council in the best position possible for future funding announcements.

13. A Member requested that a more detailed explanation of the delivery timeline and progress and better communication of expected achievements be included in the report to Cabinet in February 2021.

Recommendations:

- I. The Select Committee ensures democratic oversight of the Surrey infrastructure plan by scrutinising the delivery of the plan at a future meeting in the 2021/22 council year, assessing the success of the 15 objectives; and
- II. The Select Committee seeks evidence of the council working with partner agencies to secure funds and deliver projects and how the Surrey infrastructure plan and Directorate's capital programme helps to realise the aims of the council's main strategies (e.g. Climate change strategy, local transport plan, digital strategy)
- III. The Select Committee recommends that the report to Cabinet in February 2021 includes a timeline for delivery of the plan.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 7]

1. The Chairman noted that two items were scheduled for the March 2021 meeting of the Select Committee namely Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Improvement Update with accompanying Task Group Report and the Climate Change Delivery Plan.
2. A Member requested that the Select Committee receive an update on the Highways Contract. The Executive Director stated that the contract was out for procurement and would likely go to Cabinet in the autumn of 2021, after which the Directorate could report to the Select Committee.
3. A Member asked whether the Select Committee could help shape the Land Use Strategy. The Executive Director welcomed the establishment of a Member Task Group and would discuss with the Scrutiny Business Manager the timing of scrutiny.
4. A Member requested that the Select Committee be provided with an update on the Local Transport Plan and Waste Commissioning. The Executive Director would work with the Scrutiny Business Manager to schedule timely updates to Select Committee.

8 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY, 19 MARCH 2021 [Item 8]

The Select Committee noted its next meeting would be held on 19 March 2021.

Meeting ended at: 11:57

Chairman

