

CABINET – 29 OCTOBER 2024**PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

4b

Public Questions:**Question (1): Artur Godlinski**

I am a father of two girls (3 & 6 years old), and I have moved to Burpham recently. One of the main reasons to choose Burpham was the distance to the city centre of Guildford, which is very well suitable to be reached by bike. The planned London Road upgrade for pedestrians and bikers was a convincing factor for my wife and me to move our family here.

When will the promised active travel scheme be delivered, so that I can teach my children how to live in a place that encourages all modes of travel, not only driving by car?

Reply:

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with section 1 (London Road from New Inn Lane to Boxgrove Roundabout), construction is anticipated to start in June 2025 and will last approximately 20 weeks. To minimise disruption to the local community, there will be no road closures or daytime traffic lights; instead, work will be conducted at night.

Matt Furniss**Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth****29 October 2024****Question (2): Calum Shaw**

I would like to raise a question regarding the decision on Stage 1 of the London Road Active Travel Scheme.

As a resident of Guildford town centre and a father of a 14-year-old daughter, I am particularly concerned about the lack of safe and pleasant routes to nearby areas such as Burpham. The current infrastructure constrains her freedom to visit friends independently, and I hope that this scheme will begin to address the lack of a local active travel network.

Could you please clarify how this scheme aligns with Surrey County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP4), particularly in supporting sustainable and safe transport options for local residents? and how does it contribute to the Council's Vision Zero objective for 2050? 20

Reply:

The scheme will provide improved infrastructure and network connectivity in relation to walking & cycling, enabling Surrey residents to have greater choice in how they travel more sustainably and feel more confident in doing so. Facilitating these choices is a key component of this council's LTP4.

4b

The LTP4 therefore has a significant role to play in the delivery of the county's net zero carbon target by 2050. The scheme also contributes to Guildford Borough Councils local plan, as London Road is a key corridor link to a strategic development site.

Matt Furniss
Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth
29 October 2024

Question (3): Pat Daffarn

Without the London Road cycleway, how will GBC/SCC connect the missing link in the part implemented "Sustainable Movement Corridor" from the Science Park, Royal Surrey County Hospital and University in the west to Burpham, Gosden Hill, Garlick's Arch, Ripley and the new National Highways cycleway over the M25 to Cobham in the East?

Reply:

The initial options for the local cycling and walking infrastructure plans for Guildford can be found: <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/27192/Local-Cycling-and-Walking-Infrastructure-Plan>

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) aim to identify important routes for walking and cycling in Guildford Borough and the town centre, connecting key destinations. The next step in developing the LCWIP is to create routes and secure funding for their design and construction. Over time, this plan will provide a high-quality network of walking and cycling paths that link key locations in Guildford and beyond.

Matt Furniss
Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth
29 October 2024

Question (4): Doug Clare

Please can Surrey County Council state whether George Abbott School supports the proposal for the London Road Active Travel Scheme?

Reply:

George Abbot Secondary School supports the scheme. With 2,000 pupils, the school generates significant movement during peak times, many accessing the school via London Road and is hence a very important stakeholder. In addition to representation in the stakeholder group meetings, the pupils conducted several surveys which confirmed their position. Annex 2 of the cabinet report includes two letters of endorsement from George Abbot School.

Matt Furniss
Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth
29 October 2024

Question (5): Sam Neatrou

There is currently an e-petition on the SCC website which has gained over 1000 signatures calling for the implementation of the London Road active travel scheme in its entirety. Together with official resident engagement, the initial consultation, SCC's own survey research and SCC's commitment to active travel, does the Cabinet accept the level of support in the town for this scheme?

Reply:

Significant community engagement has taken place on this scheme including the creation of a stakeholder reference group who co-produced the 12 week community engagement, along side community drop in sessions.

Cabinet and officers have sought to reflect the feedback from all parties in the recommendations and as the Cabinet member for the scheme, I absolutely recognise the level of support from the community and George Abbot School.

Matt Furniss

Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth

29 October 2024

Question (6): Mark Percival

The ARUP report concluded that section 1 of the London Road scheme is safe and meets LTN 1/20 standards, and further concludes the scheme will result in a Road that is "safer and more accessible for children, pedestrians and cyclists, travelling around Guildford now and in the future."

Given this unequivocal technical support, what is the time scale for implementation of stage 1, and will SCC reconsider the decision to not implement stage 3?

Reply:

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with Section 1, construction is anticipated to start in June 2025 and will last approximately 20 weeks. To minimize disruption to the local community, there will be no road closures or daytime traffic lights; instead, work will be conducted at night.

Regarding Section 3 (London Road from Boxgrove Roundabout to York Road), the decision not to proceed was made by the Leader in February due to insufficient local support and the challenging widths outside Guildford High School. This decision remains the council's position.

Matt Furniss

Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth

29 October 2024

Question (7): Oli Greaves

Can you explain how Surrey County Council can recommend to proceed with Section 1 when it appears to be in breach of its Constitution? In 4.06 (iv), the Constitution states that “that relevant matters are fully taken into account in decision making”, yet in relation to Section 1 that has clearly not been the case. This was verbally confirmed by Surrey County Council at a meeting on 11 September 2024 where the Leader of the Council was present with the 21 October 2024 report’s author, Roger Williams.

In February 2024 Surrey County Council committed to review Section 1, informed by the comments received through the engagement, and ensure the scheme considers the needs of all road users.

The 27 February 2024 leader report clearly set out 3 major concerns from the engagement re Section 1: “Space and safety”, “Impact on local residents and traffic”, and “Questioning the need”. Yet at the 11 September 2024 meeting SCC confirmed that they had not and would not be:

- updating the traffic analysis (which will be materially different without Section 3)
- producing a pollution report, despite concerns about worsening air quality (including more car emissions from increased journey times) and an intended scheme benefit of contributing to Surrey’s decarbonisation
- carrying out a new cost : benefit analysis, despite one being promised and the Arup report indicating a far lower level of cycling than originally indicated by Surrey County Council as a key justification for the scheme

Further, it is not clear how SCC believes it addressed the safety concerns when Arup’s report states there are only 5 inches between an HGV’s wing mirrors and the shared use path. Although Arup notes two HGVs “can” pass safely and not encroach (a near miss is not an accident), that is very different from whether tolerances of 5 inches between a 30mph HGV and a pedestrian or cyclist are best practice or advisable and should be recommended by SCC (especially as Arup previously indicated drivers may keep closer the kerb when faced with small separations).

The above points demonstrate that relevant matters for Section 1 have not been fully taken into account in decision making.

Reply:

Surrey County Council has conducted extensive engagement on this scheme, establishing a stakeholder group that includes local community representatives to co-design a 12-week community engagement process.

The results of this engagement were presented at the leader's decision meeting on February 27th. The instruction for further work focused on examining the width required for HGVs to pass, as well as the shared-use paths in the narrow section, which were addressed in Arup's report.

Section 1 meets all technical requirements and guidelines, as confirmed by Surrey County Council designers. This design has also received endorsement from the Director of Inspections at Active Travel England. Therefore, it is appropriate for this report to be considered by Cabinet and is not in breach of our constitution.

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