

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

TUESDAY 21 MAY 2019

**QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED UNDER THE PROVISIONS
OF STANDING ORDER 10.1**

MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS

1. MR EBER KINGTON (EWELL COURT, AURIOL & CUDDINGTON) TO ASK:

I note that Surrey has some of the busiest roads in the country that suffer from high traffic volumes and utility works and that Surrey County Council has been lobbying the government to address the unfairness of highway grant allocations that do not consider road usage.

However, I also note that for 2019/2020 the Cabinet Member for Highways has allocated part of the local highway budget on the basis of the number of County Councillors (divisions) in a Borough/District rather than use the principle of road usage.

Can the Cabinet Member for Highways advise me of the following:

- What is the highway maintenance and engineering rationale for distributing local highway funds on the basis of the number of divisions within a Borough/District?
- Will he be translating this formulae to the national scale, urging the Department of Transport to allocate national highway funding on the basis of the number of MPs or constituencies within any given Highway Authority area?

Response:

The rationale for allocating Local / Joint Committee funding was explained in my email to all Members sent on the 21 December 2018. As I again explained in my reply to the Epsom & Ewell Local Committee question to Cabinet this April, the Local / Joint Committee capital allocation has, only in part been aligned with the number of County Members in a District or Borough.

Below is an extract from my email of the 21 December 2018 and included in the reply to Cabinet in April 2019:

“Each Local / Joint Committee will receive core £100,000, this will give every committee a base funding level for the year 2019/20. The remainder of the budget (£900,000) will be fairly split according to how many County Divisions each committee has, taking into account the comments received about population levels etc. This ensures that all committees will have a reasonable base budget to undertake improvements in their areas, while those with larger populations get a greater allocation of the remainder to reflect some additional demand”.

I am pleased that the County Council is once again able to provide a healthy budget of £2,000,000 capital to Local / Joint Committees and £7,500 revenue per Member (totalling £607,500 revenue countywide), enabling them to undertake important works. For Epsom & Ewell this equates to a total of £193,056. These county funds are in addition to any local parking surpluses or developer contributions each Committee controls. Officers will advise Members on suggested priorities within their areas, but it is for Local Members to determine

how best to use the funds. There is no requirement that these local budgets need to adhere to asset management principles.

Below is an extract from my reply to Cabinet in April 2019:

“This capital allocation is distinct from centrally managed budgets and can be used to tackle a range of local issues. The central budgets follow approved asset management principles to ensure the roads and other highway assets in most need, regardless of location, are prioritised.”

I hope that this helps to clarify the rationale behind the local highway fund distribution. The County Council is not moving away from sound highway maintenance and engineering rationale, but is enabling local flexibility for a proportion of the budget.

The County Council will continue to lobby government for a fairer settlement to Surrey residents and highway users. Funding should reflect the heavy usage our roads endure, not just road length.

MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS

2. MR ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK:

How does the Council monitor the state of Surrey’s pavements as some of them are in awful condition?

Response:

All of the pavements that Surrey County Council is responsible for are categorised by hierarchy and are inspected on a risk based basis as set out below;

Category 1 - Primary Walking Route. Inspected monthly - Busy urban shopping and business areas and main pedestrian routes - major shopping outlets (+100 shops).

Category 2 - Secondary Walking Route. Inspected every 3 months - Medium usage routes through local areas feeding into primary routes, local shopping (+20 shops), links to transport hubs.

Category 3 - Link Footway. Inspected every 6 months - Linking local access footways, small shopping outlets (+5 shops), large schools and industrial outlets, +500 pupils.

Category 4 - Local Access Footway. Inspected every 12 months - All other footways.

The categories are set based on the key drivers of high footfall and therefore increased risk and include the following considerations;

- Shops
- Transport Hubs
- Pedestrian Routes
- Schools
- Industrial outlets
- Vulnerable user usage

Pavement inspections are carried out by a Highway Inspector walking a prescribed route and recording defects that meet the intervention levels as set out in the Highway Safety Inspection Policy Identification of Defect Severity Matrix. Pavement defect types are shown below;

- Paving slabs or blocks - rocking, causing trips or missing
- General surface defects - potholes, trips, bumps or depressions
- Ironwork and covers - broken, tilted, rocking, missing or projecting

In addition to Safety Inspections, since 2011 all of the pavements for which Surrey County Council is responsible (approx. 5000kms) have undergone a Footway Network Survey (FNS) which is carried out to a national standard for pavement surveys and is carried out on a 5 yearly cycle. This survey records both the surface material and condition of each pavement and classifies the condition and extent of the deterioration of sections of pavement into one of 4 condition bands as below;

- 1) as new
- 2) aesthetically impaired
- 3) functionality impaired
- 4) structurally unsound

This classification is used to inform our Pavement Horizon programme which was launched in 2016 and includes both reconstruction work and preventative maintenance. As per the Council's decision at the outset of the Pavement Horizon programme, the reconstruction programme targets high priority areas where they are most in need of improvement and where they are well-used, particularly by more vulnerable members of our communities. This includes town and village centres, as well as areas around schools, health centres and hospitals.

SINEAD MOONEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

3. MR CHRIS BOTTEN (CATERHAM HILL) TO ASK:

The sudden ending of the Section 75 arrangement with Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust came to light last weekend in a briefing to the voluntary sector. While it is a technical measure, it has been in place since 2012 to ensure joint funding and a shared approach to the provision of Adult mental health services; its sudden rupture, without democratic process or transparency, indicates serious problems with the Mental Health provider and further casts doubt on the quality of services Surrey residents receive. It is ironic that the action came to light in Mental Health Awareness Week.

- Why was this decision not brought to Cabinet so Members could hear the debate and ask questions?
- What impact will this have on service provision?
- What is the financial impact of the decision?
- What measures are being taken to secure improved services for Adults suffering mental health problems?

Response:

The Council has served notice that it wishes to withdraw from the current Section 75 agreement with Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. The decision to serve notice was taken by the Director of Adult Services in consultation with the Portfolio

Lead for Adult Social Care and the Leader of the Council. The notice period is six months and the Section 75 remains in place during that period. Discussions are ongoing with the Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SABPT) and a report will be taken to Cabinet outlining the future partnership arrangements when these have been agreed.

The S75 delegates the discharge of certain social care functions to the SABPT, although the relevant staff remain SCC employees. The Section 75 was agreed in 2012, before the Care Act, and so is an incomplete description of the duties that we might delegate. The schedules outlining the finance, performance and staffing arrangements are no longer accurate.

Ending the Section 75 arrangement will enable the Council to achieve a more preventative model of social care, focussing on greater collaboration and integration across all sectors, not solely based on secondary health care. It is anticipated that improved quality and greater effectiveness can be made in this service using in-house management. This will be a better offer for our residents who require this type of support. SCC and Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust will work closely together over the next six months to safely transfer services. Avoiding any adverse impact on service users will be central to these discussions – either in the long term, or in the process of transferring work back to the County Council.

The service covers the work of 183 Staff including social workers and support staff. The total budget cost for the staff is £8.6m for 2018/9. The SCC spend on this client group is £7.2m. It is expected that the service will continue to work within the same cost envelope and be subject to the savings targets agreed across the Department.

Members will know that Adult Social Care has been very successful in reshaping its services to a new model of care that has resulted in significant financial savings to the Council in the last year. We need to apply the same model and approach to people with mental health problems, and our ambition is to provide better services within the resources that the Council can afford. The under development of preventative and community resources may have resulted in an over reliance on costly residential and institutional care. Taking back control of the service is an essential first step in this process. Many other councils have taken a similar approach.

MIKE GOODMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE

4. MR ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK: (2nd question)

A recent survey by the Times, found that every school in London was over the World Health Organisation limit for air pollution. Fine particles are the most dangerous form of air pollution as they penetrate deep into the bloodstream and lungs. Does Surrey have similar figures for our schools, especially ones near for example the M25? Are there plans to address these real concerns?

Response:

District and borough councils have the statutory duty to assess air quality and declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) if there is a potential breach in the standards. There are currently 26 locations, across nine of the 11 district and boroughs in Surrey that have been declared AQMAs (Mole Valley and Tandridge have not declared any to date). Surrey County Council's Transport and Public Health teams have been working closely with officers from district and borough councils to take forward a Schools Air Quality Programme, funded through the DEFRA Air Quality Fund. The programme aims to help reduce local air pollution

near targeted schools, offering a package of interventions to primary or secondary schools in or within 2km of an AQMA.

The Schools Air Quality Programme started in October 2018 and will run until the end of the school year in July 2019. A package of complimentary measures has been offered to 40 primary/secondary schools in or within 2kms of an AQMA. Measures include: Theatre in Education (TiE), a bespoke production based on air quality and sustainable transport to/from schools; classroom workshops and support for pupils to measure local air quality at their school to compare sites such as roadside and playground; school travel planning intervention; Bikeability training (basic level to support children to learn to ride a bicycle as well as advanced level for cycling on busy roads); an air quality element to the existing Golden Boot Challenge (which encourages active travel); and an Air Quality Summit (schools conference).

As part of this programme, four schools are currently working with the London Sustainability Exchange to target parents and carers who continue to leave their car engine running whilst waiting to pick up their children at the end of the school day. This 'anti-idling' initiative is aimed at raising awareness of the harmful effects and the impact on localised pollution of the idling.

To support the overall programme, a county-wide communications campaign targeted parents/families to raise awareness about the impact air pollutants have on children's health and encourage parents to use alternative modes of transport to and from school. The Schools Air Quality Programme is currently being evaluated and the findings will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in December 2019.

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