

**MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL****TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2024****QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED UNDER THE PROVISIONS  
OF STANDING ORDER 10.1****NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY, WASTE AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE****1. ROBERT EVANS OBE (STANWELL AND STANWELL MOOR) TO ASK:**

Has the Council looked at Brent Council's initiative to try and counter fly tipping? If so, is the experiment worth a try for Surrey's hot-spots?

**RESPONSE:**

In 2022/23 Brent Council recorded the highest number of fly tipping incidents of any English council. In response Brent have recently launched a new initiative aimed at reducing fly tipping in the borough. From what we understand this involves increased resources for enforcement patrols and a greater use of CCTV.

In Surrey, the powers to investigate and prosecute for fly tipping offences lie with the borough and district councils. The county council's responsibility is limited to arranging for the disposal of any fly tipped material collected by district and borough councils as part of their street cleaning responsibilities.

Any new initiative to clamp down on fly-tipping would therefore be a matter for the Surrey district and borough councils.

Further information on measures to report and prevent fly-tipping can be found on the Surrey Environment Partnership's [website](#).

**TIM OLIVER OBE, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL****2. EBER KINGTON (EWELL COURT, AURIOL & CUDDINGTON) TO ASK:**

A recently published critique by Civic Watcher of the information and data provided to Members of the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee ([Navigating the Fog: Understanding Misinformation, Disinformation, and the Quest for Clear Data in Local Government – Measure what matters.](#)) suggests that SCC's "performance management, scrutiny, and oversight are at risk of being compromised by incomplete or poorly presented information." It further argues that "some of the information Surrey has publicly shared (and also - notably - not shared) about its SEND provision contains serious flaws," providing several examples to illustrate that assertion.

Its conclusions are worrying in that it suggests the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee is not being provided with accurate data, that critical SEND issues are still being left unaddressed, and that “Surrey County Council's pervasive rhetoric—*parent driven demand for EHCPs is growing exponentially year on year*—is..... both misleading and contradictory.”

- a) Does the Leader recognise these criticisms of SCC's data analysis and provision of information to select committees?
- b) If the criticism is not accepted, on what basis has that judgement been made and what steps have been taken to provide all Members with evidence to show where the analysis included in the critique is flawed?
- c) If the criticism has been accepted, in all or part, will he provide a statement in the near future setting out what has gone wrong in SCC's data analysis and the provision of information to committees, and what steps are to be taken to address all the identified deficiencies?

## **RESPONSE:**

Civic Watcher's referenced article contains factual inaccuracies but also assumes that the summary table of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is the sole source of information provided to Select Committee members, which is not the case. Members receive the comprehensive monthly Performance Compendium for Early Help, Social Care and Education, which contains a complete range of performance indicators, including graphs showing trends, benchmarks where available, and signposting to the source of the data provided. Performance reports to the select committee summarise this extensive body of evidence, but Members can and do regularly ask officers to provide additional information, either on an ad hoc basis or for inclusion in future routine reporting.

Recent focus has concentrated on the timeliness of EHCPs in response to the level of delay and the need to address performance issues in 2023/24, notwithstanding the timeliness of EHCPs being a statutory measure routinely reported to the Department for Education (DfE). Scrutiny from leaders within CFLL and from Members has been intensive, and performance teams have provided updates which draw on “live” although necessarily provisional figures, in addition to the routine end of month and published data. The improvement work undertaken within SEND has resulted in increased timeliness, higher than the national benchmark for 2023, and remedial attention has moved to other areas of performance in relation to EHCPs with aligned reporting.

In recent Select Committee discussions, focus has primarily been on the quality of EHCPs, the completion of Annual Reviews, the delivery of provision set out in the EHCP and on understanding feedback from parents. The KPIs overseen by the Additional Needs and Disabilities Board are also being refreshed to reflect the priorities of both officers and Members with a shift in focus from the statutory timeliness measure to incorporate a holistic overview of the EHCP process.

Performance teams within the Council are responsive to Members and are committed to offering any support necessary to enable Members to exercise their scrutiny roles. It is accepted that data in relation to education processes and measuring outcomes is complex and the volume of metrics information available to Members is substantial. The Performance sub-committee of the Select Committee was introduced to allow Members to have additional focus solely on performance information. Attendance from relevant officers is designed to inform and assist select committee members in carrying out their scrutiny functions.

If Members would benefit from additional support, Member training workshops could be re-introduced. Annual reports outlining how Surrey compares to national, regional and statistical neighbour benchmarking can also be provided.

### **CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

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

Please could you confirm the number of Surrey's Looked After Children and Care Leavers for each age from 16 and above in different types of accommodation within and outside of Surrey (including foster care placements, children's homes, semi-independent number of children) and how this has changed compared to five years ago?

#### **RESPONSE:**

<b>Placement type in/out of Surrey for children looked after</b>	<b>01/10/24 age 16</b>	<b>01/10/24 age 17</b>	<b>31/03/19 age 16</b>	<b>31/03/19 age 17</b>	<b>01/10/24 Total</b>	<b>31/03/19 Total</b>
Children's Homes (With Regulations) In Surrey	11	6	13	17	17	30
Children's Homes (With Regulations) OOC	11	8	20	7	19	27
Other fostering In Surrey	17	18	20	22	35	42
Other fostering OOC	43	27	36	34	70	70
Relative/Friend Fostering in Surrey	9	13	13	2	22	15
Relative/Friend Fostering OOC	2	2	4	5	4	9
Residential Schools In Surrey	0	2	0	0	2	0
Residential Schools OOC	2	2	1	1	4	2
Secure Children's home In Surrey	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secure Children's home OOC	1	1	1	0	2	1
Young Offenders/Penal Institution In Surrey	0	0	0	0	0	0
Young Offenders/Penal Institution OOC	2	1	1	1	3	2
Semi-independent In Surrey	25	72	12	29	97	41
Semi-independent OOC	9	22	15	32	31	47

Other placements regulated in Surrey	5	5	2	2	10	4
Other placements regulated OCC	2	1	1	2	3	3
Other placements unregulated in Surrey	2	2	0	0	4	0
Other placements unregulated OOC	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>293</b>

**Information for care leavers aged 22 – 25 was not reported to the DfE until 22-23**

Accommodation type in/out of Surrey for care leavers	01/10/24 age 16	01/10/24 age 17	01/10/24 age 18	01/10/24 age 19	01/10/24 age 20	01/10/24 age 21	01/10/24 age 22	01/10/24 age 23	01/10/24 age 24	31/03/19 age 16	31/03/19 age 17	31/03/19 age 18	31/03/19 age 19	31/03/19 age 20	31/03/19 age 21	01/10/24 Total	31/03/19 Total
Emergency or B & B In Surrey	0	0	1	1	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	8	1
Emergency or B & B OOC	0	0	0	6	3	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14	1
Gone abroad OOC	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	3
In custody In Surrey	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
In custody OOC	0	0	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	6	8	11
Independent living In Surrey	0	0	2	15	37	31	24	9	7	0	0	3	5	15	14	125	37
Independent living OOC	0	0	2	26	30	12	8	0	6	0	0	1	11	11	23	84	46
Other accommodation In Surrey	0	0	6	4	5	3	1	0	0	0	0	11	12	13	6	19	42
Other accommodation OOC	0	0	2	6	10	4	3	1	0	0	0	4	15	4	6	26	29
Other residential accommodation In Surrey	0	0	11	13	17	4	2	1	0	0	0	11	10	4	6	48	31
Other residential accommodation OOC	0	0	10	5	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	5	1	6	5	24	17
Semi-independent transitional In Surrey	0	0	68	53	44	9	4	0	0	0	1	24	20	9	9	178	63
Semi-independent transitional OOC	0	0	20	26	25	1	2	1	0	0	0	26	47	45	18	75	136

With Former Foster Carers In Surrey	0	0	12	4	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	24	8	3	0	21	35
With Former Foster Carers OOC	0	0	7	12	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	15	16	5	4	24	40
With parents or relatives In Surrey	2	2	13	15	13	5	2	1	0	0	0	5	11	7	13	53	36
With parents or relatives OOC	0	0	9	6	7	2	3	0	0	0	0	3	4	7	7	27	21
Location unknown	4	2	10	3	6	1	3	1	0	0	0	25	10	5	5	30	45
Not in touch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	11	16	19	10	0	58
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>653</b>

## MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

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

In the Council meeting of July 2021 Cllr Furniss announced a one-off injection of £3 million, split over three years, to clear the backlog of outstanding recommended road safety improvements outside 49 schools across Surrey.

Please could you provide a table showing for each of the 49 schools what road safety improvements are complete/still planned and the cost? Please could you confirm the remaining budget?

### RESPONSE:

In July 2022 Surrey County Council confirmed [significant additional funding](#) of £3 million spread over three years to make walking, wheeling and cycling to school easier and safer, and to mitigate the negative road safety and pollution impacts of motor vehicles near schools. The following table provides a summary of the schemes implemented so far and their cost, along with a list of the remaining schemes to be implemented in the coming months and their estimated cost.

Once complete, the programme will have delivered improvements at 29 schools, including signalised or zebra crossings, traffic calming, 20 mph schemes, footway widening and a pilot of the first 'School Street' in Surrey.

The original list of 49 schools was refined and reprioritised in this programme, as some of the schools and proposals on the initial list were implemented by investment from the former Local Committees, local members, or from developer funding such as Community Infrastructure Levy. In other cases, the school was closed, or the scheme was not in the end found to be justified following detailed assessment and investigation.

There is continued demand for such improvements outside schools. These have generally proven very popular in responding to public concerns and have been effective in supporting active travel. Consequently, discussions are taking place over the possibility of further funding being made available for such schemes in future years as part of the budget setting process. Members also have the option to invest in such schemes themselves with the budgets allocated to them for highway improvements. Some schemes have been implemented using Community Infrastructure Levy funding too.

## **MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

### **5. ANDY MACLEOD (FARNHAM CENTRAL) TO ASK:**

Pavement parking can make life extremely difficult for residents living with visual impairment as well as for wheelchair users, parents and carers with pushchairs and elderly residents.

The Guide Dogs charity has warned it is particularly hazardous for those who are registered blind, who take their lives in their hands when they are forced to go around cars and into the road.

Pavement Parking can also lead to hidden impacts – loss of confidence, less frequent independent travel and then a reduction in orientation and mobility skills. Currently there is an assumption that pavement parking is acceptable unless it is specifically prohibited – this encourages dangerous parking.

In 2020, the Department for Transport consulted on proposals to ban pavement parking in England. 15,000 people responded to that consultation, but there has been no action.

Pavement Parking is already banned in London, Edinburgh and Plymouth for historic reasons.

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 bans pavement parking, double parking and parking at dropped kerbs, with certain exemptions designated by local authorities - for example to ensure safe access for emergency vehicles. As of 11 December 2023, local authorities can begin enforcing the law – this means drivers could be fined £100 for these parking behaviours; reduced to £50 if paid within 14 days.

The Times has reported that councils could be handed powers to fine drivers who park on pavements, under new laws being considered by the Government.

Swindon Borough Council is introducing a trial ban from Autumn of this year, which will see motorists being fined for blocking pavements in parts of the town. If successful, there will be a wider roll out across Swindon next year.

In light of this, can the Cabinet Member disclose:

- a) Whether Surrey County Council is considering an equivalent trial to the Swindon scheme within the next two years;
- b) Any plans or schemes to enforce existing penalties for dangerous parking;
- c) Any plans or schemes to improve signage to protect vulnerable residents?

**RESPONSE:**

We recognise the problems caused by antisocial pavement parking and try to tackle the problem either through enforcement where it is possible or the use of parking restrictions as part of our parking review process.

The way forward following the 2020 consultation about pavement parking has not yet been published by the Department for Transport (DfT). More information here. [Managing pavement parking - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/managing-pavement-parking).

In response to the specific points raised:

- a) The council has powers to introduce permanent and temporary pavement parking bans and we do try to pick up pavement parking problems as part of our parking review process. Waiting restrictions (single or double yellow lines) also apply to the pavement and verge and we often use these to prevent pavement parking as well. One of the reasons cars are parked on pavements is because the road is not wide enough to allow parking and for other vehicles to pass. In most situations we have to remove the parking altogether with waiting restrictions to prevent the pavement or the road being obstructed. Our enforcement officers will also enforce against vehicles that do park on pavements and verges where there are waiting restrictions in place. At present we have no plans to introduce an experimental ban as is being planned in Swindon but will follow their progress with interest.
- b) Surrey County Council operates Civil Parking Enforcement which limits our powers to issuing Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) for parking and moving traffic enforcement contraventions. Through our parking review and general road safety programmes we try to reduce the occurrence of dangerous parking (for example, by placing double yellow lines around a junction). However, currently only Surrey Police have powers to enforce dangerous parking or driving under criminal legislation.
- c) We are again constrained by DfT regulations in terms of signs we can place on the public highway, however we do use prescribed signs where appropriate to assist vulnerable road users. Many of the restrictions we implement are at the request of Surrey accessibility groups or vulnerable road users.

We do aim to tackle all types of parking problems through our parking review process and there is more information about reporting these and requesting new parking restrictions, as well as how we carry out parking reviews to reduce obstructive parking by following this link. [The parking review process - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/parking-reviews)

Parking contraventions can also be reported direct to our Enforcement Team via [surreyparkingenforcement@nslservices.co.uk](mailto:surreyparkingenforcement@nslservices.co.uk)

Other obstructions on the pavement can be reported to either the police if it is dangerous, or to Surrey Highways via our web page below, and we will aim to investigate and deal with the problem as soon as possible.

[Report it online - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk)

## **CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

### **6. CATHERINE POWELL (FARNHAM NORTH) TO ASK:**

Given concerns raised by parents and carers regarding being kept in the dark during the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment / Education, Health and Care Plan process please can the Cabinet Member advise whether:

- a) a record of the various documents and information on which the Multi-Disciplinary Team panel decisions are made is kept; and
- b) reasons for the decisions reached are minuted?

If this information is held, can the process be changed to automatically share this information with parents and carers so that they can begin to understand the reasons for decisions and the individuals or groups that made the decision, rather than just receiving a Yes / No answer, with the offer of mediation or appeal if they do not agree?

### **RESPONSE:**

In November 2023, our EHCNA timeliness was just 9%. Many parents felt “in the dark” because of these delays, and a lack of communication about the progress of their child’s EHCNA.

In July of this year, we issued 72% of EHCP’s within the statutory 20-week timeframe and, supported by the £15m investment from SCC, have now completed all outstanding (917) overdue assessments. The current England average is around 50%.

Considerable work has also been undertaken to improve communication. The Learners’ Single Point of Access (L-SPA) contact centre receives on average 1500 calls per month with 92% answered within 20 seconds. The number of calls not answered within 20 seconds has reduced from 17% in September 2023 to 3% in August 2024. We recognise that we still have much work to do to continue these improvements in communication and relational working with parents and families.

- a) The SEND Code of Practice (2015) sets out legally binding criteria for deciding if a child or young person in England needs an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) needs assessment and, subsequently, an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), under the Children and Families Act 2014.



Criteria for EHC Needs Assessment: Local authorities must consider an assessment if the child has Special Educational Needs (SEN) and may require provision via an EHCP- key factors include:

- Information from schools on previous support provided.
- The views of the child/parents.
- Reports from external professionals indicating complex needs.

Criteria for Issuing an EHCP: An EHCP must be issued if:

- The child's needs cannot be met by the school's usual resources – termed ordinary available provision (OAP).
- Long-term, complex needs require coordinated support from education, health, and care services.

In Surrey, the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) within the Learners' Single Point of Access (L-SPA) oversees EHCNA requests and the panel closely follows the statutory guidelines of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice in handling Education, Health, and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNAs). It forms a view based upon the advice of a range of professionals about the need for an EHCP.

Based upon this advice and the views of the multi-agency panel, a local authority designated officer will decide on behalf of SCC if a child has a Special Educational Need (SEN) and if it is necessary for special educational provision to be made for the child or young person in accordance with an EHCP.

The answer to question 16 provides further detail.

Essentially, the decision of the LA Officer and relevant salient points from the discussion is then recorded in our EHM database from which a letter advising parents and schools of the outcome is generated. A personalised letter with the decision, and recommendations and advice as suggested by panel members, is then sent to the parents.

Parents have access to the professional reports submitted as part of the assessment process. The summary of assessment document is also shared with families and settings.

If a “no to issue decision” is made, a “ways forward meeting” is offered to discuss next steps with the family. This is separate from the offer of mediation or parents' ability to access an appeal against the decision through a tribunal.

b) See above and response to Question 16.

There are currently no plans to change the recording of panels.

The current process is legally compliant and is an efficient way of conducting the local authority's' responsibilities.

SCC always tries to be transparent in its decision making and has published an overview of the whole EHCNA process, and specific guidance about how its decision making is undertaken on the SEND Local Offer website alongside additional information about SEND Support and Ordinarily Available Provision in schools. This information is also shared again with parents where they ask for clarification and a detailed explanation is also provided where parents request a “ways forward meeting”.

[A guide for parents and carers of children with additional needs and/ or disabilities \(surreylocaloffer.org.uk\)](http://surreylocaloffer.org.uk)

## **MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

### **7. JOANNE SEXTON (ASHFORD) TO ASK:**

The current gully cleaning and drainage management practices carried out by Surrey County Council are not always successful, wasting public funds and failing to adequately maintain our drainage infrastructure and road cleanliness, due to several factors:

- I. Ineffective Signage and Lack of Enforcement: The current signage to notify residents of gully cleaning is not enforceable and it fails to clearly communicate the consequences of obstructing these operations.
- II. Vehicles frequently block access to gullies, preventing proper cleaning and causing the drainage company to make repeated visits. This is unacceptable and leads to unnecessary costs to the tax payer.
- III. Changing Weather Conditions: With the increasing frequency of torrential rain, Surrey County Council’s current drain cleaning operation is not sufficient to address these new conditions.

A more effective approach to gully cleaning and road maintenance should include:

- I. Improved Signage and Communication: Signage must clearly inform residents of parking restrictions and penalties for non-compliance to ensure vehicles do not obstruct cleaning operations and issue PCNs.
- II. Strict Enforcement: A strict enforcement regime is necessary to penalise vehicles obstructing access to gullies, ensuring cleaning teams can perform their duties effectively.
- III. Coordination with Road Sweeping Operations with Boroughs and Districts: Surrey County Council should work closely with boroughs and districts to coordinate road sweeping and gully cleaning. Every road should be swept at least once a year to prevent detritus buildup and maintain effective drainage.

Given the issues raised above will the Cabinet Member agree to:

- a) Develop a comprehensive plan for assessing and cleaning all significant drains in each borough and district, prioritising those based on potential impact if they fail?

- b) Ensure that on site signs and communication are improved so as to ensure vehicles do not obstruct cleaning operations, and that enforcement action and the issuing of PCNs is undertaken where obstruction takes place?
- c) Collaborate with boroughs and districts to incorporate local insights and ensure a coordinated approach to road cleaning and drain maintenance?

**RESPONSE:**

In a congested areas like parts of Surrey, there are frequent problems with parked cars inhibiting access for gulley cleansing and other street cleaning activities. Much work has already been undertaken to improve the situation but we will seek to continually review and improve performance.

There are approximately 160,000 gullies on the highway networks and each and every one is already prioritised for cleaning depending on impact and local conditions. The standard time frame between cleans is 12 months, but for some it is reduced to 6 months or increased to 24 months.

Roads that have been identified as particularly problematic with parked cars have benefitted from advisory signage. This approach has been successful and on average increased the performance of gulley cleaning on first visit from 45-50% to over 70% already. It is a quick and efficient way of improving performance and we are continually reviewing our targeted approach to further improve. These programmes of advisory signage are shared with officers in the relevant district or borough council to assist with joint working on the network.

I understand that Spelthorne Borough Council requested a series of formal parking suspensions earlier this summer but unfortunately we were not provided with sufficient notice for these to be organised. I am pleased to confirm that these are now being implemented by our parking contractor, but would encourage all districts and boroughs to communicate with the Council's parking team about roads where they feel suspensions would be valuable so we can better plan this work and minimise costs for all parties.

**CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING / MARK NUTI, CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING, AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

**8. FIONA DAVIDSON (GUILDFORD SOUTH-EAST) TO ASK:**

There is a growing recognition of the incidence of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in children, particularly looked-after children (FASD is a group of conditions that can develop when someone has been exposed to alcohol in the womb). One study estimates the incidence in looked-after children at 27%. Adoption UK estimates that about a quarter of adopted children are diagnosed with, or suspected to have, FASD. The parents and carers of children suspected of having FASD in Surrey report their struggles to have the condition recognised, and face a battle to have the condition assessed, diagnosed, and treated.

- a) Can the Cabinet Member please provide reassurance that the new Children's Community Health Contract recognises the significance of FASD, and contains specific contractual provision to meet the needs of children and young people who may have, or have FASD?
- b) Foster carers and special guardians in particular report a demoralising lack of support from SCC, from Mindworks and from the NHS. Given our difficulties recruiting and retaining foster carers would the Cabinet Member further advise whether SCC would agree to:
- researching the scale of the incidence in Surrey, and the particular difficulties experienced by parents and carers in getting support for their children and young people suspected of having FASD; and
  - developing a policy in respect of our understanding of this condition, its impact, and how SCC (and our partners) support families so that – as far as we are able – we aim to ensure in future that those affected are not left behind, as they are today?

**RESPONSE:**

Surrey's Public Health Team and Children's Commissioning Team have scoped work to better understand the incidence of FASDs within our local communities. The proposed work will involve using nationally available data and understanding to estimate the likely prevalence within Surrey's children and young people; will map and assess FASD pathways in Surrey, from prevention to diagnosis and treatment and will draw on the understanding and views of professionals around the clinical health issue, and wider staff in education and social care, and parents and carers, to inform understanding and any next steps. This work will help identify if it is deemed necessary to develop local policy or guidance for FASD or embed in other resources. The work will be scheduled in the public health work programme.

The Children's Community Health contract service specification requires the provider to follow applicable standards set out by any competent body. It states "providers will need to take account of all relevant guidance and standards set out by competent bodies including .... The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health." The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health includes Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Quality Standards published by NICE in 2022 in its Clinical Evidence Directory (key documents that RCPCH promotes and expects clinicians to follow). The FASD Quality Standards cover assessing and diagnosing FASD in children and young people and state that service providers (such as community paediatric services) should ensure that healthcare professionals with expertise in neurodevelopmental assessments have additional training in FASD.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**9. SCOTT LEWIS (WOODHAM AND NEW HAW) TO ASK:**

Can it please be explained to me the process for consulting Divisional Members on local issues outside of their Division that may have a direct impact on their residents?

As the County Councillor for Woodham and New Haw I was not made aware of the proposed plans for weight limit restrictions for Brooklands Road, which if HGVs reroute may have a direct impact on my residents. Assuming the restrictions do go ahead, how will the scheme be reviewed and any negative impacts for my residents be addressed?

**RESPONSE:**

The proposed 18 tonne weight limit for Brooklands Road was subject to an informal consultation this summer. This was advertised on our website with schools, business and local Members being directly advised. There were a total of 1,677 responses (with 84% support), indicating many people were aware of the plans. As there is no expected substantial impact on your Division, you were not individually contacted.

The weight restriction will be introduced as an "Experimental" order. This means that comments can be received for the first six months post implementation and then there will be a review of the impact to see if it has been successful or there are any unintended and unexpected consequences such as inappropriate routing of vehicles. We will ensure you are fully kept informed of the review and you will have opportunity to comment.

It is expected that most vehicles over 18 tonnes will use the A245, A3, M25 as the alternative route, consistent with the existing advisory signing. We have traffic counters installed on a number of roads so an assessment will be made of before and after traffic flow movements. If the data indicates there is a genuine issue, the scheme can be reviewed and maybe amended or measures introduced on other routes to address any problems.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**10. BECKY RUSH (WARLINGHAM) TO ASK:**

With reference to Norheads Lane/Beddlestead Lane resurfacing 25 September 2024. I would like to know:

- a) Who in Highways approved the resurfacing of Norheads Lane, Warlingham?
- b) Why was it deemed to be an emergency, carried out as evening work and with no notification to Councillor(s) or residents?
- c) Why was the sign for the works for another road not Norheads Lane, it does not seem that our processes have been followed?

- d) Why was Beddlestead Lane closed to carry out the resurfacing work on Norheads Lane and why does Beddlestead Lane continue to be closed even though the works have stopped. When will it be opened again?
- e) What are the future plans for Norheads Lane, specifically resurfacing of it and down grading?
- f) What is the value for money justification for resurfacing Norheads Lane in preference to other Surrey roads?
- g) Can you confirm that I will be included in discussions regarding future works on the road?

**RESPONSE:**

- a) The repair works were carried out in accordance with the Highway Safety Policy. The policy sets out our inspection and response to identified defects and as such is adhered to by relevant officers in carrying out their day to day activities. On the basis that the policy is in place, and primarily is concerned with the safety of residents and to manage SCC liabilities, individual operational responses to the safety inspections do not require further approval by managers in highways.

In the case of Norheads Lane, the Highway Safety Inspection (HSI) in the summer of 2024 identified safety defects meeting our intervention levels according to the approved safety defect matrix. Due to the significant level of defects identified, the Inspector requested that larger patching works were carried out to avoid the false economy of completing lots of individual pothole repairs, creating a patchwork quilt effect that would not last sufficiently to address the safety risk. The repair works that commenced out at the end of September were the patching works requested following the highway safety inspection.

Previously a gate was located across the road, blocking access for a number of years, and as such highway safety inspections had not taken place. As a result the condition of the road had deteriorated to a significant extent. We are not aware who put the gate in place however the road is confirmed as public highway. SCC was served a legal notice from the British Horse Society and Trail Ride Fellowship in November 2022 and the illegal gate was removed in 2023. On this basis the road is now subject to inspection and maintenance in accordance with our policies.

- b) The repair works here were brought forward at short notice as a result of gang resource being available, following the cancellation of another scheme, and in the interests of avoiding standdown costs. Operationally changes like this can often occur at short notice and as this was last minute there was no opportunity to provide notification to councillors or residents, however it wasn't expected that it would cause disruption given it is a lightly used road and being worked on at night. Officers recognise that it would have been preferable to provide notification however short notice and apologise for not doing so on this occasion.

- c) The signs and traffic management that you refer to were on Beddlestead Road and these were in place due to fly tipping unrelated to the patching works on Norheads Lane.
- d) As above, the signage and closure on Beddlestead Lane were unrelated to the Norheads Lane patching repairs. Signs at the northern end of the road were removed on Friday 27 September, and the ones at the southern end were removed on Tuesday 1 October.
- e) In 2023 we explored the possibility of restricting access to the road by placing a Traffic Regulation Order on the road however legal advice was that this would not be possible given the highway status as a publicly maintainable road. We will review this advice again and are not planning to carry out any further works until this review has been undertaken and a decision has been finalised. As described above however, we have a responsibility to carry out critical safety repairs as determined necessary whilst the highway status remains as is.
- f) For clarification, Norheads Lane has been subject to patching repairs only, it has not been resurfaced as suggested in the question. The justification for carrying out the patching works is to ensure the County Council is compliant with our Highway Safety Policy and our duty under the Highways Act 1980 to keep the road safe for road users. The Highway Authority would be liable to any claims for compensation on this stretch of road if we do not maintain it to a reasonable level.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**11. WILL FORSTER (WOKING SOUTH) TO ASK:**

Please can the Council confirm how many bids for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding it has submitted to Woking Borough Council since CIL was established?

**RESPONSE:**

Woking Borough Council has a unique approach to the allocation of CIL funding which differs significantly to how CIL is allocated in other districts and boroughs. Unlike other districts and boroughs that open bidding rounds to infrastructure providers, including SCC, Woking BC only takes project proposals and applications from Woking BC councillors. Therefore, there have been no SCC bids submitted to Woking BC.

It will be the case however that some of the projects that have been allocated CIL funding by Woking BC will have direct SCC involvement in terms of delivery, although these are not captured internally through the SCC bidding register as they are not SCC bids. Upon requesting this information from Woking BC there is no central database at WBC to assess which projects include SCC delivery. This has been confirmed by Woking BC on 3 October 2024.

**CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

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

- a) In a recent update on H2STA to the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee it was stated that “The Service is currently experiencing an increase in appeals for discretionary travel assistance (children aged Under 5 and aged 16-19 and 19-25) as we look to align more closely with our current policy...”

How many pre-5-year-old and post-16-year-old cases have come through the appeals process in the last three years, and how many appeals have been upheld at each stage in each year?

- b) How many H2STA cases went to the final appeals panel between January and September 2024, and how does that compare to the previous three years?

How many children were waiting for appeals to be heard when the new school term started in September 2024, and how does that compare with the previous three years?

- c) It is noted that the timescale to advise parents on the outcome of the final appeal for H2STA has been extended from five working days to 10, establishing a new key performance indicator.

However, in the past three years, how many times has the council failed to respond before the previous target of five working days after the final appeal?

**RESPONSE:**

- a)

<b>Outcome by Appeal Type</b>	<b>Autumn 2024</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
<b>Under 5s eligibility received (Stage 1)</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>63</b>
Not yet assessed	10	0	0
agreed between S1 and S2 following additional evidence	0	44	0
agreed	9	3	24
declined	3	41	24
withdrawn	1	4	15
<b>Post 16 eligibility received (Stage 1)</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>102</b>
Not yet assessed	32	71	0
agreed at S1	42	32	62



agreed between S1 and S2 (following more evidence)	3	98	38
declined	35	19	2
withdrawn	5	0	0
<b>Under 5s eligibility received (Stage 2)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7</b>
No outcome yet received	2	0	0
agreed	0	3	4
declined	0	6	2
withdrawn	3	16	1
<b>Post 16 eligibility received (Stage 2)</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>16</b>
Not outcome yet received	21	0	0
agreed	0	4	5
declined	2	27	5
withdrawn	12	24	6

b) Total no Stage 2 Appeal cases for Under 5's & Post 16 by year:

- 11 Stage 2 Appeals were held between August – September 2022.
- 80 Stage 2 Appeals were held between January – September 2023.
- 78 Stage 2 Appeals were held between January – September 2024.

No of children waiting for Stage 2 Appeals for Under 5's & Post 16 to be heard when new term started by year:

- September 2022 – 6 Stage 2 Appeals
- September 2023 – 8 Stage 2 Appeals
- September 2024 – 14 Stage 2 Appeals

c) Democratic Services had historically provided the outcome letters to parents. There is no formal statutory SLA for this response, however parents are advised during the panel that they will get a response within 5 working days (raised to 10 working days during peak period). The Children, Families and Lifelong Learning Secretariat Team took over the clerking of the Stage 2 Panels in July 2024. This was done to ensure all panels stay in timescale, due to the increase of appeals because of the stringent application in policy. As Surrey School Travel & Assessment Team are still seeing high levels of appeals, families are being advised currently that they will receive letter within 10 working days. No letters have fallen out of this timescale.

**CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

**13. HAZEL WATSON (DORKING HILLS) TO ASK:**

Despite an increase in local government spending on Children's Services in 2021-22, most of this funding was allocated to late intervention services, with only a small portion dedicated to early intervention. Over the past decade, national spending on early intervention services has seen a significant reduction, with a 46% decrease from 2010/11 to 2021/22. [Children's services funding and spending | Policy report | Action For Children](#)

What are the corresponding figures for Surrey County Council?

**RESPONSE:**

The data in the Action for Children report looks at comparisons of Section 251 data returns. The Finance team has compared Surrey's data returns for that period for the detailed types of expenditure and to the best of our understanding that would reflect a 15% decrease in our early intervention spend in Surrey.

We would however want to give a health warning on the robustness of the data as the details in the report do not give detailed methodology so we cannot assure that it is a direct comparison.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

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

The new government's upcoming changes in the law aim to empower local councils to establish community bus companies, enhancing public control over transport services.

The Secretary of State's announcement is part of a broader initiative to end the "postcode lottery" of bus services and will be accompanied by a new Buses Bill, providing local leaders with the necessary tools to meet community transport needs.

What opportunities are there for Surrey County Council to take advantage of the proposed changes?

**RESPONSE:**

This Council is at the forefront of Local Transport Authorities investing in public transport as we work to improve journey opportunities for our residents right across Surrey, rather than waiting for Government to provide financial support.

We have a positive working relationship with the 22 operators running buses in Surrey. They work with us and have been supportive of the investment that we have

made to deliver Council priorities. Some bus operators have also invested alongside us, for example, in new zero emission buses.

In January this year we started a tendering exercise in preparation for bus service contracts that were due to expire. In total 15 new contracts were awarded covering 21 bus services. Our proactive and positive engagement with bus operators led to a high number of bids being received. This has delivered a saving to the council, as the old contracts cost £2.33m per annum, whilst the new contract cost is £2.01m per annum.

In addition, Surrey Connect Digital Demand Responsive Transport provides a flexible service for residents, mainly in rural areas, who would otherwise be reliant on infrequent scheduled bus services or would have no public transport offer. Surrey Connect has an average user satisfaction rating of 99% and are supporting residents to make trips that they otherwise would not be able to make. This includes residents accessing new jobs, further education and training, as well as increased social activities. As the new Surrey Connect services bed in, and with more promotion, we expect passenger numbers to grow over a full year of operation.

As set out in the response to Councillor Essex, the Government has announced the ability for Local Transport Authorities to develop proposals for the franchising of bus services, whilst also lifting restrictions on creating municipal bus companies.

Whilst these present an opportunity for Local Transport Authorities, they come with significant financial risks. This includes taking the revenue risk on bus fares and passenger growth, the financial risk of purchasing and maintaining bus fleets and depots, plus the initial risk and associated cost of developing a detailed business case to Government for approval to proceed. Developing a franchising proposal that in the end may prove not to be financially viable could cost a Local Transport Authority millions of pounds.

Therefore, whilst the Council is actively considering the opportunity as currently presented, we need to scrutinise the detail and assess the risks and opportunities in full, which can only happen when the promised Better Buses Bill is published.

In the meantime, the council continues to invest in more Surrey Connect Digital Demand Responsive Transport services across the county, more bus priority schemes to help our local bus services run to time, more real time passenger information to aid passenger decision making, and more zero emission buses to meet our net zero ambitions.

## **DAVID LEWIS (COBHAM), CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

### **15. FIONA WHITE (GUILDFORD WEST) TO ASK:**

Kent County Council (KCC) has revealed that approximately £68m in pension credit remains unclaimed, affecting up to 18,000 eligible individuals in the county. KCC estimates that a third of those entitled are not taking advantage of this financial support, which averages £186 per month.

What are the corresponding figures for Surrey?

**RESPONSE:**

In the 2023/24 financial year, an initial estimate is that over 8,000 older people in Surrey are not claiming pension credits they would be eligible for, with an approximate value of £24m. Work is underway to determine how best to raise awareness of pension credits amongst this group, and to increase the uptake of this benefit.

**CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

**16. LIZ TOWNSEND (CRANLEIGH & EWHURST) TO ASK:**

Parents and Carers of children and young people with additional needs are finding the lack of transparency over panel decision making extremely distressing and disempowering. It appears that increasing numbers of decisions made at SEND Governance panels are routinely not being issued with detailed rationale by Council officers. Families have informed me that: they are told no minutes are being taken, they are not receiving written explanations for the decisions made. Where rationale is provided, it is often limited to just one sentence.

I am very concerned by what appears to be a surprising lack of transparency, especially given that many of these decisions are covered by statutory frameworks, for example the SEN Code of Practice, and the Children and Families Act 2014.

The outcomes often involve whether appeal thresholds have been met; decisions with significant legal ramifications. Whilst I appreciate there may be a number of children discussed in any one meeting, it would appear not a difficult task to separate the notes for each child in order to provide assurance about the quality of the discussion that has taken place and therefore the subsequent rationale for any decision made?

I would therefore like confirmation from the Cabinet Member on what parents should expect in terms of minutes and a written rationale for decision-making in a governance panel. Specifically, is this decision to withhold this information reflective of statutory requirements, or is it based on Surrey policy and practice?

**RESPONSE:**

Panel discussions are not recorded or minuted verbatim. The SEND team does keep a record of the actions and rationale for decisions to manage the volume of meetings and workflow of the decision-making process. We are confident that these records capture the salient points of the discussion. Professional reports are shared giving the basis on which decisions are made.

Parents and carers do already have access to all reports produced following a request for an EHCP, unless sharing these could put the child or young person at

risk on safeguarding grounds. These are shared, alongside the rationale for decisions, as standard following a decision being made.

Verbatim notes would not be appropriate given the scope of discussions and the sensitivity of topics discussed, including but not limited to; mental health issues faced by children and their families; sensitive historic and current social care information; or confidential health records.

We are looking at developing the process of information sharing by creating an opportunity for early co-production meetings between case staff and families in advance of panel meetings.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**17. ASHLEY TILLING (WALTON SOUTH & OATLANDS) TO ASK:**

On 4 April last year SCC contractors started work on relocating a crossing on Walton High Street by lopping the tops off four cherry trees on the pavement. Work on removing the three trees on the opposite side of the road was halted through the outrage of residents and the intervention of fellow Walton councillor, Rachael Lake.

It took until December last year before a consultation was organised to find the views of residents. The result was resounding support for not going ahead with moving the crossing so that the trees could be preserved. However, despite my repeated requests for a decision to be communicated to me and to local people on both the crossing and the trees, I am still waiting for this to happen.

I have been told several times that this is because SCC Highways are awaiting an arboriculturist report on the state of the trees.

Why has it taken so long for the decision about the crossing to be communicated and why has it taken 17 months for an arboriculturist's report to be produced to underpin a decision on retaining the trees or replacing them if they are too damaged to keep in place?

**RESPONSE:**

The scheme to install improved crossing facilities in Walton High Street has proved problematic. It is accepted that the consultation in December 2023 indicated support for the crossing to not be moved and hence the trees to remain. Unfortunately, this has been investigated and the manner in which the trees originally scheduled for removal were cut means this is not practical for them to remain as they will grow outwards and restrict pavement usage. Legislation surrounding removal of public trees was updated last year and there is now a need to formally consult before any substantial tree is removed (unless on safety grounds). A formal consultation is due to take place this autumn and a decision will be made once complete – this will not re-consider the moving of the crossing as that was concluded last December. If the trees are removed, we will look to install suitable replacements nearby. I am sorry if

you have not been kept adequately informed and I have asked that officers keep the divisional councillor fully updated going forward.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**18. PENNY RIVERS (GODALMING NORTH) TO ASK:**

We are aware that high speeds on our roads represent a major cause for road traffic accidents. There is strong evidence that wide area 20mph zones reduce casualties on our roads, encourage walking and cycling and improve our environment.

With the overwhelming support across Farncombe and Binscombe noted from SCC's consultation on Local Street Improvements and given that 464 residents have signed the petition for a 20mph speed limit, would the Cabinet Member agree that the time has come for a wide-area 20mph zone across Farncombe and Binscombe?

If that is so, could he provide a planned timescale and budget for implementation?

**RESPONSE:**

In July this year, the Council's Cabinet approved [a new approach to 20 mph speed limit schemes](#). Our new approach gives greater flexibility to providing 20 mph schemes, ensuring that we install schemes on the right roads after we have listened to the views of residents, with County Divisional Members at the heart of decision making.

We have made this change because 20mph schemes are better for road safety, better for vulnerable road users, and encourage active travel.

We have not adopted a blanket approach to introducing 20 mph schemes, our policy is more flexible. This means that while town centres, residential areas and roads near schools are the locations where 20 mph speed limits are more likely to be implemented, other main roads on the outskirts of towns and villages could retain a higher speed limit. Schemes will also be predominantly self-enforcing, which means that where necessary, and where existing speeds are higher, we will use highway engineering measures to get speeds down.

An important principle in implementing our policy is that local people will be consulted, with their views collated and presented to the local county Divisional Member to help shape the decision to proceed with 20 mph schemes; or not, as the case maybe.

All County Councillors have the option of commissioning 20 mph schemes in their area, in phases if necessary, and can use the budget allocated to them for local highway improvements to do so. In some areas, it might be possible to supplement this with Community Infrastructure Levy funding via a successful bid to the relevant district or borough council. Once funding is allocated to a scheme, it is usually possible for consultation and implementation of a new speed limit to be completed within 12 months.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**19. PAUL FOLLOWS (GODALMING SOUTH, MILFORD & WITLEY) TO ASK:**

Could the Cabinet Member please give an update on the expansion of the Surrey Connect Service to Godalming?

**RESPONSE:**

I am very pleased that the Phase 2 expansion of our popular Surrey Connect Digital Demand Responsive Transport services at the start of September included a new Haslemere territory in Waverley, complimenting the existing Farnham and Cranleigh schemes.

The new Haslemere territory offers residents of Haslemere, Hindhead, Chiddingfold, Hambledon, Witley and Milford together with all the villages and settlements in between access to the Surrey Connect flexible bus service. Passengers can travel throughout the territory, and also to the out of territory destinations of Godalming Railway Station and Godalming High Street. In addition, passengers can board in Godalming at these bus stops and travel into the Haslemere territory.

Our Surrey Connect Digital Demand Responsive Transport services are primarily aimed at providing access to a bus service where there are limited or no conventional bus services operating. Therefore, the initial phases of the Surrey Connect programme have focused on the more rural areas of the county. I would add that residents of Godalming have access to a local bus network, comprised of a mixture of commercially operated local bus services and Surrey County Council supported local bus services. This means that the level of public transport accessibility for Godalming residents is considerably greater than elsewhere within the district.

**CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

**20. MARK SUGDEN (HINCHLEY WOOD, CLAYGATE AND OXSHOTT) TO ASK:**

The Labour Government is now imposing VAT on independent school fees from January 2025, mid-academic year.

Could the Cabinet Member update Members:

- a) On the number of contacts from concerned parents to the School Admissions Team on this matter?
- b) Provide an assessment on the actual and/or projected increased demand for non-independent school places across Surrey, the ability to satisfy any such increased demand and the associated cost implications to the Council.

## **RESPONSE:**

- a) The School Admissions Team is unable to report on the number of contacts from parents on this matter as this is not being recorded. There are complexities to this, including that there may be multiple contacts about the same child; more than one child could be referenced in the same contact; and parents contact the team in different ways, including email and phone calls.
- b) It has not yet been possible to make an assessment on a projected increase in demand for state funded schools across Surrey because it is too soon to be able to quantify the proportion of families affected who will require a place in a state-funded school. The admissions window for applications for Year 7 in September 2025 closes on 31 October 2024 and after this date we will be able to assess if the total number of applications have increased compared to previous years. Applications for in year places in January 2025 are accepted from mid-November 2024, and from this point we will be able to gauge any increase in demand for places. Nevertheless, the service is ready to work collegiately with our schools and stakeholders to manage any increase in applications and we remain confident in the council's ability to fulfil its statutory duty to offer a school place to any Surrey child who needs one.

## **CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

### **21. CHRIS TOWNSEND (ASHTEAD) TO ASK:**

A few years ago, the Youth Service adopted a new strategy that ceased to provide universal youth work but offered the opportunity for this work to be provided by other organisations in SCC buildings. A number of local groups took up this opportunity, including Ashtead YMCA. The provision of youth work in these venues has been very successful.

Ashtead YMCA have now been told, with just six months' notice, that the buildings are to return to SCC with no explanation as to why, and with no understanding of the dramatic impact such a move would have on the communities involved.

This is yet another example of poor communication and muddled thinking by SCC. This is a change in policy, not an operational issue, and as such needs to go through the usual procedure of a report to the Select Committee prior to a decision by Cabinet.

Can the Cabinet Member explain:

- a) Why these changes are being made?
- b) Why these changes have not gone through the usual procedure?



## RESPONSE:

- a) There is no change to the policy or strategy. It is merely the 5-year strategy coming to its conclusion. Over the course of 2019-2020, various organisations expressed an interest in taking on a Lease to manage a Youth Centre building. Organisations entered Heads of terms which provided an offer of tenancy of that building for up to a 5-year period from the date of occupancy. Occupancies began in 2020-21.

The heads of terms for tenancies included the provision that notice could be served by either SCC or the proposed tenant at any time before the end of the 5-year period to return the building back to SCC and without any reason needing to be given.

At the time of expression of interest for the proposed tenancies, all parties were advised that there was no proposed extension beyond the 5 years being offered. There was also no guarantee that notice would not be served before the 5-year period expired.

Organisations wishing to take up tenancies of buildings, had their own independent legal advice on terms before they entered into any agreement or took up occupation and accepted terms for tenancies of the buildings.

SCC has an increasing business need for space to deliver supportive services including statutory within a local community for the benefit of families, children, young people, and their communities. The youth centre buildings provide an opportunity to deliver these services locally.

There is no requirement to advise tenants in advance of notice being sent. However, as SCC regards each organisation that has been part of this strategy as a partner, they have been visited to explain the ending of the tenancy arrangements, and to offer support and resources to the providers to facilitate the transition of the buildings back to SCC as the tenancy period expires. No notices have been issued at this point.

Conversations about the continuation of universal youth services in each of the centres is continuing with our provider partners and SCC will continue to work in partnership to support and advise those partner providers as required.

- b) There is no change to the policy or strategy. As there is no change there is no requirement to bring this operational matter to Cabinet, as there is no Cabinet decision to be made. However, this has been brought to the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee to ensure transparency and oversight by members and this included a Workshop with select committee members on 12 June 2024.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

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

Can the Council liaise with boroughs and districts to better co-ordinate grass cutting and street sweeping?

**RESPONSE:**

Coordination already exists between the County Council and district and boroughs (D&Bs) for some aspects of grass cutting and street cleansing. For example, all D&Bs are advised when we are undertaking works to the High Speed Road Network, so they can benefit from the traffic management we provide. Coordination is then dependent upon the relevant D&B and if they have the capacity to make use of these opportunities. Often the D&Bs can provide resource and their crews compliment the range of activities the County Council may coordinate when installing traffic management for grass cutting – including gulley emptying, street lighting and road markings.

Standards of street cleansing vary across the county, again dependent on the D&Bs own standards. Whilst SCC continues to deliver various activities across the whole county as programmed and required by our own service levels, it is operationally challenging and does not generate efficiencies to vary this delivery according to the different D&B street cleansing schedules and standards. It is acknowledged that there have been issues early on in the grass cutting season where contractors were leaving cut grass in the road channel. In most locations, this should not happen and efforts have been made to ensure all contractors are aware of and work to our performance standards. Officers will publish the grass cutting schedules for 2025 and share this with D&Bs.

**TIM OLIVER OBE, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**23. EBER KINGTON (EWELL COURT, AURIOL & CUDDINGTON) TO ASK:  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

Does the Leader agree with me that, in the final year of this Council's term of office, Members and Democratic Services officers should look at the format of committee reports to ensure that they assist Members in the work of scrutiny and in the understanding of the key issues.

Currently many committee reports are too long, repetitive and fail to highlight the key areas of concern or with key concerns issues being buried deep within the report or not highlighted.

Will the Leader agree to the setting up a review of how reports are presented to Members including:

- a) Shorter reports, with supporting information included in annexes and repetition avoided except where required due to statutory reporting requirements;
- b) A requirement for an Executive Summary fronting all reports. An Executive Summary would briefly summarize the key points of the report: stating the purpose of the report, highlighting the major points, and describe any results, conclusions, or recommendations including any successes or causes of concern;
- c) Officers no longer being required to introduce reports at a committee meeting, but asked if they have any new or additional information to add since it was written and published – a practice already adopted by some committees and the Corporate Parenting Board?

**RESPONSE:**

This issue has been raised and discussed recently by scrutiny chairmen at the Select Committee Chair and Vice Chairs Group. In response, a new Select Committee Report Template has been developed for use by Directorates which sets clear parameters on the length of reports, the use of appendices and the need for executive summaries for more complex subjects. It is for individual Committee Chairmen to decide how to conduct a meeting in respect of the presentation of reports. This would normally be agreed with officers at the Draft Reports meeting.

**CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

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

How many Surrey children are currently in Alternative Provision (AP)?

Please provide a breakdown of the:

- a) the reasons for this; b) the length of time in AP; and c) the number of hours of support provided per week per child, and how much of this is in person?

**RESPONSE:**

**Alternative Provision (AP)**

Section 19 of the 1996 Education Act states “Each local authority shall make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them”.

This piece of legislation forms the basis upon which all local authorities should provide alternative provision.

The AP cohort is very fluid, with the cohort size, demographics and needs changing continuously. This data summary provides an insight into year-on-year progress

(2022/23 to 2023/24) as well as insight into a specific tracked cohort – children with Education Health and Care Plans and children who are medically unfit to attend school where the council is directly providing or commissioning alternative provision. It must be noted that the fluidity of the cohort means that snapshots of comparative data may not provide a direct correlation across all factors/variables.

Headlines:

- 896 Children accessing LA operated/commissioned AP (under Section 19 duties) in 2023/24, down from 944 in 2022/23
- Tracked cohort of 371 – snapshot as of March 2024
- The proportion of the cohort with an EHCP has increased from 15% to 23%.
- 63% of those placed in SCC commissioned AP are receiving less than 15hrs of education
- New monitoring process across SEND teams

## Pupil Volume

The number of statutory school aged children placed in LA commissioned/operated AP (*not included those in receipt of an EOTAS package*) has reduced by 5.1%. Whilst the number of independent AP placements has remained relatively consistent, the number of children accessing these settings has decreased by 3.3%.

Access to Education (A2E) and Surrey Online School (SOS) have seen an increase in overall demand which is in line with SCC’s ambition to reduce reliance on independent AP. Further to this, the increase in placements with SOS reflect the role the service is playing in supporting a volume increase in packages of support, particularly for those accessing A2E.

	2022/23				2023/24			
	Placements		Pupils Placed		Placements		Pupils Placed	
	Commissioned/Capacity		No.	% of total	Commissioned/Capacity		No.	% of total
PRU / AP Academy (non-medical)*	240	30%	355	38%	240	30%	340	32%
PRU/AP Academy (medical)*	68	8%	146	16%	68	9%	129	12%
A2E	280	35%	260	28%	280	35%	272	26%
SOS	57	7%	57	6%	62	8%	62	6%
Independent Providers	149	20%	121	13%	145	18%	117	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>810</b>		<b>950</b>		<b>795</b>		<b>920</b>	

Notes:

1. Data as at 18/07/2024 reflecting all placements across the specified academic year
2. Data does not include those accessing AP as part of an EOTAS package.
  - a) Additional 41 children accessing A2E, SOS and Ind AP in 23/24 as part of EOTAS package
  - b) Additional 29 children accessing A2E, SOS and Ind AP in 22/23 as part of EOTAS package
3. PRU/AP Academy placements provided as FTE

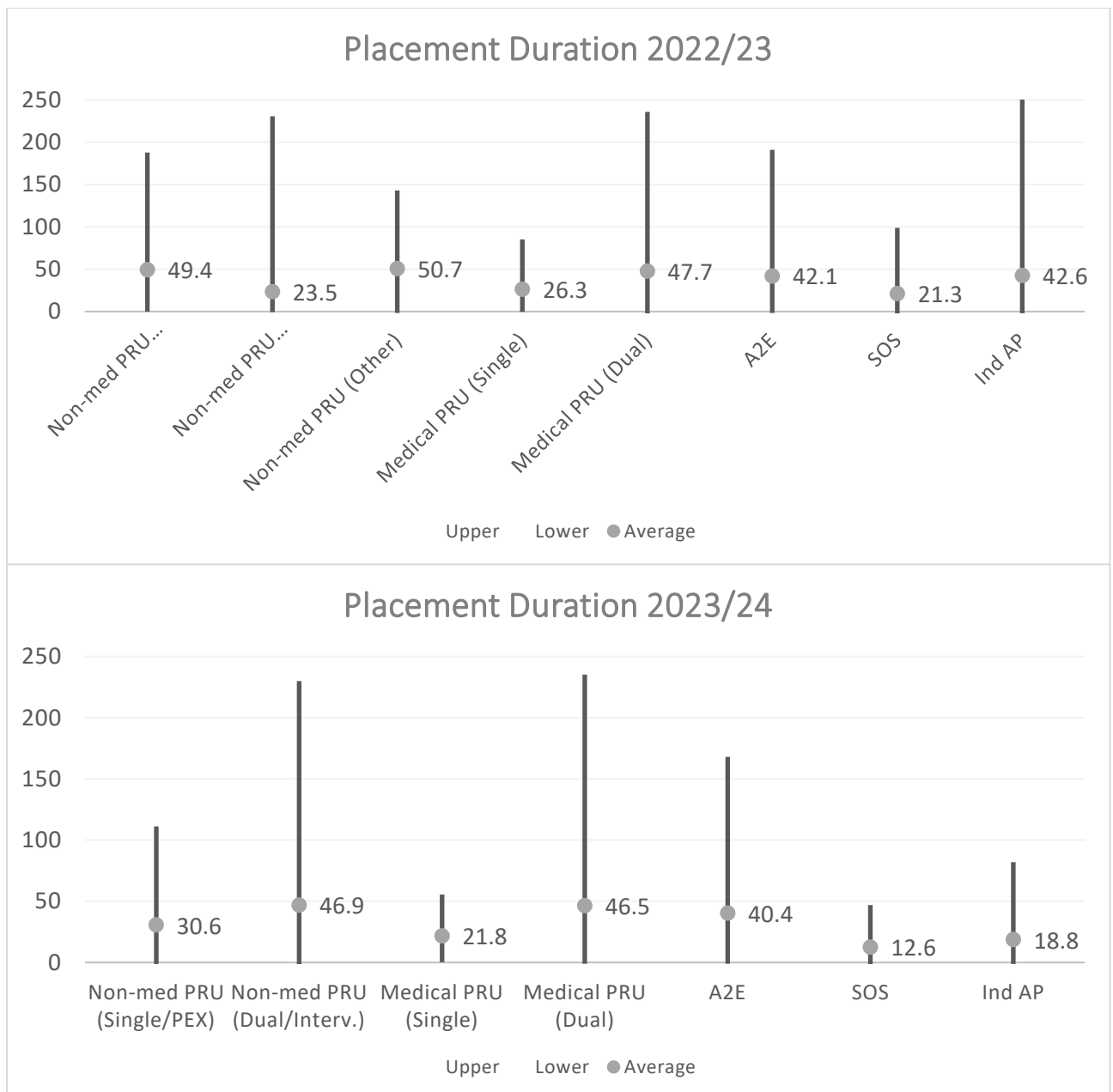
4. A2E, SOS and Ind AP are 'on demand' with volume of hours for each placement varying depending on the need of the child – placements commissioned/capacity does not therefore reflect FTE
- a) A2E 'Placements commissioned/capacity' reflects total number of children that can be supported at one time

'Pupils placed' data source: EYES 'on roll'

# 'Pupils Placed' data source: EYES AP Placement - census

### Placement Duration

Based on indicative 2023/24 data, average placement duration across nearly all provider categories and registration types decreased between 2022/23 and 2023/24. The exception to this is non-medical PRU/AP Academy intervention dual registration placements however a data audit to refine this category is necessary.



**Notes:**

1. Average placement duration based on placements ended
- a. 2023/24 data is provisional, with a large number of placements still to end therefore excluded from the data set.
2. Data does not include those accessing AP as part of an EOTAS package.
3. A data audit has been initiated to ascertain whether any 23/24 intervention placements at non-medical AP Academies should be re-categorised to 'other' in line with practice from 22/23 recognising activity outside of the scope of SCC commissioned provision.
4. PRU/AP Academy data sourced from EYES on roll, with all other setting data sourced from EYES AP Placements – census data.

**Number of hours provision received**

Based on reviewed data undertaken in May 2024

<b>Total 371</b>	<b>EHCP 317</b>	<b>No EHCP 54</b>
Total 371	On roll 191	Off roll 180
Total 317 (EHCP)	199 < 15 hours	118 > 15 hours
Total 54 (no EHCP) 22 Medical	On roll 44	43 < 15 hours

The majority of the provision made to CYP requiring alternative provision will often be a blend of face-to-face support and/ or remote learning depending on the specific needs of the child. We are currently exploring how our reporting can be enhanced to more succinctly bring together the different elements of support that would make up a CYPs individual package.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**25. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK:  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

Residents report the Blue Heart scheme is suspended and not accepting new applications. However, there is no note of this on the website or FixMyStreet (the route to registering a new verge under the scheme).

Please explain what the suspension of the Blue Heart scheme means for the verges already registered by residents. How will these verges be managed next year and beyond? What advice can be given to residents who would like to register new verges?

**RESPONSE:**

In response to some operational and resident concerns raised over the last few months, the County Council has determined that it needs to review further how best to manage and potentially expand the Blue Heart scheme. While some residents support Blue Heart verges, there has been some local conflict where not all residents' views are aligned.

On this basis a pause of the scheme in relation to accepting new applications has been put in place as described. I am sorry that the website has not referenced this situation, and I will ask officers to rectify that situation.

Those verges already registered as Blue Hearts are not impacted by the pause and will benefit from a cut and collect at the end of the season as planned.

A review, as described above, is being undertaken and it is anticipated residents will be able to request new sites be added to the scheme from the start of 2025.

## **CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

### **26. CATHERINE POWELL (FARNHAM NORTH) TO ASK: (2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

On 12 September, the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee heard evidence from a secondary school headteacher who stated that she had been directed by Surrey County Council to take three children with additional needs, despite telling Surrey County Council that the school was unable to meet their needs. During her testimony she discovered, to her surprise, that additional funding was available in these circumstances via a reasonable adjustments form.

Can the Cabinet Member provide figures, by quadrant for the term that started in September, stating:

- a) How many children in Surrey were placed in schools despite the school making clear they could not meet the child's needs?
- b) Does SCC require a formal written statement from schools to confirm their acceptance of a child with additional needs before the child is formally placed there in cases where the school has previously advised that it cannot meet need?
- c) How many headteachers / SENCOs of schools in this situation were made aware that extra funding was available to them to help them meet the needs of the children when the children were put on their roll?
- d) For what proportion of these children is additional funding being made available to schools via the reasonable adjustments process, and what is the average value of the funding per child?

### **RESPONSE:**

The headteacher who spoke at the select committee meeting has since acknowledged that she was mistaken in relation to the local authority directing the school to take the three children she mentioned. 'Direction' is the statutory power for a local authority to direct a school to admit a child with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). It comes from Section 43 of the Children and Families Act 2014 [Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/section/43). This law requires that the school named in the child's EHCP must admit the child.

Additionally, she was unaware that her school had submitted reasonable adjustments forms, and these had resulted in additional funding being made available to the school to support the placements.

Finally, the school was named as parental preference in two of the three examples. Where this is the case, the legal framework ([SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)) sets out:

“If a child’s parent or a young person makes a request for a particular nursery, school or post-16 institution in these groups the local authority **must** comply with that preference and name the school or college in the EHC plan unless:

- it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or
  - the attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources”
- a) No schools were directed by the local authority’s SEND admissions team to take children into their school as part of the Key Stage Transfer Process in 2024.
- b) No. The Local Authority is required to consult with settings prior to naming them on an Education Health Care Plan, and to consider carefully the feedback they receive. The Local Authority has the legal power to direct a setting to admit a child or young person by naming the school on the Education, Health Care Plan and if the decision is to name a setting, they are required to admit the young person (as detailed above).

In practice, Surrey very rarely uses the power to direct, instead we request schools share their concerns via a reasonable adjustments form that allows us to review any additional support they feel they need and make adjustments where necessary to support these placements. These forms are part of the information shared at the point of consultation, so every consultation sent to a school or setting contains the form and process to complete this feedback. If it is considered that a direction is in the best interest of the child, this recommendation would be made to an Assistant Director and their agreement would be required before a direction letter is issued.

- c) As stated above, our consultation form contains the information needed to provide additional information where schools have concerns. We are confident that this system is widely understood as it is regularly used by staff completing this work and the detail shared in the select committee was erroneous.
- d) The information on this is held case by case, as the response to the request requires a review of the individual needs of the child or young person against the finding previously agreed. There is no set response, and no standard amount of funding offered.

All funding agreements are made in line with the banded funding framework which sets out the description of needs and provision, and then allocates a band to this



profile. The banding framework was co-produced with schools and was recently reviewed with school partners. The funding attached to the bands is detailed below (this is funding to be used in addition to the £6,000 notional SEND funding that schools are required to set aside for SEND students):

The Bands will be funded as follows:

Band	Finance for each child per academic year*
Targeted 1	£1,614
Targeted 2	£3,700
Enhanced 1	£6,397
Enhanced 2	£9,409
Bespoke	£10,424+

\*Surrey County Council reserve the right to review funding

## **CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

### **27. LANCE SPENCER (GOLDSWORTH EAST AND HORSELL VILLAGE) TO ASK: (2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

Despite the considerable efforts of its staff and increased investment by the county council to reduce the backlog of Education, Health and Care assessments the system is still understaffed and confrontational, with just 2% of tribunal cases being found fully in favour of the LA. The positive results of the new Mediation and Dispute Resolutions Officers show what can be achieved through constructive engagement with parents and carers.

What plans are there to extend these services to reduce the number of cases going to tribunal?

### **RESPONSE:**

We agree, the work of the Mediation and Dispute Resolution Officers (MADRO) has been a positive step forward. Interactions with parents based upon relational working principles and the early resolution of concerns or disputes is the approach we are trying to build and embed in our practice, learning from and extending the good work undertaken by the MADRO officers.

## **MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

### **28. STEPHEN COOKSEY (DORKING SOUTH AND THE HOLMWOODS) TO ASK: (2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

Lane Rental is only charged on about 7.5% of Surrey roads. Is there any plan to extend the use of lane rental to encourage both the utilities and SCC to minimise the disruption caused by roadworks?

**RESPONSE:**

Guidance from the Department of Transport at the time we submitted our Lane Rental application to the Secretary of State for Transport in 2020 was that 5% of a Highway Authority's road network could be included in the Lane Rental Network. Due to the high traffic volumes in Surrey, we submitted 7.5% of our network for consideration, which was approved. Revised guidance was issued by the Department for Transport in March 2024 which allows for between 5% and 10% of the authorities' network to be considered for Lane Rental.

Officers are in the process of reviewing the Lane Rental network in Surrey in light of the revised guidance and aim to consult on, and submit, a revised network for consideration by the Secretary of State for Transport in 2025.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**29. ASHLEY TILLING (WALTON SOUTH & OATLANDS) TO ASK:  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

The spraying of weeds on pavements and roads only started in Elmbridge at the end of August and continued well into September so that many streets suffered from full growths of weeds throughout the summer months.

Why was spraying, along with cutting back the verges, not carried out in accordance with the published schedule?

**RESPONSE:**

Contractor resources are used across the county to carry out the weed spray and as you have described, Elmbridge was the last of the eleven districts and boroughs to be treated. As you will be aware our current approach is to undertake one weed treatment per year, and the published schedule is what we anticipate our contractors should work to, to achieve this. Unfortunately, in some areas there were changes to the delivery programme for a variety of reasons - including issues with staffing, machinery and weather patterns. Following the experience of the last year, plans are now in place to ensure Elmbridge, and the other districts and boroughs in Surrey are treated earlier in the growing season for 2025.

**NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY, WASTE AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**30. ANDY MACLEOD (FARNHAM CENTRAL) TO ASK:  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

The Brightwells Yard regeneration scheme started in 2001 with the appointment of Crest Nicholson by Waverley Borough Council as their development partner. The final design of the scheme includes 239 residential apartments and a commercial element including a 6-screen cinema, a 25-unit shopping centre and 6 restaurants

and cafes. A multi-story car park provides both residents' parking and a public car park to support the shopping centre and cinema.

Surrey County Council decided to invest in the commercial part of the development in 2017, though this decision was called in to question in terms of its viability by Councillor Harrison, the then leader of the Residents' and Independents Group.

The development has now reached practical completion, in that it is almost completely built. The apartments are now around 60% occupied, the cinema is open and around 4 or 5 of the retail units may open later this year.

It now becomes vitally important for Farnham, Surrey and Waverley that the remaining retail units and restaurants are occupied as soon as possible. Surrey has quite rightly decided to take over the management of making this happen from Crest Nicholson.

As Brightwells is in my division I can report that the great majority of residents in Farnham wish Surrey every success in establishing a viable and vibrant daytime and evening commercial centre at Brightwells, supported by the new public car park.

So can the Cabinet Member please indicate to the Council:

- a) For the reassurance of the people of Farnham, what steps Surrey will now take to improve on Crest Nicholsons performance in obtaining commercial tenants for Brightwells, and what is the best prediction for the opening of the commercial centre?
- b) Now that Surrey is responsible for managing most of the public spaces on the site under the 150-year lease arrangement with Waverley, what will be the best way for residents or local organisations to raise queries about points of concern or possible uses of the public spaces with Surrey?
- c) For the Council itself as an investor in the scheme when, if ever, can we expect the returns from our investment projected in 2017?

**RESPONSE:**

- a) From the date of the practical completion (PC) of the scheme (6 September 2024) Surrey County Council's (the Council) Land & Property officers became responsible for the marketing of the vacant retail units and the wider promotion of the commercial scheme itself (please note that the Council is not responsible for the residential units nor the public car park). The Council is currently reviewing the commercial agency arrangements and the wider leasing and promotion strategy to ensure that the scheme becomes a vibrant destination centre within the town of Farnham. Currently we have 7 tenants who are either open for trade or fitting out to be open for trade pre-Christmas 2024. Since PC we have also agreed lease terms with several new tenants who will add to the exciting tenant mix within the scheme. A formal scheme opening is unlikely to take place before Easter 2025, although the scheme is now open to the public and a good number of tenants will be open and trading before Christmas 2024. For 2025 we are already planning regular public community and commercialisation events to help publicise and encourage

visitors to the scheme, and we look forward to working with local groups and residents as we plan our 2025 events calendar.

- b) It is important to note that the Council is only responsible for the paved area of public open space known as “Town Square” and it is within this space that we will be holding public events. The car park and the entire area of open space which includes all the grass area and public seating forming the central area of the scheme, is and will remain the responsibility of Waverley Borough Council (WBC) and therefore, all matters pertaining to this area should be referred directly to them. Anybody wishing to contact the Council with regards to the paved “Town Square” area should contact the Centre Manager, whose site office is located on Threadneedle Street.
  
- c) In July 2015, the Council’s Cabinet approved the acquisition of the long leasehold interest in the commercial elements of this scheme for the purposes of town centre regeneration to meet the corporate strategy priority of economic prosperity and working with our partners. This regeneration scheme has already enhanced the economic outcomes of the area by providing circa 240 new homes and new retail and leisure offerings in what was previously an under-performing area of the town. Furthermore, this regeneration investment will provide the Council with an ongoing revenue income through tenant rental payments thereby enhancing the Council’s financial resilience in the longer term. Like all property assets, the capital value of the asset will fluctuate due to macro-economic conditions and as more lettings occur within the scheme the total annual revenue will rise, which in turn will improve the overall capital value of the asset. As a town centre regeneration scheme, Brightwells Yard, along with the Council’s plans for the town centre through the Farnham Infrastructure Programme, demonstrates how the Council is investing in the town, and supporting the local economy, which will be further enhanced when the new pedestrian bridge to the south of Brightwells is completed in Q1 2025.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**31. MARK SUGDEN (HINCHLEY WOOD, CLAYGATE AND OXSHOTT) TO ASK:  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Question)**

Claygate Parish Council and Claygate residents have expressed their strong concerns about the appalling extent of weeds growing in kerb gulleys and on and at the backs of footways of residential streets across the Village.

Surrey County Council states such weeds can interfere with road user visibility, prevent or slow down drainage, destroy paving surfaces, force kerbs apart and crack walls, causing safety issues and greatly increasing maintenance costs.

Moreover it makes residential streets look unsightly, unkempt and gives the overall impression that ‘nobody cares’. Claygate residents do care.

Can the Cabinet Member clarify the 'Why We Control Weeds' policy on the SCC website and what actions could be taken to significantly improve the situation:

- a) What is meant by most residential roads will be treated?
- b) Why are not all roads treated and who determines which ones are or are not treated?
- c) What is meant by the words 'but there may be local variation'. Are roads treated once a year or not?
- d) Why are weeds sprayed just once a year, normally in September, and Is this really enough to achieve effective control?
- e) What type of weed spray is currently used, is it effective and are there other more effective Alternatives?'

**RESPONSE:**

Weed growth has been a concern in Elmbridge and other parts of the county this year. For 2025, the intention is to undertake an early season treatment (around March to April, to be confirmed) across the entire county and keep the situation closely under review.

In response to your specific points in order

- a) Our website states, "all pavements and kerbs in residential roads are treated to control weeds" and this is what we undertake.
- b) All pavement and kerbs on residential roads are treated if they form part of the public highway.
- c) Local variation means that in some areas there may be the need to treat more than once. This could be due to the presence of injurious weeds, such as giant hogweed.
- d) Our recent approach has been to undertake one spray per year, in part, for environmental operational reasons. In response to the issues experienced over the last year we will be spraying earlier in the season for 2025 which should help improve effectiveness and we will continue to review if further treatments, or other action, are needed.
- e) The treatment we use is a herbicide known as glyphosate. Trials of several different treatments have shown glyphosate to be the most effective in terms of performance and value for money.

**NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY, WASTE AND INFRASTRUCTURE / KEVIN DEANUS, CABINET MEMBER FOR FIRE AND RESCUE, AND RESILIENCE**

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

Does the Council know how many properties in Surrey are still affected by cladding such that they do not satisfy the revised standards and regulations, post the Grenfell tragedy?

## RESPONSE:

Data held by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) shows that there are 91 High-Rise Residential Buildings (HRRB) in Surrey, seven of which have cladding and require remediation; the seven are between 7 and 24 stories. This is less than 10% of the 91. All of these have mitigation measures in place, such as communal alarms and waking watches. A waking watch is where a building is patrolled on all floors and outside the building to raise the alarm in the event of a fire. Each of these buildings are in the Government's [Cladding Safety Scheme](#) (CSS), which is a fund that will meet the cost of addressing life safety fire risks associated with cladding on residential buildings.

One of the HRRBs has ACM cladding, the same cladding that was used on Grenfell Tower. However, it is not fitted in the cassette manner, which leads to violent burning. This building also does not have flammable insulation underneath; it has a sprinkler system and a fully automatic fire system and is in the CSS.

SFRS has sent letters to all HRRB owners reminding them of their responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Fire Safety Act 2021 and Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022. All buildings have been revisited by SFRS in last 18 months and the service is in regular contact with the Responsible Person for the premises. The service will also be revisiting all seven buildings again in the next three months. SFRS has sought legal advice to confirm what actions are available due to the timescales for remediation. The legal opinion is that the current mitigations of risk are sufficient to make enforcement currently unsuccessful.

In December 2019 the definition of dangerous cladding was extended to include buildings between 11 and 18 metres, referred to as mid-rise. Data provided by the then Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) identified 163 mid-rise residential properties in the county. SFRS matured the data provided and has visited 277 mid-rise buildings to check for External Wall Systems (EWS), otherwise known as cladding. Of the 277 mid-rise buildings 14 were identified as needing further investigation. The service has contacted the building owners to establish what actions are being taken.

These buildings, along with the HRRBs, are flagged as having cladding on our mobile data terminals, available on frontline appliances, so that crews are prepared in the event of a fire. SFRS continues to support HRRBs and mid-rise building owners to ensure that they are compliant with legislative requirements.

In relation to the Surrey County Council (the Council) estate, a full and extensive audit of all SCC properties, both corporate and schools, was undertaken post the Grenfell tragedy and this confirmed that all buildings were compliant with none falling within the criteria specified above. The Council do have an ongoing project for a 5-story school science block, which relates to curtain walling and fire stopping works following funding approved by Cabinet.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**33. EBER KINGTON (EWELL COURT, AURIOL & CUDDINGTON) TO ASK:  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Question)**

In July I exchanged emails with Steve Bax, Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways on the current one-spray-fits-all policy relating to the treatment of weeds on urban footways and in alleyways. There are too many examples where the depth, height and prevalence of weeds on the footway are causing a safety hazard and where residents walk in the road rather than risk using the footway.

At that time the Deputy Cabinet Member was sympathetic, and committed to finding solutions.

Can you provide an update on the progress thus far?

**RESPONSE:**

It is accepted that weeds can be an issue to our residents and damage the highway infrastructure. While it is unlikely weeds alone would stop residents from using a footway, if members are aware of problems with overgrown vegetation, please do report it as explained in the email sent by the Cabinet Member to all Members on 19 August 2024. This year, in addition to the one treatment with a herbicide, teams have also been deployed to remove or trim weeds in identified key locations. For 2025, the intention is to undertake an early season weed treatment (around March to April, to be confirmed) across the entire county which should help improve effectiveness of the treatment. We will continue to review if further treatments, or other action, are needed.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH / MARISA HEATH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT**

**34. JONATHAN ESSEX (REDHILL EAST) TO ASK:  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Question)**

What approaches have Surrey County Council made to Surrey MPs and the new Government to make the case for additional support for climate action across Surrey (including for retrofit of homes, council buildings, schools and NHS estate) and clarification on future bus funding, specifically in light of the £2 bus fares cap currently due to end on 31st December 2024, and Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) phase 2 funding is currently due to come to an end in March 2026?

**RESPONSE:**

Surrey County Council continues to make the case for additional resources for climate action in Surrey through our established networks and communications via organisations such as ADEPT (The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport) and the Local Government Association (LGA).

Regarding the future of bus funding, Surrey, other Local Transport Authorities and bus operators have all been pressing the Department for Transport to provide clarity over the National Bus Fare Cap, otherwise known as the £2 flat fare scheme.

We know that the Department for Transport is actively reviewing the £2 flat fare scheme. Options include withdrawing the scheme altogether, extending it for another period, amending it by increasing the fare from £2 to £2.50 as proposed by the previous Government, or targeting the scheme at key groups, for example young people.

Currently, we have no certainty as to what the Government may do. However, they have been made very aware that to remove the scheme with no notice will create a potential “cliff edge” for many bus users, something that is not acceptable. This was due to happen to Covid Recovery funding until pressure from councils, including Surrey, ensured that it was extended by the previous Government. Whatever option is chosen, time will be needed for Local Transport Authorities and the bus industry to respond. It has been pointed out to the Government that there is a need for a reasonable notice period, suggestion of six months, that should be in place before any change comes into force.

The Government’s views on wider bus funding are less clear. There is Bus Service Improvement Plan Phase 3 funding that is being made available to authorities in the midlands and north of England from the cancellation of the HS2 extension. However, there is no confirmed Government funding beyond that.

We know the Government wants to increase the number of bus franchises in England. However, this comes with significant time, risk and cost implications for Local Transport Authorities. Government has pledged funding to support authorities setting up new bus franchises, but there is no detail on how much, when it may be available or what it may specifically be used for, noting that the initial cost of business case development has to be funded locally.

There is the risk, I have highlighted to the Buses Minister, that there needs to be equivalent funding made available for areas where bus franchising is not practical or affordable to implement. Otherwise, a “two-tier” approach to bus funding will be created, where residents in “un-franchised” areas may lose out. That is not an acceptable outcome.

I hope to get greater certainty on all these issues and many more from the Autumn Budget and from the promised Better Buses Bill.



**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**35. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK:  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Question)**

Please provide figures on the number of charge points installed to date for the county council in Surrey by Connected Kerb, and how this compares to the total five-year target?

**RESPONSE:**

Update on the installation of EV chargepoints onstreet in Surrey by Connected Kerb: Surrey County Council was one of the first councils to agree a large-scale contract with an EV chargepoint installer, and continues to lead the way in delivering and commercialising public on-street chargepoints for residents. As at October 1 2024 there are 486 chargepoints in the delivery pipeline. This is made up of:

- Undertaking Design and costing 268
- Member, D&B and Resident Consultation 52
- Awaiting construction and mid construction 152
- Operational 14

The target to be installed by 2028 under this contract is around 2000\* onstreet chargepoints. The numbers achieved may be significantly affected by:

- Available locations;
- Resident acceptance; and
- Usage rates and wider EV take up.

Planned numbers and locations will be reviewed annually and adjusted up or down according to circumstances. To date there are already have around 25% of the 2028 target number of sites identified and progressing through delivery.

It is hoped to boost numbers further with lamp column chargepoints of 3KWH in locations where the 7KWH chargepoints are impractical. Numbers are yet uncertain but this could number in the 100's by 2028.

\*the total Surrey public chargepoint demand identified by a number of forecasts is close to 10,000 by 2030. This figure includes all District and Borough car parks and the many public chargepoints located on private land. The Connected Kerb contract relates primarily to onstreet chargepoints. We estimate that this contract will raise the Surrey onstreet chargepoints from 13% of all public chargepoints to around 25%. This gives rise to the target of 2000 onstreet chargepoints in Surrey by 2028.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**36. CATHERINE POWELL (FARNHAM NORTH) TO ASK:  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Question)**

The SCC website ([8.6 Choice of SuDS for Streets | Healthy Streets for Surrey \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk)) recommends the use of rain gardens for “*new and existing streets, particularly in verges and any left-over spaces*” and rainwater planters as being “*particularly appropriate on constrained sites and high streets.*”

Please can the Cabinet Member advise:

- a) Which town centres SCC has installed rain gardens in?
- b) When this was done and whether or not any issues were encountered during their construction?
- c) Where raingardens have been installed, are they considered to be a success in terms of:
  - managing surface water runoff;
  - costs of maintenance;
  - fitting aesthetically into the town centre?

**RESPONSE:**

The only town centre specific scheme is the Rain Gardens that were installed in approximately 2020 in Chertsey Road, Woking. These were part of the overall town centre improvement works and were specifically designed to address an existing drainage problem. They have provided improved drainage on this section of Chertsey Road, which previously had very minimal facilities. They were constructed during the wider highway improvement works, and no unusual issues were encountered to the best of our knowledge. The long-term maintenance of them is minimal, and they fit aesthetically into the town centre. They do have a propensity to be trampled slightly by the heavy footfall in this location, but generally they are considered to have been a success given the wider demands of this busy urban environment.

SCC is currently installing rain gardens along Croydon Road in Caterham, in partnership with Tandridge District Council. The scheme is still under construction. There is not a central data base for Rain Gardens being introduced in and around Surrey, but our Asset Team are developing a process so that all new and existing drainage can be recorded centrally on a detailed drainage map of Surrey, this will include Rain Gardens being recorded showing build data, management plans etc.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**37. ASHLEY TILLING (WALTON SOUTH & OATLANDS) TO ASK:  
(3<sup>rd</sup> Question)**

This Council recently passed a motion to uphold the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals which include Goal 11 'Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable' and Goal 15 'Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems'.

Why is this Council still deploying highly toxic glyphosate weed killers when more environmentally friendly alternatives have been used successfully in some of our Boroughs and Districts which do not have the harmful effects of glyphosate-based sprays?

**RESPONSE:**

The County Council, along with other Highway Authorities, has in the past tried alternatives to glyphosate. I am aware that Officers wrote to you in September and explained that other methods (such as foamspray) are considerably more labour and time intensive, making them hugely more expensive. For example, recent tender analysis has shown that foamspray is up to fifteen times more expensive conventional treatment. Glyphosate remains the most proven and cost-effective solution. The concentration of the glyphosate we use has reduced over time to the minimum level that is still seen as effective.

If you can provide details of boroughs and districts which have successfully used alternatives on a comparable scale as to that needed for the public highway, officers would be pleased to learn from their experiences.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**38. EBER KINGTON (EWELL COURT, AURIOL & CUDDINGTON) TO ASK:  
(4<sup>th</sup> Question)**

I have emails from SCC's Parking Team dated January and July 2024, stating that there is a backlog of the painting of yellow line waiting restriction agreed at the 2021/2022 Epsom and Ewell Parking Review. This, in turn, is creating a delay in the implementation of the 2023 Parking Review published in the press in February 2024.

I reproduce below an email dated 06/09/24 from one resident who is relying on the implementation of DYL outside his home, agreed in the 2023 Review, to ensure access for a school bus to his property

*"Our situation now is our disabled son has a school bus which picks him up and drops him off in the morning/afternoon. Whilst we have made space on our driveway for this to happen safely, yesterday .....a parent parked right across our driveway*

*while we were waiting for school bus drop off. And today also, was worse, because the driver left their vehicle.*

*We see parking issues on a regular basis, however previously we did not have a school bus picking up and dropping off my child. Please can this be resolved at a matter of urgency. It is unacceptable what Surrey CC is putting us through, this is a long going matter we have been chasing numerous times. Such requests are not made without valid reasons.”*

This continuing backlog from historical reviews is unacceptable and new delays are causing concern. What reassurance can I give to residents that Surrey Highways has the resources and systems in place to get on top of these delays?

**RESPONSE:**

In order to address the volume of road marking orders that need completing, our contractor has sourced additional resources this financial year (eight road marking teams) to increase delivery output. The extra resource has made a positive impact, as weather has permitted. The Parking Team has been working closely with the contractor to identify and prioritise the oldest jobs, one of which was the lining for the Epsom and Ewell parking review 2022 (Phase 14), which was prioritised and completed in July this year.

While the additional resources are helping work through the backlog, lining is still taking place for newer jobs too and the 2023/24 Epsom and Ewell parking review (Phase 15) is now 85% complete. There are seven jobs that remain outstanding in relation to this review and three of those cannot be started due to accessibility improvements currently being carried out at Stoneleigh Broadway station. The remaining four require either traffic management, vegetation clearance or sweeping and we are seeking to complete these by the end of October if at all possible.

In the case highlighted, we arranged an extension of the single yellow line outside the residents property in the 23/24 parking review and this was implemented, however due to a misunderstanding about what was needed, the single yellow line does not extend far enough to allow a bus to have full access. We do apologise to the residents concerned for this, however once we were made aware of the issue, we prioritised the extension of the yellow line restriction and consequently it was completed in early October 2024.

**DENISE TURNER-STEWART, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITIES / NATALIE BRAMHALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY, WASTE AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

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

Please could you provide an update as to the reconstruction work at the permanent site of Redhill Library and when it is due to be re-opened?

**RESPONSE:**

Comprehensive surveys were carried out by the Council's surveying consultant, AtkinsRealis, to establish the extent and condition of the RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) at Redhill library. This information was incorporated into a tender package following governance approvals and Neilcott Construction Ltd were selected as the main contractor.

Neilcott's have carried out further detailed surveys and have provided proposed mitigations and costings to rectify the RAAC and the main contract work is due to commence w/c 28 October 2024. However, in the interim strip out works have taken place alongside the commencement of the main Library works which are not affected by the RAAC requirements.

Recommendations from the programme indicate a current target reopening date of June 2025 for Redhill library.

A temporary Library provision will be provided in central Redhill during the works period.

**MARISA HEATH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT**

**40. CATHERINE BAART (EARLSWOOD AND REIGATE SOUTH) TO ASK:  
(4<sup>th</sup> Question)**

Biodiversity net gain of at least 10% is now mandatory for developments. Surrey Nature Partnership recommends that Surrey's planning authorities require developers to achieve 20% post development biodiversity net gain.

Pending the approval of the County Council's Local Nature Recovery Strategy, currently being drafted, what net gain in Biodiversity is the county's Planning and Regulatory Committee expecting developers to achieve, including for the council's own development projects?

**RESPONSE:**

At present, SCC Planning and Regulatory team are requiring all applicants (external and SCC own developments) to achieve a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), this is in line with the statutory requirement. Currently, our priority is to ensure that the councils' systems and processes for BNG are operating effectively so that we deliver statutory BNG to the standard required.

We are still in the early stages of developing the Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy with partners and so no further comment is possible at this time.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**41. CATHERINE POWELL (FARNHAM NORTH) TO ASK:  
(4<sup>th</sup> Question)**

Please can the Cabinet Member advise:

- a) How many notifications for breached of HGV bans SCC has issued in July, August and if data is available September, and how many of these were due to data collected from the new mobile camera?
- b) How many fines for breaches of HGV bans SCC has issued in July, August and if data is available September, and how many of these were due to data collected from the new mobile camera?

**RESPONSE:**

**Upper Hale area HGV Restriction & Enforcement Activity**

Since it's delivery in July our ANPR camera vehicle has been visiting the Upper Hale Road to enforce the 7.5T HGV weight restriction. However, during mobilisation and testing, the vehicle experienced technical difficulties with its camera installation which impacted its functionality to the point where, in mid August, SCC Parking and Traffic Enforcement Team rejected the vehicle and requested a replacement as soon as possible.

Our enforcement service provider, NSL supplied a new vehicle on the 16 September which has since been regularly on site (near the BP Garage on the Odiham Rd). The first two weeks of operation look very positive and NSL report it is performing well in terms of capturing video images and reading vehicle registrations, and that the software link to the back office system/operators that issue warnings/PCNs is also working.

Surrey CC has not paid NSL for the vehicle so far, and by way of compensation for the delays and problems experienced, they have offered it free of charge for the remainder of the financial year.

This table shows the number of HGV video clips captured since 16 September which will result in either a warning letter being issued (or a PCN for a second offence). It should be noted that some of these vehicles may have entered the restrictions for valid reasons, but this will not be known until they have responded to the warning letter/PCN.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Hours Deployed</b>	<b>HGV video clips captured</b>
Monday 16 September	3	15
Wednesday 18	3	12
Thursday 19	2	10
Friday 20	3	5

Monday 23 September	3	14
Tuesday 24	3.5	16
Wednesday 25	3	10
Thursday 26	3.5	18

In terms of the specific numbers of PCNs and warning letters, none were issued prior to 15 September and 100 potential contraventions have been identified from 15 September to the end of the month.

At the end of September camera enforcement warning signs were installed around the periphery of the restriction. (except Castle Street where they will be done as part of the FIP works) The signs are situated on posts under the 7.5T restriction signs and also at the Six Bells Roundabout and Farnborough Road near Alma Lane. These will help improve the conspicuity of the restriction & enforcement operation and potentially improve compliance.

Going forward we'll be able to gather data on the number of contraventions identified and PCNs/warning letters issued. This will give a better understanding of compliance levels with the restriction and the most effective times to carry out enforcement (which could potentially include weekends and evenings).

The camera vehicle has also been used to help enforce School Keep Clear markings around the county when not at Upper Hale, and further information on this will be provided at the members' autumn highways briefings.

## **MARISA HEATH, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT**

### **42. CATHERINE POWELL (FARNHAM NORTH) TO ASK: (5<sup>th</sup> Question)**

Please can the Cabinet Member advise how records of protected and priority habitats and species held by the Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre (SBIC) are shared with National Databases and how data from National Databases for Surrey is extracted and added to the Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre?

This is particularly important as it is not only local nature recovery that is important but also nature recovery on a national and international scale, and many volunteers with interest in particular species will be more likely to send data into National Databases than SBIC. There are also regular national campaigns to encourage more people to get engaged, such as the Big Butterfly Count run by the Butterfly Conservation and the Garden Birdwatch run by the British Trust for Ornithology, as they encourage residents to report into the national database not SBIC.

### **RESPONSE:**

The Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre (SBIC) is hosted by Surrey Wildlife Trust and seeks to hold as comprehensive a record of the wildlife of Surrey as possible.

SBIC has been established as a service for local authorities, developers, ecological consultancies, educational establishments and the general public to supply information about the biodiversity of Surrey. Whilst Surrey works closely with the SBIC we are unable to answer questions related to sharing information between SBIC and national databases. SBIC can be contacted at [surreybic@surreywt.org.uk](mailto:surreybic@surreywt.org.uk) and would be happy to provide further information. We have also sent this query on to them to advise further.

**MATT FURNISS, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**43. CATHERINE POWELL (FARNHAM NORTH) TO ASK:  
(6<sup>th</sup> Question)**

The SCC website for [Temporary changes to bus services for road closures - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](http://Temporary changes to bus services for road closures - Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)), states:

“Temporary changes or road closure information that may affect your journey by bus will be listed below when details are available. This information is supplied in good faith and is accurate at the time of publishing. Passengers should be aware that changes in road closure schedules can affect the start and length of works and checks should be made with the bus operator before travelling.”

Some of the most vulnerable residents rely on bus services to get them to and from work, education, health and social facilities, yet the notification of bus stops being removed from service and routes being disrupted by road works does not seem to be part of the notification to residents with sufficient notice for them to make alternative plans.

Can the Cabinet Member please advise:

- a) How the current SCC processes ensure that bus users are given the maximum knowledge of the buses being diverted and bus stops closed and what he thinking the minimum notice period should be?
- b) Whether the standard template for letters delivered to local residents regarding road closures / roadworks can be amended to include the impacts on bus routes and bus stops?
- c) Whether the notifications on One Network can include the assessed impact on bus routes and bus stops being removed from service?

**RESPONSE:**

Taking each of the three points in turn:

- a) Where a full road closure is required to carry out highway works, and once scheme programmes have been finalised, the Highways Team will email the Local Bus Team directly, aiming for one month’s notice before works are due to start. The teams also speak with each other several times a week to discuss changes, impacts and anything else that is relevant. The team delivering the works also liaises with Transport for London buses directly on



their suspensions, as these require additional notice periods of ideally four to six weeks, and again direct communication on this continues up to the point a scheme starts.

One month is considered appropriate to provide time to take into account some standard programme movements. However, weather events, emergencies on the network, and neighbouring authorities works cannot always be predicted and this can change start dates or extend works, diversions, bus suspensions, etc, on a daily basis, so minimum notice could be on the day due to unforeseen circumstances.

Due to the nature of operational works and potential for change this can limit the time available to notify bus passengers. The Local Bus Team aim, wherever possible, to post information at bus stops five days ahead of the closure taking place.

- b) Currently we state on letters that residents should contact their bus operator to find out the details of diversions during the works. This has been considered the most practical approach to date given the risk of operational programme changes. Bus operators advertise changes to bus services on their social media posts, once all the details of the works are known. The Local Bus Team also provides details on the County Council's web pages and passenger information is posted at the affected bus stops, advising passengers of the closure and the nearest available bus stops. We will continue to seek to improve how we share this information with residents, also including utilising the benefits of the One.Network system described below.
- c) Officers are working with One.Network to develop and introduce a new "module" to the suite of products we use, which is called 'Route Manager'. This will provide improved visibility of bus routes on our mapping system and will enable direct notifications of permits for works impacting bus routes to be sent directly to the bus operators. This will provide earlier warnings of works and improve systems for making the necessary changes to bus routes and bus stops. Work is underway on the development for this module, which we are hopeful will be live from February 2025.

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