

MINUTES of the meeting of the **COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 19 September 2019 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Friday, 22 November 2019.

Elected Members:

(*present)

- * Mr John O'Reilly (Chairman)
- Mr Andy MacLeod (Vice-Chairman)
- Mr Saj Hussain (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mrs Fiona White
- * Mr Mike Bennison
- * Mr Paul Deach
- * Mr Jonathan Essex
- Mr John Furey
- * Mr Ken Gulati
- * Mrs Jan Mason
- * Mrs Becky Rush
- * Mr Keith Witham

In attendance:

Denise Turner Stewart, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Fire & Resilience

Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

9/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies were received from John Furey.

10/19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING [Item 2]

These were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

11/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were none.

12/19 QUESTIONS & PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were none.

13/19 SURREY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE TRANSFORMATION WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORT [Item 5]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Saj Hussain, Chairman of the Fire Transformation Working Group
Chris Botten, Working Group Member
Jan Mason, Working Group Member

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Vice-Chairman made the following statement: The fire transformation Working Group was set up by the Environment Select Committee now the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee to support the transformation of the fire service and to provide independent scrutiny on the *'Making Surrey Safer- Our Community Safety Plan'*. Between March and July 2019, the Working Group has spoken with 17 stakeholders and has listened to their views and concerns on the *'Making Surrey Safer- Our Community Safety Plan'*. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the witnesses whom we have spoken to for their willingness and efforts- it has been greatly appreciated. The evidence heard at witness sessions has helped the Working Group formulate a series of recommendations for consideration by the Select Committee. I believe the recommendations contained within the Working Groups report are impactful and will help strengthen the *'Making Surrey Safer- Our Community Safety Plan'*. I would like to give residents and stakeholders the assurance that the proposed plan will be scrutinised by the Select Committee on a quarterly basis and any areas of concern will be forwarded to the Cabinet for further investigation.
2. Mr Botten reiterated that the Working Groups key concern was the level of staffing within the service especially if changes were to be made to how the service operated. As a result the Group recommends that the new proposed crew and vehicle placement model as detailed within the *'Making Surrey Safer-Our Community Safety Plan'* is resourced at full establishment firefighter (including on-call) staffing levels. It was added that the increase in response times especially at night time was raised as a concern by witnesses.
3. It was agreed that the committee would ask questions regarding the plan in the following item.
4. The committee endorsed the recommendations of the Working Group for Cabinet approval.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approve the *'Making Surrey Safer – Our Plan'* 2020-23 subject to the following recommendations of the Fire Transformation Working Group:

- i. By 1 April 2020, the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Fire and Resilience to ensure that the new proposed crew and vehicle placement model as detailed within the *'Making Surrey Safer-Our Community Safety Plan'* is resourced at full establishment firefighter (including on-call) staffing levels and for staffing levels to be closely monitored by the service to ensure these do not fall below establishment levels.

- ii. Emergency response times are closely monitored and scrutinised by the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee on a quarterly basis to ensure that response times which do not meet current and future Surrey response standards can be addressed by further appropriate scrutiny.
- iii. If the 'Making Surrey Safer-Our Community Safety Plan' is approved by Cabinet, that Senior Managers continue to engage with staff to discuss the impact of the changes on working patterns and give staff the opportunity to comment and shape the design of the service.
- iv. The service must aim to recover costs from incidents which do not fall within the services statutory obligations. By 1 April 2020, a detailed schedule of charging for incident attendances is drafted to recover costs from incidents which do not meet the services statutory obligations especially in cases of persistent false fire alarms.
- v. The Surrey Fire and Rescue Service statement of assurance is scrutinised by the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee in 2020 so the Committee can be confident that the service has the appropriate arrangements in place to deliver services safely and effectively.
- vi. All future public consultations and any associated documents are made accessible in a variety of formats to a wide range of people with differing needs including those with mental health support needs, learning difficulties and physical, sensory or cognitive impairments. It is recommended that the council works closely with organisations and groups that represent disabled people to pilot the accessibility of documents before any future public consultations are launched.

14/19 SURREY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS) MAKING SURREY SAFER - OUR PLAN 2020-2023 [Item 6]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Denise Turner Stewart, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Fire & Resilience

Steve Owen Hughes, Director of Community Protection & Emergencies

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Cabinet Member thanked the Working Group for their work and felt that appropriate scrutiny of the service had been undertaken. The Cabinet Member stated her support for the Working Groups recommendations.
2. It was queried by members if the changes to the fire service were part of cost saving measures. The Cabinet Member stated that a £6m saving target for the year had been removed and the new plan would

- be making significant capital investment to the service as part of the councils wider transformation plan.
3. With regards to older firefighters who did not pass the annual fitness tests, the aim would be to expand the role of the firefighter so that experience and expertise would remain within the service. To do this, discussions would need to take place with the Unions on a national level. There was support from the committee on this approach.
 4. Concern was raised around the risks to vulnerable people impacted by the change to response times in the new plan. Officers were asked what assurance they could give that the overall risk to the community would be reduced. The Director of Community Protection & Emergencies stated that prevention activity would increase with the number of safe and well visits increasing to 20,000. The committee could be assured that prevention activity would see a decline in the number of incidents.
 5. A member of the Working Group explained the importance of the committee holding the service to account on response times which has been included within one of the Groups recommendations. Giving an anecdote, the member spoke positively about an experience he had recently had with the fire service.
 6. It was queried how culture within the service would be transformed for the better. The Director of Community Protection & Emergencies recognised that there were cultural issues within the service. The service had not had any changes since the 1970's and bullying and harassment would be addressed through specific plans. The Director of Community Protection & Emergencies spent one day per week with staff at fire stations and stated that he was happy to listen to staff concerns.
 7. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Fire & Resilience confirmed that the level of engagement undertaken by the service had been unprecedented.
 8. There was a recognition from members that there was a great amount of misinformation about the service on social media. Officers recognised that more needed to be done to highlight the positive work the service was doing.
 9. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety requested scrutiny support from the Working Group on how best for the service to engage with residents. It was felt that it would be useful for the Working Group to continue its work.
 10. It was confirmed that last calendar year there were two fatal fire deaths, and that last financial year 2018/9 there were four deaths at three separate incidents which included two accidental fires and one deliberate incident. The new approach to prevention work would help lower these numbers.
 11. It was confirmed that the new plan did not account for Section 14 arrangements with neighboring fire authorities which would help build in resilience.

Resolved:

The Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee,

- i. endorse the 'Making Surrey Safer – Our Plan' 2020-23 and recommend the Plan to Cabinet for approval subject to the recommendations of the Working Group,
- ii. receive an update on the progress of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service response to the HMICFRS improvement plan in November 2019,
- iii. continue to support the service with scrutinising areas identified within the HMICFRS Report, focusing on culture within the service and public engagement with residents.

15/19 WASTE TASK GROUP FINDINGS [Item 7]

Declarations of interest:

Mr Essex declared an interest in that he was a trustee of a furniture re-use charity.

Witnesses:

Dr Andrew Povey, Chairman of the Waste Task Group
 Alan Bowley, Interim Head of Environment
 Becky Rush, Task Group Member
 Jonathan Essex, Task Group Member
 Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman of the Waste Task Group explained that the Groups work was to focus on how the council could strengthen its environment friendly agenda, rather than focusing on trying to save money.
2. Task group members explained that there was consensus to keep all Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) in Surrey open and supported the reduce-reuse-recycle vision. During visits to a number of CRCs across Surrey it was clear that practice across each varied greatly.
3. There was a discussion around the increase in fly-tipping and why this was occurring. The Chairman of the Waste Task Group explained that the majority of fly-tipping was commercial waste and that a recommendation had been included within the Task Groups report around future working with the commercial sector to help tackle this issue. More clarity was required around what can and cannot be taken to CRCs which was adding to fly tipping issues.
4. The Interim Head of Environment explained that fly tipping data was collated by the district and boroughs although this information was not always accurate as it was measured differently depending on the authority. A fly tipping working group had been established to engage and educate the public.
5. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste explained that a fly tipping strategy had been introduced by the council 2 years ago.
6. A member stated their support for the discontinuing of charges for small quantities of wood and rubble although the Cabinet Member confirmed that these charges had never been introduced.
7. There was agreement that the messages being shared regarding CRCs had been confused and mixed. More work needed to be

undertaken to educate residents around the benefits of CRCs and recycling in general. It was explained that the Resources and Waste Strategy would see the introduction of a tax for certain recycling materials.

8. There was a recognition that recycling rates required improving and district and boroughs had a role in supporting this through the waste collection and disposal contracts through the Surrey Environment Partnership (SEP).
9. There was a short discussion around staffing at CRCs. It was agreed that any staffing issues should be reported to the Cabinet Member outside of the meeting for investigation by officers.
10. The Chairman of the Waste Task Group informed the committee that he would be attending the next meeting of the SEP. He explained that the SEP did not have any targets in place and required vigorous scrutiny. A Member of the Task Group added that the SEP required turbo charging so action was being undertaken rather than the SEP becoming a talking shop.
11. A member explained that in Melbourne, Australia local councils allow residents to leave items for recycling and collection outside their homes which the council then collects for free. It was argued that this was something the council should seriously consider.

Resolved:

The Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee endorse the Waste Task Group's recommendations in particular keeping all community recycling centres open, discontinuing charges for small quantities of wood and rubble and encouraging community composting.

Actions:

For the Select Committee to scope scrutiny work around the Surrey Environment Partnership as part of its forward work programme.

16/19 PARKING STRATEGY UPDATE [Item 8]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Richard Bolton, Local Highway Services Group Manager
David Curl, Parking Strategy and Implementation Team Manager

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Parking Strategy and Implementation Team Manager introduced the report explaining that the Surrey County Council (on street) Parking Strategy was adopted in 2011 and sets out the councils policies about on-street parking regulation and enforcement. It has evolved and developed in the years since but it is now time for a more comprehensive update to ensure it is in alignment with the councils '2030 vision' and changes in national legislation.

2. It was queried how officers could justify the increase of resident permits from £50 to £80. Officers explained that the increase would cover the costs for administration and enforcement of resident permits.
3. It was explained that parking reviews combine all the agreed changes to parking restrictions in a district or borough over a period of time so that they can be taken through the statutory process together. This saves time and money as by law it is necessary to place a statutory notice in a local paper to amend or create a as a single Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which could costs up to £800 for a small change therefore batching it is more efficient.
4. A member commented that the fear of traffic enforcement had disappeared and argued that the committee should write to central government on issues concerning pavement parking. Officers explained that governments transport committee recommended in there 'pavement parking' report a ban on pavement parking nationally which officers supported.
5. There was agreement that the costs associated with placing a statutory notice in a local paper to amend or create a single Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was too high and needed to be reviewed.
6. A member of the committee commented that the increase charges for second and third additional resident permits was extremely high from £75 to £100 (second permit) and £130 (third permit). Officers explained that costs had increased to discourage the use of second and third permits and to encourage off street parking.
7. It was explained that the enforcement of parking restrictions solely by camera is now only allowed for contraventions on School Keep Clears (SKC's), bus stop clearways/bus lanes and red routes. It was explained that camera operations are very expensive and can become onerous.
8. There was a discussion around electric vehicle charging points although officers explained that EV charging points were not part of the parking strategy.
9. Some members of the committee were opposed to the increase in permit charges arguing that increased costs should not be used to offset service charges.
10. The Chairman rounded up the discussion stating that the committee support the majority of the proposals within the report. The Chairman could see the rational for increasing costs as it had not happened for a number of years. The profit would also be reinvested into local committees which was a positive.
11. Mr Gulati asked for the following statement to be included in the recommendation: that Select Committees urge Local Committees when looking at on street parking charges should consider the matter with caution in light on local opinion, likely impact of displacement parking and cost of enforcement.
12. A vote was taken on the recommendation included within the officers report including the additional detailed statement from Mr Gulati. There were seven votes in support and two votes against. The recommendation was therefore carried.

Resolved:

That the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee endorse the parking proposals contained within the report and urge Local Committees when looking at on street parking charges to consider the matter with caution

in light on local opinion, likely impact of displacement parking and cost of enforcement.

17/19 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON HEATHROW AIRPORT EXPANSION [Item 9]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

Mike Goodman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste
Sue Janota, Spatial Planning & Policy Manager
Paul Millin, Strategic Transport Group Manager

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste whom explained that the key issue for the council in relation to Heathrow Airport Limited's (HAL) plans for airport expansion was Southern Rail Access which is a priority infrastructure project for the council and will support economic and sustainable growth.
2. Members supported and recognised that Southern Rail Access was a priority for the council and residents and welcomed the prioritisation of this within the consultation response.
3. There was consensus that the information provided by HAL in the consultation lacked detail especially with regard to mitigation measures being put in place.
4. A member of the committee commented that air quality was a key concern for him especially with the ever-growing climate change agenda and therefore more transport modelling detail was required from HAL to fully assess the impact on air quality.
5. There was a short discussion around flight paths and the fact that many residents had not been consulted on these changes. It was explained by officers that flight paths were within the remit of the Civil Aviation Authority and that flight paths in relation to Heathrow expansion would be consulted on in 2022.
6. It was explained that the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG) was made up from a number of different authorities including Hounslow, Slough, Spelthorne and Runnymede. The HSPG lobbied DfT and HAL to push forward work to develop the expansion project and ensure it benefits each authority.
7. A comment was raised around whether work could be undertaken with the LEP's to support the council with the impacts of the airport expansion.
8. The Chairman of the committee was of the view that there seemed to be a lack of commitment from HAL on support to the council especially with regards to Southern Rail Access and transport assessments/mitigation measures.
9. The committee endorsed the response from the council on the airport expansion consultation but expressed concern around the lack of information from HAL regarding expansion proposals. It was felt that if the council received an unsatisfactory response from HAL then the

Cabinet needed to reconsider their stance towards the expansion especially in light of the climate emergency declared in May 2019.

Resolved:

The Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee endorse Surrey County Councils response to the Heathrow Airport expansion consultation and express concern over a lack of detailed information and commitment from Heathrow Airport Limited. The Select Committee urges Cabinet to reconsider their position in regards to the Heathrow Airport expansion if the council does not receive satisfactory responses from Heathrow Airport Limited.

18/19 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER [Item 10]

The forward work programme and actions and recommendations tracker were agreed by the Committee.

19/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 11]

The next meeting of the Select Committee will be held on 22 November 2019 in the Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames.

Meeting ended at: 14:20

Chairman

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