

MINUTES of the meeting of the **COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 17 July 2024 at Council Chamber, Surrey County Council, 11 Cockshot Hill, Woodhatch, Reigate, RH2 8EF.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 26 September 2024.

Elected Members:

- * Ayesha Azad
- * Catherine Baart
- * John Beckett
- Luke Bennett
- * Liz Bowes
- * Stephen Cooksey
- * Andy MacLeod
- * Jan Mason
- * Cameron McIntosh
- * Lance Spencer (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mark Sugden (Vice-Chairman)
- * Richard Tear
- * Buddhi Weerasinghe
- * Keith Witham (Chairman)

Substitute Members:

Ayesha Azad

* = present

23/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Luke Bennett. Councillor Ayesha Azad was in attendance as a substitute.

24/24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 29 APRIL 2024 [Item 2]

The Committee **AGREED** the minutes from the previous meeting were a true and accurate record of the meeting.

25/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None received.

26/24 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There was one question received from a member of the public and one received from a Member of the Committee, in writing, prior to the Committee meeting. The questions and answer were provided in the supplementary agenda circulated at the meeting.

The same member of the public was present at the Committee meeting and asked a supplementary question about Surrey County Council's

budget of £1.5 million for verge cutting in the current financial year, and whether this was an appropriate use of these funds. The member of the public also stated that it would be beneficial to the local environment if the Council did not cut verges regularly and enabled wildlife to develop in verges.

In reply, the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth stated that the Council encouraged environmental protection. However, the Council received requests to cut back verges and needed to balance these requests. In doing so, the Council would continue with the previous district and borough scheme of six cuts in urban areas and two cuts in rural areas. Maintaining this level allowed the Council to continue the Blue Hearts Wildflower Scheme and reduce the overall amount of cutting.

27/24 UPDATED VISION ZERO ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY (INCLUDING A NEW APPROACH TO 20 MPH SPEED LIMITS) [Item 5]

The Committee received a report of the Road Safety and Sustainable School Travel Team of an updated version of the Surrey RoadSafe Vision Zero Road Strategy, which had been amended following feedback from a ten-week public consultation.

Witnesses:

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth.

Paul Millen, Strategic Transport Group Manager.

Lucy Monie, Director of Highways and Transport.

Ducan Knox, Road Safety and Sustainable School Travel Manager.

Rebecca Harrison, Safer Travel Team Leader.

Due to a member of the public arriving late to ask their supplemental question, the discussion briefly shifted to Agenda Item 4. Following this short discussion, the Committee returned to Agenda Item 5.

Key points made in the discussion:

1. A Member asked how the Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy changed because of the public consultation. The Strategic Transport Group Manager hoped that there would be more support for the 20-mph strategy. The public had expressed preferences for where they wanted the 20-mph limit to be implemented. The Strategic Transport Group committed to provide additional information on how consultations with local people would be conducted.
2. A Member asked if the Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy should be reviewed considering the percentage of respondents expressing a lack of confidence that it would lead to improvements in road safety. The Strategic Transport Group Manager replied that respondents' lack of confidence in the Strategy related to road

maintenance. Significant work was underway to make improvements.

3. A Member asked if key performance indicators would be developed to measure progress in achieving the strategy's goal. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that the strategy included a delivery plan and framework. This would be reviewed by the Road Safety Governance Board (RSGB). There was no established threshold for a high level of compliance with speed limits. However, intervention was prioritised at sites with the most significant speed and casualty issues.
4. A Member asked if reducing serious injuries and deaths by 2035 was the primary measure of success and what the RSGB's relationship was to Surrey County Council and this Committee. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that the data is arranged by road user groups. The relationship between the RSGB and the Committee is determined by the respective Cabinet Member, and the activities of both are subject to scrutiny by this Committee.
5. A Member asked about the number of speed surveys conducted and whether a high level of compliance could be measured for most of them. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that data was collected from measuring thousands of sites. The sites requiring the most attention were identified in collaboration with local boroughs and districts. Further data was gathered from telematics devices used by road users.
6. A Member said that participants in the public consultation were dissatisfied with measures to ensure driver compliance with speed limits and concerned about the new approach to implementing 20 mph speed limits. However, the consultation results indicated that only 4% of respondents experienced confusion or misunderstanding.
7. A Member asked whether the issue surrounding public consultation stemmed from ineffective communication or fundamental disagreement with the proposed strategy. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that there was a lack of understanding to a degree. Some individuals indicated opposition but also supported specific areas of the policy. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth said that consultations were not the best way to communicate and expressed the need to reevaluate the approach.
8. The Chair said that 42% of respondents felt either unconfident or very unconfident about the likelihood of improving road safety. Respondents' main concern was that funding for road maintenance would be more effective in impacting on road safety.
9. The Chair asked if road maintenance should be prioritized in the strategy. In reply, the Strategic Transport Group Manager

acknowledged that road maintenance was important; however, it should not overshadow the main objectives of the strategy. The Director of Highways and Transport said that there was already a separate strategy for highway maintenance that prioritized user safety.

10. A Member asked if there was any evidence linking road conditions to serious injuries and fatalities. In reply, the Strategic Transport Group Manager said there is a lack of data on the issue, but police records include information about the causes of incidents.
11. A Member asked how many reduced speed limits would need to be established to reach the safe road targets of the strategy and what the associated costs would be. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that this was challenging to identify. Early data indicated that reducing 60 mph speed limits as part of the Rural Speed Limit Programme had been effective.
12. The Chairman said that a consistent majority of respondents in social media polls opposed 20 mph speed limits in residential areas, town centres, and near schools.
13. The Chairman asked about the demographics of the participants. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said they do not have this data.
14. A Member asked for elaboration on proposed governing structures. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that a governance board was being set up among the strategy's decision makers. The board would make major investment decisions using money from the Road Safe Partnership. Also a strategy and delivery group would develop plans for the governance board.
15. A Member remarked that both road markings and potholes were critical issues. The Cabinet Member stated that significant investment had been made in road markings.
16. A Member asked for clarification of self-enforcing speed limits. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that this indicated where drivers voluntarily choose speeds that complied with the posted speed limit based on a road's physical characteristics without the need for police enforcement. This was accomplished through road width visibility, the presence of parked vehicles, and traffic calming measures.
17. A Member said that the Council had an established process for setting local speed limits, allowing residents to submit online requests for reductions. Local councillors were then consulted to determine whether to conduct a speed assessment. However, Annex 5 indicated that feasibility work and speed studies were conducted first, followed by a formal engagement plan with local

Councillors. This approach raised concerns about the financial feasibility of achieving the goals from the outset.

18. A Member asked whether local Councillor involvement could occur earlier than proposed in Annex 5. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that local Councillors could contribute their local allocation to the feasibility study. If a Councillor did not want to proceed, they would not have to secure a locally funded scheme.
19. A Member asked the reason for using the 85th percentile in speed assessments and how to address situations where there is a significant difference between the mean speed and the 85th percentile. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that the 85th percentile represented the speed above which the fastest 15% of vehicles travelled. This metric, along with the mean speed, helped determine the appropriate type and priority of intervention. An explanation and examples could be added to the website for the public about speed measurements.
20. The Chairman asked about the level of support required to approve a 20 mph scheme. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that defining the exact level of support required was unhelpful, as anyone could contribute to the consultation process.
21. A Member asked about local engagement with Districts and Boroughs and whether their involvement could be included. The Strategic Transport Group Manager would gather the views of the Districts and Boroughs and disseminate information through their media channels as part of the consultation process.
22. A Member asked who would conduct the public consultations and whether an officer would be assigned to oversee them. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that when a local Councillor aimed to promote a scheme, the Highways Engagement and Commissioning Team would act on behalf of that Councillor.
23. A Member asked who the members of the Road Safety Working Group (RSWG) were, how Councillors could improve collaboration with them, and how to obtain more information about the outcomes of their informal meetings. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that the RSWG was part of the Road Safety Team, which reviewed maps to identify collision hotspots and routes and welcomed public concerns about specific sites. The RSWG collaborated with the police to visit locations and commission speed surveys. When issues were identified, solutions were proposed and implemented. Meeting minutes could be shared and the RSWG welcomed site suggestions from members.
24. A Member asked how the Council determined which roads were appropriate for the 20 mph schemes and how many roads would need speed limit reductions to meet this strategy's target. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that the policy focused on

areas outside schools, residential neighbourhoods, and town centres. It was up to the local community to identify which roads were relevant.

25. A Member asked how the RSWG's views regarding the 20 mph limit were incorporated into the speed management planning process, where the speed management plans were published and whether Councillors could access them. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that RSWG's agenda featured speed management plans. While the data was not published, they could provide a redacted snapshot of the sites requiring the most attention and actions for those locations.
26. A Member asked if any concerns from Councillors about various sites could be communicated to the Strategic Transport Group Manager for review. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that they could do this.
27. A Member asked where the RSWG gets its data. In reply, the Strategic Transport Group Manager said that a national system collected data on injuries resulting from traffic collisions. The RSWG also considered other data sources, such as non-injury collisions and information submitted by individuals.
28. A Member asked whether sufficient funding existed to implement the strategy, what solutions are available if it did not, and if Councillors could access central funds beyond the ITS scheme. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that by the end of the financial year, the majority of the £3 million allocated for safety outside schools went towards 29 initiatives along with supporting traffic calming measures, safe walking routes to school, and speed limit enforcement. Additionally, funding would be directed towards speed management and road safety capital schemes. There was a £500,000 budget within the capital pipeline for capital schemes, totalling £2.5 million over five years.
29. A Member asked how the amount of £2.5 million was determined, whether this was appropriate, and when it would be reviewed. The Director of Highways and Transport said that this amount was a starting point. As with all capital budgets, it would be reviewed in due time. At this early stage, it was unclear whether this amount was appropriate.
30. A Member asked about the basis of the £2.5 million and the number of other routes that posed high or similar risks to the A25 between Dorking and Reigate that required funding, and whether it was possible to request financial support from Central Government. The Cabinet Member said that £2.5 million was designated solely for implementing the 20 mph strategy. This was a suggestion rather than a commitment. The review of the capital budget was ongoing. Furthermore, the £500,000 was designated for 20 mph zones and road safety initiatives. This represented the Council's contribution,

with additional funding available for partners. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that £1.8 million was allocated between Dorking and Reigate from central Government, as this route had ranked among the worst nationally. No additional qualifying roads in Surrey had been identified for further funding.

31. A Member asked if the strategy fully aligned with the Department for Transport (DfT) Circular of March 2024, about variable speed limits. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that Surrey's approach aligned to the DfT circular. Although variable speed limits exist in Surrey, they did not significantly impact traffic, and the maintenance involved did not justify such a scheme.
32. A Member asked a supplementary question regarding the impact of a new government on this policy area. The Strategic Transport Group Manager said that it is too early to tell what will happen with any new government.
33. A Member asked about the principles outlined in the report regarding the implementation of a 20 mph speed limit and supplying additional evidence toward the process. The Strategic Transport Group Manager confirmed the importance of evidence and if the measures did not work further actions could be taken.
34. A Member asked which organisation would make the greatest impact in achieving this strategy. The Strategic Transport Group Manager noted that all organizations had worked together and that it was impossible to determine if one was more important than another.

Decision:

RESOLVED, that the Communities Environment and Highways Select Committee,

1. Notes the main changes were additional emphasis on ensuring local people are consulted on proposals and on the need for 20 mph speed limits to be self-enforcing;
2. Notes the public response to the consultation revealed a lack of confidence that the strategy would improve road safety in Surrey, with resident feedback suggesting road condition and potholes had a greater impact on road safety;
3. Notes there was a mixed response on the proposals for a new approach to 20 mph speed limits which reflected both disagreement to the policy but also a misunderstanding of how the policy would be implemented;
4. Supports the Vision Zero Roadsafe Strategy in broad terms and the consultative approach that is being taken but notes the public concern about whether the impact of this strategy will succeed and

its likelihood of meeting the target to reduce KSIs by 50% by 2035 (758 to 375), and notes that this will be addressed in future communications and engagement plans to better explain the policy to the public;

5. Expresses concern at the consultation results specifically related to speed limits and lack of clear message/result and supports future work to improve consultation methodologies;
6. Recommends more detailed targets are produced to monitor progress and ensure impact including a delivery plan with key deliverables aimed at reducing deaths and KPIs;
7. Recommends appropriate prioritisation of funding and sufficient resources to deliver the strategy;
8. Recommends that supporting communication and outreach addresses the public perception (raised in the public consultation) that fixing potholes and improving roads would have a greater impact on road safety and highlights the Council's highways improvement programme;
9. Recommends revisions to the strategy to address the comments raised by the Committee in discussion to clarify the role of the local Councillor in 20-mph scheme proposals and the process for local engagement (including parish council involvement) and to amend annex 5 accordingly, which should clarify that a pragmatic and flexible approach can be taken to local consultation.

Actions/requests for further information:

None.

Meeting was recessed from 12:06 p.m. to 12:17 p.m.

28/24 SURREY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PERFORMANCE [Item 6]

The Committee received a report of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) on performance and progress following the outcomes of the inspection carried out by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in Spring 2023.

Witnesses:

Kevin Deanus, Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience.
Bernadette Beckett, Chief of Staff.
Elizabeth Lacey, Head of Change.
Sally Wilson, Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

Key points made in the discussion:

1. The Chief of Staff said that the cause of concern issued by the HMICRFS was about SFRS's risk-based inspection programme and identifying its highest-risk premises and meeting its own targets. All SFRS staff are aware of the expectations on them in managing the risk-based inspection programme. The HMICRFS returned in February 2024, carried out a detailed inspection of the SFRS, and discharged the concern.
2. A Member asked about the process of identifying high-risk sites and the communication across the SFRS to spread the knowledge of these high-risk sites. The Head of Change said that the risk-based inspection programme was based on operational crews visiting all sites over a 12-month period, and as of July 2024, 100% of the sites are up to date. The visits were coordinated through the Community Risk Management Database. Local crews were also informed about local risks, which were included in station level and borough level plans.
3. A Member asked how activities for the improvement plan were prioritized, considering the large number of tasks to complete, and which tasks represented the greatest priorities for achieving a significant reduction in risk. The Head of Change said that many activities had been undertaken, all which differ in size and complexity. Some tasks were resolved quickly, while others required a more robust management approach. All areas noted for improvement were treated as priorities, with a focus on Safe and Well visits for the most vulnerable members of the community.
4. A Member asked about changing staff behaviour, how changes were managed, and what adjustments to performance management were necessary. The Head of Change said that all areas of improvement required changes in behaviour. No modifications were needed for the performance management framework; however, efforts were underway to improve team familiarity.
5. A Member asked a supplementary question about how these changes are being accepted by the staff. The Head of Change said that the changes were received positively.
6. The Chairman asked about the new Prevent and Protect software, the technology roll out and achieving productivity gains. The Head of Change said that the software went live on 1 July 2024, with the primary focus on Fire Safety Teams. Although it was too early to know about productivity gains, the system received positive feedback.
7. The Chairman asked about the status of the Safe and Well visits. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer said there had been a significant improvement in the number of visits, although still below the national average. The number of visits should align more closely

with the national average this year. Additional staff were being recruited to assist with scheduling Safe and Well visits.

8. The Chairman asked about staff nearing retirement that want to continue working with this kind of work. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer said that there were frequent opportunities for staff nearing retirement to engage in a staff or volunteering role.
9. A Member asked why Safe and Well visits were below target, and questioned the necessity of conducting business Safe and Well visits when other Safe and Well visits were not meeting the target. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer noted that the target number for Business Safe and Well Visits should be lower than the Safe and Well visits, as SFRS wants to reach the most vulnerable in the community first.
10. A Member noted that she would like reassurance that visits were occurring around Epsom and Ewell and reaching the community. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer said that efforts were made to provide Safe and Well visits in the community, noting challenges in reaching certain areas of the county.
11. The Chairman said that Councillors needed to know how to promote visits and asked that an email be sent outlining how to promote the Safe and Well visits in the local community.
12. A Member asked about the Business Safety Audits, questioning why they received a red rating without a comparable benchmark and what options existed for improvement. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer said that Business Safety Audits aligned with the Risk-Based Inspection Programme. It needed to be investigated why targets were not being met.
13. A Member asked about the status of recruitment, retention, and morale, as well as SFRS sickness absence rates compared to national figures and potential solutions. The Chief of Staff said that the 2022 survey indicated an improvement in workplace culture and morale across the service. Attrition rates remained stable, though there was a slight increase in departures among support staff. The sickness absence rates were higher than national figures, primarily due to long-term illnesses.
14. The Chairman asked about the relationship between SFRS and the Fire Brigade union. The Chief of Staff said that the relationship is very good.
15. A Member asked how recruiting for fixed-term positions was impacting the service. The Chief of Staff said that fixed-term roles only apply to support staff. However, the overall experience indicated no impact to the quality of applicants within the recruitment process to date.

16. A Member said that the data indicated that the percentage of disabled individuals was 8.9% compared to England's average of 5.9%, and asked why it had been designated as red. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer said that the percentage is red because the county profile of 13.8%.

17. A Member asked if there will be any lessons learned in the Grenfell Tower Phase II report that is due in September. The Chief of Staff confirmed that the report will be taken into consideration.

Decision:

The Committee **NOTED** that:

1. The Cause for Concern–Risk-based Inspection Programme had been discharged.
2. The Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's new IT system (Prevent and Protect software) was rolled out to the Fire Inspection Team and will then be rolled out all teams in the Service.
3. Safe and Well visits were currently below the national average, that the Service aims to align these with the national average this year. Enhanced processes are now in place, and the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service presented information on annual Business Safety visits, which require risk-based inspection and are more time intensive.
4. Staff levels have benefitted from improvements in Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's culture and improved morale, with attrition of staff is currently stable.

Actions/requests for further information:

Assistant Chief Fire Officer: Request an email be sent to all 81 county councillors on the best way a councillor can promote Safe and Well visits in the communities.

29/24 YOUR FUND SURREY UPDATE [Item 7]

The Committee received a report of the Head of Community Investment and Engagement providing an update on the Your Fund Surrey (YFS) community grant programme, presented for scrutiny.

Witnesses:

Denise Turner-Stewart, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities.

Jane Last, Head of Community Investment and Engagement.

Samantha Mills, Lead Community Investment Advisor.

Key points made in the discussion:

1. A Member asked about the current total budget, the amount spent so far for projects, what was in the pipeline, and how much remained in the YFS Large Fund. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said that there was £43 million in total, £20.5 million has been approved, and another £8.1 million has been set aside for the YFS Small Fund. This leaves £14 million to be allocated for the pipeline.
2. A Member asked which fund had uncommitted resources. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement replied that there is £14 million unallocated, with a few projects that have come to the stage to be scored. The £35 million within the pipeline includes projects in early stages or that have stalled for various reasons. Applications were still being accepted against the £35 million. The Deputy Leader said that there had been approximately a 30% drop-off rate, as some applicants had changed their minds.
3. A Member asked about issues related to projects and their monitoring. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said that there were currently no issues.
4. A Member asked about the 16 projects allocated to deciles one and two, questioning whether they were sufficient to meet the Council's No One Left Behind policy. They also noted that a more comprehensive overview of projects across all deciles would be beneficial. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said they will provide the breakdown across deciles as requested.
5. A Member raised supporting approval for a local project and the issues for those projects that do not have a local volunteer infrastructure. They also questioned the fund's limit of £50,000 for the YFS Small Fund and the barrier this creates for a project seeking £57,000 in funding. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said the Council has Community Link Officers (CLO) that have been supporting local needs and submissions. The established £50,000 limit for the YFS Small Fund because those projects that exceed this amount become more complicated to manage.
6. The Chairman asked if this situation could be revisited. The Deputy Leader emphasised that the mechanism for that quantity of funding would need more diligence and be part of the Large Fund and staff are always working to help organizations qualify and work hard to find options.
7. A Member asked if CLOs were trained in YFS. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said that CLOs work together with the YFS team to understand expectations from communities. They received training on YFS processes and assist communities with their local connections and engagement.

8. A Member asked about the plan to evaluate the benefits of the projects in relation to the four aims of Surrey County Council, and what the costs would be. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said that applicants are asked what the benefits of their project are. The team also use Social Value measurement tools to assess the social value and benefits for these projects and, under the transformation banner, the team engaged in prevention efforts.
9. The Chairman asked about the possibility of a large project applying for a small amount from the YFS Small Fund. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said that they wanted to avoid complicating the process by involving multiple pots of money.
10. A Member said that at the beginning of the YFS programme, communications and promotions in the YFS programme have currently diminished.
11. A Member asked whether communications can be reinvigorated again. The Deputy Leader agreed that this was valid. As the project approached its four-year mark, the team had gathered data demonstrating how it had met expectations and should highlight these achievements.
12. A Member asked whether there was satisfaction in the uptake of the YFS Small Fund. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said that uptake was slow a year ago in the YFS Small Fund. However, today they are satisfied with the recent increase in engagement in the YFS Small Fund but had only disbursed £2 million, with approximately £8 million to go in this financial year. They encouraged Members to boost awareness for the fund.
13. A Member asked about whether early lessons could be drawn to promote access to small YFS Small Fund applications following the significant rise in them. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said that effective communication of ongoing projects was essential. The CLOs made presentations to various organisations. The lessons learned emphasised the importance of communication and the promotion of successes from other projects.
14. A Member asked about tracking applications through the CLOs and the method used for submitting those applications. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said that YFS did not track how applicants found out about YFS. This could be explored. Where CLOs were involved in supporting a group, they did have this information.
15. A Member asked about the funding allocated to Greener Futures projects and about concluding the scheme. The Head of Community Investment and Engagement said that Greener

Futures' data can be supplied. The Deputy Leader said they are not looking to close the scheme and expressed hope that it would continue into the next council. They remained aware of the application pipeline and planned to contact everyone by autumn.

Decision:

RESOLVED, that the Communities Environment and Highways Select Committee,

1. Notes the total fund currently available is £43 million (Large Community Projects) with £20.5 million already spent, and £1 million is allocated in Small Community Projects and £14 million is left in the pipeline;
2. Notes the difference Your Fund Surrey makes in delivering a wide range of community projects particularly in designated key neighbourhoods and noted the contribution this makes to supporting the most vulnerable in society and ensuring no one is left behind;
3. Notes the successful introduction of the small community projects fund which ensures all communities throughout Surrey benefit from YFS investment and supports the efforts of officers to target members and areas which have yet to take up the fund or have used a lower proportion of funding;
4. Recommends renewed focus on communicating the impacts and benefits of the YFS scheme so that residents understand the difference the Council and Councillors are making investing in their communities;
5. Welcomes the work done to provide county wide measure of social value;
6. Askes the Cabinet Member to review the process and crossover between the large and small project funds and any flexibility for contributing from the small fund to a larger project.

Actions/requests for further information:

Head of Community Investment and Engagement: Provide a breakdown table of all deciles explaining the split of money and number of projects across Your Fund Surrey.

30/24 UTILITIES IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE [Item 8]

The Committee received a verbal report updating the work underway to implement actions and improvements following the Committee sessions with Energy and Water Utility companies.

Witnesses:

Jonathan Hulley, Deputy Cabinet Member for Strategic Highways.
Lucy Monie, Director of Highways and Transport.
Carolyn McKenzie, Director of Environment.

Key points made in the discussion:

1. A Member asked whether there had been discussions with utility companies regarding post-work signage left for months and equipment abandoned on highways. The Director of Highways and Transport said that leftover signage had been covered and would be incorporated into the ongoing discussion process. The team aimed to address the issue with the appropriate utility company. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Strategic Highways said that they were committed to addressing site signage at the Utility Task Force meeting on 26 July 2024.
2. A Member asked whether the volume of emergency works by utility companies is tracked and if that data was used to reduce emergency works. The Director of Highways and Transport said that water utilities reported the highest number of emergency works. This information will be used to discuss the accurate classification of emergency works with utility companies. The Deputy Cabinet Member said that over the past 12 months, all utility companies had planned works at manageable levels. However, there was an increase in immediate work activity, most notably with water companies.
3. A Member asked if there was a benefit to the utility companies to come to Utility Task Force meetings. The Director of Highways and Transport said it was essential to communicate with these companies, emphasising the cost savings associated with improved advance planning. The Director of Environment said that, from a strategic and environmental perspective, there were numerous benefits, particularly for water companies. The Deputy Cabinet Member said the sessions held with water and energy providers noted their commitment to collaborate.
4. A Member asked about establishing specific guidelines for signage, including the use of utilities' logos. The Director of Highways and Transport said that goal would be challenging due to the utility companies' use of contractors. The Council could encourage utilities to improve signage. The Deputy Cabinet Member said that signage was an agenda item at the Utility Task Force meeting on 26 July 2024. Signage could be created to indicate that the work was not being carried out by the Council.

Decision:

The Committee **NOTED** the verbal report.

CHANGE IN THE ORDER OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

It was **AGREED** to change the order in which items were considered at the meeting as set out below. The minutes reflect the order of the meeting.

- Agenda Item 10
- Agenda Item 11
- Agenda Item 9

31/24 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 10]

The Chairman invited the committee to review the progress and updates related to the actions and recommendations tracker and forward work programme.

The Committee **NOTED** the action and recommendation tracker.

32/24 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: 15 OCTOBER 2024 [Item 11]

The Committee **NOTED** its next meeting would be held on 5 September 2019.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The Chair invited the Committee to move into Part II to exclude the press and public and, following a vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED, the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee,

Decides under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item 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.

PART 2 SESSION

33/24 VERGE-CUTTING PROGRAMME UPDATE [Item 9]

The Committee was presented with a verbal update regarding the current performance and status of the verge-cutting programme and provided an opportunity for members to ask questions.

Witnesses:

Steve Bax, Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways.
Richard Bolton, Assistant Director for Highways Operations and Infrastructure.
Lucy Monie, Director of Highways and Transport.

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The report was introduced by officers. The Committee asked a number of questions which were responded to by the officers present before moving to recommendations.

Decision:

See exempt minute – E-15-24.

Meeting ended at: 3.15 pm

Chairman