

Cabinet - 23 June 2020

Cabinet Member Update

Mr. Matthew Furniss, Cabinet Member for Transport

I am pleased to be able to share with you some of the work that we have been doing to support our transport and highways system. Covid-19 and the resulting lockdown have created challenges, but also unlocked new opportunities to promote low and zero carbon modes of transport, enabling us to be proactive in tackling the climate emergency.

Cycling

The Council has been seeking ways to boost the uptake of cycling as a long-term positive legacy of Covid-19 recovery. The Cabinet has agreed to provide £200,000 extra funding to support even more cycle training across schools in Surrey in future years, bringing total funding to £510,000. Last year, Surrey County Council provided cycle training to over 16,000 young people in Surrey's schools. This helps to deliver the council's objective of 'more cycling more safely', as cycling is good for the health of individuals, reduces congestion, air pollution and climate change.

Additionally, work on supporting the local economy and prioritising active travel through the establishment of pop-up cycle lanes is being undertaken in Farnham, Reigate and Banstead, Leatherhead and Dorking. By supporting 'active travel' schemes like these, we can promote health and wellbeing whilst moving towards a greener future for the county.

Electric Buses

In February, the government opened two new bidding opportunities for ultra-low emission buses. We have responded with two exciting propositions to help support our goal of becoming a carbon-neutral county:

- The first is for an all-electric bus town focusing on Farnham and radiating out to the surrounding communities of Bourne, Rowledge, Shortheath, Wrecclesham, Sandy Hill, Hale, Weybourne and Badshot Lea. Our bid has a total value of £11 million and has been developed in partnership with operator Stagecoach. It will be supported by measures to make buses run to time, along with more real time passenger information to help residents.
- The second bid is to the Rural Mobility Fund, for new Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services in the rural areas of Mole Valley. The proposal aims to support residents living in rural areas to access key services. It has been developed in partnership with the District Council. The new service will provide an enhanced DRT service with a range of mobility tools, e.g. app-based approach, enabling passengers to book, pay and track their transport journeys online. It will be available up to 16 hours per day, 7 days a week. We anticipate significantly improved accessibility to support strong modal shift from private cars to public transport.

Final decisions from Government are likely in late Summer. We already have nine all-electric zero emission buses operating in Surrey at our four Guildford Park and Ride sites. These two bids alongside other emerging plans for more ultra-low emissions buses highlight the council's

unwavering commitment to deliver on our climate change ambitions, with the work vital in helping bus services and our economy to recover post Covid-19.

Highways

In good news, an evaluation of the introduction of average speed cameras on the A217 between Banstead crossroads and the M25 has shown that there has been increased compliance with the speed limit along the whole length covered by the enforcement cameras. This reduction in speeding has coincided with a halving in the total number of personal injury collisions. The number of serious injury collisions has reduced by more than three quarters. As well as the reduction in road injury, this has reduced the amount of congestion and has helped to improve the journey time reliability on this key strategic route. The council are planning to install average speed cameras on the A320 St Peter's Way, Chertsey and A31 Hogs Back (eastbound) in the coming month where we expect that there will be similar benefits.

Improving information for Residents

Highways & Transport are improving the accessibility of information on our website in order to make the most of digital technology to help Surrey and its residents thrive. This has included an enhanced GIS map showing works that are planned for the current year and those being considered for the future. I recently led a presentation by officers to fellow councillors demonstrating the benefits of the new map and online reporting. The map and other Service information can be found on our [Roads and Transport](#) webpages. There is also a map illustrating our LED Street Lighting changes which can be accessed [here](#).

Lane Rental

We are also preparing to lodge a bid with the Department for Transport to implement a 'Lane Rental Scheme', a new way of incentivising companies who conduct works on our highways to be less disruptive and more expedient. Lane Rental encourages utility companies and the County Council to find innovative ways to make support the flow of traffic on the busiest and most congested roads flow at peak times during roadworks. To do this, there would be extra charges for works which cause delay at rush hour, but not for those which keep traffic moving or are only running during off peak hours. This will help to avoid peak time disruption and congestion, without penalising the organisations which need to access our road space to deliver vital infrastructure improvements. Reducing congestion will boost air quality, helping to create a greener future for our county.