

**MINUTES: of the meeting of the Mole Valley Local Committee
(Transportation) held at 6.00pm on Thursday 15 May 2002 at Mole
Valley District Council Offices (Pippbrook)**

County Council Members

- * David Gollin - Chairman
- * Mrs Helyn Clack - Vice-Chairman
- * Bob McKinley
- * Mr James E Smith OBE
- * Mr David K Timms
- * Mrs Hazel V A Watson

District Council Members

- * Mr Michael Anderson
- * Valerie Homewood
- * Mrs Janet Marsh
- * Mrs Jean Pearson
- * Mr Peter Seabrook
- * Mr Ben Tatham

* = Present

PART ONE

IN PUBLIC

[All references to Items refer to the Agenda for the meeting]

[Chief Executive's representative in the Chair for Items 1 and 2 only]

21/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

No apologies for absence were received from County Council Members.

22/02 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE 2002/03 [Item 2]

RESOLVED

That Mr David Gollin be elected as Chairman of the Committee for the Council Year 2002/03.

(Mr David Gollin in the Chair)

23/02 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE 2002/03 [Item 3]

RESOLVED

That Mrs Helyn Clack be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the Council Year 2002/03.

[Note: District Council Member participation from Item 3 on the agenda onwards]

24/02 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS** [Item 4]

No apologies for absence were received from District Council Members.

25/02 **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS** [Item 5]

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

26/02 **MINUTES** [Item 6]

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Mole Valley Local Committee meeting held on 10 April 2002 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

27/02 **PETITIONS** [Item 7]

No petitions were received in accordance with Standing Order 62.

28/02 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** [Item 8]

No questions were received.

29/02 **MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME** [Item 9]

No questions were received.

30/02 **LEATHERHEAD ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT PHASE 2** [Item 13]

Mr Gollin had received a letter from Sheena and Mike Reeves which was distributed to members of the Committee. He also reminded the Committee that the meeting had been called under the urgency provisions of the County Council and was therefore to address the issues of the Phase 2 work currently under contract only. An opportunity to discuss wider issues would be provided at the meeting to be held in public on 19 June.

The Committee received a presentation from Mike Lewis on behalf of Leatherhead *Ahead* in which their objections to the work were set out. Clive Smith, on behalf of the District Council, and Alan Paterson, speaking for SCC as the Transportation authority, then outlined the background and justification for the current Phase 2 work and the water feature specifically. A separate paper was circulated outlining the Section 106 funding schedule and the financial implications of contract termination.

Mr Gollin invited the Committee to first seek points of clarification on the papers before opening up wider discussion and debate. Points arising were:

Church Street / North Street Link

- The Movement Study Team had advised in 1998 that the retention of the Church Street / North Street vehicular link would be contrary to GOSE advice and there are concerns regarding safety. This remains the officers' view.
- The re-introduction of the Link would also much reduce the number of additional parking spaces currently being provided as part of the scheme.

- Buses would also have difficulties negotiating the junction if reinstated since this would involve a sharp right turn. Bus operators have expressed a preference for retaining the Bridge Street / North Street access
- In the Officers' view, the link would be contrary to current Government advice and policy. To favour its re-introduction may jeopardise access to other government funds.

Water feature and access ramp

- The sloping ramps across the feature, of which a model was on display, are designed to conform with British Standards for the degree of gradient, and the provision of a suitable flat resting space.
- The retaining walls at the top end of the water feature are 1 – 1.5m above ground level, with the whole installation rising from base ground level to a maximum height of 2.5m. This includes the existing gradient of the slope.
- The right-hand side ramp, as seen from Bridge Street, is designed to allow emergency vehicle access.

Cost implications

- The overall scheme cost is in the order of £750K, including design costs. The installation that includes the water feature is around £350K but this includes retaining walls, ramps and other engineering that would be necessary for disabled access. The actual cost specific to the hydraulic element of the engineering is difficult to isolate but estimated at no more £40 – 50K.
- The implications of contract termination are estimated at around 50% of the contract value since sub-contractors have already been engaged and equipment purchased by the main contractors. There would also be costs associated with 'making good' the work already undertaken and designing and implementing an alternative.
- These costs would need to be met from other sources since this would not be an appropriate use of Local Transportation Plan or Section 106 developer funding. However, the developer funding may be available for an alternative 'environmental enhancement' if used before the designated expiry date. Some of this funding is due to expire in the near future which reduces the scope for redirecting its use.

19 June meeting in public

- Representatives of residents' associations of surrounding communities will be invited as well as those in Leatherhead itself.
- Professor Whitelegg has worked on similar issues internationally and in Guildford and will be seeking views from stakeholders as well as chairing the meeting.

The item was then opened for wider debate.

Bob McKinley, seconded by Mr Ben Tatham, proposed the following motion:

“ The Local Committee (Transportation) welcomes the engagement of Leatherhead Ahead, and looks forward to a constructive dialogue on the future development of Leatherhead town centre, in partnership with other community groups in the town. After careful consideration, the recommendation of the Officers for the Phase II work to proceed is

supported. Further development including such things as on and off street parking, transport initiatives and other improvements to accessibility should be the subject of the forthcoming Town Centre inquiry meeting on June 19th."

Mrs Hazel Watson, seconded by Mr Michael Anderson, proposed the following amendment:

" That the first motion be amended with the insertion of the words "subject to further consideration of the water feature" after the word "supported".

The subsequent discussion raised a number of additional points of clarification, including:

- There was concern about the potential for vandalism to the water feature. Officers advised that deterrents had been engineered into the design.
- The timescale for the existing work had been planned to minimise the disruption to town centre traders, especially during the Christmas period. There was concern that delays or new works resulting from contract termination would prolong the disruption.
- Delays would also result from the need to revisit consultations with groups, such as disabled access groups, who had contributed views to the current solution, and the necessary feasibility and design processes for an alternative.
- Possible alternatives to the water feature were discussed – plants, stone facing etc. – but it was observed that any installation would conflict with the reinstatement of the link road which Leatherhead *Ahead* are seeking.
- It was also asserted that the opponents of the work do not speak for the whole Leatherhead community and that there is a contrary, though less vocal, viewpoint that is concerned about the implications of re-introducing traffic to the High Street. This is of particular concern to older people and those with disabilities.

The amended motion was put to the vote and lost by 7 votes to 4, with 1 abstention.

The original motion was then put to the vote and passed without amendment by 9 votes with 3 abstentions. Mrs Hazel Watson asked for her abstention to be recorded.

The Committee therefore RESOLVED to support the officer recommendations that:

- i) **the Phase II enhancement works be completed as previously agreed;**
- ii) **the wider issues of improving accessibility to the town centre be the subject of a meeting in public in June of representatives of local interest groups.**

[Meeting Ended: 8.12 pm]

Chairman