

**MINUTES OF LEADER DECISIONS, WITH CABINET MEMBERS
(ACTING AS CABINET)
HELD REMOTELY ON
31 MARCH 2020 AT 2.00 PM**

The Leader, further to Article 6 in the constitution and the executive scheme of delegation (Part 3, Section 1, paragraph 2), is authorised to take any executive decision. The Leader in consultation with 2 cabinet members can act as Cabinet further to any requirement of the Council's financial procedure rules agreed by Council on the 17 March 2020 (see Council minute 18/20a).

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Cabinet at its next meeting.

Members:

*Mr Tim Oliver (Chairman)	*Mr Mike Goodman
Mr Colin Kemp (Vice-Chairman)	*Mrs Mary Lewis
*Dr Zully Grant-Duff	*Mrs Julie Iles
*Mrs Sinead Mooney	*Mr Matt Furniss
*Mr Mel Few	*Ms Denise Turner-Stewart

Deputy Cabinet Members:

*Mrs Natalie Bramhall	* Miss Alison Griffiths
*Mr Mark Nuti	

* = Present

Members in attendance:

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

PART ONE - PUBLIC

32/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

An apology was received from Mr Colin Kemp.

33/20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 25 FEBRUARY 2020 [Item 2]

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2020 were approved as a correct record.

34/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were none.

35/20 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 4a]

There was one question from Mr Will Forster, this and the response were published as a supplement to the agenda.

36/20 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4b]

There were none.

37/20 PETITIONS [Item 4c]

There were none.

38/20 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED ON REPORTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE [Item 4d]

There were none.

39/20 REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES, TASK GROUPS, LOCAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL [Item 5]**a) Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Task and Finish Group**

There was one report from the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Task and Finish Group, the Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning explained that due to COVID 19 the timeframes had moved and a further response may be needed for this report.

The report and the initial written response was published with the agenda.

b) Update from the Communities, Environment & Highways Select Committee on the Climate Change Strategy

Mr John O'Reilly, Chairman of the Communities, Environment & Highways (CEH) Select Committee, introduced the recommendations and stated that the committee were happy with the emphasis on partnership working and the development of Key Performance Indicators.

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste thanked the CEH Select Committee for their help in shaping the climate change strategy which would be coming to the April meeting of Cabinet for approval.

The report and response was published with the agenda.

40/20 LEADER / DEPUTY LEADER / CABINET MEMBER/ STRATEGIC INVESTMENT BOARD DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST CABINET MEETING [Item 6]

Further to the decision of the Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning regarding the amalgamation of Christ Church C of E Infant School and Englefield Green Infant School and Nurseries it was reported that there was a pause for the consultation on the statutory notices. Therefore, the schools would not amalgamate in September. Consultation would take place after the COVID 19 emergency.

RESOLVED:

That the delegated decisions taken since the last meeting of the Cabinet and the further update be noted.

Reason for decision:

To inform the Cabinet of decisions taken by Cabinet Members, Strategic Investment Board and the Committee in Common subcommittee under delegated authority.

41/20 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL RESPONSE TO COVID 19 [Item 7a]

A. COVID-19 – COUNCIL RESPONSE

The Leader gave an overview of council's response to the Covid-19 situation and how the council with key organisations had come together to provide a co-ordinated effort to protect vulnerable residents and give reassurance to all residents. He spoke of the good work being done by volunteers and different parties such as military planners working with the emergency team. There were challenges in identifying residents that did not have their own network of support and the borough and district councils were helping with this.

The Leader also spoke of the costs and that £25m was coming from the government but this was not enough. He reassured that cash would be available to the council when needed and that the liquidity of the council was assured. A hardship fund had been set up and was administered by the district and borough councils. The residents helpline number for this hardship fund was 0300 2008. The council was also committed to supporting organisations from which services were commissioned.

The Leader and Cabinet Members thanked all the volunteers, foster carers, staff for being adaptable and the voluntary & faith sector for the phenomenal work they were doing.

The Leader concluded by reiterating the need for all to continue to stay at home and following distancing rules to save lives. He also went on to explain that the council would look at planning for a smooth recovery when the emergency was over.

RESOLVED:

1. That the latest public health situation with regard to COVID-19 and Surrey's response and acknowledge the impact on Surrey's residents and the Council be noted.
2. That the changes to Local Authority powers and duties introduced by the Coronavirus Act be noted and that authority be delegated to the relevant Executive Director in consultation with the relevant Cabinet member to amend service provision in accordance with the Council's statutory duties as these may be varied by the Act, regulations and guidance made thereunder be noted.
3. That the initial assessment of the impact on Surrey County Council's short and medium-term financial position be noted.

4. That the development of a COVID-19 package of support for key suppliers and service providers and the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector in Surrey, delegating authority to the Executive Director of Resources and Executive Director of Transformation, Prosperity and Partnerships in consultation with the Leader to determine the detail of the scheme was approved.
5. That the reprioritisation of services and transformation programmes due to the impact of COVID-19, acknowledging it was a fast-changing situation that would require regular review of priorities be agreed.
6. That the establishment of economic stimulus measures for businesses to support their survival and recovery from COVID-19, delegating authority to the Executive Director of Resources and Executive Director of Transformation, Prosperity and Partnerships in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to determine the detail of the scheme be agreed.

B. COVID 19 - URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY OFFICERS (item 7b)

Four decisions taken under Standing Order 54 were presented for noting.

RESOLVED:

That the four decisions taken by officers as set out in annexes to the submitted report be noted.

Reason for decision:

We are facing unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 emergency and therefore need to supplement our established goals and ambitions for Surrey and its communities, as outlined in the Community Vision 2030, with very clear immediate priority objectives, to: delay the spread of the virus in Surrey and save lives, protect our most vulnerable residents and communities and support colleagues in health to ensure that we reduce pressure on the health system.

These will guide our decisions, both at a strategic level as we regularly reprioritise services and redirect our staff and resources, and at an individual level as we make important choices day-by-day. The recommendations set out in this report will enable us to do this and provide the best services and support to our communities through the emergency and recovery phases.

42/20 RETURNING THE COUNTRYSIDE TO RESIDENTS [Item 8]

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Fire & Resilience introduced a report that set out a proposed new delivery model for Surrey County Council's Countryside Estate which returns the responsibility for property management, visitor services and access to the Council. Conservation and Habitat Management would still be managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust under a Deed of Variation to the current contract.

RESOLVED:

1. That the variation of the agreement with Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) for the management of the Countryside Estate in accordance with the proposals detailed in the report, noting the cost implications outline in paragraphs 34-38 of the submitted report be agreed.
2. That authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Environment, Transport and Infrastructure and the Executive Director for Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Fire & Resilience and the Cabinet Member for Finance to:
 - a. enter into final negotiations with Surrey Wildlife Trust and complete the variation to the agreement, including the surrender of Phase 1 and 2 leases and re-grant of lease.
 - b. agree the implementation of transitional arrangements with Surrey Wildlife Trust for the management of Countryside Visitor Services and property management responsibilities pending completion of the variation.
 - c. transfer the responsibilities for visitor services to Surrey County Council on the 1 April 2020 subject to 'call-in' arrangements.

Reason for decision:

Approval of the recommendations to implement changes to the agreement with SWT, improves its effectiveness and efficiency. SWT are fully supportive of the proposed changes as set out in this report. The countryside is a natural resource offering significant opportunities to support and benefit the health and wellbeing of residents.

43/20 GREENER FUTURES INVESTMENT PROGRAMME [Item 9]

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste explained how the Council, after declaring a Climate Emergency and committing to becoming net zero carbon by 2050, needed to work with partners, residents, businesses and Government to deliver urgent action to reduce carbon emissions produced in our county. The Council was currently finalising an ambitious and forward-thinking climate change strategy for the county, working closely with borough and district partners. The strategy would be published in April. The submitted report set out the Greener Futures Investment Programme (GFIP) including the initial investment approach over the next five years. This would continue to evolve as the climate change strategic framework was developed. An outline of the GFIP was set out in annexes to the submitted report:

RESOLVED:

1. That the proposed investment in our Greener Futures Investment Programme was endorsed.
2. That officers will further develop the pipeline capital schemes so that they are fully scoped and costed, refining the information contained in Annex 2. Individual schemes will be brought to Cabinet for approval when they are developed to business case stage be noted.

Reason for decision:

Surrey County Council is directly responsible for carbon emissions resulting from our own estate and operations. Due to the nature of the services we provide, there are also carbon emissions within the county which we can reduce through investment in infrastructure, planning policy and other measures.

To tackle our own emissions, and those which fall within our scope of influence, to meet our 2030 and 2050 carbon reduction targets, we will be required to make significant changes to the way we deliver services across the spectrum of local authority activities. This will require additional resource, significant investment in our buildings and infrastructure and other associated costs.

However, there is more that the Council will need to do to ensure that our capital investment maximises carbon reduction opportunities and that these schemes, once delivered, are monitored to determine that expected carbon reductions are realised. Baseline emissions research for Surrey, produced by Leeds University, has identified that there are a number of proven cost-effective and technically viable carbon reduction options that the County Council could deliver in addition to our existing capital programme to reduce carbon emissions. These types of initiatives and schemes are included below in Annexes 2 and 3. The majority of these schemes are still at feasibility stage and so further work is required by officers to develop these to business case stage with accurate costings. This report requests approval from Cabinet to continue to develop these initiatives.

44/20 DIGITAL STRATEGY 2025 [Item 10]

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Support introduced a report that set out the Council's ambition for digital over the next five years and the direction of the Digital Transformation Programme, including the prioritisation of activity and resource deployment. It formed part of a suite of strategies that directed the Council service design and delivery to achieve the objectives of the Organisation Strategy 2025. The Cabinet Member gave an update on the effects of COVID-19 in that the strategy was being accelerated, that the rollout of Windows 10 devices had been reprioritised to those in most urgent need. She also explained recent firewall issues and that this was being dealt with in conjunction with BT. Further thought was being given to how to deal with calls from people wishing to volunteer separately to other calls as the numbers were rising every day.

The Leader reported that helpline times were being extended with the help of the police. The Council website was a good source of information – <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/coronavirus/community-support/need-help>. A flyer was to be posted out to residents which gave basic information on how to look after themselves. Residents needed to be aware of scammers and the Cabinet Member for Communities, Fire & Resilience gave thanks to Trading Standards for the work being done on this issue.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Digital Strategy 2025 be approved.

2. That the Digital Strategy 2025 sets the direction for the Digital Transformation Programme, ensuring that resources deployed on the programme are core contributors to the delivery of the strategy was noted.

Reason for decision:

To enable the Council to adopt a consistent approach and level of ambition to the use of digital technology, and to ensure that the Digital Transformation Programme contributes directly to the outcomes described in the Organisation Strategy 2025.

45/20 2019/20 MONTH 10 (JANUARY) FINANCIAL REPORT [Item 11]

The Cabinet Member for Finance gave a brief overview of the report which reflected revenue and capital budgets, the expected outlook for the remainder of the financial year and, also as a quarter-end report. It also included Treasury Management and Debt. The Cabinet Member explained how the COVID 19 had affected the target of a balanced budget for this year. He explained that he expected little effect for this year but that the council would need to look at the impact⁶ for 2021/22 revenue and capital budgets.

The Leader explained that the council would be looking for reimbursement from government and that whilst the council would be under great strain going forward the council was in a good position due to the work undertaken over the last few years.

RESOLVED:

That the Council's forecast revenue and capital budget positions for the year be noted.

Reason for decision:

This report was to comply with the agreed policy of providing a monthly budget monitoring report to Leader and Cabinet for Member for approval of any necessary actions.

46/20 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [Item 12]

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

47/20 COMMERCIAL PROGRAMME (WASTE) UPDATE [Item 13]

RESOLVED:

That this Part 2 report contained information which was exempt from Access to Information requirements by virtue of paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including commercially sensitive information to the bidding companies).

See [Exempt Minute E-2-20].

Reason for decision:

See [Exempt Minute E-2-20].

Meeting closed at 3.20 pm

Chairman