

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL'S SELECT COMMITTEES

SCRUTINY OF:

- Local and Joint Committee Highway Functions

Date Considered: 7 February 2022

Select Committee: Communities, Environment and Highways

Local and Joint Committee Highway Functions

As part of pre-decision scrutiny, Community, Environment and Highways Select Committee scrutinised a draft Cabinet report seeking approval to a change in the way that executive highway functions are taken – transferring them from Local and Joint Committees (LC/JCs) to enable officers to take such decisions in more direct consultation with the relevant members. The draft Cabinet report set out the process and timescale for the transfer of these functions and the alternative decision-making processes which are to be put in place. The proposed changes are scheduled to take effect from April 2022.

In scrutinising the draft Cabinet report presented to the Select Committee, the Select Committee Members, inter alia, asked for clarification about the proposed Community Network Approach; Integrated Transport Scheme (ITS) funding mechanism; provision of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); rights of residents to present petitions and questions to Joint Committees/Local Committees on highways matters; accessibility; potential democratic deficit; and accountability of the proposed changes.

After careful deliberation, the Select Committee agreed a set of its own recommendations which are outlined below for Cabinet to consider before making its decision on this matter.

RESOLVED:

The Select Committee, in principle, support the recommendations in the draft Cabinet report titled 'Local and Joint Committee (LC/JC) Highway Function' subject to the following areas being addressed:

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1. All references to Community Network Approach (CNA) in the Cabinet report be removed. [Any future CNA proposal needs to be fully developed first with a draft provided to Members for their comments and feedback].
2. County wide Integrated Transport Scheme (ITS) funding is apportioned using the same methodology used previously which is a top slice of £100,000 to districts and boroughs and then the remaining amount splits between the 81 members, for the transition year only.
3. An information sheet about how the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) aspect will be incorporated under the new arrangement be circulated to assist Members, or a detailed report is brought to the Select Committee.
4. Asks that residents continue to have the right to present petitions and questions to Joint Committees/Local Committees on highways matters during the transition period even if the other components (Members' allocations, parking reviews, etc.) are taken out of their jurisdiction.
5. Any new proposal must be accessible to all – especially those with no digital/internet access.

Councillor John O'Reilly

Chairman of the Community, Environment & Highways Select Committee

Surrey County Council