

**Minutes of the Environment and Sustainability Committee
18 January 2022**

Present:

Councillor I.J. Beardsmore (Chairman)

Councillors:

M.M. Attewell	M. Gibson	S.C. Mooney
J.T.F. Doran	K.M. Grant	R.J. Noble
T. Fidler	N. Islam	J.R. Sexton
N.J. Gething	V.J. Leighton	

Substitutions: None

Apologies: Councillors O. Rybinski and V. Siva

In Attendance: Councillors C. Bateson, M. Beecher and R.W. Sider BEM

1/22 Minutes

The minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 3 November 2021 and the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

2/22 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

3/22 Questions from members of the Public

There were none.

4/22 Ward Issues

There were none.

5/22 Briefing on Surrey 2050 Place Ambition from Surrey County Council officers

Sue Janota, Spatial Planning and Policy Manager from Surrey County Council, gave a presentation to the Committee setting out the history, background detail, and involvement of representatives from county, borough and district authorities, and business leaders in forming this initiative to provide a strong coherent voice on a number of areas to promote good sustainable economic growth, improve business opportunities and bid for large infrastructure projects across the county.

This had led to the setting up of a Place Ambition Task Group to take the work forward. As part of the work, strategic priorities were agreed and eight strategic opportunity areas identified as areas to support long term prosperity. The Strategic Opportunity Area (SOA) most relevant to Spelthorne was the Longcross – Staines – Heathrow Corridor.

Following Covid-19 it was decided to review and refresh the strategy to reflect post-pandemic challenges and prepare an implementation framework. The updated version identified four strategic priorities:

- Improve connectivity both within Surrey and between strategically important hubs
- Enhance the place offer of Surrey's towns
- Maximise the potential of our Strategic Opportunity Areas
- Invest in natural capital and deliver nature recovery

A detailed implementation framework had been prepared setting out how it was proposed to deliver the priorities. A consultation was open until Friday 4 March and responses were welcomed from all. Following that the task group would reconvene, consider the results and what adjustments should be made before the District and Borough authorities were asked to endorse the proposals.

Work on this strategy had been taking place for some time and work was well underway in other areas of the county. Surprise and concern was expressed by Spelthorne councillors that they had not been informed of this initiative before. The Group Head for Regeneration and Growth explained that under the Council's previous Strong Leader and Cabinet governance arrangements, updates and briefings would have been provided to the Leader and relevant Cabinet portfolio holder at that time but could not recall that the issue had been brought to Cabinet during that time. The strategy had evolved over a number of years, however the leadership and direction of the Council had significantly changed over that period so it was considered appropriate that it was brought to the Committee for consideration. The Group Head for Regeneration and Growth acknowledged the concern of members and apologised that they had not been informed previously.

In response to a request from a Committee member, the Group Head for Regeneration and Growth offered to provide details of the relevant past meetings held about this matter and who had attended on behalf of Spelthorne Borough Council. The information has been attached to the minutes of this meeting.

A communications message was to be published to notify councillors and residents of the consultation and encourage responses to the proposals.

Reassurance was sought that the strategy was relevant to other areas in Spelthorne and not just Staines. Members were advised that Staines had been identified in relation to the Strategic Opportunity Area relating to Heathrow, and that strategic priority two covered all other areas.

Concern was expressed at the lack of detail for an improved rail connection to Staines and that further connectivity elements needed to be drawn out. The natural river divide emphasised the need to consider cross border areas and improved connectivity to Spelthorne and should be reflected in the strategic priority areas. Transport issues raised included the view that a heavy rail scheme would have a negative impact on Staines and a light railway scheme was considered a better option. The Committee was advised that work continued through the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group to find a solution to the railway connection. It was understood that the government was giving thought to what was required and how to progress this and that both heavy and light rail options were under consideration.

Questions were asked about whether any increase in bus transport would be targeted at the identified SOAs or if it would be aimed at bolstering other areas in Surrey or a mixture of both. A similar question was raised regarding proposed government cuts to rail funding and if this would impinge on the plans to develop the rail network and where might those cuts be applied. Sue Janota advised that she was unable to answer at this time and would need to refer back before responding.

It was also suggested that the introduction of cycling routes and footpaths would have a significant impact on connectivity and deserved further detail in the documents.

Staines Bridge and the roundabouts leading to it was also raised as a significant issue that needed to be addressed as it created a bottleneck prohibiting movement of traffic in and out of Staines.

In response to a question about how progress on the strategic priorities could be checked and monitored, the Committee was advised that a dashboard was being worked on and any comments on this aspect were welcomed through the consultation. It was suggested that monitoring should adopt a more holistic approach and not simply rely on statistics.

Sue Janota advised that the question of how information would be disseminated to key players was still to be considered. The Group Head for

Regeneration and Growth suggested that updates could be provided to the Committee on how matters were progressing if they wished.

One Committee member considered that a greater emphasis on environmental issues was required and it should be a common theme running throughout the report.

A further comment was that the disruption caused by Covid had not been fully explored and the future impact assessed. A question was raised as to where funding was expected to come from, particularly in view of the government's levelling up policy and the general exodus from the south. It was acknowledged that when originally set up, it was envisaged that government funding would be available and there would be some still available in terms of transport, however it was agreed that the pandemic would have impacted on funding plans.

It was suggested that the framework was amended to clarify where responsibility and ownership lay for various matters as it was unclear at present.

On more local issues, the Committee was advised that, as the Place Ambition was regarded as being at a more strategic level, the results of the local borough survey on the Staines Development Framework had not been shared with them, but it was agreed to do so.

Whilst acknowledging that the Place Ambition was a collaborative vision, not necessarily that of each individual area, one member spoke of the importance of good design as increasingly developments of unimaginative design were being proposed. Sue Janota advised that the Surrey Development Forum had been set up to promote good design and a number of initiatives were running. Members were advised to speak to the borough's strategic planning team about work on design codes and expectations. The Group Head for Regeneration and Growth thought that it was important for Spelthorne to focus first on agreeing the Local Plan and Staines Development Framework and design work would follow on from that.

Councillors and residents were encouraged to respond to the consultation and it was agreed that a response should be sent on behalf of the Committee also.

The Committee **resolved** to note the presentation and delegated authority to the Group Head of Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Environmental and Sustainability Committee and the joint Chairs of the Climate Change Working Group, to respond to the Place Ambition consultation on behalf of the Committee.

The Chair thanked Sue Janota for the presentation and answering the Committee's questions.

6/22 Capital Bids 2022/23 (part of annual budget process)

The Chief Accountant presented the three capital bids for 2022/23 to the Committee for their consideration.

In response to questions from the Committee the Group Head of Neighbourhood Services provided the following information:

New Wheelie Bins

The Council had a duty to replace any bins that had been crushed, broken or stolen. Bins were also required for new developments in the borough, although a charge was made for these.

The bins were high quality and therefore more expensive than some available but were considered a good choice as they had a long lifespan. They were bought in bulk through the Council's procurement framework.

Food Waste Vehicle:

A replacement food waste collection vehicle was required to replace one written off following a traffic accident. The loss adjusters had recently advised that the value of that vehicle had been assessed as £40,000. The Committee was advised that the capital bid had to be submitted as £80,000, the cost of the replacement vehicle for accounting purposes.

River Ash Boardwalk

The Committee was advised that when the Bronzefield site was built, funds were allocated specifically to the Bronzefield Reserves for environmental enhancements to the area and could not be used for any other purpose. It was proposed that a boardwalk was installed for the part of the circular path alongside the river in that area that was subject to high levels of flooding to make it accessible to residents all year round.

The Committee **resolved** that the three capital bids as presented should be rated green (to commence in 2022/23) for recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

7/22 Revenue Growth and Savings Bids 2022/23 (part of annual budget process)

The Chief Accountant presented the Revenue growth and savings bids to the Committee for their consideration.

A number of questions were asked about the growth and savings bids. One Committee member requested that the wording of the growth bid for councillor training was reworded.

The Committee **resolved** to agree all the growth and savings bids as proposed for recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

8/22 Committee Review of Fees and Charges for Service Areas 2022/23 (part of annual budget process)

The Chief Accountant presented his report to the Committee.

The Committee **resolved** to agree the Fees and Charges as proposed for recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

9/22 Verbal update on request for site investigation of land to rear of Thames Side

Claire Lucas, Principal Air Pollution Officer, gave a verbal update on further investigative work undertaken to ascertain if there was sufficient evidence to request a site investigation of the land and which body had jurisdiction for this.

The Committee was advised that:

- The Freedom of Information request (FOI) submitted to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) was considered too broad and they had suggested a more refined approach. A further request had been made for a five year period based on the BBC article and other information available and the MOD response was awaited.
- Officers had spent a significant amount of time reviewing data received in relation to the site permit to the north of the M3 and requested follow up information.
- A request had been made to Esso requesting any relevant data they may have for that area in relation to the pipeline site investigation works carried out for the Southampton to London pipeline. They were not subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and it was hoped they may respond on a voluntary basis, however no response has been received to date.
- The Environmental Health team had looked into the possibility of monitoring techniques for flooding events for ground gases but concluded this was not possible as there were so many variables to consider, including types of gases, the configuration of premises and how the premises were ventilated.
- Legal advice was expected later this month.

A report was to be prepared for the next Committee meeting in March 2022.

The Committee **resolved** to note the verbal update.

10/22 Bonfires and Anti-Bonfire Campaign

The Committee considered a report setting out the action taken to promote awareness of the hazards posed by bonfires both to people's health and the environment. As it was not possible to ban bonfires, a campaign to discourage residents and businesses from having bonfires was launched using the following approaches:

- An article in the borough Bulletin which explained the risks of bonfires, suggested alternative means of properly disposing of waste, and provided information on how to report bonfires
- A social media campaign using strong graphics to promote the anti-bonfire message
- A revision of the Council's bonfire and smoke webpage to give a stronger anti-bonfire message.

The Senior Environmental Health Manager advised that the number of complaints had increased significantly over the Covid period and it would be necessary to see whether these continued at the same level or reduced. It was agreed to share any meaningful statistics obtained with the Committee.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

Resolved:

To note the anti-bonfire campaign currently running.

Reason for decision:

The anti-bonfire campaign has a direct positive impact on climate change since a reduction in bonfires will directly lead to a reduction in carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere.

11/22 Bidding Process for Green Initiatives Fund

The Committee considered a report setting out a proposed bidding process for projects requesting funds from the Green Initiatives Fund. The process had been based upon a similar approach for grants funding applications.

The Committee was advised that some adjustments may be required once the bidding process was underway as bids were likely to be submitted for internal and external projects.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Not to put a bidding process in place which could result in funding for projects which do not fully deliver on the Council's climate change objectives.

Resolved:

To note and agree the proposed bidding process for projects requesting funds from the Green Initiatives Fund.

Reasons for Decision:

The Green Initiatives Fund will support projects aiming to reduce the impact of climate change in the Borough. A fair means of assessing individual projects proposed by the Council or outside organisations is required to ensure appropriate use of the funding.

12/22 Adverse Weather Plan and Community Sandbag Distribution Centre Plan Sign-Off

The Committee considered a report which set out the Council's Adverse Weather Plan and Community Sandbag Distribution Policy, following the review and updating of both documents. The report highlighted key updates to both plans which included clarity on roles and responsibilities

It was agreed that the Group Head for Commissioning and Transformation would contact those members who had suggested that some amendments or clarification may be necessary to the policy to address these.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None

Resolved:

To note the report and associated Adverse Weather Plan and Community Sandbag Distribution Policy.

Reason for Decision:

To ensure the Council has up to date plans to respond to adverse weather with clarity on roles and responsibilities.

13/22 Recovery Action Plan - E&S

It was **resolved** to note the Recovery Action Plan items relevant to this Committee.

14/22 Updates from Task and Finish and/or Working Groups

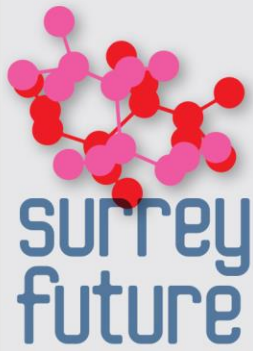
The Committee **resolved** to note the updates provided from the task and working groups.

15/22 Forward Plan

The Committee **resolved** to note the forward plan.

16/22 Urgent business

There was none.



SURREY'S 2050 PLACE AMBITION

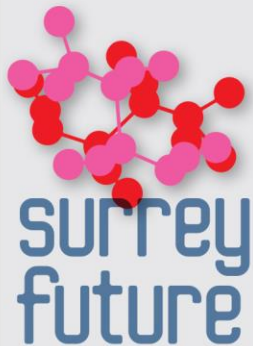
Surrey's Spatial Framework:
A Strategic Vision for Place Leadership,
Infrastructure & Good Growth

Draft Version 2



Minute Item 5/22

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- 1. Introducing the Place Ambition**
 - 2. Approach to Good Growth and Strategic Priorities**
 - 3. SOA1: Longcross-Staines-Heathrow Corridor**
 - 4. Next Steps**



Surrey Future

'Surrey Future' partnership created in 2012:

"Surrey Future brings together Surrey's local authorities and business leaders to agree the investment priorities to support the county's economy. Surrey Future means we can consider how to manage planned growth sustainably, both in Surrey and on our borders. We want to retain existing businesses and attract new ones in the right locations in the county. And we want to make sure Surrey can successfully bid for funding for large infrastructure projects. This will help to transform the county's economy in years to come."

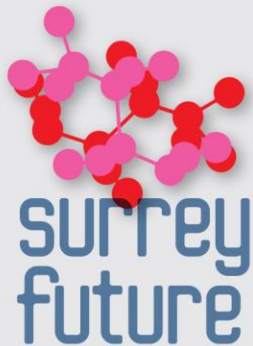
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Surrey Future Steering Board

Chair: Rob Moran, Chief Executive, Elmbridge Borough Council

Includes officer representatives from the County and Borough and District Councils, both Local Enterprise Partnerships, Gatwick Diamond Business, Surrey Employment & Skills Board and Surrey Nature Partnership

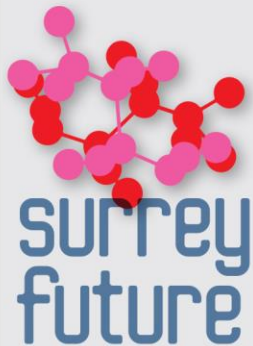
Reports to Surrey Chief Executives Group and through them to the Surrey Leaders' Group.



June 2018

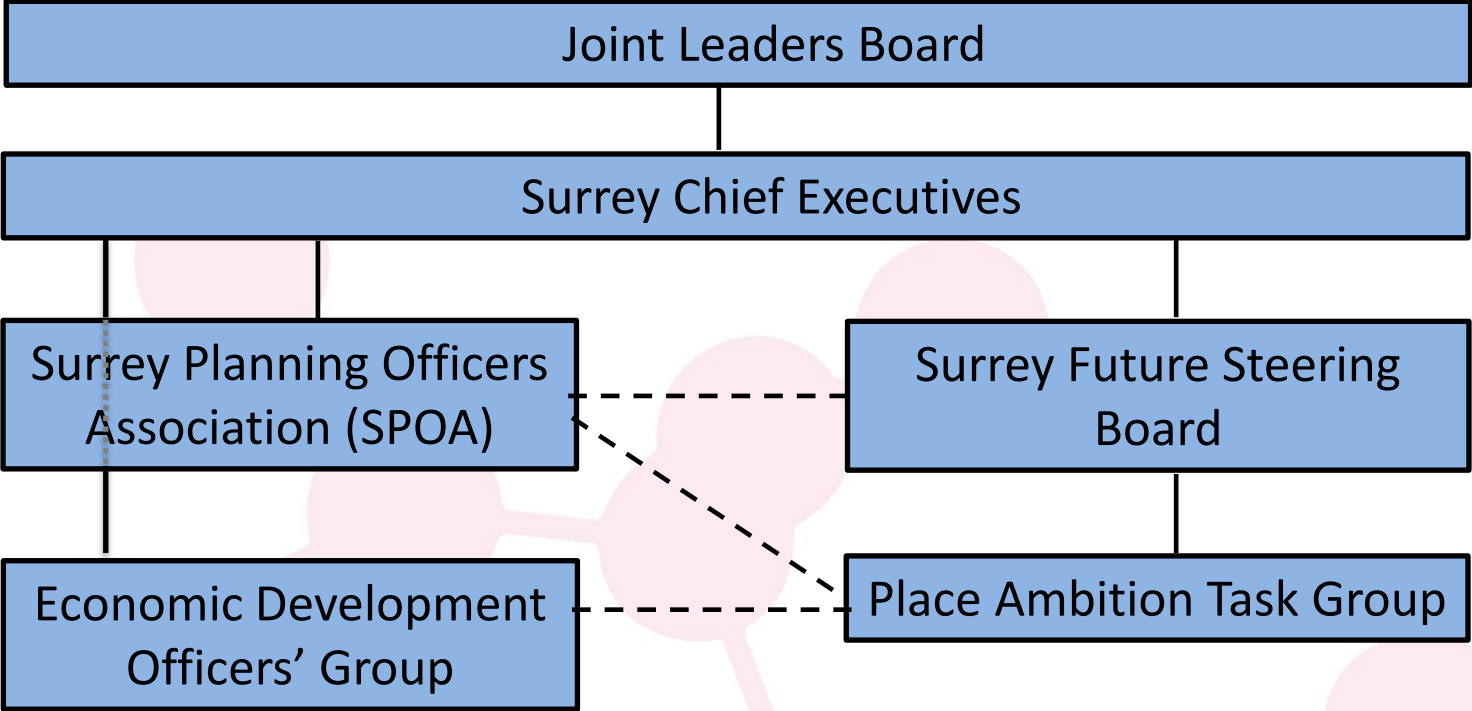
Surrey Future Steering Board given remit to develop a new approach to growth, building on the Interim Local Strategic Statement for Surrey 2016 – 2031 previously agreed by Surrey Leaders. It's purpose was to:

- Provide basis for a strong, collective and coherent 'Surrey voice' at the national table and strategic leadership.
- Articulate and secure the type of growth that is right for our areas ie 'good growth'
- Facilitate a place based approach to growth integrating economic, social, spatial and infrastructure priorities
- Contribute positively to our Duty to Cooperate by providing robust evidence of strategic collaboration on planning for local plan examinations.
- Ensure a more proactive, resilient and responsive approach to managing long term growth within Surrey and on our borders (e.g. London, Heathrow, Gatwick).
- Improve ability to access additional funding to pay for much needed infrastructure investment in our areas
- Help to secure buy-in from Surrey communities and stakeholders to shared strategic priorities and ambition for good growth by moving the conversation from 'plans & strategies' to 'people & places'.

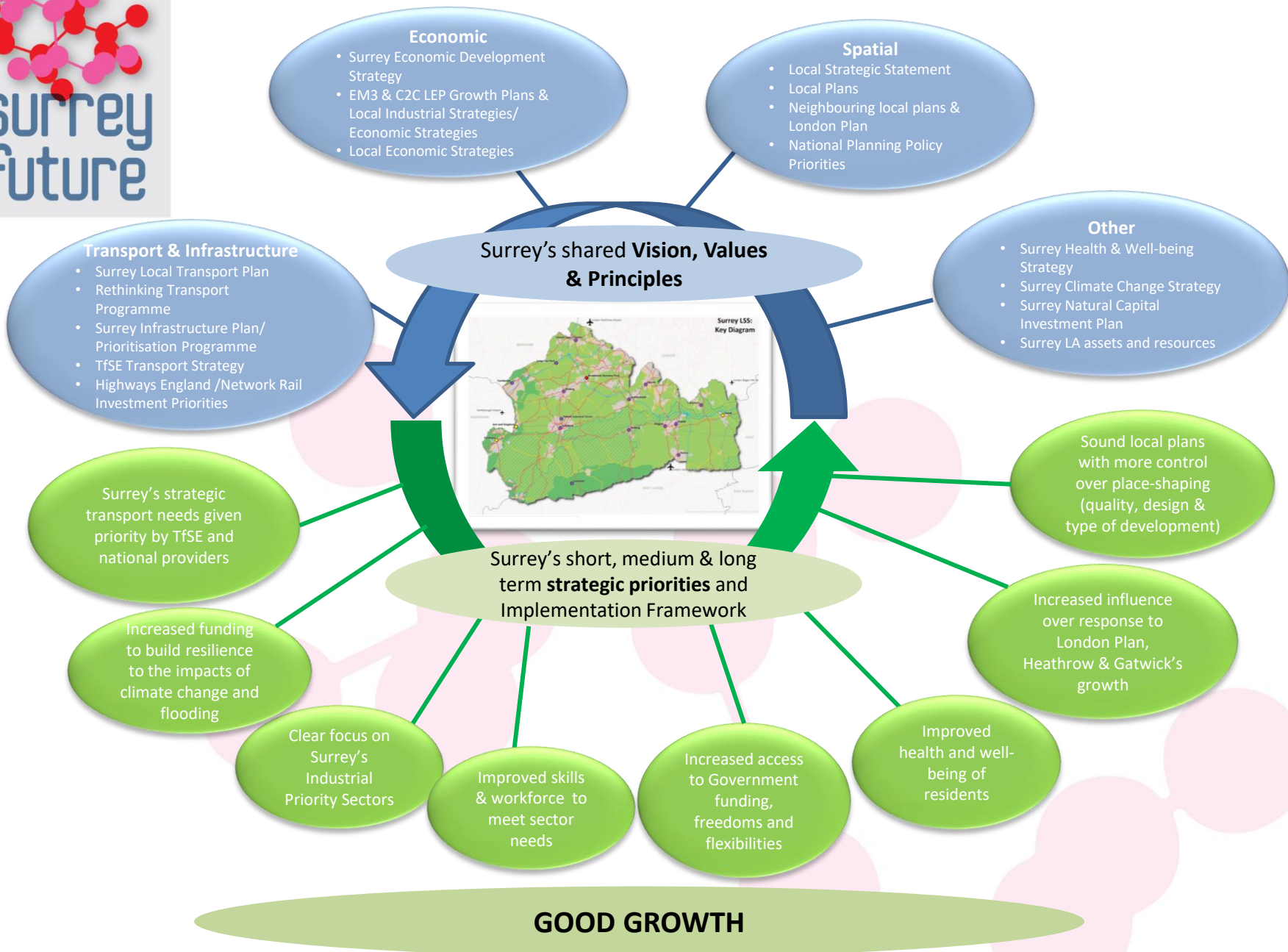


October 2018 – June 2019

Place Ambition Task Group set up to take the work forward reporting to the Surrey Future Steering Board and engaging closely with district planning and economic development officer groups.

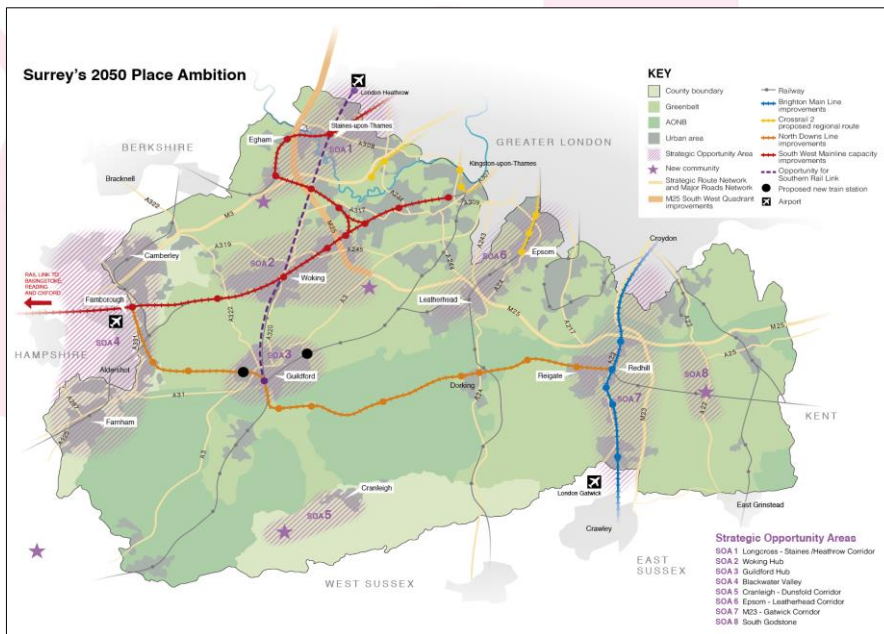
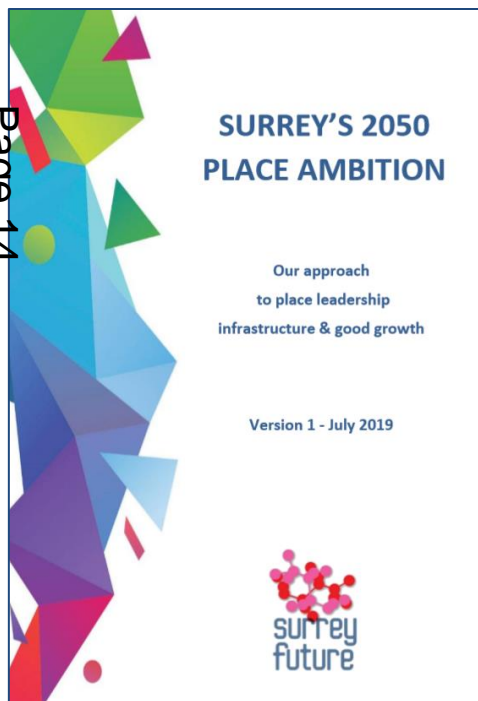


Starting point was to confirm the agreed shared vision from the LSS, develop a set of principles and values and identify the 'strategic influencers' on Surrey's Growth.

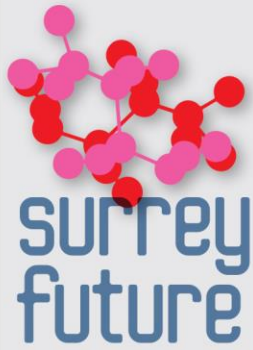


Following consultation with Leaders, relevant portfolio holders and chief executives in the districts and boroughs, the Surrey Future Steering Board launched Version 1 of the Surrey 2050 Place Ambition to...

- (1) Facilitate **Good Growth** in Surrey
- (2) Develop shared, long term **strategic priorities** on improving connectivity; enhancing the place offer of Surrey's towns; maximising the potential of our strategic economic assets through eight Strategic Opportunity Areas
- (3) Set out our long term **spatial vision**



January 2020 – October 2021



(1) Surrey Future Steering Board started work on the **Implementation Framework**, focusing on:

- Working with SCC to ensure that emerging LTP4 and Surrey Infrastructure Plan support delivery of Strategic Priorities.
- Developing an Urban Strategy to deliver Strategic Priority 2.
- Exploring with district and borough officers what the priorities are for each of the 8 Strategic Opportunity Areas to deliver Strategic Priority 3.
- Integrating the Place Ambition workstreams with other linked workstreams across Surrey to ensure policy and investment priorities supporting Good Growth are aligned.

(2) Place Ambition Task Group **refreshed the Place Ambition**:

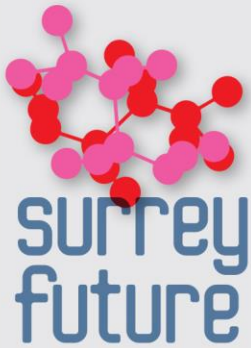
- To reflect the current context, especially challenges around post-pandemic economic recovery, the increasing weight being given nationally to climate change, biodiversity, health and wellbeing and improving the quality of development.
- To reflect updated evidence, link workstreams across Surrey and changes to local plan context

November 2021 – December 2021

Inaugural conference on ‘Good Growth’ held jointly with Surrey Development Forum with community groups, local government and developers attending. Consultation on refreshed Place Ambition and draft Implementation Framework launched.

“Good Growth” approach to development

- Is proportionate and sustainable, focusing on the places where people both live and work.
- Supports overall improvements to the health and well-being of our residents
- Is supported by the necessary infrastructure investment - including green infrastructure.
- Delivers high quality design in our buildings and public realm.
- Increases resilience and flexibility in the local economy.
- Delivers buildings and infrastructure ready for a zero-carbon future and builds resilience to the impacts of climate change and flooding.
- Is planned and delivered at a local level while recognising that this will inevitably extend at times across administrative boundaries.

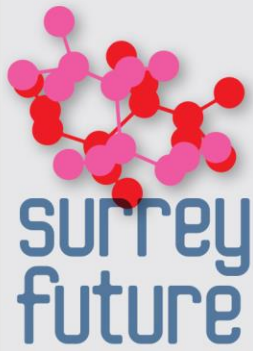


SURREY'S 2050 PLACE AMBITION

Surrey's Spatial Framework:
A Strategic Vision for Place Leadership,
Infrastructure & Good Growth

Draft Version 2





Four Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority 1:

Improve connectivity both within Surrey and between strategically important hubs

Strategic Priority 2:

Enhance the place offer of Surrey's towns

Strategic Priority 3:

Maximise the potential of our Strategic Opportunity Areas

Strategic Priority 4:

Invest in natural capital and deliver nature recovery

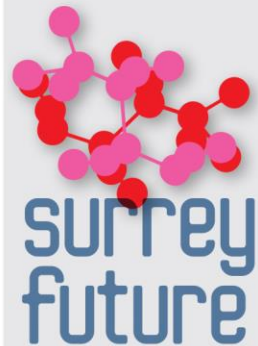
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Strategic Opportunity Area (SOA) 1: Longcross – Staines - Heathrow Corridor



Anticipated outcome by 2030	Potential strategic interventions 2020 – 2030	Links to other plans and strategies	Strategic partners
Improved rail connectivity to Heathrow, Guildford and Woking	All partners are committed to enhancing southern rail access to Heathrow.	LTP4, Surrey Infrastructure Plan, Surrey Rail Strategy, Southern Access to Heathrow (DfT), Heathrow Strategic Planning Group Joint Spatial Planning Framework	Surrey County Council Runnymede and Spelthorne Borough Councils Heathrow Strategic Planning Group Heathrow Airport Ltd Department for Transport Network Rail
Support productivity growth in key sectors along the corridor; Enterprise Zone at Longcross likely to become a significant hub for creative industries and key employment location	Support ‘hub role’ of the corridor for priority sectors of creative industries and IT/ software through provision of sites/premises, urban realm improvements and promotion of the area/supporting inward investment and stronger links with higher/further education, particularly Royal Holloway.	Surrey Economic Strategy, Runnymede and Spelthorne Economic Strategies, EM3 LEP Economic Recovery Plan	Runnymede & Spelthorne Borough Councils Surrey County Council EM3 LEP
Delivery of a Development Framework for Staines which will set out the opportunities to deliver new homes, commercial activity and vital infrastructure	Production and delivery of the Staines Development Framework Improvements to the A308, to enable pedestrian movement in Staines town centre and improve transport infrastructure and local mobility, to support the role of Staines as a transport interchange.	Spelthorne Local Plan, LTP4, Surrey Economic Strategy, Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Surrey Climate Change Strategy	Surrey County Council Spelthorne Borough Council Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board



Developing the Surrey Urban Strategy

WE WANT OUR TOWNS TO

- Be **resilient and dynamic places** that can adapt to future climate, economic, demographic and technological changes over time and where potential impacts are mitigated.
- Be **diverse and inclusive places** that help tackle social, economic and health inequalities and recognise the different needs of residents and communities.
- Be **healthy places** with all opportunities taken to enhance the health and wellbeing and overall quality of life for residents.
- Be **connected places** with transport and digital infrastructure offering excellent access to services, jobs and green spaces.
- Be **beautiful places** where we can be proud of all new development and we protect the best of what makes Surrey special.
- Have **vital, viable and versatile town centres** that can continue to provide a hub for economic, retail, social and community activities.

WE WILL DO THIS BY....

Working more effectively with local communities to ensure we meet their diverse needs and improve their overall wellbeing

Initial Priorities:

Annual conference with Surrey local communities; explore options for engaging with residents digitally

Raising the standard and quality of development in Surrey

Initial Priorities: Working more proactively and collaboratively with the development industry through the new Surrey Development Forum; celebrating our successes and championing good practice

Developing the right tools to deliver good places

Initial Priorities: Identifying strategic towns to support ongoing enhancement of the 'place offer' in a post-covid environment; Healthy Streets design guidance; promote the 20 minute neighbourhood/town principles as set out in LTP4; prepare a Surrey Green and Blue Infrastructure Guide to complement and support local GBI strategies

Building shared capacity and expertise

Initial Priorities: Design training for officers and members and consider how to support communities so they can engage in a more effective way (e.g. in relation to proposed new design codes); sharing learning and knowledge from strategic developments

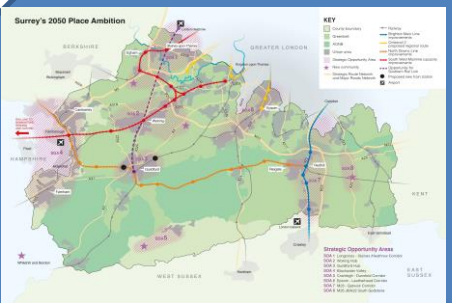
Optimising our natural capital and public sector assets

Initial Priorities: Maximising the potential to environmental net gain by exploring strategic funding opportunities; Local Nature Recovery Strategies/ Surrey Nature Recovery Network; explore opportunities to co-locate services in town centres/community hubs.

Building resilience to climate change

Initial Priorities: Align actions and priorities being developed both locally and countywide; work with partners to implement the Greener Futures Climate Change Delivery Plan.

Surrey's Integrated System for Achieving Sustainable Growth



- PA Strategic Priority 1:**
Improve connectivity both within Surrey and between strategically important hubs
- PA Strategic Priority 2:**
Enhance the place offer of Surrey's towns
- PA Strategic Priority 3:**
Maximise the potential of our Strategic Opportunity Areas
- PA Strategic Priority 4:**
Invest in natural capital and deliver nature recovery

Implementing the Surrey 2050 Place Ambition

Our Climate and Environment Priorities
 Surrey Climate Change Strategy
 Borough and District Climate Change Strategies
 Surrey Nature Recovery Network
 Surrey Land Management Framework

Our Economic priorities
 One Surrey Growth Board's Surrey's Economic Future – Towards 2030:
 Surrey County Council's Economic Strategy Statement
 Borough and Districts' Economic Strategies
 LEP Recovery Action Plans

Our Spatial Priorities
 Borough and District Local Plans
 Place Ambition Strategic Opportunity Areas
 Place Ambition Urban Strategy

Our Infrastructure Priorities
 Surrey County Council's Local Transport Plan (4)
 Surrey's Rail Strategy
 Surrey Infrastructure Plan
 Borough and District Infrastructure Delivery Plans

Our Health and Wellbeing Priorities
 Surrey's Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Next steps

- Your opportunity to comment on the document through the following link: [Place Ambition \(surreysays.co.uk\)](https://surreysays.co.uk) by Friday 4 March 2022
- Your feedback will be used to inform the direction and revise our Place Ambition
- The intention is that the final version will be agreed and endorsed by all Surrey local authorities and strategic partners making up the Surrey Future partnership
- We will also engage with others who have a key role to play in its delivery, including government departments and agencies and neighbouring authorities
- Use the document to help shape projects joint projects and access additional funding and investment opportunities



Further Information

[PlaceAmbition - Surrey County Council - Citizen Space \(surreysays.co.uk\)](http://surreysays.co.uk)

Sue Janota (Surrey County Council)

sue.Janota@surreycc.gov.uk

Environment and Sustainability Committee **Information on the evolution and timeline for the Surrey Place Ambition 2050**

At its meeting on 18 January 2022, the committee asked for additional information on where the matter had been discussed, plus which post holders had been involved, as well as the level of councillor involvement.

Background

Governance - Surrey Future Steering Board

The Surrey Place Ambition 2050 is a Surrey Future Partnership document. It is not a Surrey County Council document per se, but they are leading on pulling the document together and the consultation is being done by them. Its preparation has been overseen by the Surrey Future Steering Board. The Board comprises Surrey County, all the Surrey Districts and Boroughs plus representatives of other key stakeholders such as the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (West Surrey), the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (East Surrey), Gatwick Diamond and Surrey Wildlife Trust. It is an officer only group (led by a Chief Executive from a Borough – by agreement), but reports into Surrey Chief Executives Group and Surrey Leaders Group at the appropriate time.

Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership - Step Up Town 'designation'

The EM3 LEP covers West Surrey and large parts of Hampshire. According to the chair of the LEP Board on EM3's website:

"We understand that our purpose is to work in partnership with local businesses and local government to steer us towards the world we want to create in the future. We need growth if we are to generate the prosperity which will pay for the housing, healthcare, and council services that we all want and people in our local communities need. Our job as a Local Enterprise Partnership is to invest to support productivity, collaborate with others, identify local strengths and meet local challenges; all to make growth benefits our people and enhances our places".



<https://www.enterprisem3.org.uk/>

It should be noted that Staines-upon-Thames has been identified as a Step-up Town by the Enterprise M3 LEP for nearly 8 years. It first appeared in the Enterprise M3 Economic Plan 2014 – 2020. In that document step up towns were identified as “areas of latent economic potential, which currently experience barriers to growth that impacts upon the overall performance of the Enterprise M3 area. Our Step-up Towns’ Growth Packages include a series of catalytic transport and infrastructure measures to alleviate congestion and enhance capacity, town centre renewal to promote inward investment, skills centres of excellence and interventions to unlock housing sites”.

The Plan is an EM3 approved document and had no statutory status from a planning point of view. As it is not a Spelthorne document it would not have gone to Cabinet for comment or approval as it is not a Council policy. However the Chief Executive and the Leader(s) at the time would have been aware of the document from attending the EM3 LEP Chief Executives and Leaders meetings.

The aim of such a ‘designation’ was to highlight those areas (alongside Growth Towns such as Woking and Basingstoke) where EM3 were more likely to focus funding opportunities (for infrastructure projects).

<https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/2340.pdf>

This was carried forward into the EM3 Strategic Economic Plan (2018-2030) which again identified Staines-upon-Thames as a Step-up town, “to realise untapped potential by focusing on activities to stimulate growth and deliver improved commercial, retail and residential opportunities”.

<https://www.enterprisem3.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-02/Strategic%20Economic%20Plan%202018.pdf>

Further analysis was done by EM3 in 2019 of all their towns, and reference is made in that document to the Surrey 2050 Place Ambition and the Longcross-Staines-Heathrow Strategic Opportunity Area

https://enterprisem3.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-02/EM3%20Towns%20Study%20Final%20Report%20v4.0%20Part%202%20Future%20Growth%2020.1.19_0.pdf

There have been some positives from a funding point of view (sustainable transport for the Wider Staines area – Staines to Heathrow, Brooklands College, and Egham roundabout). £0.5m was also allocated for a gigabit rollout in Staines (though this did not proceed as commercial operators are undertaking a phased rollout across the borough without any funding injection).

Surrey Place Ambition and the Longcross-Staines-Heathrow Strategic Opportunity Area

The Surrey Place Ambition 2050 Draft Implementation Framework is looking to deliver “good growth which requires long term commitment and investment”. It makes clear that it “will be delivered through collaboration with many different strategic stakeholders and partners and through various plans and strategies many of which have already been developed” and that “growth will be implemented through a number of strategies.” Para 2.1 on page 4 sets out that “Surrey Borough and District Local Plans ...are vital for the successful implementation of the spatial elements of the Place Ambition, both testing and delivery.”

Surrey Place Ambition 2050

It is therefore very clear that the document is merely pulling together existing/emerging strategies and local plans into one document across the County (effectively just collating in one place what is already known and in place or being worked on by all the districts and boroughs). It is also making it clear that it is *then* for the boroughs and districts to implement locally, and not the County. The document will have no statutory

basis in terms of the decision making process of Spelthorne Borough Council in relation to the Local Plan or determining planning applications.

There is nothing new in this draft document that has not either been in the public domain for a number of years (Spelthorne Borough Councils desire for a Southern Light Rail access from Staines-upon-Thames to Heathrow, and Staines as an EM3 Step Up Town), or is not being developed by Spelthorne Council and therefore in the public domain since work first started on the document (e.g. Staines Development Framework).

The Surrey Place Ambition 2050 Draft Implementation Framework runs to 45 pages, and just 4 pages (9 – 12) relate to the Strategic Opportunity Area (SOA) covering Spelthorne and Runnymede. The SOA links together the importance of Heathrow to the EM3 area, the step-up town designation for Staines-upon-Thames and the strategic development of Longcross (combination of its designation as part of a multi-site enterprise zone some years ago and 1,700 homes in Longcross Garden Village).

Four Priority Outcomes are identified (only 2 and 4 apply to Spelthorne):

1. Delivery of the new community at Longcross including connectivity improvements, especially links to Chertsey (including for secondary schools) and wider area
2. Improved rail connectivity to Heathrow, Guildford and Woking
3. Support productivity growth in key sectors along the corridor; Enterprise Zone at Longcross likely to become a significant hub for creative industries and key employment location
4. Delivery of a Development Framework for Staines which will set out the opportunities to deliver new homes, commercial activity and vital infrastructure

Pages 11 and 12 set out the proposed strategic interventions up to 2030 to deliver these outcomes:

Rail connectivity (2)	All partners are committed to enhancing southern rail access to Heathrow (County, Spelthorne, Runnymede, HAL, DfT etc)
Development Framework (4)	Production and delivery of the Framework, improvement to A308, transport interchange, pedestrian movement (Surrey - highways infrastructure, Spelthorne - framework, Health and Wellbeing Board - pedestrian)

There have been two draft versions of the document. The first draft was produced in May 2019 and the second in November 2021. This latter document is the one which is currently out to consultation and which was presented to the Environment and Sustainability Committee on 18 January 2022.

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/environment-and-infrastructure/placeambition/>

The timeline below starts in the immediate run up to the May 2019 first draft, and finishes in December 2021 with the consultation on the second draft.

Version 1 Surrey Place Ambition

Spelthorne Borough Council operated a Strong Leader and Cabinet model at this time. The portfolio holder for strategic planning and assets was the then Leader.

10 May 2109

Surrey Chief Executives considered the draft document.
No representatives from Spelthorne were at that meeting.

16 May 2019

Surrey Futures Steering Board agreed the draft Place Ambition document. This included reference to the Strategic Opportunity Areas (Longcross- Staines-Heathrow Corridor)

Chief Executive attended this meeting

6 June 2019

The strategic lead officer from another borough discussed the draft document. Both the Chief Executive and Leader attended this meeting

(The Board agreed to briefings rather than a more formal approach as the document is non-statutory. The idea was that it would evolve/be subject to updating).

It is understood there was concern expressed at the time by the Chief Executive and the Leader that this document was aimed solely at Surrey's ambitions at the time for a Unitary bid. The advice given was that any and all County strategic plans would need to fall out of Spelthorne Borough Council's Local Plan work stream. It is understood that the then Leader briefed his conservative group who were equally dismissive and concerned about its possible covert Unitary status.

There was no formal report to Spelthorne's Cabinet as this was an early draft of a non-statutory document. Nor was there an update to Cabinet at a briefing on this document (as advised at the E&S meeting).

The links below set out the Councils clear and emphatic response to Surrey's fully developed proposal for a Unitary bid which only saw the light of day in the summer of 2020. The Councils 'dim view' of the first draft of the Surrey Place Ambition 2050 document needs to be seen through this lens.

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19639/Spelthorne-alerts-residents-to-Surrey-s-unitary-authority-plans>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19636/Spelthorne-responds-to-Unitary-Authority-Plans>

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19703/Spelthorne-Borough-Council-unanimously-vote-to-oppose-Surrey-wide-Unitary-Authority>

11 July 2019

Surrey Place Ambition Conference held to publicise Version 1. Chief Executive and Leader invited to attend alongside other officers, but did not do so. The Strategic Planning Manager did attend the conference.

Version 2 Surrey Place Ambition

Political governance

The Council operated under the Strong Leader and Cabinet system until May 2021. There were two Leaders during this period. Under the first, the portfolio of strategic planning sat with the Leader. Under the second, strategic planning moved away from the Leader and sat with a Cabinet portfolio holder. A briefing took place on the document but did not feature heavily in discussions with portfolio holders. At no point, were officers advised to change the approach previously set out in the draft document.

From May 2021 the Council has operated under the Committee System. Strategic Planning falls within the remit of the Environment and Sustainability Committee and the Chair and Vice Chair. A briefing took place on the document but did not feature heavily in discussions with the chair and vice chair. At no point, have officers been advised to change the approach previously set out in the draft document.

Priorities of the Council during this period (September 2019 – November 2021)

Covid-19

Spelthorne was the first Council in Surrey, and possibly nationally, to declare it was putting itself on an emergency footing in response to the COVID 19 pandemic on 13 March 2020. For

at least the next six months virtually the whole council was re-oriented to focus on supporting our most vulnerable residents, communities and businesses with our emergency response. <https://democracy.spelthorne.gov.uk/documents/s27114/Report%20on%20emergency%20response%20to%20COVID-19.pdf>

Nearly two years on, and the Council is still heavily involved in helping the residents and the business community to recover. This has had to be our main focus, and is a fundamental tenet of why we exist as a Council. <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/recoveryplan>

Local Plan and Staines Development Framework

Progress has been made on the Local Plan throughout this period. Members of the committee will be well aware of this work, that of the Local Plan Task Group and the absolute necessity of delivering a Local Plan in a timely manner. This has been the main focus of the strategic planning team, alongside the previous proposals for the expansion of Heathrow and the Staines Development Framework.

The first reference to a Staines 'masterplan' appears in the Spelthorne Local Plan – Issues and Options Consultation May 2018 (Option 3 page 25). <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19959/Issues-and-Options-Consultation-documents>

It is also referred to in the Spelthorne Local Plan – Issues and Options Consultation Response Document dated September 2018 (pages 1 and 4 where the pie chart shows Option 3 Staines focus was the preferred option). <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19957/Issues-and-Options-Consultation-2018>

It is for these reasons that Surrey Place Ambition 2050 Version 1 dated July 2019 referred to a Staines Masterplan/Staines Development Framework.

However, work could only be undertaken once a consultant had been appointed to assist with delivering this masterplan – now development framework. A Cabinet report on 6 November 2019 approved the concept of a Staines Masterplan and authorised officers to go out to tender.

<https://democracy.spelthorne.gov.uk/documents/s24006/Cabinet%20-%20SUT%20masterplan%20report.pdf>
<https://democracy.spelthorne.gov.uk/documents/s24007/Masterplanning%20Specification%20v8.0.pdf>

Work started in earnest on the process of coming forward with a development framework with the appointment of David Lock Associates (February 2020) and the setting up of the initial councillor Task Group in June 2020.

The masterplan was again referred to in the Spelthorne Local Plan – Preferred Options Consultation Response Document September 2020:

“The Preferred Spatial Strategy consulted on aimed to meet Spelthorne’s housing needs by releasing some weakly performing Green Belt, intensifying development in urban areas and by producing a masterplan for Spelthorne’s largest town, Staines upon Thames, to seek further opportunities for growth beyond the sites identified in our Strategic Land Availability Assessment. Production of the Staines Masterplan has begun and is expected to be complete by the end of 2020, in time for the Regulation 19 consultation of the submission version of our Local Plan early next year. This will enable both to be considered together as the masterplan will be key to supporting our assumption on growth in the town”.

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19902/Preferred-Options-Consultation-2019>

Expansion of Heathrow

As councillors will know Heathrow did have plans to expand the airport with a third runway. This was vigorously fought by this Council and the work was led by the Strategic Planning Team. <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/heathrow>

There was a report which went to an extraordinary Overview and Scrutiny committee in September 2019 <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/finalconsultation> April 2020 saw a further round of consultation by Heathrow to which the Council responded in detail. <https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/19044/Council-welcomes-further-Heathrow-consultation>

A very considerable amount of time and resource was put in by the Strategic Planning team (and others) throughout this period. It is for this reason that there was such a delay between the first reference to a Staines Masterplan and the appointment of the consultants in June 2020.

All of the above were a much higher priority for the organisation, residents and councillors. Limited resources within the strategic planning team had to be directed to those rather than to a peripheral document being pulled together by Surrey which simply represented a collation of existing known plans and strategies.

Surrey Futures Steering Board

Officers attended 9 meetings between 16 September 2019 and 7 December 2021 (the Chief Executive attended one, the Group Head for Regeneration and Growth attended six and the Strategic Planning Manager attended two).

One of these Board meetings (4 February 2021) focused on Implementing the Surrey 2050 Vision workshop. This was led by Catriona Riddell Associates (a Consultant who has been appointed by Surrey to help deliver this piece of work). It looked at the Surrey Infrastructure Plan, the Urban Strategy, priorities for delivering the Strategic Opportunity Areas over the next ten years, metrics to be used to measure 'good growth' and stakeholder engagement including a community forum later in the summer of 2021. This was attended by the Group Head for Regeneration and Growth. There was no push back against the Strategic Opportunity Area as no political steer had been given to do so.

There have been two meetings held at officer level to discuss and review the Strategic Opportunity Area for the Staines-Longcross-Heathrow Corridor. Officers from Spelthorne, Runnymede and Surrey attended these meetings including the Group Head for Regeneration and Growth and the Strategic Planning Manager. There was no push back against the Strategic Opportunity Area as no political steer had been given to do so.

There is no record of this draft version 2 having been to a Surrey CEX meeting for sign off before the Conference at the end of November or before the consultation went live. Nor is there any record that this draft version 2 document has been to a Surrey Leaders meeting.

Surrey Future and Surrey Development Forum Conference

An all day conference with Councils, developers, housebuilders and residents groups took place on 25 November 2021 to talk about "good growth" for Surrey. It was designed as a launchpad for the Surrey Place Ambition 2050.

This was attended by the Chair of E&S - Cllr Ian Beardsmore, Local cllr - Cllr M Beecher, Group Head Regeneration and Growth, Planning Development Manager, plus 2 Residents Association reps. The Leader Cllr Nichols was invited, but was not able to attend due to Covid.

<https://surreydev.co.uk/event/surrey-future-surrey-development-forum-inaugural-annual-conference/>

<https://surreydev.co.uk/inaugural-annual-conference/>

Surrey Cabinet

From speaking to Surrey officers, it is understood that neither the first nor second versions have been to Surrey's Cabinet for consideration. They have advised that there is an intention that the current consultation draft will go to Cabinet in order that their response can then be fed into the revised draft.

Consultation

As of mid-February, Spelthorne is only one of two councils across the whole of Surrey who have taken the matter to committee or cabinet for councillors consideration. The other Council was Woking and this consisted of a report, the place ambition and a proposed officer response to the document. We are certainly the only Council who gave a presentation, had a Surrey officer attend to answer questions and who enabled a full, frank and open debate by councillors to be held.

The Council has been actively promoting community engagement on this matter with a press release and social media. This briefing will be placed on the Council's website to ensure that residents can get a clearer understanding on the background. A new section has been added to the Shaping Staines page which has the new release and this is where this briefing note will be located, plus the response of the Environment and Sustainability Committee once that has been agreed by the chair and vice chair. In addition, the communications team have been asked to ensure that the top News Stories list is refreshed so that this re-appears at the top periodically. There will also be a final reminder 'push' release in the run up to the close of the consultation.

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/Shaping-Staines>

Next steps

A response will go to Surrey County Council on behalf of the Environment and Sustainability Committee setting out the comments and concerns raised at the meeting on 18 January 2021. This is as per the agreement of the Committee, and will be reviewed by the chair and vice chair of the committee before dispatch. These will no doubt be taken into consideration by the Surrey Futures Steering Board as the draft version is further revised.

The intention will be for Spelthorne Council to put the final draft version of the document to the Environment and Sustainability Committee, with a recommendation on whether or not to 'adopt' the Surrey Place Ambition version 2 on behalf of the Council. It is understood that all Councils (boroughs, districts and the county) will need to decide for themselves whether or not to formally adopt this non-statutory document.

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