

CABINET - 28 SEPTEMBER 2021**CABINET RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE****A. PROCUREMENT OF HIGHWAYS' TERM MAINTENANCE CONTRACT****Recommendations:**

While supporting the contents of the Report and the rigorous process leading to the award of the contract, the Committee:

- i. Urges timely and robust details of the specific improvements Surrey residents will be expecting from this new contract, particularly regarding the reporting of and quality of work on potholes and other highways matters and the overriding importance of 'Right First Time'.
- ii. Seeks early publication of the chosen contractor's commitment to "improve engagement with residents" and improve communication with them on planned works etc. and collaboration more generally. This should also involve elected Divisional members. The Reference Group of Councillors which has been involved throughout the contracting process can play a constructive role in helping shape these.
- iii. Asks that a robust process remains in place for the transition phase and initiated for mobilisation period.
- iv. Suggests that unannounced and random spot checks on a regular basis be considered as part of an effective contractual management process; the contract is easy to understand with strong governance and monitoring provisions for dispute resolution mechanism and in an unlikely termination scenario from Surrey County Council's perspective.
- v. Proposes that more publicity/communication be considered for social value activities and projects undertaken as part of the new partnership.

John O'Reilly

Chairman of the Communities, Environment & Highways Select Committee

Cabinet Response:

Cabinet is grateful for the Select Committee's consideration of the Procurement of the Highway's Contract and welcome their recommendations. I can respond to each numbered recommendation as follows.

- i. We are also keen to share details of the improvements Residents can expect to see from the new contract and will ensure this happens at the earliest opportunity. This is likely to be addressed in various stages over the coming months as the formalities of the new contract are finalised and the communications plan is developed in more detail.
- ii. We remain committed to improving engagement with Residents and Members on highway activities. Over recent years we made several improvements in this area such as introducing a dedicated Works Communication Team to provide timely

information about schemes and engage directly with residents. We have also improved the website reporting function for highway issues and regularly promote our activities and share information on schemes via social media. We now can build further on this with the start of a new contract. Officers would welcome the opportunity to work with the Reference Group to discuss how best to achieve this recommendation.

- iii. We can confirm that detailed plans will be in place to manage the transition and mobilisation period. This will be supported by a robust governance structure and Officers can update the Reference Group throughout the period as necessary.
- iv. Monitoring the performance of the current contract has been vital to ensuring the successful delivery of our highway services. We have demonstrated that we can work effectively within the contractual mechanisms to challenge and make improvements where needed. We currently already have dedicated resources carrying out a compliance role across the contract, which is also supported by our technical Materials Laboratory function. We will build on these strengths in the new contract and continue to utilise a range of management mechanisms, including random quality checks. The revised governance structure will support all parties to ensure the contract is operating effectively and respond to any performance issues in a timely and appropriate manner.
- v. As described above, we have been increasing our publicity and communication activity in Highways over recent years. Information about the new social value activities and projects will be included as part of the overall improved communications activity when the contract starts.

Matt Furniss
Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure
28 September 2021

B. POLICY ON THE USE OF SAFETY CAMERAS IN SURREY

Recommendations:

The Select Committee supports the proposed revisions and specifically endorses the creation of the “community concern” sites that may become eligible for cameras but cautions that:

- i. Any unrealistic expectations among residents are not raised about new average speed cameras.
- ii. In exploring alternative options before the use of cameras in “community concern” areas, these options themselves do not become a reason (costs etc.) resulting in no decision is ever reached.
- iii. Members should be able to request, wherever appropriate, spot cameras for a community concern site using their respective divisional highways allocation and other sources without unnecessary constraints.
- iv. A roadmap of the process and prioritisation of requests – existing and new – be put in place and communicated accordingly to all relevant stakeholders.

John O'Reilly
Chairman of the Communities, Environment & Highways Select Committee

Cabinet Response:

Cabinet is grateful to the select committee for their comments. Taking each numbered recommendation in turn:

- i. We would agree that it will be important to communicate the new policy and criteria to Members and residents to help ensure that expectations are not raised unnecessarily. A public facing summary of the policy will be provided on the county council's website and a briefing will be provided to Members that will clearly explain the circumstances when cameras will or will not be allowed. Within this it will be important to advise of the typical costs and funding required to implement new safety camera sites.
- ii. An important principle in the use of safety cameras is that they will only be used as a last resort after safety engineering measures have been considered first. This is a principle strongly supported by Surrey Police. The county council work closely with Surrey Police to develop speed management plans for every Borough and District in Surrey. These list the sites where speeding is a problem and the action that will be taken by the Police and the county council to address these concerns. There are currently hundreds of sites on the speed management plans, and clearly there would not be the resources to deliver nor the capacity to administer safety cameras at every such site. Therefore, safety cameras will only be considered when there is no engineering alternative to tackle the identified problem. It is far better use of public money to solve speeding problems with engineering measures wherever possible without the need to process offences and prosecute court cases enduringly. This approach also helps retain public support for safety cameras rather than them being seen incorrectly as a revenue raising tool.
- iii. We would support Members being able to use the Local/Joint Committee highway capital allocation for implementing spot speed cameras at community concern sites. The only constraints within the policy are ones to ensure that cameras are targeted at sites where speeding is confirmed, and where alternative engineering solutions are not viable (for the reasons described above). There may be other technical limitations depending on the physical characteristics and layout of the site and the availability of a power supply, which officers will be able to advise upon.
- iv. We would agree that it will be important to set out the process whereby requests for new safety camera sites will be assessed, prioritised and communicated to stakeholders and residents. We would envisage that this will be included within the public facing summary of the policy on the county council's website and within the briefing to Members. The process will be overseen by the Surrey Safer Roads Partnership Board.

Matt Furniss
Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure
28 September 2021

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