

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**TUESDAY 22 MARCH 2022****QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED UNDER THE PROVISIONS
OF STANDING ORDER 10.1****MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE****1. NICK DARBY (THE DITTONS) TO ASK:**

What is the intended response to the Mayor of London's latest proposals for cross border charging, and is any direct debate or discussion intended by Surrey with the Mayor?

RESPONSE:

To date Surrey officers have not had discussions with Transport for London (TfL) or the Mayor of London's Office over reported proposals of extending London's Ultra Low Emission Zone boundary to cover the whole of Greater London or introducing a cross boundary charge. Any such proposals would be subject to a full statutory public consultation held by TfL when the Council would formulate a response to the consultation.

Our new Surrey Transport Plan sets out the possibility of an eco-levy for Surrey to manage private and large goods vehicles demands to meet our Climate Change & Greener Future priorities. However, charging would be most effective if applied across all roads and would be most successful if applied as a national system. National charging has been raised recently, particularly in relation to the need to replace fuel duty as petrol and diesel sales reduce. Transport for the South East (TfSE) also raised the need for its consideration in their recent Transport Strategy. We will engage with adjacent authorities, TfSE and Central Government to understand and inform developments on this issue as and when appropriate.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE****2. ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK:**

London's Ultra Low Emission Zone was recently expanded to the North and South Circular roads. In a bid to reduce pollution and congestion, Transport for London (TfL) is now considering extending the scheme's boundary to the whole of Greater London, seriously impacting many Surrey residents.

What discussions has Surrey had with TfL or the Mayor of London on this subject?

RESPONSE:

To date Surrey officers have not had discussions with TfL or the Mayor of London's Office over reported proposals of extending London's Ultra Low Emission Zone boundary to cover the whole of Greater London or introducing a cross boundary charge. Any such proposals would be subject to a full statutory public consultation held by TfL when the Council would formulate a response to the consultation.

DENISE TURNER-STEWART, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

3. WILL FORSTER (WOKING SOUTH) TO ASK:

The 2022/23 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy sets out £5.8m of efficiencies in Home to School transport through 'improved route planning and procurement' and the Council is currently consulting on proposed changes.

- a) What is the annual expenditure on Home to School transport in each of the last three years and to date in the current financial year?
- b) The Council is proposing to reduce the reliance on 'one child per vehicle' transport. How many children currently use 'one child per vehicle' transport to get to school?
- c) How many primary children have journeys of over 45 minutes and do any children currently have journeys of more than 75 minutes?
- d) What percentage of decisions are overturned on appeal?
- e) What is the reason behind the proposal for officers to sit on appeal panels?

RESPONSE:

- a) The annual expenditure on Home to School transport is set out below:

Year	Total spend £'m	Notes
2018/19	40.478	
2019/20	43.774	
2020/21	33.668	Significant reduction due to COVID lockdowns
2021/22	38.171	Periods 1-11

- b) At the end of January 2022 there were 698 'one child' per vehicle routes for home to school transport.
- c) These timescales are set out in national guidance, which does not consider the increased journey times arising from congestion in Surrey. We do not hold data on actual journey times, but we do not currently put children on transport routes

that are over 45 minutes or 75 minutes. However, traffic incidents and congestion can push them over that limit on some occasions.

- d) From Sept 21 to March 2022, 21% of Stage 2, Councillor Panel appeals were overturned.
- e) The alternative arrangement for appeals panels proposed, in the consultation, is in line with national guidance and makes the best use of resources and the time available from Councillors and Officers. We will evaluate the responses to the consultation before making any recommendations to change the process.

CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

4. LANCE SPENCER (GOLDSWORTH EAST AND HORSELL VILLAGE) TO ASK:

A report by charity Action for Children shows that nationally between 2015/16 to 2019/20, there were at least 320,000 missed opportunities to provide early help to children who were then re-referred to social care within twelve months.

The charity is calling for ministers to bring in new legal duties for councils to give children early help, increase funding for early intervention and for data to be collected on early help provision and outcomes.

The Council closed the majority of Sure Start Centres, which provided a key point of intervention for children who had additional needs.

How many children have been referred to social care in the last twenty-four months, and how does that compare with the numbers being referred for the twenty-four months prior to the closure of the Sure Start Centres?

RESPONSE:

Prior to 2018/19 the Sure Start Children's Centres supported all families with children 0 – 5 years needing early help. After a public consultation in 2018/19, the new family centre model was mobilised in June 2019 and was completed with the final children's centre in Tandridge becoming a family centre in July 2020.

The new family centre model extended the age range to families with children 0 – 11 years as there was an identified gap in provision for families with primary school age children. Need is assessed across four levels (Universal 1, Early Help 2, Targeted Help 3 and Specialist 4) and Families are allocated to the centres via the Children's Single Point of Access (CPSA). The Centres now provide early help and targeted help for families assessed to have needs at level 3. This enables families most needing our help to receive the right help at the right time. They also offer group activities and courses for families needing early help at level 2.

Where children have been identified as needing specialist help at level 4, family centres participate in a multi-agency approach with social workers and others to ensure that families get the help they need.

Family Centres work with the whole family to provide safe and appropriate care for their children. They provide an outreach model of 1:1 family support in the home or local community venue, whichever best suits the needs of the family. They work together within their District or Borough with the Family Support Programme and Targeted Youth Service to ensure that families get the help they need, sharing expertise and knowledge to ensure the whole family is supported.

They use Surrey's Family Resilience model of practice so that families build on their strengths and make sustainable change in the way they want to.

Family Centres aim to:

- Reduce inequalities for disadvantaged children and families to prevent the need for statutory services;
- Strengthen family relationships to enable families to stay together;
- Improve child and family health;
- Improve readiness for and outcomes at school.

The table below is taken from the Department for Education (DfE) 'explore education statistics' website and the compendium for the current reporting year (for which there is no comparable national or regional data).

Referrals to children's social care			
	Surrey	National	Regional
2017/18	13,626	655,630	106,590
2018/19	10,635	650,630	104,890
2019/20	8,519	642,980	114,440
2020/21	10,428	597,760	111,140
April 2021 to end of February 22	8,559	N/A	N/A

The above table shows the referral rate into Children's social care since 2017/18. During this time, we saw a reduction in contacts and the number of children subject to a Child Protection (CP) plan significantly reduced. We then saw increases in contacts and referrals, leading to increased numbers of CP in 2020/21 which could be accounted for by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since July 2021 Family Centres have had access to the central case management system, Early Help Module (EHM) so we are now able to see the work carried out with families needing targeted help (level 3) that are allocated by the CSPA. Early Help Assessments (EHA) carried out by the family centres have contributed significantly to the increased number of EHAs completed and recorded on EHM.

MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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

The Access for All scheme for Network Rail control period 7 is currently open for bids for access improvements to railway stations.

Would the appropriate Cabinet Member please indicate what discussions are currently taking place and with whom, which stations the Council is seeking to support, and whether Members will be consulted ahead of the submission date of 15 April?

RESPONSE:

The Department for Transport (DfT) has yet to open the Access for All (AfA) scheme for Control Period 7 (2024 – 2029) and guidance has not yet been issued. In anticipation of this scheme going live, the AfA team at Network Rail (NR) have been in contact with the Train Operating Companies (TOCs) to prepare nominations against the AfA funding, as the TOCs will make the submissions to Government. It is expected that the DfT and NR will review nominations using a range of criteria including:

- Station footfall/usage
- Available match funding
- Stakeholder support
- Nearest alternative step free station
- Project feasibility and deliverability

Early conversations have taken place between Surrey County Council and our three TOCs, namely South Western Railway, Great Western Railway and GoViaThameslink Railway, with the Council agreeing in principle to provide letters of support for AfA bids. At this early stage, Ash Vale, Esher, Horsley, Dorking Deepdene and Upper Warlingham Stations have been identified for consideration, taking into account the likely criteria, which is based on previous AfA schemes. However, it is the TOC that will make the final decision on which stations will be nominated.

In the AfA programme for Control Period 6 (2019 – 2024), schemes at Leatherhead Station and Stoneleigh Station were funded; however, these have still to be delivered.

MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

6. HAZEL WATSON (DORKING HILLS) TO ASK:

There is an increasing number of instances where residents are charging their electric vehicles when they are parked on the public highway with the electric charging cable being attached to their car from their house with the cable draped across the pavement between their house and the parked car.

The Council's website states:

We are often asked about trailing a charging cable from a property across a public footpath. Under the Highways Act 1980, Part IX Lawful and Unlawful Interference with Highways and Streets, it is illegal for any person to place or run a cable or wire along or across a public highway. Having the cable trail from a home, across the footway to a car may cause a safety hazard to pedestrians who are entitled to safely use the full width of the footway. Surrey County Council therefore does not allow this, although potential solutions will be kept under review.

Can the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure set out what action he is taking to publicise the County Council's position that such charging of electric vehicles contravenes the Highways Act 1980, Part IX Lawful and Unlawful Interference with Highways and Streets and to ensure that Surrey residents are aware that such charging of electric vehicles on the street is illegal, and can the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure also set out what enforcement action is being taken by which team within the Council to enforce this law when it is contravened?

RESPONSE:

We are aware that the issue of trailing EV charging cables across public footpaths is an area of some contention and uncertainty. The Council's legal advice was sought which concluded that this practice is considered illegal. In order to make the position of the Council clear, this advice was put on the Council's website.

There are many issues on the highway network which could be subject to enforcement action, from overgrown vegetation to illegal signage and any action needs to be balanced against the actual impact the issue is causing. If a cable is reported to the County Council and it is considered a hazard, appropriate enforcement action would be considered by the Highway Operations & Infrastructure Group. Reports can be submitted via our website.

**NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND WASTE /
MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

7. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK:

The proposed Local Transport Plan 4 sets out a vision for twenty-minute neighbourhoods across Surrey. How will this impact on the proposed relocation of Priory School to Woodhatch Place in Reigate?

RESPONSE:

Twenty-minute or 'Liveable Neighbourhoods' incorporate Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and complementary improvements to the public realm, such as tree planting, pocket parks, seating areas and the like that collectively help to manage traffic volumes and speed to create a positive living environment for residents. The Council is working with partners to develop a programme of potential Liveable Neighbourhoods across Surrey, in line with our emerging Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). As part of the LTP4 public consultation, over 50 places were identified by residents or stakeholders as potential places for Liveable Neighbourhoods. A process to select places that are most suitable for delivery alongside other supporting measures, such as Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, is being developed, linked to the approval process for LTP4 by Cabinet and then Council scheduled for later in the Spring.

If LTP4 is adopted and approved it would form a material consideration in the planning application process for the proposed relocation of the Priory School to Woodhatch Place in Reigate. The planning application is targeted to be submitted in May 2022.

CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

8. JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:

The average placement distance of Surrey's Looked After Children from home is 31 miles, which is more than double that of our statistically most equivalent authority for Children's Services, North Yorkshire, and 50% higher than for all local authorities classed as Outstanding. Please provide the timescale for ensuring all new Looked After Children placements are placed within Surrey and what issues must be overcome to make this happen.

RESPONSE:

Children who become looked after by Surrey do so for a number of reasons and their needs are both individual and often complex. Referrals for placements, in the majority of cases, will request a home is identified which allows the child to remain close to their family home and school. Approximately 10% of children coming into care, are unaccompanied asylum seekers who have no roots in Surrey and whilst this is what we try to establish for them, they often have connections outside of

Surrey which they wish to maintain, and their wishes and feelings need to be considered if it is in their best interest. Other children will be placed outside of Surrey with family members, in a foster to adopt or other specialist placements required to meet their health or educational needs.

The benchmarking data required by the DfE is for children living outside of county and more than 20 miles from home. In Surrey as of 17/03/22 we had 27% of children in this category. Our target is 20% which would be better than the region at 22% and statistical neighbours at 27%. This is a challenging target to meet but we believe we should be aspirational for children.

In order to address the need for more homes in and close to Surrey which can meet the needs of our children we have a programme called Placements, Values and Outcomes which is one of our Transformation Programmes within CFLL. This includes strengthening our in-house fostering service and new framework agreements with Independent Fostering Providers, the development of Surrey's internal Children's homes, improved commissioning arrangements with private providers to both block book beds in children's homes in Surrey (where the quality and Ofsted grading supports this) and encouraging new providers into Surrey. The lead in time for registering new foster carers is on average six months whilst the lead in time for registering a new children's home is likely to be longer depending on the building requirements.

We anticipate it will take us up to three years to reach our target. This will of course depend on the needs of the children coming into care during that period which is very difficult to predict.

NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND WASTE

9. NICK DARBY (THE DITTONS) TO ASK: (2nd Question)

- a) Is there any intention to refurbish the Woodhatch Place reception area, and if so, what is the estimated cost and budget?
- b) In the same context is there a defibrillator at Woodhatch Place, and what was the cost of the work/engraving to the stonework in the reception area to show Surrey County Council's acquisition?

RESPONSE:

- a) Works to the main reception area in Woodhatch Place will focus on improving security access measures for the safety of Council officers and members, rather than a total refurbishment of fixtures, fittings and decorations. Surveys commissioned in 2021 by the Council's Corporate Resilience Group from a Counter Terrorism Security Advisor and the Surrey Police Design Out Crime Office (DOCO) highlighted major concerns and particular areas of vulnerability (the current threat level for terrorism in the UK is "substantial", meaning that an attack is likely). As well as strengthening security access measures and

installing associated data requirements, improvements and upgrades will also be made to the reception desk, air-conditioning and power requirements in the main reception area. The estimated cost for the works is £127,000 (including 10% contingency; the costs are subject to a detailed site survey). The works are scheduled to start by July 2022, subject to design and the tender process. Access arrangements will be in place during the works.

Security reviews are also underway at all the Council's main offices (Fairmount House, Dakota, Consort House and Quadrant Court).

- b) There are four defibrillators in Woodhatch Place, one in the corridor currently being used by the NHS for the temporary vaccination centre (ground floor, West Wing), and one on each floor in the centre block by the kitchens. All the defibrillators are clearly visible. The cost of the stonework was £4,063.44 (inc. VAT), including the cost of the stone, engraving and installation.

BECKY RUSH, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES

10. ROBERT EVANS (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK: (2nd Question)

Can the Council please detail all investments or financial commitments, direct or indirect, that Surrey has with Russia?

RESPONSE:

INVESTMENTS

The Council has no direct financial investments in Russia.

We invest in a number of AAA rated funds who themselves hold a diverse range of investments. Some of these secondary investments may have indirect exposure to Russia, though we believe that it is unlikely. We do not have access to their detailed portfolio however we would expect funds to have exit plans for Russian exposure and are continuing to liaise with our investment managers to clarify the position.

PENSIONS

Surrey Pension Fund Statement:-

“The Surrey Pension Fund is saddened by and strongly condemns the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Given the current circumstances we have immediately suspended making any further investments in Russia and Belarus and continue to review our existing investments with a view to exiting in due course as and when markets permit, as long as the current circumstances prevail. This is above and beyond the UK sanctions currently in place. Due to sanctions by the UK Government and reciprocal actions taken by the Russian Government, it is not currently possible to sell any listed Russian equities, or Russian Government Bonds.”

Surrey Pension Fund (administering authority Surrey County Council)

The Surrey Pension Fund has minor exposure to direct holdings in regions connected to the conflict (less than 0.25% of the Fund as of 24 February 2022 (c£12m based on a fund value of £5bn)) through its Multi-Asset Credit (MAC) fund with Border to Coast and indexed funds with LGIM.

a) Border to Coast MAC Fund:

- i- Russia: 1.2%, – sovereign bonds, VEB, Gazprom, Lukoil
- ii- Belarus: <0.1%, – sovereign bond
- iii- Ukraine: 0.4%.

Formal fair value pricing of the MAC Fund will only take place at the monthly trading date.

b) LGIM World Emerging Markets Equity Index Fund: Overall direct exposure of 1.67%:

c) Future World Index – Overall direct exposure of 0.112%:

In line with LGIM's fair value pricing policy the value of Russian assets has been pro-actively written down over the past few days. As of close on 2 March, the decision of the fair value pricing committee was to price Russian equity securities at zero. These assets will remain held but with a zero value.

The Fund has no exposure to direct holdings in regions connected to the conflict in its mandates with CBRE, Newton or in its private market portfolio.

We are in the process of examining our indirect exposure to Russia (e.g. BP and Shell) across our portfolios on an agreed. We are working with our managers towards having an update available as soon as possible.

PROCUREMENT

We are constantly reviewing the LGA's latest guidance in relation to contracting with Russian organisations in light of the Ukraine crisis. We are implementing this guidance across all services and will be issuing further internal guidance as becomes necessary within the relevant legal teams.

Specifically, we have reviewed all contracts with Russian companies that are currently listed on the London Stock Exchange (LSE). We did have a small expenditure with Gazprom in 20/21 but no expenditure in 21/22. The Council's main supplier of energy is through a Government Framework and they have confirmed that Gazprom do not supply energy to them.

MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

11. LANCE SPENCER (GOLDSWORTH EAST AND HORSELL VILLAGE) TO

**ASK:
(2nd Question)**

A number of bus services were transferred from Arriva to Stagecoach in December. Since then, the frequency of the services has been reduced, and now it has been announced that fares are set to increase.

In addition, the Council has put forward ambitious plans hoping to attract £120m of grant funding under the Bus Back better Scheme. The reality is likely to be nearer £18m over 3 years.

The Surrey Transport Plan and the Greener Futures Delivery Plan see local bus services as a key component to reducing the use of motorised travel in the coming years.

In the light of significant reductions in central government funding what specific plans does the Council have in the next twelve months to improve the bus services across Surrey and encourage increased usage in line with the Surrey Transport Plan?

RESPONSE:

When Arriva withdrew from operating buses in Surrey in December 2021, Stagecoach took a commercial decision to take over this primarily commercial network. The impact of covid (staff sickness) coupled with a national bus driver shortage resulted in Stagecoach reluctantly deciding to operate some services with reduced frequencies. This ensured the company had sufficient drivers to cover all their commitments; however, it did negatively impact some routes and users. Stagecoach driver recruitment is well underway, with the company aiming for a full return to 'normal frequencies' in May.

After a significantly challenging period for the bus industry, Stagecoach implemented a fare increase on 1 March 2022. Their previous review was January 2020. Linked to this, Stagecoach have improved the value of their offer to customers by modernising ticketing options to better meet changing travel patterns. Whilst fare increases are seldom welcome, there are some clear positives in the new range of ticketing options that will hopefully encourage more residents to get back on the bus.

In October 2021 the Council submitted an ambitious Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to the Department for Transport. Nationally, the BSIP funding pot available to Local Transport Authorities outside of the city regions has reduced from £3bn to £1.2bn. If shared equally that would equate to approximately £6m a year – which means significantly less funding may be available than we have bid for in our BSIP. However, the decision on BSIP funding is still awaited, which along with our investment plans, will be reported to Cabinet on 26 April.

Alongside the BSIP opportunity, Surrey County Council is already making a substantial investment of £47m to introduce more zero emission buses and more electric community transport minibuses. The new zero emission buses will be supported by more bus priority measures to make sure the bus turns up on time, coupled with an expansion of our electronic Real Time Passenger Information system to help residents make more informed travel decisions. This investment will improve bus reliability and make buses more attractive to residents. It will also improve air quality in areas where zero emission buses operate, helping us to deliver our Surrey Transport Plan ambitions, alongside our 2030 and 2050 net zero carbon goals.

MARK NUTI, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES

12. STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK: (2nd Question)

It has already been agreed that the decisions on highways spend will be removed from the Local/Joint Committees.

In the presentation to members from November 2020 on Local Community Networks it was stated that “Decision making continues in Local & Joint Committees” until April 21 and then “Transfer decision making to LCNs through 2021/22 and 2022/23”.

- a) What are the current plans for setting up Local Community Networks, and how will Members be involved in the transfer of responsibilities from the current Local/Joint Committees to the Local Community networks?
- b) As the transfer of responsibilities seems to be running very late what role (if any) does the Council see for these committees going forward?

RESPONSE:

- a) A report was taken to Cabinet on 22 February 2022 which approved a change in the way that executive highway functions are taken, transferring them from Local and Joint Committees (LC/JCs), to enable officers to take such decisions in direct consultation with the relevant Members.

The transfer of LC/JC highway functions sits alongside the development of new engagement methods and tools throughout 2022 enabling Members and Officers to reach out more effectively to residents, be it on local highways schemes or any other issues or opportunities in the community. This range of new methods are being developed under the working title of a “local community network approach”, reflecting that the engagement methods we wish to utilise need to be very local, connected into the wide range of existing networks of organisations and groups in an area, and be inclusive of all in the community.

Examples of the types of engagement methods we wish to maximise include open discussions between Councillors and residents (e.g. a community

conversation, a Councillor hosting a Facebook Live “surgery” or poll to hear directly from their residents), public stakeholder engagement events and digital tools like Commonplace (e.g. surveys and interactive maps) to reach a greater number of people and gauge public opinion. The successful reach and impact of such methods has been seen in recent months and further seminars and training sessions will be set up from May onwards to ensure that all Councillors are supported and equipped to make the most of these opportunities.

- b) The changes that will take effect from April 2022 relate only to the current highway functions of the LC/JCs. The LC/JCs will continue to operate beyond April 2022 and will address Public Rights of Way (PROW), libraries decisions and advisory functions as set out in their terms of reference. The arrangements for these decisions and responsibilities will though also be reviewed with stakeholders given the Council’s commitment to develop improved engagement and decision-making approaches.

TIM OLIVER, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**13. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK:
(2nd Question)**

Please provide details of what issues the Council has lobbied central Government about in the last twelve months, particularly in response to commitments in published Council’s strategies and to agreed answers to Members’ questions and motions. Please indicate where a record of lobbying is published on the Council’s website.

RESPONSE:

The Council engages with central government on a whole host of issues as a significant stakeholder and partner across most of the work that we do as a council. Members and officials from all parts of the council have regular, frequent meetings with counterparts in Whitehall to discuss our plans for the future of services, any issues that may need central government input and to provide advice and guidance on proposals that might impact our residents.

There are a number of issues that we have regular contact with central government regarding. These include, but are not limited to: Adult Social Care, including the recent reform proposals; wider issues around council freedoms, flexibilities, finances and funding from central government; the special educational needs of Surrey’s children and young people; funding for maintaining the roads and highways around the county; and our recently launched Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan that aims to see the council achieve net zero status by 2030 and the whole county by 2050.

Regular updates on meetings and engagement with ministers and officials are provided through reports to Council and Cabinet, which we believe is the most appropriate and transparent approach to updating members and the public. We also

share a weekly Public Affairs bulletin which captures key developments in Government and where any Surrey County Council position has been put forward. Members can also keep up-to-date with new Government announcements and how they will impact on Surrey's residents through the Council's webpages, including Surrey News and Surrey Matters, where the Leader and members of the Cabinet will provide comment.

MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**14. JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:
(2nd Question)**

In July 2019, the Council agreed a motion on wildlife friendly verges. The Council has implemented this in boroughs and districts where it directly procures the grass cutting. In other boroughs and districts this has been delayed until contracts are up for renewal later this year. Please confirm that the new grass cutting contracts delegated to boroughs and districts will be required to be stronger, such that they align with the agreed motion. Further, please confirm that guidance from the Council will inform stronger compliance across Surrey this growing season.

RESPONSE:

The Council is offering a one-year extension for the existing agency agreements with the Districts & Boroughs, whilst we look at options for best delivering the service. This will include a renewed focus on biodiversity. Several of the Districts & Boroughs have already been active in reducing cuts where appropriate. In addition to Mole Valley and Tandridge, this year the cutting of highway verges in Elmbridge will also be under the direct management of the County Council – the number of cuts will hence be reduced. The Council actively supports the "Blue campaign". This is a national campaign which includes promotion of not cutting verges, helping nature develop and encouraging biodiversity. Areas of verges are left uncut and can be marked by a blue plaque. Residents are encouraged to suggest areas where they think there is local support for not cutting and if feasible this is something we support and action. The Districts & Boroughs are able to support this initiative at the moment, and it will be formally required as part of any new agreements.

MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**15. LANCE SPENCER (GOLDSWORTH EAST AND HORSELL VILLAGE) TO ASK:
(3rd Question)**

Improving conditions for Active Travel is a key component of delivering the Surrey transport Plan, which is due for approval by Cabinet in April. In addition, improving the place we live in is also one of the key drivers for the Community Vision for Surrey in 2030.

It is recognised that some progress is being made through the Local/Joint Committees in implementing Rural Speed Limit areas, driven by safety considerations.

How many 20 mph Schemes, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and Rural Speed Limit areas are currently being considered across Surrey and is there a publicly available list of them?

RESPONSE:

The Council's speed limit policy supports lower 20 mph speed limits in residential areas and busy shopping streets where the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are more important. This is reinforced by the draft Local Transport Plan 4, which highlights lower 20 mph speed limits as helping to support a hierarchy of road users with the most vulnerable (pedestrians and cyclists) requiring the greatest consideration.

The Council is delighted to work in partnership with Surrey Police, utilising funding from the Drive SMART Road Safety Partnership to introduce lower speed limits across a wide area of the rural southern central part of Surrey where the existing default national speed limit of 60mph is inappropriate. The process outlined in our speed limit policy is being applied to reduce the speed limit to 20mph on many roads that are "single track with passing places". On other two-lane rural roads, the existing 60mph speed limit is being reduced to 50mph, 40mph or 30mph depending on the existing mean average speeds. It is expected that the lower speed limits will result in reductions in speeds and, if successful, this will reduce the number and severity of road collisions, support active travel, improve air quality, reduce carbon emissions, and potentially help address concerns over excessive vehicle noise.

The rural speed limit proposals have recently been approved by Mole Valley Local Committee, Waverley Local Committee, and Guildford Joint Committee. More detail on the proposals can be found in the respective committee reports via the following links, with the intention that the project will continue across the south of Surrey in future phases:

[Agenda for Mole Valley Local Committee on Wednesday, 9 March 2022, 2.00 pm - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#) (item 8)

[Agenda for Waverley Local Committee on Friday, 11 March 2022, 10.00 am - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#) (item 32/21)

[Agenda for Guildford Joint Committee on Wednesday, 16 March 2022, 7.00 pm - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#) (item 10)

In addition to the rural speed limit project described above, the County Council's speed limit policy has been applied to develop proposals for a 20mph speed limit across Farnham Town Centre. It is expected that this will be implemented in the coming months. More information can be found from the report presented to the Waverly Local Committee:

[Agenda for Waverley Local Committee on Friday, 3 September 2021, 10.00 am - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#) (item 8/21)

There is not an available list of all other 20mph schemes. However, there are a number that are being commissioned or have funding allocated. For example, work is taking place to develop proposals for a 20mph speed limit across Weybridge town centre and Caterham town centres, along with adjoining roads. Various 20 mph schemes are also being progressed via the funding delegated to local members for highway improvements, including:

- Farleigh Road, Warlingham
- Claygate Lane, Chesterfield Drive, Cumberland Drive, Hinchley Way, Severn Drive, Hinchley Wood
- Stonny Croft, Ashted
- Taleworth Road, Ashted
- Winkworth Road access roads, Banstead
- Holmesdale Avenue and Canalside, Redhill
- Gibbet Lane, Camberley
- High Street, Chobham
- Oxshott Village Centre

Twenty-minute or 'Liveable Neighbourhoods' incorporate Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and complementary improvements to public realm, such as tree planting, pocket parks, seating areas and so on that collectively help to manage traffic volumes and speed to create a positive living environment for residents. The Council is developing a programme of potential Liveable Neighbourhoods across Surrey, in line with our emerging Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). As part of the LTP4 public consultation over 50 places were identified by residents or stakeholders as potential places for Liveable Neighbourhoods. A process to select which places are most suitable for delivery alongside other supporting measures, such as Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, is being developed, linked to the approval process of LTP4 by Cabinet and then Council scheduled for later in the Spring.

In addition to the above, a Low Traffic Neighbourhood proposal for the Ashford Park housing estate (Ashford Park Crescent, Spelthorne) has been included within the County Council's Active Travel Tranche 3 bid to the Department for Transport, with a funding announcement awaited.

MARISA HEATH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

16. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK: (3rd Question)

Please describe what progress the Council has made in carbon literacy training for officers and members, noting some other councils have recently announced accreditation from the Carbon Literacy Trust, which provides free training materials to councils. What percentage of senior officers at the Council have undertaken accredited carbon training?

RESPONSE:

Carbon Literacy Training is a useful tool to raise awareness and support for the Council's 2030 Net Zero target. Currently, an online training module is available to all SCC officers and members on Olive to provide a foundation level understanding of climate change in Surrey. Since that was launched in 2021, over 900 people have completed it. The Council also supported district and borough councils by making this module available to their officers and members via Surrey Learning Pool.

In addition, the Council's Climate Change team have been exploring options for further training which is interactive to empower staff and support embedding the Climate Change Delivery Plan in all decision-making processes, and this includes Carbon Literacy Training. Officers from the Climate Change team have spoken to the Carbon Literacy Trust and received the free toolkits for Local Authorities for Councillors, Management and Officers. Officers in Climate Change are undertaking trainer training this spring to pilot Carbon Literacy Training across the Council as part of the internal 'Green Champions Network'.

MARISA HEATH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

17. JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK: (3rd Question)

Please list what the Council's planned retrofit activities are for the next six months to better insulate Surrey households from rising gas and electricity prices.

RESPONSE:

The Council has committed to facilitate the decarbonisation of Surrey's homes, through the installation of fabric insulation and energy efficiency measures, heat pumps and solar PV, in order to meet our net zero carbon targets. The other driver for this work, which is just as important in the current circumstances, is the need to protect residents, particularly residents on lower incomes who are more likely to be in fuel poverty, from rising energy bills.

The Greener Futures Climate Change Delivery Plan sets out our ambition to support the decarbonisation of 20% of Surrey's fuel poor homes by 2025.

Over the last eighteen months we have:

- Secured £16m of Government grant funding, which has led to 547 low income homes receiving 690 low carbon measures (heat pumps, solar, insulation) to date through the Green Jump Surrey Programme.
- The Council has also allocated £750,000 to act as a top up fund for Government funding to enable homes to receive more costly decarbonisation measures (including solar, heat pumps and solid wall insulation) as Government funding is capped at £10,000 per household.
- £13m of Sustainable Warmth funding has been secured from Government to continue to decarbonise fuel poor homes in the county.

- 7,000 residents registered with Surrey's Solar Together scheme, with over 1,400 residents so far accepting quotations provided for Solar Panels, with a further 125 residents installing retrofit battery storage. Installations are expected to be complete in July 2022.
- On 1 December the Council launched a Community Energy Pathways scheme, which provides support to community groups wishing to establish their own community energy projects, helping them to access the necessary funding to do so.
- We have lobbied Government on climate change funding and policy and will continue to work to be seen as a lead authority in this area.

Over the next six months we will be focussing on the following:

- Developing a research project with the University of Surrey's Living Lab to focus on home energy behaviours to understand the reasons and barriers that prevent people from decarbonising their homes and the engagement approaches that the Council and delivery partners should adopt to overcome these barriers.
- Building on the early findings from the research we will develop a targeted engagement campaign which will focus on energy behaviours and reducing the impact of rising energy bills. This campaign will include a focus on energy referral pathways as well as training front line staff at the Council (and partners) to enable us to provide better help and support to 'hard to reach' residents regarding home energy reduction and bills. This campaign will link to and support other Council priorities, such as promoting independence of older residents.
- Working with our delivery partners (Action Surrey) and Boroughs and District partners to complete the delivery of the GHLAD2 funding, which is targeted at decarbonising fuel poor homes by June 2022.
- Delivering a pilot in conjunction with Elmbridge Borough Council to identify private rented properties in breach of Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) legislation and use enforcement powers to improve standards.
- Starting to develop a low interest loan scheme for decarbonisation measures which could be offered to private sector landlords
- Engaging with social landlords and finding opportunities to support them on the decarbonisation agenda.
- Preparing to deliver the next tranche of Sustainable Warmth funding (£13m allocated to Surrey's low income and low income off-gas homes).
- Continuing to lobby Government for the funding, policies and finance mechanisms needed to deliver decarbonisation of Surrey's housing at the scale required. This includes a call for Government to accelerate its commitment to shift or rebalance energy levies as promised in the Heat and Buildings Strategy, which would make running costs of technologies such as air and ground source heat pumps more affordable.

MARK NUTI, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES

18. LANCE SPENCER (GOLDSWORTH EAST AND HORSELL VILLAGE) TO

ASK:

(4th Question)

Your Fund Surrey was launched with a flurry of communications about eighteen months ago, just ahead of the County Council Elections. The promise was to spend up to £100m over five years with an anticipation of £20m per year being spent on about one hundred projects per year.

At the end of February 2022, four projects have been approved, with a total spend of £633,000.

At the recent Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee meeting there was considerable concern about the glacial progress on this programme.

Does the Cabinet Member now accept that the administrative overhead to ensure due diligence on the spend of public monies, means that the actual costs of publicising and managing this activity outweigh the benefits that are being delivered, and that in addition the nature of the process means that the most deprived communities are the least likely to benefit, as they do not have the resources to engage with the complex process to receive funding?

What action does the Cabinet Member intend to take to review the performance of the programme to ensure it delivers as first envisaged and ensure it does deliver to the neediest in our communities?

RESPONSE:

Your Fund Surrey (YFS) is a ground-breaking “first” for this authority and a crucial component of the Council’s commitment to Empower Communities, delivering a lasting investment for our residents.

The scheme was co-designed from the outset with residents, community groups, funding experts and with input from members from the appointed Select Committee Task Group to ensure all communities in Surrey can benefit. To date over 55,000 people have engaged with the Fund.

In direct response to feedback, Your Fund Surrey is open for applications from Surrey residents 24/7, with no set deadlines or targets which might hinder residents. As was explored at the recent Select Committee, the YFS team proactively monitor key data including IoMD* data toward identifying any areas where take up of the fund may be low. In such instances, active and targeted engagement will be undertaken working with local councillors to reach out and seek to provide the support required for these communities. Officers will continue to listen to feedback and make further refinements to the Fund over the lifespan of the Fund, whilst always ensuring appropriate oversight on the spend of public monies.

Significantly, in another first for this authority, the Fund was successfully launched and operated during several periods of national lockdown. It would be difficult to base any forward projections on the Fund's operation of the year to date. In the past month alone, a further three communities' projects have been approved with applications amounting to £813,500, with the fund now awarding a total of £1,446,363

I would call on all County Councillors to acknowledge the key role they play in relation to the Fund to go out and speak with, and encourage, your residents and groups to come forward with proposals, so that all our communities benefit from this amazing Fund.

*Indices of Multiple Deprivation

DENISE TURNER-STEWART, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

19. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK: (4th Question)

On 8 March 2022, the High Court ruled that every local council must keep to fixed legal time limits when reviewing the needs of children and young people with special educational needs. The court judgment confirms that the draft amended Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) must be issued within four weeks of the annual review and the final amended plan must be issued within twelve weeks of the annual review. This ruling therefore recognises the importance of not just timely establishment of EHCPs but ensuring they are updated in a timely way once they exist. Please confirm what percentage of EHCPs need amendment but currently have exceeded these time limits in Surrey. If these time limits are currently being exceeded, what is the Council's plan to operate within the legal time limits from now on?

RESPONSE:

The statutory guidance detailed in the current Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) code of practice: 0-25 sets out clearly the timeframes for reviewing EHCPs and this is the measure that the local authority uses to ensure that we are working towards full compliance with the statutory requirements. The recent High Court ruling has provided additional clarity to confirm the timescales relating to the annual review process, which may have been interpreted in different ways by local authorities and legal practitioners across the country.

As of 17 March 2022, our data confirms that we have 67% of annual reviews that are either up to date or due this month. There are some data recording quality issues that suggest this is an underestimate.

Where a child attends school, the local authority requires the school to hold an EHCP annual review in line with the Statutory Guidance. In light of the judgement the local authority is writing to all schools to remind them of the statutory timescales for convening and returning annual review paperwork, this compliance is crucial in supporting the local authority to meet the timescales specified within the High Court ruling. We are also updating our SEN operating procedures to ensure that decision making and any necessary amendments are consistently made within the statutory timescales. In addition, we are currently reviewing our data collection processes and will improve the processes where necessary to ensure that we can closely monitor performance in this area.

SINEAD MOONEY, CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS AND HEALTH

20. JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK: (4th Question)

In light of the recent Government announcement on strengthening the messaging to prevent the occurrence of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), please provide details of how this will increase work to prevent FAS in Surrey.

RESPONSE:

We recognise that reducing Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in Surrey is a shared responsibility between health and social care.

On 16 March 2022, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence published new guidance on Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, particularly in relation to supporting pregnant women to prevent FASD and diagnosing FASD in children and young people. In response to this, Surrey's Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS) which oversees the provision of maternity and neonatal care, will work with providers to ensure that they are meeting the new guidance in their routine care of pregnant women and those giving birth. The focus will be on the prevention and early identification of FASD, as well as understanding the needs of families affected by FASD.

In addition, Surrey's Substance Misuse Treatment Service ([i-access](#)) works in partnership with the Safeguarding Midwives and Maternity Services, as well as Health Visitors and Social Workers. It is recognised that often, when women present to treatment services, they are already drinking dependently or problematically and although information is provided, the emphasis and advice needs to be provided earlier, before conception. Women are routinely asked about alcohol use in pregnancy, at assessment and a medical review will be offered, if appropriate, where FASD is discussed, risks explained, and a reduction/detoxification plan put in place.

There are already recommendations highlighted within Surrey's thematic review of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI), that professionals working with women should make enquiries about their alcohol use, as it is recognised that social drinking can lead to FASD. i-access offer 'Parental Substance Misuse and the Impact on Children in Surrey' training on behalf of the Surrey Safeguarding Children's Partnership, which includes a section on FASD. Surrey's Substance Misuse

Strategy, currently under review and due to be launched within 2022/23, will include recommendations about the prevention and early identification of FASD through awareness campaigns, alcohol advice and wider Public Health-commissioned health and wellbeing services.