

## CABINET – 4 FEBRUARY 2014

## PROCEDURAL MATTERS

**Members' Questions****Question (1) from Mrs Hazel Watson (Dorking Hills) to ask:**

In December 2013 and January 2014 parts of Surrey, including parts of my own Division, suffered severe flooding involving properties being flooded, in some cases people being rescued by the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service by boat, and some roads including major A roads being impassable as a result of flooding.

What action is the County Council taking to work with the Environment Agency to reduce the risk of flooding in the future by improving flood defences in flood affected parts of Surrey? What action is being taken to improve the advance warning to residents so that they can take appropriate action to safeguard themselves, their properties and belongings?

Can the County Council provide progress reports to County Councillors, including myself, whose Divisions have suffered flooding so that we can reassure local residents that action is being taken to tackle flooding in Surrey?

**Reply:**

The Flood and Water Management Act, introduced in 2010, made the County a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) responsible for managing the flood risk associated with surface water runoff, ordinary water courses and groundwater. These responsibilities are in addition to the duties also imposed on the council as Highway Authority.

The LLFA has a duty under the Act to:

1. Produce a local flood risk management strategy
2. Create an asset register
3. Carry out an investigation where significant flooding occurs
4. Create a Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (not yet enacted)

In these circumstances Surrey has and will continue to respond to flooding issues throughout the county providing practical support and assistance with partner organisations where possible. The council is also ensuring that flood information is obtained, maintained, shared and communicated widely with other flood risk management authorities, and internal and external stakeholders, for future reference and action where appropriate.

Following the flood events over Christmas and in the interim the council has been evaluating the data to confirm whether official 'investigations' are required at approximately 20 sites across the county where significant flooding occurred. Any individual investigation of this nature will require the involvement of all the relevant flood risk management authorities concerned in order to provide appropriate conclusions.

Planning for the response to flooding incidents is undertaken through the Surrey Local Resilience Forum, chaired by the Surrey Chief Fire Officer. Flooding is assessed as one of the three very high risks for the County and plans to support residents affected by flooding are in place and reviewed on a regular basis. Based on risk assessments provided by the Environment Agency work is currently underway to plan for the response to a 1%-5%

flooding event in the Lower Thames area that could impact on approximately 15000 properties in Surrey. Planning for the response to other flood risk in the County continues.

The council's operational response to the severe weather events and emergency situation over Christmas and the New Year included officers from a variety of services, together with staff from our service provider partners who successfully delivered on the ground. Many of the individuals concerned worked throughout the holiday period and over subsequent weekends to ensure services to Surrey residents were generally maintained. I would like to acknowledge the work done by all parties and thank the individuals and services concerned.

**Mr John Furey**  
**Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment**  
**4 February 2014**

**Question (2) from Mr Tim Hall (Leatherhead and Fetcham East) to ask:**

At the Cabinet on 17th December 2013, the Cabinet Member for Communities promised to produce the Economic Impact Figures for Surrey and by District of the Ride London Surrey 2013 Race. Could she please supply them. Also how those figures were calculated?

**Reply:**

Independent research carried out during the event demonstrated that it generated £13m in direct economic benefit. The research used the "eventIMPACT" methodology, the UK government-endorsed standard approach to calculating the impact of events, which takes into account expenditure by organisers and visitors. The £13m direct economic benefit is made up of the proportion of the expenditure by participants, spectators and organisers during, and in the lead up to the Prudential RideLondon FreeCycle, Prudential RideLondon Grand Prix and Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100 and Classic that would not have been spent without the event.

In addition, independent research was carried out to assess the value of the national and international TV broadcast. This demonstrated that London and Surrey benefited from £21m worth of media coverage from Prudential RideLondon-Surrey Classic which would not have occurred without the event.

Unfortunately we are not able to break down this data in order to provide Surrey specific figures, however, we have asked for this to be made available for this year's event. Event organisers are also working closely with businesses along the race route to help them prepare for this year's event, to ensure that local communities in Surrey reap the maximum economic benefit going forward.

**Mrs Helyn Clack**  
**Cabinet Member for Community Services**  
**4 February 2014**

**Question (3) from Mr Tim Hall (Leatherhead and Fetcham East) to ask:**

Mole Valley District Council has agreed to "waive" their proportion of the Council Tax on those properties that were flooded in the recent storms, while the properties are empty.

Will the County Council do the same?

**Reply:**

Surrey County Council has been working in partnership with district and borough councils to support residents throughout the recent flooding, which is still on-going in many parts of the county. On 19 February 2014 I will be meeting with all district and borough leaders to assess our response, and to discuss how we will support residents who have been affected by flooding going forward. This matter should be properly considered there.

**Mr David Hodge**  
**Leader of the Council**  
**4 February 2014**

**Question (4) from Mr Tim Hall (Leatherhead and Fetcham East) to ask:**

Could the Cabinet Member for Communities tell us how much Prudential PLC is sponsoring the Prudential Ride London Surrey in both 2013 and 2014?

**Reply:**

Surrey County Council does not have access to this information as it is commercial and confidential to the event organisers.

**Mrs Helyn Clack**  
**Cabinet Member for Community Services**  
**4 February 2014**

**Question (5) from Mr Tim Hall (Leatherhead and Fetcham East) to ask:**

Could the Cabinet Member for Highways and the Environment give the latest updated figures for storm damage to Bridges and Other Structures from the recent Storms and Floods?

**Reply:**

An update on the flooding situation was provided at the meeting.

**Mr John Furey**  
**Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment**  
**4 February 2014**

**Question (6) from Mr Tim Hall (Leatherhead and Fetcham East) to ask:**

At both the Cabinet on 17th December, and the Meeting with Councillors on 20th November. The Cabinet Member for Communities stated erroneously that in the Cabinet in December 2011, had agreed the 2013 Ride London Surrey Race. Would she re-publish the Minute and admit that she was as was pointed out at both meetings to her wrong.

**Reply:**

Mr Hall will be aware that the Leader and I have already answered numerous questions regarding the process for agreeing the Ride London Surrey event. In December 2013 this Cabinet agreed to host the event for the next four years, as well as approving the Surrey Cycling Strategy, after a thorough public consultation. The Cabinet has learnt lessons from the 2013 event and we are now working with event organisers and local communities along the race route to deliver an improved event for 2014.

**Mrs Helyn Clack**  
**Cabinet Member for Community Services**  
**4 February 2014**

**Question (7) from Mr Tim Hall (Leatherhead and Fetcham East) to ask:**

Sir Paul Beresford MP has stated publicly that he is working with the Leader of the County Council on the issues of Flooding. Could I ask how many meetings Sir Paul has had with the Leader on this subject if any?

**Reply:**

The flooding experienced in Surrey since late December has been some of the worst in recent memory. In order to support residents effectively through this time it has been vital that the Council works closely with emergency services, district and boroughs and the NHS, as well as communicating regularly with local stakeholders such as MPs. As we now begin to assess our response we will continue to work with MPs, including as Sir Paul with whom I have been in contact with, to ensure that lessons are taken forward for the future.

Perhaps Mr Hall is unaware that Sir Paul has recently raised the specific issues of Mole Valley flooding on the floor of the House of Commons when addressing the DEFRA Minister. This direct action by Sir Paul demonstrates that he is actively working with SCC, Mole Valley District Council and other agencies for the benefit of the residents in his constituency.

**Mr David Hodge**  
**Leader of the Council**  
**4 February 2014**

**Question (8) from Mr Tim Hall (Leatherhead and Fetcham East) to ask:**

Could the Cabinet Member for Communities explain why the Route of the Ride London Surrey 2013 was not consulted on at all? And why the Route for 2014 was published before Consultations even started in certain communities such as Leatherhead?

**Reply:**

As with my response to Mr Hall's previous question, the Leader and I have already answered numerous questions regarding the process for agreeing the Ride London Surrey 2013 event. My focus is now working with event organisers and local communities along the race route to deliver an improved event for 2014.

**Mrs Helyn Clack**  
**Cabinet Member for Community Services**  
**4 February 2014**

**Question (9) from Mrs Hazel Watson (Dorking Hills) to ask:**

Mole Valley District Council has established a hardship fund for flood victims whose insurance does not cover double council tax. Will the County Council establish a similar hardship fund to refund the County Council's part of the Council Tax for flood victims who are forced to vacate their flooded homes and to live elsewhere to avoid them having to pay Council Tax on two properties?

**Reply:**

Surrey County Council has been working in partnership with district and borough councils to support residents throughout the recent flooding, which is still on-going in many parts of the county. On 19 February 2014 I will be meeting with all district and borough leaders to assess our response, and to discuss how we will support residents who have been affected by flooding going forward. This matter should be properly considered there.

**Mr David Hodge  
Leader of the Council  
4 February 2014**