

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE IN EPSOM & EWELL
5 March 2012**

MEMBER QUESTIONS

**Question 1 Chris Frost
Re: Malden Rushett Junction B280/A243**

Although this junction is within the Royal Borough of Kingston, the traffic jams on approaching it from Epsom affect many local residents. Recently I have been having another attempt to get Kingston and Transport for London (TfL) to do something about the problem. They have a project in mind, but are waiting for funding news from TfL. Given that it affects many of our residents, would it be possible for us to offer to share the costs of the project (in any proportion considered appropriate)?

Are there any other ways we could encourage them to act?

Officer Response:

Officers are in discussion with TfL on this matter. They are also discussing with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council whether this location can be added to the Transport Infrastructure Schedule under the Community Infrastructure Levy to fund the work or at least contribution to it.

**Question 2 Chris Frost
Re: Highway Staff Shortage**

1. When will the vacancy for our second CHO be filled?
2. I understand that the Epsom & Ewell Engineer has been asked to undertake duties relating to the Olympic games cycling event. As a result he will not be available for his regular duties until after the games have finished. As we have a backlog of projects that needs to be addressed, when will we have a temporary member of staff to carry out his duties?

Officer Response:

1. The role is currently being advertised internally as part of the Phase 2 Restructure. The Phase 2 Restructure is due to 'go-live' in April, there may though still remain some vacancies if there is the need to go externally if appropriate internal candidates can not be found.
2. The Engineer historically covering Epsom & Ewell has been assisting with the planning and implementation of Olympic cycling events and associated projects for over a year, in conjunction with undertaking duties within the NE Area Team. The Phase 2 Restructure will result in additional resource for the team and staff involved in traffic management issues are likely to work across Borough boundaries in the NE Area in future to provide greater flexibility. However, in addition to this, temporary agency resource is being sought (and has been for some time) to assist the NE Area Team.

Question 3 Cllr Neil Dallen
Re: Stones Road Bridge/Tunnel

This project was started in 2010 and ran out of money.

We were promised that it was top priority for 2011/12 and would be completed during 2011. Last time I asked a question at the Local Committee I was told that “works are programed to start in September (2011) with a view to complete the work by the end of the year, details of the communication strategy will follow shortly.”

An email then informed us that the detailed programme will not be available until after the contract has been awarded.

We are now in March 2012 and the tunnel is still not completed.

To my knowledge no communication has been given to residents and no detailed programme made available.

1. Why the on-going delay to the completion of the project?
2. Why has there been no communication regarding the project progress (and problems)?
3. Why are sub-contractors allowed to slip completion dates of projects that cause considerable inconvenience to residents?
4. Are there any penalty payments that are now due to SCC from the sub-contractor?
5. What is the latest completion date?
6. Is there a realistic project plan that is available so that we can have some confidence in the completion date?

Officer Response:

1. There were delays at the beginning of the contract in Network Rail granting approvals for temporary works in connection with the construction. The contractor has made efforts to mitigate this delay, including working during Christmas week.
2. We have generally kept local Surrey members and the Area Team Manager aware of progress but not carried out wider communication on a regular basis.
3. It is a condition of the contract that our contractors are only allowed to revise their programme with our consent.
4. There is provision in the contract to charge liquidated damages where appropriate.
5. The subway was opened for use on the 24th February. There are some finishing works to complete which may require a further short closure.
6. A programme was submitted at the beginning of the contract and updated to reflect changes in progress.

Question 4 Cllr Julie Morris
Re: Light Pollution

Following greater efficiency in lighting of road signs, bollards and energy-efficient bulbs in street lights there are birds singing all night in some areas, a situation more commonly associated with central London. What account does the new regime take of possible light pollution and disruption to wildlife and can adjustments be made to enable normal bird behaviour patterns to return?

Officer Response:

Not much work has so far been undertaken that would affect the lighting of signs and bollards. We are working towards better use of photo-electric cells and possibly converting some units to LED but this is very much in the planning stage as it requires a degree of investment not immediately available via current budgets.

In terms of the street lighting programme which is replacing the lights throughout the county there are a number of benefits which have been endorsed by the CPRE. Andy Smith, CPRE Surrey Branch Director, recently commented on the new lights by saying: "This is just the beginning but we look forward to a time when the night skies above Surrey are genuinely dark and are no longer blighted by that seemingly ever present orange glow. Surrey County Council is to be warmly congratulated for the work it has done on this. For the CPRE it is about preserving rural character and restoring some of what has been lost to us in recent decades through urbanisation."

One of the key elements is that the lights which are now being replaced tend to have the lamp element protruding from a bracket which is then covered by a glass bowl and allows light to emit from a very wide angle which results in light coming sideways and to a degree upwards. The new lanterns are constructed differently and in these the lamp element is housed deeper inside the lantern which focusses light downwards in a much more controlled way. This is supported by a number of angled mirrors within the lantern which controls the direction of the light. These factors ensure that the light shines down where it is needed. The new lamps emit white light instead of the orange light produced by many of the old lights.

In addition, the new lights are dimmed from 2300-0530 every night. In residential areas, there is a 50% reduction in power and on routes with higher traffic levels the power is reduced by 25%.

Both these elements combined are resulting in less light pollution being created and once the programme of replacement is completed in early 2015, these benefits will be realised across the County.

Question 5 Cllr Michael Arthur
Re: Primary Route Destination

It has been raised with me now that Epsom is expanding with new developments if a way could be sought to make application to the Highways Agency for designation of Epsom as a primary route destination.

For road travellers unfamiliar with our local area, Epsom is not always an easy place to find. Such a designation would greatly improve this and would also be an economic boost by making the town better known.

Could the officers comment and advise as to how such an application might be taken forward?"

Officer Response

Parts of the Primary Route Network do go through the centre of Epsom. DfT periodically update the list of Primary Destinations asking Highway Authorities to recommend changes. This happened last in 2011. The response from the County Council in discussion with the Leader of the Council was as follows:

The current list of primary destinations does not reflect the relative importance of towns within Surrey. However, the popularity of sat navs means that signing to primary destinations is not as important as it used to be. Our priority at the moment has to be highway maintenance and improving the condition of our roads. Whilst in an ideal world we would want to change the primary destinations, we do not see it as a priority at the moment. We would like to defer a decision on the primary destinations for a number of years, until road

condition has improved substantially. Given the state of roads across the country and a general squeeze on resources, we would recommend that the Government adopt a similar approach nationwide.

The DfT received 29 requests from local authorities to change the list of Primary Destinations in England as part of last year's consultation. Of those, only two towns were added and one was removed.

Question 6 Colin Taylor

Re: Residents Parking

1. I note in the minutes from 25 January item 3/12 paragraph 5 comment 1 the statement: "Officers may need to consider the eligibility of residents for permits."

In the informal consultation last summer, residents were sent maps indicating the areas for Residents parking schemes. These were not sent to members. Under what statutory provision or Council decision are elected members being excluded from this consideration, where above all local background is particularly relevant.?

2. Has a date been fixed yet for when residents permits will start to be required?
3. Have the details of eligibility for special permits for GPs, nurses and care workers been agreed and where can the details be found? (I thought there was going to be a meeting to discuss these points.)
4. Although not recorded in the draft minutes, one of the conditions for agreeing the proposals was that Horsley Close and Hazon Way (with its side roads) plus Waterloo Road would be looked at urgently. Clearly the implementation of what has already been agreed elsewhere must take priority, but approximately when will it possible to sort out the long-standing issues with these roads?
5. In relation to the areas where residents bays were not progressed because of the level of support, can members have a breakdown of the responses from each road? (A, number of residents who are disappointed by not having a scheme so far are asking members for more information.)

Officer Response

1. I believe that it was agreed that there would be further discussions with Councillors to decide those who would be included in the permit schemes, following the last committee meeting. Feedback from residents and Councillors alike suggested that there may be different requirements to those suggested in the original consultation. This will be discussed further with Councillors.
2. We are likely to look at implementation early in the next financial year.
3. These are normally fairly standard throughout the county - the Traffic Regulation Order will say who is entitled, but final details are yet to be agreed.
4. In the new financial year. The next review is unlikely to start before summer 2012 to allow for completion of the work required from the 2011 review.
5. Colin Taylor has been sent the information he requested. Other members can be sent a copy on request to the Community Partnership and Committee Officer.