

MINUTES of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.30 am on 10 May 2018 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Date Not Specified.

Elected Members:

- * Mr Bob Gardner (Chairman)
- * Mr Wyatt Ramsdale (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mrs Mary Angell
- * Mr Stephen Cooksey
- * Mr Paul Deach
- * Mr Jonathan Essex
- * Mr Matt Furniss
- * Mr Eber A Kington
- * Mrs Bernie Muir
- * Mr John O'Reilly
- * Mr Stephen Spence
- * Mrs Lesley Steeds
- * Mr Richard Walsh

Substitute Members:

- Mr Bill Chapman
- Mr Richard Wilson

9/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1/18]

Apologies for absence were received from Richard Wilson and Bill Chapman.

10/18 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 28 FEBRUARY 2018 [Item 2/18]

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved with one amendment.

11/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3/18]

Paul Deach declared a historic pecuniary interest as a former social media consultant for the Surrey Wildlife Trust. He noted that he no longer had an interest in this area.

Stephen Spence declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Rambler's Association.

Bernie Muir declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Rambler's Association.

12/18 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4/18]

There were no questions or petitions received.

13/18 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5/18]

There were no responses from Cabinet.

**14/18 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
[Item 6/18]**

Members questioned the status of the recommendation of 11 October 2017. The Chairman noted that there had been an update and discussion on this in February and that the committee had scheduled a discussion on fly-tipping at its December 2018 meeting to follow up on this recommendation.

Members noted and approved the forward plan and recommendations tracker.

**15/18 UPDATES FROM MEMBER REFERENCE GROUPS AND TASK GROUPS
[Item 7/18]**

Declarations of interest:

Paul Deach disclosed a historical interest as a former media consultant for the Surrey Wildlife Trust.

Witnesses:

Bob Gardner
Wyatt Ramsdale
Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. The Chairman of the Countryside Management Member Reference Group noted that the group had been working with the Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) to develop a robust and sustainable business plan. He noted that there had been historic work undertaken regarding countryside car parking, which had been developed and implemented by the service.
2. The Cabinet Member for Environment noted that there had been significant concerns regarding the viability of the SWT Business Plan. It was noted that the business plan was being refreshed and that there would be a rolling three year business plan that Members were invited to comment on. It was noted that this was aimed at improving commercial viability.
3. The Cabinet Member for Environment explained that the SWT needed to become more proficient at being a commercially viable organisation, but stressed that they were very good at the role of countryside management. Members stressed that there needed to be a balance found, due to the SWT being a service provider, rather than a primarily a profit making organisation.
4. Members noted that there would be an update on the work of the Basingstoke Canal Task and Finish Group at the next meeting of the Committee.

5. Members noted that the Waste Local Plan Consultation item further in the agenda would update the Committee on the work undertaken by the Waste Management Member Reference Group.

16/18 TACKLING SINGLE USE PLASTICS [Item 8/18]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Sarah Kershaw, Directorate Alignment Manager
Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment
Jason Russell, Deputy Director Environment & Infrastructure
Lesley Harding, Head of Place Development

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. Officers outlined the impetus for the creation of a single use plastics policy, highlighting the motion of Full Council in March 2018 to tackle the prevalence of single use plastics in Surrey. Members noted that there was wide ranging political support for the resolution of this issue as a result of this. It was stressed that the Council needed to lead by example on this issue.
2. It was highlighted that the strategy was planned in two separate phases: Phase One of the plan was clarified as being the strategy to tackle single use plastics within the organisation of Surrey County Council. Phase Two of the plan was aimed to be a wider Surrey strategy. Officers noted that the expected timescale for completion of Phase One was October 2018.
3. The Committee expressed the need for additional impetus on this project and stressed the requirement to engage with the project with as much alacrity as possible. Officers noted that work had been undertaken to analyse “quick wins” which had immediate effects. It was also highlighted that scoping work had been undertaken with departments in Surrey County Council and that officers had been approached through internal forum to identify additional ideas. The Cabinet Member stressed that the Council motion was quite recent and that there had been significant amounts of work undertaken in a relatively short space of time which emphasised the political impetus and importance of this issue for officers and Members.
4. Officers noted that there were wider implications which needed to be considered when undertaking this project, noting that there were some difficulties in removing plastics in some areas, due to statutory requirements and unforeseen cost implications. It was also noted that there may be some unforeseen costs that would be analysed as part of Phase One.

5. Members questioned whether there had been a project manager appointed for this project and how much that this would cost the Council. Members also questioned the resources available to the service to undertake this task. Officers noted that there was an available resource of £30,000 for a project manager and also identify other wider costs for this project. The Cabinet Member for Environment noted that there was a need to recruit good people to manage a project of this nature to ensure a successful conclusion.
6. Members noted that it could work with partners to gather knowledge and ideas, noting that some partners would have already available resource and ideas. Members also questioned whether the service had talked with partners and schools to determine what they are doing and offer suggestions. It was stressed that there was an important need to work with schools and partners.
7. Members suggested that there would need to be a strong communications campaign in order to change attitudes on this issue, noting that there was a need for a culture change in how single use plastic is perceived and utilised, particularly as part of Phase Two. Officers explained that an external communications campaign was currently in development and aimed to link with partners to achieve this in the long term.
8. Members suggested that there could be incentives to officers as part of Phase One to encourage the culture change away from single use plastics. Members proposed that the organisation could look at the potential of working with partners to provide multiple use cups and mugs to officers to encourage this culture change. It was also suggested that this could include Surrey County Council branding to promote multi-use cups across the county and encourage culture change.
9. Officers noted that there was a milestone action plan being developed as part of phase one which would include timescales and thresholds of success for the project.
10. It was suggested by the Committee that the service could work to benchmark and incorporate the work of other authorities, partners and commercial organisations that have undertaken any similar project. Members also suggested the potential to be host to a workshop event with partners and other organisations to share good practice on this.
11. Members questioned whether there were any contractual arrangements that were slowing down schemes to reduce single use plastics in the organisation.
12. The Committee asked whether there was a potential to appoint officer champions for single-use plastics throughout the organisation to promote change.

13. Members questioned whether they had received any confirmation or direction from the Secretary of State for Environment following the letter sent by the Cabinet Member for Environment. The Cabinet Member noted that he was awaiting response from the Secretary of State and noted that a response could open further opportunities

Recommendations:

That the Environment and Infrastructure Select Committee:

1. Supports the development of the policy over the next few months by forming a Member Reference Group;
2. That officers continue to communicate with schools and partners and other authorities as part of the development of an action plan;
3. That officers incorporate into the timeline for Phase One plans to undertake benchmarking and learning exercises with other authorities, partners and local businesses with an aim to feedback, incorporate and share ideas;
4. That the committee receive a brief update report in six months regarding progress of phase one and future plans.

17/18 REVIEW OF THE SURREY WASTE PLAN: CONSULTATION ON DRAFT PLAN [Item 9/18]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Paul Sanderson, Minerals & Waste Policy Team Manager
Phil Smith, Environmental Assessment Officer
Jason Russell, Deputy Director Environment & Infrastructure
Lesley Harding, Head of Place Development
Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. Officers clarified the role of Surrey County Council as the waste planning authority. It was noted that the development of this plan had been a long process and involved a significant consultation, which was open for 14 weeks. It was noted that the consultation response had been strong and had raised several key issues.
2. It was noted that service would be putting forward a submission plan in for consultation in Autumn 2018, noting that there had been a revision in the timetable resultant of the need to adequately review the consultation responses.
3. Members questioned the number of responses and whether they were within expected parameters. Officers noted that response had been

good and that they also included a high number of interested organisations as well as individuals. It was noted that the consultation responses reflected the locations of the sites that were proposed, and that the distribution of responses was to be expected.

4. Members raised the suggestion of “Land adjacent to the A25 and A22 next to Streets Court which was used when the M25 was being modified and now sits vacant,” that was in the consultation report and questioned why there was little detail on the reasoning for rejection. Officers acknowledged the lack of information, but clarified that the site was rejected based on deliverability and the requirement for the site to be returned to its previous state as a Green Field site.
5. Members questioned whether there were any significant variations on the previous plan that had been made as part of this submission, and how changes would affect members of public. Officers noted that there had been updated evidence and modifications based on changes in government policy from the last plan. It was explained that there was updated emphasis in the plan to recover and recycle waste rather than to landfill.
6. Officers explained that there had been site assessments and environmental assessments undertaken and that local transport plans would need to be flexible to account for changes in traffic. It was also noted that sites had taken into account the plans for Crossrail 2 and the Transport for London (TfL) had been involved in consultation.
7. Members expressed the need for transparency creation of future consultations and ensure that members of the public can understand what is being asked of them. Officers noted these comments and expressed the wish to improve upon consultation in future to alleviate these concerns.
8. Members of the committee expressed concern regarding the flexibility of the plan to allow the executive to have significant decision making powers regarding waste management facilities with little consultation from members of the public. Officers noted that the plan may in future have some restriction on the type of facility that is being created, but retains flexibility.
9. Members questioned the idea of self-sufficiency and how this was attainable. Officers noted that self-sufficiency of waste management incorporated commercial and industrial waste.
10. Officers noted the work undertaken with the Waste Management Member Reference Group and thanked the group for their contribution to the development of the plan. Members noted that the Member Reference Group should continue to support development of the consultation plan.

Recommendations:

That the Environment and Infrastructure Select Committee:

1. Notes the level and depth of response to the consultation on the draft Surrey Waste Local Plan and supports the work being undertaken to prepare a submission draft Surrey Waste Local Plan in light of responses received
2. Recommends that the Waste Management Member Reference Group will continue to monitor the submission plan in Summer 2018 prior to further consultation by E&ISC in September 2018.

18/18 CAPITAL INVESTMENT AND THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEER AND PARISH COUNCIL INPUT IN MAINTAINING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY [Item 10/18]

Declarations of interest:

Stephen Spence declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Rambler's Association

Bernie Muir declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Rambler's Association

Witnesses:

Steve Mitchell, Countryside Access and Operations Manager

Lisa Creaye-Griffin, Countryside Group Manager

Jason Russell, Deputy Director Environment & Infrastructure

Lesley Harding, Head of Place Development

Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment

Key points raised in the discussion:

1. Officers explained that there was a backlog of delivery for public rights of way. It was also noted that there were issues regarding closures of public rights of way, such as footbridges. Officers highlighted that one of the key challenges for the maintenance of public rights of way was the reduction in funding maintenance by 50%.
2. Members questioned how much funding was required to improve and resolve maintenance issues and what resource was required to resolve the backlog. Officers noted that estimates on required funding had been made based on outstanding work but that there were no precise figures available.
3. Members asked whether the backlog in maintenance would cause significant issues in the long term and whether there was a potential to invest to save in this area and restore funding to previous levels. Officers noted that there had been some consideration on this but that there also had been liaising work undertaken with partners, volunteers and District and Borough authorities to alleviate pressure.
4. Officers noted that the service had been using an interactive web form to collate information of areas that required work. The interactive map allowed the public to see what issues had been reported. Members

suggested that this could be spread wider than it is currently, noting that County, Borough and District and Parish Councillors could be useful conduits for the information held on this resource. It was also suggested that volunteer groups and rambling associations could also be supplied this information to ensure that this work is more appropriately targeted.

5. The Cabinet Member for the Environment noted that there would be work undertaken with the directorate to ascertain whether there was budget available in the next financial year to alleviate some of the issues raised.

Recommendations:

That the Environment and Infrastructure Select Committee:

1. That the Cabinet Member for Environment works with Members from borough, district and parish authorities to look at the potential to achieve joint funding and explore developing an initiative to increase funding to this service to restore more rights of way
2. That the report is circulated to Local Committee Chairmen to ensure better linkage with Local Committees;
3. That the service circulate wider the link to the interactive web form to County Councillors, to volunteer organisations and to interested parties
4. That a list of current issues in public rights of way be circulated to all Members

19/18 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 11/18]

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for 6 September 2018 at County Hall.

Meeting ended at: 1.14 pm

Chairman