

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET
HELD ON 23 JUNE 2015 AT 2.00 PM
AT ASHCOMBE SUITE, COUNTY HALL, KINGSTON UPON THAMES,
SURREY KT1 2DN.**

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Cabinet at its next meeting.

Members:

*Mr David Hodge (Chairman)	*Mr John Furey
*Mr Peter Martin (Vice-Chairman)	* Mr Mike Goodman
*Mrs Helyn Clack	* Mrs Linda Kemeny
Mrs Clare Curran	* Ms Denise Le Gal
*Mr Mel Few	*Mr Richard Walsh

Cabinet Associates:

Mrs Mary Angell	*Mrs Kay Hammond
*Mr Tim Evans	Mr Tony Samuels

* = Present

PART ONE
IN PUBLIC

125/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Mrs Angell, Mrs Curran and Mr Samuels.

126/15 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 26 MAY 2015 [Item 2]

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2015 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

127/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were none.

128/15 PROCEDURAL MATTERS [Item 4]

a MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 4a]

Questions from Mr Essex were received. The questions and responses are attached as Appendix 1.

Mr Essex requested further clarity in relation to the baseline for the Local Transport Review, as asked in the third part of his question. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning agreed to provide this information outside the meeting.

129/15 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4b]

No questions from members of the public were received.

130/15 PETITIONS [Item 4c]

- (i) Lingfield Library: A petition, with 294 signatures was received from Mrs Russell. The response, from the Cabinet Member for Localities and Community Wellbeing is attached as Appendix 2.

Mrs Russell expressed disappointment with the response and in particular, the proposed changes to the staffing of Lingfield Library. She asked about the travelling costs for staff of these proposed new arrangements and the Cabinet Member for Localities and Community Wellbeing agreed to provide a response on this outside the meeting.

- (ii) Surrey Wildlife Trust: A petition, with 420 signatures was received from Mr Paton. The response, from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning is attached as Appendix 3.

Mr Paton said that the purpose of his petition was to highlight concerns about nature interests which he believed would be compromised if SWT had to work with commercial sponsors to find new sources of funding. He cited examples of threats from proposed housing developments in part of the county. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning said that he would address the points raised by Mr Paton in his introduction to the report on the Surrey Wildlife Trust.

131/15 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED ON REPORTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE [Item 4d]

No representations were received.

132/15 REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES, TASK GROUPS, LOCAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL [Item 5]

No reports were received.

133/15 THE AGREEMENT WITH SURREY WILDLIFE TRUST FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S COUNTRYSIDE ESTATE [Item 6]

Prior to the Cabinet Member introducing the report, Mr Harmer, as Chairman of the Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board, was invited to address the Cabinet. He said that the Surrey Wildlife Trust had been scrutinised extensively by this Board and its review group. He agreed with the comments and concerns as set out in the Cabinet report and confirmed that the Board was supportive of the recommendations before the Cabinet today.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning began by saying that, following the Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) report to Cabinet in December, this report outlined the next steps in the contract negotiations between Surrey County Council (SCC) and SWT.

Today's report provided an update on progress and sought approval to implement changes to the agreement to achieve the aims of the SWT being self funded by 2021 and would reduce the cost to Surrey residents to zero by 2021, whilst at the same time managing the countryside estate to the highest standards and ensuring that visitors were able to enjoy the wonderful countryside in Surrey. This was part of SCC's overall strategy to reduce costs at a time when the Council's budgets were under financial pressure.

He said that robust business plans to achieve income generating opportunities across the Estate would be brought to Cabinet in November and during the next five months considerable work between SWT and SCC would be required to develop these plans. The Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board would continue to be involved in this work and a task group has been formed to assist this process. Also, a time frame was being drawn up so that milestones were met by October.

He said that the County Council would continue to work with Surrey Wildlife Trust to improve facilities for visitors and ensure maximum value for money for taxpayers and commercial opportunities, particularly at places like Newlands Corner and Oakham Common, were being considered.

He also informed Cabinet that Surrey was the most wooded county in England and that SWT were developing a woodland management strategy plan for the woodlands, which would not only protect the woodlands but also make them commercial.

Other additional plans for the Countryside Estate were developing its role in environmental education and improving the health and wellbeing of local communities, which would give the County Council the opportunity of working with SWT to link with the SCC strategic goals, particularly wellbeing and the resident's experience.

He considered that, achieving zero contribution was not solely based on commercial opportunities. SWT and SCC including Property Services were working to improve the overall efficiency of the estate, to reduce costs and by November 2015, a new five year Management Asset Plan would be completed and this would be a critical milestone for the partnership.

Also, to assist and monitor progress and compliance a new robust Governance model had been developed, which would ensure the following:

- an annual report to the County Council
- regular updates to the Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board
- the ability to make quick changes, if needed

- an up to date inventory of the property and woodlands to enable the County Council to assess with SWT the best way to manage it
- a clear process for developing business cases and assessing them
- a new set of KPI's, to monitor SWT performance quarterly. (These would also be discussed at the Partnership meeting and at the Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board meeting)

Finally, he drew attention to the annexes attached to the report, namely:

- Annex 1 - Financial Formula
- Annex 2 - Governance Arrangements
- Annex 3 - Asset Management Plan
- Annex 4 - Key Performance indicators

In conclusion, he said that he hoped his explanation had addressed the points of concern raised by Mr Paton, the petitioner.

Other Members made the following points:

- The new Governance Arrangements were more robust than those previously in place
- Detailed business plans would now be required
- That Surrey County Council would be working with SWT to deliver Value for Money for Surrey taxpayers
- SWT was a valuable financial and wildlife asset
- It was hoped that in the future, that SWT would make a profit
- Agreement that SCC needed to ensure that the wildlife was protected
- A need to encourage residents / visitors to walk / cycle / ride in the Surrey countryside
- There should be a firm understanding of what SWT does and that this report was timely.

RESOLVED:

1. That variations to the Agreement, and associated leases, relating to revised financial formula, governance arrangements, Asset Management Plan, performance management and woodland management, as described in paragraph 3-7 of the submitted report, and subject to the same variations being agreed by Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) Trustees in July 2015 be approved.
2. That the net contribution of Surrey County Council to the SWT Agreement be reduced to zero by 2020/2021; that the distribution of funds thereafter will be determined; and that a robust business plan be required to achieve this and be reported to Cabinet by November 2015; and that failure to implement recommendation 1 or 2 will lead to an immediate review of alternative methods of achieving value for money in the management of the Council's Countryside Estate.
3. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director for Environment and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning, the Cabinet Member for Business Services and Resident Experience, the Director for Legal and Democratic

Services and the Head of Property Services, to enter into final negotiations with SWT to vary the Agreement.

Reasons for Decisions:

Approval of the recommendations will implement changes to the Agreement with SWT which improve its effectiveness, deliver improvements for visitors, aim to reduce the Council's contribution to zero by 2020/2021, and agree the distribution of funds thereafter.

134/15 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL TRANSPORT REVIEW [Item 7]

This report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning, who informed Members that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) included a requirement to make savings through a Local Transport Review of £2m by 2017/18 and this report set out proposals to achieve £840,000 savings in 2015/16, whilst at the same time maintaining services that residents relied on, which was and remained a challenging objective for the Council to achieve.

He said that the Surrey taxpayer currently subsidised half of the 29m bus journeys made in Surrey each year, which meant that 150 of the 200 services provided for residents were being subsidised.

He acknowledged that, whenever any reductions of bus services were made this would affect some residents and that was regretted. The report indicated that 234 passengers would be affected. However, officers had continued to work with the bus companies and a number of changes had been made since the report was published and therefore, he was pleased to report that number had now been reduced to 160 and officers would continue to work at reducing this further. He considered that this had been achieved by listening to residents and their representatives, and after the second consultation, talking to suppliers and being imaginative with solutions. He confirmed that these changes would not impact on the proposed savings of £840,000.

He publically thanked the excellent work led by the Travel and Transport Group Manager and his team and said that they have done a remarkable job in reducing the cost of the bus service to Surrey's council taxpayers, whilst protecting the integrity of the net work. He also thanked the Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board, the Members' reference group and the Local Committees and Members who have made valuable contributions.

He said that the Local Transport Review had been established to deliver savings via three streams: (1) financial support to local buses, (ii) concessionary fares, (iii) community transport, and before any services were considered officers worked with the suppliers and managed to deliver annual savings in excess of £300,000 by renegotiating contracts and working with the operators to work smarter.

He also said that, twelve "School Special" public bus services had been commercialised and enhanced involving, in some cases, integration with certain Home-to-School "closed door" services provided by Children,

Schools & Families, which had also lead to future savings for the Education Transport budget. However, he acknowledged that there was more work necessary in this area to establish how further savings can be realised. Officers were continuing to look at other ways of working with operators in seeking to grow the commercial value of buses and were positive about the work with Surrey University.

Moving onto the second element of the review - concessionary fares, namely disabled people being allowed to use their bus pass before 9:30 and after 23:00 and the companion passes allowing these holders to have a companion to travel with them free of charge should continue. The cost of this provision was £400,000, however these two important services were valued by the holders and during the consultation the County Council was advised that if these concessions were withdrawn, it would cause real hardship to those holders so he recommended that this valuable service continued.

On the third element of the review, he said that the community transport review would start in July and would be a wide ranging review with a number of organisations and Borough, District and Parish colleagues.

He then explained the consultation process to Cabinet, saying that the recommendations had been drawn up following a wide reaching public consultation, which ran from October 2014 to February 2015 and during the consultation, the County Council had wanted to understand the following:

- How important bus and community transport services were to residents and how this would impact them if it was reduced or no longer there?
- What could be done to encourage more people to travel by bus/increase their bus travel?
- How important and valued the two extra SCC funded local concessions were to Surrey's qualifying English National Travel Scheme pass holders?

He said that over forty meetings were held with stakeholders from October 2014 to January 2015, including: community transport meetings, deaf forum, bus user groups, disability forums, youth forum, all Looked After Children and a number of parish councils. Overall, more than 6,800 residents and stakeholders had their say on the services that matter most to them, which had been a fantastic response.

The key findings were:

- More than 4 in 5 (85%) of respondents to the consultation considered the bus service that they used to either be important or very important to them. They said that they used buses to take them to/from shops/ schools/ colleges / university and work, to attend medical appointments, to visit friends and relatives and for leisure and recreational activities.
- That withdrawal of the locally funded free disabled travel before 09:30 or after 23:00 (Monday to Friday) and free companion passes could cause isolation, frustration, depression and greatly

reduce independence in an already vulnerable and disadvantaged community.

- More than 4 in 5 (83%) respondents to the consultation said that better information, improved infrastructure or if a better journey experience could be offered that they would increase their current bus travel or start to travel by bus.

From the findings, officers used the data to consider possible changes to routes and this information formed the basis of the second public consultation which ran from May to 16 June 2015 and gave residents and stakeholders an opportunity to feedback on the detailed proposals for changes to local bus services.

Over 1500 residents and stakeholders had their say during the second consultation. Since the consultation closed, four petitions objecting to the changes, as proposed in the report, have been received by the service and details of further refinements to bus service proposals were attached as Appendix 4.

A selection of these comments included:

- The proposal to change the route of the 557 (Woking-Chertsey-Sunbury-Heathrow Airport) and the 446 (Woking-Addlestone-Staines) could make it difficult for a number of people to access St Peter's Hospital direct.
- Reducing the route and frequency of the 564 (Whitley Village-Hersham-Walton-Xcel) could make less choice for some people to access medical appointments.
- A small number of respondents said the proposals to withdraw sections of the 526/527 (Crawley-Charlwood-Horley-Crawley) could limit their access to shopping and reduce options to travel by bus, although they would still have a service.
- In addition, many respondents agreed with some proposals, such as to:
 - increase the frequency of the 458 (Kingston-Walton-Staines)
 - change the route of 515 (Kingston-Cobham-Guildford) Sunday service
 - extend the route of 437 to Brooklands and the route of 555 to Hersham daily

Officers were continuing to review the comments from the second consultation and there may still be minor adjustments to those published.

Finally, he drew attention to the annexes attached to the report, namely:

Annex A - Community Transport Delivery Strategy

Annex B - First Consultation Summary Report

Annex C - Record of consultation events held in association with Bus Users UK

Annex D - Second Consultation Summary Report

Annex E - Table of proposed changes to local services from 29 August 2015

Annex F - Equality Impact assessment

Finally, he said that he believed that this consultation clearly demonstrated how Surrey County Council had engaged with residents and listened to their concerns, made changes to deliver value for money for residents and achieved the savings required.

Mr Harmer, Chairman of the Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board was also invited to speak on this item and said that the Local Transport Review had been extensively considered by this Board. He praised the two stage consultation process and said that overall this was a good report and set of recommendations, which he considered would be acceptable to Surrey residents.

Other Members, including the Leader, made the following points:

- That, due to low passenger numbers, it was proposed to withdraw Bus No. 540 in the Leader's division
- The importance of providing rural bus services wherever possible
- The proposed termination of Bus No. 22 to villages south of Dorking on Saturdays would mean that some residents would no longer be able to travel to Dorking over the weekend
- Also, proposed changes to Buses 526/527 would mean that bus travel would no longer be possible between Gatwick Airport and Charlwood

[Addressing the previous two points, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning said that further consideration had led to a proposal for the Mole Valley Demand Responsive Service (Buses4U DRT) to be extended to operate on Saturdays.

For the 526/527, the local Bus team were continuing to discuss opportunities with operators to provide a peak hour service to connect Charlwood with Gatwick Airport, following the unexpected withdrawal of commercial service 40/50, and initial discussions had concluded this could be achieved but at a cost because these journeys would not be commercially viable and additional subsidy support would be required.

He said that officers would continue reviewing the comments from the second consultation and discuss with key stakeholders, including Gatwick Airport to explore any opportunities that may arise which may result in minor adjustments being made that are affordable and value for money.]

- That there was a thorough Equalities Impact Assessment attached to the report, which had addressed the concerns arising from both consultations – this indicated that work was on-going to mitigate the effect, particularly for those residents with protected characteristics
- Confirmation that the respondents were 'different' for each consultation
- Pleased that following further discussions with Abellio and the Hospital Trust that the bus link to St Peter's Hospital on route 446 would be modified and extended to Ashford Hospital and therefore, the link between the two hospitals would be preserved

- All Members needed to be informed of the cost of the bus subsidies in their divisions
- Consider ways of trying to encourage residents to use the buses in their areas
- Finally, the Leader was pleased that the Council had been able to retain the valued Concessionary Fare Scheme.

RESOLVED:

Following the Local Transport Review report to Cabinet on 23 September 2014, it is recommended that Cabinet:

1. That the proposed changes to local bus services in Surrey, as detailed in Annex E of the submitted report be approved, and authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning and the Strategic Director for Environment & Infrastructure, to agree any minor adjustments before these changes take effect from 29 August 2015.
2. That Surrey County Council retains its policy in relation to concessionary fares as described in paragraph 3 of the submitted report.
3. That the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning and the Strategic Director for Environment and Infrastructure report back to Cabinet on the consideration of further proposals for change to local bus services in Surrey in the financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18.

Reasons for Decisions:

These recommendations will enable SCC to achieve the required savings needed from the Local Transport Review, as outlined in the MTFP. It will also ensure that Cabinet is kept fully informed throughout, and can take decisions on changes based on best practice and best value in subsequent years of the review.

Recommendations for change are based on:

- Responses to two public consultations.
- Full understanding of the impact on the changes to the public (including those with protected characteristics) and the environment.
- Maintaining services that residents rely on the most such as services that get people to employment, healthcare, school and essential shopping.
- A funding arrangement with partners that is financially sustainable in the long term.

135/15 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2014/15 [Item 8]

The Cabinet Member for Business Services and Resident Experience said that Surrey County Council had a statutory duty under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 to publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The AGS provided a comprehensive assessment of the Council's

governance arrangements and once signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, the AGS would be incorporated into the Statement of Accounts and the Annual Report.

The annual review of governance was overseen by the Governance Panel which met four times a year and reported to the Statutory Responsibilities Network and the Audit & Governance Committee. She said that the Corporate Strategy, Confident in Surrey's Future provided clear direction for staff as well as a signpost for residents, businesses and partner organisations, which was underpinned by the Medium Term Financial Plan, the Investment Strategy and Service Plans.

She highlighted aspects of Leadership and behaviours within the Council and also the staff and Members' Code of Conduct, which set out the expected high standards of conduct. She also drew attention to the Annual Report produced by the Council which demonstrated the delivery of priorities over the year and included the AGS and summary audited accounts.

She mentioned the Council's risk management strategy which was renewed annually and also the Leadership Risk Register – also regularly reviewed by the Statutory Responsibilities Network, the Audit & Governance Committee and Cabinet.

On the People Strategy, she said that it set out the Council's aims and objectives in relation to employees and the wider workforce, including volunteers, charities and members of the public who help the Council to help residents.

On engagement and collaboration, she highlighted the creation of two new companies in 2014/15: (i) Surrey Choices Ltd for delivery of Adult Social Care day services and (ii) a Property Company. She also made reference to examples of 'working together' namely, the Surrey County Council and East Sussex County Council business and support services partnership known as Orbis and also the Surrey County Council and Buckinghamshire County Council joint trading standards service.

Finally, she drew attention to the areas where governance arrangements needed to be enhanced in 2015/16, namely the Children's and Safeguarding Service and Contract Management and said that the focus for 2015/16 would include these and also the implementation of new duties incorporated in the Care Act and working with partners on the Better Care Plan.

RESOLVED:

1. That the 2014/15 Annual Governance Statement, attached as Annex A to the submitted report, be approved and signed by the Leader and the Chief Executive for inclusion in the Statement of Accounts and Annual Report.
2. That the Audit and Governance Committee continue to monitor the governance environment and report to Cabinet as appropriate.

Reasons for Decisions:

There is a statutory duty to annually review and report on governance. The identification of issues in governance and a responsive approach to addressing those issues is viewed as best practice.

136/15 FINANCE AND BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR MAY 2015 [Item 9]

The Leader of the Council presented the first budget monitoring report for the new financial year 2015/16 and said that the Council continued to face hard choices as demand grew and funding reductions continued.

He highlighted the following key changes to the report.

- It was shorter, with comments focusing on matters that were significant at county council level.
- Table 1 set out the current budget, including funding and spending changes for carry forwards and adjustments for other movements. The impact of these changes on the overall net budget was that the County Council would still draw £3.7m this year from the Budget Equalisation Reserve.
- Reporting showed performance for each service.

As he has said before, the Council's financial strategy had four key drivers to ensure sound governance to manage the finances and provide value for money.

These were:

1. To keep any additional call on the council taxpayer to a minimum

Currently the forecast for the end of year revenue position was for an overspend of £1.8m. However, although it was early in the year, he considered that, provided the Council received its budgeted funding, he was confident that the Cabinet's strong commitment to tight financial management, backed up by the actions of managers across the Council would make this the sixth consecutive year that the Council would have a small underspend or a balanced budget.

2. Continuously drive the efficiency agenda

That, at the end of May, services forecast delivering efficiencies of nearly £67m - of this, over £20m had either already been implemented or was on track, £29m had some issues, £17m was additional in-year or one-off savings and less than £0.5m was considered to be at risk.

3. To reduce the Council's reliance on council tax and government grant income.

That reducing reliance on government grants and council tax was key to balancing the Council's budgets over the longer term and the Revolving Infrastructure and Investment Fund had invested nearly £8m this year and forecast investing another £10m by the year end.

4. To continue to maximise investment in Surrey

Finally, he said that the Council's capital programme not only improved and maintained the Council's services and it was also a way of investing in Surrey and generating income for the council.

Other Cabinet Members were invited to highlight the key points and issues from their portfolios, as set out in the Annex to the report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted, including the following:

1. the council's forecast revenue position for 2015/16 is to overspend by £1.8m, as set out in Annex 1, paragraph 1 of the submitted report.
2. the council's forecast achievement of efficiencies for 2015/16 is £66.5m, as set out in Annex 1, paragraph 25 of the submitted report.
3. the council's forecast capital expenditure for 2015/16, including long term investments, is £189.1m, as set out in Annex 1, paragraphs 33 and 34 of the submitted report.
4. services' management actions to mitigate any significant overspends, as set out in Annex 1 of the submitted report be noted.

That the following virements be approved:

- £1.0m revenue virement from the Economic Prosperity budget to budgets across Environment & Infrastructure Directorate to enable preparatory work on Local Growth Deal schemes to continue, as detailed in Annex 1, paragraph 14 of the submitted report.
- £0.7m revenue virement from the Central HR Training Budget to most services to allocate service specific training budgets for 2015/16, as detailed in Annex 1, paragraph 15 of the submitted report.
- £0.75m capital virement from highway maintenance to additional flooding and drainage and embankment works, as detailed in Annex 1, paragraph 35 of the submitted report.
- £22.3m capital virement to reprofile of 2015/16 capital spending into future years, while maintaining the council's overall investment over the five year programme, as detailed in Annex 1, paragraph 36 of the submitted report.

Reasons for Decisions:

This report is presented to comply with the agreed policy of providing a monthly budget monitoring report to Cabinet for approval and action as necessary.

137/15 CONFIDENT IN SURREY'S FUTURE: EQUALITY, FAIRNESS AND RESPECT STRATEGY 2015 - 2020 [Item 10]

Introducing the report, the Cabinet Member for Business Services and Resident Experience said that, following approval of the Council's Corporate by the County Council in February 2015, this Strategy had been refreshed to align with the Council's Corporate Strategy, *Confident in Surrey's Future: Corporate Strategy 2015-2020* in order to help achieve the Council's three strategic goals of wellbeing, economic prosperity and resident experience. The refresh had focussed first on the evidence base of the needs of Surrey residents with protected characteristics.

The Cabinet Team were supportive of the strategy, particularly the clear and simple one page format of *Confident in Surrey's Future, Equality, Fairness and Respect Strategy 2015 – 2020*.

It was also confirmed that the strategy had been considered at the Council Overview Board and had been endorsed by it. Also, referring to the Looked after Children implications, the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding reminded Members that every elected Member had signed up to being a corporate parent.

RESOLVED:

That the *Confident in Surrey's Future: Equality, Fairness and Respect Strategy 2015-2020* be approved and that progress towards its priorities be reported on an annual basis through the Council's corporate performance reporting arrangements.

Reasons for Decisions:

Approving *Confident in Surrey's Future: Equality, Fairness and Respect Strategy 2015-2020* will support the delivery of the Council's commitment to ensure best practice in equality, fairness and respect, in the services it provides and in its workforce. It will also ensure that statutory requirements for the publication of equality objectives continue to be met.

138/15 NEW BUILD SPELTHORNE FIRE STATION [Item 11]

The Cabinet Member for Localities and Communities Wellbeing said that a decision had been taken by Cabinet on 4 February 2014 to close Sunbury and Staines fire stations and to build a new fire station at a suitable location in Spelthorne and this paper related to the building of a new fire station in Spelthorne and sought approval to release capital funds from within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), as detailed in the confidential part 2 report, to be considered later in the meeting.

He said that Surrey County Council was investing in the Surrey Fire & Rescue Service (SF&R) and this new build was another example of the Council investment – other new fire stations had been built or were in the process of being built in Guildford, Woking and Salfords.

He confirmed that an Equalities Impact Assessment had been included with 4 February 2014 report and there were no known changes since then that would affect this decision.

The Cabinet Associate for Community Safety emphasised that SF&R facilities were for the benefit of the entire county and the location of fire stations assisted in this strategy. She also said that the fire station undertook a great deal of preventative work which had enabled the County to deliver a good service for Surrey residents.

Finally, the Cabinet Member for Business Services and Resident Experience confirmed that the new building would be contemporary and efficient.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the agreement of the detailed financial information for the project, as set out in agenda item 14 in Part 2 of the agenda, the business case for the provision of a new fire station in Spelthorne be approved.

Reasons for Decisions:

A new build fire station in Spelthorne will achieve the outcomes desired in the Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority's Public Safety Plan 2011 – 2020 by providing modern, efficient, low cost premises that are Disability Discrimination Act compliant and meeting equality and diversity needs with suitable operational training facilities to meet modern fire service duties. In addition, it will enable the Service to achieve the associated efficiency savings built into the MTFP resulting from the consolidation of the two fire stations into one.

139/15 LEADER / DEPUTY LEADER / CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST CABINET MEETING [Item 12]

RESOLVED:

That the decisions taken by Cabinet Members since the last meeting as set out in Annex 1 of the submitted report, be noted.

Reasons for Decisions:

To inform the Cabinet of decisions taken by Cabinet Members under delegated authority.

140/15 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [Item 13]

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

PART TWO – IN PRIVATE

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS WERE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE BY THE CABINET. SET OUT BELOW IS A PUBLIC SUMMARY OF THE DECISIONS TAKEN.

141/15 NEW BUILD SPELTHORNE FIRE STATION [Item 14]

This Part 2 report contained the financial and value for money information relating to item 11.

RESOLVED:

That the release of up to a maximum figure, as set out in the submitted report, for the overall budget for delivery of the project be authorised.

Reasons for Decisions:

A decision was taken by Cabinet on 4 February 2014 to close Sunbury and Staines fire stations and to build a new fire station at a suitable location in Spelthorne. A new build fire station in Spelthorne will achieve the outcomes desired in the Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority's Public Safety Plan 2011 – 2020 by providing modern, efficient, low cost premises that are Disability Discrimination Act compliant, meeting equality and diversity needs with suitable operational training facilities to meet modern fire service duties. In addition, it will enable the Service to achieve the associated efficiency savings built into the MTFP resulting from the consolidation of the two fire stations into one.

142/15 PUBLICITY FOR PART 2 ITEMS [Item 15]

That non-exempt information relating to items considered in Part 2 of the meeting may be made available to the press and public, if appropriate.

[Meeting closed at 3.45pm]

Chairman

Member's Question

Question from Mr Jonathan Essex (Redhill East) to ask:

1. The first Local Transport Review resulted in a host of measures being proposed by bus users in Surrey to improve Surrey's bus travel, which are clearly prioritised and set out in the Cabinet report. Please can you confirm how these set of positive suggestions will be taken forward with 'invest to save' proposals across Surrey (or similar) as opposed to being limited to specific capital funding bids such as the excellent news of an improved bus corridor between Redhill, Reigate and Horley announced recently. What will the time scale for considering these positive opportunities to make savings through improving the service level be considered.

Could you please confirm when the consultation for the further bus budget savings is expected to focus on these elements to avoid the need to impact even more bus routes in the two subsequent parts of this Local Transport Review are proposed in 2016 and 2017.

2. The number of passengers affected of 234 appears to assume that the average user uses a bus 5 times a week. Please can you confirm the total number of people that are likely to be affected by the changes.
3. Surrey's Local Transport Plan (published July 2014 – see Executive Summary at http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/29898/STP-Executive-Summary-2014.pdf) includes an objective for Sustainable Transport (to provide an integrated transport system that protects the environment, keeps people healthy and provides for lower carbon transport choices) alongside objectives to improve the effectiveness, reliability and safety of transport in Surrey. This implies a greater role for sustainable travel options, including bus travel in the future, with this taking a greater share of transport on Surrey roads, thereby reducing congestion. Please can you confirm if this understanding is correct and also whether the impact of the Local Transport Review has as its baseline an increase in annual use of bus travel or maintaining bus travel as the same percentage of total transport on Surrey's roads, and how the chosen baseline sits with the Surrey Local Transport Plan commitments.
4. Some of the bus changes will require passengers to change journeys and use separate buses to complete their journey. With the current ticketing arrangements this will be more expensive. Please can you confirm that through-ticketing is being considered by Surrey to ensure that impact of the proposed changes are minimised, as well as to encourage increased bus use in Surrey.

Reply:

The responses are in the same order as the questions:

1. Surrey County Council will work in partnership with our bus operators and other stakeholders, including large businesses, Boroughs/Districts, hospitals, the rail industry and others, to deliver improvements to bus services in Surrey. The focus of this work will be to increase attractiveness of bus services, enhance reliability, encourage greater usage and support a sustainable and realistic alternative to the private car, delivered through Quality Partnership Agreements and Joint Investment Plans. The impact of these schemes will be monitored and will assist the shaping of Local Transport Review proposals in 2016 and 2017.
2. Based on current usage pattern data supplied by bus operators, the figure of 234 relates to the estimated number of people on average on a weekday that could be impacted by the changes as currently tabled in the report, some of which are to be amended. The majority of this number would result from a requirement to change buses to reach certain destinations, rather than having no bus service at all. If a required journey can still be accomplished within the new timetables, there may be no impact, thus it is not straightforward to suggest a figure for the people actually individually affected, rather than perceived to be.
- 3) Surrey's Local Transport Plan contains a broad range of objectives (which still remain valid) and to support them, the Local Transport Review has sought to maintain where possible the primary bus network and to enhance frequencies in certain cases, whilst being mindful of the affordability of securing those services not deemed commercially viable by the bus industry. The Review seeks to focus available investment to obtain the best value and maximum benefit for Surrey residents. Prioritising and working to enhance the main commercial bus network will contribute to these objectives, alongside the delivery of capital funding for infrastructure and information improvements. The outcome of the current Bus Review is expected to be similar to the one undertaken in 2010-2012, whereby overall patronage loss and environmental impact was minimal.
- 4) Ticketing arrangements are matters for the bus operators. Already, some offer multi-journey products that give a discount over purchasing two separate fares. Surrey County Council is encouraging consideration of through ticketing in those cases where significant demand manifests itself for a through fare with a change of bus, where a current direct link may be severed. The Council welcomes the availability of multi-journey and flexible ticketing offers, to encourage increased bus patronage.

Mr Mike Goodman
Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
23 June 2015

RESPONSE TO PETITION

The Petition concerning 'Lingfield Library'

It states: 'We the undersigned, would like to register our dismay at the proposed changes to the staffing of Lingfield Library, and ask the Library service to re-consider its decision to remove them.'

Details of petition:

We believe Surrey County Council (SCC) misled us with their statement at the public meeting last June that Lingfield Library, with its current staff, would stay as it is for one year after the new trust is set up, to enable the trust to pursue ways of paying staff from funds.

We understand that Lingfield will have no continuity of staff as we are single manned and both staff will be relocated.

No one from the library service would surely opt for Lingfield as their base for one year unless they have a guarantee of a placement elsewhere at the end of that year. They would also be taking on extra responsibilities as our library assistant does now, as a lower grade.

The security of the building and its contents will be a major concern.

Has SCC considered borrowers with special needs? We have borrowers who rely on the staff to help them choose or obtain the reading material they prefer. Some are afraid to deal with 'new' people, preferring to wait until either of the staff they recognise is on duty if relief staff are in. Familiarity and continuity are vital for such people.

Do the senior library service staff have any first hand knowledge of our library? The relationship between staff and users, the ambience and social atmosphere. Do they even care?

Submitted by Mrs Rita Russell

Signatures: 294

Response

Surrey County Council has not misled residents. A meeting of Cabinet 24 July 2012 decided that Lingfield Library was one of ten libraries that would become a Community Partnered Library. At the public meeting last June, the Leader committed SCC to retaining the status of Lingfield as an SCC managed library until one year after the establishment of arrangements for the new Trust to take over responsibility for the building. The decision regarding this arrangement was taken by the Leader on 9 June 2015. The Leader was happy to take this decision because of the success of the already established Community Partnered Libraries in Surrey. That commitment included continuing to provide staff from the library service to run the library. In the

meantime (and this position was discussed by SCC in the negotiations with the prospective trustees) Lingfield Library remains managed by the Surrey County Council library service as part of the directly managed library network and therefore included in the operational review of the library service.

One of the aims of the Library Review is to improve training and development opportunities for staff so that libraries can continue to improve the service offered to residents and can deliver on SCC's priorities, particularly to help people live and age well, to promote volunteering in building community resilience and to expand the range of services available locally. The Review is county-wide and will give all staff the broader experience of other libraries serving other communities so that all libraries can progressively improve - to the benefit of all residents

Across the library service as a whole there is recognition that members of the community with special characteristics require additional support and care to get the most from their library. This was recognised both in the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for community partnered libraries in 2012 and in the EIA for the library review in 2014 and is reflected in training and customer care guidance for staff across the service as a whole. Feedback on library staff is very positive across the whole service.

The library service operates from a wide range of premises (including a number of listed buildings) and within the everyday role of library managers, there is always responsibility for the security of the building and on site property and valuables. New staff will be properly inducted and be under the same guidance and supervision as current staff.

The library service will continue to provide appropriately trained staff for Lingfield Library. Library staff throughout the service have the training, skills, sensitivity and customer service skills to deal with people with a variety of needs and characteristics, and knowledge of the wider library service and its range of over 100 services will help library users at Lingfield. Staff will be provided who will work regularly at Lingfield - but working in rotation as required rather than permanently based there - and will soon build appropriate relationships with library users. Developing good relationships with library users and the community is part of the job of every member of the library staff.

Mr Richard Walsh
Cabinet Member for Localities and Community Wellbeing
23 June 2015

RESPONSE TO PETITION

The Petition

To ensure the independence of Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) and its ability to protect the County's Wildlife and its habitats by continuing to provide adequate funding for SWT's activities in managing social assets on behalf of the Community such as Special Protection Areas.

Details of petition:

The Surrey Advertiser has reported that the County Council has plans to withdraw all County funding from Surrey Wildlife Trust over the period to 2021. This may require SWT to work with commercial sponsors and supporters to find new sources of funding which has the potential to compromise its independence and conflict with its role as manager of Special Protection Areas within the Thames Basin Heaths. Surrey Wildlife Trust's website states, 'SWT is the only organisation concerned solely with the conservation of all forms of wildlife in Surrey.' The Wildlife Trusts website states, 'The Wildlife Trusts want to help nature to recover from the decline that for decades has been the staple diet of scientific studies and news stories. We believe passionately that wildlife and natural processes need to have space to thrive, beyond designated nature reserves and other protected sites.' Wildlife habitats across the County face the constant threat of encroachment by new development. Surrey needs an organisation which can champion the interests of Nature. Withdrawal of funding from SWT is inconsistent with SCC's pledge to protect the Green Belt.

Submitted by Mr Ben Paton

Signatures: 420

Response

I understand the well intended motivation of Mr Paton and those who subscribed to the petition. However, I do not agree that the county council's proposals are in any way inconsistent with our enduring pledge to protect the Green Belt; on the contrary they are aimed at enhancing the contribution that our countryside makes to this valuable asset.

The County Council is well aware of the value of the Countryside Estate as it relates to the immediate benefits of wildlife and habitat protection, and the wider benefits to public health and Surrey's unique and vital economy and enshrined this in the Agreement with SWT.

The proposed changes to the long term Agreement with Surrey Wildlife Trust have been jointly developed based on sound principles which recognise the wider aims and objectives of both organisations.

Our work with the Wildlife Trust has shown the Agreement can work effectively, with reducing levels of financial support from the County Council,

provided that we work collaboratively, have strong governance arrangements in place and develop clear plans.

SCC has statutory responsibilities towards the Countryside Estate including rights of way and nature conservation. (The Estate is protected by a range of designations including SPA (Special Protection Area), SAC (Special Area for Conservation), SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and the AONB (Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). These designations attract a modest amount of grant but in order to conserve them at the level these designations require, further sources of funding need to be attracted, including working with other organisations to bid for funding.

SWT as a charity is protected under the agreement if it is not able to generate the income needed to manage the Estate.

I will present detailed plans describing how the Agreement will be revised to achieve these objectives to the Cabinet later in the meeting, similarly the Wildlife Trust will present the changes to their Council in July.

I trust that the signatories to the petition are reassured by this response.

Mr Mike Goodman
Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
23 June 2015

Surrey County Council Local Transport Review

Meeting of Cabinet, 23 June 2015

Petitions and Further Refinement of Local Bus Services

1. Following the closure of both the first consultation in February and the second consultation in June four petitions have been received relating to specific bus service changes. Although all four petitions missed the consultation deadline and the formal deadline for reporting to Cabinet, given that key decisions are to be taken on bus services by Cabinet it is important that the views of residents are not lost, but are heard and listened too.
2. A summary of the four petitions and what we are doing is set out below.
3. In addition, further refinement of bus service proposals has taken place following continued discussion with bus operators and key stakeholders, as noted below. Officers continue to review the comments from the second consultation and there may still be minor adjustments to those published.

Petition - Bus Route 22

4. A petition has been received from residents of Mole Valley and their representatives, with 187 signatures.
5. The key objection raised is the removal of the 22 bus service on a Saturday as it would isolate several communities in the south of Mole Valley District.
6. In considering this, it is proposed that the Mole Valley Demand Responsive Service (Buses4U DRT) will be extended to operate on Saturdays. Residents who currently use Metrobus service 22, from areas not served by conventional bus services such as Newdigate, Leigh, Chart Downs, Sutton Abinger, Holmbury St Mary and Abinger Common, will be able to book journeys in advance on the DRT service by phoning the call centre. The service will be operated by East Surrey Rural Transport Partnership who operate the Monday to Friday DRT service in Mole Valley. The service will be open to all Mole Valley residents who don't have access to other bus services and will provide an alternative for the Metrobus service 22 whilst also providing new transport opportunities.
7. Publicity will be produced in advance of the service starting and will be sent out to Members, Parish Councils, Resident Groups etc who can assist in publicising the service by including information in any newsletters and on websites.

Petition - Bus Route 557 (Shepperton)

8. A petition has been received from residents of Shepperton and their representatives, which has 415 signatures.
9. The key objection raised is that the direct bus from Shepperton to St. Peter's Hospital would be broken, requiring a change of bus en-route.
10. In response we have worked hard with the operator of this service, Abellio to develop a revised route for service 557 so that it can include St. Peter's Hospital and maintain the direct link, whilst still making a saving in subsidy. The modified 557 would also retain a direct hospital link from Sunbury, New Haw, West Byfleet and Sheerwater.
11. Agreement with Abellio should be confirmed shortly, securing a revised 557 for a further year. Officers will work with local communities and Members to grow patronage on this route. However, if the patronage to and from the hospital from these locations does not increase we may have to review the service again in 2016.

Petition - Bus Route 557 (Stanwell Moor)

12. A petition has been received from residents of Stanwell Moor and their representatives, which has 691 signatures.
13. The key objection raised is that the changes would mean residents having to walk to a bus stop across a busy dual carriageway to access key local bus services.
14. The Cabinet Member, accompanied by Officers met County Councillor Robert Evans and Borough Councillor Sue Doran in the village on Friday 19 June. A tour of the village and discussion of issues with several residents took place. It is recognised by all that the 557 service is not well used by residents of the village. An average daily total of only 8 return journeys are undertaken on the 557 from the village itself. Yet local bus access to key services is an issue. What residents would like is the resumption of Abellio's commercial service of 441 through the village.
15. However, there is no easy solution. Officers will discuss the 441 situation with Abellio again and determine if any alternative options are available.

Petition - Bus Route 564

16. A petition has been received from residents of Walton on Thames and other locations. The petition has 371 signatures.
17. The key objection raised is the withdrawal of the service between Walton town centre, Vicarage Fields Estate and Xcel Centre, with replacement by a less-frequent service 400 on Mondays to Fridays only.
18. The proposal to run service 564 between Whiteley Village and Walton town centre every 60 minutes on Mondays to Saturdays, is to be modified so that the full route is restored Mondays to Saturdays, but operating every 70 minutes through the day.

Bus Links to St Peter's Hospital

19. Following further discussions with Abellio and the Hospital Trust, on route 446, Abellio has agreed to modify their proposed hourly daily commercial service 446 (Woking-St. Peter's Hospital-Staines) by extending it to Ashford Hospital at no cost to the Council. This will preserve the link between the two hospitals which is currently provided by service 557.
20. Working with Abellio we will begin a joint initiative with the Ashford-St. Peter's Hospital Trust to promote all bus travel options to both hospitals, with the aim of growing patronage and helping services to be more sustainable in the longer term.