

MINUTES of the meeting of the **COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 4 December 2023 at Surrey County Council, Woodhatch Place, 11 Cockshot Hill, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 8.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Wednesday, 7 February 2024.

Elected Members:

- * Catherine Baart
- * John Beckett
- Liz Bowes
- * Stephen Cooksey
- Jonathan Hulley (Chairman)
- * Andy MacLeod
- Jan Mason
- * Cameron McIntosh
- * Lance Spencer (Vice-Chairman)
- * Richard Tear
- * Buddhi Weerasinghe
- * Keith Witham

35/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

There were no apologies or substitutions.

36/22 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 5 OCTOBER 2023 [Item 2]

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

37/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None received.

38/22 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

None received.

39/22 BUDGET 2024/25 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY [Item 5]

Witnesses:

David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Nicola O’Conner - Strategic Finance Business Partner
Rachel Wigley – Director Finance Insight and Performance
Nicola Kilvington – Director of Corporate Strategy and Policy
Tony Orzieri – Strategic Finance Business Partner
Louise Lawson – Strategic Finance Business Partner
Denise Turner Stewart, Cabinet Member for Customers and communities
Natalie Bramhall, Cabinet Member for Property and Waste (Remote)

Kevin Deanus – Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience
Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport & Economic Growth

Key Discussions:

1. A Member asked how the Council's financial position compared to other Councils and if transformation activities were on track to achieve savings. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources answered that the Council was on a sound financial footing and that transformational activities would take place over a 5-year period but faced variable challenges such as a new government and changes in grants and funding. The Director Finance Insight and Performance noted that compared to other County Councils, Surrey was fairing a lot better, and the Council had worked diligently over the last five years to improve their financial position. The Member asked for clarification on a comparative league table, the Director of Finance agreed to send information on borrowing requirements compared to the revenue budget.
2. A Member asked what potential deterioration of services that fell under the remit of the Committee could be expected considering the year-on-year deterioration in budget. The Executive Director of Environment, Infrastructure & Growth noted that the focus was on finding efficiencies in the budget and driving more value out of existing contracts such as Waste contracts, not service cuts. The Executive Director emphasised that there wasn't an area that fell in the remit of the Committee that would see a service reduction. The Member asked if the Council was still trying to lobby Government for a better funding formula for road maintenance. The Executive Director noted that the Leader of the Council was chairing the County Council Network, and the Council was exploring a host of solutions to improve funding.
3. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport & Economic Growth noted that the funding formula criteria had been raised with the Secretary of State for Transport, who was open to the idea of changing the formula and offered to report the outcomes of meetings with Department for Transport officials.
4. A Member asked if the Council was confident in the assumptions that had been made around non-pay inflation. The Strategic Finance Business Partner noted that the level of inflation had a huge impact on budget pressures and that the impact had been significant. The corporate non-pay assumption was 5% in the draft budget and would be reviewed ahead of the Final Budget proposals which were due to be presented to Council in February. It was noted that the corporate inflation assumptions were only used where there was no other insight. Inflation on food, fuel and in specific markets such as children's social care where rates exceeded the corporate assumption. In addition, where contract terms and conditions included annual inflationary uplifts, inflation assumptions in the draft budget were made consistently with these terms. Inflation had come down recently and the forecast was for inflation to reduce further in the coming year.

Capital Programme

5. A Member asked if the Council should lower aspirations to further reduce underfunded capital borrowing and if this could be an area to close the budget gap. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources answered that the capital budget was put together considering statutory duties and what was affordable. An affordability test was applied to 'unfunded' capital projects which receive no grants and are not self-financing and a cap was placed on unfunded capital borrowing. Although the Capital programme is ambitious, we are not doing everything we want to do. The Cabinet Member explained that due to the time lag any reduction in capital budget for 2024-25 would not close the revenue gap for 2024/25 but would have an impact from 2025/26 onwards. The Member noted the reduction in highway maintenance capital by £30 million in two years' time and suggested this would have a significant impact. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources noted that this was not a reduction in core highways investment, but the budget reflected the commitment of this Council for an enhanced capital budget and investment for highways to the end of this Council term. It would be for future Council to decide on future priorities but emphasised that highways would always be maintained. The Member noted that land based solar farms were not in the capital funding. The Cabinet Member for Customers and Communities agreed to send how much of the capital funding would be invested in green projects. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources noted that the greener futures agenda was embedded in every project by the Council and that details of some Greener Futures schemes were included in the Capital Pipeline which was subject to robust business case before being included in the capital programme.
6. A Member asked what assumptions had been made about the Your Fund Surrey capital investment programme over the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The Cabinet Member for Customers and Communities noted that the criteria was constantly being reviewed to prioritise projects with greater impacts.
7. A Member asked what number of projects was in the pipeline to be considered as well as their value. The Cabinet Member for Customers and Communities answered that £10 million had already been committed for the next year with a plan for up to 300 projects.

Directorate Budgets

8. A Member asked how much funding The Council could expect from the changes to the HS2 Funding and if the Council could use the funding to reduce existing capital costs or new improvement projects. The Executive Director for Environment, Infrastructure & Growth noted that the Council would receive an additional £2.6 million in 2023/24 as part of the minimum additional funding of £82 million from 2023/24 until 2033/34. Whether the funding could be used for additional projects was still being explored. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport & Economic Growth noted that the £2 million was guaranteed funding but the Council was trying to gain additional funding. The Member queried if the £2 million had to be spent this

financial year and how much government funding had the Council received for road maintenance. The Strategic Finance Business Partner said that the main grant was £25.7 million a year from the Government.

9. A Member expressed concern about the efforts of charities preparing bids for Your Fund Surrey which may have little chance of success given the funding constraints and reductions to the fund. It was important to be open and honest with applicants if there were not sufficient funds available to fund applications in the pipeline. The Cabinet Member for Customers and Communities noted that these issues had been factored into the expected allocation and that pipeline applications had been rigorously assessed. Officers worked closely with applicants and applicants were only being denied if they did not fit the criteria. The Cabinet Member noted that applicants should contact the Council to discuss the criteria and how they could meet it.
10. A Member asked what assurances there were for highways and environment services in the 2024/2025 budget as it was the most important outcome for Surrey residents in a recent public survey. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources said that those services would not be impacted by the budget gap.
11. A Member asked if the Council should be using reserves for core services and if a £700,000 efficiency was realistic and achievable for the SFRS considering the new list of required improvements. The Chief Fire Officer said that the £700,000 in efficiencies were achievable.
12. Following discussion of the Committee's draft Budget recommendations it was resolved that:

RESOLVED

That the Communities Environment and Highways Select Committee

1. Supports in broad terms the budgetary approach set out in the slides shared with the Committee including the directorate efficiency proposals and the broad goal to achieve efficiencies without any reduction in service or visible impact to residents over the immediate 24/25 financial period and in future years.
2. Supports the Capital programme which remains ambitious, specifically the ongoing investment in highways and roads improvement, flooding and drainage schemes and greener futures programmes.
3. Notes that revenue funding gaps persist particularly in relation to the Environment, Transport and Infrastructure budget where a further £8m reduction is still to be found. Notes with some concern that this gap does not reflect the full £8.7m required to fully implement the Task & Finish group recommendations although it does reflect the lower investment amount of c. £5m to address this work.
4. Further notes the results of the public engagement consultation and

feedback to Councillors which shows that better roads and pavements is of the highest priority to residents; and therefore, recommends that spending on protecting our highways assets and infrastructure should be prioritised in line with residents wishes and priority given to plugging this funding gap in further budget discussions.

5. Supports continued investment in ITS schemes to improve Road Safety and urges Cabinet to remain focused on the need to reduce deaths and injury on Surrey's roads and for funding to be looked at for future years.
6. Highlights that tackling climate change remains a high priority for residents as evidenced by the Surrey Says open survey exercise and urges Cabinet to ensure this continues to be reflected in budget planning over the MTF period as further cuts are sought.

Actions/requests for further information:

1. Director Finance Insight and Performance (Rachael Wigley) to Share league table slide setting out projected borrowing requirement compared to other Councils with Cllr Baart.
2. Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport & Economic Growth (Matt Furniss) to feedback outcomes from meetings with Department for Transport officials around the Highway Funding Formula.

40/22 SURREY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT & HMICFRS INSPECTION [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Kevin Deanus - Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience
Dan Quin – Chief Fire Officer
Sally Wilson – Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Elizabeth Lacey – Head of Change

Key Discussions:

1. The Chairman asked if the Chief Fire Officer was surprised by the outcome of the inspection, specifically that seven out of eleven areas were graded by the inspectorate as requiring improvement. The Chief Fire Officer expressed disappointment but conceded that it was a fair reflection of the service. The Service had been very open and honest in briefings with the inspectorate about issues and areas for improvement and these issues were reflected back in the HMICFRS report. The Cause of Concern in protection had come as a surprise. The Chief Fire Officer offered to send the Committee a link to a BBC Surrey radio interview relating to the inspection report.
2. A Member asked what organisational or structural changes would take place following the inspection. The Head of Change noted that there no big organisational or structural changes were needed to deliver the improvements. Project management resources had been allocated to deliver the Inspection Improvement Plan. An area commander had

been allocated to both protection and prevention areas, to provide enhanced strategic leadership (previously one area commander covered both protection and prevention). The Service was looking to cultivate a shared understanding and collectively work to deliver improvements. The Service was also looking to align individual performance goals with corporate performance goals.

3. A Member asked of the 24 areas identified as areas of improvement, to what extent had they been addressed. The Head of Change noted many of those actions had been identified for months and some actions even completed. Following feedback, monthly leadership forums and weekly engagement sessions to regularly discuss the outcomes of the inspection report had taken place. The Senior Leadership Team had also conducted weekly site visits to listen to feedback. The Chief Fire Officer noted that many things had been addressed and completed but that culture changes would be a long-term journey.
4. The Chairman asked if improvements on culture had come at the expense of other areas highlighted in the report. The Chief Fire Officer answered that commitment to improving culture would always remain a top priority for the service. It was critical to retaining staff and making the Service somewhere people wanted to stay. The Service was now experiencing a lower turnover rate compared to 2020. This was a success. The Chief Fire Officer outlined improvements in the majority of KPIs in 2023 compared to previous years and noted that the Inspection Improvement Plan had had a galvanising effect on the force.

Cause of Concern

5. A Member asked if there was a mechanism to reduce buildings in the high-risk category and if there was a national policy to reduce the level of risk. The Chief Fire Officer noted that there was not an intent to build buildings that would be classified as high risk. Risk was sometimes raised due to the level of risk to firefighters responding to the building. Premises that had higher levels of prohibition notices or eviction notices would also be classified higher.
6. A Member asked if the inspection programme had been reprioritised to focus on premises identified as high risk. The Chief Fire Officer answered yes. Premises categorised as very high risk would receive an annual visit. Over 6000 locations had been prioritised. The Member asked about the relationship between SFRS and trade union partners. The Chief Fire Officer provided reassurance that the relationship was positive. The Member noted the positive reviews of new recruits and apprentices. The Chief Fire Officer noted that there were over 100 apprentices working as part of the frontline service at SFRS. This compared favourably to neighbouring services and was something to be proud of.
7. A Member asked if new ways of working was required to shift from the Risk-Based Inspection Programme model to the geographic hub

model. The Chief Fire Officer noted that there was slight changes to the ways of working. The Geographic model would provide inspectors with the necessary facilities to conduct their work and would enable inspectors to spend more time in communities. Inspectors had vans with mobile offices in the back so that witness statements or interviews could be conducted on the go. Mobile office options for inspectors were also being explored.

Inspection Improvement Plan

8. Chairman asked how risk sharing information was being communicated to staff. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer noted that a new Prevent and Protect IT solution was being delivered to ensure firefighters had easy access to the most up-to-date operational risk information available plus remote access via mobile laptops.
9. A Member asked how best practice was discussed between other fire services. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer noted that SFRS had very good relationships with Fire and Rescue Services in the Southeast and had opportunities to share best practices including at industry conferences.
10. A Member asked how there had only been one prosecution in the last five years and how this compared to other services. The Chief Fire Officer noted the dataset used by HMI was a year out of date and the criteria of prosecution was very high and everything must pass the 'public interest test'. There were 5 prohibition notices active in 2022, if breached, these would lead to prosecutions.
11. The Chairman asked how the prosecution record compared to other services. The Chief Fire Officer answered that there had been 1 within since March 2022 and if it had gone up to 5 it would be in the upper second quarter of prosecutions nationally. The Chairman noted that being on top of enforcements was a priority issue for this Committee.
12. Member asked how SFRS fell under HMI's expectation of 'out of hours' (OOO) provisions. The Chief Fire Officer answered that the issue around the number of less qualified workers during out of office hours had now been rectified. The Service had also adopted an interim arrangement with East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service to address the gap.
13. Discussion of the recommendations. The Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience commended the recommendation to recognise the efforts of SFRS staff who put their lives on the line. Following discussion of the draft recommendations it was resolved that:

RESOLVED:

That the Communities Environment and Highways Select Committee:

1. Expresses appreciation of the efforts of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service and notes ongoing public support for the service and

improvements that have been made to bring about a positive working culture.

2. Expresses concern over the number of areas for improvement identified in the HMICFRS inspection and in particular the general lack of performance management and oversight within protection that is identified. This affects productivity and effectiveness. The Select Committee urges Officers to ensure there is clear direction and guidance to staff on prioritising risk and targeting activity; better performance management and quality assurance to ensure high risk premises are inspected in agreed timeframes; and audits carried out to a consistent and acceptable standard, whilst also maintaining the good progress that has been made in other areas.
3. Echoes the concern of HMICFRS that only one prosecution was carried out in the five years from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2022 and that the service doesn't consistently use its full range of enforcement powers or take appropriate opportunities to prosecute those who don't comply with fire safety regulations. The Select Committee notes that prosecution rates have improved since April 2022 and urges the Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience to keep this issue under review; to ensure that the service's relationship with the Council legal team is effective and that adequate support is provided to enforce fire safety legislation.
4. Notes that HMICFRS identifies a number of areas where poor ICT systems are limiting productivity and operational effectiveness (e.g., where records cannot be adequately updated due to system constraints) and even outdated reliance on several paper based systems which are inefficient and hinder productivity. The Select Committee urges a review of the adequacy of existing systems in supporting and maximising operational efficiency and effectiveness and a check on deliverability of the ICT Strategy to determine whether it remains fit for purpose and whether the Service has the capacity and capability to complete these projects.

Break for lunch at 12:37

Meeting resumed at 13:16

Actions/requests for further information:

5. Chief Fire Officer (Dan Quin) will share the BBC Surrey Radio interview relating to the latest Fire Inspection Report.

41/22 NEW DRAFT VISION ZERO ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY AND 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT POLICY [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Duncan Knox, Road Safety & Sustainable School Travel Manager

Rebecca Harrison, Safer Travel Team Leader

Lucy Monie, Director, Highways and Transport

Paul Millin, Assistant Director, Strategic Transport

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth

Key Discussions:

1. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth noted that in Surrey 80% of fatal road incidents took place on 30 mph roads and that reducing speed would reduce fatalities.
2. A Member commended the excellent report and the efforts to reduce deaths by 2050 and efforts to introduce 20mph areas. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth noted that decision making regarding 20mph areas should be as local as possible and Members had the delegated powers to implement 20mph zones, however resident support must be demonstrated and a blanket 20mph policy was not appropriate in Surrey. The Assistant Director, Strategic Transport emphasised that it was important for residents to back plans for any new 20mph zones in their areas. The Road Safety & Sustainable School Travel Manager noted that the mid-point target of reducing the number of road deaths by half had a target date of 2035 to reflect the fact that the new Surrey RoadSafe strategy would likely be adopted in 2024.
3. The Vice-Chair raised concerns that each road related fatality cost was estimated to cost £2.1m to the community. Delaying the target for reducing road deaths by 5 years (to 2035) would cost Surrey approximately £1 billion. In addition, the new policy required local consultation prior to approval and implementation with the risk that the process was now more complex and difficult to achieve than under the current system. More detail was required on how the consultations would work and what funding was available for introducing 20mph schemes in local areas.
4. The Chairman noted that this topic was an area of interest for the public and asked for an overview from the existing policy and the proposed new policy. The Road Safety & Sustainable School Travel Manager noted that the new policy would make it easier to introduce 20mph speed limits if there were supported by the local Member and their local community. Previously, 20mph limits could only be introduced where the mean speeds were 24mph or less. Under the new approach 20mph could be introduced with speeds of between 24 and 28mph with 'light touch' measures only. Where mean speeds were above 28mph physical traffic calming measures (e.g. speed bumps, road tables, gateway measures, etc) would be required.
5. A Member asked if there were enough resources to meet the demand for new 20mph speed limits. The Assistant Director, Strategic Transport noted that they were waiting for the results from the new road safety strategy and consultation although, intuitively, it is believed that demand might be high.
6. A Member asked how Surrey compared to other counties outside of London on road deaths. The Road Safety & Sustainable School Travel Manager noted that it was difficult to do direct comparisons due to

different variables. The Road Safety & Sustainable School Travel Manager noted almost half of the casualties recorded on Surrey's roads were non-residents. A comparison table of raw numbers of fatalities for Surrey and neighbouring local authorities could be shared with the committee.

7. A Member asked if more flexibility could be given to councillors on how they chose to use their £100,000 Member Allocation, as currently only £30,000 could be used for ITS works such as speed policy reviews and work to support introduction of 20mph. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth said he was happy for it to be raised to £40,000.
8. A Member asked for clarification on the timeline of the consultation and why 28 mph was the upper threshold for the light touch policy. The Road Safety & Sustainable School Travel Manager said that the consultation would start in January 2024 subject to approval from Cabinet on the 19th of December. The Light touch threshold was chosen in conjunction with police partners to ensure 20mph schemes would target areas where a reduction in speed would be successful.
9. A Member asked if Vision Zero policy included Surrey's motorways. The Road Safety & Sustainable School Travel Manager noted that Vision Zero did include motorways as it covered all roads in Surrey.
10. A Member noted that the police had expressed concerns about increased demand for speed limits and how had those concerns had been addressed. The Member also asked if the same local engagement and support required for 20mph zones was required for the Rural Speed Limit Review. The Road Safety & Sustainable School Travel Manager noted that the police had been consulted on the new policy with the aim that new 20mph areas would not require more policing and would work well to reduce casualties and deaths. The Council was working closely with police partners. There were also high levels of public engagement with the Rural Speed Limit Review with policy being made available to local Parish Councils to distribute information locally.
11. The Cabinet Member noted that the budget included an additional £2.5m towards funding road safety/ 20mph schemes. The Chairman suggested that £2.5m might not touch the sides of the likely demand. The Cabinet Member encouraged members to use their local allocations for local schemes. Bigger schemes would be prioritised from the central £2.5m fund. A member asked for more flexibility in the use of member highways allocations. The Cabinet Member emphasised that the purpose of those funds was repairing and maintaining roads and pavements.
12. Following discussion of the draft recommendations it was resolved that:

RESOLVED:

That the Communities Environment and Highways Select Committee:

1. Notes that Surrey has some of the highest numbers of pedestrian and cycling road casualties of any local authority in Great Britain and welcomes the draft Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy aimed at reducing fatal and serious collisions to zero by 2050. Further Welcomes the collaborative approach that has been taken and that the Strategy has been developed in partnership with Surrey Police (including the Police and Crime Commissioner), Surrey Fire and Rescue and National Highway colleagues.
2. Supports the new target for reducing collisions by 50% by 2035 (and to zero by 2050) and the new 20mph policy which allows greater flexibility to implement more 20mph speed limits across Surrey where they are supported locally. Further supports the principles underpinning the new approach including that:
 - The focus should be on reducing speeds in town centres, residential areas, village centres and near schools.
 - That any new speed limit must be supported by local people and the local County Councillor.
 - and that requirements or expectations for additional enforcement by Surrey Police should be carefully managed.
3. Is concerned over the available funding to meet the demand to implement more 20mph speed limits which is likely to be high and asks that further work is done to review and clarify funding arrangements including the funding position for each County Councillor (who will be responsible for making the final decision on whether to proceed with schemes in his/her area under the new policy). This should take account of the Integrated Transport Scheme budget for County Councillors and other available sources. Consideration should be given to granting more flexibility to Councillors on how they choose to use their Members Highways Allocation.
4. Urges further work to clarify the process of local community engagement including how to determine adequate levels of engagement and support to approve a scheme plus the process for agreeing schemes with RoadSafe Partners, and how any conflict will be managed. Expresses concern that the approach set out might in fact prove more onerous than the existing one, making 20mph more rather than less difficult to achieve.
5. Asks that clarity on this and the funding position above be brought back to the Committee in Spring/Summer 2024 following completion of the public consultation.

Actions/requests for further information:

1. Road Safety & Sustainable School Travel Manager (Duncan Knox) to share graph table of Surrey Road deaths data compared to neighboring counties.

42/22 REFERRAL FROM COUNCIL - WILL FORSTER MOTION ON VISION ZERO [Item 8]

Key Discussions:

1. The Chairman invited the Member who proposed the Motion to Council on Vision Zero to speak. The Member noted broad support for the new road safety strategy and 20mph policy which was a move in the right direction but raised two concerns: firstly, around the length of the consultation which he considered sufficient; and secondly, the availability of funding to meet the demand. The Cabinet Member reiterated that £2.5 million had been set aside for the 20mph zone initiative on top of what is already spent on road safety. If demand outstripped funding this could be explored further down the line

43/22 PARTNERSHIPS PROSPERITY & GROWTH UPDATE [Item 9]

Witnesses:

Tim Oliver, Leader (Remote)

Sinead Mooney, Cabinet Member for Childrens and Families (and Housing)

Natalie Bramhall, Cabinet Member for Property and Waste (Remote)

Michael Coughlin, Executive Director, Partnerships, Prosperity, and growth

Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth

Key Discussions:

1. A Member asked what the timeline was for unravelling existing LEP structures and transferring responsibilities and assets to County Council. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth reported that LEP integration was progressing well and offered to report back to the Committee once the transfer had taken place.

A member asked what further engagement was planned with stakeholders to understand the local need and to shape the future service offering. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth noted that a strategic business review was recently conducted with local businesses and stakeholders. A preferred model had not been identified yet but would be in place by 1st April 2024. Further guidance was needed from government around growth hubs and the level of funding that might continue with those.

1. A Member asked what governance arrangement would be put in place and how this would relate to existing Institutions. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth answered that the One Surrey Growth Board and its sub-forums would be used to provide the business voice and help shape the approach. Work was underway to look at how to refresh the Growth Board and Business Leaders forum to get a greater range of views on that.
2. A Member asked how integration of LEP functions would support the Council's green agenda or boost the green economy. The Cabinet

Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth answered that the green agenda was a big priority for the Council and growth in the green sector had a lot of potential in Surrey. £2.3 million had been bid for Skills Bootcamp Funding which had green skills education. There was also opportunities with the Rural Prosperity Fund Partnership to encourage businesses to switch to Electric Vehicle options.

3. A Member asked if there was enough resources to carry out the Council's ambitions. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth answered financially yes but noted that this was a new process and should be reviewed in a year's time.

Skills

4. The Cabinet Member for Childrens and Families (and Housing) highlighted areas of the strategy which identified housing for key workers as a priority. Childrens homes and adults social housing had also been accelerated due to this strategy.
5. A Member noted that responsibility of delivering housing belonged with Districts and Boroughs but asked if there was enough buy-in from them around for the Housing strategy. Historically there were concerns. The Executive Director for Partnerships, Prosperity, and growth noted that a lot of work had been done to reassure Ds and Bs and many concerns had been resolved.
6. A member noted dependencies with the planning system and that many of the issues raised in the Housing strategy stemmed from there. The Executive Director flagged that the 'Call to Government' highlighted these issues. The Cabinet Member for Childrens and Families (and Housing) explained that a significant part of the work had to be addressed nationally with a call to government. The Cabinet Member had written to the Housing Minister and the Shadow Minister and had received an acknowledgment and offered to share the response once received with the Committee.
7. A Member asked how success could be measured and how to assess the progress made against the programme for Housing workstreams. The Executive Director for Partnerships, Prosperity noted that metrics such as the number of people on housing registers, house price ratio and homeless applicants were all collected in the baseline assessment that demonstrated the housing crisis from 2022. These baseline metrics would then be used most likely on an annual basis to compare progress.
8. A Member asked about the thinking behind the revision of essential worker accommodation. The Executive Director for Partnerships, Prosperity, and growth answered that there were two main opportunities within the Council: repurposing assets the Council held and freeing residential estate that the Council held for the purpose of housing essential workers.

9. Discussion of the recommendations. Two Members raised concern with the wording on Housing Strategy recommendation two and supported the rephrasing of the word failure.

Cllr Buddhi Weerasinghe left at 14:51

Actions/requests for further information:

1. Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (Sinead Mooney) will share the Housing Minister's response to the Call to Government on housing issues in Surrey once received.

Recommendations:

Following discussion of the draft recommendations it was resolved that the Communities Environment and Highways Select Committee:

LEP Transition

1. Welcomes the creation of a Surrey Growth Hub and the greater clarity and coherence for local businesses that this will bring.
2. Seeks reassurance that support to business on green issues and decarbonisation is prioritised by the new Growth Hub service in line with Council net Zero goals.
3. Endorses the planned governance review of the One Surrey Growth Board and the vital importance of ensuring local business voices and needs are at the heart of decision making and arrangements going forward. Requests the Cabinet Member/Service to report back to the Committee on 'business voice' and on progress more broadly with integration by the end of this Municipal year (May 2024).

Housing Strategy

1. Supports continuing efforts to work collectively with Councils, housing associations, other public sector land-owners, service providers and the private sector in a spirit of collective endeavour to address the evidenced housing crisis in Surrey.
2. Recognises the efforts that have been made to engage Districts and Boroughs and that these are ongoing. Asks the Service to continue working to resolve these issues and for the Cabinet Member to report back to the Committee on the state of play in this regard before the end of the next Municipal year (May 2025).
3. Asks the Cabinet Member and the relevant Executive Directors to update the Committee on progress against the Strategy at or before its October 2024 Session, including on progress against workstream KPIs for the SCC Programme for Housing as appropriate.

**44/22 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
[Item 10]**

Key Discussions:

1. The Chairman noted the opportunity to review and agree the Forward Work Programme and to make suggestions for possible amendments or additions to the programme. A request for the Committee to hold a special session on Utilities was noted and the Committee gave its approval in principle for a special session in the New Year on the performance of Utility providers. The Chairman agreed to explore options to scrutinise Ringway contract and performance as well as parking enforcement. A review of the Library Service was also raised.

45/22 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: 7 FEBRUARY 2024 [Item 11]

The next meeting will be held on the 7 February 2024.

Meeting ended at: 15:26

Chairman

