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**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE EPSOM & EWELL
15 September 2008**

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Question 1 Cllr Stephen Pontin

We have experienced a huge increase in the theft of manhole & drain covers in Ruxley Ward. This presents considerable safety hazards to all road users, particularly cyclists and pedestrians. We understand that this is a national trend due to the sharp increase in scrap metal value.

However, what are this committee with SCC doing to combat this crime? What research has been carried out regarding the use of alternative materials, and / or better methods for securing these covers?

Officer Response

Many of the manhole covers on the roads are maintained by utility companies however Surrey County Council, like other highway authorities, has traditionally used iron or steel covers as these materials have proved to be strong and durable enough for continuous traffic loading.

The material requirements for manhole and gully covers are specified by British Standard BS EN 124 :1994 as follows:

Cl 6.1, "manhole tops and gully tops" are to be cast iron, steel or steel reinforced concrete

Cl 6.1.2 Gully or manhole gratings have to be made from cast iron or steel

However Cl 6.1.3 "Other materials" states:

"For any other material used in the field of application of this standard, all requirements of this specification shall be met and an approved independent body shall establish any other relevant requirements and testing methods"

This may allow the use of "other materials" but they must meet all the requirements in the standard. At the present time we are not aware of an approved non metallic substitute for manhole covers and gully gratings, although the increasing price of scrap metal may prompt further development in this area.

Temporary plastic covers and grates have been used in the past however our materials engineers have not been able to approve any in a permanent situation.

Question 2 Cllr Stephen Pontin

The roads on the Clarendon Park Estate have not yet been adopted. When do SCC propose to complete this adoption process, thus taking responsibility for maintaining the roads, pavements and pathways etc?

Officer Response:

Adoption has still not taken place. The latest position, as of Monday 8th September is that the developers' contractor is completing final remedials to the pumping station (part of the sewage system). This will allow Thames Water to carry out a final inspection and adopt the sewer system. This is the only issue that is holding up the highway adoption. Completion of remedials to the pumping station will allow the highway adoption to proceed.

Developers latest timescale for completion is mid October.

Developers generally experiencing difficulties due to market conditions and this is having an impact on lots of sites. Luckily Clarendon Park well advanced, and all monies owed have been paid therefore it should not have any impact on completing adoption. Surrey's Transportation Development Control Team will continue to apply whatever pressure they can to ensure this happens as soon as possible.

The developers were reminded on Monday 8th to carry out weeding and road sweeping throughout Clarendon Park and we were assured this would happen shortly.