

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 6 October 2022 at Surrey County Council, Woodhatch Place, 11 Cockshot Hill, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 8.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Wednesday, 5 December 2022.

**Elected Members:**

- Catherine Baart
- \* Stephen Cooksey
- Colin Cross
- \* John Furey
- \* David Harmer
- \* Jonathan Hulley
- \* Andy MacLeod (Vice-Chairman)
- \* Jan Mason
- \* Cameron McIntosh
- \* John O'Reilly (Chairman)
- \* Lance Spencer
- \* Keith Witham

(\* = present at the meeting)

**34/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Colin Cross.

**35/22 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 14 JUNE 2022 [Item 2]**

The minutes of the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee held on 14 June 2022 were formally agreed as a true and accurate record of the meetings.

**36/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

Cameron McIntosh declared an interest in Item 2, A County Deal Update report and left the meeting for this item

**37/22 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]**

None received.

**38/22 A SKILLS PLAN FOR SURREY [Item 5]**

**Witnesses:**

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth  
Michael Coughlin, Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth  
Jack Kennedy, Head of Economy and Growth

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth summarised the role of skills development in securing economic and inclusion outcomes, aligning with Surrey County Council's (SCC) strategic focus on '*Growing a sustainable economy from which everyone can benefit*' and underlying principle of '*no-one left behind*'.

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman asked how the success of this ambitious agenda would be assessed and would there be the capacity to amend the strategy if required. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth confirmed the Skills Plan, which would be shared with the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee, would include measures against each objective adding that the document would continually be updated to reflect changing skill requirements going forward. The Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth noted longer term difficulties, particularly where the Council was not the direct deliverer of programmes and noted three strategic aims over the longer term: the number of people accessing opportunities; the levels of qualifications and skills improving; and ensuring that businesses remain within Surrey and are able to recruit from within the County due to an increase in residents entering employment. The Chairman requested that the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee see a copy of the Cabinet paper. **Action - Cabinet Member for Transport and Growth/ Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth**
2. A Member asked if basic skills for those that had missed a formal education would be included in the plan. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth confirmed that basic skills would be addressed through the lifelong learning element via Surrey's maintained schools with this offer being extended to academy schools.
3. A Member queried how future skill requirements could be predicted. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth explained that input regarding future skills from business leaders and companies would be reflected in the future Skills Plan. The Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth added that businesses and education providers were brought together through the Surrey Skills Forum enabling direct conversations around short and long-term requirements.
4. A Member, in referring to paragraph 9 of the report, queried how residents facing barriers could enter and progress through the skills and employment system in practice. The Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth reiterated the

focus of SCC to convene and facilitate contact between education providers, businesses and residents with a view to simplifying navigation of the scheme.

5. A Member said that there was a lack of guidance for young people not planning to go to university. The Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth explained that the Skills Plan paper addressed the gap – caused by the predilection of young people going to university –with discussions taking place with both Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) around an enhanced career service to provide the alternative guidance required.
6. A Member said that more detail could be provided on how the Council could lead from the front on the Skills Plan. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth confirmed that as an employer, the Council had a good set of training programmes and a number of apprenticeships, however, there were challenges around offering jobs on completion of qualifications –continued work with businesses was required to ensure opportunities were available following training. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth added that a focus to signpost people in the right direction and design apprenticeships for people to access at an earlier age than currently happens was key to leading from the front.
7. A Member requested clarification around actions that had already been taken in areas such as the Enterprise M3 (EM3) Principal Skills Hub and timelines, noting that knowledge of this information would avoid a duplication of efforts. The Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth said that the government dictated the national context around skills and a requirement for local skills improvement programmes, led by employer representative bodies would be produced by May or June 2023. The Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPS) would be brought together by the footprint of the Local Community Investment Plan (LCIP) reaching across the east of Surrey. In addition, a summary plan bringing together residents, business and providers has been initiated to fully reflect the needs of the County and allow greater coherence.
8. The Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth said that the information included in the paper was deliberately open ended to allow for members' feedback and comments to be reflected in the report to Cabinet. He offered to bring the final policy back to the Communities, Environment and Highways (CEH) Select Committee for scrutiny after this. The Chairman welcomed the opportunity for the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee to scrutinise the final policy in

## **2023. Action – Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth**

9. A Member was concerned at the lack of indicative costs and information around the level of senior management required in the paper. The Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth said that recruitment was underway for a specific skills post to work alongside the Head of Economy and Growth; a role dedicated to skills. An application for transformational funding had been submitted to support the roll out and development of the skills plan and resources were in place to drive the plan forward.
10. A Member asked if investment zones to support the Council's Skills Plan had been explored following the recent announcement from the government? The Leader of the Council confirmed the intention to submit three proposals for investment zones with approval being sought from the local planning authority by the 14 October 2022 expression of interest deadline.
11. The Chairman, in referring to paragraph 17, queried if schools could be expected to meet the expectation of providing meaningful encounters to develop the skills uplift. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth said that whilst the signs were encouraging, difficulties were expected around transporting students to businesses with SCC planning to undertake work to facilitate these journeys.

### **Resolved:**

The Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee:

1. Agrees that private sector employers (large, medium and small) should take the lead in improving skills with important roles for public sector organisations (Universities, Schools, National Health Service (NHS), Surrey County Council, districts and boroughs etc.) but these need robust definition and clarity of their input.
2. Accepts the ambitions of the Plan and the eventual Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) but needs assurance that a robust performance measurement system and timeline (where appropriate) will be put in place to monitor progress and to adjust the strategy if evidence so requires.
3. Appreciates the inevitably limited role that Surrey County Council will play in the plan but argues that its practical role as one of the key procurers and deliverers of services, as well as of strategic leadership be better defined.

4. Requests that the final version to Cabinet on 25 October 2022 addresses the aforementioned points.

Cameron McIntosh left the meeting at 11.07am for this item due to an interest in item 6, A County Deal Update

### **39/22 A COUNTY DEAL UPDATE [Item 6]**

#### **Witnesses:**

Tim Oliver, Leader of the Council

Michael Coughlin, Executive Director of Prosperity, Partnerships and Growth

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

1. The Leader of the Council introduced the report, outlining the new government's approach to County Deals and an expectation that the proposal would remain unchanged –Surrey County Council would continue to pursue a Tier 2 deal.
2. The Vice Chairman sought clarification on the draft core proposals included in the paper, particularly in terms of the Lead Climate Change Authority which is not currently in existence and asked how this would relate to other work within borough and district councils' responsibilities. The Leader of the Council explained that the Cabinet Member for the Environment would cover the Surrey Council Climate Change strategy in the following agenda item, however one aspect of the County Deal was to gain more control locally and discussions were ongoing with districts, boroughs and parish councils to decide how to maximise these opportunities.
3. The Chairman, in reference to paragraph 23, voiced concerns at the inadvertent tone of the sentence 'the power to compel partners to cooperate'. The Leader of the Council agreed to change the wording to 'the power to encourage partners to cooperate'. **Action – Executive Director of Partnerships, Prosperity and Growth.**
4. A Member sought reassurances that current policies implemented by the last Secretary of State would remain relevant. The Leader of the Council said that no changes were expected in terms of the government's policy in relation to devolution and there remained a commitment from the current Secretary of State with the paper going to the House of Lords unamended and passing through parliament following the Select Committee stage on 20 October 2022.

**Resolved:**

The Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee:

The Select Committee appreciates this further update following its June 2022 meeting at which substantive recommendations were made and subsequently accepted by Cabinet.

Cameron McIntosh returned to join the meeting at 11.58

**40/22 ASSESSMENT OF THE GREENER FUTURES CLIMATE CHANGE DELIVERY PLAN [Item 7]**

**Witnesses:**

Marissa Heath, Cabinet Member for Environment

Paul Deach, Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment

Katie Stewart, Executive Director of Environment, Transport and Infrastructure

Caroline McKenzie, Director of Environment

Katie Sargent, Environment Group Commissioning Manager

The Cabinet Member for Environment introduced the report highlighting the insulation of homes and the installation of renewables in homes as priorities, reiterating that whilst there were areas that needed further progress, the value of collaborative working prior to the paper going to Cabinet in November was clear.

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment explained that recent work with the communications team was intended to optimise the message going out to residents to reinforce the greener futures message and maximise behaviour change.

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Vice Chairman, in reference to the lack of national funding for transport issues noted in paragraph 11, was concerned about the new government having a lack of enthusiasm for greener futures agenda. The Cabinet Member for the Environment said that the aim was for the agenda to continue locally, regardless of national reprioritisation, and the focus was for the Council to remain at the forefront of the agenda by lobbying for alternative sources of funding and ensuring resources were available to bid for funding opportunities.
2. A Member, in reference to the Cabinet Member for Environment's comment around alternate sources of funding noted that the same was said a year ago and reiterated that action was required. The Environment Group Commissioning Manager explained that progress was being made with the implementation of different finance mechanisms and added that

as an example, the development of a power purchase agreement to enable rental roof style schemes with schools could be replicated for use on commercial, industrial and agricultural buildings to generate income and help fund decarbonisation measures going forward.

3. A Member was concerned at the time taken to bring information forward to the Greener Futures Reference Group on these finance options. The Director of Environment whilst noting the concern, explained the complexity of the mechanisms and the need gather evidence and build on trust to encourage private sector finance.
4. A Member queried how the format of the report could be adjusted to reflect that despite reductions being achieved, emissions were rising faster than the trajectory the county needs to stay on track to meet its net zero ambitions. The Cabinet Member for Environment committed to add a record of this information to future reports. **Action- Cabinet Member for Environment**
5. A Member queried when the next base data update could be expected. The Environment Group Commissioning Manager confirmed that data was released annually.
6. A Member requested an update regarding the progress of delivery in respect of the Light emitting diode (LED) streetlight replacement programme and the roll out of Electric Vehicle (EV) chargepoints pilot project, particularly given the risk and concerns over the lack of capacity of third-party providers to deliver some objectives. The Executive Director of Environment, Transport and Infrastructure confirmed that the LED streetlighting programme was on track and was an area where SCC was making significant energy savings. An investment of £30 million in this programme was providing an annual saving of £1.3 million and a commitment was made to provide the Select Committee with a written update regarding this. Following the agreement of terms by the Select Committee's EV Reference Group, the procurement for EV chargepoints had been issued and was in the final stages of tendering. It was expected that a proposal of a decision on procurement would be taken to Cabinet in November 2022 with a meeting of the Select Committee to follow shortly after. **Action – Executive Director of Environment, Transport and Infrastructure**
7. A Member asked for an update following a question raised at full Council in December 2021 regarding carbon literacy training and asked about progress in delivering that training for officers and the progress in Member training. The Environment Group Commissioning Manager confirmed that the Corporate

Leadership Team had received the carbon literacy training and that this would be rolled out further, with sessions taking place every two months. The Environment Group Commissioning Manager committed to providing the committee with numbers of staff that have received training. **Action – Environment Group Commissioning Manager**

8. A Member queried the reason that paragraph 9 of the report showing a green RAG (Red, Amber Green) status for sustainable warmth was rated as red in the introduction provided by the Cabinet Member for Environment. The Member concluded that as the figures show, although good progress had been made, the Council was not delivering against its targets for 2025, 2030 and 2050 which should be reflected in the ratings. The Cabinet Member for Environment noted the continuing progress for sustainable warmth within funding constraints and explained that targets were being met as an authority, however there were broader challenges around what was happening in privately rented and privately owned homes that remained a challenge. The Member reiterated the importance of realistic information around targets was shared with residents.
9. A Member, in reference to a comment made in the previous item made by the Leader of the Council regarding investment zone applications to be submitted by 14 October 2022, asked if the removal of environmental controls would undermine the Council's Climate Change policy and was there any clarity around the Government's intentions around environmental controls in these Investment Zones. The Cabinet Member for Environment agreed with the speculative nature around environmental controls and confirmed that submissions by the Council would reiterate that the environmental agenda must not be undermined.
10. A Member suggested that information shared with residents could be more straightforward, for example the LED streetlight programme could be expressed as a percentage of the total. The Cabinet Member for the Environment welcomed the suggestion and agreed that clear messages to residents were fundamental to encourage behaviour change.
11. The Chairman asked if the commitment remained for a carbon budget to be delivered alongside the financial budget. The Cabinet Member for Environment confirmed this was the case.
12. The Chairman asked if there was confidence that essential behavioural changes required to meet the 2025, 2030 and 2050 targets would happen. The Cabinet Member for Environment said that there was confidence in the team to bring a clear vision and develop the integration of behaviour change but challenges



were expected and support from the government and others was required. The Council needed to further develop communications with residents to impart information regarding the benefits of changes and the support available to residents to implement those changes.

13. A Member suggested a measurement of where residents are currently in personally changing their behaviours and relaying this information back to them as a way of improving communication of the message. The Cabinet Member for Environment agreed to take away the suggestion for consideration. **Action – Cabinet Member for Environment.**

14. A Member asked if greener construction skills were being addressed as part of the Skills Plan for Surrey. The Cabinet Member for Environment confirmed that the Skills Plan for Surrey would be focusing on greener construction skills.

### **Resolved:**

The Community, Environment and Highways Select Committee:

1. Welcomes the substantive progress already achieved, particularly at Surrey County Council level, made over the last 12 months to meet our net zero carbon target by 2030. It commends the work of officers and the active involvement of the Greener Futures Member Reference Group.
2. Supports the proposed amendments to the Delivery Plan contained in Paragraph 16. The intention to work even closer with Surrey's Districts and Broughs is applauded.
3. Is concerned that the new government's commitment (both in policy and funding) to climate objectives may be waning (energy crisis, de-regulation to promote growth, and possible public spending reductions) may seriously impede Surrey as a whole from achieving net zero by 2050, despite vigorous lobbying by the Council and others. The Strategy may have to be adapted should these fears be realised.
4. Recognises that significant behavioural change by residents on vehicle usage, low carbon measures and active/sustainable travel has yet to take place and that while the Council itself inevitably can only play a limited role, it should intensify its efforts in this regard.
5. Reiterates its support for Carbon budget to be developed alongside the Council's financial budget.
6. Appreciates that RAG status to measure the success of a project within the constraints applied to that project is helpful for internal

management purposes. However, asks that in case of Climate Change the RAG status against the 2025, 2030 and 2050 targets be included in all future reporting to make it more useful for external communication and understanding.

#### **41/22 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER POLICY REVIEW [Item 8]**

##### **Witnesses:**

Marisa heath, Cabinet Member for Environment

Katie Stewart, Executive Director of Environment, Transport and Infrastructure

Caroline McKenzie, Director of Environment

Daniel Williams, Lead Countryside Access Officer

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

1. The Chairman asked what the practical consequences were of changes being introduced due to the new policy. The Cabinet Member for Environment explained that taking action around issues on a particular byway would be easier to take forward. The Director for Environment added that although most residents would not notice the changes, as the policy only affects a proportion of the county where BOATs are inexistence, those affected would find the process much simpler and easier to navigate.
2. A Member asked if any communications for residents were planned regarding this policy change. The Cabinet Member for Environment agreed to take the suggestion away. **Action – Cabinet Member for Environment**
3. A Member queried if the budget and resources would be increased as a result of the policy changes. The Director for Environment explained that the budget and resources had been increased slightly to absorb any issues and the impact of the policy change would be monitored going forward.
4. A Member noted that the report did not reference any consultation with parish councils and sought reassurance regarding their role within this decision-making process. The Director for Environment said that a full consultation had not been required as the change in policy reflected a change to legislation; however consultations would continue with each stakeholder group as required.
5. A Member requested that on completion of the process, a short briefing document be sent to the parish councils and local resident groups of the affected areas to explain the new processes. The Cabinet Member for Environment agreed to

provide the briefing note on completion of the process. **Action – Cabinet Member for Environment**

6. A Member queried the decision-making process and the opportunity for councillors' input following the abolition of local and joint committees. The Cabinet Member for Environment said that a paper referencing the transfer of powers would be going to full Council.

**Resolved:**

The Community, Environment and Highways Select Committee:

1. Supports the proposed policy.
2. Asks for communication plan to raise awareness about the changes.
3. Requests for a short briefing document for parishes to inform and support them.

**42/22 HEALTHY STREETS FOR SURREY DESIGN GUIDE [Item 9]**

**Witnesses:**

Katie Stewart, Executive Director of Environment, Transport and Infrastructure

Caroline Smith, Planning Group Manager

Deborah Fox – Champkins, Placemaking Group Manager

David Milner, Create Streets

Nicholas Boyes-Smith, Create Streets

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman asked if an expanded view to be expected from the Council in its input relating to new planning applications as a consequence of this new guidance. The Planning Group Manager reiterated that the Council remained a consultee in respect of planning applications and did not make the decisions. The Transportation Development Planning Group would assess all new planning applications against the new guidance and if from a Highways point of view, as per the national planning policy framework, the Council considered that an application was not well designed, this would be made clear to a relevant borough council for them to consider when they come to their conclusion.
2. A Member asked if small features such as parklets could be retro fitted using Integrated Transport Scheme (ITS) allocations. The Executive Director of Environment, Transport and Infrastructure confirmed that the service was committed to

working with Members through the ITS and other schemes and sources to effectively bring these measures into existing projects.

3. The Vice Chairman welcomed the paper noting that coordination with borough and other councils would be required in relation to the Design Code. The Planning Group Manager said that design codes would be required for all Local Authorities and the Council had successfully bid to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities last year to be a Design Code path finder to develop a web tool for this guidance. The digital guidance currently being trialled, would allow the districts and boroughs to use this for their own street design and design codes.
4. A Member said the Design Code would benefit from a strong Recommendation that utilities were not placed in roadways. David Milner Deputy Director, Create Streets, noted the code on page 79 of the report which states that 'most utilities will be routed under pavements, so paving systems must be easy to lift and reinstate without the need for specialist contractors or materials. The Executive Director of Environment, Transport and Infrastructure added that this code combined with the benefits of a new lane rental scheme to allow direct engagement with the utilities companies at a strategic level.
5. A Member noted that paragraph 26 mentioned that advice will be made available to residents so that they can see design consideration for themselves and asked how this would be achieved. The Planning Group Manager confirmed that formal responses were currently available to all on the borough and district website. The funding received to create the Design Code web tool would develop the process to make it more accessible and easier to understand for all involved and would be an improvement on current accessibility of information.
6. A Member asked how this policy overlaps with the Government's Office for Place and queried if engagement with developers had taken place. The Planning Group Manager gave reassurances that engagement was taking place with developers, the Surrey Development Forum and local and national builders.

**Resolved:**

The Community, Environment and Highways Select Committee:

1. Strongly commends and supports the new Healthy Streets for Surrey design guide.

Requests that Districts and Boroughs consider including Healthy Streets for Surrey design guide as part of their Supplementary Planning Guidance.

**43/22 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 10]**

The Select Committee noted the Recommendation Tracker and the Forward Work Programme.

**44/22 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: 9 NOVEMBER 2022 [Item 11]**

The Committee noted its next meeting would be held on 9 November 2022.

Meeting ended at: 12:35pm

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**Chairman**