

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT  
WOODHATCH PLACE, 11 COCKSHOT HILL, REIGATE, SURREY, RH2 8EF,  
ON 10 OCTOBER 2023 COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM, THE COUNCIL BEING  
CONSTITUTED AS FOLLOWS:**

Saj Hussain (Chair)  
Tim Hall (Vice-Chair)

Maureen Attewell	* Eber Kington
Ayesha Azad	Rachael Lake
Catherine Baart	Victor Lewanski
Steve Bax	David Lewis (Cobham)
John Beckett	David Lewis (Camberley West)
Jordan Beech	* Scott Lewis
Luke Bennett	Andy Lynch
Amanda Boote	Andy MacLeod
Harry Boparai	Ernest Mallett MBE
Liz Bowes	Michaela Martin
Natalie Bramhall	Jan Mason
Helyn Clack	Steven McCormick
Stephen Cooksey	Cameron McIntosh
Colin Cross	r Julia McShane
Clare Curran	Sinead Mooney
* Nick Darby	Carla Morson
Fiona Davidson	Bernie Muir
Paul Deach	Mark Nuti
Kevin Deanus	John O'Reilly
Jonathan Essex	Tim Oliver
* Robert Evans OBE	Rebecca Paul
Chris Farr	George Potter
* Paul Follows	Catherine Powell
Will Forster	Penny Rivers
* John Furey	John Robini
Matt Furniss	Becky Rush
* Angela Goodwin	Joanne Sexton
Jeffrey Gray	* Lance Spencer
David Harmer	Lesley Steeds
Nick Harrison	Mark Sugden
Edward Hawkins	Richard Tear
Marisa Heath	Ashley Tilling
Trefor Hogg	Chris Townsend
Robert Hughes	Liz Townsend
Jonathan Hulley	Denise Turner-Stewart
Rebecca Jennings-Evans	Hazel Watson
Frank Kelly	Jeremy Webster
Riasat Khan	Buddhi Weerasinghe
Robert King	* Fiona White
	Keith Witham

\*absent

r = Remote Attendance

#### **58/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]**

Apologies for absence were received from Nick Darby, Robert Evans OBE, Paul Follows, John Furey, Angela Goodwin, Eber Kington, Scott Lewis, Julia McShane (remote), Lance Spencer, Fiona White.

#### **59/23 MINUTES [Item 2]**

The minutes of the meeting of the County Council held on 11 July 2023 were submitted, confirmed and signed.

#### **60/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

There were none.

#### **61/23 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS [Item 4]**

*Jordan Beech joined the meeting at 10.05 am.*

*Harry Boparai joined the meeting at 10.07 am.*

The Chair:

- Informed Members of the death of former Surrey County Councillor David Goodwin, he paid tribute to the contribution he had made to Surrey and led the Council in a moment of reflection.
- Congratulated Hazel Watson on her 30th anniversary of being a Surrey County Councillor [*Hazel noted her thanks for the recognition of her service, noting that much had changed since 1993*].
- Encouraged Members to attend the in-person Member Development Day on 20 October at Woodhatch Place.
- Referred to the 'Thank You' Reception for Surrey's volunteers, inviting Members to nominate their local volunteers.
- Hoped that Members would be able to attend the Act of Remembrance on Friday 10 November in the Memorial Garden at Woodhatch Place.
- Highlighted the first Surrey Hate Crime Conference held yesterday and thanked the former Chair, Helyn Clack for facilitating that.
- Highlighted the Stripey Stork charity which celebrated their tenth birthday, he praised their work whereby five million pairs of shoes had been donated.
- Asked Members to read the information provided on the Council's Fostering Service.
- Noted that the rest of his announcements could be found in the agenda.

#### **62/23 LEADER'S STATEMENT [Item 5]**

A recruitment video regarding the Council's Fostering Service was shown, the Chair encouraged Members to share the video and promote the work.

The Leader of the Council made a detailed statement. A copy of the statement is attached as Appendix A.

*Rebecca Jennings-Evans joined the meeting at 10.28 am.*

Members raised the following topics:

- Noted that it felt as though the Government could not do anything right regarding industrial relations, long waiting lists, inability to agree a high-speed train line; that mantra of nothing is working appeared at the Council with some staff not being paid due to IT glitches, sought reassurance that they would be supported.
- Noted that the Leader did not mention climate change, over the last month the national Conservative Party distanced itself from previous commitments, asked what impact that would have on the Council's climate change plans and whether the Leader disagreed with the Prime Minister's change of tone.
- Noted that residents were anxious that climate change was not mentioned in the Council's recent budget consultation, sought reassurance that it was an omission and fighting climate change remained a fundamental part of the Council's vision.
- Regarding the recent inspection of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), noted that the Leader's tone in his statement around SFRS being on a journey of improvement was not reflected in the Council's triumphant response to the inspection report.
- Noted that Woking residents were concerned that SFRS did not have a tall buildings policy in place there, urged the administration to be open and truthful with the challenges faced.
- Noted that it was World Mental Health Day, in May 2019 the Council had adult social care packages in place for 426 people in Surrey, that had increased over the years to 725 in July 2023.
- Noted that regarding children there were long waiting lists for mental health support and more children were absent from school.
- Recognised that finances were challenging but questioned at what point the administration would invest more in proven effective early intervention and prevention services to stop statutory services' costs spiralling out of control.
- Stressed that people were not just being left behind but the odds were being stacked against them, it was the time to act to recognise the vast socio-economic differences across Surrey, for example 18 areas in Surrey were in the bottom 10% of the children and young people sub-domains and three areas were in the bottom 10% for the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index.
- Wished that the warnings about the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) system had been heeded sooner to avoid the current crisis but welcomed the £15 million of additional funding over the next three years.
- Noted however that there was no increased investment in early preschool intervention, that would lead to further escalation in need with backlog recovery impacted by more applications for needs assessments.
- Noted that the supply of places on preschool programmes was outstripped by demand, regarding the local early autism programme the 18 places per quadrant could have been taken four times over this year.
- Highlighted that the majority of the forecasted £24.4 million overspend against the budget related to the price inflation in social care placements for children's services, as Corporate Parents that was not good enough.
- Noted that a higher proportion of children taken into care in Surrey had Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), last year's policy decisions to focus on the allocated budget for respite care and short breaks on some groups and remove it from others left gaps in support with devastating impacts.
- As part of the equality impact assessments for the budget, would continue to challenge the administration to put a value on preventative and support services.
- Noted that the system needed to be simplified, more complex caseworkers for children and more foster carers were needed; encouraged Members to reach out to their divisional foster carers to offer support.

- Noted that mental health and SEND support for children were the most raised issues, asked the Leader to advise what he could do to support that.
- Asked whether the Leader would agree that the Council must increase pace to turn its Local Transport Plan (LTP4) into a better plan that works for all, ensuring that better Surrey public transport aligns to London's plan so it does not become more expensive to travel to London by train; noted the absence of funding to improve the alternatives of new cross-border bus routes, bike lanes and walking.
- Noted that to make the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) fairer and improve transport systems, the Government needed to intervene by introducing fairer ways of charging to reduce road traffic along the principle of polluter pays.
- Asked the Leader to call on the Government to introduce a national scrappage scheme, to prioritise funding for new bus routes, make permanent the £2 maximum bus fare, to cap train fares, to demand that it does not frustrate the potential to reduce speed limits and to introduce 'school streets'.
- Asked whether the Leader agreed that Gatwick Airport's expansion plans were at odds with LTP4, expanding road traffic with grade separated interchanges and increasing congestion, pollution, carbon emissions and off airport parking; for the Leader to provide assurance that Surrey's response robustly highlights how the expansion undermines both LTP4 and climate commitments.
- Asked the Leader to confirm that as well as providing statutory services, the Council would continue to provide non-statutory services going forward so it leaves no one behind.
- Joined the Leader in highlighting the importance of foster children having a good and loving family, setting out a future where they are valued.
- Noted that the International Monetary Fund reported that the UK was expected to have the highest inflation and second lowest growth of the G7 economy, the Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer was therefore right to champion fiscal discipline which would be essential in restoring household finances.
- Noted that in the Leader's recognition of Government's cuts to local government finances to deliver essential services, asked whether the Leader agreed that the Prime Minister was out of touch to consider cutting inheritance tax for the wealthiest while thousands of residents could not afford heating or rent/mortgage.
- Asked whether the Leader agreed that the Government's rolling back on its environmental promises to appease the right of the Conservative Party was wrong for future generations and the country's global image.
- Asked whether the Leader would join him in thanking officers who helped secure funding for Egham to have the 'liveable neighbourhoods' funding for design and scoping works; and to lobby the Department for Transport against its scrappage.
- Asked whether the Leader was aware that during September to now the new on-demand Surrey Connect bus service for West Guildford had seen a 45% increase in the number of bus passenger journeys compared with its predecessor run by Stagecoach, the service filled in a gap left by Arriva and Stagecoach.
- Noted that residents were supportive of the new Surrey Connect bus service which was available 7am-7pm, particularly useful for those wishing to use the bus to commute; thanked the Leader for pursuing the policy.
- Thanked the Government for the additional £7.9 million funding provided to help fund bus services in Surrey and could be used for real-time information displays, local services were vital to those with lower incomes or mobility issues; looked forward to seeing more bus services in Surrey.
- Noted new and improved bus services in Camberley and sought for more facilities to make bus services friendlier, more accessible bus stops, more bus shelters and real-time information displays.
- Noted that a highlight of being a Member had been the gradual but positive progress by the Council towards support for more liveable, walkable, cyclable

neighbourhoods and communities for example via 20 mph zones and Active Travel Schemes; sought assurance that the administration would not turn its back on that progress as was the case by Government ministers.

- Noted the importance of expanding the Surrey Connect bus service county-wide.
- Hoped that the 458 bus service run by the White Bus operator becomes part of the £2 flat fare scheme.
- Welcomed the Surrey Connect bus service in Cranleigh, it was important in rural areas enabling residents to access local services; however older residents were unable to book the service via phone and had to download the app, urged the Leader to review that.

## **63/23 CHANGES TO CABINET PORTFOLIOS AND APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES [Item 6]**

The Leader introduced the report noting that transformation work had happened over the summer which resulted in a restructuring of the Corporate Leadership Team by the Chief Executive, he had updated the Cabinet portfolios to reflect that.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. Noted the changes to Cabinet appointments and Portfolios set out in the Annex 1 and 2.
2. Appointed Helyn Clack as a Select Committee Task Group Lead for the Adults and Health Select Committee, replacing Riasat Khan, for the remainder of the 2023/24 Council Year.

## **64/23 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME [Item 7]**

### **Questions:**

Notice of thirty-one questions had been received. The questions and replies were published in the supplementary agenda (items 7 and 9) on 9 October 2023.

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

**(Q1) Keith Witham** asked whether the Cabinet Member would agree that the information regarding Project Horizon should be made available by division on the Council's website and that information should be kept up to date with both current and future works undertaken.

**Will Forster** asked the Cabinet Member to explain the difference in the percentage of resurfacing on roads to pavements, was it the case that Surrey's pavements were in better condition than roads; or were pedestrians being short changed.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience explained that the Council's website contained information on the Project Horizon programmes listed. He noted that Surrey's pedestrians were not in a worse position than road users, roads and pavements were regularly inspected.

**(Q3) Catherine Baart** asked whether the Cabinet Member could confirm that in budget consultation surveys from now on there would be a separate option for climate change.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources confirmed that would be the case.

**(Q7) Mark Sugden** asked whether the Cabinet Member could confirm the number of children attending private schools in Surrey and what percentage they represented of total children attending Surrey schools. He asked whether top line information could be provided by division.

**Robert King** requested data on children who attend Surrey independent schools that do not live in Surrey and travel into the county.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Learning confirmed that the Council knew how many children there were enrolled at independent schools in Surrey, there were over 150 independent schools across the county. She would liaise with the service to provide the information requested.

**(Q8) Jan Mason** noted that Surrey's firefighters were brilliant. She noted that in her 22 years of service at the Council there had been cut backs to the SFRS. She stressed that the Council had a responsibility to deal with the inspection outcome properly, she asked whether the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member felt the inspection report had nothing to do with the Council.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety recognised the Member's commitment to SFRS. She noted that this year saw an unprecedented uplift in the budget of SFRS, there was full establishment with a highly motivated and skilled workforce. The Council welcomed the report from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). Feedback had been received prior to submission in relation to the Cause of Concern Action Plan which indicated that the contents met the requirements of the Inspectorate. The report highlighted the areas where SFRS needed to focus on and the successes within the context of a challenging environment. SFRS was progressing the improvements set out in the inspection report. SFRS was good at keeping people safe and had a robust response system. Under the leadership of Chief Fire Officer and his senior leadership team, the work focused on dealing with the most challenging issues such as improving the culture of the service, addressing misconduct and ensuring every member of staff felt welcomed and valued without fear of discrimination or bullying. Other fire and rescue services were looking to SFRS for guidance. She welcomed the regular scrutiny through the select committee.

**(Q9) Ashley Tilling** noted that he had been a victim of the poor MySurrey roll out by not having received his Member's Allowance since being elected in May. Many people, schools and other organisations had been affected by that new IT system. He asked why the new IT system was not properly tested before it replaced the previous system, to prevent the costly and lengthy remediation measures currently taking place.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources clarified that the new system had been tested, in that testing process the team tried to identify all potential issues, due to its complexity there were unanticipated issues. The situation concerning payroll had been regrettable, apologies had been sent and work was underway to resolve the problems around delayed and incorrect payments. He explained that the problems that were experienced in September related to leavers and joiners, most people who were impacted had received emergency payments. Work was ongoing to ensure that the October payroll runs as smoothly as possible, the team was working closely with the schools and employees affected.

**(Q10) Hazel Watson** asked the Cabinet Member how temporary was temporary and what was the timescale for replacing temporary premises with permanent premises.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Learning explained that the temporary accommodation was short term for a term or possibly longer in the context of a building project. She noted that there were other schools where temporary accommodation was kept for longer periods. Regarding the thirty-four projects the team was currently working on to deliver over the next couple of years, some of those had temporary solutions which had been planned for, to be in place until the construction of the final building. She would be happy to discuss any schools with the Member where she was concerned that there were temporary buildings in place for a long time.

**(Q11) Will Forster** had no supplementary question.

**George Potter** sought an answer to part a) as the response simply stated that areas that 'require improvement' did not necessarily mean that things were worse than last year; the question was whether having seven areas requiring improvement was considered good enough. Regarding part b) he asked whether the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member was willing explain to the Leader that a tall buildings policy being published in January next year was not the same as having one in place currently.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety noted that regarding part b) there is an existing tall buildings policy in place which had been reviewed, a revised policy would be published in January 2024. Regarding part a) she noted that her responses to Q8 and Q11 referenced the interview with the HMICFRS Inspector, it was important to hear his view of SFRS; he said unequivocally that the SFRS had improved consistently over three inspections. The main issue was culture and needed to be addressed before other issues could be addressed - the inspection took place six months ago. She noted that SFRS had an outstanding culture, other fire and rescue services were looking to SFRS to improve their culture, that had been a priority for the service led by the Chief Fire Officer; all the other improvements were being carried out. The Inspectorate's feedback was that it was satisfied with the proposed plan which would be submitted tomorrow.

**(Q12) Stephen Cooksey** noted that it appeared that from the information provided one of the main reasons for the delay was the retention and recruitment of staff, he asked the Cabinet Member whether those teams were now fully staffed.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience noted that the retention and recruitment of staff was difficult, especially when competing against the private sector which could offer more money. He would liaise with the Highways team to provide a response around whether those teams were fully staffed.

**(Q13) Catherine Powell** asked the Cabinet Member what additional support would be provided to Family Voice Surrey as it has been working extremely hard during the challenging times and had been put under significant pressure.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Learning clarified that Family Voice Surrey (FVS) was the county's independent parent carer forum, it was an independent charity and must remain so. She noted that she was aware of some parents who did not feel that the parent carer forum could sufficiently represent their views because of the close working between it and the Council, and would like it to be further distanced from the Council. She was therefore unsure whether further support from the Council would be welcomed by FVS, she would ask FVS' Chief Executive.

**(Q15) Keith Witham** noted that regarding getting a simple black and white directional sign, asked whether the Cabinet Member could ask the relevant officer to reinspect the

location alongside him, the chairman of the community shop and a parish council representative.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience noted that he was happy to arrange that.

**(Q16) Jonathan Essex** referred to the first table in the response which showed that there had been an increase of 350 non-maintained and independent school places over that three-year period with a unit cost for each which was 2.5 times more expensive than those provided by the Council in state provided specialist provision. He asked whether that data could be reviewed and for the Council to reconsider whether there was an opportunity to expand its programme to provide more special places for additional needs children. He noted that the special school places were more expensive in terms of the unit increase in Home to School Transport costs than that provided in mainstream schools due to a greater distance. He requested whether the costs for Home to School Transport could be split between state and non-maintained provision, to see whether the shift to the Council providing more in-house places would save money on Home to School Transport.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Learning noted that the Council recognised some time ago that one of the reasons for the huge pressure on the High Needs Block was that the county had disproportionately more children with special needs in non-maintained independent special school places than others, often in places far from home which was reflected in the high Home to School Transport costs. There was an urgent need for the Council to invest heavily in its maintained specialist provision and that was underway. She referred to the information in her Briefing that set out that by September 2023 the Council had opened 230 new specialist places and teams were working on 34 projects to take the total number of specialist maintained places up to 6,000 by the end of 2025/26. She agreed that it was imperative that the Council continues with its ambitious programme of capital investment in specialist maintained places, she would ask the team in the Home to School Travel Assistance service whether in future they could split out the spending between those children in state maintained provision and those who were in non-maintained provision.

**(Q17) Catherine Baart** highlighted the steep upwards trend of paying out for flood damage. She asked the Cabinet Member whether a table could be provided to Members of all the sites and the problems that made up that £110,000; and what was being done or had been done to avoid repeated flooding at those sites broken down by division.

The Cabinet Member for Environment reiterated that the £110,000 was not indicative of the date the incidents occurred, the legal cases and the conversations took place over time and that could be explored further with the Member. She noted that at present she did not want to commit to asking officers to do a large piece of work, however they could provide a list of the issues per division. Solutions were being considered and a flooding strategy was being created. She noted that the team was exceptional and would be happy to invite the Member to meet with them to discuss the matter.

**(Q20) Ashley Tilling** had no supplementary question.

**Robert King** asked the Cabinet Member whether Members could get premium access to crash maps, Members could access the free service, but that only showed the individual accidents and not the police reports and the reason behind those accidents.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience would find out whether that would be possible and would liaise with the Member.

**(Q21) Catherine Powell** noted disappointment that no report would be issued as it was a missed opportunity for continuous improvement. As the Cabinet Member accepted that the decision not to collect cuttings was an economic matter rather than an environmental one, she asked whether the Cabinet Member could commit to updating the messaging to residents to reflect that. As there would be no policy changes regarding the maintenance of footways or cycleways, their use deterred by vegetation that could not be covered by the divisional Member Highway Fund allocation of £7,500, could the Cabinet Member advise when the maintenance strategies would be aligned with LTP4. Regarding development and Highway wet spots she had an example in her division which was contrary to the Cabinet Member's response and would email him.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience noted that the rationale was not just economic, but also was based on the impact on the carbon footprint of having vehicles travelling around. He welcomed the Member to detail her questions and would provide a written response, copying in the new Cabinet Member.

**(Q24) Catherine Baart** asked the Cabinet Member whether it would be possible to have a table outlining what was happening with each hospital in Surrey on Active Travel and improving the use of public transport.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth would see what information could be provided as hospitals commissioned their own public transport too, for example Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals would have an improved public transport service between them thanks to a campaign by the Council and the MP for Woking. Whilst hospitals acted as their own entity, the Council did engage with them.

**(Q26) Catherine Powell** noted that based on her correspondence with the National Autistic Society she was confused as her understanding was that before the recommissioned services were introduced in April, it was providing two youth clubs, two children's clubs and holiday outings. However now they were only able to fund one youth club for the whole of Surrey in Godalming, which was forty minutes or more from large areas of the county. Was the Cabinet Member advising that the situation had changed and more funding had been provided.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Learning would liaise with the Member outside of the meeting.

**(Q30) Jonathan Essex** noted that as it was confirmed that there was no match funding, he asked whether the Cabinet Member could confirm how much funding the Council was providing for each of the Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT) areas and how much it would cost if that was to be rolled out county-wide.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth noted that it cost around £100,000 per DDRT bus, rolling the service out county-wide would cost around £12 to £16 million. The Council was already subsidising buses at over £10 million a year and would look to reuse some of that because it would be providing a more enhanced convenient and cheaper service. He noted the additional £7.9 million funding awarded to the Council from the Government, some of that would fund DDRT and the Surrey LINK bus card scheme with half price bus fares for young people in Surrey aged 20 and under. That funding was on top of the Council's £49 million broken down to: £32 million for the decarbonisation of buses including 32 hydrogen buses with Metrobus, £6 million for electric minibuses for community transport, £9 million for the bus priority measures and £1.4 million to expand the real-time information displays. The county was the only one working with bus operators to decarbonise their fleets.

### **Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member Briefings:**

These were also published in the supplementary agenda (items 7 and 9) on 9 October 2023.

Members made the following comments:

**Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways:** on parking and enforcement, **Chris Townsend** noted the minimal enforcement by the new team in his division. The repainting of the yellow lines did not happen often, since April only had two repaints had been done; he asked why little was happening.

The Deputy Cabinet Member was surprised as the feedback he had received, and what he had seen on the ground was that there were more parking enforcement officers than ever on Surrey's streets. The statistics also showed that more penalty charge notices were being issued than ever. He asked for the Member to email the location he was referring to and would ask NSL to provide the figures and would put him in touch with the local parking enforcement team.

**Cabinet Member for Education and Learning:** on Home to School Transport, **Helyn Clack** noted that this time last year the Leader apologised for the problems that occurred regarding Home to School Transport. There had been a massive improvement since then, she congratulated the Cabinet Member and the team for their work. She noted that she did not have the same problems that she had last year and issues were resolved quickly. She asked what the one significant issue was that the team overcame to ensure the improvement in Home to School Transport this year.

The Cabinet Member thanked the Member for recognising the significant improvement in the Home to School Travel Assistance service, a much better service had been delivered this year for children and their families. She noted that there was not one thing that was done, there had been many recommendations from the reports into the team, an end-to-end process review, a restructure of the team, recruitment and training, careful management and procedures introduced, and more resources invested. She was confident that the team would build on the progress made; she would pass on the Council's thanks to the staff that led the improvement work.

**Jonathan Essex** on the scale of investment in special school places going forwards, asked if it would be possible for the Cabinet Member to provide information on how the increased capital spending there was likely to reduce revenue spending in future.

The Cabinet Member was happy to provide that information. She noted that she reported to the Cabinet regularly on the progress of the capital programme on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in partnership with the Cabinet Member for Property and Waste. She noted that every maintained specialist school place that the Council provided had a revenue impact greater than £20,000 a year; another reason why the Council needed to invest that scale of capital into its SEND programme.

**Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources:** on the arrangements to cover the £24.4 million deficit forecast, **Nick Harrison** asked the Cabinet Member to what degree was that covered by contingencies in either the current year or brought forward reserves. Noting that the payroll difficulties concerning MySurrey caused consequential impacts on the processing within the pension section, he asked whether the Cabinet Member was aware of that and was paying attention to that.

The Cabinet Member noted that regarding funding the deficit, the Council had a £20 million contingency budget which was included in the 2023/24 budget; there had also been a review of its reserve position which had significantly improved over the last five years and some of those reserves would be used sensibly. He noted that the Cabinet had agreed to make some additional investment to enable the improvement of the delivery of the Council's services. At the same time directorates were continuing to look for efficiencies to close that gap. Regarding the payroll there were teething problems, he and the team were fully aware of the issues, those were being taken into account to ensure the provision of a professional and accurate payroll system.

**Cabinet Member for Property and Waste:** on the agreements with SUEZ and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), **Nick Harrison** was pleased to note those. However, he expressed disappointment that the Council was having to deal with 150,000 tonnes of residual waste outside of the current network, it was disappointing that the energy from waste plant was not built with sufficient capacity when that decision was made several years ago.

The Cabinet Member noted that it was good news regarding Defra that a positive conclusion to the negotiations had been reached. Regarding the 150,000 tonnes of residual waste, in 1999 when the contract was signed the Council was to deliver two energy from waste plants; unfortunately it could not secure planning permission for the second energy from waste plant. She was pleased that officers were bringing forward plans for another mixed recycling facility in the county, the Land and Property team had identified a potential site to deal with that residual waste.

*Bernie Muir left the meeting at 11.50 am.*

## **65/23 STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS [Item 8]**

Helyn Clack (Dorking Rural) made a statement on her division and other Surrey areas being under constant pressure from traffic and congestion. Gatwick Airport was one of the three airports in Surrey proposing to increase its capacity with passenger traffic to double to 90 million yearly, enabled by building a new runway to the north of the existing runway. There would be up to 90,000 car parking spaces at the airport, rural roads would likely be more congested and need more maintenance. In the plan submitted there was no suggestion of a curb or ban of night flights, she encouraged the Council to object to the plan without a proper contingency for funding Surrey's rural roads.

Steve Bax (East Molesey and Esher) made a statement on East Molesey which was surrounded by three rivers. Water safety was a constant concern, particularly for young people engaged in dangerous activities. Education was key, he welcomed the outreach activities of SFRS in schools to raise awareness of the risks and river safety. Using his Member Allocation he funded an additional throw line at Hurst Park riverside and through Your Fund Surrey he provided match funding for a patrol boat for the Thames, called the Surrey Volunteer. The patrol boat would be used by the Maritime Volunteer Service to patrol the river every weekend. The Deputy Leader alongside him attended its launch. He urged Members to spread the word for more volunteers for the patrol boat and he thanked the administration for providing that funding.

Fiona Davidson (Guildford South-East) made a statement on the London Road Active Travel Scheme in Guildford. Studies show that a lack of trust in organisations stems from saying one thing and doing another. The Council had declared values of caring about residents, being open, respecting others; yet what it says is not matched by what it does. She was concerned that the consultation letter to residents claimed that the road width after implementation would be the same as currently, residents had been provided with

the drawings but not the dimensions despite frequent requests. Another contentious issue was the risk of serious congestion and displacement of traffic, residents had not been provided with promised traffic modelling information. The scheme's original consultation exercise was not representative of those most impacted, and the new survey was open to anyone to comment. Residents deserve better than that.

## **66/23 ORIGINAL MOTIONS [Item 9]**

### **Item 9 (i)**

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

Under Standing Order 12.1 Matt Furniss moved:

#### **This Council notes:**

- The proposed removal of Day Travelcards by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, for those travelling into and throughout London. This will result in Surrey residents having to buy separate rail and London transport service tickets. Currently, Day Travelcards provide unlimited travel on Transport for London (TfL) services, including the London Underground, Bus, Tram, Docklands Light Railway, London Overground and Elizabeth line, and National Rail services in London. They can also be used to obtain a one third reduction in River Services fares. The proposals to remove Day Travelcards constitute an unfair, unacceptable and expensive levy on our residents who wish or need to travel to London.
- The proposals have deliberately targeted the removal of the Day Travelcard as a method to generate additional income for TfL. It is anticipated by the Mayor's own consultation that the withdrawal of Day Travelcards will result in rail operators ceasing to sell Zone 1-6 Travelcards. This will add barriers and travel friction to journeys to London – running counter to evidence that passenger journeys and the use of public transport are enhanced by improving integrated ticketing not reducing it. No regard is given in the proposals for the potential loss of revenue to the London economy that may be caused by the increase in travel costs as Surrey residents risk being priced out of the nation's capital. Employers, retail and leisure businesses, theatres and many others may see a reduction in revenue as residents reduce their time and/or expenditure in London. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth has written to TfL on this matter to express concern and a lack of support for these proposals.

#### **This Council resolves to:**

- I. Demand that London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, immediately withdraws his proposals for the removal of Day Travelcards.
- II. Request that the Leader of the Council writes to Sadiq Khan informing him of this resolution of Surrey County Council, the discriminatory nature of his proposal, the impact on Surrey residents, the negative impact on the economy of London and therefore the need to abandon plans to remove Day Travelcards.
- III. Ensure the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Transport urging him to intervene in this matter.

Matt Furniss made the following points:

- Thanked Jonathan Essex and Robert King for their help and collaboration in crafting the cross-party updated amendment.
- Noted that there was an invisible wall being drawn around London by the Mayor of London, restricting the freedom of movement and social inclusion.
- Noted that ensuring the affordability and accessibility of public transport had been outlined as a priority for the Council and the London Assembly.
- Noted that Day Travelcards alleviated higher fares for certain passengers travelling into and around London, 14.2 million tickets had been purchased on the National Rail network alone annually across the UK.
- Noted that without the Day Travelcard passenger fares would rise by 7% for off-peak and families would pay 16% more for their tickets.
- Called for more integrated ticketing not a reduction, the withdrawal of the Day Travelcard would likely have a negative impact on Transport for London's (TfL) income and would lead to more expensive and time-consuming journeys; disability groups had voiced concerns.
- Noted that on 27 September, alongside leaders of a range of councils outside of London, business representatives, bus users and advocates of public transport and disabled people, he signed a joint letter urging the Mayor of London to abandon the withdrawal.
- Noted that the updated amendment enabled the Council to negotiate on the zone 6 extension to areas of Surrey bordering London, currently some residents could use the Oyster card system whilst others used the National Rail ticketing system.
- Noted that some operators introduced smart ticketing, however that was not a truly pay as you go ticket.
- Noted that simplifying the complexities in ticketing would reduce the financial barrier for many short trips and having a zonal ticketing structure, and fares reform were a key part of the strategy to achieve a modal shift towards public transport.
- Noted that rail operators needed to adapt to the post-pandemic commuting pattern, the Council's Surrey Connect bus service reflected that.
- Noted that the new joined up bus and rail ticketing approach could be accompanied by a similar cap used in the Oyster card system in London, limiting the total cost through ticketing integration; that would widely benefit Surrey.

The motion was formally seconded by Jeremy Webster, who made the following comments:

- Noted that there were 84 railway stations in Surrey with 16 in the zones and six in the Oyster card area, leaving 62 railway stations where travellers would be affected by the Day Travelcard withdrawal.
- Noted that the withdrawal was a discriminatory action against the elderly, disabled, families, children and those on low incomes, and many people do not have access to modern technology or a bank card; it would affect visitors and casual users who do not understand the system and would be unable to buy an add-on Day Travelcard to their rail ticket.
- Noted that without an Oyster card or a bank card in the zones, travellers would have to buy single peak tickets for each journey and could not use buses as those were cashless; children were charged adult fares when using bank cards to pay for buses.
- Noted that registering senior or disabled railcards and therefore claiming the discounts on fares within the zones was only possible via an Oyster card.
- Noted that TfL was keeping the Oyster card and bank card capping at the Day Travelcard price.

- Noted that the revenue apportioned to TfL from Day Travelcards was less than that received by TfL from Oyster cards.
- Urged for the discussions to take place between the Mayor of London, the Rail Delivery Group and the Department for Transport (DfT), and to stress the importance of the Day Travelcards to London and the surrounding counties.

Jonathan Essex moved an updated amendment which had been published in the second supplementary agenda (item 9 (i)) on 10 October 2023, which was formally seconded by Robert King.

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

**This Council notes:**

- The proposed removal of Day Travelcards by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, for those travelling into and throughout London. This will result in Surrey residents having to buy separate rail and London transport service tickets. Currently, Day Travelcards provide unlimited travel on Transport for London (TfL) services, including the London Underground, Bus, Tram, Docklands Light Railway, London Overground and Elizabeth line, and National Rail services in London. They can also be used to obtain a one third reduction in River Services fares. The proposals to remove Day Travelcards constitute an unfair, unacceptable and expensive levy on our residents who wish or need to travel to London.
- The proposals have deliberately targeted the removal of the Day Travelcard as a method to generate additional income for TfL. It is anticipated by the Mayor's own consultation that the withdrawal of Day Travelcards will result in rail operators ceasing to sell Zone 1-6 Travelcards. This will add barriers and travel friction to journeys to London – running counter to evidence that passenger journeys and the use of public transport are enhanced by improving integrated ticketing not reducing it. No regard is given in the proposals for the potential loss of revenue to the London economy that may be caused by the increase in travel costs as Surrey residents risk being priced out of the nation's capital. Employers, retail and leisure businesses, theatres and many others may see a reduction in revenue as residents reduce their time and/or expenditure in London. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth has written to TfL on this matter to express concern and a lack of support for these proposals.

**This Council resolves to:**

- I. Demand that London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, immediately withdraws his proposals for the removal of Day Travelcards.
- II. Request that the Leader of the Council writes to Sadiq Khan **and the Secretary of State for Transport** informing **them both** ~~him~~ of this resolution of Surrey County Council, the discriminatory nature of his proposal, the impact on Surrey residents **and surrounding counties**, the negative impact on the economy of London and therefore the need to abandon plans to remove Day Travelcards.
- III. Ensure the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Transport urging him to intervene in this matter **and request a joint meeting with TfL and DfT, to include in those negotiations extension of zone 6 to areas of Surrey**

**bordering London to increase Surrey residents' direct access to contactless TfL fares and so cheaper train travel.**

Jonathan Essex spoke to his updated amendment, making the following points:

- Noted that the updated amendment was a result of cross-party discussion and agreement and provided an opportunity to make things better by opening up talks between the Mayor of London's office, TfL, DfT and councils around London to not just keep the Day Travelcard but as part of the wider reforms to make transport more affordable for all around as well as in London.
- Noted that the Mayor of London was proposing the withdrawal following a reduction of TfL's operational revenue grant from the Government by £700 million in April 2018, TfL now received less revenue support from the Government than any comparable world city.
- Highlighted that TfL was therefore over dependent on ticket revenue to fund its transport services, with the reduction in Government funding TfL's losses against pre-pandemic levels had been topped up by DfT in funding agreements agreed behind closed doors.
- Noted that the proposal to withdraw Day Travelcards was first made public in DfT's Annex A of their funding agreement settlement letter in February 2022.
- Noted that the updated amendment retained the first resolution to demand the Mayor of London withdraw the removal of Day Travelcards, on the basis that the DfT and Train Operating Companies (TOCs) agree an alternative arrangement that allows TfL to meet the requirements of its funding agreement with the Government.
- Called for greater transparency and accountability going forward, neither the Council nor the Greater London Authority had been included in such talks.
- Noted that the updated amendment proposed that in addition to writing to both the Mayor of London and the Secretary of State for Transport, that the Council work with other councils around London to call on them to openly negotiate a wider fair transport deal and fairer funding settlement to address the long-standing fare inequality where travel into London was more expensive from just outside the zoning area.
- Noted that the wider economic, social and environmental benefits of Day Travelcards must be recognised.
- Noted that the updated amendment called on the Government to extend zone 6 into Surrey and create further zones as required, so all of Surrey would be within the area that was discounted and contactless; as enjoyed for many years by some areas north of London.
- Noted that for many years different areas of Surrey had requested extension to zone 6, doing so now would provide access to the Day Travelcard area, including buses as well as trains and providing discounted public transport to London.
- Noted that the Government's Committee on Climate Change had called for a rework of ticketing prices to make public transport more affordable, that would only have value if Day Travelcards are retained. The further discounting of tickets down to a fairer level around London would require financial support and permission from the Government and agreement by the TOCs.

The updated amendment was formally seconded by Robert King, who made the following comments:

- Thanked Jonathan Essex and Matt Furniss for their hard work in the negotiations, it was an opportunity to get something right for Surrey's residents.
- Highlighted the 'Feltham dash' whereby residents would exit a South Western Railway service to scan their card in zone 6 and jump back on to save money.

- Noted that DfT had withdrawn the ability to book out of zone 6 using national ticketing, that affected passengers already hit by price rises.
- Regarding the extension of zone 6 many residents had called for that for years, the TOCs and TfL were in favour; however DfT and the Secretary of State for Transport were needed to underwrite the potential initial cost of that.
- Noted that despite operating in a major city, TfL received one of the lowest levels of funding in Western Europe; TfL had to find between £500 million and £1 billion per year in extra revenue in the Government's funding settlement.
- Noted that it was an opportunity not to degrade the service by removing Day Travelcards, but to find new revenue from new customers using public transport leaving their cars; making public transport a truly attractive proposal through a zone 6 agreement across Surrey.

Matt Furniss accepted the updated amendment and therefore it became the substantive motion.

Three Members spoke on the substantive motion and made the following comments:

- Noted that the idea of withdrawing Day Travelcards was ridiculous, many residents found it to be a vital service.
- Noted that the substantive motion went a step further as in addition to the Mayor of London, it sought to lobby the Government to support the continuation of the Day Travelcard; as well as seeking to extend zone 6 so that more of Surrey could benefit from what other London areas benefitted from.
- Noted the need to acknowledge that TfL was being asked to do a lot with very little. Whilst the Mayor of London's decision to withdraw Day Travelcards was wrong, the decision was proposed because over 70% of the cost of travel in London was funded from fares, whereas it was less than 30% in Paris.
- Noted that the root cause of the issue was for proper funding for London, Surrey and the home counties on their transport systems.
- Praised the cross-party discussions on the updated amendment now substantive motion, that in working together to find root causes of problems better solutions could be delivered.
- Noted that many residents in their division used the main London Waterloo to Guildford line.
- Understood that the Mayor of London signed the order telling TfL to stop selling Day Travelcards from January 2024 if no alternative proposals are agreed; hoped that the Council in its joint discussions would note that shortage of time.

The Chair asked Matt Furniss, as proposer of the motion to conclude the debate, he made the following comments:

- Thanked all for their comments, welcomed the cross-party substantive motion as the issue affected many residents; hoped that the Government would provide support on the matter.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and was carried.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that:

**This Council notes:**

- The proposed removal of Day Travelcards by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, for those travelling into and throughout London. This will result in Surrey residents

having to buy separate rail and London transport service tickets. Currently, Day Travelcards provide unlimited travel on Transport for London (TfL) services, including the London Underground, Bus, Tram, Docklands Light Railway, London Overground and Elizabeth line, and National Rail services in London. They can also be used to obtain a one third reduction in River Services fares. The proposals to remove Day Travelcards constitute an unfair, unacceptable and expensive levy on our residents who wish or need to travel to London.

- The proposals have deliberately targeted the removal of the Day Travelcard as a method to generate additional income for TfL. It is anticipated by the Mayor's own consultation that the withdrawal of Day Travelcards will result in rail operators ceasing to sell Zone 1-6 Travelcards. This will add barriers and travel friction to journeys to London – running counter to evidence that passenger journeys and the use of public transport are enhanced by improving integrated ticketing not reducing it. No regard is given in the proposals for the potential loss of revenue to the London economy that may be caused by the increase in travel costs as Surrey residents risk being priced out of the nation's capital. Employers, retail and leisure businesses, theatres and many others may see a reduction in revenue as residents reduce their time and/or expenditure in London. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth has written to TfL on this matter to express concern and a lack of support for these proposals.

**This Council resolves to:**

- I. Demand that London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, immediately withdraws his proposals for the removal of Day Travelcards.
- II. Request that the Leader of the Council writes to Sadiq Khan and the Secretary of State for Transport informing them both of this resolution of Surrey County Council, the discriminatory nature of his proposal, the impact on Surrey residents and surrounding counties, the negative impact on the economy of London and therefore the need to abandon plans to remove Day Travelcards.
- III. Ensure the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Transport urging him to intervene in this matter and request a joint meeting with TfL and DfT, to include in those negotiations extension of zone 6 to areas of Surrey bordering London to increase Surrey residents' direct access to contactless TfL fares and so cheaper train travel.

**Item 9 (ii)**

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

Under Standing Order 12.1 Trefor Hogg moved:

**This Council notes:**

- The very strong links between the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals for 2030;
- The United Kingdom's commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- That **leave no one behind** is the central, transformative promise of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals; and
- Our own Community Vision for 2030 which states Our Ambitions for People and Place as **making Surrey a special place where no one is left behind.**

**This Council further notes:**

That the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals provides a balanced, well-researched and detailed model of how those goals are strongly linked and interact with each other. For Surrey they provide a guide that supports a coherent view of Our Ambitions for People and Place and how they are strongly linked and interact with each other.

**This Council resolves:**

- I. That where practicable this Council will make use of the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a guide to how we should address the interlinked nature of Our Ambitions for People and Place. Particularly in relation to our own policies for the environment to shape them so that they will support delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and will be a key part of our contribution to leaving future generations a place to live in that allows them to thrive.

Trefor Hogg made the following points:

- Noted that the motion sought a joined-up approach to delivering the Council's ambitions for Surrey and how it would make Surrey a special place where 'No one is left behind'.
- Noted that substantial progress had been made but there was more to do, to deliver that change the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provided that guidance.
- 1. No Poverty and 2. Zero Hunger: noted his deep personal commitment to fighting both, the cost of living crisis continued to bite the most vulnerable in society, and Surrey continued to help them.
- 3. Good health and well-being: noted the excellent health service in Surrey, however the level of challenge to them was rising, the focus must be on the causes and not symptoms; focusing on health inequalities.
- 4. Quality education: noted that Surrey's schools were among the best in the country equipping children for the future, 91% of them were Ofsted rated Good or Outstanding.
- 5. Gender equality: noted that across Surrey there was still much to do to change long held attitudes.
- 6. Clean water and sanitation: noted that the Council must continue to hold its utility companies to account.
- 7. Affordable and clean energy: noted that the Council's ambition was that 15% of Surrey's energy should come from solar energy by 2032; he welcomed hearing people getting solar panels installed.
- 8. Decent work and economic growth: noted that economic growth was essential in terms of being able to afford a greener future, waste of resources including energy must be eliminated.
- 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure: noted that Surrey's research centres were world class in various disciplines, Surrey could provide the infrastructure required.
- 10. Reduced inequalities: targeting Surrey's identified priority areas and priority groups with the resources needed to deliver change.
- 11. Sustainable cities and communities: noted that the Healthy Streets for Surrey design guide was a good beginning to allowing us to enjoy natural spaces and energy efficient buildings.

- 12. Responsible consumption and production: communications, education and making it easier to be responsible were vital, just imposing more taxes was not.
- 13. Climate action: noted that the easier part of reducing emissions over the last thirty years in the country had been done, now action needed to be done on the harder work of changing technology and reducing consumption; supporting businesses and residents every step of the way.
- 14. Life below water and 15. Life on land: noted that the state of nature in Surrey was inadequate, the Council must strive to mobilise its residents and landowners to participate in restoring nature through efforts such as planting the 1.2 million trees and further developing and delivering the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions: were needed that help residents through persuasion, but do not compel them.
- 17. Partnerships for the goals: working together for a better county, making Surrey that special place where 'No one is left behind'.

The motion was formally seconded by Jonathan Hulley, who reserved the right to speak.

Five Members spoke on the motion and made the following comments:

- Noted that the SDGs captured many of the Council's ambitions around inequality, sustainability, health and justice; and whilst already looked at in the climate change and environmental work, it was good to have an explicit commitment and focus.
- Noted that it was important that the Council was seen to be playing its role in the bigger picture of what needs to be done to create a better county, but also a better world.
- Noted that most of the SDGs were meant to be accomplished by 2030, those were last revised in 2017 and had been written before that; questioned why the administration waited so long to bring forward the motion.
- Noted that the SDGs were high-level and broad, it was hard to see what the motion would do in terms of implementing anything which would make a difference in anyone's lives.
- Noted that it was difficult to see how protecting the oceans was relevant to a landlocked county like Surrey, nor how the Council could reduce income inequality within and between nations, or how it could promote more international cooperation.
- Noted that looking at the SDGs such as working to tackle climate change, the Council had already declared a 'climate emergency' and had a climate change plan setting out more detail than the SDG set out.
- Could not see a reason to vote against the motion, however simply saying the Council agrees with the SDGs and seeks to do something about those was meaningless as the motion did not spell out action to be taken; hoped that detailed plans on action to be taken would be provided.
- Noted that the SDGs were a collection of interlinked objectives designed to serve as a shared blueprint for nations for peace and prosperity for people and the planet now and into the future; the UK signed up to them in 2015.
- Passionately supported the SDGs, however eight years had passed and the SDGs were in jeopardy as progress stalled noting the climate crisis, economic fluctuations, conflicts and increasing inequality with household disposable income falling.
- Noted that the Government pledged to max out on oil and gas reserves, the quality of rivers and seas was threatened by raw sewage, more of the country's natural biodiversity had been lost compared to most countries in Western Europe, public services were under threat, doctors, nurses and

teachers felt undervalued and overworked, there were cost of living and mental health crises and the Criminal Justice System had its funding cut.

- Noted that committing to the SDGs was an admirable pledge, however it would be helpful to know how against the above national backdrop, the Council would meet the SDGs.
- Noted that in April 2023 the UN Secretary-General highlighted that nations had only made 12% progress on the SDGs with seven years to go. The ambitious SDGs needed to be met now and all levels of government must strive to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, promote sustainability, and provide access to education and justice for all.
- Noted disappointment in the motion where it used the wording 'where practicable', asked when the values would not be practical and when there would be a time that the Council would approach a situation with decisions and policies that promote inequality, injustice and unsustainable actions.
- Asked what the motion was trying to achieve, hoped that its purpose would be to take some of the SDGs that relate to concerns today in areas that the Council could address.
- Regarding SDG 7, renewable electricity was vital particularly with local generation however generating solar panels stripped large amounts of natural resource from the land, suggested the use of vertical wind turbines and using skills in Surrey to develop technologies that could be used within the urban environment to make a real difference; as part of the Council's takeover of the Local Enterprise Partnerships' responsibilities.
- Noted that the Government's reports highlight a large gap in strategy around the storage and transport of hydrogen; asked what the county could do to fill that gap as the Council invests in 32 hydrogen buses.
- Regarding SDG 12, reiterated that Surrey's carbon footprint was based on the carbon used within Surrey; it did not include airport transport or imported food; did not believe that the motion's purpose was to widen that remit.
- Noted the need to discuss the prominence of economic growth in politics and the county, the SDGs were a good opportunity to do that, linking the climate impacts of over consumption of resources and emissions in Surrey and addressing entrenched poverty and inequality locally.
- Noted the need to have an economy that thrives and survives locally, with growth which does not mean building on green belts and destroying sustainable communities.
- Noted that the Council bravely shared its leadership of its Greener Futures Board with the Founding Director of the Institute for Sustainability at the University of Surrey; the global quality of life had declined since 2016 partly due to climate pressures.
- Noted that SDGs were in decline, the Council therefore in declaring that it wants to move forward in Surrey as part of that global challenge was brave, it must take its leadership role seriously setting out a clear message.
- Welcomed the restructuring of the Cabinet and the Corporate Leadership Team with growth and the environment moved into the same section; it provided an opportunity to discuss the balancing of the economy, environment and social aspects of sustainability.

Jonathan Hulley, the seconder of the motion, made the following comments:

- Noted that whilst the SDGs were high-level, the Council had already delivered projects that brought meaning to those.
- Referring to SDG 11, the Council had rolled out the Surrey Connect bus service across the county - thanked the Leader and Cabinet Member for that -

and furthermore the Council had its tree planting strategy and focused on planting of trees in Surrey's streetscapes.

- Referred to SDG 17, delivering the Council's Community Vision for Surrey 2030 required the support and the cooperation of residents, businesses, the public sector and the district and borough councils; all needed to be part of the solution.

The Chair asked Trefor Hogg, as proposer of the motion to conclude the debate, he made the following comments:

- Acknowledged that the SDGs were framed by the United Nations in relation to nations, that was why the wording 'where practicable' was used in the motion, as the SDGs need to be applied at a county level.
- Noted that as a county, Surrey was doing well but had further to go; for example currently a lot of energy and resources were wasted, targeting waste was the best way of improving Surrey's position.

The motion was put to the vote and was carried.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that:

**This Council notes:**

- The very strong links between the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals for 2030;
- The United Kingdom's commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- That **leave no one behind** is the central, transformative promise of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals; and
- Our own Community Vision for 2030 which states Our Ambitions for People and Place as **making Surrey a special place where no one is left behind**.

**This Council further notes:**

That the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals provides a balanced, well-researched and detailed model of how those goals are strongly linked and interact with each other. For Surrey they provide a guide that supports a coherent view of Our Ambitions for People and Place and how they are strongly linked and interact with each other.

**This Council resolves:**

- I. That where practicable this Council will make use of the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a guide to how we should address the interlinked nature of Our Ambitions for People and Place. Particularly in relation to our own policies for the environment to shape them so that they will support delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and will be a key part of our contribution to leaving future generations a place to live in that allows them to thrive.

**67/23 APPROVAL OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR ABSENCE [Item 10]**

The Leader introduced the report and explained that John Furey was undergoing rehabilitation following a major operation, he was expected to be back and walking by the end of the year.

**RESOLVED:**

That John Furey may continue to be absent from meetings until March 2024 by reason of ill health. The Council looks forward to welcoming him back in due course.

**68/23 SELECT COMMITTEES' REPORT TO COUNCIL [Item 11]**

The Chair of the Select Committee Chair & Vice-Chairs' Group introduced the report noting that the select committees had planned their annual forward work programmes, had received briefings about next year's budget and were carrying out deep dives on key issues in their remits. The Group had recently discussed performance monitoring of the Council's services and she believed that the select committees were working hard to improve services for Surrey residents.

The Leader thanked the chairs and the members of the select committees for their hard work. He noted however that not all select committees were running two task and finish groups, the intention was that they would run at least one and that was the role of the Select Committee Task Group Leads. He sought to understand what the issue was so the select committees could undertake deep dives via the task and finish groups.

**RESOLVED:**

That Council reviewed the work summarised in this report providing feedback to Scrutiny Chairs as appropriate.

**69/23 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL - ELECTORAL REVIEW: RESPONSE TO LGBCE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS [Item 12]**

The Chair of the Electoral Review Task Group introduced the report which was the final stage to a process that had taken almost a year to pursue. He thanked the Support Services Manager and his team for their work. He thanked the members of the Task Group and provided reassurance that the recommendations for Council to approve had been agreed unanimously by it. He outlined the previous two stages of the process and that the report detailed the Council's collective response to the Commission's draft recommendations, final recommendations to be published in December. Conflicting views were overcome by sending all suggestions back to the Commission and the Task Group did not take a view in favour of one suggestion over another. He emphasised that those unhappy with the Commission's proposals could write separately to the Commission by the 16 October 2023 deadline.

A Member supported the submission and thanked the Task Group for its work. However, he hoped that when the review concludes the Council would include in its feedback to the Commission that it was unhelpful of them to commence the review without waiting to have regard to the new ward boundaries which had been adopted at the May local elections. He was disappointed regarding the uneven offering provide to him compared to another Member regarding the boundary of the Guildford East division, where the other Member's detailed argument against the proposals was included whilst he was not offered the same opportunity to put forward the argument as to why he agreed with the proposals. He would write to the Commission directly.

A Member thanked the work of the Task Group noting that creating artificial administrative boundaries across an area taking into account numbers rather than communities was difficult. He was disappointed that his request that the submission incorporates the recent Guildford Borough Council boundaries was not met, as for example the small village community of Wanborough relied on the neighbouring village

of Puttenham's services. He would write to the Commission directly. In future he asked for the recently approved boundary changes to be incorporated.

The Chair noted that Members should write to the Commission if they had concerns.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council endorsed the Electoral Review Task Group's response to the LGBCE.

**70/23 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION - REPORT OF THE PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE [Item 13]**

The Chairman of the Planning and Regulatory Committee introduced the report noting that the changes were made following inspection and interviews by the Planning Advisory Service. Some of the main changes were around speaking and the other related to the running order of speakers and the way the Committee was run. The Committee would review the operation of the changes after six meetings to see how they worked, the changes to be in place for the next Committee meeting later in the month.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Approved the amendments to the Surrey Code of Best Practice in Planning Procedures and Standing Orders as set out in Annexes 1 and 2.
2. That the Planning & Regulatory Committee reviews the operation of these changes after six meetings.

**71/23 REPORT OF THE CABINET [Item 14]**

The Leader presented the report of the Cabinet meetings held on 25 July 2023 and 26 September 2023.

**Recommendations on Policy Framework Documents:**

**26 September 2023:**

- A. Youth Justice Plan

**RESOLVED:**

Approved the 2023/24 Youth Justice Plan.

**Reports for Information/Discussion:**

**25 July 2023:**

- B. The Care and Support Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care Housing
- C. Freedom to Travel Strategy
- D. Approval to Procure Increased Educational Psychology (EP) and Special Educational Needs (SEN) Service Capacity
- E. Quarterly Report on Decisions Taken Under Special Urgency Arrangements: 4 July 2023 - 2 October 2023

**RESOLVED:**

1. Noted that there had been two urgent decisions since the last Cabinet report to Council.
2. Adopted the report of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 25 July 2023 and 26 September 2023.

**72/23 MINUTES OF CABINET MEETINGS [Item 15]**

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

[Meeting ended at: 12.50 pm]

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**Chair**

## Leader's Statement – County Council, 10 October 2023

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Mr Chairman, Members, welcome to October's full Council meeting – the first since the summer months, with the new academic year well underway and the hubris of the party conferences behind us, at least for the time being.

I want to talk through some of the work that has been continuing over what has been an extremely busy summer for us, but first let me touch on what we've just watched.

I can see that many of you were touched by our new fostering recruitment video – as indeed was I.

A couple of weeks ago I attended a launch event for this video campaign, alongside foster carers and young people who had experienced the benefit of fostering in their own lives.

The message was clear – foster families have a huge positive impact on the lives and life chances of children in care, but we need more.

With over a thousand Surrey children in care, and under 400 foster families, it is clear that we do not have enough foster carers in the county.

At the event, I was honoured to meet a young lady called Fiaa.

Her story is truly inspirational and with our help through the foster care system, Fiaa is now a successful music artist and even due to appear on TV's Children in Need later this year.

I am proud that we have been able to support Fiaa but, the honest truth is, we need to be doing more. And we can all help.

We must explain the benefits of fostering to our residents and indeed the pleasure that families tell me they get from seeing children in their care flourish. As you heard in the video – it could be any of us.

So please take that message out into your communities, speak openly and passionately about fostering, encourage people to consider stepping forward – we know that word of mouth is our most successful recruitment tool.

The fostering team can provide you with any information and marketing material you might need and you can also share their content on social media.

So, what else has happened. Well, I'm delighted that we've expanded our revolutionary on-demand bus service, Surrey Connect, from Mole Valley now across Tandridge, Farnham, Cranleigh, West Guildford, and Longcross – putting the infrastructure and solutions in place to help people get around Surrey in a more environmentally friendly way. We will continue that rollout across the county in 2024.

To help people even further with public transport, we've introduced a new half price travelcard for young people, and secured funding from government to improve and protect bus services across Surrey – adding to already committed funding to make our buses cleaner, more reliable and easier to use.

I am absolutely committed to getting sustainable travel infrastructure in place, instead of resorting to punitive fines or ultimatums, which seems to be the way of the Mayor of London.

More community projects have been funded, opened and – quite literally, launched - through Your Fund Surrey, including the Kingston Maritime Volunteer Service boat on the Thames, keeping people safe and reassured on the river.

Kenyngton Manor Park's new playground will be opening soon, nearly £100,000 agreed for a disability challengers playground in Stoke Park in Guildford, and a small fund grant for Tandridge Access Group for new mobility gates in Limpsfield, with more applications coming into the Your Fund Surrey team all the time.

A major development for Surrey's local economy came in August, when the government announced that Upper Tier Councils will take on the functions and responsibilities of Local Enterprise Partnerships – something we've called for and have set about preparing for.

We are committed to delivering a strong and sustainable local economy, and now this Council will have responsibility for representing our businesses, strategic economic planning, and delivering government programmes to boost the regional economy.

Both of our LEPs - Coast to Capital and Enterprise M3 - have accomplished a lot of good work since being established in 2011.

At the start of September, as an early part of this process, we took on responsibility for the Careers Hub service. We're delighted to be working with all the county's secondary schools, special schools, and colleges with the aim of ensuring every young person can find their best next step.

The service will formally launch at the first ever Festival of Skills on November 23<sup>rd</sup> at Sandown Racecourse.

This work is key to growing a sustainable economy, fit for the future, here in Surrey.

Mr Chairman, last month we received the latest inspection report from His Majesty's Inspectorate into our Fire and Rescue Service.

While I'm pleased to see inspectors recognise that we are heading in the right direction and note a marked improvement in our culture, there are other elements that need further progress.

I know that progress is already being made, and we are in good hands with our Chief Fire Officer Dan Quin committed to that work. We will meet that challenge – like all we face – head on.

Our action plan is going back to inspectors this week, and our Service Improvement Plan will be shared with Select Committee in December.

In the meantime, our fire service officers will continue to work 24/7 to protect the people of Surrey.

However, further challenge has come to local government – and in particular in areas of Surrey – over recent months, with severe financial pressure bearing down on some of our District and Borough councils.

As the County Council, we are very much part of an important ecosystem of public and community organisations across the county, that work together for the benefit of Surrey.

If one or more of those organisations struggle, it impacts us all and we must work together as far as possible to protect and serve the people of Surrey.

However, Members, I must be very clear – while the County Council has a solid and robust budget position, thanks to many years of hard work and bold thinking, we face pressures like everywhere else.

We cannot, and will not, simply pick up the funding or running of services for which we have no responsibility, resources or capability.

We cannot, I'm afraid, be the white knight across the county, riding to the rescue if and when funding for community services delivered by others is withdrawn or reduced.

We must be a responsible organisation, and that often means tough conversations, and difficult decisions, but we must deliver the services we're here to deliver, and protect our own long-term future, for the benefit of Surrey residents.

Mr Chairman, as I've said, this Council's finances are in good shape.

Our transformation over the last few years has given us a solid base and is helping us weather the storms encircling local government and indeed the global economy.

But things are not easy.

Everything we do has become more expensive. Demand for services is increasing. Other organisations are struggling. Public finances are stretched.

We must face up to these challenges, as we have done consistently, to set balanced budgets and fulfil our responsibilities.

But we cannot keep approaching these challenges in the same way.

We cannot salami slice services. We cannot simply cut costs. We cannot just be reactive.

We cannot stop delivering. We cannot stand still.

We must draw on the innovative thinking, the ambition, the energy that has led our successful transformation programmes and look to the future with a renewed sense of purpose.

We must act now to prepare for upcoming challenges. We must use our relative position of strength to drive a robust programme of change and transformation, building a different kind of Council, an organisation fit for the ever-changing future.

I genuinely believe that as a Council we are moving forwards, but those drivers of sustained progress need to be regularly reviewed and refreshed.

So, over the summer I have been working closely with our Chief Executive and the team to take a fresh look at how we are delivering our four key areas of –

- Building a sustainable economy
- Improving health outcomes
- Delivering a greener future and
- Creating thriving communities

That work has involved a root and branch review of all the delivery and improvement programmes and projects that are happening every day here at Surrey County Council.

What is clear, is that some things have to stop, at least in the short term, whilst we focus on those big programmes that will move the dial on delivery of improved services and outcomes for our residents. And we need to build a sustainable budget for the next five years on the working assumption that no government is going to have the wherewithal to throw billions of more funding at local government.

We would be naïve in the extreme if we were to sit back and wait to be bailed out. We need to take responsibility of how we use the public's money effectively and efficiently and we will.

We will look at the way support services are organised and delivered within the County Council.

We will accelerate projects that will deliver a truly integrated Health and Social Care System, including quicker and safer discharge from hospital.

We will continue to look to strengthen our relationship with the District and Boroughs at a time when they are facing budget pressures resulting in the reduction in spend on non-statutory services.

We will engage with the voluntary and charitable sector and be open and honest about who this Council will be working with to deliver our collective ambition that no one is left behind.

We will actively engage with key stakeholders and organisations that can help us build on a more preventative and early intervention approach to Children Services.

We will create a new customer service offering, putting residents front and centre so they can more easily flag up issues of concern and have those issues resolved more speedily.

We will continue to actively engage with residents as we drive forward our transformation plans seeking feedback and input wherever appropriate.

Members, if we are to be a Council that really delivers on its ambitions for our residents, it is imperative that we continually assess how we are doing things, that we look outside this organisation for examples of best practice, that we continue to embed a culture across the whole organisation of pride in delivering excellent quality services.

The foundations of change were laid 5 years ago, starting with our finances, and it was that willingness to adapt and refocus that helped us through the pandemic. But the world looks different now with different ambitions, different concerns, and different ways of working and we need to reinforce and re invoke that “can do” spirit.

We have come out of that dark tunnel of Covid into the sunlight and we must look to the future with optimism but also increase the pace at which we drive excellent practice in a robust, deliverable and sustainable way across all directorates.

We can do this.

We will do this.

We are doing this.

I don't want this Council having to react to crisis, but to be strong enough to ward off that crisis before it comes.

We should have the vision and the insights to see problems of the future and work to prevent them. We should understand the evolving world, including the opportunities it brings, and ensure we are best equipped to embrace it.

This is what our residents would expect. They are at the heart of all that we do, and we must ensure that we can deliver the best public service for them, now and long into the future.

Our children and young people will need us throughout their lives – let's make sure we're there to deliver from cradle to grave.

So, Mr Chairman, it's been a busy summer, and we are in the midst of a busy autumn, and I'm afraid to say winter is fast approaching.

We know that winter brings with it increasing concern for residents, as the heating has to go back on, the nights draw in and the sense of increasing cost pressures grow for people as they go about their lives.

Last year we published and distributed a directory of support to our residents, highlighting the help available as energy bills escalated and the cost of living rocketed.

We know that people found it useful, and this year we have compiled an expanded version, highlighting an even broader range of useful Council – and partner services.

It will be making its way through letterboxes early next month, and I sincerely hope residents – particularly those who don't access our digital channels – find it a useful guide to help them in their everyday lives.

We are all here in this room with the common purpose of supporting our residents and making their lives better.

As the seasons change, let us all keep working together to make sure we deliver that, and continue working towards that ultimate ambition that no one in Surrey is left behind.

Thank you.

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