

**CABINET MEMBER DECISION – TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE
– 6 JULY 2021**

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Members Question:

Question (1) Chris Townsend (Ashtead):

Please can the Cabinet member answer the following questions -

1. What is the reason for the Highways reorganisation?
2. Will it cost more or less money?
3. Why are we losing the Local knowledge that currently exists?
4. What impact will this have on Councillors and / or the public?
5. Will relevant IT systems be correct and up-to-date?
6. Why is a seminar being held AFTER the consultation has ended?

Reply:

An update was sent to all Members on the 25 June explaining the rational and reasoning for the Creating ETI (Environment, Transport & Infrastructure) programme. The review of Highways & Transport falls within this. In answer to the specific points highlighted above:

- 1) The Highways & Transport team is being reorganised to:
 - Increase capacity & resilience
 - Increase strategic focus on key areas including contract management, business planning and community engagement
 - Improve consistency of service areas and clarity of roles

The restructure aims to improve consistency, clarity of responsibility and reflect the changing needs of our residents and the Council. We are increasing capacity to design and deliver highway improvement schemes, enhancing resources to tackle moving traffic violations, improving ability for engagement with residents and partners and providing greater focus on maintenance activities.

2) There are no savings targets associated with the Creating ETI programme. Overall, across the directorate there is an increase in staffing costs, reflecting the fact that the agenda for ETI has expanded significantly over the last couple of years.

3) Local knowledge varies across the County and across teams. Rather than losing local knowledge through these changes, the intention is to improve the consistency of the knowledge and skills applied by the team across the county. Many officers are likely to remain in similar roles and will still be able to share their knowledge when needed.

4) The intention of the Creating ETI programme is to improve levels of service to our residents. Councillors will still have the ability to prioritise budgets under their direct control and get replies to their own and their constituents' enquiries. Further details on how the proposed changes will operate will be provided in further information to be sent to all Members once the staff consultation has completed.

5) IT systems will be updated as appropriate.

6) In accordance with the protocols and HR policies, the consultation is for impacted staff, not for Members. Below Deputy Chief Officer level, Members have no formal role in how the organisation is managed. However, further information will be provided to members once the staff consultation is complete in order to update Members on the restructure and address questions on how the new structure would operate – and specifically, what the changes mean for members.

Matt Furniss
Cabinet Member for Transport & Infrastructure
5 July 2021