

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****TUESDAY 7 JULY 2020****QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED UNDER THE PROVISIONS  
OF STANDING ORDER 10.1****TIM OLIVER, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL****1. MRS HAZEL WATSON (DORKING HILLS) TO ASK:**

In the 2019 Prudential RideLondon cycle event there was a very serious accident when an event participant at speed hit a pedestrian, an elderly resident, who was being escorted across the event route at an authorised crossing point in Abinger by an event marshal. This accident resulted in the elderly resident having to be taken to hospital.

The event organisers have not yet responded to the community's request to set out their response to the accident and to specify the actions that they intend to take to ensure that such an accident cannot happen during future RideLondon events, claiming that their insurers are preventing them from doing so.

Will the Leader of the Council recognise the duty that the Council has to look after residents living in the County and write to the RideLondon Organisers to inform them that such a response time is unacceptable, that the communities in Surrey need to be treated with respect, that issues arising from accidents such as this need to be resolved with our communities between each annual event, and that the County Council will seriously consider withdrawing approval for the 2021 event if the RideLondon event organisers are unable or unwilling to specify the actions that they are taking to ensure that such an accident cannot happen during the 2021 RideLondon event?

**RESPONSE:**

The Prudential Ride London Surrey event is a prestigious occasion in the national cycling calendar and helps inspire more people in Surrey to cycle as a healthy leisure activity and sustainable means of transport. This supports Surrey County Council's Community Vision for Surrey 2030 for everyone to live healthy, active and fulfilling lives, to make good choices about their wellbeing, and for journeys across the county to be easier, more predictable and safer. More cycling as an alternative to motorised transport also contributes to Surrey's response to the Climate Emergency. The event has resulted in a total of £4.68 million being distributed to sporting and recreational organisations in Surrey by the London Marathon Trust.

However it is recognised that many Surrey residents have concerns over access to and from homes, the impact on businesses, and the provision of services to local people due to the one day road closures needed to host the event on traffic free roads. Some respondents to our recent public consultation also raised concerns over some of the operational aspects of the event including safe crossing points and marshalling.

The Cabinet have not yet made any decision regarding continuation of the event beyond 2021, and discussions are ongoing with the event organiser London Marathon Events to see how, if the event were to continue in Surrey, we can maximise the benefits to Surrey residents while addressing the concerns raised in the public consultation. The organisation and operational details and risk assessments of any future events will continue to be subject to approval by county council officers to ensure the event runs as smoothly and safely as possible, and this will take into account any learning from previous events.

London Marathon Events have advised that they would like the claim associated with this particular incident to be resolved as quickly as possible (which is currently being dealt with by their insurers). Once this is complete they have committed to restarting their dialogue with the community, to meeting those involved and community representatives to share the actions that they will take to ensure an incident of this nature cannot occur again.

## **SINEAD MOONEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS AND HEALTH**

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

Does Surrey County Council feel that the government's announcement that the two metre rule can be reduced to 'one metre plus' where necessary, is confusing as a public health message? What extra advice or support (including financial) has Surrey County Council offered to schools, care homes and other institutions for which it is responsible?

### **RESPONSE:**

The public health response to COVID-19 in Surrey is guided by scientific evidence and expert advice.

According to the latest research transmission of COVID-19 is most strongly associated with close and prolonged contact. Therefore, physical distancing is an important mitigation measure.

According to Sage, the government's committee of scientific advisers the current evidence suggests [being 1m \(just over 3ft\) apart carries between two and 10 times the risk of being 2m apart](#). The World Health Organization recommends keeping a [distance of at least 1m](#). Some countries have adopted this guidance, often because they also insist on other measures such as wearing masks.

In [a study published in medical journal The Lancet](#)<sup>1</sup>, scientists looked at research into how coronavirus spreads. They concluded that keeping at least 1m from other people could be the best way to limit the chances of infection – risks decrease with each additional metre up to a distance of 3m.

As more evidence emerges and we learn more about the virus transmission, we can be more certain about the most effective protective measures. When evidence is limited, as is the case for this new disease, our role is to ensure that facts and risks are effectively communicated with the public to enable them to make an informed decision to protect their health and others.

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<sup>1</sup> **Physical distancing, face masks, and eye protection to prevent person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19: a systematic review and meta-analysis**  
<http://www.thelancet-press.com/embargo/physicaldistancing.pdf>

**What extra advice or support (including financial) has Surrey County Council offered to schools, care homes and other institutions for which it is responsible?**

Throughout the pandemic the public health team has been working closely with the regional Public Health England team to help various settings in our community (such as a schools, care homes and other institutions) to implement the national health protection guidelines and respond to their enquiries. We have recruited two infection control nurses to support the care homes. Additionally, a comprehensive support package to care homes has been put together to offer further support and training including Mental Health to the care home staff. We have also been working closely with schools to support them with the implementation of the national guidelines as they change and become updated.

We recently published our Local Outbreak Control plan which builds on existing health protection plans already in place between Surrey County Council (SCC), Public Health England (PHE) South East (SE) Surrey and Sussex Health Protection Team (HPT), the 11 Surrey District and Borough Council Environmental Health Teams, Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care System (ICS), Frimley Health and Care ICS, and Surrey Local Resilience Forum (LRF). The Outbreak Control Plan will be triggered where there are suspected or confirmed COVID-19 outbreaks in any setting or community.

To date in Surrey, the response to COVID-19 has been coordinated via the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) and key communications developed and implemented by a Multi-Agency Information Group (MIG), represented by all partner organisations including the Public Health team in Surrey. This group will continue to lead the Communications response to COVID-19 and any communications activities relating to the Local Outbreak Control Plan including, wider public warning and informing messaging, communications campaigns pertaining to the latest Government advice and guidance and wider stakeholder communications about COVID-19 in general.

**TIM OLIVER, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

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

The number of council staff earning over £50,000 has increased from 407 in 2018/19 to 556 in 2019/20. Is there a plan for senior staffing, and is the budget out of control?

**RESPONSE:**

The increased number of staff being paid over £50,000 is mainly due to changes brought about by the council's review of its pay model, as endorsed by the People, Performance and Development Committee, which came into effect on 1 April 2019 and which reintroduced annual incremental progression through pay grades within bands. This means that the majority of staff within the relevant pay bands will progress year on year to the top of the band. The pay bands in question (PS11 of the council's Job Family Pay Model and PS11SC of the Career Pay Model) encompassed pay ranges of £44,838-£50,711 w.e.f. 1 April 2019 and so as staff moved incrementally to the top of the pay band on that date they passed the £50,000 p.a. trigger point for reporting purposes.

The council's most senior Officers are responsible for the staffing establishment and associated paybill within their remit and the cost of incremental pay progression is incorporated into the annual budget planning cycle.

**NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE  
AND MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT**

**4. MRS ANGELA GOODWIN (GUILDFORD NORTH) TO ASK:**

The coronavirus pandemic has affected all aspects of our lives, and the most dreadful impact has been the loss of lives. But there have also been some positives including reduced traffic congestion and cleaner air. We've even heard nature come back to life. Clean Air Day (<https://www.cleanairday.org.uk/about-clean-air-day>) takes place on 8 October this year. As part of its collaborative Climate Change strategy, this is an opportunity for Surrey County Council (SCC) to:

- lead on initiatives and activities across our community (namely through working with education establishments (schools / colleges / Universities), businesses, District & Borough Councils, Surrey Highways, Surrey's Health & Wellbeing Board, Emergency Services, local radio stations, cycling clubs, local bus companies etc);
- help people use active transport (walking, cycling, running);
- encourage schools to run walking buses;
- encourage 'buddy schemes' for cyclists who need moral support on roads;
- encourage academics partners (such as the University of Surrey) and employers (from businesses of all sizes) to clean forms of transport on that day.

These are only a handful of examples and there will be many more.

- Therefore, can the Cabinet Members for Environment & Climate Change and Transport confirm their commitment to Clean Air Day 2020? As part of their commitment, can they also outline the actions they will take, involving members as much as possible?

**RESPONSE:**

The Cabinet Members for Environment & Climate Change and Transport confirm their commitment to Clean Air Day 2020. Officers have started working with Borough and District partners through the Surrey Air Alliance to develop a number of plans for this day, including a county wide communications campaign to raise awareness of the risks of air pollution and the mitigation measures that residents can take to minimise their exposure to pollution, reducing the risks to their health. Member involvement in promoting Clean Air Day, and the activities which are being developed by the SAA, will be welcomed.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT**

**5. MR STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK:**

- A) Please can the Council confirm which walking and cycling improvements will be funded by the £1.69m investment in Active Travel being made by both the Government and the County Council?
- B) Please can the Council confirm which proposals it intends to submit to the Government for the second tranche of the Active Travel funding?

## RESPONSE:

- A) The County Council has been working to a tight timeframe to develop schemes for tranche 1. Government awarded us £848k, but this will be matched to enable delivery of the full £1.69m.

The table below details the provisional schemes for tranche 1. This maybe subject to change depending on final costing and resources.

- B) At this time we are not able to confirm which schemes will be submitted to government for the second tranche of the active travel fund. With many hundreds of suggestions, it is imperative that we develop schemes which best align with the aims of active travel and encourage more people to cycle and walk. Officers, working with partners such as Sustrans and Create Streets are developing a robust mechanism for prioritising the ideas. The submitted schemes will need to align with any government guidance (to be issued) to try and maximise funding allocation.

### Provisional tranche 1 schemes

District / Borough	Location	Measures
Waverley	Farnham	Widening of footways, advisory 20mph limit and HGV rerouting
Waverley	Godalming	High Street closure
Waverley	Haslemere	Footway widening
Waverley	Cranleigh	Direct pedestrians
Guildford	Guildford	Widening of footways
Spelthorne	Lower Sunbury	Residential tactile closures
Spelthorne	Ashford	New footway over Waverley and traffic made one-way northbound
Elmbridge	Weybridge	Closure of Baker Street or retail hours pedestrianisation
Elmbridge	Walton	High Street retail hours pedestrianisation
Elmbridge	East Molesey	Bridge Road retail hours pedestrianisation
Elmbridge	Hersham	Cycle route
Epsom & Ewell	Ewell	High Street pedestrianisation
Epsom & Ewell	Epsom	Footway widening
Reigate & Banstead	Reigate	Cycle and 20mph speed limit
Reigate & Banstead	Redhill	Permit cycling in pedestrian area
Reigate & Banstead	Horley	Additional cycle parking
Reigate & Banstead	Banstead	Wayfinding signs
Reigate & Banstead	Reigate	A25 parking restrictions in westbound cycle lane
Mole Valley	Leatherhead	Pedestrianise High Street on Sundays and permit cycling. Suspend parking bays
Mole Valley	Dorking	Cycle parking and wayfinder signs
Mole Valley	Ashted	Cycle parking
Mole Valley	Bookham	Cycle parking
Tandridge	Oxted	Cycle parking
Tandridge	Caterham	Cycle parking and pedestrian improvements
Tandridge	Warlingham	Cycle parking and widening of footway
Surrey Heath	Bagshot	Cycle / ped provision
Surrey Heath	Chobham	Bollards to keep footway clear
Runnymede	Egham	Footway widening

Runnymede	Chertsey	Footway widening and closure parking bays
Woking	Woking	Footway widening by Victoria Arch
Woking	West Byfleet	Closure of Camphill Road for cycle / ped improvements
Woking	West Byfleet	Remove guardrail to create space
Countywide	Various	Cut back vegetation / clear detritus for some existing assets

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT**

**6. MR WILL FORSTER (WOKING SOUTH) TO ASK:**

Please can the Council publish Woking's Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan and bid that were submitted to the Department for Transport at the end of March 2020? Has the Council received a response from the Government yet?

**RESPONSE:**

The LCWIP for Woking was submitted to Department of Transport (DfT) at the end of March this year and will shortly be published and made available on the Surrey CC webpages. We will also provide a direct link through to the Woking Borough Council website, who are also publishing information on the LCWIP which was developed in partnership between the authorities.

Since submitting the Woking LCWIP to DfT the County Council have followed up with them to understand next steps and future funding opportunities being planned by Government to take the plans forward to delivery. Naturally there is an element of uncertainty at the current time, however, the indication from DfT is that they still expect to undertake a review of all LCWIPs received and then provide feedback with further detail concerning potential funding expected to follow. We will keep the SCC webpage information up to date with current news and progress in this area.

The council is committed to helping residents make more journeys by walking and cycling. We will therefore be offering a reduction in price for our schools based cycle training in the new academic year, supporting the "COVID recovery" active travel initiatives already being planned and implemented. An additional £200,000 (bringing the total budget to £510,000) is being provided to reduce 'Bikeability' Level 1 cycle training course fees from £15 to £10, with Level 2 courses fees reduced from £30 to £15. We also plan to introduce new cycling to school courses for secondary school children, alongside a new pedestrian training course for primary school children. Delivering these courses will of course be subject to the social distancing guidance in place at that time.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT**

**7. MR JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:**

Please can you provide an update as to the development and procurement of the forthcoming highway maintenance contract, including how it integrates climate change considerations and whether the contract for routine maintenance and pothole filling will be separated from major resurfacing and reconstruction of roads?

**RESPONSE:**

The procurement of the future highway maintenance contract is in progress and on track to be formally issued to the market later in the year. We are currently informally engaging with suppliers on what the contract opportunity might be in Surrey and have had a positive level of interest. We are continuing to develop the details of the contract proposal and associated documents, all of which will reflect the county council's climate strategy ambitions, amongst other council priorities. We are anticipating procuring a highways contract that will be able to adapt as new technology and innovation make this possible, and foresee this will significantly benefit our ability to contribute to the carbon zero ambition in particular. In terms of the structure of the contract, we do not anticipate separating routine maintenance and major resurfacing activities. Having considered different structure options against achieving the ambitions of the county council we consider that keeping these activities together will provide us with the greatest opportunity to optimise the end to end delivery and transform our services so that they are fit for the future.

**TIM OLIVER, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**8. MR ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK:  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

How much extra does the Council estimate the current COVID-19 crisis will cost Surrey and how much of this is expected to be covered by the government?

**RESPONSE:**

The Council has been closely monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on our finances since the crisis emerged. We are currently forecasting additional costs, lost income and unachievable efficiencies of £53 million. To date, the Council has received £47 million of government funding. This leaves a forecast deficit of £6 million before any additional sums are allocated from the £500 million announced on the 2 July. There are a number of financial risks related to COVID-19, estimated at £16 million, that may increase the deficit should they materialise.

Beyond the current financial year, the Council may face significant funding reductions as a result of shortfalls in Council Tax and Business Rate income collected by the District and Borough Councils. The value cannot be quantified until the full impact of the crisis on income collection is understood. Shortfalls in tax collection will be spread over three years.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT**

**9. MR WILL FORSTER (WOKING SOUTH) TO ASK:  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

Last month, the Department for Transport brought into force new rules to allow local authorities to use CCTV to identify drivers who park or load illegally in mandatory cycle lanes and who are therefore putting cyclists at risk.

The Government believes that having approved the use of cameras for this purpose, it will be easier for local authorities to use their civil parking enforcement powers to take action against those doing so.

- Please will the County Council work with relevant Borough and District Councils to ensure these new powers are used effectively to protect cyclists across Surrey?

**RESPONSE:**

The County Council welcomes these new powers to use enforcement cameras to help keep cycle lanes clear of parking. Our road safety and parking teams will start to assess locations where these new powers could help improve the safety of our cycle network and we will be formulating a policy on the use of enforcement cameras in these circumstances. We will ensure the District and Boroughs will be involved in this process.

On a technical point the new regulations allow us to only enforce waiting and loading restrictions (e.g. double yellow lines) by camera within a mandatory cycle lane. We are assessing whether camera enforcement could be used on any of our cycle lanes that already meet this criteria, however it is anticipated the identification/promotion of suitable enforcement sites will be facilitated through the parking review process already in place. The legislation does not permit us to enforce parking in a mandatory cycle lane where there are no parking restrictions.

**NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE**

**10. MR JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

Surrey County Council have declared a climate emergency and agreed a climate change strategy yet Item 11 of the Cabinet meeting on 23rd June 2020, for a £42m road infrastructure investment did not include a formal environmental or sustainability report as part of the paper (as committed to in the Climate Change Strategy), or set out the proposed investment's likely climate and sustainability impact. In light of this, please can you confirm:

- A) That climate and wider ecological impacts will be considered for all future such decisions of the Cabinet as well as those for delegated approval; and
- B) With regard to this specific proposed investment can you please confirm:
  - i. How this investment fits with the council's climate ambition and what impact it is predicted to have on meeting net zero carbon emissions in Surrey?
  - ii. What is the predicted impact on air quality, particularly PM2.5?
  - iii. How public transport priority measures been considered and what bus priority measures are required to be included in the new developments to minimise traffic generation?
  - iv. Please confirm how active transport and improved crossings have/will be prioritised as part of the scheme, noting that three of the four links noted as being upgraded (those not linked to the M25) currently have a substandard shared path with little or no help given to crossing junctions with a long crossing time, and the opportunity to improve wider active transport network capacity including outside schools?

**RESPONSE:**

As set out in the Climate Change Strategy it is our intention to embed climate change and sustainability across all decision-making processes. We are undertaking this through an assessment of cabinet and select committee reports to require a carbon assessment to be carried out on all programmes being put forward for approval. Officers in Environment, Commissioning and Finance are working closely to develop a mechanism to flag any capital

programme that may have a carbon implication as part of the business case assessment. We are also developing online training for all officers and members with a focus on climate change and carbon literacy and this will include more advanced training in whole life cycle carbon assessment for officers involved in schemes and initiatives with a large carbon impact or opportunity for carbon reduction.

In relation to this particular scheme, we will have completed an ecological screening review /decision prior to going back to Cabinet in September. We will work with the Climate Change Team to understand the potential carbon reduction from the active travel elements of the scheme and to express a commitment to monitor this through our reporting mechanisms.

The A320 upgrade is needed to address the likely impact of the additional traffic that would arise as a consequence of the housing and other development that would be brought forward under the Runnymede Local Plan. Runnymede Borough Council have completed detailed air quality modelling with respect to the impact of the implementation of the Local Plan. With specific reference to impacts on PM2.5 concentrations the modelling report concluded as follows:

"Figures 9.15 and 9.16 present the annual average PM2.5 concentrations for the without Local Plan and with Local Plan scenarios, respectively. Figure 9.17 presents the difference in concentration between the two scenarios, and Figure 9.18 presents the difference in the Addlestone and Chertsey areas. No exceedances of the Air Quality Objective for annual average PM2.5 concentrations are predicted in either 2036 scenario."

Air Quality Modelling to support the Runnymede Local Plan, p.46, Cambridge Environmental Research Consultants, May 2018

Public transport, active travel and improved crossings are core components of the scheme and will be incorporated into the links and junctions as part of the detailed design. In addition to this Housing sites that are brought forward as a direct result of the A320 scheme will have conditions so placed as to ensure that public transport and active travel infrastructure is included.

The HIF Business case identifies "the need for HIF funding in particular arises from an inherent co-ordination failure amongst the private sector interests, as well as that the scale of the investment required exceeds the local authorities' own funding capacity. The HIF investment will co-fund large-scale strategic transport infrastructure, including the reconfiguration of Junction 11 of the M25 and walking and cycling improvements along the A320 North of Woking. If the strategic transport works are not completed, it will not be possible to develop the area either during the plan period or in the long term as the impact of large-scale housing delivery will not be acceptable in planning terms. The transport and wider impacts on existing and future communities cannot be sufficiently mitigated without the proposed infrastructure." The consultancy study and supporting technical assessments undertaken to produce the business case were focused on the high-level physical highway infrastructure. The provision for improving public transport, walking and cycling are details that will be addressed at the next design stage.

Stakeholders and members of the public can be assured of this as the business case development process included extensive consultation with Surrey County Council (SCC) public transport, road safety and, walking and cycling teams, all of whom are committed to ensure that the final scheme delivers improvements to public transport, as well as walking and cycling facilities. SCC will ensure that the design and, the siting of these facilities is undertaken in consultation with residents, resident groups and stakeholders that are affected by the scheme. A detailed communications strategy will be developed to ensure a co-

ordinated approach to internal and external communications in order that affected stakeholders and residents are suitably informed and effectively engaged with in conjunction with SCC's scheme-specific communications strategy/plan.

**TIM OLIVER, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**11. MR ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK:  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Question)**

There have been a number of incidents recently of travellers setting up on both private and public land in Surrey. In paying tribute to the help and assistance from Spelthorne Council received by Ashford Cricket Club, what discussions has Surrey had with its boroughs and districts or the government in order to try and address this issue in a sensible and compassionate manner?

**RESPONSE:**

By way of background, Surrey County Council's technical team manage 15 permanent traveller sites across the county and they are also responsible for responding to unauthorised encampments (UEs) when this occurs on Surrey County Council land. (includes SCC land used by Parish Councils).

Throughout the pandemic, powers were paused by the Government to limit the spread of COVID-19. During this period Surrey County Council have monitored sites through visits where practically possible for welfare purposes and to offer support e.g. nurse visits, bin bags and portable toilets.

If UEs occur on Borough Council land, they will, alongside the Joint Enforcement Teams follow a similar process to Surrey County Council.

Surrey County Council do liaise with Boroughs to share intelligence and to identify traveller groups and understand their intentions.

Private land owners do take action with UE's themselves, however where there is a community impact, such as Ashford Cricket Club, Spelthorne, the Joint Enforcement Team and Surreys technical team liaised to provide support and advice to the parties involved.

At present SCC are taking a sensible and compassionate approach on all UEs, in accordance with the Government's advice. We understand that Surrey Police do continue to use their powers when required.

Surrey's technical team met with Surrey Fire & Rescue on 1 July and they have agreed to attend any UEs to offer 'Fire Prevention' advice and free Smoke Detectors to the traveller community.

Surrey recognises the ongoing need for the Borough's and the County Council to work together, particularly on recognised stopping points across the County and to review all permanent sites, including future planning due to the increased demand and in accordance with Government guidelines and Local Plans. The County have made offers of land for a transit site and two stop over sites which they are considering.

## **JULIE ILES, CABINET MEMBER FOR ALL-AGE LEARNING**

### **12. MR JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:**

#### **(3<sup>rd</sup> Question)**

In the last few months of lockdown our education sector, alongside the NHS and other workers, have been recognised as part of our Covid-19 frontline. Surrey County Council's land and property team's Covid-19 response included the rapid creation of the Headley Court community hospital. In light of new guidance expected during the week commencing June 29 2020 from government on how all children will be able to return to school in September, can you outline:

- i. How Surrey County Council will be working with schools across Surrey with insufficient classroom space to provide the additional space needed, whether in the form of temporary classrooms or leveraging use of suitable empty buildings in appropriate locations, so schools can open for all pupils when school's restart in September.
- ii. What is planned in terms of activities over the summer period; in addition to continuing and extending the guidance and support already provided for schools and our young people.

#### **RESPONSE:**

I would like to thank Mr Essex for his questions and for providing me with an opportunity to outline how Surrey County Council is supporting schools to re-open for all pupils from September and connecting our families with summer holiday activities for children.

He is right to emphasise the important role that our mainstream and special schools, early years providers and colleges have played. Throughout the pandemic, the vast majority of Surrey schools have been open for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children. From 1 June, schools and early years providers began to welcome back more children in designated year groups where it was safe to do so. And as we go into the Summer holidays, school leaders are planning for the return of all pupils from September 2020 to be taught a full curriculum. I cannot thank our school leaders, teaching staff, support workers and school governors enough for the tremendous work they have done, and continue to do, throughout this period.

#### **i. Full opening of schools from September 2020 for all pupils**

The Council's Land and Property team has been exploring a number of options for temporary classrooms or leveraging the use of suitable empty buildings in appropriate locations, in anticipation of a change to the guidance for schools to re-open for all children from September 2020. This included identifying potential commercial, public and voluntary sector owned buildings. In discussions with school leaders, however, it quickly became clear that their risk assessment determined that it was better to maintain all children on their existing school site, rather than expand over multiple sites.

On 2 July, the government published comprehensive new guidance on the full opening of mainstream and special schools, early years settings and colleges from September 2020 for all pupils. The guidance, based on Public Health England advice, is that schools should use their existing resources to make arrangements to welcome all children back. They should not need to deliver any of their education on other sites (such as community centres / village halls) because class sizes can return to normal and spaces used by more than one class or group can be cleaned between use.

We do know that some school's risk assessment may determine that small adaptations to their site are required, such as additional wash basins or hand sanitiser stations. Our Land and Property team are providing advice and support to schools to make these adaptations.

## **ii. Childcare and Holiday Play Schemes**

The Council's Commissioning teams are working together with Local Borough Councils, voluntary organisations and private providers to ensure that childcare and activity clubs are available across Surrey to support children and families over the summer school holidays.

Under current guidance such schemes can only operate from school sites so we have invited providers and partners to express an interest in delivering services and will be brokering partnerships with schools who have identified demand. Providers will include sports and activity clubs, arts and crafts. We will be providing support and guidance for schools around bringing in 3rd party providers to deliver services to their children.

We are also enlisting Early Years providers and childminders who are registered to care for children up to the age of 8 years for families who need more flexibility than is afforded by holiday play schemes. We are working closely with Ofsted who have committed to expediting registrations when prioritised by Surrey County Council.

The County Council will also be running a range of activities and programme, including:

- The Summer Reading programme
- Fun Fit and Fed camps for children on free school meals are planned
- Continuing to deliver hot meals to schools and settings as well as coordinating the free school meals voucher scheme.
- Adult learning will be delivering 100 sessions of learning taster sessions for a small fee
- Surrey Outdoor Learning & Development (SOLD) is offering a range of summer holiday outdoor learning opportunities for young people, families and adults; these include TAZ – "The Adventure Zone" - which is the out of school time brand for SOLD courses
- Early Years schemes funded for 150 vulnerable children for 6 weeks (which can be allocated flexibly)
- School age funding for 250 vulnerable children for 3 weeks (which can be allocated flexibly)
- The commissioned Short Breaks programme for families with children with disabilities.

Other private providers and Multi-Academy Trusts are also running their own summer programmes.

We will be monitoring the availability of holiday provision to ensure it is enough to meet demand. For most families, we expect them to be able to access summer holiday activities in the way they always have done. The County Council will be running a campaign to publicise the programme and encourage take up via advertising and marketing in communities and through schools and settings. We have developed a strong communication plan for the programme for the Summer Holiday Offer 2020, including a brochure which will be distributed widely.

**NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE  
AND MEL FEW, CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES**

**13. MR JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:  
(4<sup>th</sup> Question)**

Please can you confirm whether Surrey County Council will pledge support to the new #RetroFirst campaign from the Architects Journal (see <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/retrofirst>) which calls for:

- i. Government to Cut VAT rate on refurbishment from 20% to 5%;
- ii. Promotion of reuse by introducing new clauses into planning guidance and the building regulations; and
- iii. Changes to procurement, insisting all publicly funded projects look to retrofit solutions first.

**RESPONSE:**

Officers will discuss support of the RetroFirst campaign at the Climate Change Strategic Board and will explore how this campaign aligns with our Government lobby plans for the climate change agenda and our Cabinet approved Surrey Climate Change Strategy. Recommendations will be made to Cabinet Members on the proposed approach. A response to each of the points from the campaign are covered below.

- i. Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from commercial and domestic buildings in Surrey account for 43% of Surrey's 2019 emissions baseline. We are currently working on a development approach for the Strategy which will include a focus on reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from housing and buildings in the county. Therefore, the Council supports the proposed VAT reduction on refurbishment from 20% to 5% as a measure to stimulate the refurbishment market.
- ii. The National Planning Policy Framework promotes the effective and efficient use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. The Prime Minister made a number of announcements on June 30th in respect of planning. He announced that a greater range of commercial properties would be able to be 'repurposed' through the reform of the Use Classes Order; that a 'wider range of commercial buildings will be allowed to change to residential use without the need for a planning application' and also that builders will no longer require a 'normal planning application to demolish and rebuild vacant and redundant residential and commercial buildings if they are rebuilt as homes'.

The Government is therefore already proposing measures that will make it easier to reuse existing buildings for alternative uses. It needs to be recognised that the reuse of an existing building will not always be appropriate however, dependent upon the nature and condition of the building and the proposed use of the land. There is therefore a balance to be struck and this can only be done on a case by case basis.

In view of this, the Council would support an amendment to planning guidance to support the promotion of the reuse of existing buildings where appropriate, with developers needing to justify why it is not possible to reuse existing buildings as part of any planning submission for redevelopment.

- iii. The Procurement Team works with all Council services to ensure that the most appropriate procurement strategy is developed for each project which is in accordance with the Council's ambitions as well as Public Contract Regulations and the Council's Standing Orders.