



Minutes of meeting

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)

Date: WEDNESDAY 9 December 2009

Time: 7.00 pm

Place: King George V Hall, Effingham

Members present:

Surrey County Council

Mr Mike Nevins (Worplesdon) (Chairman)
Mr Bill Barker (Horsleys) (Vice Chairman)
Mr Mark Brett-Warburton (Guildford South-East)
Mr Graham Ellwood (Guildford East)
Mr David Goodwin (Guildford South-West)
Ms Marsha Moseley (Ash)
Mr Tony Rooth (Shalford)
Ms Pauline Searle (Guildford North)
Mr Keith Taylor (Shere)
Ms Fiona White (Guildford West)

Guildford Borough Council (for Transportation matters)

Mr David Carpenter (Merrow)
Ms Mary Laker (Worplesdon)
Mr Nigel Manning (Ash Vale)
Ms Diana Lockyer-Nibbs (Normandy)
Ms Caroline Reeves (Friary & St Nicolas)
Mr Matt Furniss (Christchurch)*
Mr Tony Phillips (Onslow)
Ms Jenny Wicks (Clandon & Horsley)
Mr John Garrett (Lovelace)

* substitute

**MINUTES TO BE AGREED AT THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL COMMITTEE ON 09 MARCH
2010**

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

- Flooding in Chestnut Avenue (Keith Chesterton).
- Traffic lights on the A246, Effingham (Anthony Clark – Effingham Parish Council).
- Flooding at East Horsley train station (Tony Page).
- Anti-social parking in Park Barn (Wayne McShane – Park Barn and Westborough Community Association).
- The Guildford Society Walking Audits (Maurice Barham – Guildford Society).
- Replacing faded road markings (Charles Hope – West Horsley Parish Council).
- Road signs that are left on the highway after works have been completed (Tony Page).

A number of questioners noted that they had not received a response when they had written to the Highways Team. The Local Highways Manager apologised and explained that they receive a high volume of correspondence. The Local Committee resolved that the Chairman would write a letter to the Head of Service to ask for additional support and resources for the Guildford Highways Team.

53/09 Apologies for absence and substitutions [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Sarah Di Caprio and Terence Patrick (substituted by Matt Furniss).

54/09 Minutes of the last meeting (30 September 2009) [Item 2]

Agreed and signed by the Chairman.

55/09 Declarations of interest [Item 3]

Pauline Searle declared an interest under Item 11, because she is a trustee of Disability Challengers.

Diana Lockyer-Nibbs declared an interest under Item 7, because she is a member of the British Horse Society).

56/09 Petitions [Item 4]

No petitions were received.

57/09 Written public questions [Item 5]

Six written public questions were received. Answers are set out at **Annex 1**.

In relation to question 1, Joan Butler of the Guildford Society recognised the cost of creating a manual and suggested that the Heritage Lottery Fund is one option that could be explored. The Local Highways Manager noted that discussions need to take place with Guildford Borough Council regarding the officer time it would require to complete a manual. Tony Rooth commended the hard work of the Guildford Society. In response to a question from Fiona White, the Local Highways Manager explained that Surrey County Council had spent £100,000 on the High Street, and that Guildford Borough Council are currently tendering for their planned £100,000 of work. Mark Brett-Warburton highlighted that the Local Development Framework has to have a design framework and the possibility that

MINUTES TO BE AGREED AT THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL COMMITTEE ON 09 MARCH 2010

a manual would duplicate work. Caroline Reeves gave the support of town centre councillors to the work of the Guildford Society.

In response to question 5, Liz Hogger of Effingham Parish Council questioned whether there is extra funding available to cover the costs incurred when projects cause additional damage. The Local Highways Manager explained that there is no additional funding available. In relation to damage caused by the suspension of the HGV ban on a diversion route in Effingham, he explained that the Highways Team would continue to monitor the roads closely.

In response to question 6, Liz Hogger of Effingham Parish Council asked for confirmation if discussions between Howard of Effingham and Surrey County Council had taken place over the admissions policy. There was not a Member or officer present with the detailed knowledge to answer this question. The Chairman agreed that the council would provide the questioner with a response.

58/09 Written members' questions [Item 6]

No written Member questions were received.

Non-executive functions

59/09 Byway open to all traffic 521 (Ash) seasonal Traffic Regulation Order [Item 7]

The Committee agreed:

- (i) the grounds for making a Seasonal TRO are met, and an Order should be made for part of Byway Open to All Traffic 521 (Ash) as shown on Drawing No. 3/1/54/H15 (see Annex 1).

Reason for the decision:

To protect the surface of the right of way over the winter period from further vehicle damage. Allowing the surface to recover during the winter should make it more accessible to other user groups.

60/09 Priority places: addressing inequality in Guildford borough [Item 8]

Wayne McShane of the Park Barn and Westborough Community Association addressed the Local Committee. He raised concerns that the community have over a rumour that the old Pond Meadow School building might become a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

Fiona White sympathised with the views of the Westborough Community Association and highlighted that Westborough already has one PRU in the St Francis Centre. Commending the achievements set out in the report, notably the fall in crime, she praised the work of the two community development workers. She noted that community development is an investment that saves money in the long-term and that it enables the community to help itself.

Pauline Searle supported the comments made by Fiona White and outlined her appreciation of the work of the community development workers, for example in setting up the Bellfields youth club.

MINUTES TO BE AGREED AT THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL COMMITTEE ON 09 MARCH 2010

The Vice-Chairman noted the recent achievements of Kings College, but highlighted his concern that the morale of the school and community would suffer if a PRU were located in the old Pond Meadow building.

Mary Laker supported the achievements of partnership working in North Guildford. She noted the benefit and need for Pupil Referral Units, but raised concerns about the fairness of one area having two PRUs.

Jenny Wicks commended the Surrey Strategic Partnerships approach to tackling the issues faced by our more deprived communities.

The Area Director for North-West Surrey noted that the future of the old Pond Meadow building is under discussion, however nothing has been decided yet. She confirmed that the next step is a meeting with King's College, the local Member and county council officers. The Area Director also noted that the approach of the Surrey Strategic Partnership is a good opportunity for the mainstream services of partner organisations to review their approach to areas of deprivation.

The Local Committee agreed to:

- a) note and endorse the progress made in North Guildford and Ash.
- b) continue to use the resources at its disposal to promote the development of stronger, more self-reliant communities in Guildford.
- c) comment on the challenges facing partnership work in North Guildford and Ash.

Reason for the decision:

The work in deprived areas is undertaken to empower individuals and communities to develop local solutions to the problems that face them, and address a number of key issues for public services.

61/09 Local Committee capital and revenue allocations update 2008/09 [Item 9]

The Local Committee agreed to:

- i) note this review of the Capital & Revenue allocations for 2008/09.
- ii) comment on progress made and any concerns about delayed projects.
- iii) decide on any changes to the way the Committee deploys any future funding e.g. by pooling funds or agreeing strategic themes for the funding.

Reason for decision:

To formally acknowledge the range of outcomes achieved from this use of Surrey County Council funding.

62/09 Proposals for the Local Committee's revenue allocations [Item 10]

The Local Committee agreed to:

- a. approve the proposed expenditure from the Members' Revenue Allocation budget listed in paragraph 6 and detailed in Annexe A.

MINUTES TO BE AGREED AT THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL COMMITTEE ON 09 MARCH 2010

- b. note the allocations agreed under delegated authority from the 2009/10 budget since the Local Committee meeting held on 30 September 2009 (paragraph 4)
- c. note the return of funding to the relevant member for a project where funding is no longer required (paragraph 5).

Reason for decision:

To enhance the wellbeing of Guildford residents.

63/09 Proposals for the Local Committee's capital allocation [Item 11]

Members had a discussion regarding the process and criteria applied to the capital funding. It was noted that different systems are used in other districts and boroughs. It was recognised that if the Local Committee has a capital funding allocation for 2010/11, they should review how they use the money and look to allocate the money earlier in the financial year.

The Local Committee agreed to fund the following groups using its capital allocation:

- a) Groups for disabled people
 - Disability Challengers £4,480
 - Oakleaf Enterprise £4,920
 - Crossroads Care £2,800
- b) Groups for young people
 - Our Place Youth Group £1,520
 - Guildford YMCA £4,551
 - St Francis District Church £6,129
- c) Environmental improvements
 - Landscape and Access Team £9,000
 - Countryside Team £3,200.

Reason for decision:

To enhance the wellbeing of Guildford residents.

64/09 Climate change fund [Item 12]

Members discussed a number of potential ideas.

The Local Committee agreed:

- a) to identify a project or projects for consideration and decision at the meeting of the Local Committee on 10 March 2010.
- b) that based on the proposals put forward by the committee, and following their meeting on 10 March 2010, a bid will be submitted as its application for support from the Climate Change Fund.

Reason for decision:

MINUTES TO BE AGREED AT THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL COMMITTEE ON 09 MARCH 2010

The Local Committee has an opportunity to support a project which will reduce the impact of climate change in Guildford.

65/09 Forward programme [Item 13]

The Local Committee agreed:

- 1) agreed the Forward Programme 2009/10, as outlined in Appendix 1, indicating any further preferences for inclusion.
- 2) considered any further themes for Member briefings during 2009/10.

Reason for decision:

To enable to Local Committee to plan its programme of reports.

[Meeting ended at 8.40pm]

.....(Mr Mike Nevins - Chairman)

Contact:

Carolyn Rowe
(acting Area Director)

01483 518093
Carolyn.rowe@surreycc.gov.uk

Chris Williams
(Local Committee & Partnership Officer)

01483 517336
christopher.williams@surreycc.gov.uk

The next meeting of the Committee will be on Wednesday 09 March 2010 at 7pm, at Lord Pirbright's Hall.

Annex 1

THE GUILDFORD SOCIETY

Q1 THE HIGH STREET

The Guildford Society is deeply concerned about the state of the High Street. English Heritage, in seeking the regeneration of Historic Towns, advocates the production of a Streetscape Manual. Many other Historic Towns are already working to a design guide of this type.

The Streetscape Manual covers lighting, street surfaces, paving, street furniture, signage and planting. Such a guide could assist the development of a jointly agreed strategy to conserve and regenerate Guildford's Town Centre.

Do both Borough and County recognise the genuine value of investing in the quality and management of our historic town, attracting as it does not only shoppers from the surrounding areas but also visitors from abroad? Only a sustained programme of conservation and regeneration can ensure its continued attraction. Would the Local Committee agree, as other historic towns have done, to recommend the commissioning of a design guide of the type recommended by English Heritage, to form part of the Local Development Framework?

In submitting this question, the Society would like to offer whatever assistance it can to minimise the cost to council taxpayers.

A Surrey Highways share the concern expressed for the proper maintenance of Guildford High Street, and recognizes its importance to Guildford in terms of economic activity, conservation and safety. Officers would be willing to assist in the production of a Streetscape Manual as suggested, and recognize the value of such a manual in guiding decisions regarding choice of materials, approach to street clutter etc. However no commitment can be given regarding the funding available. It is the nature of historic areas that the unit costs of carrying out maintenance to their enhanced materials are much higher than for conventional roads, footways and street furniture.

Surrey Highways re-laid a section of the High Street setts during the last financial year, and Guildford Borough Council will shortly start work on a further section. The Guildford Society has correctly identified that frequent works carried out by the utility companies are the principal cause of loose setts. For reasons of safety, not least because for several hours each day the setts are a pedestrian area, these must be reinstated quickly and safely, and the only practical means of doing so is via the temporary use of tarmac.

All of the Guildford Society's suggestions are desirable, but higher levels of maintenance, greater use of enhanced materials, higher levels of quality control, and use of operatives with greater skills, would all increase costs to the public, whether via taxation or utility company charges. In the present economic climate it is questionable that these are affordable.

Cracking of paving slabs due to cars and lorries mounting the footway is common, particularly in the Upper High Street. Surrey Highways has recently commenced a programme of footway replacement, starting at the George Abbot statue and working up to Trinity Gate. The works have been suspended during the Christmas embargo period, but will recommence in January. To reduce future damage, smaller, thicker slabs are being used which crack less easily, and deeper foundations are being specified. The cost of relaying the footway in this one road (one side only) is some £200,000.

This response has been prepared by Surrey Highways officers on behalf of Surrey County Council only. Clearly this issue equally affects Guildford Borough Council. There has not been sufficient time to consult GBC but their views must be sought before decisions are taken on this matter.

EFFINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Q2 ITEM 7/325 ON THE MINOR IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMME

- a) Please can SCC Officers provide full details of their concept of this project. Despite several requests, the description in the published reports still does not coincide with what the Parish Council asked for.
- b) Given the above, please can SCC Officers provide a detailed explanation of how they arrive at the estimated cost for the project, which has gone up from £60k in 2006-7 to £100k in 2009.

- A**
- a) The project as requested consists of providing a signalled right turning lane from the A246 into Beech Avenue. The lane already exists, but is not signalled. The exact scope of the project will not be determined until the project commences. It is currently ranked 19th on a list of 26 projects in the forward programme. The first 15 of these comprise the current 5 year programme, assuming that current funding levels are maintained.
 - b) No detailed estimate of the cost of this scheme (or any other scheme on the 'schemes awaiting funding' list) has been carried out. However in order to recommend the priority to be given to such projects, officers carry out a simple cost-benefit calculation on each scheme.

The original cost was coarsely estimated as including additional traffic signal poles and cables, but also a new traffic signal controller, as the existing controller, which is an older model, is not capable of being modified as required. Experience elsewhere shows that other works may also be required; for example cable ducts are likely to have collapsed, and anti-skid surfacing may need renewed. Allowance is therefore made in the coarse estimate for such contingencies. Each year when the programme is reported to Committee, officers revise the coarse estimate to allow for inflation. An increase from £60k to £100k is consistent with that approach, and with increased costs being experienced across the entire highways capital programme.

EFFINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Q3 SPEED LIMIT REVIEW

What is the timetable for the review for the SCC speed policy, and can there be an update on implementation of the two speed limit reductions agreed for the A246 through Effingham?

A The Cabinet at its meeting on 1 December 2009 considered a call-in related to a speed limit decision made by the Surrey Heath Local Committee. That decision, in respect of the specific speed limits, was deferred until the revised speed limit policy was agreed. This is consistent with the deferral of 6 speed limits in Guildford which similarly do not comply with the current policy. Ian Lake, SCC Cabinet Member for Transport, commented as follows:

“The decision made by the Local Committee is strictly speaking contrary to our agreed policy on speed limits. Because of this, my strong advice to Cabinet, based on guidance from Democratic Services, is that we cannot allow the decision to stand. To do so would be contrary to our agreed policies.

But I fully sympathise with the Local Committee on this occasion. We have said that local committees should have more discretion about our services. It is quite right that officers should advise members on whether a particular scheme is worthwhile or not. But it is also right that the committee should have the powers to reach their own decision, having listened to the advice from officers. This administration has said that localism is at the heart of our policies, and this is an opportunity to prove that we mean it.

I am therefore asking officers to develop a change to our policies to allow the Local Committee to do what they have asked to do. Clearly, this change of policies needs to be carefully considered. There can be no margin for error where road safety is concerned. Because of this I am asking officers to consult relevant stakeholders and members on how any new policy might be framed, before they report back to me and Cabinet Member for Community Safety. Any new policy may also need suitable safeguards to ensure that decisions on speed limits are properly assessed and justified.

This needs to be done quickly. We do not want to delay this any longer than it needs to. I would like a proposal to be brought back to us as soon as is practical, so that we can discuss and hopefully consider a new policy which may give more discretion to local committees.

I would also like this to be the first step in reviewing a suite of revised transport policies, which give more power and discretion to local people and to Local Committees. We will bring more proposals to you in coming months.”

The two speed limits in Effingham remain on hold pending the adoption of the new policy.

EFFINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Q4 HEAVY GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR LICENCE

Effingham Parish Council notes with great consternation the discovery that an Interim HGV O-licence has been granted by the Traffic Commissioner only one day into the three-week consultation period for the statutory consultees (SCC and GBC), and that, despite a strenuous protest by SCC Officers who objected to the application, the Traffic Commissioner has refused to rescind the Interim licence. Will Surrey County Council elected members make representations to have this grave breach of due process by the Traffic Commissioner reversed?

A SCC is especially concerned in respect of this particular case as a previous application at the site in 1998 had been refused at public inquiry on highway safety grounds. The relevant legislation (the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995) permits the traffic commissioner to grant an interim licence if one is requested when an application for an Operators Licence is made. There is no requirement in the legislation for the traffic commissioner to consider the merits of this, although in the past, custom and practice has been to wait for the period for representations and objections to end before granting such a licence. In this case, the Traffic Area waited for the end of the period for representations to end (i.e. the period during which members of the public can make comments) but not until the end of the period for objections (i.e. the period in which Local Authorities can object). As local residents are not able, under the legislation, to comment on highway safety, this could only ever be raised by the local authorities. In this case the Traffic Area did not wait to see if there were any highway safety implications and granted the interim anyway. To further compound things, they state that they do not have any records of the previous application at the site, although the County Council has subsequently supplied them with these.

The legislation does permit the revocation of interim licences on certain grounds, but this does not include the injudicious granting of them in the first place. Further, on the strict reading of the Act, the traffic commissioner has done nothing wrong. There are no grounds for revocation of this particular interim within the Act. The interim will continue in force until a full licence is issued or the application is refused. SCC has been informed that this matter will go to public inquiry and will be determined there.

For the reasons outlined above, it is not appropriate to ask the traffic commissioner to revoke the interim in this case. It would, however, be appropriate to ask the traffic commissioner not to grant interim licences until the period for representations and objections has ended. This is a matter of only 21 days and would ensure that no interims are granted on sites where there are potential highway safety implications. This would not prejudice the outcome of due process as the applicant would still be able to put their case during the consideration of the application.

EFFINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Q5 Can Highways Officers confirm that they are monitoring the serious effects on Effingham roads and property caused by the road diversion during the Forest Road bridge closure? These effects are now compounded by both the effects of the recent heavy rain, and the village centre obstruction caused by collapse of the Lower Road sewer. HGVs and much increased traffic numbers are using very narrow roads in the Conservation Area of the village.

The following issues are already being reported:

- potholing and breaking up of the road surface, Effingham Common Road, especially as it reaches the village
- breaking up of the road surface, Chapel Hill
- undermining of the Listed flint wall, Chapel Hill
- car park of the Sir Douglas Haig pub being used as a rat-run.

The Parish Council requests that a very frequent monitoring scheme is put in place immediately, so that resources can be speedily diverted to road surface or other repairs as problems arise.

A Officers will continue to monitor the condition of roads in Effingham on both a planned and reactive basis. The Parish Council and individual residents are encourage to report any defects through our website (www.surreycc.gov.uk, then click on 'Report it'), or via our contact centre (0300 200 1003). Any defects which meet our normal criteria will be dealt with.

Use of or damage to private property as mentioned above is not the responsibility of Surrey Highways.

BOROUGH AND PARISH COUNCILLOR LIZ HOGGER

Q6 HOWARD OF EFFINGHAM SCHOOL

The Howard of Effingham School is consulting on a possible change to Foundation Status. Two questions arise:

- a) According to SCC's website, the admissions policy of a Foundation school is controlled by its own Governing body. However, the School has said that if it becomes a Foundation School it will delegate this power to Surrey County Council, and SCC will continue to administer the admissions policy in accordance with the published admissions criteria conforming to the National Code of Practice and Admissions, as now. To allay further anxiety about the admissions policy for this school, please can Surrey County Council confirm that it has formally agreed to continue this role? Also, what are the long term implications for the future - would it be the case that such an arrangement could be rescinded?
- b) The Howard's consultation literature states that 'to facilitate the organisation of The Trust, all partner schools are required to alter their current status to become Foundation Schools'. Please can SCC confirm which schools are meant by 'partner schools' - are these the schools of the Effingham Learning Partnership (i.e. primary phase) or for instance Thomas Knyvett School (secondary phase)?

- A**
- a) The admissions policy and process are the core responsibility of foundation and trust schools. This means that they can either retain the admissions policy as it currently stands or change it, now or in the future. The consultation documents states that they intend to follow the requirements of the National School Admissions Code and that Surrey County Council will administer applications for student places. If the school becomes foundation or trust status, Surrey County Council will potentially be prepared to act as its agent in admissions. This means that the county council will do the work for a charge, but would not take legal responsibility for the policy. The council has not yet formally agreed to this role. If the school does become a foundation school and the county council does agree to administer the admissions policy, the arrangement could be reviewed in the future.
 - b) Currently, Howard of Effingham School and Thomas Knyvett College work together in a federation. It is their intention that they would form the Howard Partnership Trust. This means that they would both become foundation schools. It does not mean that any of the primary schools in the Effingham Learning Partnership have to become foundation schools. To date, none of the primary schools have consulted the county council on any change of their status.