

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET
HELD ON 26 MARCH 2024 AT 2.00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WOODHATCH PLACE, 11 COCKSHOT HILL,
REIGATE, SURREY, RH2 8EF**

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Cabinet at its next meeting.

Members: (*present)

*Tim Oliver (Chairman)
*Natalie Bramhall
*Clare Curran
*Matt Furniss
*David Lewis
*Mark Nuti
*Denise Turner-Stewart
*Sinead Mooney
*Marisa Heath
*Kevin Deanus

Deputy Cabinet Members:

*Maureen Attewell
*Paul Deach
Jordan Beech
*Steve Bax

Members in attendance:

Catherine Baart, Local Member for Earlswood and Reigate South
Catherine Powell, Residents' Association and Independent Group
Leader

**PART ONE
IN PUBLIC**

38/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Jordan Beech.

39/24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 27 FEBRUARY 2024 [Item 2]

These were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

40/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were none.

41/241 PROCEDURAL MATTERS [Item 4]

41/24 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 4a]

There were three member questions. The questions and responses were published in a supplement to the agenda. It was agreed that the member questions would be taken with Item 5, the Select Committee report on the referred council motion 'Advertising & Sponsorship Policy'.

42/24 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4b]

There was one public question. The question and response was published in a supplement to the agenda.

43/24 PETITIONS [Item 4c]

There were none.

44/24 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED ON REPORTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE [Item 4d]

There were none.

45/24 REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES, TASK GROUPS AND OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL [Item 5]

The referred council motion 'Advertising & Sponsorship Policy' report was introduced by the Chairman of the Greener Futures Reference Group who confirmed that the Group was unanimous in its view that the current advertising policy did not support the council's greener future agenda and ambitions. The Group was of the view that it was undesirable to enable advertising for commercial benefit by companies or products in direct opposition to the Council's net zero goals and aims. The length of the contracts for large and small format advertising were queried.

The Cabinet Member Highways, Transport and Economic Growth stated that he would be happy to send the member details of the advertising contracts. There was recognition around the importance of the Council's net zero goals and aims. If the council was to accept the recommendations of the Group it would impact the council's income stream and advertising for council services such as the bus service which is valued by residents. The Cabinet Member for Environment stated that she did not believe it was right to interfere with the current contracts for advertising and explained that strict guidelines around advertising were set by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) whom she would contact asking them to consider whether guidance could be formed around the advertising of fossil fuels and high carbon products.

Catherine Baart asked if the Cabinet Member Highways, Transport and Economic Growth thought it would be appropriate to see a flight being advertised on a billboard in Surrey and if the new advertising space could be used to support green companies based in Surrey. The Cabinet Member explained that the council would be leasing sections of the highways for advertising and would not be owning the advertising boards. The ASA had a set criteria of what is acceptable for advertising. As a result the council could not dictate what should or should not be advertised. The Cabinet Member welcomed advertising space being used by green companies based in Surrey.

The Leader noted that the Council was taking a leading role in the greener futures agenda and asked for the Cabinet Member for Environment to write to the relevant Minister around future plans to tighten advertising guidance in relation to fossil fuels.

The Surrey Utilities – Water and Wastewater Services report was introduced by the Chairman of the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee. The Chairman gave an overview of the work that been undertaken and the witnesses that been engaged. The Chairman briefed the Cabinet on the Committee’s conclusions and recommendations. The report was welcomed by the Cabinet Member for Environment who acknowledged the positive work that had been done by the committee. There were known issues with utilities companies and it was positive to see the committee on the front foot trying to resolve these issues. The Cabinet recognised the value of the work undertaken by the committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Referred Council Motion ‘Advertising & Sponsorship Policy’ report and the Surrey Utilities – Water and Wastewater Services report be noted along with the Cabinet response.

46/24 LEADER / DEPUTY LEADER / CABINET MEMBER/ STRATEGIC INVESTMENT BOARD DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST CABINET MEETING [Item 6]

There were three decisions for noting. The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning explained that one decision related to the determining of a statutory notice to bring into effect the formal commencement to change the age range and extend the premises at St Paul’s CofE Infant School whilst the other related to the approval of the use of £3.33m for Guildford County School’s new mainstream SEN Unit which would create permanent accommodation for 25 additional state-maintained specialist school places in Surrey from September 2025 onwards.

RESOLVED:

That the decisions taken since the last Cabinet meeting be noted.

47/24 CABINET MEMBER OF THE MONTH [Item 7]

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources who made the following points:

- Key focus had been on developing the 2024/25 budget and MTFS. The council was in a robust financial position. Work was being done to develop the 2025/26 revenue and capital budgets.
- In January, Grant Thornton presented their Annual Audit Report for 2022/23 to the Audit & Governance Committee. The assessment focuses on three areas: financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Grant Thornton expressed opinion that the Council had strong arrangements in place and that the findings in their report were in contrast to reports relating to many other local authorities in the current climate.
- There was a focus on AI capabilities and how AI could address some of the challenges facing the council. Aida, the MySurrey chatbot had successfully reduced the number of queries coming through and had also reduced pressure on the support teams allowing them to focus on more complex questions.
- The Cabinet Member apologised for the inconvenience and distress caused by the implementation of Unit 4 stating that teething issues should be expected with the introduction of a brand new system.
- The Cabinet Member had been involved in the purchase of Victoria Gate in Woking and was looking forward to working with the agile team to understand the buildings capacity.
- Thanks was given to the Interim CEX Leigh Whitehouse who would be leaving the council to join West Sussex County Council as CEX. Leigh's work in turning around the council's financial position was recognised.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet Member of the Month update be noted.

48/24 SURREY INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN - PHASE 5 SCHEMES [Item 8]

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure who explained that Cabinet were being asked to agree the implementation of the Surrey Infrastructure Plan Phase 5 projects within the approved budget envelope, subject to the final business case for each scheme being approved by the Capital Programme Panel. Cabinet were also being asked to agree the implementation of the Surrey Flood Alleviation Programme 2024/25 to

2025/26. The Cabinet Member briefly described each of the projects contained in Phase 5.

Members welcomed the report and endorsed the projects within Phase 5. The projects were welcomed by local residents and demonstrated investment in the county. There was recognition that the Surrey Infrastructure Plan had benefited the county and residents.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet agree the implementation of the Surrey Infrastructure Plan Phase 5 projects identified in this report and set out in Appendix 1, within the approved budget envelope, subject to the final business case for each scheme being approved by the Capital Programme Panel.
2. That Cabinet agree the implementation of the Surrey Flood Alleviation Programme 2024/25 to 2025/26 as identified in this report and set out in Appendix 4a, within the approved budget envelope, subject to the final business case for each scheme being approved by the Capital Programme Panel.
3. That Cabinet agree the implementation of the Smallfield and Reigate Flood Alleviation scheme as identified in this report and set out in Appendix 4b, within the approved budget envelope, subject to the final business case for each scheme being approved by the Capital Programme Panel.
4. That Cabinet agree to delegate the development and delivery of the schemes to the Executive Director for Environment, Infrastructure & Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure.

Reasons for Decisions:

The recommendations will enable the continued development and delivery of infrastructure schemes that meet a wide range of outcomes and demonstrate deliverability and affordability. They enable the implementation of the fifth phase of SIP schemes and the development of a continuous pipeline of projects that require further feasibility work. The process is intended to remain dynamic with new schemes added to the long list as they are identified. A continuous programme of schemes will be developed taking them from concept through to delivery identifying suitable funding opportunities as they progress.

(The decisions on this item can be called -in by the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee)

49/24 CHENNESTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL - ROOF REPLACEMENT WORKS [Item 9]

The report asked Cabinet to approve capital funding for essential works at Chennestone Primary School, Manor Lane, Sunbury-on-Thames, TW16 5ED. The Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure explained that work was required to improve the condition of the school's flat roofing, thereby safeguarding the health and safety of pupils and staff, mitigating the impact on the school's operational activities and the children's education whilst improving the school's overall energy efficiency. The Leader queried if there were any Surrey school buildings with RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) issues. The Cabinet Member stated that the school in question did not have any RAAC issues and that the school estate had been thoroughly investigated with only one primary school flagging with RAAC concerns.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet approves capital funding allocated within the School Capital Maintenance Budget for the Minor Capital Works (MCW) Programme of FY2024/25 to replace the roof coverings and water tanks, remove asbestos, undertake structural repairs, and carry out any other associated work for essential condition improvement works to Chennestone Primary School, Sunbury-on-Thames. The capital funding required is commercially sensitive at this time and is set out in the Part 2 report.
2. That Cabinet approves procurement of appropriate construction partners to carry out the works in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Standing Orders.
3. That Cabinet notes that, regarding the procurement of construction partners, the Executive Director for Environment, Infrastructure & Growth and the Director of Land and Property are authorised to award such contracts, up to +5% of the budgetary tolerance level.
4. That Cabinet authorises Legal Services to seal any awarded contract where required.

Reasons for Decisions:

Approving the recommendations in this report will enable the Council to:

- Provide a dry, warm and safe learning and working environment for the school's pupils and staff.

- Support the school's operational activities and the children's education.
- Improve the building's energy efficiency and contribute to the Council's NZC target.
- Maintain and protect the building, providing a fit for purpose building for future years.
- Reduce the maintenance burden for the Council and school.

(The decisions on this item can be called in by the Resources and Performance Select Committee)

50/24 2023/24 MONTH 10 (JANUARY) FINANCIAL REPORT [Item 10]

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources explained that at Month 10 the Council was forecasting an overspend of £4m against the 2023/24 revenue budget, after the application of the contingency budget. This was an £0.7m deterioration since Month 9. The overspend relates to pressures on care package budgets due to demand and market pressures and the forecast impact of assessed fees & charges debt across the year in Adult Social Care. There was also further increases in Home to School Travel Assistance and additional costs for children in Education placements within Children Services. At Month 10, capital expenditure of £269.1m was forecast for 2023/24, a variance of £0.8m more than the re-set budget of £268.3m. This was a decrease of £1.8m from the forecast at M9. The Council had assessed its reserve levels and believes they are resilient and robust.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet notes the Council's forecast revenue budget (after the application of the full contingency budget) and capital budget positions for the year.

Reasons for Decision:

This report is to comply with the agreed policy of providing a monthly budget monitoring report to Cabinet for approval of any necessary actions.

(The decisions on this item can be called in by the Resources and Performance Select Committee)

51/24 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [Item 11]

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

52/24 CHENNESTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL - ROOF REPLACEMENT WORKS [Item 12]

The Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure introduced a Part 2 report which contained information which was exempt from Access to Information requirements by virtue of Paragraph 3: information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet approves capital funding of [E-03-24] allocated within the School Capital Maintenance Budget for the Minor Capital Works (MCW) Programme of FY2024/25 to replace roof coverings and water tanks, remove asbestos, undertake structural repairs, and carry out any other associated work for essential condition improvement works to Chennestone Primary School, Sunbury-on-Thames.
2. See Minute 49/24.
3. See Minute 49/24.
4. See Minute 49/24.

Reasons for Decisions:

Approving the recommendations in this report will enable the Council to:

- Provide a dry, warm and safe learning and working environment for the school's pupils and staff.
- Support the school's operational activities and the children's education.
- Improve the building's energy efficiency and contribute to the Council's NZC target.
- Maintain and protect the building, providing a fit for purpose building for future years.
- Reduce the maintenance burden for the Council and school.

(The decisions on this item can be called in by the Resources and Performance Select Committee)

53/24 PUBLICITY FOR PART 2 ITEMS [Item 13]

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

Meeting closed at 14:53

Chairman