



SURREY

COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)

Date: THURSDAY 1 DECEMBER 2005

Time: 7.00 pm

Place: PARK BARN CENTRE, PARK BARN DRIVE, GUILDFORD GU2 8EN

Members present:

Surrey County Council

Mr John Ades (Ash)
Mr Bill Barker (Horsleys)
Mr David Davis (Shere)
Ms Sarah Di Caprio (Guildford South-East)
Mr David Goodwin (Guildford South-West)
Mr Mike Nevins (Worplesdon)
Mr Eddie Owen (Guildford East)
Mr Tony Rooth (Shalford)
Ms Pauline Searle (Guildford North)
Ms Fiona White (Guildford West)

Guildford Borough Council (for Transportation matters)

Mr Keith Chesterton (Stoke)
Ms Vivienne Johnson (Christchurch)
Ms Liz Hogger (Effingham)
Ms Marilyn Spier (Merrow)
Mr Sheridan Westlake (Merrow)
Mr Tony Phillips (Onslow)
Ms Jenny Wicks (Clandon & Horsley)
Ms Diana Lockyer-Nibbs (Normandy)
Mr Terence Patrick (Send)
Mr John Garrett (Lovelace) (substitute)

**THESE MINUTES WERE FORMALLY APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE AT ITS
MEETING ON 9 FEBRUARY 2006**

The following issues were raised during the informal public questions session:

- Traffic at the Stoke interchange (Hazel Paget)
- Surrey County Council contact centre (Hazel Paget)
- Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic in Worplesdon (Sandra Morgan, Worplesdon Parish Council)
- Parking by university staff and students in Westborough and Park Barn
- Parking in Millmead Terrace (Jane Bell)
- Burpham Juniors Football Club (Martin Bradley)
- Rights of Way Improvement Plan and signage (Peter Hattersley)
- Bus passes (Peter Hattersley)
- Parking along Southway
- Delays in implementing road crossings (Epsom Rd, Boxgrove Rd) (Cllr Eddie Owen)
- Cost of implementing 'crossovers' or dropped kerbs (Cllr David Goodwin)
- Treatment of potholes (Cllr Fiona White)

All references to Items refer to the Agenda for the meeting.

IN PUBLIC

96/05 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Nigel Manning was substituted by John Garrett.

97/05 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (20 October 2005) [Item 2]

Agreed and signed by the Chairman.

98/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

Personal interests were declared as follows:

Keith Chesterton	Item 7	Chair of Guildford Group of Ramblers Association
David Goodwin	Item 10	Holder of a parking permit
Fiona White	Item 16	SCC representative on Surrey Community Development Trust
Sarah Di Caprio	Item 16	Member of Guildford Mukono link and Guildford Environmental Forum

99/05 PETITIONS [Item 4]

Cllr Pauline Searle presented a petition of over 300 signatures calling for consideration of traffic congestion in Grange Road and Manor Road, and the halting of further development in the area until the traffic issues are resolved.

The Committee also received a petition of 30 signatures from residents of White Hart Court calling for improvements in the condition of the footpaths in Ripley from White Hart Court to the local shops.

A report will be brought on each item to a future meeting of the committee.

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100/05 WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 5]

Two questions had been received from Roger Duckworth and Caroline Reeves. The questions and answers are appended to these minutes.

101/05 WRITTEN MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 6]

Four questions had been received from Sheridan Westlake, Diana Lockyer-Nibbs and Liz Hogger (2). The questions and answers are appended to these minutes.

102/05 RIGHTS OF WAY, FOOTPATH 375 NORMANDY, OFF FLEXFORD ROAD: MAKING OF DIVERSION ORDER [Item 7]

Members agreed the officer recommendations

103/05 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2 [Item 8]

Members made various comments on the draft plan including the following issues:

- Transport Innovation Fund (TIF)
- Workplace parking levy
- Cycling
- Sustainable development implications
- Park and Ride
- Maintenance

The Group Manager for the Local Transport Plan responded to the comments.

104/05 YOUTH VOICES PROJECT [Item 12]

Representatives of Guildford Community Learning Partnership and Jellytree Productions Ltd introduced a short DVD film showing young people of East Horsley raising the following requests and issues:

- A youth shelter in East Horsley
- Improved lighting around the youth centre
- Better communication with the Police
- Information about healthier lifestyles (i.e. smoking and alcohol)
- It takes a long time for facilities to be provided

Members agreed officer recommendations i) and iii) and that officers should investigate the feasibility of further provision for young people in East Horsley and Bellfields.

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105/05 SURREY WASTE PLAN 2005 – THE PREFERRED PLAN [Item 13]

Nick Smith from the Guildford Anti-Incinerator Network (GAIN) addressed the committee

Members made various comments on the draft plan, including the following points:

- Preference for alternatives to incineration
- There should be more investment in recycling resource centres
- Brownfield sites should be used (near the residential or commercial sources of waste)
- Wisley is not a suitable site for incineration
- The plan has a bias towards incineration
- There are flaws in the consultation questionnaire
- Alternatives to incineration should be promoted e.g. composting
- Sites could be in greenfields areas, but not AONBs

The Head of Minerals and Waste responded to the comments and questions.

106/05 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS [Item 14]

The Chief Executive of Guildford Borough Council presented the report. Members noted the report

[John Garrett and Keith Chesterton left the meeting.]

107/05 CONTROLLED PARKING ZONE EASTWARD EXTENSION [Item 9]

The following residents addressed the Committee:

Ken Waffenden (Aldersey Road) - supportive of the proposals

Alan Miles (Pit Farm Tennis Club) - concern about the impact on the club

Eric McCurdy (Tormead Road) – parking issues in Tormead Road.

Vivienne Johnson proposed, and Sarah Di Caprio seconded, an amendment which was discussed. Officers and Members advised some adjustments to the amendment, which the Committee agreed as follows:.

- (i) That the proposed extension to the Controlled Parking Zone into the area detailed on the plan in ANNEXE 1 of the report be implemented with the minor amendments detailed in ANNEXE 2 and shown on the plan attached as ANNEXE 1, together with
 - a) switch of unrestricted and 4-hour bays in Broadwater Rise, subject to there being no objections from residents affected by the change
 - b) conversion of the two proposed 4-hour bays in Fielders Green to unlimited waiting,but with the exclusion of the unadopted part of Cranley Close.

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- (ii) That the Surrey County Council make the orders as advertised subject to the amendments recommended in this report under the relevant parts of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, including sections 1,2,4,32,35 and 36 and Parts III and IV of schedule 9, giving effect to the proposed extension of the Controlled Parking Zone.
- (iii) That it does not support objections which have not been resolved.
- (iv) That any reasonable advice and non-financial support be given to residents from the unadopted part of Cranley Close to introduce measures to minimise dangers and protect the Close from adverse impacts resulting from the adjacent scheme
- (v) That officers investigate at the earliest opportunity the introduction of no-waiting restrictions in Tangier Road at its junction with The Ridgeway.
- (vi) That the objector in St Omer Road be encouraged to make a request for Advisory Driveway Protection Markings directly to SCC Highways to assess the situation regarding restricted access.
- (vii) That a report on the scheduling of the review be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

108/05 CONTROLLED PARKING ZONE CENTRAL AREAS (AREAS A TO E) [Item 10]

Members discussed the proposals in the report. Officers agreed to take forward the request by David Goodwin as detailed in paragraph 41 of the report.

Members agreed the officer recommendations. [David Goodwin left the meeting for the discussion and decision on recommendation (iii).]

Jane Bell addressed the committee concerning Parking in Millmead Terrace.

109/05 EFFINGHAM COMMON ROAD - PEDESTRIAN REFUGE [Item 11]

Members agreed the officer recommendation.

110/05 MEMBERS' REVENUE BIDS [Item 16]

John Ades and other members indicated that they were in the process of negotiating with organisations before making proposals to the committee.

Members agreed the bids including those in the list tabled at the meeting, subject to further negotiation and consultation, and detailed Service Level Agreements being put in place.

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**111/05 LOCAL CAPITAL ALLOCATION FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS
2005/6 [Item 15]**

Members agreed to use the capital allocation in the following way:

- up to £5,000 on plaques to commemorate the victims of the Guildford bombings and the effect of the bombings on people in Guildford (subject to further investigation, particularly into any previous commemorations),
- the remaining balance split equally between the Wey Navigation and the Waterside Centre.

112/05 FORWARD PROGRAMME [Item 17]

Members agreed the Forward Plan

[Meeting ended 10.50 pm]

.....(Mr Bill Barker - Chairman)

Contact:

Dave Johnson (Area Director)

01483 517301

dave.johnson@surreycc.gov.uk

Diccon Bright (Local Committee & Partnership Officer) 01483 517336

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Item 5: Written Public Questions

ROGER DUCKWORTH

Q1 Environmental Problems at Strawberry Farm, Glaziers Lane, Normandy

Strawberry Farm has an established soil mixing operation on about 1.5Ha of the site. A Certificate of Lawful Use was issued in 1994 after a successful appeal against most of the content of Enforcement notices issued by SCC and GBC in 1992. The Inspector's report noted that the access was unsuitable if vehicle movements were to increase (Paragraph 62). The details of the soil mixing are specified in the Waste Management Licence (WRA 38) issued by SCC Planning in 1995.

In Spring 2005, activity on site increased with the import of green waste and scrap timber which are shredded and chipped on site, three or more large excavators working on site moving huge mounds of soil and producing clouds of dust, much higher noise levels and, in the later stages, nauseating smells across the surrounding properties, due to a large quantity of shredded green material in steaming, stinking heaps. There has also been a large increase in the number of heavy lorries approaching the site through Normandy, along Glaziers Lane and then squeezing along the restricted access track. Without any form of public notification or consultation, the site has registered an Exemption, which allows the import of 20,000 tonnes/year of green waste in addition to the existing soil throughput of 35,000 tonnes/year.

While many residents pro-actively support the principles of recycling, they are adversely affected by the processes at Strawberry Farm. Residents have raised their concerns with Parish, Borough and County Councils, and the Environment Agency. A petition has been raised by those directly affected (particularly those in Glaziers Lane and the south end of Bailes Lane). There are already over 250 signatures, which represent the majority of the properties in the affected areas.

1. How can these new industrial scale operations covered by the Exemption start at Strawberry Farm without the requirement to seek and gain Planning Permission?
2. Is Clause 62 of the inspector's 1994 report relevant to the increased traffic at the junction of the track to Strawberry Farm with Glaziers Lane?
3. Why is this new industrial scale recycling operation being started as an open field (Green Belt) farm activity when it should be conducted in fully enclosed conditions to ensure close control of the processes and containment of gases, dust, noise and other airborne contaminants? The site must have adequate transport access.

A Some of the information being quoted by local residents in relation to this issue does not appear to be wholly accurate, and officers are grateful for the opportunity to set the record straight. An officer has recently spoken to Mr. Duckworth and updated him on the current position with the site. The background and current position regarding the site with regard to Planning Control is as follows:

The site currently benefits jointly from a Certificate of Lawful Use of Development (CLUED) issued by the County Council and a Planning Permission granted by an Inspector following an enforcement appeal that allows the recycling of soil. These clearly define the permitted operational activities on site and the area of land for which such is permitted. While neither the CLUED or Planning Permission cover any part of the private access road leading into the site, the Appeal Inspector clearly recognised that the recycling use had used that route since its commencement. There are no specific planning conditions relating to the use of the land or indeed the number of HGV movements permitted in relation to site operations.

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Item 5: Written Public Questions

Surrey County Council (SCC) has been carefully considering current site operations as to whether the shredding of imported green waste material for incorporation into the soils as an additive requires planning permission. Past operations on site have involved the shredding of small volumes of imported green waste being added to the soil as a supplement to imported mushroom compost. Due to the decline in the British mushroom industry locally, the compost has now been completely replaced by green waste material (not timber) which is being shredded and added to soils to provide a similar organic volume to that previously. Although the materials involved differ, the principal remains the same, namely the incorporation of organic matter to improve the recovered soils. Whilst site operations have therefore increased, consideration must be given to the fact that the landowner may be able to operate at this level under the existing planning permission & CLUED that cover the site.

Information has been recently received from the operator's planning consultant which documents past and current operations. After careful consideration of this information in the context of planning case law, SCC officers are of the opinion that some aspects of current site operations extend beyond the Planning Permission and CLUED that cover the site. Accordingly the operators consultant has been informed that planning permission is required for (1) the storage of imported green waste, siting of shredding machinery and thereafter the shredding of imported green waste for incorporation in soil screening, (2) the creation of a hard stand area and installation of a weighbridge and office / welfare units, and (3) the proposed creation of an additional internal access track leading to the site operational area. Initial feedback from the operator's consultant is that planning applications will be submitted to address these matters. A site meeting is being arranged with one of SCC's Planning Officers in order that the required content of such applications can be discussed which will hopefully avoid any unnecessary delay in their submission.

HGV movements to and from the site are an ongoing concern of local residents. Comment has been made regarding poor sight lines and the turning geometry of the entrance to the access track from Glaziers Lane. However as documented above, there are no planning conditions restricting the use of the highway or private access track. This sort of control cannot be imposed retrospectively, although some control might be achieved if a further planning application was made to expand the site. Paragraph 62 as referred to by Mr. Duckworth is a comment within the Inspector's decision notice based on that evidence put before him and not a condition of the permission. Clearly the Inspector did not feel it was appropriate to withhold planning permission at the time, despite concerns about access.

In summary, on the basis of previous planning decisions and due to the nature of planning control, concerns with regard to HGV movements on the Public Highway would have to be addressed with the Police. I suspect the Police can only address dangerous driving as I understand there is no weight restriction on Glaziers Lane. Those concerns relating to the access road are private matters which therefore need to be addressed independently with the site operator. Should of course a retrospective planning application be considered necessary for the change in operations on site, vehicle movements for that part of the development applied for may be considered appropriate. It may be useful for you to speak to Mr. S Parsons (0208 541 9864) in this Council's Highways Department who may also be able to comment on the current concerns regarding HGV movements.

Finally, beyond the planning control that Surrey County Council deal with, the issue of the Waste Management Licence Exemption is a matter that needs to be addressed independently with the Environment Agency who, under their own relevant legislation monitor the waste license issued previously by this Council. The Agency's remit also covers concerns relating to odour and dust etc from the recycling activities. The contact officer is Mr. John Naylor (01276 - 450004).

Paul Warner, Planning Enforcement Officer, Minerals, Waste and County Development

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Item 5: Written Public Questions

CLLR. CAROLINE REEVES, GBC MEMBER for FRIARY & ST. NICOLAS WARD (submitted prior to the by-election on behalf of G4 Residents' Association)
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Q2 CONTROLLED PARKING ZONE – RESIDENTS' PERMITS

1. Is it possible to make the designated area of each permit much clearer on the actual permit, perhaps by printing it in a black tint behind all the other black text on the permit? This would make it easier to see if a car is parking in the wrong area.
2. Is it possible to make closer checks on the use of permits by people who move out of the area? There are residents in our area who have now moved away, and although they complained bitterly about parking when they lived here, they are now parking here using the permits which they renewed before they moved.

- A**
1. We can increase the font used for the "area" on permits issued this year and re-design the permit for next year. The permit area is printed on to the permit when it is issued. To have permits pre-printed with the letter in the background would mean printing and holding 9 different sets of paper. It would also mean changing the paper for different customers and therefore lengthen queues at the public counter and the time it takes to issue a permit. The registration number of the vehicle needs to be prominent but there is scope for enlarging the size of the area letter on the permit.
 2. The number of permits issued per household is limited and we have to be satisfied the former permit holder has moved away before a permit is issued to a new resident. If the old resident has not returned the permit Parking Attendants are often asked to keep an eye open for the permit being used. Every resident declares that they will return the permit if they move away. If we observe or are given information that a permit is being used by a person who no longer lives at the address for which the permit was issued we can look to take further action against them.

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Item 6: Written Members' Questions

CLLR. DIANA LOCKYER-NIBBS, GBC MEMBER FOR NORMANDY

Q1 HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES - NOT IN PIRBRIGHT

The new arrangements set out at the last Committee Meeting will mean effectively a complete ban on HGVs going through Pirbright. Apart from isolated local businesses the main concentration is to the Ash/Aldershot area. They will now have to continue along A322. If allowed they will use Holly Lane to go to A323 through Normandy. If not they will have to go round the already congested roundabout at the end of the Guildford by-pass.

Normandy already has its fair share of HGVs. Its road safety scheme is possibly being put back yet again, whilst Pirbright continues to receive regular improvement works. More particularly the HGVs for the Vokes site and the new industrial centre there, having been diverted as above, will now use Cobbetts Hill and as I have pointed out before, this road is completely unsuitable for such traffic.

The Traffic Commissioner this year rejected an application for a Vehicle Operators Licence at the wireless station on this road. Indeed it is more unsuitable than any of the Pirbright roads now being restricted.

I believe that the wider implications of the Pirbright ban need to be considered before any ban is approved. Will this be done? Will Holly Lane also be closed to HGVs? How does this effect Surrey's Distributor Road Network?

A At the last meeting of the Committee an HGV ban was proposed as one possible solution to problems of vibration allegedly related to traffic calming measures installed in Cemetery Pales, Pirbright. The Committee agreed (i) that a 7.5 Tonne ban be implemented in Cemetery Pales, and (ii) that an Area-wide ban be investigated for the whole of the Pirbright area.

Traffic orders are presently being drafted for the proposed Cemetery Pales ban and initial consultations are taking place. Since the eastern section of Cemetery Pales is in Woking borough, the approval of the Woking Local Committee will also be required. The diversion route for traffic affected by the ban will be via the A324 Connaught Road. However this passes under two bridges of restricted height. An alternative diversion route for over-height vehicles is therefore required, via the A322, (Bagshot Road / Worplesdon Road) and the A323 (Aldershot Road / Guildford Road). No diverted traffic will be signposted via Fox Corner or Holly Lane, although it is possible that HGV drivers will find these routes for themselves. These diversions are unlikely to increase the overall level of HGV traffic in Normandy, but may cause a reduction in HGV traffic using the A324 with an equivalent increase using the A323.

School Lane and Hunts Hill Road are themselves to be the subject of 7.5 Tonne HGV bans, as agreed by the Committee on 3 March 2005. Cobbetts Hill Road was excluded from this decision by the Committee against officer recommendations in view of the effects on school bus services and the uncertainty at the time regarding the former Wireless Station site. This decision may be reconsidered in the light of changed circumstances.

It is not clear at present whether the Cemetery Pales ban will proceed, as there have already been reservations expressed. Normandy Parish Council and local County and Borough Members will be included in the consultation and are encouraged to express their views in order that these may be properly considered. If it proves impossible to proceed with the Cemetery Pales ban, it is even less likely that an area-wide ban in Pirbright will be possible.

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Item 6: Written Members' Questions

CLLR. SHERIDAN WESTLAKE, GBC MEMBER FOR MERROW

Q2 THE SURREY SAFETY CAMERA PARTNERSHIP

Given (1) the need to promote greater accountability and transparency in the debate on the location and use of speed cameras and (2) the public interest in scrutinising the operation of the new Safety Camera Partnership, if the Committee will publish figures for the estimated gross income from each individual fixed speed camera within (a) the Borough, (b) the rest of Surrey, in 2004-05, and the estimated gross income from mobile speed enforcement cameras as a whole within (a) the Borough, (b) the rest of Surrey, in 2004-05.

A Openness and Transparency

The Surrey Safety Camera Partnership is proud of its open and transparent approach to reducing casualties through the provision of road traffic enforcement at collision "hot spots" in Surrey. This is demonstrated by the advertising of our enforcement locations throughout Surrey on our website and in other literature, along with data showing the numbers of collisions and speed surveys before and after the introduction of enforcement at each of the sites.

As well as this we also ensure that our enforcement sites conform to minimum visibility requirements, are well signed, and fixed speed cameras are conspicuous by being painted bright yellow. Vehicle activated signs are also being used at some locations to warn drivers of the hazards and the presence of the safety cameras if drivers approach too fast. The aim is to give drivers maximum opportunity to stick to the speed limit and to warn them of these dangerous locations. However, if despite the warnings drivers continue to substantially exceed the limit or jump red lights at these dangerous locations, they will be issued with a penalty.

As part of their commitment to openness and transparency, Safety Camera Partnerships are required to publish audited accounts for their expenditure following the end of each year of operation. As this is the first year of operation of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership the first set of accounts will be published sometime after April 2006.

Cost Recovery Process

Speed and red light cameras have been in use in Surrey since 1995. Prior to the setting up of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership in April of this year, the cost of the provision of safety camera enforcement was met by the County Council, Police and Magistrates budgets, and ultimately the taxpayer. In the past it was not always possible to provide enforcement at locations that really needed it due to lack of resources in any one of the partner organisations. Following the setting up of the Safety Camera Partnership, the partner organisations are now able to recoup the cost of providing safety camera and mobile speed enforcement from central government from the fines generated by motorists speeding and jumping red lights at some of Surrey's most dangerous locations. There is now no cost to the taxpayer. There is no financial incentive to the partners to generate more revenue above that needed to recover the costs, as any surplus is retained by central government. The Police staff employed in this activity are an additional resource that would not otherwise be available, and are not taken from other police duties.

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Item 6: Written Members' Questions

A Level Of Enforcement at Individual Safety Camera Enforcement Sites

(cont'd)

Data on the number of offences and hence the level of enforcement at individual safety camera sites will not be made available. The Surrey Safety Camera Partnership deploys resources between individual sites depending on the level of casualties and the road safety need. If drivers thought that there was a far less chance of being photographed at some sites then they may be tempted to ignore the fact that it is a dangerous location and exceed the limit. This could lead to an increase in road casualties.

Therefore it is considered that the public interest in disclosing site-specific data at this level is outweighed by the potential consequences to law enforcement and the impact of such a release on road safety measures. The decision to exempt this information when submitted under the Freedom of Information Act has been supported by the Information Commissioner.

It is worth pointing out that Councillors will be provided with the same response irrespective of whether the request is submitted directly as a request for information to the Safety Camera Partnership under the Freedom of Information Act, or whether submitted as questions to Local Committee.

Mobile Speed Camera Enforcement in Guildford and Surrey Prior to the Safety Camera Partnership

Although the levels of enforcement at individual enforcement sites maintained by the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership cannot be released, it is possible to provide the level of enforcement undertaken by mobile speed camera units in Guildford and Surrey as a whole during 2004/05. As this was the year prior to the creation of the Surrey Safety Camera Partnership this enforcement was solely a police matter and all fines were retained by central government.

The total number of offences detected by mobile speed enforcement that resulted in a payment of Conditional Offer of Fixed Penalty Notice in Guildford Borough during 2004-05 was 2 offences, leading to fines totalling £120 being paid to the exchequer.

The total number of offences detected by mobile speed enforcement that resulted in a payment of Conditional Offer of Fixed Penalty Notice in Surrey during 2004- 05 was 1,969 offences, leading to fines totalling £118,140 being paid to the exchequer.

Duncan Knox
Project Manager - Surrey Safety Camera Partnership

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Item 6: Written Members' Questions

CLLR. LIZ HOGGER, GBC MEMBER for EFFINGHAM

Q3 Community Team for Guildford

I understand that Mole Valley District has a scheme called the Community Team. I'm told this is a gang of two men with a lorry and equipment working on a rotational basis - one week in each of the Mole Valley areas all year round. For the week they are in a particular area, they will do any jobs within their capacity - potholes, sign cleaning, path clearing, hedge trimming etc. The Parish Clerks just phone up to put things on their list, which are then done in turn. Parish Clerks within Mole Valley apparently talk in glowing terms about this arrangement. Given the problems with the County Council side of Operation Locust this year in Guildford Borough, can the Community Team scheme be considered for implementation within the parished areas of Guildford, to provide a more regular service rather than the one-off annual cleanup of Operation Locust, and allowing direct input from local parish councils?

A A single Community Gang has been in operation in Guildford for the past two years. Unfortunately funding levels to date have not allowed for more than one gang. Guildford has 24 Parishes, with some 50% of the population in the unparished area of Guildford Town. The result has been that each parish (or equivalent area in the town) has received attention for approximately one week each year. Parish Councils have been approached for matters to add to the list, but in some cases the lists have been so long as a result that the Community Gang has been unable to attend to all of these in the limited time available.

We are currently reviewing the operation on the Community Gangs in South West Surrey with a view to (i) introducing the arrangements similar to those described by Cllr. Hogger and (ii) arranging a second gang in Guildford. The process will continue to involve Parish Councils, but also, as in Mole Valley, involving County Members. In other parts of the County the Community Gangs cover one County Division at a time, rather than one Parish, and this has been found to work effectively. We hope this new arrangement will operate from early in the new (calendar) year. In view of the perceived lack of success of Operation Locust we will be reviewing our future involvement.

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Item 6: Written Members' Questions

CLLR. LIZ HOGGER, GBC MEMBER for EFFINGHAM

Q4 Gritting priorities for rural roads

Mr. R. Suckling, representing John Weller Farms Ltd of Dunley Hill Farm, Ranmore Common Road, within the Effingham borough ward, has recently written to the Guildford Highways Team concerning inadequate gritting within the Guildford Borough section of the Ranmore road. Mr. Suckling points out that the road is gritted on the Mole Valley side of the boundary, but the stretch from the Guildford borough boundary as far as the junction with Green Dene is not treated as a priority for gritting by Guildford highways. This road serves 15 office units at Dunley Hill Farm, as well as several homes, yet it seems to be regarded as low priority for gritting since it is classified as a 'minor road'. In fact this road is heavily used by commuters as well as business traffic, and there have been several incidents of vehicles losing control as they pass from the gritted section of road in Mole Valley onto the ungritted section which is the responsibility of Guildford. I seek an assurance that the whole stretch of the road over Ranmore will in future be given high priority for gritting, to ensure a seamless service across the Mole Valley / Guildford divide.

A The South West Surrey Maintenance team received Mr. Suckling's letter on 28th November, and preparation of a reply is in hand.

Crocknorth Road and Ranmore Common Road were added to the precautionary salting network in 2004 and are currently gritted as Priority One routes as far as the boundary with Mole Valley. The gritter leaves Green Dene grits to the boundary, turns and grits Critten Lane and Beech Avenue to the A246.

Background information

The relevant County Council's policies and practices are set out in the annual Winter Maintenance Plan. The precautionary salting network is reviewed annually, and is carried out on Class A and B roads, and on other roads carrying over 5,000 vehicles per day. In addition, we aim to treat as many of the following as practicable and within resource constraints:

- main access routes to major accident and emergency hospitals, and to important emergency service locations
- main access routes to important industrial and large educational establishments
- major bus routes and accesses to bus and rail stations
- roads which present a local hazard, such as steep hazardous gradients and over bridges where known local icing conditions occur.

The County Council is unable to carry out precautionary salting on all roads in the County. The main reasons for this are:

- the very high cost - about £35,000 for each time the winter service fleet is mobilised.
- the practical difficulties in resource terms of pre-salting all roads (4850 km) overnight.

The Guildford precautionary salting network is some 250 km. in length, approximately 35% of the total road network. At present, the Guildford network is treated using four predetermined routes out of a total of 35 routes for the entire County.