

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, KINGSTON UPON THAMES, KT1 2DN ON 9 JULY 2019 COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM, THE COUNCIL BEING CONSTITUTED AS FOLLOWS:**

Tony Samuels (Chairman)  
Helyn Clack (Vice-Chairman)

*	Mary Angell		Naz Islam
	Ayesha Azad		Colin Kemp
	Barton		Eber Kington
	John Beckett		Graham Knight
	Mike Bennison		Rachael I Lake
*	Amanda Boote	*	Yvonna Lay
	Chris Botten		David Lee
*	Liz Bowes		Mary Lewis
	Natalie Bramhall		Andy MacLeod
	Mark Brett-Warburton		Ernest Mallett MBE
	Ben Carasco		David Mansfield
	Bill Chapman	*	Peter Martin
	Stephen Cooksey		Jan Mason
	Clare Curran		Cameron McIntosh
	Nick Darby		Sinead Mooney
	Paul Deach	*	Charlotte Morley
	Graham Ellwood		Marsha Moseley
	Jonathan Essex		Tina Mountain
	Robert Evans		Bernie Muir
	Tim Evans		Mark Nuti
	Mel Few		John O'Reilly
	Will Forster		Tim Oliver
*	John Furey		Andrew Povey
	Matt Furniss	*	Wyatt Ramsdale
	Bob Gardner		Penny Rivers
	Mike Goodman	*	Becky Rush
	Angela Goodwin		Stephen Spence
	David Goodwin		Lesley Steeds
	Zully Grant-Duff		Peter Szanto
	Alison Griffiths		Keith Taylor
	Ken Gulati		Barbara Thomson
	Tim Hall	*	Rose Thorn
	Kay Hammond		Chris Townsend
	David Harmer		Denise Turner-Stewart
	Jeffrey Harris		Richard Walsh
	Nick Harrison		Hazel Watson
*	Edward Hawkins	*	Fiona White
	Marisa Heath		Keith Witham
	Saj Hussain		Victoria Young
*	Julie Iles		

\*absent

#### **44/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Angell, Mr Furey, Mr Hawkins, Mrs Iles, Mrs Lay, Ms Morley, Mr Ramsdale, Mrs Rush, Mrs Thorn and Mrs White.

#### **45/18 MINUTES [Item 2]**

The minutes of the meeting of the County Council held on 21 May 2019 were submitted, confirmed and signed.

#### **46/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

Dr Andrew Povey declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was a trustee for the Surrey Hills Society.

#### **47/18 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS [Item 4]**

The Chairman:

- Highlighted to Members that the Chairman's Announcements were located in the agenda front sheet.
- Welcomed and congratulated Jacob Wren, the Surrey Youth Mayor.
- Reminded Members of the Yehudi Menuhin concert taking place after the meeting.

#### **48/18 LEADER'S STATEMENT [Item 5]**

The Leader made a detailed statement. A copy of the statement is attached as Appendix A.

In addition to his Statement the Leader:

- Welcomed Extinction Rebellion in the Public Gallery, highlighted the important environmental issues to be debated and was grateful for the input of several of their representatives.

Members raised the following topics:

- Praised the work of Children's Services for their continued improvement and progress, thanked all those involved and noted the challenges ahead.
- Welcomed the invitation of the Cabinet Member for Adults and Public Health to the first meeting of the new all-party parliamentary group on social care.
- Highlighted the lack of current funding arrangements by Surrey County Council which led to the abandonment of youth centres.
- The recent report from the all-party parliamentary group on Highways was welcomed but footways and roads remained poor in some areas.
- That there were two recent reports on the lack of local authority funding, which outlined the £60 billion deficit by 2024/25.

- The Green Paper on Social Care which highlighted the serious lack of funding remained unpublished.
- Endorsed the Leader's Statement on Children's Services as attested to by the recent report by Ofsted which showed excellent programme management by the Council.
- Praised the progress of Local Partnership Boards and that the Council must continue to be a "system leader" on challenging issues like school place planning.
- Welcomed the Leader's Rethinking Transport project on sustainable transport and urged the Council against Heathrow's expansion.
- That there must be adequate infrastructure funding and senior oversight over Community Investment Levy's/Section 106 planning applications.
- That the Highways team provide detailed responses to complex planning applications.
- As the Lead Local Flood Authority, the County Council must ensure that the Environment Agency and local water boards provide adequate drainage and sewage services.
- That there was a crisis in primary care and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy was welcomed to address this.
- Called for more investment in sustainable public transport and encouraged cycling and walking to reduce air pollution and healthier option.
- Congratulated the use of recycled materials by Surrey Choices in their award-winning garden at the Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival.
- Surrey County Council's EmployAbility Making a Difference Award was praised as it provided employment opportunities and training for those with learning difficulties.
- Supported Children's issues being at the forefront of the speeches and highlighted the report of Children's Commissioner which commended the progress in Children's services despite the challenge of a recent restructure.
- Highlighted the letter of congratulations sent on behalf of Unison by their Children's Convener which praised the Council's positive Ofsted report on Children's Services.

#### **49/18 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME [Item 6]**

##### **Questions:**

Notice of seven questions had been received. The questions and replies were published in a supplementary agenda on 8 July 2019.

A number of supplementary questions were asked and a summary of the main points is set out below:

**(Q1) Mr Will Forster** asked if the Leader of the Council could write to the new Prime Minister and the new Secretary of State for Education once they were in office, asking them to adequately fund all schools and SEND in Surrey. The Leader of the Council agreed to note that.

**(Q2) Mr Chris Botten** asked if the Leader of the Council would note the success of having senior Cabinet Members involved in the delivery of Infrastructure Local Plans. The Leader of the Council noted the comment.

**(Q3) Mrs Hazel Watson** asked the Cabinet Member for Highways for a copy of the new Strategy and Action Plan on Drive SMART and asked for a progress report in six months' time. The Cabinet Member for Highways will ensure all Members would have a copy and agreed that in six months' time a progress report would be given to the Council.

**(Q4) Mr Robert Evans** asked the Leader of the Council if he had any special measures to ensure that Surrey County Council would not run out of money to meet its legal obligations in next three years. Mr Evans also asked if the Leader of the Council had made any specific plans to visit the new Prime Minister once in office. The Leader of the Council stated that this would be achieved through good financial planning, for the first time the books were balanced in the last financial year but there would be a challenge this year for the Council as there would be in many local authorities. CIPFA have looked at the Council's budget process and transformation plans, to ensure sound financial management. The Leader recognised the severe underfunding of local government and lobby the Conservative Government.

**(Q5) Mr Ernest Mallett** stated that the terminology of the response was unclear. Mr Mallett asked the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families if Youth Centres would close due to no open access being available for voluntary groups. He also restated the last bullet point of his question which he felt had not been answered, by asking if the premises and equipment would be open to voluntary providers. Lastly, he asked if any work had been done to reduce the potential for increased crime and vandalism due to the withdrawal for the provision of Youth Services.

Mr Essex asked if local committees could have an update on youth provision on how this has changed in the last three years.

Mr Harrison asked if voluntary groups such as the Horley and Edge Centres would be charged rent for the use of these premises.

Mrs Mason agreed that the first three bullet points of Mr Mallett's question had not been answered. She asked the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families if she accepted the widely held view in Epsom and Ewell, that young people had been abandoned without alternative suitable provision of Youth Services such as the Edge Centre.

Mr Townsend asked that if there is an upcoming consultation on youth centres, when will this happen.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families replied that the current position on Youth Service provision is unchanged since the restructure and that greater provisions were a work in progress. That none of the youth centres would be closed during the restructure. There would also be new support structures such as an adolescent safeguarding service and the targeted youth support service. That the Edge Centre had a low level of take up for women which would be addressed.

**(Q6) Mr Jonathan Essex** asked the Leader of the Council if he could confirm why these locations were sensitive, what would the general scope of sites be and the time, length and previous uses of these sites. The leader of the Council responded that these sites were commercially sensitive and that a briefing under the Part 2 of the Local Government Act was available.

**(Q7) Mr Robert Evans** asked the Cabinet Member for Finance if he felt that this was another case of the figures not being made available and since Surrey County Council had budgeted for this project, why was the cost not disclosed.

Ms Turner Stewart asked if the Cabinet Member for Finance would agree that once operational the station would have an impressive range of capabilities so that it could be a multi-agency facility.

The Cabinet Member for Finance agreed with Ms Turner Stewart's question. Once the facility has been completed and the final invoices have been received, the Council will be informed of the cost of the project.

**Cabinet Member Briefings:** these were also published with the supplementary on 8 July 2019.

Members made the following comments:

**Cabinet Member for Highways:** on the issue of surface dressing, that the money spent on anti-skid surface dressing in a particular division would have been better allocated to address the severe flooding issue on the A24. The Cabinet Member stated that the resurfacing budget would not have covered the major flooding issue and that the resurfacing was done on safety grounds. He would be happy to go to the Member's division to discuss the matter further and put any further issues to the local committees.

It was asked that in what circumstances would Surrey County Council as the Highways authority be not best placed to undertake important highways maintenance and would there be sufficient funds to complete these works locally. The Cabinet Member responded that it was down to District and Borough Councils to decide their work projects, such as Woking's higher quality pedestrianised areas and noted that income from the licensing in these areas were kept within the local District and Borough Councils.

**Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Development and Infrastructure:** on the A320, that the infrastructure bid would be delivered by March 2023 and that the Council should be informed about the details of the spending. The Cabinet Member stated that he had only recently seen the terms and conditions of the bid and that once he and the relevant officers had gone through the document, he would discuss this with the Member where it concerned him locally.

Members also raised the issue of the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and questioned how they operated. That many member briefings on these had been cancelled and it would be useful to be informed of the difference between the East and West LEPs. The Cabinet Member stated that each LEP had its own way of interpreting issues and delivery strategies, with the four boroughs in the east covered by Coast 2 Capital and seven boroughs in the west covered by Enterprise M3. More member briefings would be arranged and representatives

from these groups would be happy to discuss their local industrial strategies with Members.

It was asked whether the LEPs covered the whole of Surrey County as this was not the case previously. The Cabinet Member confirmed that that the LEPs do cover the whole of Surrey County with Coast 2 Capital covering the boroughs in the east and Enterprise M3 covering the boroughs in the west.

It was asked whether there would be an impact on the LEPs in Surrey County as they were served by two LEPs, as the Government has now limited to one LEP per county. The Cabinet Member stated that there was a recent boundary review done by the LEPs and that he would continue to respond to local government consultations on this matter.

**Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste:** on the statutory consultation response concerning Heathrow, whether it should go through Council, Cabinet or the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee rather than one Cabinet Member and Officers in private. The Cabinet Member stated that it was current practice to produce a reply in consultation with the relevant Officers. There had already been five member briefings on the expansion of Heathrow and there would be another one in July. The views raised in those briefings would form part of the Cabinet Member's consultation response.

**Deputy Cabinet Member for Property:** on the property project delivery of a site in Mole Valley and the likelihood of its approval. The Deputy Cabinet Member reported that the particular property was in the first tranche of properties in the Joint Venture and was expected to be processed by the end of this year.

## **50/18 STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS [Item 7]**

Mr Nick Darby made a statement in regards to secondary school admissions in the Dittons and for Surrey County Council to review the admissions criteria in Elmbridge.

## **51/18 ORIGINAL MOTIONS [Item 8]**

### **Item 8(i)**

Under Standing Order 12.3 the Council agreed to debate this motion.  
Under Standing Order 12.1 Mr Mike Goodman moved:

an amendment to the motion set out in the agenda for this meeting in his own name, as follows: (with additional words in bold/underlined and any deletions crossed through)

Following the Prime Minister's announcement that the UK will eradicate its net contribution to climate change by 2050.

This council notes:

- That as the first country in the G7 to legislate for long-term climate targets, the UK already leads the world in tackling climate change

- This is not only the right thing to tackle the climate emergency for future generations but a significant opportunity to increase our energy efficiency, improve our resilience and deliver a greener, healthier society.

This council welcomes:

- The target of net zero emissions being enshrined in law as soon as possible
- That in its report, the Committee on Climate Change forecast significant benefits to public health and savings to the NHS from better air quality and less noise pollution, as well as improved biodiversity
- That the UK is on track to become the first G7 country to legislate for net zero emissions, with other major economies expected to follow suit
- That for the first time, young people will have the chance to shape our future climate policy through the Youth Steering Group, set up by DCMS and led by the British Youth Council, who will advise Government on priorities for environmental action and give a view on progress to date against existing commitments on climate, waste and recycling, and biodiversity loss.

Therefore, this council resolves to:

1. commit to working closely with the Government, the Environment Agency, our Borough & District colleagues, local businesses, our residents and other partners in meeting this ambitious target.
2. deliver a strategy in 2019/20 **involving a task group** that clearly outlines how we plan to deliver the target **including actions that will be taken.**
3. write to the government asking them to confirm what support will be made available to local authorities to help achieve this goal.
4. **declares a ‘Climate Emergency’, and commits actions to support businesses and all local authorities in their work to tackle climate change by providing a strong unified voice for councils in lobbying for support to address this emergency, and sharing best practice across all councils.**

Members agreed to accept the amendment and therefore it became a substantive motion.

Mr Goodman made the following points:

- Stressed the importance of climate change and welcomed the County Council’s announcement of a “Climate Emergency”.
- Thanked all those involved in Surrey County Council for the actions taken to tackle climate change and that there must be a collaborative approach.
- That there was a need to develop and deliver an action targeted climate change strategy for Surrey by next spring. To ask the Environmental

Commission and the newly formed Select Committee Task Group, partners, District and Borough Councils to help deliver this.

- That individual action is critical for meaningful climate change, it was not just about the environment but about justice and the community.
- Surrey County Council listened to its resident's concerns for a clean and safe environment addressed through its 2030 Vision.
- That the legal obligations surrounding climate change were not fully addressed until 2008 by the United Kingdom through its Climate Change Act.
- Welcomed greater awareness of the issue over last ten years through Sir David Attenborough's Blue Planet documentary, Extinction Rebellion's cause and praised Greta Thunberg's campaign.
- Highlighted the importance of the report by the Committee on Climate Change this May on its document on "net zero" emissions by 2050 now enshrined in law in the United Kingdom.
- Climate change required the embracing of new technologies, multi-agency collaboration and action plans between the government and local authorities.
- That Aviation contributed to CO2 and non-CO2 warming effects. The United Nations' International Civil Aviation Organisation to develop an approach to mitigate this.
- That the United Kingdom must consider the upcoming report by the Committee on Climate Change on the impacts on the climate from the aviation sector and consider Heathrow expansion further.
- That Surrey County Council's use of renewable energy was low new targets needed to be set in line with the Leader's Environment Charter.
- The highest levels of CO2 and NO2 emissions in Surrey County Council were from transport.
- The Council needed to review its public transport provision, buses to be zero emissions in the future and more fast-charging points for electric cars would be required.
- That seven out of eleven districts and boroughs are at a very good green standard for energy efficiency for new builds, this would be improved through partnerships.
- That recycling rates in Surrey were among the highest in United Kingdom, but 2016 data showed that 121,000 tonnes of CO2 could have been saved from recycling going to landfill, service to report this annually.

The motion was formally seconded by Mr Will Forster, who made the following comments:

- Climate change was the biggest concern facing the United Kingdom and that there was an uncertainty around climate change policies with the change of Government.
- That this action should have happened sooner as earlier motions in the year were on climate change.
- Praised the work of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste for leading the way with the declared "Climate Emergency".
- That the Council needed a comprehensive plan for the climate crisis so that Surrey would be greener, cleaner and safer.



Eight Members made the following points:

- That expectations would be raised after agreeing this motion, there needed to be substantive and measurable policies on climate change not just rhetoric.
- That the role of public transport was critical including the need of a greater provision of electric buses.
- That climate change must be a matter of policy prioritisation even in times of economic distress.
- Collaboration on this amended motion led the way towards a zero carbon Surrey.
- There was a need for a new officer team of sustainability, renewable energy and green investment specialists to rethink public transport in Surrey.
- That more than £1 billion was needed for greener energy, the modern way of living was responsible for more than 40 times of the CO<sub>2</sub> that trees could absorb in Surrey.
- The Council must stop the support of Gatwick expansion through real estate investment and must halt Heathrow expansion taking over Spelthorne.
- That a new minerals strategy was needed which focussed on renewables.
- That the Council should divert £145 million of pension funds divested in drilling for oil, gas extraction and coal mining to green alternatives.
- The United Kingdom to be advanced of the global target of 2040-55 net zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and 71 Councils had signed up to a 2030 plan of action.
- That there needed to be collective action by all in Surrey not just County Councillors, encourage household energy efficiency and recycling.
- Highlighted the Plastic-Free Woking initiative helping shoppers to reduce plastic waste.
- Surrey County Council to lobby Government through the eleven Surrey Members of Parliament, not just write to them.
- District and Borough Councils' to address this issue in parallel with Surrey County Council.
- Concern over the impact of atmospheric pollution on children's learning and development, address use of vehicles outside schools.
- Questioned the motion's declaration of a "Climate Emergency" raised earlier this year, that there had been no significant change on the Council's legal standing to declare this emergency.

The Chairman asked Mr Goodman, as proposer of the original motion, to conclude the debate:

- The Government and new prime minister would not roll back on its net contribution to climate change as it was now law, the first G7 country to legislate this.
- That he had written to the government three times on the last motion on climate change, the Government legislated for the report on "net zero"

CO2 emissions by 2050 and this document was recommended to the Council.

- Agreed that it was a joint effort by all in Surrey.
- Highlighted the need to address climate change in schools such as the anti-idling campaign to reduce the level of harmful emissions.
- That Government commitment on this issue was essential, and he would put this concern to the Rt. Hon Michael Gove MP for Surrey Heath.

The substantive motion was put to a vote with 68 members voting for, 0 voting against and 1 abstention.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that:

Following the Prime Minister's announcement that the UK will eradicate its net contribution to climate change by 2050.

This council notes:

- That as the first country in the G7 to legislate for long-term climate targets, the UK already leads the world in tackling climate change
- This is not only the right thing to tackle the climate emergency for future generations but a significant opportunity to increase our energy efficiency, improve our resilience and deliver a greener, healthier society.

This council welcomes:

- The target of net zero emissions being enshrined in law as soon as possible
- That in its report, the Committee on Climate Change forecast significant benefits to public health and savings to the NHS from better air quality and less noise pollution, as well as improved biodiversity
- That the UK is on track to become the first G7 country to legislate for net zero emissions, with other major economies expected to follow suit
- That for the first time, young people will have the chance to shape our future climate policy through the Youth Steering Group, set up by DCMS and led by the British Youth Council, who will advise Government on priorities for environmental action and give a view on progress to date against existing commitments on climate, waste and recycling, and biodiversity loss.

Therefore, this council resolves to:

1. commit to working closely with the Government, the Environment Agency, our Borough & District colleagues, local businesses, our residents and other partners in meeting this ambitious target.
2. deliver a strategy in 2019/20 involving a task group that clearly outlines how we plan to deliver the target including actions that will be taken.

3. write to the government asking them to confirm what support will be made available to local authorities to help achieve this goal.
4. declares a 'Climate Emergency', and commits actions to support businesses and all local authorities in their work to tackle climate change by providing a strong unified voice for councils in lobbying for support to address this emergency, and sharing best practice across all councils.

**Item 8(ii)**

Under Standing Order 12.3 the Council agreed to debate this motion.

Under Standing Order 12.1 Mr Eber Kington moved the motion, which was:

This Council notes:

- The importance of trees in slowing the pace of climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the air, as well as providing a habitat for wildlife
- The contribution trees make to the environment in our towns including shading and cooling, pollution and noise mitigation, as well speeding up floodwater drainage and improving the quality of our street scene.

This Council further notes:

- The Government's pledge in 2018 to plant 11 million new trees by 2050, including in towns and urban areas, and the appointment of a national Tree Champion with a remit to make this happen.

In support of the national campaign to increase the number of trees being planted, particularly in our towns, this Council therefore:

- I. Calls for a review of Surrey County Council's current policies on, and attitude towards, the planting of trees in urban areas with a view to introducing a more proactive policy, which looks to increase the number and regularity of trees planted;
- II. Calls for the new strategy to include providing opportunities to educate children in understanding the benefits of trees and to get involved in tree planting;
- III. Recommends closer partnership working with Borough and District Councils, and landowners seeking sites for new tree planting; and
- IV. Recommends that Surrey Highways take advantage of any outside funding to assist with costs, including any Borough and District schemes that enable residents and community groups to fund the planting and future maintenance of trees.

Mr Kington made the following points:

- That the climate had changed physically and attitudinally on the issue of tree-planting.
- There was a growing demand for the planting of more trees in country, the United Kingdom appointed the first Tree Champion Sir William Worsley in 2018 dedicated to planting 12 million new trees.
- That the Council and Surrey Highways had not recognised the change fast enough in line with the government and local environmental groups- no new trees were planted in Epsom and Ewell since 2004.
- That since 2017, residents in Epsom and Ewell could request an approved and appropriate tree to be planted by borough councils in a verge at the cost of £250 if Surrey Highways agreed the application.
- Noted that Surrey Highway's policy on the measurements required for tree planting on verges was not fit for purpose.
- That new trees were planted in urbanised areas and questioned why the replacement and maintenance of existing trees had not happened.
- That the motion led to a more proactive approach towards tree planting with local organisations and district and borough councils identifying suitable sites.
- Epsom and Ewell had £12,500 to plant new trees but over 140 sites identified for tree planting were rejected by Surrey Highways.
- That there was a disconnect between Surrey Highways and district and borough councils on tree-planting.
- This Council must work cross-party and utilise its partnerships to be committed to planting more trees to tackle climate change.
- Praised the work of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste and the Leader of the Council.

The motion was formally seconded by Mr Goodman, who made the following comments:

- That he hoped to make an imminent final announcement on the Council's commitment to the planting of more trees.
- That he was committed to Surrey's 2030 Vision, that residents live in a clean, safe and green community.
- That the Government announced that it wanted to plant more than 10 million trees and has put £60 million to fund this.
- That new trees must be planted in the right areas, to be safe and maintained.
- The Woodland Trust to plant several million trees and had given away thousands of new trees to schools and communities.
- Surrey County Council would work more closely with environmental partners, with schools and its local councils to plant more trees.
- That the Council supported Surrey Wildlife Trust's "Hedgerows Heroes" project.
- Reported that there were over 280 million trees in the United Kingdom and Surrey was the most wooded county which covered 22% of its land.
- That Surrey Heath was the most wooded council in England with 40.6% of its land wooded followed by 40.2% for Waverley.

- That trees reduced air pollution, helped against flooding, and created important habitats increasing biodiversity.
- That Surrey County Council will work with the Surrey Nature Partnership so that trees are just planted and forgotten, must be maintained.

Thirteen Members made the following points:

- That there appeared to be a greater destruction of current trees than the planting of new trees.
- Raised the possibility of having blanket Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) in Surrey and regenerating ancient woodlands.
- That planning agreements should take tree re-planting into consideration and noted Hindhead Tunnel project's provision of 10,000 more trees than were removed.
- That all have a small part to play to tackle climate change.
- That within the Worplesdon Division there were five new rowan trees planted this year, to act as a barrier around parking rather than bollards.
- That tree wardens in Ashted were instrumental in planting new trees last year.
- That there was a dispute between district and borough councils and Surrey County Council over the equipment to deal with wires under verges and the difficulty in finding suitable sites for tree planting.
- That residents and councillors must be informed by Surrey County Council and Surrey Highways on proposed tree cuttings.
- Highlighted the work of the longstanding Spelthorne tree wardens on the maintenance of trees.
- That Surrey Highways and Spelthorne Borough Council had worked collaboratively on utilities checks and new tree planting.
- That new trees planted would be of a smaller, less root bound species than those planted in the 1930s.
- Recognised that many members have used their allocation to fund the planting of new trees.
- That Bookham and Fetcham West had proactive tree wardens and the Bookham tree wardens recently planted their 200<sup>th</sup> street tree.
- That there was a difficulty in Epsom and Ewell to get trees planted which would provide benefits to mental health.
- That trees were highly important for absorbing CO2 emissions and that Surrey County Council was correct in only cutting down diseased and damaged trees in Spelthorne, not due to simple uprooting.
- Commended the work of the Tree Advisory Board in Epsom which was funded through a Member's Allocation, but the supply of trees was an issue.
- Highlighted the Centennial Wood in Epsom and Ewell that has planted hundreds of trees whilst the golf course opposite chopped down hundreds of trees.
- Suggested to the planning department at Surrey County Council that where trees could not be planted due to uprooting pavements, they be planted in boundary of new developments so the trees overhang onto the pavement.
- That in Elmbridge there was a problem of the "two-buggy rule" which hindered having replacement trees.

- That a review be undertaken on Surrey County Council’s policy on cutting down street trees and leaving a stump.
- Highlighted the Highways Act 1980 Section 142 to the Cabinet Member for Highways on the need for a common policy towards granting licences for the planting of trees and shrubs on highways and the difficulty and costs for obtaining and upholding them.
- Pointed out a section from the Member/Officer Protocol, that officers can assist members further by avoiding a focus on “obstacles”.
- That Surrey Highways has reviewed the policy on tree planting by identifying suitable locations, funding and encouraging the use of member allocations, identified different material for pavements so uprooting does not affect the pavement.

The Chairman asked Mr Kington, as proposer of the original motion, to conclude the debate.

- He thanked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste for his commitment on the issue of climate change and tree planting.
- Agreed that suitable locations for new trees and the maintenance of existing trees was essential.
- That the County Council must respond to the call by residents and tree wardens locally for new trees.
- Ensure that policies on climate change have real solutions and political will behind them.
- Hoped that Surrey would become the “tree planting county of the country”.

The motion was put to a vote and received unanimous support.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that:

This Council notes:

- The importance of trees in slowing the pace of climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the air, as well as providing a habitat for wildlife
- The contribution trees make to the environment in our towns including shading and cooling, pollution and noise mitigation, as well speeding up floodwater drainage and improving the quality of our street scene.

This Council further notes:

- The Government’s pledge in 2018 to plant 11 million new trees by 2050, including in towns and urban areas, and the appointment of a national Tree Champion with a remit to make this happen.

In support of the national campaign to increase the number of trees being planted, particularly in our towns, this Council therefore:

- I. Calls for a review of Surrey County Council’s current policies on, and attitude towards, the planting of trees in urban areas with a view to introducing a more proactive policy, which looks to increase the number and regularity of trees planted;

- II. Calls for the new strategy to include providing opportunities to educate children in understanding the benefits of trees and to get involved in tree planting;
- III. Recommends closer partnership working with Borough and District Councils, and landowners seeking sites for new tree planting; and
- IV. Recommends that Surrey Highways take advantage of any outside funding to assist with costs, including any Borough and District schemes that enable residents and community groups to fund the planting and future maintenance of trees.

### **Item 8(iii)**

Under Standing Order 12.3 the Council agreed to debate this motion.  
Under Standing Order 12.1 Mr Jonathan Essex moved the motion, which was:

#### **Managing Verges for Wildlife**

Surrey County Council is responsible for managing highway verges and related highway owned land. This includes the cutting of verges and the use of weed killer. The way in which it manages this land has an impact on wildlife and amenity.

This Council notes that each of Surrey's eleven boroughs and district areas has a contract to cut verges on behalf of the County Council which results in many of Surrey's highway verges being cut typically at least twice each year (where speed limits are over 50mph) and more often in urban areas.

Surrey's highway verges being cut several times each year means verges are cut before many wildflower plants have had a chance to flower. Wildflowers need to be available for insects when in flower and to be left long enough to have seeded before being cut. Cutting regimes should be timed to allow wildflower verges to self-perpetuate and improve the wildlife value of verges. Many councils who have reduced cutting regimes have also found it saved money.

Furthermore, this Council notes that its contracts for management of its highway verges include the use of Glyphosate weed killer. Other councils, including Croydon and Lewes, have committed to be pesticide free, the latter successfully adopting weed killer-free alternatives after six months of trials.

Council therefore agrees to:

- I. Review and reduce the timing and frequency of highway verge cuts across the County to increase biodiversity and manage our verges as wildlife habitats, and work with partners to produce a pollinator action plan to guide verge cutting contracts;
- II. Communicate to residents the reasons for the change of management and the importance of road verges as wildlife habitats; and
- III. Commit to phase out use of Glyphosate on Surrey Council's own land over the next two years.

Mr Essex made the following points:

- That the timing of verge cutting by contractors with four cuts a year in urban areas and two cuts in rural areas prevents biodiversity and the growth of wildflowers.
- That the weed killer “Glyphosate” was carcinogenic to people and toxic to wildlife, other councils used a greener alternative called “Foamstream”.
- Stop using weed killer on stumps and dig them up and replace them with a new tree.
- Glyphosate affects honey bees and therefore the pollination of wildflowers.
- Two year phasing out of the weed killer was necessary and a pollination action plan to be considered when cutting verges.

The motion was formally seconded by Mr R. Evans, who reserved the right to speak.

Mr Furniss moved an amendment which was tabled at the meeting. This was formally seconded by Mrs Bramhall.

The amendment was as follows (with additional words in bold/underlined and deletions crossed through):

#### **Managing Verges for Wildlife**

Surrey County Council is responsible for managing highway verges and related highway owned land. This includes the cutting of verges and the use of weed killer. The way in which it manages this land has an impact on wildlife and amenity.

**~~This Council notes that each of Surrey’s eleven boroughs and district areas has a contract to cut verges on behalf of the County Council which results in many of Surrey’s highway verges being cut typically at least twice each year (where speed limits are over 50mph) and more often in urban areas.~~**

Surrey’s highway verges being cut several times each year means verges may be cut before many wildflower plants have had a chance to flower. Wildflowers need to be available for insects when in flower and to be left long enough to have seeded before being cut. Cutting regimes should be timed to allow wildflower verges to self-perpetuate and improve the wildlife value of verges. **~~Many councils who have reduced cutting regimes have also found it saved money.~~**

**This Council notes that 9 out of the 11 Districts and Boroughs manage highway verge cutting and since last year the minimum number of cuts suggested by the County Council has reduced from 7 in urban areas to 4.**

Furthermore, this Council notes that its contracts for management of its highway verges include the use of Glyphosate weed killer. **However, the County Council has a legal obligation to treat and contain some injurious weeds,**



**such as ragwort and Japanese knotweed, in the most effective manner.**  
Other councils, including Croydon and Lewis, have committed to be pesticide free, the latter successfully adopting weed killer-free alternatives after six months of trials.

Council therefore agrees to:

- I. ~~Review and reduce the timing and frequency of highway verge cuts across the County to increase biodiversity and manage our verges as wildlife habitats, and work with partners to produce a pollinator action plan to guide verge cutting contracts;~~
- I. Work with the Districts and Boroughs to:
  - a. Produce a pollinator action plan for the next contract period,
  - b. To further review and reduce the frequency of highway verge cuts where it is both safe and desirable to do so,
  - c. To assist in the management of verges and timings of cuts to promote wildlife habitats.
- II. Communicate to residents **via our website and social media the reasons for the changes to the frequency of the cuts, explaining the benefits this can have on the wildlife habitat** of management and the importance of road verges as wildlife habitats; and
- III. Commit to phase out use of Glyphosate on Surrey Council's own land over the next two years.
- III. **To trial more environmentally friendly alternatives on the highway and review outcomes after one full cycle use, and then look to reduce the use of glyphosate based on the results of these trials if cost effective to do so.**

Mr Furniss spoke to his amendment, making the following points:

- That the amendment offered clarity and ensured the delivery of the policies proposed.
- That there must be continued working with partners in district and borough councils, who as contractors of the work choose the timing and frequency of verge cutting, sometimes taking on additional cost.
- That the amendment includes the trialling of more environmentally friendly alternative weed killers, to protect the bees.
- Ensured that communication with residents over the changes and understand the balance between residents who want the verges cut more frequently and those that want to let them grow.
- That changing the management and policies surrounding verge cutting would incur short-term costs.

The motion was formally seconded by Mrs Bramhall, who reserved the right to speak.

Mr Essex accepted the amendment and therefore it became the substantive motion.

Mr Evans, the seconder of the motion, made the following comments:

- That not all verges needed to be maintained with respect of point i. b. of the motion on cutting verges when it was both “safe and desirable” to do so.
- That verges could be left unmaintained such as the wildflower meadow in Olympic Park, which inspired the 8 mile long wildflower stretch by Rotherham town council on a central reservation, increasing biodiversity and reducing maintenance costs.
- Questioned the “cost effective” wording of environmentally friendly weed killers, that the environmental and human costs as well as the financial cost.

Seven Members made the following points:

- That residents may be against cutting curbs due to unattractive weeds outgrowing the wildflowers.
- That each borough should go for crowdfunding to plant indigenous wild flowers which would help bees and fruiting trees.
- Pointed out plans to increase the number of central reservations with wildflowers in Surrey Heath.
- That verge cutting can promote road safety and residents were in favour of tidy verges.
- That some tree stumps should be kept as they were important in the lifecycle of beetles.
- That it was a safety issue as on country roads cut verges allow walkers, horse riders and cyclists to avoid oncoming vehicles.
- Asked parish councils in Mole Valley to audit the verges, those that needed to be maintained and those that could accommodate wildflowers.
- That along the A22 in Whyteleafe there were significant verges and these were badly cut yesterday which affected the flora.
- That the Council should support Surrey Wildlife Trusts’ protection of unmaintained corridors to protect biodiversity.
- That Surrey is an equine county and that the example of “ragwort” in the amended motion is problematic as it was not comparable to more difficult treatment of Japanese Knotweed.
- Raised concern with the wording on the “trailing” of more environmentally friendly alternatives “if cost effective to do so”, if it is necessary it should happen regardless of the expense and it should be long-term.
- That there is a call from residents for the County Council to review its policies on grass and verge cutting so that it is flexible and appropriate
- Many residents cultivate their own verges some have wildflowers, but also some have brambles and nettles, policies must be desirable.
- That there is an urban and rural solution, but questioned the meaning of urban in terms of the frequency of verge cutting at four cuts year.
- That a parish had gone Glyphosate free for the last two years and that ragwort was pulled up and burnt.

- That one parish had requested a certain stretch of verges to be unmaintained helping pollinators and biodiversity in the food chain, encouraging pedestrians and horse riders more than vehicles.

The Chairman asked Mr Essex, as proposer of the original motion, to conclude the debate.

- Thanked the members for their positive comments on verge maintenance.
- Guidelines must be drawn up with a clear rural/urban distinction in relation to the frequency of verge cutting.
- That “ragwort” should be removed to avoid confusion on effectively dealing with more difficult invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed.
- That future policies would consider maintenance approaches by others such as parish and district councils.
- That the wording of “cost effective” should remain as this appreciated the cost and the effectiveness in relation to being wildlife friendly, which would retain the commitment set out in the original motion.

The substantive motion was put to a vote with 63 members voting for, 0 voting against and 4 abstentions.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that:

### **Managing Verges for Wildlife**

Surrey County Council is responsible for managing highway verges and related highway owned land. This includes the cutting of verges and the use of weed killer. The way in which it manages this land has an impact on wildlife and amenity.

Surrey's highway verges being cut several times each year means verges may be cut before many wildflower plants have had a chance to flower. Wildflowers need to be available for insects when in flower and to be left long enough to have seeded before being cut. Cutting regimes should be timed to allow wildflower verges to self-perpetuate and improve the wildlife value of verges.

This Council notes that 9 out of the 11 Districts and Boroughs manage highway verge cutting and since last year the minimum number of cuts suggested by the County Council has reduced from 7 in urban areas to 4.

Furthermore, this Council notes that its contracts for management of its highway verges include the use of Glyphosate weed killer. However, the County Council has a legal obligation to treat and contain some injurious weeds, such as Japanese knotweed, in the most effective manner. Other councils, including Croydon and Lewes, have committed to be pesticide free, the latter successfully adopting weed killer-free alternatives after six months of trials.

Council therefore agrees to:

- I. Work with the Districts and Boroughs to:
  - a. Produce a pollinator action plan for the next contract period,
  - b. To further review and reduce the frequency of highway verge cuts where it is both safe and desirable to do so,
  - c. To assist in the management of verges and timings of cuts to promote wildlife habitats.
- II. Communicate to residents via our website and social media the reasons for the changes to the frequency of the cuts, explaining the benefits this can have on the wildlife habitat; and
- III. To trial more environmentally friendly alternatives on the highway and review outcomes after one full cycle use, and then look to reduce the use of glyphosate based on the results of these trials if cost effective to do so.

#### **52/18 REVISED MEMBER/OFFICER PROTOCOL [Item 9]**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and stated that the revised Protocol was clearer and more appropriately focussed. It highlighted the collaborative working between Members and Officers and the boundaries in which they operate under.

Members made the following comments:

- That it was constructive, the wording was well-balanced and served as a clearer guide than the previous protocol.
- This revision was at the request of the People, Performance and Development Committee for a more effective protocol.
- Raised a concern that the non-demanding tone of the document highlighted subtleties. Training would be necessary to understand the Protocol fully, ensuring both Members and Officers felt confident when engaging with each other.

#### **RESOLVED:**

The County Council endorsed the revised Member/Officer Protocol for inclusion in the Constitution.

#### **53/18 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SHAREHOLDER BOARD [Item 10]**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and summarised the report, stated that the Council has assets worth £300 million and generates a £17 million annual income revenue. Since the report was published a new Contract was awarded to Surrey Choices and the Council had sold their interest on FutureGov to generate a sizeable return.

Members made the following comments:

- Commended the work of Surrey Choices at Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival.
- Referred Members to page 53 of the report on Surrey Choices and welcomed the modernisation of its services and praised the appointment of a new Assistant Director for Learning Disabilities to provide genuine employment opportunities.
- Asked about the Municipal Bonds Agency in which the Council has an investment of £450,000, if investors would still have a preferential interest rate and that now investors have to bear the risk of default.
- Referred Members to page 48 on Halsey Garton Property Ltd., that the dividends on the returns on the investment was approximately £4 million since 2016, the modest 1% return as modest should be looked at in Resources and Performance Select Committee.
- Referred members to page 7 of the report on Babcock 4S and asked whether the council looked at other providers and not just Strictly Education.

The Leader of the Council informed Members of the business plan of Surrey Choices to address the delivery of service. Council would review continued involvement in the Municipal Bonds Agency. That the interest arbitrage on Halsey Garton Property Ltd. must also be taken into account and there would be a review on investment by the Strategic Investment Board. There was a Cabinet Paper which addressed the services within Babcock 4S.

**RESOLVED:**

The County Council noted the Annual Report of the Shareholder Board.

**54/18 APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER [Item 11]**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report.

**RESOLVED:**

The Council appointed Paul Evans as the Monitoring Officer for Surrey County Council from when he commences employment with Surrey County Council.

**55/18 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS [Item 12]**

The Leader of the Council stated the recommendations and thanked Mr Harris who had requested to step down from the role.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Bill Chapman is duly elected as the Chairman of the Adults and Health Select Committees for 2019/20.
2. That Bill Chapman is duly elected as Surrey County Council's representative on the South West London and Surrey Joint Health Scrutiny Committee and sub-committee.

**56/18 REPORT OF THE CABINET [Item 13]**

The Leader presented the report of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 May 2019 and 25 June 2019.

**Reports for Information/ Discussion**

- a. 2018/19 Financial Outturn Report
- b. Moving Closer to Residents
- c. Quarterly Report on Decisions Taken Under Special Urgency Arrangements: 8 May – 28 June 2019.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 28 May 2019 and 25 June 2019 be adopted.

**57/18 MINUTES OF CABINET MEETINGS [Item 14]**

No notification had been received by the deadline from Members wishing to raise a question or make a statement on any matters in the minutes.

[Meeting ended at: 12.45 pm]

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**Chairman**

## County Council speech – July 2019

Mr Chairman and Members, I have said before in this chamber that there can be no greater priority for any of us than turning around our Children's Services.

I spoke in March about the "green shoots of recovery" following an Ofsted Monitoring visit, and I was tremendously encouraged by the follow up visit last month, which focussed on the Single Point of Access, the Early Help Hub and the Contact Centre team.

The feedback we have received is a testament to the rapid progress the team has made in over the past year and while there is more to do, continuing to improve our Children's Services will remain our highest priority. I am sure we would all want to congratulate our excellent staff in getting us to this point.

Mr Chairman, as you will all be aware, there will be a paper going to next week's Cabinet meeting that trails the second part of our libraries consultation, which kicks off in September and builds upon the initial consultation we did with our residents last Autumn.

Since then extensive officer level conversations have taken place across each of our districts and boroughs, and will continue to do so ahead of the launch.

The way libraries are used has changed dramatically since they were built in the 1950s, and the key aspect of the consultation is how we can modernise the service and provide opportunities for everyone to learn, access information, acquire new skills, and be involved in their communities.

Mr Chairman, one of the commitments in our Surrey 2030 vision is for journeys across the county to be easier and safer.

In support of this we have undertaken an important piece of work, which has seen Surrey's partners and residents work together to discuss our shared ambitions around reducing congestion, improving air quality and promoting independence.

The Rethinking Transport project is now coming to the end of its discovery phase but through these conversations, representatives of a number of partners, including businesses, health organisations and transport providers have shared their views on how Surrey's future transport system can contribute to achieving our 2030 ambitions and health and wellbeing priorities.

A number of innovative solutions have been suggested as part of this first phase:

- Reducing the need to travel through smarter working;
- Embracing emerging technology;
- And encouraging sustainable and active modes of transport.



The next phase will explore how these potential solutions might work in practice and highlights many of the key themes that are important to tackling climate change, which I know is something our residents care deeply about.

On the environment more broadly, I am pleased that colleagues across the chamber have embraced my suggestion of an environment charter.

The select committee has set up a cross-party task group and is planning an ambitious programme of work involving experts from academia and industry as well as key local communities and partners.

This will help us to understand the scale of the issues facing Surrey. We must take action to identify the threats to our natural environment and identify ways we can have the biggest impact to ensure Surrey remains a great place to live, work and enjoy. Indeed we will shortly be passing a motion put by Mike Goodman the Cabinet Member for the Environment declaring a climate emergency. Perhaps just as importantly, the charter will contain positive and practical steps that this Council will take to help avert the seriousness of the situation our society faces.

It requires all of us to think about our actions and behaviours as leaders of this organisation, as community representatives and also as residents going about our daily lives. That's why we'll be working with a number of partners, including the University of Surrey, and I look forward to receiving the select committee's draft call for action later in the year and a debate at Council on how we take this forward.

Alongside the select committee's work, we are developing our commissioning approach to encourage communities to come forward with ideas on how to tackle the issues we face at a local level – be that air quality, waste reduction or congestion. We know a lot of fantastic initiatives are already thriving in our communities and we would like to celebrate and encourage these initiatives.

Working with businesses to try to secure sponsorship, we want to engage local groups to showcase what we can do by working together and acting differently. We will be launching this towards the end of the month and I hope all members will actively support this initiative – wouldn't it be terrific if each of us put forward an idea to pilot in our own community? This is an issue for the whole county and beyond that cuts across many areas including transport and health.

And indirectly linked to that is the launch of Surrey's Health and Wellbeing strategy.

This has been made possible thanks to unprecedented levels of collaboration with the NHS, district and boroughs, the voluntary and community sector and the police, focused on delivering better health and wellbeing outcomes for people in Surrey.

The strategy has three key priorities:

- Helping people in Surrey to lead healthy lives
- Supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of people in Surrey, and
- Supporting people in Surrey to fulfil their potential

Mr Chairman, life expectancy is broadly based as much on actions taken by local government as it is on lifestyle decisions taken by an individual and medical interventions combined. And through this Strategy, we're signalling an important shift to a more preventative approach, addressing root causes of poor health and wellbeing – including things like poor housing and the environment – and not simply focusing on treating the symptoms.

The draft implementation plan will be finished over the coming months, and I very much look forward to signing this off at the Health and Wellbeing Board later this year.

Mr Chairman, there will be no let-up in the pace of activity over the second half of the year:

- This Summer the seventh annual Prudential RideLondon will be whizzing through our streets. Dozens of projects in Surrey have benefited from grants totalling nearly £4m since it began, whilst the riders themselves have raised a staggering £66m for charity. As many of you are aware I will be taking part in this year's ride in aid of Shooting Star Children's Hospice and the Brain Tumour Charity – both fantastic causes. I will be doing all I can to raise the profile of the amazing work they do.
- We will continue the work to identify a new civic heart for the county council that will mean we are closer to our residents.

- The creation of Local Partnership Boards will gather pace, which I hope will be a key forum for engagement with communities around local issues, and I look forward to the boards being piloted by Reigate & Banstead and Runnymede Borough Councils.
- Equally we take our responsibilities in safeguarding our communities from the impacts of flooding very seriously, and I will be looking to make progress in closing the funding gap on the Surrey Flood Alleviation Scheme,
- Finally Mr Chairman I will also be announcing in the autumn a series of pledges which will be our promises to the residents of Surrey over the coming months and years and will support our commitment to be a leading County authority.

Can I wish all members a peaceful Summer break and suggest you use the opportunity to recharge your batteries in readiness for a very busy September.

Thank you.