



# **SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S LOCAL COMMITTEE IN EPSOM & EWELL**

## **VEHICLE CROSSOVERS**

**9 October 2006**

### **KEY ISSUE:**

To provide Members with an update on the present situation in respect of processing applications for vehicle crossovers

### **SUMMARY:**

Members and the public are complaining at the length of time currently being taken to process applications for vehicle crossovers in East Surrey. This report sets out the position in respect of the present delivery of this function.

### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The committee is asked to agree;

- (a) That the report be noted.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Section 184 of the Highways Act 1980 enables the public to apply to the Highway Authority for a vehicle crossover to be constructed across a highway verge or footway to allow access to their property. There is no legal requirement for the Highway Authority to grant such an application, although subject to issues of safety, environmental impact and planning consent being satisfied, it would normally do so.
- 1.2 Across the East Area of Surrey approximately 25 requests for application forms for the construction of vehicle crossovers are received from the public weekly.
- 1.3 The recent restructuring of the County Council's Transportation Service has resulted in a very significant reduction in the number of staff engaged in processing applications from the public for vehicle crossovers. Across the five districts of Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, Mole Valley, Reigate & Banstead, and Tandridge the total number of 5 Highway Stewards and 5 Business Support staff, who were formerly involved in delivering this function, has been reduced to just ONE Highway Steward and ONE Business Support staff for the entire East Area.
- 1.4 The process associated with vehicle crossovers has been reviewed and streamlined to ensure that the most efficient use is made of the reduced staff resources now available to the East Area Highway Services.
- 1.5 In order to help manage an ongoing and escalating backlog, a temporary "embargo" to reduce the number of new requests for application forms was introduced 16<sup>th</sup> June 2006. The public who contact the County via telephone, letter or web site are being invited to register their interest, and this is logged. They are presently being advised that an application form will be sent to them in date order, once the processing of requests is back to normal. This is hoped to be in October.
- 1.6 Since the introduction of the "embargo" more than 300 members of the public have logged an expression of interest in receiving an application form.
- 1.7 At present more than 200 requests for applications are outstanding and require processing.
- 1.8 These requests are being processed at a rate of 20 per week.

- 1.9 Since 16<sup>th</sup> June, 120 completed application forms have been submitted by the public. A further 35 completed forms remain unprocessed from the period prior to the introduction of the “embargo”.
- 1.10 The completed application forms are being processed at a rate of 10 per week.
- 1.11 This rate of processing supports the employment of one full time construction gang dedicated to vehicle crossover works. This gang is able to complete approximately 5 or 6 crossovers per week.
- 1.12 The typical period required for the construction of a crossover from the time a completed application form has been returned to the County Council, with cheque for the cost of the works, is currently approximately 14 weeks. This is made up as follows:
  - a) 4 weeks to carry out the required searches relating to statutory undertakers apparatus (gas, electricity, telephone etc.).
  - b) 3 weeks to carry out the necessary site measurements and prepare the contract documentation for Carillion.
  - c) 1 week to obtain a quotation for the cost of the works from Carillion.
  - d) 6 weeks for Carillion to programme, resource and carry out the construction works.

**2.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

2.1 The construction of vehicle crossings is funded directly by the general public.

**3.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

**4.0 CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

4,1 There are none for the purpose of this report.

**5.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are none for the purpose of this report.

**6.0 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 Despite major streamlining of the associated processes and procedures, there is currently a considerable backlog in dealing with applications for vehicle crossovers. At the present level of available staff resources, this backlog is likely to increase for the foreseeable future.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

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