



Agenda and Reports

for the meeting of

THE COUNTY COUNCIL

to be held on

10 DECEMBER 2024

(i)

(ii)

Woodhatch Place
Reigate
Surrey

Monday, 2 December 2024

TO THE MEMBERS OF SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

SUMMONS TO MEETING

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the Council to be held at Woodhatch Place, 11 Cockshot Hill, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 8EF, on Tuesday, 10 December 2024, beginning at 10.00 am, for the purpose of transacting the business specified in the Agenda set out overleaf.

TERENCE HERBERT
Chief Executive

Note 1: *This meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site - at the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. The images and sound recording may be used for training purposes within the Council.*

Generally the public seating areas are not filmed. However by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the representative of Legal and Democratic Services at the meeting.

If you would like a copy of this agenda or the attached papers in another format, e.g. large print or braille, or another language, please email Amelia Christopher on amelia.christopher@surreycc.gov.uk

This meeting will be held in public. If you would like to attend and you have any special requirements, please contact Amelia Christopher on 07929 725663 or via the email address above.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair to report apologies for absence.

2 MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8 October 2024.

(Pages
13 - 50)

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter

- (i) Any disclosable pecuniary interests and / or
- (ii) Other interests arising under the Code of Conduct in respect of any item(s) of business being considered at this meeting

NOTES:

- Members are reminded that they must not participate in any item where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest
- As well as an interest of the Member, this includes any interest, of which the Member is aware, that relates to the Member's spouse or civil partner (or any person with whom the Member is living as a spouse or civil partner)
- Members with a significant personal interest may participate in the discussion and vote on that matter unless that interest could be reasonably regarded as prejudicial.

4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Signing of the Armed Forces Covenant

This morning (10 December) Colonel Kenny from the British Army visited the Council Chamber in Woodhatch Place to co-sign the Armed Forces Covenant. The covenant is to formalise a commitment to support and respect the members of the Armed Forces community. This includes serving personnel, veterans, and their families. The covenant aims to ensure that they are treated fairly and receive the support they need in recognition of the sacrifices they make for the nation.

Act of Remembrance

We recently paid our respects in a well-attended Act of Remembrance, with over 150 participants, including a Deputy Lieutenant for His Majesty The King, military personnel, veterans, members of the Royal British Legion, other invited guests, and both past and present Members and staff.

Call for Volunteers

We are calling for more nominations for the Community Champions Event. Volunteers and charity workers are the backbone of our community, and their contributions are invaluable. Whether it is helping at events, supporting local initiatives, or aiding those in need, they each make a

significant impact. If you know someone who embodies the spirit of giving back to the community, please submit your nominations by 31 December.

Season of Celebrations

We have had a wonderful season of celebrations, showcasing the vibrant and diverse spirit of our community. Here are some highlights:

The First Citizenship Ceremonies at Woodhatch Place: We were honoured to welcome new citizens in a heartfelt ceremony, marking their official membership in our community.

The SFRS Honours & Awards Evening: This event celebrated the bravery and dedication of our Surrey Fire and Rescue Service personnel, recognising their outstanding contributions and service.

The Woking Sea Cadets AGM & Annual Awards: A proud moment for our young cadets, where their achievements and commitment to maritime skills and community service were acknowledged.

The Artventure Trust 4th Anniversary Celebration: We celebrated four years of incredible work by the Artventure Trust, which supports adults with learning disabilities through creative arts.

The Woking Diwali Parade: A vibrant and joyous celebration of Diwali, the festival of lights, bringing together people from all walks of life to enjoy the cultural festivities.

The Dashain and Tihar Festival: These important Nepalese festivals were celebrated with great enthusiasm, highlighting the rich cultural heritage and traditions of our Nepalese community.

The Community Foundation Celebration Event: This event recognised the invaluable contributions of local charities and community groups, celebrating their efforts in making a positive impact.

SCC's Stars in Surrey Awards (3rd Year): Our annual awards ceremony honoured the exceptional achievements and dedication of individuals and teams within Surrey County Council, celebrating their hard work and commitment.

These events have truly highlighted the strength and unity of our community. Thank you to everyone who participated and contributed to making these celebrations memorable.

A Time for Reflection

While this is a season of celebrations, it is also a time of worry and sadness for many. As we enjoy the festivities, let us remember those facing difficult times. The holiday season can be challenging for those struggling with financial hardship, health issues, or personal loss. We encourage everyone to consider making Christmas donations to support those in need. Whether it is contributing to local food banks, donating warm clothing, or supporting essential charities, every act of kindness makes a difference. The Chair will be donating to Surrey's foodbanks and homeless shelters to provide hot meals and warm beds. Together, we can bring hope and comfort to those who need it most.

Thank you for your continued support and for making our community a place of care and compassion.

Christmas Wishes

That just leaves me to say I wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year filled with joy, peace, and good health! Please do take the break as an opportunity to rest and spend time with your nearest and dearest.

5 LEADER'S STATEMENT

The Leader to make a statement.

There will be an opportunity for Members to ask questions and/or make comments.

6 APPROVAL OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR ABSENCE

(Pages
51 - 52)

The purpose of this report is to request that the County Council considers whether to agree that County Councillor Mark Sugden be absent from Council meetings by reason of ill health.

7 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL - ELECTORAL REVIEW: FINAL REPORT

(Pages
53 - 56)

This report provides an update on the conclusion of Surrey County Council's (SCC) electoral review process, which was conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

The Council is asked to note the final recommendations, which will determine the names and boundaries of SCC electoral areas (divisions) from the May 2025 local election onwards.

8 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

(Pages
57 - 64)

For the Council to formally note its thanks to the two retiring Independent Persons following the end of their term of office, and to appoint two new Independent Persons for a four-year term.

9 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

1. The Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader or the appropriate Member of the Cabinet or the chairman of a committee to answer any questions on any matter relating to the powers and duties of the County Council, or which affects the county.

(Note: Notice of questions in respect of the above item on the agenda must be given in writing, preferably by e-mail, to Democratic Services by 12 noon on Wednesday 4 December 2024).

2. Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member Briefings on their portfolios.

These will be circulated by email to all Members prior to the County Council meeting, together with the Members' questions and responses.

There will be an opportunity for Members to ask questions.

10 STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Any Member may make a statement at the meeting on a local issue of current or future concern.

(Note: Notice of statements must be given in writing, preferably by e-mail, to Democratic Services by 12 noon on Monday 9 December 2024).

11 ORIGINAL MOTIONS

Item 11 (i)

Catherine Baart (Earlswood and Reigate South) to move under standing order 11 as follows:

This Council recognises that:

- The UK is committed to reduce its carbon emissions to net zero by 2050, and by 68% from 1990 levels by 2030. The government's Committee on Climate Change is due to report on the UK's Carbon Budget on 26 February 2025.
- The Climate Change Committee has estimated that Local Authorities have powers or influence over roughly a third of emissions in their local areas.
- The Local Government Association have estimated that climate action can be three times more cost effective if led by local rather than national government.
- Surrey County Council has a target of achieving net zero across the county of Surrey by 2050, in line with the climate science as set out in the Surrey Climate Change Strategy.
- Significant additional financial resources are required to achieve these targets, in collaboration with local public, private and third sector partners.
- The Leader confirmed at the last full Council meeting that Surrey County Council has now formed strategic relationships with the University of Surrey, Royal Holloway and University of the Creative Arts.

This Council resolves to:

- I. Commission a report for the council's Cabinet that identifies the additional finance, powers and partnership arrangements needed to deliver our county-wide 2050 climate target; and
- II. Use this report to support a request to the Secretary of State that Surrey County Council and all local authorities are given statutory duties, powers and funding to enable them to achieve net zero in line with the UK's legal commitment on carbon emissions.

Item 11 (ii)

Jonathan Essex (Redhill East) to move under standing order 11 as follows:

This Council agrees that:

- Surrey County Council used to support a network of 58 Sure Start Children Centres with some government support. These were replaced with 23 Family Centres in 2017 and these are now funded through 11 Family Centre and Family Resilience contracts that also include youth services up to 18 (and age 25 for those with SEN).
- This shift to the family centres model has been accompanied by a shift in council funding for children services. There is now less funding allocated to universal and community support, and signposting to families (often through group sessions) alongside increased funding for more targeted and intensive support to individual families, including through the new Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS).
- Recent academic research has highlighted that the Sure Start Children Centres model reduced childhood obesity and youth crime whilst increased early identification of SEN (and reduced SEN and EHCPs in secondary schools) and improved educational outcomes.
- The above shift in funding in children's services within a post-Covid context of continued austerity, together with service improvements in Surrey County Council, has contributed to a reduction in children being taken into care in Surrey. However, at the same time there has been an increase in the numbers of children requiring additional support when they start school, and a surge in the number of children who have mental health needs.

This Council resolves to:

- I. Commission a review of recent research into the benefits of taking a broader preventative approach to children's services. This review should include recommendations to improve long-term outcomes for Surrey families, including through strengthening universal and community support to meet emerging needs earlier.
- II. Write to the new Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP to call for additional funding for local authority Children's Services across the UK that is directed to prevention, to improve outcomes to meet the objective that no children or families are left behind.

Item 11 (iii)

Liz Townsend (Cranleigh & Ewhurst) to move under standing order 11 as follows:

This Council recognises that:

Children and young people have a legal right to special educational provision and support that meets their needs. However, currently too many children and young people are not getting the education and support they need, with long-term consequences for their educational outcomes and overall wellbeing, together with that of their families.

Many parents and carers of children and young people with additional needs often find the system to access education an arduous and expensive battle that brings families to breaking point.

Part of the process that they report causes much distress is the panel decision making process. This is the point when decisions are made about their child behind closed doors often by unknown professionals, and to which the individual case officer, who is involved with the families on a day-to-day basis, is not automatically invited.

This Council acknowledges that:

Many parents do not currently feel that the panel process is transparent or consistent. These panels are making significant decisions about the future of children and young people with additional needs, and it is important parents are part of the process.

Due to its closed nature, many parents and carers often feel that vital information is not adequately covered and, in some cases, omitted. Once a decision is made, the rationale provided to parents and carers for this is often reported as inadequate and this compounds a feeling of exclusion and mistrust.

This Council notes:

This process is not a statutory requirement and could be changed in line with The SEND code of Practice [SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/424213/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf) that sets out the requirements to involve families and young people in decision making.

This Council resolves to call on the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning to commit to:

- I. Provide the opportunity for parent/carers of children with additional needs to be involved in the panel decision process with a clearly defined role.
- II. Provide the opportunity for the child or young person with additional needs to be involved in the panel decision process with a clearly defined role.
- III. Ensure the relevant case officer is automatically invited to attend panel decision meetings.

Item 11 (iv)

Marisa Heath (Englefield Green) to move under standing order 11 as follows:

This Council notes that:

- Having felt the impact of COVID and the conflict in Ukraine leading to rising costs in energy prices and food, our local economy, particularly our small and rural businesses need support and the ability to focus on growth, not additional tax burdens and complexity.

- The recent budget has had an immediate impact on farmers and rural businesses at a time when stability is important and as we seek to provide more healthy, sustainable and, where possible, local, food and look after our environment.
- The NFU has evidenced that around 75% of commercial family farms will be affected by the new IHT policy which was announced in the budget rather than the government's initial claim that it would only be 27% of farms. This means many Surrey farms will be impacted.
- Several farms will not yet fully understand the implications of the changes as they will not have had their farms formally valued since the 1992 changes. Many feel that the current change are a tax on rural areas.
- Many farms do not earn enough money to pay the potential Inheritance Tax Bill without selling off some of their land or business, which in turn makes the farm business unviable and threatens the future of Surrey farming.
- The average farm size in 2023 was 88 hectares. This is the fourth smallest average farm size of all the English regions and the same as the English average of 88 hectares. 63% of farms were below 50 hectares. Due to relative land values, farms in the south-east could be more affected by changes to Inheritance Tax than those in other parts of the country. Based on average land-values (arable and pasture) the average 88ha south-east farm has a value of between £2.1m and £2.6m (excludes machinery/ plant equipment – for context, a combine harvester can cost as much as £0.5m).
- 31% farms are rented and the impact on farmers who do not own their farms has yet to be measured.
- Surrey County Council has been working with local farmers and sharing information and best practice as it is recognised that farmers play a crucial role in land management and nature recovery across Surrey.
- The inflationary impacts of the budget on key inputs such as labour costs will prevent farmers and rural businesses being able to add investment and drive growth. Alongside this, the Rural Prosperity Fund comes to an end in March 2025 and there is no replacement for it which restricts businesses investing in their long-term resilience, competitiveness and their environmental performance.

This Council believes that:

- Food security and sustainability is a key priority for both Surrey and the nation, and the added financial pressure of the budget does not support the prioritisation of these important objectives.
- Farmers should be supported to get through the changes of moving away from direct payments, driving forward environmental objectives and producing high quality British food and encouraged to invest long-term in their businesses.
- We should not risk losing Surrey's high quality agricultural land used for food production to other uses which do not benefit the wider community.
- The tax would undermine investment and innovation in the sector at a time when we need Surrey farmers to invest in their businesses.
- In Surrey we have several rural businesses and farmers who are looking to both national and local Government for help to navigate changes such as the reduction in direct payments and it is important we respond to that and set out ways in which we will speak up for them.

This Council resolves to:

- I. Inform the Treasury that Surrey County Council disagrees with IHT proposal and calls for the policy on IHT to be scrapped.
- II. Call on the Treasury to provide a multi-year funding to support local rural businesses crucial to economic recovery, farming and sustainability.
- III. Ensure that Surrey County Council continues, and increases, support for farmers, local food production and rural businesses enabling sharing of best practice and resource.

12 REPORT OF THE CABINET

(Pages
65 - 72)

To receive the report of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 29 October 2024 and 26 November 2024.

13 MINUTES OF CABINET MEETINGS

(Pages
73 - 86)

Any matters within the minutes of the Cabinet's meetings, and not otherwise brought to the Council's attention in the Cabinet's report, may be the subject of questions and statements by Members upon notice being given to Democratic Services by 12 noon on Monday 9 December 2024.

(Note: 26 November 2024 Cabinet minutes to follow)

MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND FILMING – ACCEPTABLE USE

Members of the public and the press may use social media or mobile devices in silent mode during meetings. Public Wi-Fi is available; please ask the committee manager for details.

Anyone is permitted to film, record or take photographs at Council meetings. Please liaise with the committee manager prior to the start of the meeting so that the meeting can be made aware of any filming taking place.

The use of mobile devices, including for the purpose of recording or filming a meeting, is subject to no interruptions, distractions or interference being caused to any Council equipment or any general disturbance to proceedings. The Chairman may ask for mobile devices to be switched off in these circumstances.

Thank you for your co-operation