

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2014****QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED UNDER THE PROVISIONS
OF STANDING ORDER 10.1****CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES****(1) MR ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK:**

With respect to the proposed reorganisation of fire cover in Spelthorne, will the Council disclose:

- The cost of the land and the estimated cost of the building the new fire station?
- How many firefighters jobs will be lost?
- What the increased level of risks are for local people in terms of the safety of property and lives?
- How the Council feels it is maintaining its responsibility to protect its citizens?

Reply:

The acquisition of the land from Spelthorne Borough Council is not yet completed and therefore the information requested is confidential because this is a commercial property transaction. The estimated cost of the new fire station will be dependent upon the building design, specification, facilities, layouts and associated due diligence, which are yet to be completed. The decision arising from the Cabinet paper of the 4 February 2014: Changes to fire deployment in the Borough of Spelthorne, included: "That the amended proposal Option 5 and the commissioning of a new fire station in an appropriate location be agreed subject to a further business case setting out the delivery costs of a new station returning to Cabinet in due course". The business case will be partly predicated upon the financial information requested, as and when it becomes available, having been through the various process designed to ensure good value for money is secured.

We do not anticipate any firefighter jobs will be lost directly as a result of the changes in Spelthorne, especially as there will be sufficient leavers over the period before the new station is due to open. Firefighters at Sunbury and Staines will be asked if they wish to work at the new station or transfer to another Surrey station.

Community risk is constantly monitored and managed by the Fire and Rescue Service Surrey-wide - adjustments to response tactics are made dynamically and in accordance with circumstances. Prevention and protection activity are likely to have a greater impact on life safety than the attendance time of a second fire engine and as a result we will continue to invest in these areas.

However, it is anticipated that two fire engines will operate from the new Spelthorne fire station, one crewed by full time professional firefighters, one crewed by on-call professional firefighters. Approximately two thirds of all incidents attended by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service are resolved with only one fire engine in attendance. The Service proactively manages its operational risks on a constant basis implementing contingency plans and other mitigations where necessary.

Following the proposed changes in Spelthorne, attendance times to emergency incidents are predicted to remain within the Surrey emergency response standard that applies throughout the County. We will continue to work with the community to continue to reduce the numbers of and impacts of incidents. Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority's Statement of Assurance 2013-2014 detailing comprehensively how it meets the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and other legislative obligations across locally, regionally and nationally, is found at this link: [SFRA Statement of Assurance 2013-2014](#).

CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

(2) MR WILL FORSTER (WOKING SOUTH) TO ASK:

Please can the Cabinet Member confirm how much money the Council spends on buying newspapers for Surrey's libraries?

Reply:

Spend on newspaper

The total spend on newspaper provision in libraries for the financial year April 2013 to March 2014 was £54,437.85.

The newspaper provision at each library is by library banding and is as follows:

BAND A LIBRARIES (Camberley, Epsom, Guildford, Redhill, Woking, Dorking, Farnham, Godalming, Staines, Walton):

- 3 Broadsheets
- 1 Tabloid
- 1 Financial Times
- Up to 2 local papers

BAND B1 LIBRARIES (Ashford, Banstead, Dittons, Ewell, Horley, Oxted, Weybridge):

- 2 Broadsheets
- 1 Tabloid
- Up to 2 local papers

BAND B2, C1, C2, C3 LIBRARIES (Addlestone, Cranleigh, Caterham Valley, Egham, Esher, Haslemere, Leatherhead, Molesey, Ash, Ashted, Bookham, Cobham, Frimley Green, Hersham, Horsley, Knaphill, Reigate, Sunbury, Chertsey, Shepperton, West Byfleet, Byfleet, Caterham Hill, Merstham, Lightwater, Lingfield, Stanwell):

- 1 Broadsheet
- 1 Tabloid
- Up to 2 local papers

Surrey libraries invest a significant amount of its resources budget (c 200K) in online resources which includes free access to online newspapers. These are accessible from a library member's home computer or via a public access computer in all of Surrey's libraries.

The online newspaper resources currently available are: -

Custom Newspapers

- Access to 2,500 titles (including The Daily Telegraph, The Economist, Financial Times, The Guardian, Independent, Daily Mail, The Mirror, The Times and The Observer) in the library and from home.

Newsstand

- Search national and regional newspapers online for news events and up-to-date information.

PressDisplay

- Today's papers including the Independent, Guardian, Telegraph, Daily Mail, Daily Express. Also regional papers and newspapers from around the world.

Zinio

- View digital copies of a wide range of magazines in UK and worldwide.

Summary

We will continue to review and develop the range of newspaper resources we provide in both electronic and physical format to Surrey libraries.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

(3) MR IAN BEARDSMORE (SUNBURY COMMON AND ASHFORD COMMON (TO ASK):

Would the Leader agree that whilst the Surrey Planning Group fulfils a useful role, Surrey County Council has an absolute right to make any decision on

behalf of Surrey residents it considers correct, even when this runs counter to a decision made by the Surrey Planning Group?

Reply:

I believe that Mr Beardsmore is referring to the Surrey Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Partnership, the setting up of which is due to be discussed under item 13 of the next Cabinet meeting on 21 October 2014.

The Localism Act (2011) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) require public bodies to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. At a Local Plan Examination, local planning authorities are expected to demonstrate evidence that they have complied with this legal 'Duty to Cooperate'.

Surrey Leaders have agreed to meet as the Surrey Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Board to provide a vehicle for cooperation and joint working to help districts and boroughs in Surrey meet the challenging requirements of the duty. They have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding on how the local authorities in Surrey will work together to prepare a Local Strategic Statement setting out common priorities on strategic planning matters and actions. The partnership will also facilitate a co-ordinated approach to engaging with neighbouring authorities, particularly London and its potential growth impacts on Surrey.

Paragraph 11 of that report confirms that the Memorandum of Understanding to be signed by Surrey Leaders 'does not seek to restrict or fetter the discretion of any of the authorities in the exercise of its statutory functions and powers or in its response to consultation or determining planning applications'. The Annexes to the report include copies of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Terms of Reference and the latter also makes it clear that the Signatories cannot exercise any of the functions of a planning authority or competent authorities, including setting formal planning policy or exerting control over planning decisions.

I am sure that when Mr Beardsmore reads the Cabinet Paper he will agree that this is the right course of action for Surrey residents.

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND FLOODING RECOVERY

(4) MRS HAZEL WATSON (DORKING HILLS) TO ASK:

A number of roads in my Division have been resurfaced to an unsatisfactory standard, leaving an uneven road surface and areas where the surface underneath is visible. When I have raised these issues with Highways I have not been reassured that action will be taken but have been informed that the roads will be monitored by the County Council at the end of the 2 year

guarantee period. In view of this, when Surrey's roads are resurfaced, what quality control is carried out by the County Council of the resurfacing work and why is no action taken when the work is unsatisfactory for example by getting the contractors to resurface the road at no cost to the County Council?

Reply:

All highway maintenance works are monitored and inspected by Surrey Highway engineers to ensure that the works are undertaken to the design specification. This includes pre, during and post testing of materials by the county's laboratory. Works are then only paid when the SCC engineer approves a Completion Certificate, confirming the road meets SCC strict requirements.

This provides:

- (1) Surface treatment – two year warranty at Contractors' cost
- (2) Project horizon reconstructions – 10 year warranty

Surface Treatment is a lower cost scheme and is consequently not classed as major maintenance, it will not resolve all underlying structural issues, but will provide a new thin surface to remove any potholes or major effects and can extend a road life by 5-7 years, however, it is not intended to provide the same level of standard as a reconstruction scheme.

There has been four roads out of nearly 30 schemes in your division which we aware have caused some local concern. All four roads were delivered as part of Surface Treatment programme and approved at the time via Completion Certificate with no quality issues identified. However, since completion of the works in 2012, residents have raised a number of concerns and we have therefore completed further inspections and monitoring. Following this quality review we can now confirm:

- Bailey Rd & Ashley Rd – there are no contractor quality issues with these schemes. The primary issue is the level of car users using the roads for turning and/or parking, this is creating scuffing and general wear and tear on specific small sections of the road. The only method to completely remove these minor issues would be to reconstruct the road, which was outside the scope of the original surface treatment solution, however, the overall solution has delivered improvement to over 98% of the road.
- Wathen Rd & Hard Rd - highway monitoring over the last 12 months has identified a number of contractor quality issues, and remedial work has been agreed with contractor at no cost to the county council. Officers will contact the councillor to provide further details on specific remedial areas and expected time for works to be completed.

In the previous 24 months Surrey Highways have delivered over 300Kms of resurfacing, and despite this significant programme only approximately 5% has been identified as having quality issues, which is fully in line with

industry standards and best practice. While any quality failures have been addressed at no cost to the council. This demonstrates that our quality controls are working, however, despite success to date highways will continue to strive for a 0% quality failure.

CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

(5) MRS FIONA WHITE (GUILDFORD WEST) TO ASK:

What monitoring does the County Council undertake to ensure that agency staff providing care services to Surrey residents are providing the full amount of time that they are contracted to provide to individuals in need of care?

Reply:

The provision of domiciliary care is commissioned and delivered through the recently awarded Home Based Care contract which went live on 1 October 2014.

Providers now have a contractual requirement to have electronic monitoring in place and will submit electronic monitoring and invoicing data as required in the terms and conditions and in the correct format as specified in the contract, which also allow Surrey County Council to audit and verify the performance data.

For providers where electronic monitoring is not currently in effect, the expectation is that they will be working towards having electronic monitoring systems in place to provide that added assurance.

A list of all providers will be made available on Surrey information point web site, which will clearly indicate all providers using these systems.

The performance monitoring framework collects the following information from Providers:

- Total number of visits actually made (scheduled and unscheduled) and the number of visits that were cut short – this will be recorded using pre-allocated length of visit bandings.
- Number of calls delivered later than the planned start
- Number of calls that were not delivered (missed/ cancelled)
- Number of calls which were rescheduled

A customer satisfaction survey will be conducted regularly as part of the contract monitoring process.

Providers are required to complete a self assessment which mirrors the customer satisfaction survey and will enable direct comparisons between

responses from customers and providers to be made at contract review meetings.

In addition, the quality assurance managers regularly work with home based care providers checking daily care records for entries of times logged in and out of service user's homes, should this not reflect the care plan, then the agency are asked to address this.

Quality assurance managers also visit service users homes to test the service provided.

Monitoring information will now be collated and reviewed regularly at monthly Home Based Care Contract Monitoring meetings

CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

(6) MR DAVID GOODWIN (GUILDFORD SOUTH WEST) TO ASK:

A few years ago the County Council transferred the management of its Youth Centres to a number of voluntary organisations that were required to provide matched funding to increase the funding, activities and opening hours of the youth centres. Following the decision by the Cabinet on 23 September 2014, to bring the management of the County Council's Youth Centres in-house to be run by the County Council, what assurances can be given that the funding, activities and opening hours will not reduce following this decision?

Reply:

In April 2012 Surrey County Council transferred the management of Centre Based Youth Work to Managing Agents from the voluntary, community and faith sector. The management of the youth centres, which are also shared by the Youth Support Service, was retained by the Council. Centre Based Youth Work has operated as part of a commissioning model which has achieved the lowest rates of young people who enter the criminal justice system or who are not in education, employment or training in England.

On 23 September 2014, Cabinet agreed a new commissioning model for 2015 to 2020. This adapted model builds on achievements to date and responds to changes in the needs of young people. The limitations of the current model for Centre Based Youth Work are:

- Additional costs incurred by the duplication of management capacity between Managing Agents and Surrey County Council to manage the seconded staff;
- Confusion in relation to roles and responsibilities with lack of clear leadership;
- Large inconsistencies in performance and quality including Woking Youth Centre where the contract was terminated by mutual agreement in September 2013.

The strengths of the new model include:

- Streamlined management bringing a back office saving to Surrey County Council;
- Performance more closely managed through one single service;
- Retention of the National Youth Agency Quality Mark to maintain and improve quality;
- Increased delegation to Local Area Committees.

Funding for front line youth work will be maintained, subject to budget settlement and Council agreement to the current Medium Term Financial Plan. External income from grants will also be generated. As an indication of what is possible under direct management, Woking Youth Centre generated £21,000 of matched funding in the first seven months from September 2013. This makes Woking the second highest performing youth centre for matched funding for that period.

'Matched provision' from the community is still expected as a key feature of this model. Again, using Woking Youth Centre as an example, 486 hours of community matched provision were delivered in the first seven months of direct management. This is 265% more than the next highest performing youth centre for hours of matched provision for that period.

Opening hours will vary locally in response to local needs and priorities set by Youth Task Groups and Local Area Committees. The model opens up opportunities to increase opening hours in areas of highest need, and develop voluntary, community and faith sector provision in areas where communities are stronger. Whilst the model allows local flexibility, it is also designed to maintain and potentially increase the total number of youth work hours delivered across Surrey through this 'hub and spoke' approach.

Overall the new model will improve flexibility to respond to local needs and priorities, increase local decision making, drive improvements in performance and deliver greater value for money.

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND FLOODING RECOVERY

(7) MR STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK:

How many of the 1105 wetspots listed on the Surrey County Council website does the County Council plan to resolve by implementing flood prevention schemes in the current financial year to the end of March 2015?

Reply:

We expect to reduce the risk of flooding across 68 wetspots this financial year by implementing flood prevention schemes. The schemes vary in complexity and further works may be required in subsequent years before the full benefits are realised. In addition to these schemes, we are also progressing minor drainage schemes to address more localised issues across Surrey and expect to complete approximately 300 by the end of the financial year.

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

(8) MR DANIEL JENKINS (STAINES SOUTH AND ASHFORD WEST) TO ASK:

The status for the SITA design for the Charlton Lane Eco Park as a gasifier is fundamental to Surrey County Council's acceptance SITA's proposal and was essential to the planning permission granted on 24 September 2014.

Surrey County Council has stated that the plant will only be accepted as a gasifier if it meets the quality required to qualify for ROC's (Renewable Obligation Certificates) awarded by Ofgem. ROC's pre accreditation has not yet been awarded by Ofgem.

Will this Council allow works to commence at the Charlton Lane site before SITA's design receives pre accreditation by Ofgem as a gasifier?

If so, is it responsible for this Council to allow a plant to proceed which has failed to demonstrate it qualifies to meet the council's own fundamental criteria for approval, or the projects underpinning justification for its 'Eco Park' branding, when so many concerns have been raised regarding the negative impact upon local residents in terms of; health, environment, finance and quality of life?

Reply:

Gasification can be proven by the production of a Synthesis gas (Syngas) which is generated by heating waste with reduced levels of oxygen.

The Outotec technology plant, proposed for the Eco Park is designed to operate as a gasification plant with the production of Syngas from the waste within the fluidised sand bed in the lower part of the gasification chamber. This Syngas can be sampled and measured before being combusted in the upper part of the chamber.

Operators can apply for Ofgem accreditation for payment of Renewables Obligation Certificates if the Syngas from a gasification plant meets a certain calorific value. However, the determining factor on whether or not a plant is a gasification plant is its ability to produce a Syngas and not whether the plant is accredited by Ofgem.

SITA have applied for Ofgem pre-accreditation but accreditation proper cannot take place until the plant is operating. The EPC contractor has provided a guarantee that the plant will produce a Syngas which is of sufficient quality to meet the criteria for Ofgem accreditation for Renewables Obligations Certificates.

The revenue from Renewables Obligations Certificates would benefit the Council and reduce the Council's costs but it is not so essential that the project could not proceed without it.

Local concerns about environmental, health and amenity impacts were taken into account and carefully assessed by the County Planning Authority through the planning application process and the value for money aspects of the project have been fully demonstrated following extensive analysis by the council's financial advisors.

I therefore see no benefit in delaying this project until the Ofgem pre-accreditation process has been completed.

CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

(9) MR DAVID IVISON (HEATHERSIDE AND PARKSIDE) TO ASK:

May I ask what steps are being taken in our Primary and Secondary Schools to promote knowledge and awareness of the origins and conduct of World War 1 in this centenary year? Is the Cabinet Member aware of the resources and support available from the Ministry of Defence to help towards this initiative?

Reply:

Commemoration of the Great War centenary has been discussed on several occasions this year and last in the termly primary and secondary history network meetings held for leaders of the subject and organised by the Babcock 4S Consultant for Humanities. Staff from Surrey Heritage have been invited to attend these meetings to share with teachers how they may support their efforts in the classroom and to talk to them about the Surrey Heritage WWI project, 'A County Remembers: Surrey in the Great War' for which they hope to be awarded Heritage Lottery Funding early in 2015 for a commemoration project which will run until 2018. Surrey Heritage staff have also shared their 'World War One in Surrey Archive resource pack' with Surrey schools at these meetings and a taster pack has been sent to all Surrey schools.

Some Surrey teachers attended the 'Schools & the Great War Centenary: How Schools Should Best Prepare' conference at Wellington College.

History leaders have been sent links to resources designed to help them teach about World War 1, such as those from the British Library, the Imperial War Museum, the British Legion, Commonwealth War Graves Commission,

Europeana 1914-1918 and Exploring Surrey's Past. They are aware of many resources and sources of support available to them.

Teachers in Surrey schools see the commemorations around WW1 Centenary as an unmissable opportunity to engage students in historical studies and help them to understand why knowing about the past is so important in understanding the present and how society has evolved at a local as well as a national level. It would be challenging to find a school not doing anything to commemorate the Great War.

To give a flavour of what is going on in Surrey schools:

Lyne and Longcross C of E (Aided) Infant School with Nursery

- The Year 2 class is studying WW1 this term and will be particularly focussing on:
 - Life in the trenches;
 - Life for soldiers;
 - Weapons;
 - Life back home with the men gone;
 - Remembrance;
 - Development of women's roles;
 - This learning will be shared with the rest of the infant school through a class assembly.

Puttenham Church of England School

- The Great War has been a focus in assemblies and taught as year 2 short topic lessons;
- Children have sown poppy seeds on the Hogsback with the Parish Council;
- Children are making terracotta poppies with Watts Gallery to be on display in Compton in November;
- A few children will take part in the memorial service in Farnham;
- Children are learning a confederation-wide school song which all will sing on special assembly on 11 November.

St. Ann's Heath Junior School

- A focused week looking at WW1. Each year group is looking at the causes of the war and then will focus on a certain part:
 - Year 3 uniforms, conscription posters; Year 4 women's role and the home front; Year 5 life in the trenches and weaponry; Year 6 life in the trenches and famous battles;
 - In year 5 and 6 they will be writing poems and looking at famous WW1 poetry;
 - Across the school, year groups will be sending letters to other year groups, in role, as if they were family at home or soldiers in the trenches, to tell them about what they have learnt/ experienced;
 - Every adult and child is making a paper poppy to display in the school entrance hall, along with selected pieces of work, to recreate the art installation at Tower of London;

- They are also having an extended service on the 11th November where children across the school will discuss and reflect on what they have learnt.

Northmead Junior School

- A WWI week at the start of term during which children:
 - Visited the local war memorial to find out the name of the fallen from their local area;
 - With help from a local historian researched the fallen men;
 - Each made a 3D poppy which was then dedicated to the local fallen and they are creating a display of these (along the lines of the Tower of London) in the school grounds;
 - Learnt songs from WWI and sang at the opening of the local commemoration at Cardwell Keep in Stoughton.

Woodfield School

- Writing a Christmas production based around the Christmas day football match in no-man's land;
- Observing the 2 min silence on Remembrance Day;
- The art teacher has each pupil at the school making a clay poppy to be fired in a kiln and to be placed in the grounds;
- The DT teacher is organising the pupils to each make a paper poppy to be made into a wreath to be placed at the war memorial in Merstham;
- School assembly where a representative from the British legion attends and talks to the pupils;
- The year 9 pupils study WW1 this term during History lessons.

The Magna Carta School

- Year 9 students will study World War One after October half term to coincide with Remembrance Day – this module is a complete study of the long and short term reasons behind the conflict, as well as the horrors of the trenches and the politics behind the Armistice Agreement;
- They will complete an extended investigation into the resolution of World War One and compare it to other conflicts such as World War Two and the Vietnam War;
- House assemblies leading up to Remembrance Day focus on a key issue to help students reflect on what the day really means. This year they will explore the impact of World War One on Europe.

St Bede's School

- A focus on WW1 in year 9 and a trip to Ypres;
- Trip to see War Horse;
- A theatre group in school which performed a drama for the whole of year 8 and year 9;
- An event focusing on the Christmas Truce linked with the national scheme, 'Football Remembers';
- A noticeboard especially for things to do with the centenary.

Thamesmead School

- A WW1 day to mark the centenary during which all subjects are delivering lessons related to WW1, e.g:
 - In science, they are teaching about scientific advances stimulated by the war;
 - In English, they are focusing on war poetry;
 - In history they are considering the causes, consequences and events of the war.

Kings College Guildford

- An entire term on the First World War in Year 8 (one module on origins/causes and another on the major battles, conduct, home front, etc.);
- In Year 8 English they are reading *Private Peaceful* and doing a lot of work on historical context (recruitment, trench warfare, shell-shock, 'conchies', etc.);
- GCSE students are completing a Depth Study on the British Home Front during the First World War;
- History trips to the Imperial War Museum for their new WWI exhibit and a battlefields trip;
- English Department creating a poppy display where students write the name of a friend or family member they've lost due to war/conflict and want them to be remembered.

CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

(10) MR ERNEST MALLETT (WEST MOLESEY) TO ASK:

My constituents are being refused help with school transport to the normal and preferred feeder secondary school for Molesey pupils, namely Esher High School. The grounds for this refusal are that Hampton Academy in the Borough of Richmond-on-Thames, should have been selected as their first choice for their child. Whilst Hampton Academy may be nearer on mileage, it is difficult to access via Hampton Court Bridge and is clearly not a Surrey school.

My constituents consider that these grounds for non-help are unreasonable and are discriminating against parents who want their child to be educated in a Surrey school. Will the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning agree that this policy is not in the best interests of Surrey parents and pupils and change this policy?

Reply:

The local authority has a statutory duty to provide transport for secondary aged children, if they:

- Attend a school which is their nearest suitable school and which is more than 3 miles from their home

- Are in receipt of free school meals or their parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit and they attend one of their three nearest schools between 2 and 6 miles from their home
- Are in receipt of free school meals or their parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit and they attend a school on the grounds of their religion or belief which is between 2 and 15 miles from their home

The shortest distance between home and school is measured according to the shortest available walking route that a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk with reasonable safety to school. However, where a different school is nearest by straight line distance then transport will normally be provided to either school as long as the walking distance threshold has still been met. In this way, children who attend Esher High School would not be eligible to free home to school transport if Hampton Academy was nearest by both shortest walking route and straight line distance and if they would have been offered a place at that school had they applied.

Eligibility to transport is not linked to the admission criteria of a school. Whilst some schools, such as Esher High School, give priority to children who live within a catchment, living within catchment does not confer an automatic right to transport. Whilst a parent has the right to apply for a school of their preference, the local authority has no duty to provide transport to that school if there is another school which is nearer which could have offered a place had the parent applied, whether or not that school is inside or outside the County boundary. Any extension of policy would be discretionary and the County Council would need to identify additional resource in order to fund an increase in eligibility.

However in April 2014, following a consultation on Surrey's home to school transport policy, the Cabinet did agree to amend its policy so that, with effect from September 2015, eligibility to free home to school transport for Surrey children would be extended to children who attend their nearest geographical Surrey school (measured by the shortest walking route):

- If it is over the statutory walking distance; and
- If their nearest school is out of County and the distance or safety of route to that school would mean that transport would still need to be provided.

This extension of policy was supported as it:

- Enables parents who would otherwise receive transport to their nearest out of County school, to send their children to their nearest Surrey school and still receive transport, thus potentially increasing their 'choice' of schools
- Ensures that the cost of transport would not be a barrier for children to attend their nearest Surrey school
- Can be applied consistently across the County

- Demonstrates support to Surrey schools by offering families an incentive to apply for their nearest Surrey school, even if they have an out of County school which is nearer
- Helps to support the financial viability of undersubscribed Surrey schools and in turn may reduce the likelihood of County Council funding being needed to support the recovery of an undersubscribed school
- May cost less to transport a child to a Surrey school than to an out of County school

Depending on where families live, it is possible that this extension of policy from September 2015 will benefit children who attend Esher High School but who have a nearer school which is out of County.

CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

(11) MR WILL FORSTER (WOKING SOUTH) TO ASK: (2nd question)

Please can the Cabinet Member confirm what plans, if any it has for the unused Manor School site in Byfleet?

Reply:

Looking at the pupil forecasts in the Byfleet planning area, there is no case to re-open the former Manor School for education provision at the present time, particularly as the site is only of the appropriate size for infant provision.

However, the position will be constantly monitored and should an education use for the site become viable, the matter will be reviewed again. At the present time the council has no plans to dispose of the former Manor School site.

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND FLOODING RECOVERY

(12) MRS HAZEL WATSON (DORKING HILLS) TO ASK: (2nd question)

The enforcement of weight restricted bridges was carried out by the County Council's Trading Standards Service until about 2006 when the work ceased due to cost cutting. In view of the lack of enforcement by the County Council of weight restricted bridges, what assurances can be given to Surrey residents that Surrey's bridges are not being put at risk of damage and/ or collapse as inevitably significant numbers of vehicles in excess of weight limits will be using bridges without any fear of any action being taken?

Reply:

Trading Standards, part of Customers and Communities Directorate, carried out investigations of frequent abuse of weight limits on bridges, with the Police. The Police still carry out enforcement subject to the necessary evidence being available. Any bridge with an assessment requiring a 3T weight limit has a width restriction already installed. The Police prefer there to be a physical 6' 6" width restriction at vulnerable bridges to enforce the legal restriction. However, this width restriction can usually only be installed with an associated 3T weight limit.

All of Surrey County Council owned bridges are managed via a process of bridge inspections, maintenance and strengthening in accordance with national standards and the Code of Practice for the Management of Highway Structures. All bridges have a General Inspection every 2 years and a Principle Inspection every 6 years. County Bridges, that have a weight restriction, have additional inspections to ensure structural safety.

Other owners of bridges that carry the highway network, such as Network Rail, also carry out routine inspections and maintenance of their bridges. There is regular liaison with third parties to ensure network safety. All third party bridge owners should be implementing the Code of Practice for the Management of Highway Structures and also have a duty of care for public safety.

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND FLOODING RECOVERY

**(13) MR STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK:
(2nd question)**

The most recent proposals for gully cleaning significantly reduce the overall number of gullies cleaned each year and reduce the frequency of cleaning for 48% of gullies to once every two years. Can the Cabinet Member indicate when the large number of gullies throughout Surrey which do not appear to have had any attention for a considerable period of time and remain blocked will be cleared?

Reply:

Surrey has over 169,000 gullies which are all programmed to be cleaned to prevent them getting blocked. The recently introduced programme is designed to clean those gullies prone to blockages more frequently and provides an appropriate level of cleaning to those gullies that do not get blocked, thereby using resources efficiently. Whilst we are confident that the vast majority of the gully asset is known to us and included on the cleaning programme, it is perhaps un-surprising on an asset of this scale that we continue to identify new gullies on the highway network that haven't previously been cleaned. We are taking measures to address gaps in our knowledge however this is not a quick survey exercise and is likely to take several years to complete. In the

meanwhile, Members are reminded that they can raise concerns over blocked gullies with their local highway team who will be able to ensure that they are added to the cleaning programme at the next convenient opportunity.

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

**(14) MR DANIEL JENKINS (STAINES SOUTH AND ASHFORD WEST) TO ASK:
(2nd question)**

Surrey County Council in its motion of March 2013 recommitted itself to defending the County's green belt land.

The site at Kempton Park Racecourse of approximately 90 acres is one of the few remaining open space areas of green belt land in Spelthorne.

It has been noted by residents that a lot of preliminary planning work appears to be occurring in and around the area of the site including approximately 64 CCTV cameras, 23 car counting cables and air quality diffusion cables.

Has Surrey County Council made any of its officers available to potential developers of the site to undertake work that could be used to support a plan to develop the site or been in discussions with interested parties to the same effect?

If so, why has Surrey County Council allowed this to occur in defiance of its own stated policy of defending Surreys Greenbelt?

Reply:

Surrey County Council as Highway Authority has a statutory duty to engage in pre-planning discussions when requested by developers. Although officers have had very early discussions in respect of the highways and transport matters, no observations have been made about the acceptability or otherwise of development at Kempton Park. Spelthorne Borough Council is the planning authority in this instance and they will determine whether development should take place or not.

CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING

**(15) MR ERNEST MALLETT (WEST MOLESEY) TO ASK:
(2nd question)**

It has become clear that the County's policy on school governors is that lay persons and parents are now not preferred as school governors and only professional or ex-professional educationists are preferred. Further, it is clear that the County is seeking to parachute its own selected Chairmen of Governors

into schools and that lay persons or parent governors are definitely not wanted for these positions and are being excluded.

In view of these requirements, is it the Schools and Learning Service's view that all lay persons and parents who are governors, should resign and leave governing bodies entirely free for County to appoint education professionals?

Reply:

There is a new statutory requirement for all governing bodies of maintained schools to reconstitute by September 2015. For the last 14 years, Surrey/Babcock 4S's school improvement and effectiveness strategy has involved the deployment of Additional Skills Governors (ASGs) as an effective method of intervention. This can be summarised as follows:

- The requirement for reconstitution is predicated on the coalition government's policy of improving the effectiveness of governance in schools through ensuring governing bodies are constituted with governors who possess the appropriate skills. This in no way precludes parents, local authority or any other governors holding office. The expectation now is that both elections and appointments are informed by the electorate and appointing governing bodies knowing the skills set requirements of the individual governing bodies. The governance team have spent a considerable amount of time and communicated in a variety of ways to ensure that both clerks and governors understand the new expectation.
- The Local Authority has had powers of intervention where governance is a cause for concern in a school for many years. Current powers are enshrined in the 2006 Education Act. One of the interventions is that we have very successfully utilised since 2000, has been to deploy ASGs to governing bodies which do not demonstrate the capacity to improve without this support. This intervention is very significant as Surrey's expectations are that schools Requiring Improvement achieve good within two years, which necessitates that governing bodies need to evidence a robust and time-bonded approach to school improvement.
- The appointment of an ASG is not exercised lightly as ASGs are a valuable source of expertise and not in plentiful supply. The deployment of an ASG is only used where governance is judged to be weak and in particular where there is no evidence of appropriate and robust succession planning in place.
- ASG appointments are not permanent and are over and above the constitution of the governing body and the ASG's brief is to supply support and development until such time that the governing body can demonstrate it possesses the capacity for sustained improvement. There are occasions where the expectation of the authority is to appoint an ASG as a chair of governors, but this is to support the school and avoid the need for the issue of a formal warning notice or an application to the Secretary of State for an Interim Executive Board.

- Our practice in Surrey has been acknowledged by the DfE and recognised by the National College as the basis for the creation of their National Leaders of Governance programme, which is highly acclaimed as being an effective support to school improvement.

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

(16) MRS HAZEL WATSON (DORKING HILLS) TO ASK: (3rd question)

The County Council has a Surrey Road Verge Habitats Action Plan, has identified a list of Conservation Verges to protect habitats and species and has purchased Conservation marker posts to progress this initiative. However, since then the project has stalled as there is no member of staff with responsibility for this Habitat Action Plan. When will responsibility for the Surrey Road Verges Action Plan be given to a member of staff so that it can be implemented?

Reply:

Restructures within both the Countryside and Highways Teams that deal with road verges have required a reassessment of the way we deliver this piece of work. Marker posts are available in the depot and plans have been drawn up showing the location of the important habitats. The contractors should have those plans, however the markers will now be installed to ensure the sites are marked on the ground for the mower operators. Maintenance of the verges is carried out in a variety of ways including by Districts and Boroughs and by Parish Councils. The contracts for maintenance of the verges are due to be re-procured in the next year giving us a further opportunity to ensure any new management arrangements will also allow for roadside habitats to be properly managed.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

(17) MRS HAZEL WATSON (DORKING HILLS) TO ASK: (4th question)

Peter Martin, in his response to my question on superfast broadband at Cabinet on 23 September 2014 stated: "The principal factor determining the distribution of the slower speeds is the length of the telephone line between the cabinet and the end user premises. This has resulted in a slightly higher proportion of slower speeds in the more rural Boroughs and Districts". In light of this response, does the Leader of the Council believe that discrimination against the more rural areas of the county through the provision of a lower level of broadband service in these areas is acceptable?

Furthermore, can the Leader of the Council confirm:

(i) how many properties within the Dorking Hills division have been identified at the outset of the project as outside the 94% expected to get Superfast speeds

(ii) how the County Council intends to address broadband provision in village centres, such as Mickleham within the Dorking Hills, which are within the commercial roll-out but which cannot get a 15Mbps download speed from the commercial roll-out of broadband provision thereby making it difficult, if not impossible, for the county to achieve the anticipated level of superfast broadband provision across the county

(iii) how many properties within the IA within the Dorking Hills division now have access to fibre-based technology and how many have connected to it

(iv) how many properties within the IA within the Dorking Hills division have been identified as sub 15 Mbps premises

(v) which postcodes within the Dorking Hills division have proven Superfast premises and which postcodes have sub 15 Mbps premises and

(vi) what improvements are being considered to address the low speeds in the sub 15Mbps premises?

Reply:

Surrey County Council established the Superfast Surrey Broadband Programme in 2012 to address the situation of residents in the County that were excluded from any fibre broadband coverage roll-out plans by commercial providers. As a result of the Superfast Surrey Programme, more than 75,000 premises out of the 84,000 premises in the Intervention Area (the IA), many of whom are in the rural communities, are now already able to access download speeds of at least 15mbps with the majority accessing much higher speeds. The limitation relating to speeds that can be accessed is currently an inevitable consequence of the technology available at this time and occurs in both rural and suburban areas. However, Surrey County Council believes that it is crucial to drive fibre coverage as close as possible to homes and businesses in Surrey. This is a technology which will continue to evolve over the coming years, and by extending the fibre network as far as possible we are ensuring that our residents will have access to new technologies and services when they become available. No deliberate discrimination is involved. It is, rather, a question of available technology versus cost. The public purse is not infinite. The position is a little similar to the way that many living in rural communities live without a mains gas supply or without being connected to mains sewage. The technology available can get the service there but the cost is too great.

Question (i) response:

Surrey County Council is unable to determine the percentage of properties within the Dorking Hills Division that will be unable to achieve speeds of 15mbps or more. This is because the Superfast Surrey team has no oversight over speeds served by infrastructure upgraded as part of the commercial rollout. The

programme contract that was signed in 2012 had a target to achieve download speeds of 15mbps or more to 93.9% of premises across the IA and this was not broken down into specific geographic areas.

Question(ii) response:

Surrey County Council has no oversight over the commercial rollout but is continuing to escalate the concerns of residents in the commercial areas to senior management in BT, Openreach and Broadband Delivery UK.

Question (iii) response:

At the end of June 2014, fibre broadband coverage had been extended to more than 2,200 residents in the Dorking Hills Division as part of the Superfast Surrey IA. We do not hold take-up information at such a localised level.

Questions (iv), (v) and (vi) responses:

The delivery of fibre-based broadband infrastructure to the Dorking Hills Division is on-going and a review of the premises in the Superfast Surrey IA with slow speeds (less than 15mbps) is currently underway by Openreach to identify what, if any, improvements can be achieved within the constraints of cost and technical feasibility (Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC), Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) and re-parenting (connecting a premises to a different cabinet). It is therefore not possible at this stage to advise which premises and postcodes will be unable to access 15mbps download speeds until the end of our programme.

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