

MINUTES: of the meeting of the Mole Valley Local Committee held at 13.30 on Wednesday 24 July 2002 at Mole Valley District Council Offices (Pippbrook)

Surrey County Council Members

David Gollin - Chairman
Helyn Clack - Vice-Chairman
Bob McKinley
Jim Smith
David Timms
Hazel Watson

Mole Valley District Council Members (Part B only)

Michael Anderson
Valerie Homewood
Janet Marsh
Jean Pearson
Peter Seabrook
Ben Tatham

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

PART A - IN PUBLIC (County Council Members only)

42/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

No apologies for absence were received from County Council Members.

43/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 2]

Declarations of personal interest were advised by Hazel Watson and Helyn Clack, both in relation to Item 3 - as members of the High Ashurst Advisory Group

44/02 MEMBERS' LOCAL ALLOCATION [Item 3]

The Committee considered eight bids for funding, totalling £52,722, against the Members' Local Allocation for 2002/03:

- £30,382 Towards costs of North Leatherhead Partnership Worker
- £9,873 Refurbishment of Hampstead Road Day Care Centre
- £4,000 Towards improvement of recreational facilities in Hookwood
- £2,260 Specialist climbing equipment for High Ashurst Outdoor Education Centre
- £2,100 Video and music editing suite for Ashted Youth Club
- £1,907 Primary school materials and staff training for Learning Space
- £1,200 Radio safety system for rally carts for Ashted Youth Club
- £1,000 Towards cost of outside lighting for Buckland Church

It was resolved that

- i. all eight bids be approved

and that

- ii. decisions on projects under £500 would be delegated to the Local Director with Member approval and not required to go to Committee, and that the Committee would express to the Executive its appreciation of the Local Funding Allocation and its wish that funding be made available next year

PART B - IN PUBLIC (County Council and District Council Members)

The Committee welcomed the newly appointed Local Transportation Manager, Roger Archer-Reeves. He also commended the SCC Transportation service for achieving a good rating for services and an excellent rating for the prospect for improvement in an Audit Commission best value inspection. This is the best rating for a UK Highway Authority so far.

45/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 4]

No apologies for absence or notice of substitutions were received from District Council Members.

46/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 5]

No declarations of interest were advised by District Council members.

47/02 MINUTES OF THE LOCAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 MAY 2002 [Item 6]

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed.

48/02 PETITIONS [Item 7]

Two petitions were presented:

- Mrs Elaine Lush, secretary of the Norfolk Lane Residents' Association, presented a petition requesting that Surrey County Council re-examine the implications of proposals to close the gap between the two carriageways of the A24 in Mid Holmwood, and consider alternative options further
- Mr Terence Ellis, a governor of Westcott First School, presented a petition requesting the installation of pedestrian operated traffic lights on the A25 at the point in Westcott where children from the school cross the road

Both petitioners provided written statements which are appended to these minutes

49/02 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME [Item 8]

No questions had been received from members of the public

50/02 MEMBERS QUESTION TIME [Item 9]

Cllr Janet Marsh had submitted a question to which a written response was circulated. Both question and response are attached to these minutes

51/02 LEATHERHEAD TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS [Item 10]

The contents of Professor Whitelegg's report, "The Way Forward for Leatherhead Town Centre" was noted and the Local Committee's thanks to him for the quality and promptness of his work were expressed. The Committee noted the work that officers had undertaken following the meeting held in public on 26 June.

It was noted that, although lead responsibilities for some of Professor Whitelegg's recommended actions were not all set out in his report, these were clear in the Leatherhead Town Centre Action Plan which remains the framework for activity.

There are some concerns that delays in the Phase II work might affect the Christmas period, though it was also noted that the project start was delayed last year for the same reasons. Roger Archer-Reeves advised that an over-run in the original timescale was inevitable and promised that a more detailed briefing note would be circulated shortly.

It was resolved that:

- i. the Leatherhead Town Centre Forum should be used as a forum for discussing the recommendations with all interested parties and that officers would provide feedback to appropriate parties to ensure that awareness and engagement is maintained. This group is not a decision-making group so recommendations requiring decision will be forwarded to MVDC Committees or the Local Committee as appropriate,

and that

- ii. Officers of both councils will hold discussions with stakeholders and report back once a way forward has been established along with timescales

52/02 TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL BUDGET [Item 11]

The Committee reviewed officer proposals for the allocation of additional capital funding secured since the April meeting. The additional amount secured was £95,000, which required the prioritisation of schemes identified at the April meeting.

It was resolved that the additional LTP funding allocation of £95,000 is used as recommended::

- £25,000 - Implementation of experimental closure of Pixham Lane, Dorking
- £35,000 - Design and Implementation of further STAR measures in Dorking Rural Box
- £30,000 - Traffic Order related work (ie. Parking management and speed limits) in Leatherhead and Dorking area
- £5,000 - Implementation of part of traffic management scheme, Punchbowl Lane, Dorking

53/02 MINOR HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN SCHEMES PROGRESS REPORT [Item 12]

The report presented an update on the ongoing schemes and Members of the Committee had a number of queries clarified by officers.

54/02 FASTWAY QUALITY BUS SERVICE [Item 13]

The Committee welcomed the revised proposal as one that had responded to the concerns raised during the consultation period.

It was resolved that the detailed design and construction work on the revised Fastway route infrastructure improvements at Longbridge Roundabout to be undertaken were approved, and the necessary acquisition of land and changes in traffic regulation authorised.

55/02 STRATEGIC TRAFFIC ACTION IN RURAL AREAS (STAR) PROJECT IN HOOKWOOD [Item 14]

The Committee observed that the report presented evidence of only muted support for the proposals and that the consultation process had elicited a unenthusiastic response. There was some concern that the proposed budget

was too great to commit without more assurance that a latent opposition would not emerge at a later date. The Local Transportation Manager advised that the proposed scheme was appropriate but suggested that a site visit might be organised for any Members of the two councils who had reservations, and representatives of the local Parish Council.

It was resolved that the final decision be delegated to the Local Transportation Manager, unless no consensus was forthcoming, in which case a further report would be brought to the October Committee.

56/02 A2003 ASHCOMBE ROAD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES [Item 15]

Cllr. Derek Burt had asked to speak to this issue and suggested that there was considerable local opposition, and the proposal was expected to aggravate further the gridlock already being experienced in Dorking town centre. He suggested that any decision on this issue be deferred until the outcome of the Dorking Congestion Management Study is known. This view was approved by a number of Members. The Local Transportation Manager suggested that the paper be withdrawn at this stage and a revised proposal presented within a wider Dorking movement context once the outcome of the Study was known. This was agreed.

57/02 D289 COLDHARBOUR LANE REVIEW OF PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS [Item 16]

On the evidence presented to the Committee it was agreed that the decision of 25 July 2001 should be rescinded and that the revised proposals be approved. To reflect Member concerns, the Local Transportation Manager was requested to take a flexible approach to the Nower pinchpoint and related lighting proposals (7.4 in the report), on which there remained some reservations. The Committee registered their appreciation of the work done by Jo Hills in respect to this issue.

58/02 EPSOM DOWNS SPEED LIMIT REVISION [Item 17]

The Committee welcomed the proposals and approved the recommendation for their advertisement, and authorised the Local Transportation Manager to consider and resolve any objections that might arise.

59/02 RESPONSE TO BARNETT WOOD LANE TRAFFIC CALMING PETITION [Item 18]

There was some concern expressed that the proposed replacement of existing of traffic calming measures was dependent on funding being available and that the extant measures had deteriorated to the point where their effectiveness could not be properly evaluated. This was the result of persistent heavy traffic and may have been compromised by design changes before installation.

It was resolved that

- i. the Local Transportation Manager should commence a programme to restore the existing traffic calming measures to the extent that current funding allows and to review the outcomes with a view to a further report to the Local Committee at a later date. All existing physical measures were also to be painted with reflective paint.

And that

- ii. the Committee wished to thank the Petitioners for raising the issue, which has encouraged a revised approach to the scheme and consultation, and

advised them that no suitable alternatives to the approach now adopted had been identified at this stage.

60/02 REVIEW OF THE PARKING STRATEGY FOR SURREY [Item 19]

The revised Parking Strategy was approved in principle but the Committee felt that a more detailed consideration was warranted and, to this end, two workshops will be organised in September for Members to explore with officers the implications for Mole Valley of the Parking strategy and the Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement, with the Local Transportation Manager authorised to report to SCC Executive on any concerns that may arise.

It was resolved that County and Mole Valley Council officers should update the Local Area Parking Management Plan (Mole Valley) as appropriate

61/02 FORWARD PROGRAMME [Item 20]

The revised programme was noted.

[Meeting Ended: 5.07 pm]

Chairman

MOLE VALLEY LOCAL COMMITTEE, 42 July 2002.

Appendix of additional papers circulated at the meeting:

Three Papers are appended:

1. Submission in support of petition by Mrs Elaine Lush (Item 7)
2. Submission in support of petition by Mr Terence Ellis (Item 7)
3. Question, and response, from Janet Marsh (Item 9)

1. Submission in support of petition by Mrs Elaine Lush (Item 7)

I am Elaine Lush, Secretary of The Norfolk Lane Residents's Association and am here to present a Petition on behalf of the residents of Mid Holmwood with regard to Surrey County Council's proposals for the A24.

We feel that the concerns of Mid Holmwood were ignored in the recent A24 Consultation and have therefore submitted a proposal in respect of Mid Holmwood. In simple terms, we do not want an expensive roundabout in Mid Holmwood as submitted by yourselves a number of years ago, but a more cost effective set of proposals to improve safety of the local residents.

These include:

- The retention of the existing openings both in Mid Holmwood and at Spook Hill which in previous consultations processes were deemed to be two of the safest with the best sight lines along that piece of road
- Lowering of the speed limit to 50mph and installation of speed cameras
- An environmentally friendly footbridge

The reasons we want these improvements is to ensure the safety of all the local residents which includes a number of elderly, disabled and young children who have to cross, enter and exit a fast stretch of the A24 on a daily basis. The safety of the local community continues to cause concern, especially in view of the anticipated volume of traffic that will be travelling along the A24 to and from the Capel incinerator. Pedestrian safety is paramount and is why an environmentally friendly footbridge is also sought.

The gap retention in the village is essential to ensure the feeling of the village is retained and to sustain the existing village businesses as going concerns. Residents are also extremely concerned with the time delay in emergency services reaching them which was highlighted most recently by a particular service driving straight through Mid Holmwood as the road signs had been removed and they missed the central turning gap.

Lowering the speed limit on the Mid Holmwood stretch to 50mph, with digital cameras installed, to nab those breaking the limit and fine them instantly, is strongly proposed, although residents admit it is difficult to catch bikers who are the main culprits of excessive speed on that bit of the road!

Better signage and easier access to and from slip roads are all considered essential to improve the safety on the Mid Holmwood stretch of the A24 and thereby ensure the safety of all the local residents.

The residents' strongly consider that the proposals made by Surrey County Council will not only make the Mid Holmwood stretch of the A24 more dangerous but will completely split the village into two and destroy the local community. We request you to consider our proposals.

2. Submission in support of petition by Mr Terence Ellis (Item 7)

My name is Terence Ellis, I am a Governor of Westcott First School and I have been charged by the Board of Governors to present our petition to you and to pursue the matter of a pedestrian crossing of the A25 to a satisfactory conclusion.

Why was this Petition necessary?

Last October our Pedestrian Crossing Keeper (Lollypop Lady) retired after years of faithful service. We took advice as to how best we should obtain a replacement and duly advertised in the local press, Westcott Parish Magazine and local newsagents - all to no effect. We asked what else we could do or what other alternatives were available and received a not particularly helpful reply. To the question of a Pedestrian Crossing it was pointed out that there was already one in Westcott – some 300 to 400 yards along the road. We could not accept this situation – hence this Petition.

Westcott First School is not a very big school – has a maximum of some 80 children – but is awkwardly situated on the opposite side of the A25 to the majority of the housing with access by car severely limited by the narrowness of School Lane. Added to which when the Mums and Dads bring their offspring to school they also bring with them their younger siblings, usually in pushchairs – so we have a lot of very young children crossing a busy road twice each school day.

We have carried out a survey of the actual usage of the crossing site where the Crossing Keeper worked (outside of the Crown Pub) and can report that:-

Between 8.45 am and 9.25 am [912 vehicles per hour]

75 children accompanied by 58 adults with 23 pushchairs

and between 3.15 pm and 3.45 pm [760 vehicles per hour]

69 children accompanied by 60 adults with 18 pushchairs

crossed at that position.

As a comparison we also did a survey at the recently installed Pedestrian Crossing in Horsham Road Dorking near the junction with Ridgeway Road. The usage there was:-

Between 8.00 am and 8.45 am [1304 vehicles per hour]

19 children, 30 adults and 2 pushchairs

and between 3.10 pm and 4.10 pm [885 vehicles per hour]

20 children, 19 adults and 3 pushchairs

I would emphasise that these were only spot surveys, the traffic was greater along Horsham Road and that in Westcott some 10% of the parents chose to cross the A25 at the end of School Lane (not outside the Crown) and these have not been included in the Westcott figures, though their lot would also be improved by the operation of a Pedestrian crossing (as it was with the Lollypop Lady).

Finally I would like to point out that:-

- 1) we have evidence that a crossing with Belisha Beacons used to exist outside of the Crown (there are two framed pictures in the public bar of the Crown dated somewhere circa 1940's to 1960's).
- 2) that we are and have been continuing to seek a replacement Lollypop person but that the nature of the job excludes all but those living in the village and that wage rates in the village for comparable non-skilled jobs (housework, simple gardening etc) are of the order of £6/7 per hour (as opposed to the £5.08 on offer for Crossing Keeper).

Our purpose is to improve the road safety of our children and we ask you to give this matter your most sympathetic consideration please,

Terence E Ellis
Governor of Westcott First School

24 July 2002-09-09

3. Question from Janet Marsh, with response (Item 9)

Question received from Janet Marsh, MVDC Councillor for Ashted Village.

“ The state of grass verges has given rise to innumerable complaints this year. They have looked very overgrown and out of keeping in high profile areas. Even when cutting takes place it is very patchy. The mower passes over so quickly that only some of the grass is cut. Residents have expressed their concerns about the length of the grass and the fact that when cut it is then left to block the gullies and cause flooding problems whenever there is heavy rain.

Could you please advise:

- How many cuts are being carried out this year?
- What is the approximate timing of cuts?
- Is the number of cuts the same as in 2001?
- How was the decision reached as to the number of cuts in a year?”

Answer:

Response to questions raised by Councillor Janet Marsh concerning grass verge cutting in the District

Highway verges in urban areas are cut seven times in the growing season (generally March – October). This equates to one full cut approximately every four weeks. This is the same frequency as that carried out in 2001.

The decision on the number of cuts is based on achieving the highway safety requirements and an acceptable standard of cut within the budget. In addition to the urban cut rural areas are cut twice per year and four cuts on some high profile areas such as the A24 through the district. Additional sightline cutting takes place as required.

All the cuts are carefully programmed throughout the year, there is flexibility to react to changes in the growing season.

Heavy rain in early June did affect the progress of one particular cut which was delayed by two weeks. This did give rise to many complaints and undoubtedly affected the quality of the cut. This has been addressed with the County Council's Contractor and all cuts are now back on target.