

CABINET – 28 NOVEMBER 2023**PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Members Questions****Question (1) Hazel Watson**

We have an increasing issue with mud, stones, and general mulch on the A24 between Dorking Station and the North Holmwood Roundabout both along the central reservation between Dorking Station and the Deepdene Roundabout and along the red hatching in the middle of the road between the Deepdene Roundabout and the North Holmwood Roundabout, with the central reservation and areas around the traffic islands in the centre of the road so bad that grass and weeds have seeded and taken hold in the mulch which in places can be a couple of inches deep.

Can clarification please be given on whether clearing this from the roads is the responsibility of:

- a. Mole Valley District Council under the street sweeping contract; or
- b. County Highways under its responsibility for the highways network?

This is becoming an increasingly serious issue as the roots of the seeded grass and weeds appear to be starting to break up the tarmac and thus compromising the integrity of the road surface.

Reply:

The County Council is responsible for weed spraying the highway network.

General street cleansing is the legal responsibility of Mole Valley District Council (Environmental Protection Act 1990 refers). The Act does not specify standards or frequency of cleans but gives the district council an obligation to ensure the highway is free from litter and other refuse as far as is practical. It would be for Mole Valley District Council to confirm their operational standards. Frequent street cleaning (sweeping) can help as it gives weeds less opportunity to establish themselves.

Matt Furniss

**Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth
28 November 2023**

Question (2) Catherine Baart

Please set out targets and dates in the Climate Change Delivery plan for:

- a) the rollout of Carbon Literacy Training in the county council.
- b) Actions and dates for reaching the EV charging target in the Climate Change Delivery Plan which is rated "Red".

Reply:

- a) the rollout of Carbon Literacy Training in the county council:

Surrey County Council delivered its first Carbon Literacy Training on 9th August 2022, and has since delivered a further 15 courses as of 9th June 2023. Carbon Literacy Training is internationally recognised climate change learning that aims to educate and encourage action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions amongst a range of audiences. The initial phase of Carbon Literacy at SCC trained 137 staff members up to March 2023, including Corporate Leadership team, for which we have been awarded Bronze Carbon Literate Organisation status. Our next aim is to ensure that all Directors and Cabinet Members are trained. Our target will be to train 200 staff by the end of 2024/25 with training being offered to Directors and Cabinet Members as a priority. Training will then be offered to the wider Extended Leadership Forum.

- b) Actions and dates for reaching the EV charging target in the Climate Change Delivery Plan which is rated "Red":

We would like to note that the Climate Change Delivery Plan action to install EV charging is rated green (see Annex 1, action number 60, p77), and the impact rating for the section relating to Planning, placemaking and infrastructure (section 4.1.4 p45) as a whole is amber.

Following the appointment of Connected Kerb (CK) to deliver on-street chargepoints in Surrey, SCC has been allocated a Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding allocation. We are about to submit an application to confirm this funding by the 30th November for LEVI approval. The chargepoints are mainly funded by Connected Kerb but supported by LEVI public subsidy. The numbers proposed in the LEVI application will be consistent with the Climate Change Delivery Plan target numbers, although it may be that the delivery of the 2025 numbers may well run into 2026. Once the locations and funding are in place then the most significant challenge will be to seek resident acceptance and confirm that the detailed design that complies with Surrey's design standards. As installations progress, we will be able to report on progress against targets.

Marisa Heath
Cabinet Member for Environment
28 November 2023

Question (3) Catherine Baart

Although the Surrey 2050 net zero plan mentions average emissions per Surrey resident, it does not detail how this differs significantly across income groups. What ideas and strategies does the county council have to address the fact that the wealthiest people in Surrey are disproportionately likely to be the highest carbon emitters?

Reply:

The Climate Change Delivery Plan covers all emissions from all income groups. Wealthier people are often the ones who are able to afford the installation of green energy for their homes, purchase electric cars and make more sustainable choices on food, clothing and other commodities so it is our ambition to support all of our residents across Surrey and offer advice and opportunities to all.

Nonetheless we do ensure that we continue to meet our “no one left behind” priority and so many actions focus on ensuring that those who are most vulnerable are protected against the impacts of climate and have the skills and finance necessary to tackle carbon emissions. Examples include financial and practical support for those at risk of fuel poverty, households at risk of flooding and small businesses.

Many actions in the Delivery Plan also apply to those who already have some means to reduce emissions but have not yet done so which will include some of those residents on higher incomes. These are intended to encourage sustainable choices to be made, focusing on empowering, informing and demonstrating financial and wider benefits. Actions targeting higher income brackets include Solar Together, the energy “one stop shop”, EV charging infrastructure programme, social media campaigns and training.

This annual climate change progress review is intended to ensure that we continue to make the largest possible impact with available resources, so work will continue to identify how best to target action towards the highest carbon emitters.

Marisa Heath
Cabinet Member for Environment
28 November 2023

Question (4) Catherine Baart

What do the “sustainability policies” in place for Pension Funds (point 49 on page 270 of the agenda) mean in terms of the degree to which the Surrey Pension Funds are still investing in oil and gas companies?

Reply:

The Surrey Pension Fund Committee approved a new Responsible Investment (RI) policy in 2023 <https://www.surreypensionfund.org/media/znmhi4xw/2306-surrey-ri-policy-v1-4-accessible.pdf>

This lays out the RI beliefs of the Fund and how they are applied.

This decision to approve this policy was made after consultation with the circa 111k members of the Fund and 330+ participating employers (including Surrey County Council), as well as the general public. There was overwhelming support for the approach being taken by the Fund.

The Fund requires the consideration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors to be incorporated into the portfolio construction process of all investments made by its investment managers. These factors are important irrespective of asset class and apply over all time periods. The investment

managers combine them with other risk and return investment factors to make investment decisions; in other words, they are not taken in isolation.

Marisa Heath
Cabinet Member for Environment
28 November 2023

Question (5) Catherine Baart

Which of the 7 out of 11 local authorities have committed to measuring their indirect Carbon Impact?

Reply:

Having reviewed the data, we can confirm that all districts and boroughs provided some level of reporting on indirect carbon emissions so we will amend the final version before publication.

All Local Authorities fully measure direct emissions within the scope of their organisational emission targets, which has so far been the priority. Local Authorities have less control over indirect emissions and as such, it is harder to source accurate data, make useful estimates and track progress.

In the financial year 2021/22, whilst no Surrey Local Authority reported their indirect impacts in full, all districts and boroughs provided some level of indirect reporting.

In fact, the level of reporting between districts and boroughs was mixed, with eight providing reporting on a small range of indirect reporting; such as estimates from indirect emissions from the supply of electricity and water and emissions associated with business travel. Reporting from Waverley, Mole Valley, Guildford and Surrey County Council have estimated a wider range of indirect emissions. However, all eleven districts and boroughs within Surrey aim to improve their reporting on indirect emissions.

Marisa Heath
Cabinet Member for Environment
28 November 2023

Question (6) Catherine Baart

What ideas and strategies does the County Council have to reduce resident opposition to active travel schemes, to reduce car ownership and vehicle-kms travelled on Surrey roads.

Reply:

Inclusive community engagement and securing local resident support is critical to the success of implementing new transport infrastructure and initiatives. This applies to active travel schemes, alongside the other measures contained in the Surrey Transport Plan (Local Transport Plan (LTP) 4) that was adopted by the Council in July 2022.

Within LTP4, active travel is one of six key implementation themes, sitting alongside planning for places; public and shared transport; promoting zero emission vehicles; network management and maintenance; and future transport. Collectively, these six implementation themes aim to reduce transport emissions and 'unnecessary' short local car journeys, noting that half of all car journeys in Surrey are between three and five miles.

LTP4 and the accompanying Delivery Plan present an opportunity to change travel behaviour and shift short local journeys to more sustainable active travel modes. We will achieve this by applying our adopted principles of:

- **Avoiding** or reducing the need to travel
- **Shifting** journeys to low carbon sustainable modes, or
- **Improving** the energy efficiency of modes and networks.

Co-development and co-design of new schemes is at the core of our thinking. In simple terms, this is early engagement with residents and stakeholders to understand local and community issues so that schemes can be developed with residents, the aim being to secure widespread support.

We will empower communities by working with residents, local groups, community organisations, businesses and other partners to facilitate local conversations to reveal stories and experiences that will help communities decide what and how the most appropriate, effective, and preferred measures can be delivered. This approach is central to our development of Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plans and Local Street Improvements, both of which have active travel at their core.

It is also important to understand the reasons for opposition to active travel schemes so we may reduce it. Engagement will therefore be conducted when proposals are at a formative stage. Where possible we will use a multi-step engagement strategy, consisting of early engagement sessions; informal stakeholder engagement sessions; and formal consultation. This means there are multiple opportunities for all stakeholders to feedback their views.

During early engagement, we will identify what issues are important to residents so that this may feed into draft designs, upon which further informal engagement can be undertaken. Feedback will then be used to shape detailed designs for any subsequent statutory or formal consultation.

This approach is in line with the Greener Futures Engagement Strategy, which is supporting behaviour change, engagement strategies and media campaigns based on listening to and working collaboratively with residents and local communities on wider, connected issues around cost of living, health and climate change. This will help us to inform residents on the benefits of low carbon active travel choices, especially for short local journeys, and the benefits to individuals, communities and the environment that this can deliver. Showcasing good practice and providing robust evidence will help us make the case for active travel schemes

Matt Furniss
Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth
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