

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET
HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 2024 AT 2.00 PM
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL,
WOODHATCH PLACE, 11 COCKSHOT HILL, REIGATE, SURREY,
RH2 8EF.**

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

(* present)
*Tim Oliver (Chairman)
*Natalie Bramhall
Clare Curran
*Matt Furniss
*David Lewis
*Mark Nuti
*Denise Turner-Stewart
*Sinead Mooney
*Marisa Heath
*Kevin Deanus

Deputy Cabinet Members:

*Maureen Attewell
Paul Deach
Steve Bax
*Jonathan Hulley

Members in attendance:

Cllr Fiona Davidson, County Councillor for Guildford South-East
Cllr George Potter, County Councillor for Guildford East

**PART ONE
IN PUBLIC**

132/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Clare Curran, Paul Deach and Steve Bax.

133/24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 24 SEPTEMBER 2024 [Item 2]

These were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

134/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were none.

135/24 PROCEDURAL MATTERS [Item 4]

The Leader explained that the agenda would be re-ordered so the substantive item on London Road could be taken earlier as a number of members of the public had attended the meeting for this item.

135/241 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 4a]

There were none.

136/24 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4b]

There were seven public questions. A response from the Cabinet was published in the supplementary.

Pat Daffarn asked a supplementary question in response to his original which was if all road and housing developments would be refused until a sustainable infrastructure was in place so that Surrey County Council could actually deliver their zero carbon commitments. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth explained that all planning applications reside with Guildford Borough Council as the development authority and Surrey County Council was consulted on applications and made recommendations as necessary. The council funded bikeability and feet first training which targetted schools and had positive take up. The Cabinet Member did not believe that applications would be refused by the districts until a comprehensive network was in place but recognised that walking and cycling provision needed to be improved as new developments increased.

Doug Clare asked a supplementary question in response to his original which was if the Cabinet was going to listen to 2000 school children with no votes or listen to a small group of objectors stopping progress. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth stated that a public consultation had been undertaken and people on both sides of the debate had been heavily lobbying the Cabinet.

Oliver Greaves asked a supplementary question in response to his original question which was if the Cabinet believed the impact on traffic, air quality, the cost benefit and the needs of all road users were relevant matters for Section 1. If not, then why not. Assuming the council did believe these were relevant matters, how could the council comply with its constitutional obligations when it do not have the traffic modelling report for Section 1, no pollution report had been produced for Section 1, no report had been produced considering the needs of all road users and no cost benefit analysis had been produced. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth stated that as part of the consultation, a number of the points that the questioner raised were published and considered as part of the report.

The Cabinet Member would be happy to share these documents with the questioner. The whole route including Section 1 had traffic modelling carried out which was shared with the stakeholder group and also published. The scheme would reduce air pollution and improve air quality with increased cycling.

137/24 PETITIONS [Item 4c]

There were none.

138/24 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED ON REPORTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE [Item 4d]

There were none.

139/24 REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES, TASK GROUPS AND OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL [Item 5]

A Cabinet response to the report from the Additional Needs and Disabilities Parent Carer Experience Task Group was included in the supplementary agenda.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet response to the Select Committee report is noted.

140/24 LEADER / DEPUTY LEADER / CABINET MEMBER/ STRATEGIC INVESTMENT BOARD DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST CABINET MEETING [Item 6]

There were six decisions for noting.

RESOLVED:

That the decisions taken since the last Cabinet meeting are noted.

141/24 LONDON ROAD GUILDFORD ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME - INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT OF SECTION 1 FOR CONSIDERATION TO PROCEED [Item 8]

The Leader briefly introduced the item explaining that discussions around the scheme had been ongoing for nearly two years. The speakers would be given 3 minutes to speak on the item, followed by an introduction by the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth and then a discussion by the Cabinet.

Terry Newman from the London Road Action Group, made the following key points:

- Spoke against the report. Concerns were raised around inaccuracies in the ARUP report. It was commented that ARUPs accident data was inaccurate, official data reveals five slight car and pedal accidents in the five years to 2023, that was one a year and not two so the road was not worse than the rest of Surrey.
- 1.5 meter separation is unreliable and passing HGV mirrors were just centimetres away.
- The Highway Code protects pedestrians by prohibiting cycling on pavements, yet still condones sharing. If mixing pedestrians and cyclists is a last resort for 45% of the length and is considered safe why not use foot ways to create 100% shared paths.
- DfT has spent £2.3 billion knowing far too little about what this spending has achieved. No evidence has appeared to enable an opinion about net zero achievement, but a 5% reduction in traffic would need the removal of 750 vehicles daily only adding 300 hundred more cyclists.
- Surrey Highways actually wrote the road will remain the same width as it is currently, and that is incorrect, at the pinch point reviewed existing distance between kerbs is 8 metres.

Yasmin Broome from the Surrey Coalition of Disable People, made the following key points:

- Strongly opposing the scheme. Blind, visually impaired, disabled, older and vulnerable bus passengers should be able to get on and off the bus independently and directly from or to the pavement, as they have always done. They should not have to cross cycle lanes or step into a cycle lane to get on and off a bus.
- These designs are not safe or accessible for blind, visually impaired, older and many vulnerable groups of bus passengers. They create a new barrier to accessing public transport independently.
- Many people cite that shared bus stops are working well in other countries but this is not the case. In Denmark injuries to bus passengers caused by cyclists went up from 5 to 73 after the shared style bus stop design was introduced. In Islington, London in 2016 a shared bus stop was removed as it did not take account of the safety and accessibility needs of blind and visually impaired bus passengers.
- Zebra crossing and flashing lights have been tried and tested and will not change the behaviour of cyclists. We believe an number of incidents at these shared bust stops are going unreported. There is political support for a moratorium on shared bus stops. Lord Holmes of Richmond made a recommendation

in the House of Lords on the 25 of April 2024 around the dangers of floating bus stops.

William Clark and Charles Graham representing the George Abbott School, made the following key points:

- Will was a current student at the school and cycles to school and uses the London Road on most of his journeys. The London Road was very dangerous and Will tried to avoid cycling on this road at peak times due to how dangerous it was. He had many close calls with other vehicles and had an incident where he was cut up on a roundabout next to London Road and went over the handle bars of his bike.
- Charles was an alumni of the school and cycled to and from school for 7 years. He explained that when he was 13, he was knocked off his bike by a car trying to overtake him on the road because there was no cycle lane. He went into the hedge and injured myself.
- The scheme was important as cyclists have to travel on roads that are not safe. This scheme would make cycling safer. The school had made a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in any way possible and students cycling into school was an easy way to achieve this.
- Last year, George Abbott did a survey of 740 people and almost half of them said that they would cycle to school if there was improved cycle infrastructure in place.
- Things needed to change if we want to save our planet.

James Masterman representing the Guildford Bike User Group (G-BUG), made the following key points:

- Is a cyclist and lives 200 yards from London Road in Burpham. Burpham is part of an existing important bike lane network and no congestion is being added to the London Road by cycling.
- Only 1% of journeys on the London Road were by bike. 30% of reported injuries on the road are to cyclists.
- Segregating the cycle lane from traffic is something that Burpham residents want. In the public consultation, 5:3 were in support of this. The scheme would support the Council's own policies and plans including the Local Transport Plan 4. It would also support net zero ambitions. The council's own highway officers have redesigned the scheme following earlier concerns.
- ARUP have signed off the scheme from a safety point of view and the Local Member, George Potter and Local MP, Zoe Franklin support the scheme.

- Burpham Residents Association have no objection to the scheme. Cabinet were asked to support the scheme as it would be a travel improvement for the majority of Burpham residents who want to cycle but are scared to do so.

Cllr Fiona Davidson, Local Member for Guildford South-East, made the following key points:

- Asked Cabinet to vote against the scheme. The Cabinet report states the scheme has the support of the majority of local residents and that all the safety issues raised by those residents have been satisfactorily resolved by the ARUP report but this is not the case.
- The ARUP report was a limited desktop exercise and the author never visited the road.
- Residents in the Member's area which covers 3/8 of the road are heavily against the scheme and don't believe the scheme is safe and don't believe the outcomes justify the investment.
- London road was a safer road and in the last 5 years there had been 18 slight accidents, one serious, not involving a cyclist. Of the 18 slight accidents five involved cyclists and cars.
- Concerns were raised around the width of the new carriageway and its proximity to the footway. As some of the footway would be narrower this would cause issues for pedestrians and deter the disabled, the elderly and those with prams. As a partially sighted person the Councillor wouldn't use this footway as it's not an improvement on what exists now.
- Would support changes that could accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles separately and safely but the A3100N is narrow in places.

Cllr George Potter, Local Member for Guildford East, made the following key points:

- Two thirds of the route is in his division as a County Councillor and as a district and borough Councillor the entirety of the route is in his area.
- All the objections raised regarding the scheme had been addressed including the 8 month road closure, unsafe road lane widths, the floating bus stops and safety concerns about some aspects of design.
- The scheme in question would bring about major improvements for pedestrian safety as the current pavements are too narrow in some places and crossing over the road in some places is impossible.
- The majority of residents support this scheme which has been identified as a major part of the sustainable movement corridor

in Guildford. Objectors have not stated what they would like to see instead of this scheme.

- The scheme has been independently assessed by ARUP and Active Travel England as being the best scheme possible given the physical constraints of the route. The scheme would be a major improvement in safety, not just for cyclists but for pedestrians along the current route.
- Asked Cabinet to support the recommendations put forward by officers who have spent the last 2 years developing the scheme.

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Economic Growth briefly introduced the report explaining that London Rd, Guildford is an active travel scheme funded and fully supported by an Active Travel England grant. It had progressed through the design and decision-making process as three separate identified sections. The scheme was previously considered for decision in February 2024. At this meeting, the decision was taken to proceed to delivery on Section 2 and carry out an independent technical review on Section 1 to enable future decision making on its delivery. A review undertaken by an independent professional engineering organisation concluded that the design of Section 1 allows HGVs to safely pass and that the shared use paths comply with LTN 1/20 guidance. The delivery of this project would allow the council to contribute to the ambitions of the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and help achieve the county's net zero carbon target by 2050. It was explained that officers had been engaging with residents on the scheme for the last two years and a consultation had been undertaken in 2023 to understand their views. In this consultation, 50% of respondents agreed that the design of Section 1 positively contributed to the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and vulnerable road users.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care spoke on the report stating that she had been contacted by the CEO for Sight for Surrey and the CEO for the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People who were not in support of the scheme. As an advocate for vulnerable people the Cabinet Member was concerned that the scheme would deter vulnerable people from using local facilities and being independent she could therefore not support the scheme.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities recognised that a lot of time and deliberation had gone into consideration for the scheme. Although there are many benefits to the scheme one key area of concern was around safety. The technical review states that there may be an element of discomfort and giving way when users are passing one another on the shared pavement. This caused the Cabinet Member concern especially as there were 'pinch points' on the route and areas where the carriage way was more narrow. For this reason, the Cabinet Member could not support the recommendations.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, and Public Health stated his support for the scheme. The Cabinet Member declared that he was a Trustee of Active Surrey. The Cabinet Member explained that the UK was a nation of car drivers and if we are to change that and get fitter for the future we would need to see the introduction of schemes which would encourage walking and cycling. The Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience thanked residents for their emails and thoughts regarding the scheme. The Cabinet Member stated that his main concern was with the width of the road and shared pathway and the impact this would have on vulnerable residents. Although the scheme would be grant funded it was important that the money was used wisely. The Cabinet Member stated that he would not be supporting the officer recommendations.

The Cabinet Member for Environment stated that safety was a serious issue but so was the need to make Surrey a better county with sustainable transport links and better air quality. The Cabinet Member stated that a shift in transport would never be easy and would cause disruption but would also bring about better health, less congestion and cleaner air. The Cabinet Member explained how decisive action from Dutch politicians around cycle lanes had led to the Netherlands becoming the cycling capital of the world. The Cabinet Member welcomed the £6m funding coming into the county as a result of the scheme and stated her support for the proposals.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources declared that previously he had been a member and Chair of the Global Road Safety Partnership. He stated that the pros and cons for the scheme were evenly split. The two key issues he had were firstly around the width of the carriageway for two HGVs passing and the second was the width of the shared space/pavement. Although Cobham had shared spaces, the report states that in this scheme there would be areas where the shared space was narrow and could cause discomfort. The Cabinet Member had concern around the possible impacts on vulnerable residents after hearing from the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People and believed that the scheme needed to benefit everyone. The Cabinet Member therefore did not support the scheme.

The Leader started by saying that Surrey County Council was very supportive of people being more active which was one of the council's priorities. The council was also very passionate about reducing traffic as part of its net zero ambitions and this was one of the reasons why this scheme was introduced. The scheme had been significantly altered from what had been proposed originally. There was a recognition that appropriate consultation with residents hadn't been done. The Leader stated that issue around two HGVs passing safely on the road had caused compromise to the shared pathway, which in turn has caused concerns around safety. Concern was also felt for vulnerable residents. A full discussion had taken place over the last 2 years on the scheme.

The Leader thanked everyone for their contributions saying that the quality of conversations and submissions from everyone on both sides of the argument had been outstanding. The Leader explained that the Cabinet would be taking a vote on the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED:

Following a discussion on the item, a vote was taken by the Cabinet on the following recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. *Notes the contents of the independent technical review of section 1 and its conclusions concerning whether the scheme complies with current design guidance.*
2. *Proceeds with the construction of Section 1 –based on the strength of support from the local community, alongside the conclusions of the independent technical review.*

There were THREE votes FOR and SIX votes AGAINST. The decision was therefore not carried.

(The decisions on this item can be called-in by the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee)

142/24 CABINET MEMBER OF THE MONTH [Item 7]

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure. The following points were made:

- The redevelopment of the former Debenhams site, Winchester was near completion. New tenants on the ground floor were at fit out stage ready to trade before Christmas and new tenants for upstairs had been found.
- Brightwells, Farnham: Practical Completion of the development of this new retail and leisure commercial scheme occurred in September. The council funded the commercial retail element of the regeneration of Farnham and also the substantial infrastructure.
- In terms of disposals, over the last five years, £150 million of capital receipts had been achieved and the council was on track to achieve another £55m for 2025/26.
- All soft and hard facilities management had been outsourced to Macro. The in-house team had reduced from 125 FTEs to a client team of 16 FTE team.
- Land & Property achieved the ISO 45001 certification following a recent audit. This is an international safety accredited certificate,

and a great achievement following 2 years of operational improvements.

- The Resource and Circular Economy Team were progressing a planning application and developing the business case for a Surrey Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). The MRF will sort kerbside collected recyclables into component streams of paper, glass, metals and plastics etc.
- The Resource and Circular Economy Team were developing a proposal for a Reuse Hub on Ivy Dean Cottage which is immediately adjacent to the Eco Park at Charlton Lane, Shepperton.
- Work was progressing on the A320 HIF bid north of Woking, with a view to mobilise works from November / December at the earliest. The works programme will be 18-months plus.
- Special thanks was given to land and property staff, the Managing Director for Halsey Garton Properties and waste and infrastructure staff for all the good work being done.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet Member of the Month report is noted.

143/24 YOUR FUND SURREY APPLICATION- NEW ROWLEDGE VILLAGE HALL PROJECT, FARNHAM [Item 10]

The report was introduced by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Customer and Communities. The report recommended Cabinet to approve £800k towards the development of a new village hall. The current building was not fit for purpose and had little insulation, a leaking roof, did not meet environmental standards and was impossible to maintain economically. The existing hall was well-used, open-to-everyone and the only low-cost general-purpose community building within South Farnham. The new Rowledge Village Hall would serve the residents in the Rowledge community in South Farnham which is going through rapid growth with over 100 new homes having been built in the last 3 years. The Cabinet was being asked to fund 27% of the total project cost. The remainder of the funding would be secured via other means including CIL funding. It was commented that the Your Fund Surrey programme had delivered 325 projects over the last 4 years with £21m being allocated to projects.

The Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience commented that it was positive to see that other sources of funding had already been secured for the new village hall.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet agrees to fund the full amount requested of £800,000, comprised of:

- capital funding towards the development of the new village hall, to be paid in staged payments, on evidence of spend
 - Including 5% to be held by SCC until final evidence of completion and building control sign-off and income and expenditure provided
2. That Cabinet agrees that funding would be conditional on evidence of the sale of their existing land and all other funding being in place before release of any grant.

Reasons for Decisions:

This application has been the subject of a rigorous assessment process by officers, as set out in the body of this report. Officers consider the project to meet the aims and published criteria of the fund and to satisfy the requirements to award funding.

New Rowledge Village Hall Project aim to create a welcoming and supportive community space that will advance the health and wellbeing of the community including physical activities.

(The decisions on this item can be called-in by the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee)

144/24 2024/25 MONTH 5 (AUGUST) FINANCIAL REPORT [Item 11]

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources. It was explained that there was an inaccuracy on the front page of the report under the Capital heading which should read that '*At M5, capital expenditure of **£319.3m** is forecast for 2024/25. This is **£2.8m** more than the re-phased budget*'. At M5, the Council was forecasting an overspend of £16.7m against the 2024/25 revenue budget. This was a £1.3m deterioration in the forecast overspend compared with the end of month 4. The overspend reflected the challenges the council faced especially in the areas of home to school transport assistance and Older People care packages. Work was being undertaken to contain the overspend in the home to school transport budget which was now at £7.4m. Mitigating measures needed to be identified to compensate for the forecast overspend. Although the council had a £20m contingency in the budget the idea would be to use this minimally. An update was given on the Capital budget. The month five forecast was £319.1m, which is £2.8m more than the re-phased budget. The key challenge would be working together with services to identify mitigating measures to pull back the forecast overspend.

The Leader stated it would be important to continue to make the point to government around the difficulty in balancing the budget due to the increase in demand in adult social care services for adults with disabilities and the cost of home to school transport which was now costing the council over £70m. The local government finance settlement would be due in December and an item on the 2025/26 draft

budget and MTFs would be considered at the November Cabinet meeting. Andy Brown had joined the council as Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer and was already working on the budget.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet notes the Council's forecast revenue budget and capital budget positions for the year.

Reasons for Decisions:

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

(The decisions on this item can be called in by the Resources and Performance Select Committee)

145/24 SURREY SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 [Item 9]

The report was introduced by Teresa Bell, Independent Chair of the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board who explained that the term 'safeguarding is everyone's business' was overused and not every perceived risk required a referral through the Section 42 process under the Care Act. Safeguarding was not achieved by one single agency but by partners cooperating to prevent abuse and neglect and identifying this as early as possible. Appropriate action should then be taken by the partnership with the person impacted at the centre. It was explained that a new approach was being taken to the safeguarding adults reviews to ensure timeliness and avoiding lengthy delays. Helen Coombs and Luke Adams were thanked for their support to the Board.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care welcomed the report and stated that it was good to see what the boards focus and priorities were. The Cabinet Member thanked the Independent Chair for her work and commented that she had galvanised partners across the board. The Leader echoed thanks to the Independent Chair stating that the Board was moving forward in a positive and constructive way.

RESOLVED:

1. That Cabinet considers and notes the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Annual Report for 2023/24.

Reasons for Decisions:

This recommendation demonstrates that the Council is fulfilling its statutory requirement under the Care Act 2014 in having established a Safeguarding Adults Board in its area.

It will support the SSAB to be transparent by providing information to the public on the performance of the Board and its strategic plan.

146/24 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.

147/24 LEADERS STATEMENT [Item]

The Leader explained that in light of new legal advice around the Project Libra report, the Council would not act further on the decision made by Cabinet on 24 September 2024. In the event that the matter came back to Cabinet, it would be considered wholly afresh.

148/24 PUBLICITY FOR PART 2 ITEMS [Item 13]

It was agreed that non-exempt information may be made available to the press and public, where appropriate.

Meeting closed at 3.39 pm

Chairman

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