

County Council Meeting – 10 December 2024

REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on 29 October 2024 and 26 November 2024.

In accordance with the Constitution, Members can ask questions of the appropriate Cabinet Member, seek clarification or make a statement on any of these issues without giving notice.

The minutes containing the individual decisions for the meetings above have been included within the original agenda at Item 13. If any Member wishes to raise a question or make a statement on any of the matters in the minutes, notice must be given to Democratic Services by 12 noon on the last working day before the County Council meeting (Monday 9 December 2024).

For members of the public all non-confidential reports are available on the web site (www.surreycc.gov.uk) or on request from Democratic Services.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

A. COORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME FOR SEPTEMBER 2026 (as set out in the Cabinet agenda from 26 November 2024)

1. That Cabinet RECOMMENDS that the County Council approves the coordinated admissions scheme that will apply to all applicants and schools for 2026.

Reasons for Decisions:

- The coordinated admissions scheme for 2026 is essentially the same as 2025 with dates updated
- There are several changes that have been made to the primary and secondary schemes as points of clarification (see paragraph 9), but these do not alter current practice
- The coordinated admissions scheme will enable the County Council to meet its statutory duties regarding school admissions
- The coordinated admissions scheme is working well
- The Local Authority has a statutory duty to publish its coordinated admissions scheme for 2026 by 1 January 2025
- The proposed scheme meets the statutory requirements of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Coordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 and the School Admissions Code

REPORTS FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

At its meeting on 29 October 2024 Cabinet considered:

B. YOUR FUND SURREY APPLICATION- NEW ROWLEDGE VILLAGE HALL PROJECT, FARNHAM

This report set out the key information on the New Rowledge Village Hall, Farnham

Your Fund Surrey (YFS) application.

It was AGREED:

1. That Cabinet agrees to fund the full amount requested of £800,000, comprised of:
 - capital funding towards the development of the new village hall, to be paid in staged payments, on evidence of spend
 - Including 5% to be held by SCC until final evidence of completion and building control sign-off and income and expenditure provided
2. That Cabinet agrees that funding would be conditional on evidence of the sale of their existing land and all other funding being in place before release of any grant.

Reasons for decisions:

This application has been the subject of a rigorous assessment process by officers, as set out in the body of this report. Officers consider the project to meet the aims and published criteria of the fund and to satisfy the requirements to award funding.

New Rowledge Village Hall Project aim to create a welcoming and supportive community space that will advance the health and wellbeing of the community including physical activities.

C. LONDON ROAD GUILDFORD ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME - INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT OF SECTION 1 FOR CONSIDERATION TO PROCEED

Cabinet was asked to make a decision regarding the London Rd, Guildford Active travel scheme, funded by an Active Travel England grant.

RESOLVED:

Following a discussion on the item, a vote was taken by the Cabinet on the following recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Notes the contents of the independent technical review of section 1 and its conclusions concerning whether the scheme complies with current design guidance.
2. Proceeds with the construction of Section 1 –based on the strength of support from the local community, alongside the conclusions of the independent technical review.

There were THREE votes FOR and SIX votes AGAINST. The decision was therefore **not** carried.

At its meeting on 26 November 2024 Cabinet considered:

D. REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES, TASK GROUPS AND OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

The Cabinet decision of 29 October 2024 regarding the London Road Guildford Active Travel Scheme had been called in by the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee. The Cabinet were asked to re-consider their decision.

RESOLVED:

1. In respect of the Call in report on the London Road Guildford Active Travel Scheme. The Cabinet confirmed that the decision taken on 29 October 2024 still stands **(See Paragraph C above)**.

Reasons for Decisions

The Cabinet agreed that no new evidence had been provided by the Select Committee and all the key issues raised by the Select Committee had already been considered by the Cabinet.

E. BAGSHOT COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTRE

Cabinet was asked to make a decision around the closure of Bagshot Community Recycling Centre.

It was AGREED:

1. That Cabinet agree to the closure of the Community Recycling Centre (CRC) at Swift Lane, Bagshot and as a consequence agree to the opening of the CRC at Wilton Road, Camberley for an extra day a week (Tuesday).
2. That Cabinet allow those residents of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead who currently use the Bagshot CRC to use Lyne CRC, Chertsey as an alternative.

Reasons for Decisions:

The Bagshot CRC site is small, unmodernised and not fit for purpose. It is not an 'unsafe' site (SUEZ have obligations to keep the site safe and lawful) but there are hazards – for example, users of the site park their cars in the centre of the plot, and then walk across the path of moving vehicles to access the various waste containers.

The site has to close for container exchange, leading to inconvenience and a build-up of queues. There is no means of compacting waste in the containers which means that they will be taken off the site with spare capacity – creating more of a carbon impact per tonne in terms of haulage and increased vehicle movements. These issues do not occur at modernised sites.

There is an ongoing pattern of vandalism, fly tipping and unlawful entry at the Bagshot CRC site which happens out of hours (i.e. when the CRC is closed and overnight). Staff have been threatened by (some) users of the site who are attempting to bring non-acceptable (potentially unlawful) material onto the site. Rather than confront the user, for their own safety, the staff have had to accept the waste as presented.

Fly tipping has occurred both within the site and outside of the entrance. The existing perimeter fencing does not present a sufficient barrier to these episodes, which often involve the use of mechanical equipment. Material fly tipped has in the past included hazardous materials such as asbestos. Prevention measures would be difficult and costly to implement and could include reinforced walls with climb prevention, enhanced 24 hr security guard presence and additional lighting.

SUEZ have recorded 801 instances of fly tipping across all Surrey CRC sites between January 2019 and August 2024. Of these, 531 (66%) were at Bagshot CRC. Of the other 14 sites, Lyne Lane CRC, near Chertsey, experienced 89 fly tipping incidents (11%) in the period. Fly tipping incidents at all of the other 13 sites combined make up the remaining 23%.

SCC's waste contractor, SUEZ, retain incident logs which have recorded 48 nuisance incidents (fly-tipping, break ins, vandalism, anti-social behaviour) at Bagshot CRC between 2nd January and 25th August 2024. No other SCC CRC suffers such high levels of nuisance-based disruption. This disruption impacts on site staff and users negatively, the site often having to close to allow remedial action. A summary of the SUEZ incident logs is included at Annex C.

Despite the high levels of disruption, a review of complaints received from users of the site by SUEZ since January 2023 shows that 23 complaints have been recorded across the CRC estate, none of which relate to Bagshot CRC. SUEZ believe that this reflects the empathy felt by users for the on-site staff, recognising the difficulties the site presents.

The access road is narrow and itself suffers from fly tipping.

Swift Lane is not accessible on foot, so its closure will not impact pedestrian visitors.

The nearest alternative site is Camberley CRC which is approximately 6 miles away from the Bagshot CRC and has a travel time between the two sites (by car) of approximately 15 minutes. Alternative CRC sites are located within 10 miles

Analysis undertaken by SCC's Transport Modelling specialists shows that the Swift Lane CRC in Bagshot is the closest CRC to 12,428 households. If the Bagshot CRC was to close:

- 7,894 (63.5%) would see no increase in drive time when accessing the nearest alternative CRC (Lyne, Woking or Camberley) if the Bagshot site was to close; and
- 4,544 (36.5%) would have a maximum drive time of 20 minutes (covering 7.8 miles) to their nearest alternative CRC site.

A map marked up with postcode 'clusters' in the Bagshot CRC catchment area showing the closest alternative sites is included at Annex D

The site is owned by Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC) who lease it to SCC. The site will be returned to SHBC if it closed.

F. 2025/26 DRAFT BUDGET AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY TO 2029/30

Cabinet was asked to consider the 2025/2026 Draft Budget and Medium-term financial strategy to 2029/30 which set out progress towards delivering a balanced budget.

It was AGREED:

1. That Cabinet notes the 2025/26 Draft Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2029/30, including progress to date in setting out spending pressures and efficiencies, as set out in Annex A.
2. That Cabinet notes the provisional budget gap of £17.4m for 2025/26 and the next steps required to close the gap.
3. That Cabinet notes the proposed Draft Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2029/30 of £1.4bn set out in Section 6 of the report and Annex B
4. That Cabinet notes the summary of Resident Engagement and next steps set out in Section 9 of the report.

Reasons for Decisions:

In January 2025, Cabinet will be asked to recommend a Final Budget for 2025/26 to full Council for approval in February. The draft budget sets out proposals to direct available resources to support the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities, balanced against a challenging financial environment, giving Cabinet the opportunity to comment on the proposals and next steps.

G. EQUITY IN EDUCATION – NO LEARNER LEFT BEHIND – SURREY'S LIFETIME OF LEARNING STRATEGY

Cabinet was asked to approve the Surrey Lifetime of Learning Strategy and its publication.

It was AGREED:

1. That Cabinet approves the Surrey Lifetime of Learning Strategy and its publication.
2. That Cabinet endorses the ambition of the Surrey Education Partnership that no learner is left behind, and agrees the partnership ambition, principles and priorities for children, young people and adults as outlined in the strategy for 2024-30.
3. That Cabinet agrees to contribute as a key partner to the ambition, principles and priorities for children, young people and adults as outlined in the strategy for 2024-30.

Reasons for Decisions:

Whilst most of the children, young people and adults in Surrey achieve, thrive, belong and live well, this is not the case for everyone.

In Surrey, children from less-well off homes start school already educationally behind their peers, and this gap persists throughout school and into further and higher

education. In many instances outcomes are weaker than similarly disadvantaged learners in other parts of the country.

In some areas of Surrey, adults are less able to secure economic well-being because of skills and qualification gaps.

We are aware that attendance is a significant factor in achieving the best outcomes, and that in Surrey exclusion from school and poor attendance is too high.

Studies have also shown direct links between education and factors such as health and life expectancy rates, with academic achievement playing a potentially significant role in reducing health inequalities by shaping life opportunities.

This strategy will ensure that we take the necessary actions across the partnership, to close the gaps in terms of educational outcomes, exclusions and attendance. It will also ensure that Surrey adults can access learning opportunities, in high quality provision, that develop new skills or secure new qualifications to help them succeed at any time they need to.

H. RIGHT HOMES, RIGHT SUPPORT: OLDER PEOPLE'S RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING CARE DELIVERY STRATEGY

The report sought Cabinet approval for the Residential and Nursing Care Delivery Strategy to improve the residential and nursing care offer for older residents in Surrey within the wider Right Homes, Right Support Strategy (RHRS). Its inclusion ensures that Surrey County Council has a comprehensive strategy across Supported Independent Living for working age adults, affordable Extra Care Housing, and Residential and Nursing Care for older people.

It was AGREED:

1. That Cabinet approves the Right Homes, Right Support: Older People's Residential and Nursing Delivery Strategy.
2. That Cabinet approves £3.6m of capital funding from the Council's capital pipeline for the Older People's Residential and Nursing Delivery Strategy to:
 - a. Undertake the necessary Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Stage 0 Strategic Definition Studies, RIBA Stage 1 Feasibility Studies, and market engagement across the whole Council owned care home portfolio.
 - b. Enable a strategic business case to be developed across the whole care home portfolio.
3. That Cabinet notes the direction of travel for care homes on Council owned land (set out in recommendation 2) and the possible need for public consultation on the proposed future use of sites.

Reasons for Decisions:

Approval of the Strategy set out within this report will:

- a) Enable independence and improved outcomes for Surrey's older residents for as long as possible through delivering specialist care home accommodation, which will play a key role in the prevention of early admissions into acute hospitals and into long term care home placements that may not be necessary.
- b) Ensure that there is sufficient care home provision available to meet the increasing older peoples' population in Surrey and that can support people with complex mental health needs and complex physical frailty.
- c) Enable us to address the current, and future, deficit in available capacity from the wider care market. Despite extensive steps taken to address prices paid, developing new contracting arrangements, and investing in care home capabilities across the Surrey care market, we need new opportunities and improved capacity to enable the best outcomes for residents.
- d) Enhance our offer of support to providers to improve quality and outcomes for all residents receiving care and enable them to deliver services to meet increased demand and complex needs.
- e) Long standing strategic contracts commissioned by the Council will be managed through robust expiry planning to ensure there is minimal disruption to residents, carers, families and operational teams.
- f) Ensure that we develop (subject to detailed market engagement, feasibility studies and outcomes of possible public consultation) the most commercially viable and financially sustainable strategic business case for the Council to achieve its Residential and Nursing Care Strategy for Surrey's older residents.
- g) Ensure effective use of the Council's assets to deliver improved outcomes for our residents, that is financially sustainable and means 'no one is left behind'.

I. QUARTERLY REPORT ON DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER SPECIAL URGENCY ARRANGEMENTS: 1 October 2024 - 2 December 2024

The Cabinet is required under the Constitution to report to Council on a quarterly basis the details of decisions taken by the Cabinet and Cabinet Members under the special urgency arrangements set out in Standing Order 57 of the Constitution. This occurs where a decision is required on a matter that is not contained within the Leader's Forward Plan (Notice of Decisions), nor available 5 clear days before the meeting. Where a decision on such matters could not reasonably be delayed, the agreement of the Chairman of the appropriate Select Committee, or in his/her absence the Chairman of the Council, must be sought to enable the decision to be made.

The Cabinet RECOMMENDS that the County Council notes that there have been no urgent decisions since the last Cabinet report to Council.

**Tim Oliver OBE, Leader of the Council
2 December 2024**

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