

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL HELD REMOTELY ON MICROSOFT TEAMS ON 13 OCTOBER 2020 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
	Nikki 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 OBE		

\*absent

#### **41/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Mrs Angell, Mr Ellwood, Mr Kemp, Mrs Lay and Mr Witham.

The Chairman wished Colin Kemp well, wishing him a swift and full recovery.

#### **42/20 MINUTES [Item 2]**

The minutes of the meeting of the County Council held on 7 July 2020 were submitted and confirmed.

#### **43/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

Rachael I Lake declared a non-pecuniary interest noting that her son was an employee of Surrey County Council.

#### **44/20 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS [Item 4]**

The Chairman:

- Highlighted to Members that the Chairman's Announcements were located in the agenda front sheet.
- Drew attention to the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2020, noting that it had been postponed from June due to the current pandemic and it celebrated the selfless service and good deeds of ordinary people and famous names during that difficult time.
- Congratulated Mrs Julie Iles who had been awarded the rank of Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE).

#### **45/20 LEADER'S STATEMENT [Item 5]**

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

Members raised the following topics:

- That working together for the benefit of Surrey's residents and those that work in the county should be a continued priority and not just during the current COVID-19 surge.
- That for Members to be critical friends, it was vital that they had briefings and information to enable scrutiny on key issues including but not limited to unitarisation.
- That mental health remained an issue and was exacerbated by COVID-19 and similarly to equality impact assessments, mental health impact assessments should be included in all of the Council's reports.
- Recommended that Members and officers read the report of the Mental Health Task Group due to be considered on Thursday at the Adults and Health Select Committee. The report recommended mental health training for all and recommendations to improve the situation of those with mental health issues. Going forward, it was also important to ensure the right contract to cover children's mental health.

- Welcomed any Surrey-wide initiative to encourage the early uptake of the annual flu jab, through working with General Practice (GP) surgeries.
- Highlighted the serious funding gap from central Government, which would lead to further cuts and continued austerity.
- Welcomed Mr Edward Hawkins as Deputy Cabinet Member for Property and stressed the need for the Council to use its property assets efficiently.
- Questioned whether the Council had the right resources and could harness the momentum gained through the property review - Surrey Asset and Place Strategy - undertaken more than eighteen months ago.
- Requested that the Leader provide reassurance on the financial situation concerning Surrey's commercial property investments with regard to the annual valuation and the latest on rent collection from our tenants.
- Queried how the Council could work with the borough and district councils on the Surrey 2050 Place Ambition, in order to provide the necessary infrastructure to deliver a Surrey-wide vision and strategy.
- Thanked officers, staff and partners for the work they had done and were continuing to do during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Sent best wishes and support to the Deputy Leader of the Council.
- Noted the need for caution and sensitivity in how the Council approaches complex challenges.
- Expressed concern over Local Community Networks (LCNs) as they could be seen by borough and district councils as a way to take over the established community relationships and local structures.
- Welcomed the focus on economic growth which must be delivered in partnership with borough and district councils, to address concerns such as affordable housing and ensuring a sustainable workforce.
- Praised the significant strengthening and refocus of the Council on scrutiny and the work of the Select Committee Chairmen and Vice Chairmen's Group.
- That there had been a large change in the way services were delivered due to the pandemic, praising the work of teachers delivering content digitally and on the safe reopening of schools.
- Agreed with the Leader that the Council should embrace change and take the lead not waiting on the Government's direction.
- Asked if the Council could facilitate and deliver NHS Test and Trace locally so that school children who had been sent home could be tested, harnessing local COVID-19 testing capacity at drive-throughs.
- Asked if the Leader agreed that the Surrey Virtual Wellbeing Hub had proved a welcome addition to reach out to those with mental health issues, the Hub had helped more than six hundred and fifty people in just four months and promoted empowerment.
- That a two or three tier system of local government was not the most efficient structure and applauded the Leader for engaging with the Government to look at alternatives and noted the work by the cross-party Public Service Reform (PSR) Working Group.
- Noted the response to the COVID-19 crisis in the north of England led by regional mayors and asked whether there was a possibility of a county mayor for Surrey and if there were financial incentives.
- Asked what the chances were of there being Surrey County Council elections in May 2021.

- That during difficult times the protection of democracy was key. LCNs were a good initiative but noted concern that the views of rural areas might be ignored and overruled by the town areas.
- Asked if the Leader agreed that the dismissive remarks by a Member on the missing opportunity on the recommissioning of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) contract, underestimated the amount of officer, Member and partner focus on the matter.
- That there was a strong focus on the emotional wellbeing and mental health services across county; the Council had adopted the THRIVE framework of early intervention and developed an alliance of local and national partners including Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in which funding was procured enabling Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) to transform services.
- Thanked the Leader for his positive statement and analysis on the potential for a single unitary authority.
- Asked what the Council's overall financial position was including the direct financial impact as a result of the pandemic as well as the extent to which those costs had been refunded by Government.
- Echoed the thanks to teachers and support staff at schools, governing bodies and all those who worked hard to get children back to school. The Council had worked closely with schools and public health on health and safety risk assessments to ensure a smooth return.
- Noted that there were testing issues nationally. Residents could get tests conducted at drive-throughs and the issue was the local laboratory capacity in processing a high volume of tests.
- The Council had worked with each school setting to ensure that as few children as possible were sent home if someone in their bubble had symptoms or tested positive. It was important for children's mental health and wellbeing to get back to school.
- Noted that some services had recognised additional upfront costs as a result of COVID-19, such as for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in care homes. Costs were also expected in Children's Services to address future issues such as delayed Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).
- Asked for more clarity on the LCNs, querying whether they would have powers or would just be talking shops.

#### **46/20 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME [Item 6]**

##### **Member Questions:**

Notice of twenty-two questions had been received. The questions and replies were published in a supplementary agenda on 12 October 2020.

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

**(Q1) Mr Robert Evans** noted disappointment in the response as it did not set a high target or was ambitious in the levels of recycling that Surrey should be doing and the variations between different boroughs and districts.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change emphasised that Surrey was doing well as a county in terms of recycling, noting

the most recent figures in which the county reused, recycled or composted fifty-six percent of all of its rubbish - putting the Surrey third in the country.

**(Q2) Dr Andrew Povey** was pleased to see that Cranleigh High Street was to be included in the lane rental scheme. Concerning local consultation and engagement. He asked for the Cabinet Member's assurance that local Members would be kept better informed and involved in discussions on works on the highways.

**(Q4) Mr Mike Goodman** thanked the Cabinet Member for her excellent answer and Cabinet Member Briefing which demonstrated the work on delivering Surrey County Council's Climate Change Strategy. He queried the grant that had been secured for LoCASE (Low Carbon across the South East), how the system would work and what the benefits would be for residents and businesses.

Mr Jonathan Essex congratulated the Cabinet Member on the successful bid for the Government's Green Homes Local Authority Delivery programme, asking how many of Surrey's 600,000 homes would be retrofitted as a result of the funding and if there would be funding to retrain Surrey residents who were out of work, to do that task.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change explained that Surrey County Council secured European Union investment through LoCASE worth approximately £6 million. The contract documents would be signed in early November, to be launched soon after and would run until June 2023. The programme would be promoted to small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) across the county, working in collaboration with borough and district councils and Surrey Chambers of Commerce. SME businesses were eligible for a grant of up to fifty percent for either energy efficiency or low carbon measures, or alternatively could sign up to ten hours of support to reduce their negative environmental impacts. The carbon saved and financial benefits to SME businesses from reduced energy and fuel bills would be monitored throughout the programme.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change would provide a written answer to Mr Essex.

**(Q7) Mrs Bernie Muir** did not have a supplementary question.

Mrs Clare Curran noted that she was delighted to welcome the Deputy Cabinet Member - Support for the Leader recently to Bookham to discuss a potential community project which was being supported by a major VCFS partner and could transform service delivery in the area. She asked if the Deputy Cabinet Member could reassure Members, that if and when communities put forward schemes for Your Fund Surrey (formerly the Community Projects Fund), there would be a timely and transparent process for the assessing their feasibility.

The Deputy Cabinet Member - Support for the Leader responded that yes there would be a transparent process and Members would find out more detail on the CPF at an upcoming members seminar on 23 October as the project was launched. The CPF encouraged community engagement and he hoped that more projects would come forward, other avenues would be looked at for schemes not considered feasible.

**(Q9) Mrs Clare Curran** asked the Cabinet Member whether the Surrey Local Outbreak Control Plan (LOCP) was subject to continuous revision responsive to Government guidance and intelligence.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health confirmed that Surrey's LOCP was iterative as it was subject to regular review. Given the recent new national guidance issued by the Government, Surrey's LOCP would be updated in the next week.

**(Q11) Mr Nick Harrison** noted disappointed that the response did not highlight the budget available and whether it was sufficient to resolve the high risk wetspots. He disagreed with the definition which referred to wetspots as being reoccurring flooding incidents as in his division one of the roads had flooding for the first time which substantially impacted five properties. He asked the Cabinet Member and officers for an analysis on the cause of flooding incidents in his division and if the Cabinet Member or Deputy Cabinet Member - Place could meet with him on the implementation of the work concerning wetspots. He asked if the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee could set up a task group to review the budget, policy, procedures and action programme to address flooding risks.

In response, the chairman of the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee noted that the select committee would take up that suggestion.

**(Q12) Mr Jonathan Essex** restated his original question requesting the average recorded daily response times for each night and day shift from 1 July 2020, and not the average response time since the first Phase of the Making Surrey Safer Plan 2020-2023 from 1 April 2020. He also restated his request for the average number of fire engines available for each night and day shift since July 1 2020.

In response the Cabinet Member for Communities noted that as stated in the response, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) used Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services' (HMICFRS) measurement so the average response times could be benchmarked against other services nationally. The Cabinet Member added that response times were cumulative so there was an opportunity at the end of the year to evaluate the full year quality and ratified performance measures over the transition of the first Phase - currently estimated at nine months but was dependent on engagement and discussions with staff at SFRS. The Cabinet Member thanked Mr Essex for his continued involvement with the SFRS Member Reference Group, the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee and member seminars.

**(Q13) Mrs Nikki Barton** noted concern that the aggregate data used by the SFRS might hide the situation in Haslemere. She noted that from her understanding Haslemere Fire Station was being regularly left without any crews at all and relied on fire crews from the surrounding areas and that response times regularly exceeded the ten minute target. She highlighted two incidents last night which were attended from crews outside Haslemere with sixteen and nineteen minute response times. She requested further data on Haslemere and invited the Cabinet Member back to Haslemere Fire Station to address the issues.

In response the Cabinet Member for Communities and senior officers would be happy to attend a meeting with the Member noting the constructive engagement session last time. The Cabinet Member noted that the needs of Haslemere were recognised fully in the Making Surrey Safer Plan 2020-2023, as the whole-time availability was extended to be 7am-7pm, seven days a week - providing that additional cover at weekends. She responded to the Member's concerns about the A3 Hindhead Tunnel, noting that SFRS was heavily involved in the construction and preparation for the tunnel; complex fire solutions and regular exercises were undertaken so that the risks identified were fully recognised and managed in the Community Risk Profile.

**(Q14) Mr Robert Evans** asked whether the Cabinet Member knew how many tower blocks there were in Surrey that failed the Government safety tests due to Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) being used as cladding.

Mr Jonathan Essex commented that the Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 1 Report, suggested lowering the current definition of high-rise buildings from eighteen to eleven metres so match the height that could be reached from a standard fire engine. The report also extended the list of tower blocks to refit to include those with HPL (high-pressure laminate) cladding which had similar combustibility to the ACM cladding. He asked if SFRS and the Council had figures on the number of tower blocks in those categories.

In response the Cabinet Member for Communities noted that SFRS and all fire and rescue services worked with a list that was produced by the Building Research Establishment, which undertook constant tests such as evaluating different materials and to determine fire spread at elevation and ground level. Surrey's fire safety teams worked with building owners in the county and there was a dedicated fire safety team responsible for high-rise buildings in Surrey. SFRS had proactively investigated buildings over eleven metres in height since Grenfell and it also undertook sleeping risk assessments across a number of buildings including: high-rise, childrens' homes, care homes, hospitals and hotels. SFRS through its Making Surrey Safer Plan 2020-2023, were redistributing resources to ensure there was capacity available to undertake these key priorities going forward.

**(Q15) Dr Andrew Povey** asked for an explanatory note on the Council Tax leaflet on the 2% increase of the Adult Social Care precept which was calculated on the total amount of Surrey County Council's precept for 2019/20, so that it was not seen as misleading by Surrey's residents.

In response the Cabinet Member for Resources noted that he would take the Member's comments on board and discuss the leaflet with officers.

**(Q16) Mr Nick Darby** questioned why there was no split of the total price for the Woodhatch property in Reigate, as there were three different projects: a new school, extra care housing and office buildings. He also asked the Leader for confirmation

on whether it was the case that Surrey County Council would give itself planning permission for the new school or if permission would be from Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.

In response the Leader did not see what advantage there would be in splitting the value of the site as it would be divided in due course when the school and

extra care facilities would be built. The site was bought with the intention of adding in two other facilities and possibly others.

The Leader added that he believed it the case that Surrey County Council would give itself planning permission for the new school and Reigate and Banstead Borough Council would give planning permission for the extra care housing.

**(Q17) Mr Jonathan Essex** thanked the Cabinet Member for the response noting that facilities for Tetrapaks and small recyclables would be reinstated at all sites where they were previously present by the end of October 2020. However, he was concerned at the notion that the recycling of cans, plastic bottles and glass containers would be considered redundant at CRCs and he asked the Cabinet Member to review the volume of those materials that were collected from the CRCs before the Covid-19 lockdown and to consider reinstating such facilities at CRCs so that residents could recycle surplus.

In response the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change noted that she would review the volumes recycled at CRCs of those specific recyclables and highlighted that all but one of Surrey's borough and district councils collected those recyclables at the kerbside.

**(Q19) Mr Robert Evans** noted that he was disappointed with the response as the question was specifically about the retention of senior fire officers in SFRS and not recruitment. He added that the £4,500 extra allowance for working in the London Fire Brigade may be one reason for leaving SFRS but noted that more senior fire officers leaving SFRS quoted bullying and the twelve hour shifts in their leaving interviews, and he asked if that concerned the Cabinet Member.

In response the Cabinet Member for Communities assured the Member that significant attention was given at frequent meetings and conversations on workforce management. Personal development, upskilling, training and promotion opportunities were extensive throughout SFRS. The Cabinet Member emphasised that she had many conversations with members of staff who were motivated around the opportunities at SFRS, which was a service made up of highly skilled, experienced and dedicated individuals. Senior leadership officers at SFRS were committed to enable every member of staff and fire firefighter to be their best for Surrey's residents.

**(Q21) Mr Jonathan Essex** asked what would be needed to improve the current energy efficiency rating from C to A of the intended new Council Civic Heart in Woodhatch, Reigate and how much that may cost. Concerning access to Woodhatch, the Member also asked whether the travel plan could be shared with Members, staff and residents.

Mrs Clare Curran commented that she had visited Woodhatch and was impressed by the airy building and grounds. She asked the Leader whether anyone from the Council had contacted the former tenants, Canon and its property team to see what they did differently at their new building as any change of practice would be useful for the Council.

In response, the Leader noted that there was no simple answer to improve the energy efficiency to A. The introduction of LED lights and possible removal of

the air conditioning units in the ground floor conference rooms were a start and he would liaise with officers on the matters and costs involved.

Regarding the travel plan, the Leader responded that it would be shared with the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee and with Members once completed. The travel plan would look at options around walking, cycling, and an electric shuttle bus service.

The Leader explained that there had been direct liaison with Canon during the handover period and he would look into whether officers had asked them on what they were to do differently at their new building. The current focus of the Council's land and property team was fitting out the building with furniture and equipment, with the installation of 5G network cabling to be completed by the middle of December 2020.

**(Q22) Mr Jonathan Essex** noted that he understood from the response that there were now less free buses places and places through the concessionary seat scheme due to Covid-19. He asked the Cabinet Member to provide assurance on a post Covid-19 plan which encouraged more to travel to school on buses especially for those in which walking or cycling was too far a distance, in order to reduce school travel car dependency.

In response the Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning noted that a substantial amount of analysis was undertaken on the matter, as a result there were additional school bus services to ensure social-distancing and were Covid-19 secure with sixty-five separate routes. Funding remained for the second half term and those arrangements would be reviewed.

#### **Cabinet Member Briefings:**

These were also published with the supplementary agenda on 12 October 2020.

Members made the following comments:

**Cabinet Member for Resources:** was pleased that the Council's Land and Property team had appropriate momentum and resource for the future. That as well as delivering the significant Woodhatch Civic Heart project, a Member asked if the Cabinet Member could provide assurance that there would be the capacity in the team to drive through other local property projects.

The Cabinet Member responded with assurance that he received weekly update and with officers pursue it religiously to ensure progress is being made.

**Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change:** on the CRC in Epsom has been an issue, a Member asked for the detail of when the booking system trial would start.

The Cabinet Member noted that several residents had contacted her as they were unhappy about queueing to get into the Epsom CRC and a retailer noted difficulty in receiving deliveries as a result. As a result, a booking system would be trialled from 5 November 2020 along with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) to catch a number of people using the CRC from outside the county. The Cabinet Member noted that communications would shortly be

distributed to residents in Epsom and Ewell and neighbouring Reigate and Banstead, as well as an update on the County Council's Surrey News website.

**Deputy Cabinet Member - People:** on the continued closure of some of Surrey's registry offices due to Covid-19 and in particular Reigate Registrars Office. Following the Member's query on the matter at the last Cabinet meeting and response from the Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning, the Member asked if the Deputy Cabinet Member had looked at whether the service could be provided at the Council's intended new Civic Heart in Woodhatch, Reigate from January 2021.

In response the Deputy Cabinet Member noted that a plan was being formulated to look at how registry services could be re-established in places where social distancing was possible. She would liaise with officers on the possible use of the new site at Woodhatch, Reigate and provide a response to the Member. She noted positively that officers were keeping up with the backlog.

#### **47/20 STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS [Item 7]**

There were none.

#### **48/20 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 Nick Darby moved:

##### **This Council notes:**

The unsuccessful attempt by the Leader of the Council and Cabinet to submit a case to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to create a Surrey Single Unitary Council.

That the potential bid has caused reputational damage to Surrey County Council.

##### **Therefore resolves that:**

In order to understand the reasons behind the bid, the decision not to consult from the start with Borough and District Councils, and the cost to the council taxpayer, this Council calls upon the Leader and Cabinet to provide a full public written Report on this unsuccessful bid, to include the following:

- I. The process used to launch the bid and authorise expenditure on the bid.
- II. The rationale for developing a bid before the Government's White Paper has been published.
- III. The full costs of the bid including the costs of the initial research and financial analysis, preparation of a comprehensive business case, consultants fees, Public Affairs support, the Telephone and Focus Group

Survey, any Surrey-wide leaflets which included material in support of a bid for a Single Surrey Unitary, and officer time.

IV. Other relevant information.

Mr Darby made the following points:

- He sought a full public written report on the unitary bid, to include the process used to launch the bid and authorise its expenditure, the rationale for developing the bid at the current time and to understand the full costs of the bid so far and any other relevant information.
- Noted disappointment as the bid caused reputational damage with borough and district councils who had not been closely consulted on the options for Surrey and the bid sought their removal. Such a relationship was vital to achieve joint strategies such as the Surrey Place Ambition 2050 and dismisses their joint role in the county's response to Covid-19.
- He noted that residents should have been consulted on the proposal from the beginning, not through the belated Telephone and Focus Group Survey and not when the option chosen was expressed as a done deal, such as the leaflet to residents which promoted a single Surrey unitary.
- That the bid was rushed without a detailed business case or briefings involving Member and resident consultation. Surrey's encouragement by the Government to prepare a bid early to get in quick despite Covid-19, Brexit and the need to allow recovery was ill-judged.
- That the bid was a waste of taxpayers' money as it was confirmed the previous day that Surrey was not being invited to make a bid at present. He asked what the Council had spent so far on the intended bid and noted an approximate figure of just under £350,000 composing of initial research and financial analysis, preparation of the comprehensive business case, a Telephone and Focus Group Survey, Surrey-wide leaflets, public affairs support and expenditure on a senior policy lead and officer time.
- Highlighted the wasted costs of £183,000 for the intended purchase of the Council's proposed headquarters in Woking, now scrapped in favour of Woodhatch, Reigate.
- As a result of the above costs of just over £500,000 he asked what services could have be provided or saved, bearing in mind the constant cuts over the last ten years and continuing austerity.
- He asked if the Leader would do the same thing again or what he would have done differently and what was the Council doing to repair the reputational damage.

The motion was formally seconded by Mr Eber Kington, who reserved the right to speak.

No points were made by Members.

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

- That the motion was tabled as it was crucial that Surrey's residents knew the reasons behind the ill-timed an increasingly expensive bid for unitary authority status.

- The intended bid was shrouded in Conservative Party secrecy, confusion and uncertainty over costs and frequent u-turns over the bid's status.
- That from the outset there was no consultation with the Leaders of Surrey's borough and district councils or residents.
- That when interviewed by Guildford Dragon News on Youtube in September the Leader struggled to give an answer on costs eventually suggesting £100,000-£150,000. However, thanks to the challenge of opposition councillors that figure was in fact closer to £250,000 and rising.
- That although Surrey's unitary bid had been delayed as it was confirmed as not being on the Government's early bid list, there should be no delay in the publication of a full public written report covering the issues raised in the motion.

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

- He hoped that support for the motion would be unanimous.

In accordance with Standing Order 28.1, Mr Eber Kington requested a recorded vote to be taken on the motion. The Chairman agreed to Mr Kington's request.

The following Members voted for it:

Mrs Barton, Mr Beckett, Mr Botten, Mr Cooksey, Mr Darby, Mr Essex, Mr Robert Evans, Mr Forster, Mr Goodwin, Mrs Goodwin, Mr Harrison, Mr Kington, Mr Lee, Mr MacLeod, Mr Mallett, Mrs Mason, Mrs Rivers, Mr Spence, Mr Townsend, Mrs Watson, Mrs White.

The following Members voted against it:

Ms Azad, Mrs Bowes, Mrs Bramhall, Mr Brett-Warburton, Mr Carasco, Dr Chapman, Mrs Clack, Mrs Curran, Mr Deach, Mr Tim Evans, Mr Few, Mr Furey, Mr Furniss, Mr Gardner, Mr Goodman, Miss Griffiths, Dr Grant-Duff, Mr Gulati, Mr Hall, Mrs Hammond, Mr Harmer, Mr Harris, Mr Hawkins, Miss Heath, Mr Hussain, Mrs Iles, Mr Islam, Mr Knight, Rachael I Lake, Mrs Lewis, Mr McIntosh, Mr Mansfield, Mr Martin, Mrs Mooney, Ms Morley, Mrs Moseley, Mrs Mountain, Mrs Muir, Mr Nuti, Mr Oliver, Mr O'Reilly, Dr Povey, Mr Ramsdale, Mrs Rush, Mr Samuels, Mrs Steeds, Dr Szanto, Mr Taylor, Mrs Thorn, Ms Turner-Stewart, Mr Walsh, Mrs Young.

The following Members abstained:

Mr Bennison.

21 Members voted For, 52 Against and 1 Abstention.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that:

The motion was lost.

## **Item 8 (ii)**

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

Under Standing Order 12.1 Mr Chris Botten moved:

### **This Council notes:**

That it recognises that the future of Surrey's local government may well be with appropriately sized and proportioned unitary authorities.

### **Therefore resolves that:**

- I. In future to ensure it works inclusively with Boroughs and Districts and their communities to establish a consensus on the way forward, including ensuring that funding can be devolved to elected bodies as close to communities as possible.
- II. It minimises the use of public funds and resources in exploring and developing future models to put to Surrey residents, mindful of the fact that ALL councils in Surrey have very limited resources and that any move to Unitary bodies would be predicated on the need for greater efficiency and stewardship of public funds.

Mr Botten made the following points:

- He felt that the motion was important to begin to address the reputational and financial damage done as well as trust eroded from the unitary bid.
- That the question of unitary authorities would not disappear as proportionately sized unitary authorities could be an effective future for local government.
- That proper consultation was needed with Surrey's borough and district councils to ensure consensus on the way forward to deliver effective shared services and joint budgets devolved to elected bodies as close to communities as possible.
- That consultation was also needed with parish, town and village councils in Surrey to obtain a clear view of Surrey's unitary agenda across the county and to ensure the effectiveness of devolved powers and local representation.
- That consultation with elected Members across Surrey was vital as focus groups, various assemblies or the proposed LCNs were not guaranteed to take ownership or be representative and long-lasting.
- Emphasised that the Council must embrace modesty and humility going forward, looking towards consensus through local solutions.
- Stressed that the boundaries of a new Surrey authority must ensure integration across services protecting the most vulnerable residents such as public health, adult and children's social care.

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

Nine Members made the following points:

- Thanked Mr Botten for the motion and was supportive of unitary authorities.
- Noted that most forms of local government had lifespans of approximately fifty years of which Surrey in its present form as a non-metropolitan council had been in existence since 1974.
- That the unitary question would not go away and had been debated six years ago in Council, a full debate on the matter should have been had before Covid-19 and the Government's lead.
- Agreed that residents must be put first, many felt that the present two or three tier structure in the county was not the most efficient system and the division between responsibilities was not always clear.
- Was dismayed that residents were not kept well-informed on the unitary bid or the differing options, the Surrey-wide leaflet only promoted the Surrey single unitary option and some borough and district council leaflets opposed that view.
- That it was crucial to reflect on all the options concerning the unitary bid ensuring detailed consultations on the matter to look towards Surrey's future and financially efficient local government.
- The way in which the single Surrey unitary bid was launched fractured relationships with its borough and district councils that would be difficult to repair and showed disregard to their opinions.
- Noted that Leaders of the borough and district councils reacted strongly to the bid which proposed their abolition by investing in consultants to promote their different cases, which would likely not have been necessary if they had been consulted with from the beginning.
- That the motion provided a mechanism to move forward, Surrey's leadership and Public Service Reform Working Group must seriously consider other options in relation to the unitary bid and must engage constructively with the borough and district councils.
- That the motion was emotional in tone but lacking in content and was displeased that LCNs were being dismissed before they had been discussed in detail.
- That the Government would, in due course, be inviting different local authorities for their proposals and restructuring local government should be embraced if it meant better services for Surrey's residents and sustainability.
- Welcomed the dynamism of the Council which looked after 1.2 million residents and praised the leadership displayed during the pandemic by handling over 10,000 calls via the Surrey community helpline, making direct contact with 40,000 shielding residents and it opened a community hospital in just thirty-five days.
- Noted that the first motion was based on the false premise that the unitary bid was unsuccessful as no bid had been made and that by not linking in with the proposed LCNs, this motion did not go far enough on local engagement.
- That residents did not want a humble Council but wanted leadership.
- Explained that the Government still intended to publish the Recovery and Devolution White Paper, the restructuring of local government was a Government initiative. Surrey was encouraged to work on a business plan which it had and was currently in wave two for those authorities to be taken forward for unitary authority status.
- That it was a shame that Members were dismissing LCNs without looking at the detail or their potential.

- That the costs of the work on Surrey's unitary bid had been published, borough and district councils had also spent £150,0000 on instructing KPMG and that work had identified the opportunities to save costs.
- Did not recognise the alleged reputational damage to the Council's relationship with its borough and districts councils, as the exploration of Surrey's future governance structure was in the best interest of residents.
- Highlighted that in the latest Surrey Residents Survey, 50% thought that the Council provided value for money and 68% of residents were satisfied with how the Council were doing things. Of those who participated in the Telephone and Focus Group Survey, 61% thought that the streamlining of local government was a good idea and 61% welcomed the idea of a single unitary authority - the younger generation were most in favour.
- That the focus must be on what residents thought and what was best for them. The restructuring of local government by reducing the number of councillors and councils, and ensuring more efficient ways of delivering services was key, avoiding duplication.
- That the money committed by both borough and district councils and Surrey County Council on initial research on the restructuring of local government was not wasted, as greater information available to Surrey's councillors was an asset and enabled more informed decisions.
- That although the intention of the motion was understandable towards a more consensual debate, it could not be supported as no one but the Government though that local government reform was a pressing issue and the motion wrongly supported the Council's pre-emptive move on the issue, conceding to the idea that a Surrey unitary was the way forward.
- That it was a shame that it felt as though Members were siloing themselves into voting for or against a motion that was supposed to bring them together.
- Hoped that going forward, differing views and options as opposed to a single Surrey unitary, would be reviewed and the public and that all of Surrey's local councils would be consulted.
- Disagreed with the Leader that humility and leadership were mutual opposites.
- That it was important that the Council understood what the public wanted, and to recognise that some residents were confused when the unitary bid was on and then later off. More information was needed as although many residents wanted change, that change must be for the better - savings and efficient delivery of services.

Mrs White, the seconder of the motion, made the following comments:

- Similarly to other Members, she was sorry to see the damage done to the Council's relationship across Surrey local government particularly the borough and district councils.
- That the Government's rush for the implementation of unitaries and the need to publish the Recovery and Devolution White Paper in the autumn despite Covid-19 and Brexit, was ill-judged.
- That she was in favour of reviewing the current structure to avoid the confusion of multiple tiers of local government, however such

considerations must be through detailed and considered consultation with Surrey's local councils and directly with residents.

- That a lot of work was needed to rebuild the Council's relationship with its district and borough councils, their continued support during the pandemic was invaluable and it was unfortunate that the Council's leaflet noting a possible single Surrey unitary, did not acknowledge that contribution.
- That the idea of using parish, town and village councils as a local form of service delivery was interesting, however more awareness was needed to ensure that there were many candidates standing, so they were not later filled by co-option.
- Whilst community and residents' associations played a good role they were often self-selecting and so there was a governance question around their accountability, that concern applied to the proposed LCNs. There must remain a level of elected Member representation across the county including areas not currently covered.
- Stressed that the Council needed to pull back from its proposal of a single Surrey unitary authority and instigate proper conversations across its tiers and with its residents.

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

- The intention of the motion was to bring the Council together, it must distance itself from its hubristic approach to the unitary bid and ensure humility and modesty as leaders going forward.
- He was regretful that the Conservative Party Members could not support the motion as the issue seemed to be about ownership and not the content.
- That ideas on a consensual way forward across all of Surrey's councils including devolved funding to elected bodies as close to communities as possible could have been developed more fully later on.

The motion was put to a vote in which 20 Members voted For, 52 Against and 1 Abstention.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that:

The motion was lost.

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

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

Under Standing Order 12.1 Mr Will Forster 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)

**~~This Council notes:~~**

- As people are being instructed to return to school, the national Government is encouraging everyone to walk or cycle where possible instead of taking public transport or returning to their cars.
- The Government has announced a £250 million “Emergency Active Travel Fund” for temporary infrastructure to enable safe cycling and walking – of which, Surrey County Council received £848,000 (and provided match funding) as part of phase 1. It has subsequently submitted a £7.8m bid for phase 2.
- The Transport Secretary issued new Statutory Guidance on 9 May to all Highways Authorities, requiring them to deliver “transformative change” within an urgent timeframe.
- Measures listed under the Statutory Guidance include (but are not limited to) ‘pop-up’ cycle facilities, widening footways, “school streets” schemes, and reducing speed limits.
- The guidance further states that “measures should be taken as swiftly as possible, and in any event within weeks, given the urgent need to change travel habits before the restart takes full effect”.
- “School streets” schemes, which close the roads outside schools during drop-off and pick-up times, have the multiple aims of: improving road safety for pupils, encouraging active travel to school/ modal shift out of cars, and improving the air quality and environment at the school gates, and are very effective for enabling social distancing outside schools.

**This Council further notes that:**

- Prior to Covid-19 related changes, “school streets” schemes were successfully introduced or were being trialled at multiple local authorities across the UK.
- Since the announcement, enthusiasm for “school streets” has sky-rocketed, with many more councils introducing these schemes before schools reopened and multiple NGOs calling for the introduction of “school streets” to manage social distancing at the school gate.
- Some councils are introducing the measures under their own considerable statutory powers, making experimental traffic orders where necessary.
- Now is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to positively impact travel choices, including the associated benefits on health, air quality and road safety.

**This Council notes:**

**Funding for the highway improvements could be provided from external sources such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Some notable examples include the £250,000 cycle and pedestrian improvements outside Hinchley Wood Primary and Secondary Schools (funded from CIL), and the £360,000 pedestrian accessibility and safety scheme outside Burstow School in Smallfield (currently being designed, also funded from CIL).**

**School Streets, whereby roads near schools are closed at drop off and pick up times, provide an additional solution that could be considered as part of the Road Safety Outside School process. School Streets will not be appropriate for many sites, so it is important to follow the Road Safety Outside Schools process so the correct solutions can be developed for each location.**

However, there are some important caveats. Within London, most School Streets have been enforced using ANPR cameras operated by the civil authorities (with exemptions for residents and school staff, and essential carers who may need to enter the closed road).

Outside of London, at the present time, Local Authorities do not have the legal power to use ANPR cameras to issue penalties for moving traffic offences such as passing a point closure at the start of a School Street. This will require legislation by central government. In the mean-time enforcement is only possible by the police who have many other demands on their resources.

In other locations where the School Street closures are manually operated, this has usually taken place where there are no residential properties within the closed road zone, and so a temporary barrier can be installed (by a school caretaker for example), to ensure no vehicle can physically enter the closed road during the closure period. This would not be practical at locations where some vehicles will still need to have access to the closed road. We are not aware of any locations within Surrey where a manually operated School Street would be practical and worthwhile (for example where there are not any residential properties on the roads in question).

The Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has indicated in Parliament that Central Government will be giving local authorities outside London the powers to enforce moving traffic offences.

With that in mind officers have identified a potential trial site (Bullers Road on the approach to Farnham Heath End school in Farnham) and have scheduled a site visit with local members in the coming weeks. Any scheme would require acceptance from the residents within the School Street that they would need to register their vehicles for an exemption. They would also need to accept that they will not be able to receive any deliveries or visitors using non-registered vehicles during the closure times. The impact of displacement of parking onto other nearby roads will also need to be considered carefully. The back-office arrangements to issue and administer penalties and exemptions will also need to be set up. If we proceed with a trial at this site, then the lessons learned will inform upon the viability, value for money and success of similar schemes elsewhere in the county.

All schools are encouraged to create a school travel plan using the national Modeshift STARS online portal which provides a template and resources to assist in creating their plan, and a nationally recognised accreditation. The council's Safer Travel Team provide regular training and assistance to schools on developing their travel plans. At the present time there are 104 Surrey schools registered on the Modeshift STARS portal and 41 schools have an accredited travel plan. The same team have commissioned a School Air Quality Programme funded through contributions from Borough and District Environmental Health teams. This initiative involves theatre workshops, lessons and assemblies on air quality. It also includes children deploying diffusion tubes on the roads near the school to measure air quality and holding anti-idling events outside the school (subject to COVID-19 restrictions).

**The Safer Travel Team also assist schools in applying for the international Eco Schools accreditation. This is achieved by the school undertaking a range of activities and practices in support of the environment and climate change. This could include tree planting, though it is for individual schools to decide what initiatives are most relevant to their site. There are 37 schools with Eco Schools “Green Flag” accreditation in Surrey.**

**This Council resolves to request that Cabinet:**

- ~~I. — Works with county councillors, Districts and Boroughs, schools and local partners to swiftly identify those schools in the county that could put a “school streets” scheme in place.~~
- ~~II. — Works with county councillors, Districts and Boroughs, schools and local partners to enable all schools that wish to take part in the “school streets” scheme to do so — taking advantage of experimental traffic orders and new statutory guidance over fast-tracked Traffic Regulation Orders where necessary.~~
- ~~III. — In the long term, continue to work with all schools in the county to develop accredited Travel Plans, which could include enforceable No-Idling Zones and “school streets” schemes.~~
- ~~IV. — Measures air quality around a sample of schools in all eleven districts/boroughs at child-head height to identify the level of air pollution children are being exposed to at school drop-off and pick-up.~~
- ~~V. — Pilots additional measures to improve air quality near schools in 2020/21, such as “living green walls” and tree planting, working with local businesses to sponsor these initiatives.~~
- ~~VI. — Establishes a cross party group of members to work with officers in order to identify suitable measures, prioritise locations and oversee implementation of the scheme.~~
- I. Agrees that officers will proceed with an assessment of Bullers Road in Farnham as a potential school street pilot, subject to the caveats that central government provide the enforcement powers, residents support the proposal, and that the impact of the displacement of parking are considered carefully.**
- II. Invites nominations for further school streets pilots from communities, highways, members and schools. To be assessed for suitability following the initial pilot at Bullers Road, Farnham.**
- III. Agrees that the outcome of school street pilots in Surrey, along with school streets initiatives in other comparable areas, will inform the viability of school streets elsewhere in the county as part of the existing Road Safety Outside Schools policy process.**
- IV. Officers will continue to work with schools throughout the county on developing school travel plans, will continue to oversee the Schools Air Quality Programme, and will continue to support schools in applying for Eco Schools accreditation.**

V. **Notes the work officers are currently doing with schools throughout the county on any requests for neighbourhood zones, tree and hedge planting and air pollution projects, as part of the Schools Air Quality Programme, and continue to support schools in applying for Eco Schools accreditation.**

Members agreed to debate the amended motion and therefore it became a substantive motion.

Mr Forster made the following points:

- That during lockdown people across Surrey experienced better air quality and a safer environment due to there being fewer vehicles on the road and those benefits needed to be preserved.
- That “school streets” could improve children’s health and wellbeing and road safety during drop off and pick up times and encourage children to walk and cycle.
- That officers had identified Farnham Heath End school, which could be Surrey’s pilot for “school streets” and that if the motion was agreed, nominations of other schools would be invited.
- Hoped that the Cabinet Member for Transport would press the Government for additional powers and resources to implement “school streets” for those places outside of London such as Surrey.
- That in addition to “school streets” the motion was a commitment to the Council’s redoubling of its effort to improve local communities for example through neighbourhood zones, tree and hedge planting and air pollution projects; especially the School Air Quality Programme and the Eco Schools accreditation.

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

Four Members made the following points:

- Thanked the Member for his amended motion and confirmed that as Cabinet Member for Transport, “school streets” was something the Council supported and was pushing the Government for equal powers for areas outside of London.
- That the Council did a lot of work around schools such as improving road safety around schools through and noted that changes such as “school streets” must be considered thoroughly as they could impact on residents.
- That the Council were also working on its pledge of planting 1.2 million trees by 2030, 104 schools were registered with Modeshift STARS and forty-one with an accredited school travel plan, thirty-seven schools had the Eco Schools “green flag” accreditation in Surrey.
- That the motion had changed substantially since it was tabled and was pleased that the amendment included consultation with residents and the careful consideration of the initiative and unintended consequences on the local traffic situation - such as adding to pollution and congestion.
- Noted the work of the Safer Travel Team on improving air quality and working closely with pupils, endorsed Modeshift STARS which was an

online portal for schools to create tailored travel plans encouraging different ways of travelling to school.

- That ultimately schemes such as “school streets” would only be successful if local residents supported them and children were encouraged to use them.
- Welcomed the amended motion on the basis that it sought to invite nominations for “school streets” from across Surrey, and asked for assurance that the pilot in Farnham could be replicated quickly across the thirty proposed LCNs so that many of the county’s children could experience the scheme.

Mrs Goodwin, the seconder of the motion, made the following comments:

- Pleased to see that the Council was looking at “school streets” via a pilot and across Surrey, recognising that the scheme would not work for all.
- That whilst schools across Surrey had their own school travel plans, some residents reported that they were not always effective due to drivers blocking drives, engine idling and parking on pavements during school drop off and pick up times.
- Stressed that “school streets” must be more than just temporary moveable barriers at the end of streets, it was an opportunity for the Council to be creative and to build on active travel practices that people were doing as a result of the pandemic such as greater walking, cycling or scooting.
- That the introduction of neighbourhood zones with advisable twenty miles per hour speed limits, the planting of hedges and trees around schools to absorb air pollutants, implementing green walls, working with air pollution research experts to work with children on air pollution projects, introducing drop zones for parents to safely leave their children to walk to and from school were vital and achievable in collaboration with a variety of partners.

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

- Noted that the pandemic had encouraged many people to walk and cycle more.
- That many in Surrey wanted to do more to cut their emissions and make roads safer, but the Government and Council had not done enough to tackle air pollution and investing in infrastructure to make walking and cycling safer.
- That “school streets” and the other measures proposed in the motion redressed that, prioritising children’s wellbeing.

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

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that:

**This Council notes:**

Funding for the highway improvements could be provided from external sources such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Some notable examples include the £250,000 cycle and pedestrian improvements outside Hinchley Wood Primary

and Secondary Schools (funded from CIL), and the £360,000 pedestrian accessibility and safety scheme outside Burstow School in Smallfield (currently being designed, also funded from CIL).

School Streets, whereby roads near schools are closed at drop off and pick up times, provide an additional solution that could be considered as part of the Road Safety Outside School process. School Streets will not be appropriate for many sites, so it is important to follow the Road Safety Outside Schools process so the correct solutions can be developed for each location.

However, there are some important caveats. Within London, most School Streets have been enforced using ANPR cameras operated by the civil authorities (with exemptions for residents and school staff, and essential carers who may need to enter the closed road).

Outside of London, at the present time, Local Authorities do not have the legal power to use ANPR cameras to issue penalties for moving traffic offences such as passing a point closure at the start of a School Street. This will require legislation by central government. In the mean-time enforcement is only possible by the police who have many other demands on their resources.

In other locations where the School Street closures are manually operated, this has usually taken place where there are no residential properties within the closed road zone, and so a temporary barrier can be installed (by a school caretaker for example), to ensure no vehicle can physically enter the closed road during the closure period. This would not be practical at locations where some vehicles will still need to have access to the closed road. We are not aware of any locations within Surrey where a manually operated School Street would be practical and worthwhile (for example where there are not any residential properties on the roads in question).

The Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has indicated in Parliament that Central Government will be giving local authorities outside London the powers to enforce moving traffic offences.

With that in mind officers have identified a potential trial site (Bullers Road on the approach to Farnham Heath End school in Farnham) and have scheduled a site visit with local members in the coming weeks. Any scheme would require acceptance from the residents within the School Street that they would need to register their vehicles for an exemption. They would also need to accept that they will not be able to receive any deliveries or visitors using non-registered vehicles during the closure times. The impact of displacement of parking onto other nearby roads will also need to be considered carefully. The back-office arrangements to issue and administer penalties and exemptions will also need to be set up. If we proceed with a trial at this site, then the lessons learned will inform upon the viability, value for money and success of similar schemes elsewhere in the county.

All schools are encouraged to create a school travel plan using the national Modeshift STARS online portal which provides a template and resources to assist in creating their plan, and a nationally recognised accreditation. The council's Safer Travel Team provide regular training and assistance to schools on developing their travel plans. At the present time there are 104 Surrey schools registered on the Modeshift STARS portal and 41 schools have an accredited travel plan. The same team have commissioned a School Air Quality Programme funded through contributions from Borough and District Environmental Health

teams. This initiative involves theatre workshops, lessons and assemblies on air quality. It also includes children deploying diffusion tubes on the roads near the school to measure air quality and holding anti-idling events outside the school (subject to COVID-19 restrictions).

The Safer Travel Team also assist schools in applying for the international Eco Schools accreditation. This is achieved by the school undertaking a range of activities and practices in support of the environment and climate change. This could include tree planting, though it is for individual schools to decide what initiatives are most relevant to their site. There are 37 schools with Eco Schools “Green Flag” accreditation in Surrey.

**This Council resolves to request that Cabinet:**

- I. Agrees that officers will proceed with an assessment of Bullers Road in Farnham as a potential school street pilot, subject to the caveats that central government provide the enforcement powers, residents support the proposal, and that the impact of the displacement of parking are considered carefully.
- II. Invites nominations for further school streets pilots from communities, highways, members and schools. To be assessed for suitability following the initial pilot at Bullers Road, Farnham.
- III. Agrees that the outcome of school street pilots in Surrey, along with school streets initiatives in other comparable areas, will inform the viability of school streets elsewhere in the county as part of the existing Road Safety Outside Schools policy process.
- IV. Officers will continue to work with schools throughout the county on developing school travel plans, will continue to oversee the Schools Air Quality Programme, and will continue to support schools in applying for Eco Schools accreditation.
- V. Notes the work officers are currently doing with schools throughout the county on any requests for neighbourhood zones, tree and hedge planting and air pollution projects, as part of the Schools Air Quality Programme, and continue to support schools in applying for Eco Schools accreditation.

**Item 8 (iv)**

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

Under Standing Order 12.1 Mrs Helyn Clack moved:

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

**This Council notes:**

In Surrey, we are committed to enabling our residents, communities and local businesses to have a greater say over the issues that truly matter to them.

Surrey has a strong track record of partnership working and innate strengths and capacity within our communities and we wish to build on this.

This Council fully supports the enhanced local engagement work currently underway to ensure our residents have more influence over what happens in their local communities.

**Therefore, resolves that:**

- I. It supports residents to have a greater role in determining the priorities for the future of their communities.
- II. It enables enhanced resident engagement through the creation of a number of Local Community Networks **supported by the existing local and joint committee structure**, drawing partners together - **including Surrey's Boroughs and Districts and other statutory agencies** with the County at a local level and giving Surrey residents and communities a greater say in the issues that affect them.
- III. Through the Local Community Networks to work in partnership with local bodies and organisations to ensure effective and joined-up local approaches to addressing local issues and service provision.
- IV. It enables residents to take greater local control by the potential devolution of local assets and services.

Members agreed to debate the amended motion and therefore it became a substantive motion.

Mrs Clack made the following points:

- That as elected Members, the belief, commitment and shared responsibility to Surrey's residents had been demonstrated throughout the pandemic as the Council delivered services in the challenging circumstances and to the most vulnerable.
- That there had been an outpouring of community spirit and neighbourliness across the county with a multitude of volunteers, partners, council staff and elected Members; it was important to harness that force for good.
- That the pandemic signalled a radical need to change the Council's relationships with its residents building on the trust gained.
- Highlighted that Surrey was a forerunner on community engagement working with its parish, town and village councils as well as its boroughs and districts through the local and joint committees.
- The current conditions enabled the Council to work at pace and scale to ensure residents and local businesses could have a greater say on issues most salient to them through established town and neighbourhood communities.
- That the pandemic highlighted the ease of engagement with residents through social media and digital devices, whilst ensuring engagement with those without access to or confident in technology.
- That the cross-party and council elected Member Public Service Reform (PSR) Working Group that she chaired looked at new ways of

engagement through defined and distinct natural communities that local people would recognise and have affinity with.

- That it was the right time to commit to an approach whereby residents would have more and power influence on what happens in their local communities, ensuring that service provision would be tailored to their own needs and LCNs could provide that mechanism to ensure joined up approaches across communities.
- That residents would be consulted on the detail of LCNs inviting their views to develop proposals.
- Thanked Members who participated in the PSR Working Group and the Leader who commissioned it and praised the new Your Fund Surrey scheme and restructuring of Surrey's local libraries towards community-led provision.

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

- Noted that at the heart of the Community Vision for Surrey 2030 was community engagement, making it easier for residents to engage in matters that impact them where they live.
- The proposed new LCNs would empower communities putting them at the heart of decision-making, different to the existing local and joint committees composed of many different partners.
- That it was important to embrace the existing parish, village and town councils which were closest to residents, to build centres of communities being developed through the library refresh and Your Fund Surrey.
- That the modernisation of local Government, ensuring a resident-centric approach was beneficial and flexibility in its implementation was needed.

Seven Members made the following points:

- Supported the motion as LCNs provided a mechanism for more localised approach, the pilot in Bullers Road, Farnham was a positive example whereby a group of local residents got together to get their voices heard without the support of a Residents' Association or ability to go through the formal local committee.
- That there may be some concern if LCNs were seen as undercutting the role of borough, district or parish, town or village councils; however, they could enhance that role if linked in suitably.
- That it was a shame that the second and last motion could not have been combined as they were complementary.
- At present the two-tier system remained in which borough and district councils were important partners in jointly delivering services to residents, so enhancing resident and community engagement was vital.
- That there was a role for LCNs and discussions going forward must focus on their powers, funding and governance so that they were not talking shops.
- That although supportive of the general strategy concerning LCNs, there was concern that there needed to be more flexibility than suggested in the motion, for example by not having a limit of thirty

LCNs and having different types of groupings - mixed, all urban or all rural.

- That although in favour of enhanced resident engagement, the problem was the missing detail of what mandate the LCNs would have.
- Supported the motion in principle particularly if excluded agencies from local government, such as the police, health authorities and the Environment Agency would be included.
- That what was missing in the motion was the inclusion of annual plans for each of the LCNs - agreed by the local community.
- Noted concern that LCNs could be seen as a fourth tier to Surrey's local government structure, so there was a need to look at how they would be presented.
- That it was important to look at the idea of proposed LCNs from a resident's perspective, it was important to further harness the expertise and energy of residents. The PSR Working Group demonstrated a united commitment to delivering on the Community Vision for Surrey 2030.
- That the idea of LCNs was left over from the Member seminar on the halted unitary bid, without funding and the democratic mandate of elected Members LCNs would become a talking shop and could be taken over by pressure groups.
- That LCNs would not be a group involving a few streets but could be composed of thirty to forty thousand residents.
- That LCNs were not fully thought through, it was revealing that the original motion did not mention the role of borough and district councils.

The Chairman asked Mrs Clack, as proposer of the original motion, to conclude the debate:

- That the PSR Working Group produced a local engagement report based on the Government's proposed Recovery and Devolution White Paper and as part of that report there were seven recommendations which provided more details to the concerns raised by Members today.
- Stressed that Surrey was not a one-size-fits-all county and that flexibility was needed in the way in which the LCNs would be developed.
- The LCNs needed powers to be effective and funding would have to come from those partners engaged with those communities.
- That she was always committed to engaging with all stakeholders which did include borough and district councils, as the motion could not be merged with the second motion, explicit mention of borough and district councils was added to the amendment.
- Looked forward to engaging with Members to develop the plans for LCNs to suit the variety of local communities.

The motion was put to a vote in which 50 Members voted For, 1 Against and 17 Abstentions.

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that:

**This Council notes:**

In Surrey, we are committed to enabling our residents, communities and local businesses to have a greater say over the issues that truly matter to them.

Surrey has a strong track record of partnership working and innate strengths and capacity within our communities and we wish to build on this.

This Council fully supports the enhanced local engagement work currently underway to ensure our residents have more influence over what happens in their local communities.

**Therefore, resolves that:**

- I. It supports residents to have a greater role in determining the priorities for the future of their communities.
- II. It enables enhanced resident engagement through the creation of a number of Local Community Networks supported by the existing local and joint committee structure, drawing partners together - including Surrey's Boroughs and Districts and other statutory agencies with the County at a local level and giving Surrey residents and communities a greater say in the issues that affect them.
- III. Through the Local Community Networks to work in partnership with local bodies and organisations to ensure effective and joined-up local approaches to addressing local issues and service provision.
- IV. It enables residents to take greater local control by the potential devolution of local assets and services.

**49/20 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL - CIVIC HEART MOVE TO WOODHATCH  
[Item 9]**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report noting that he responded previously to a couple of questions asked earlier regarding accessible transport to Woodhatch.

As Chairman of the County Hall move and Agile Programme (CHAP) Task Group, Mr Forster noted the informal report by the Task Group on the Civic Heart move to Woodhatch circulated to Members yesterday. The Task Group established by the Resources and Performance Select Committee, scrutinised the County Council's plans to move County Hall out of Kingston and find a new Civic Heart in Surrey, noting that the Canon site in Woodhatch, Reigate, had been identified. The Task Group agreed that Woodhatch would be a suitable location in principle regarding the buildings and surroundings, however the transport connections were currently unsuitable. Surrey County Council needed a headquarters that was accessible to staff, Members and the public. After declaring a climate emergency and complaining that Surrey's roads were congested the Council cannot move to Woodhatch knowing that the move would encourage people to use their cars. The Task Group wanted the poor transport connections to Woodhatch to be addressed before the final decision was taken on designating Woodhatch as the Council's Civic Heart. The decision should only be taken once there was a sustainable transport plan, comprehensive office estate strategy and the costs involved were shared with Members.

Eight Members made the following comments:

- Supported the recommendations put forward by the CHAP Task Group to Council and asked if the Leader could comment on whether the recommendations could be accepted and that they would be followed through.
- That two earlier Member questions highlighted the need for a sustainable travel plan which should have been finalised before the Council committed to move and there must be sufficient budget allocated to that travel plan to ensure that the new Council headquarters would be in a sustainable location.
- That Woodhatch was in an attractive location but it was revealing that there were four hundred and seventy-five parking spaces. There was insufficient detail on the costs needed to improve the building and transport sustainability.
- That the Council would not get anything achieved if it focussed on the detail around transport holding up the major decision to move, whereby a shuttle service or local bus provision from the railway stations for example could be arranged in due course.
- That the Council made a commitment to move out of Kingston-upon-Thames and back into Surrey, staff needed certainty on that; the move would support the local economy of east Surrey.
- That it was only recently that the Council passed a motion regarding climate change and a commitment to it was needed throughout decision-making.
- That the recommendation of the Task Group was to proceed with the move but only when the transport arrangements were resolved and made sustainable, welcomed an amendment on the matter.
- That people were not aware that Redhill was a transport hub, it was the only area outside of London that had rail connectivity across the four cardinal directions as well as a good bus service and the Woodhatch site was a short walk from Reigate town centre.

Mr Forster, seconded by Mr Nick Harrison, proposed the following amendment to the recommendation: to delay the final decision on designating Woodhatch as the Civic Heart until the transport assessment was completed and the conclusions contained within CHAP informal report were addressed.

The amendment was put to a vote in which 23 voted For, 46 voted Against and no Abstentions, therefore the amendment was lost.

**RESOLVED:**

Agreed that the Council's Civic Heart be based at Woodhatch, Reigate, Surrey from 1 January 2021.

**50/20 REVIEW OF COVID RELATED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES [Item 10]**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To redefine the definition within the Council's Constitution to define Cabinet as a formal meeting of Cabinet.

2. To remove the delegation for all non-executive decision making to be delegated to the Proper Officer in consultation with the relevant committee chairman and for any non-executive decision making to be undertaken in line with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.
3. To remove the dispensation for virus-related non-attendance at meetings in relation to the six-month rule as set out in section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.
4. To note that the Council has a Remote Meetings Protocol in place and that this will continue to be in operation for all formal remote committee meetings.
5. To note that the Audit and Governance Committee reviewed the use of original delegations that Council made on 17 March 2020 and the use of the Remote Meetings Protocol to ensure that Members remained informed in relation to council decision making.

**51/20 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES - FOLLOW UP FROM INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL REPORT [Item 11]**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report.

**RESOLVED:**

1. The updated Deputy Cabinet Member Role Profile was approved and adopted by Council.
2. The new Select Committee Task Group Lead Role Profile was approved and adopted by Council.
3. The new Parental Leave Policy was approved and adopted by Council.
4. The IRP was invited to review the operation of the Select Committee Task Group Lead, and its associated SRA, in six months' time.

**52/20 CHANGES TO CABINET PORTFOLIOS AND APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES [Item 12]**

The Chairman introduced the report.

**RESOLVED:**

1. Council noted Mr Edward Hawkins' appointment by the Leader as a Deputy Cabinet Member supporting the property portfolio area on 29 September 2020.
2. As a result of the above, appointments were made to the Planning and Regulatory (including the vice-chairmanship) and Audit and Governance Committees for the remainder of the 2020/21 Council Year:
  - Mrs Victoria Young was appointed to the Audit and Governance Committee.
  - Mr Tim Evans was appointed to the Planning and Regulatory Committee.
3. Council delegated authority to the Chief Executive to appoint to the roles of:
  - Vice-chairman of the Planning and Regulatory Committee and;

- Vice-chairman/select committee task group lead for the Resources and Performance Select Committee to the Chief Executive.

### **53/20 REPORT OF THE CABINET [Item 13]**

The Leader presented the report of the Cabinet meetings held on 21 July 2020 and 29 September 2020.

#### **Reports for Information/Discussion:**

##### **21 July 2020:**

- A. Decision on the Change of Route to Market for Two Extra Care Housing Sites
- B. Looked After Children Property Projects - New Children's Homes and Shaw Family Centre
- C. Recovery and Devolution White Paper: Opportunities and Benefits for Surrey

##### **29 September 2020:**

- D. Surrey County Council Strategic Reset
- E. Developing Local Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Provision in Surrey to Meet Demand in 2021/2022
- F. Community Projects Fund
- G. Quarterly Report on Decisions Taken Under Special Urgency Arrangements: 8 July – 12 October 2020

#### **At its meeting on 21 July 2020 Cabinet considered:**

- a) Urgent Item – Recovery and Devolution White Paper: Opportunities and Benefits for Surrey

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That Council noted that there had been one urgent decision in that quarter.
2. That the reports of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 21 July 2020 and 29 September 2020 be adopted.

### **54/20 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: 13.45 pm]

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**Chairman**