

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
2 APRIL 2003**

**MOLE VALLEY LOCAL COMMITTEE
23 JULY 2003**

MINUTES: of the meeting of the Surrey County Council Local Committee for Mole Valley, held at 14.15 on Wednesday 2 April 2003 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

Michael Anderson
Rosemary Dickson
Valerie Homewood
Janet Marsh
Jean Pearson
Ben Tatham

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

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

27/03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

No apologies for absence or notice of substitutions were received.

28/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 2]

Declarations of interest were declared in respect to Item 4 by Michael Anderson, as a governor of Dawnay School, and by Jim Smith, whose grandson attends the school.

29/03 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME [Item 3]

There were no public questions as part of the open session. One written public question had been received in respect to St Stephens Avenue, Ashted. This was circulated at the meeting along with the written response, both of which are appended.

30/03 MEMBER QUESTION TIME [Item 3]

Two sets of member questions had been received, from Ben Tatham and from Michael Anderson. These were circulated at the meeting, along with written responses, all of which are appended.

In response to a supplementary question about the Westhumble Bridge, the Local Transport Director agreed that many lorries seeking to use the bridge would exceed the weight limit but emphasised that that there were real concerns about the strength of the bridge. He agreed to consult further with the County Council's Rail Development Officer.

In response to a supplementary question about the sponsorship of roundabouts, the Local Transportation Director confirmed that he would consult with local members on individual proposals, if appropriate.

31/03 PETITIONS [Item 4]

Sue Aberdeen presented a petition on behalf of the Dawnay Schools Safe Routes to School Group, in support of a footpath to run alongside Bookham library. This was received by the Chairman on behalf of the Committee.

32/03 LOCAL CAPITAL ALLOCATION, 2003/04 [Item 5]

District Council Members were reminded that this item was open to County Council Members only.

The Committee agreed to allocate up to £100,000 of the local capital allocation for 2003/04 to the LTP Transportation budget.

33/03 MINUTES OF THE LOCAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2002 [Item 6]

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed.

34/03 MAP MODIFICATION ORDER FOR PUBLIC FOOTPATH 601, GREAT BOOKHAM [Item 7]

The item was brought to Committee because there had been an objection to a map modification order, made on 4 December 2002. Sue Todd, Rights of Way Manager, advised the Committee that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the County Council does not have the power to confirm opposed orders.

The Committee agreed that the Order to modify the Definitive Map Statement by the addition of a footpath running over Tudor Close be submitted to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for confirmation

35/03 GATWICK AIRPORT DEVELOPMENTS [Item 8]

The Local Committee agreed to make the following statement to the SCC Executive:

"Mole Valley Local Committee is extremely concerned that there will be major infra-structural issues for the District if the impending review overturns the 1979 legal agreement over Gatwick and expansion is thus enabled. The Executive is urged to take every step to make clear the County Council's opposition to further runway development at Gatwick and to seek the continuation of this legal agreement. The Executive is also asked to urge the Department of Transport to ensure that the exhibition on airport expansion, currently being planned for Crawley and the Gatwick Hilton, also comes to Surrey, including Dorking"

36/03 HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE BUDGET FOR MOLE VALLEY FOR 2003/04 [Item 9]

The Local Transport Director (LTD) advised two amendments to the printed agenda papers – one to the second recommendation, and one to Annexe 1, which should have been dated 2003 / 04. The report was welcomed as a more detailed statement than had been previously received.

There were some comments about what appeared to be reductions in some budget heads compared to last year. The LTD advised that the distribution of funding set out in Annexe 1 was determined centrally and that there is local discretion to vire up to 30% between budget heads to reflect local needs and priorities. It was noted that the overall budget for Mole Valley had increased from the 2002/03 level.

The Committee:

- (i) Agreed the indicative functional distribution of the 2003/04 Highway Maintenance Revenue budget as set out in Annexe 1 of the report.
- (ii) Agreed discretion for the Local Transportation Director, in consultation with the Chairman of the Local Committee to vire up to 30% of the indicative allocations for each expenditure head within the revenue budget whilst retaining the County Councils policies and standards.
- (iii) Noted the Capital Maintenance Allocations shown in Annexe 2.
- (iv) Noted the Highway Maintenance Revenue projected 'spend' for 2002/03

37/03 CAPITAL PROJECT BUDGET [Item 10]

It was noted that the budget was only 2% underspent at the end of the year and that this was a very good outturn result for capital project budgets. The LTD advised that the schemes a) to s), set out in section 3.2 of the report reflected the prioritisation process undertaken with members at the end of 2002. These accounted for both the allocated Local Transportation Plan (LTP) funding and the £100,000 local capital funding (ref 32/03, above).

At present there is no funding available for the schemes set out in section 3.3 and these could be considered only if funding was released from the schemes in 3.2, or additional funding is secured. Members could review progress and slippage at a later date and consider whether any of the 3.3 schemes could then be activated. It was agreed that, in order to allow sufficient time to complete schemes within the current year such decisions should ideally be taken at the July Committee.

It was also clarified that some schemes relating to the A24 would be included in the major schemes capital bid planned for the Capel – M25 stretch of that road.

The Committee agreed:

- i) the priority order of schemes listed in Annexe A.
- ii) the allocation of funding as detailed in paragraph 3.2, a) to s) inclusive.
- iii) that a review of progress and budget information will be brought to the July Committee.
- iv) that a Members Working Group is convened to assist progression of the A25 route study
- vi) that the working group to assist in the progression of the Old London Road, Dorking scheme is reconvened.

38/03 BARNETT WOOD LANE AND KINGSTON LANE DESIGNATED CYCLE LANE PHASE 1 [Item 11]

It was noted that the plan included in the printed agenda did not represent the final scheme and was subject to change. It was also clarified that the Phase 1 details of the scheme would need to be finalised before any Phase 2 activity, including Compulsory Purchase Orders, could be initiated.

The Committee agreed that the progression of the scheme as indicated in Annexe A is approved in principle and subject to re-consultation on the detail of the scheme with local District and County Members

39/03 BEST VALUE INSPECTION OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN [Item 12]

The Committee agreed:

- (i) that the resolution of the Executive at the meeting on 6 January 2003 is noted
- (ii) that the committee confirms its support for the part which the Mole Valley Local Transportation Service will play in delivering the outcomes from the improvement plan.

40/03 WASTE TRANSPORT TASK GROUP – UPDATE ON FINDINGS [Item 13]

Whilst the information was welcomed it was also noted that much of it was no longer current. The Committee registered its disappointment that so little current information was available - a point made in the report itself – but commended the Working Group's continuing investigations

The Committee

- (i) Noted the report and offer any comments on the initial findings.
- (ii) Endorsed the proposed actions set out at the end of the main report

**41/03 MINOR HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENTS / TRANSPORTATION PLAN
SCHEMES PROGRESS REPORT [Item 14]**

This was noted.

42/03 REVIEW OF 2002 / 03 [Item 15]

This was noted and the extent of the Committee's achievements in its first year of activity was commented upon.

43/03 FORWARD PROGRAMME [Item 16]

This was noted.

[Meeting Ended: 5.20 pm]

Chairman

MOLE VALLEY LOCAL COMMITTEE, 12 February 2003.

Appendix of additional papers circulated at the meeting:

The following papers are appended:

1. Public questions received (Item 3)
2. Member questions received (Item 3)

Item 3: PUBLIC QUESTIONS RECEIVED

Question received from Tanya Mc Arthur on behalf of residents of St Stephens Avenue, Ashtead

On behalf of the residents in St Stephen's Avenue, we wish Surrey County Council actively to develop a proposal which will significantly reduce the through traffic flow along this street. To that end, we ask you to request the Local Transportation Committee to allocate funding for an appropriate study. We ask that the study should consider, in particular, the closure of the gap between the two parts of Woodfield Lane whilst maintaining access for emergency services, and should take account of the potential benefit of this measure in facilitating emergency service access to property north of the railway at times when Woodfield Lane is congested.

Response

The Local Transportation Director met with representatives of St Stephens Road in October 2002. The purpose to the meeting was to understand the concerns of those residents and to see what needed to be done, if anything, and what could be the subject of a study etc. The Local Transportation Director was shown and accepted that there is a level of "rat running" taking place in St Stephens Road. It was his opinion then, and still is that a piece of work would be useful to quantify the problem and set it in context with the needs of Ashstead and within the priorities of the Mole Valley area. The programme of works that Committee is asked to look at today does not include St Stephens Road, if it did, then either further funding would be required or a scheme would be required to be dropped from the list. It is the opinion of the Local Transportation Director that St Stephens Road should be quantified for need / urgency towards the end of this financial year when the next LTP programme is put together. A full study if funded in the next financial year or subsequent years, would need to be properly financed and the results set in context with the priorities of both Mole Valley and the Local Transport Plan.

Item 3: MEMBER QUESTIONS RECEIVED

Two Members submitted written questions and received written replies:

a) Questions from Ben Tatham, Mole valley District Councillor for Mickleham, Weshumble and Pixham

1. *Is it the intention to investigate the cause of the recent increase in delays at the Deepdene Roundabout? If so, when and what will be the process?*
2. *How long is it likely to be before the Highways Agency reopens the Oaklawn Road bridge and the hard shoulder and one lane of the M25 under the bridge?*
3. *Why has it been necessary to put in place a new weight restriction order on the road bridge next to Box Hill Station when the new weight limit is the same as that which has been in force since 1967 and which has never been enforced?*
4. *If the 7.5t limit is to be enforced, when will the bridge be strengthened bearing in mind the importance of the bridge for access to Westhumble and the unsuitability of the alternative which is via a narrow "Quiet Lane"?*

Response

1. I assume Cllr Tatham is referring tangentially to the increased traffic levels since the works to introduce the experimental limited closure of Pixham Lane were introduced. There is certainly anecdotal evidence to suggest that traffic volumes have increased over the last four weeks. The experimental order has yet to come into full effect. The works were opened to traffic (buses and cyclists) on Monday (31 March 2003), the rising bollards are not yet operational, but will be very soon, a matter of days. Since the site works for the experimental order have been going on officers have received approximately: 150 phone calls, 40 letters and 35 emails mostly opposed to the introduction of the experimental order. The Local Transportation Director has also had a meeting with the Dorking Town Centre Manager, who has also expressed and passed on local concerns from businesses regarding the experimental closure of Pixham Lane. At the last committee the Local Transportation Director was delegated authority to reopen the road if traffic levels etc were so bad that it was felt necessary to abandon the experiment. As mentioned earlier, the actual experiment has yet to begin, it is the view of the Local Transportation Director that a reasonable period of time, say three months should be allowed to see the effect of the experimental closure before it is either abandoned or made permanent. The closure of Oaklawn Road bridge across the M25 and the lane restrictions on the M25 have also led to some vehicle displacement from the M25 onto the A25, therefore any anecdotal evidence has to be tampered until the M25 situation is resolved.
2. It is not yet known when the Oaklawn Road bridge will be reopened to all traffic. The Highways Agency has consultants undertaking a detailed post fire analysis of the structure. The structure is a relatively complex one, being a post stressed steel box frame with cantilevered footways. There has recently been a meeting between the Highway Authority and the

Highways Agency and their consultants to discuss progress on the analysis of the bridge structure, a further meeting is to be held on the 15 April when the results of all the investigations will be known and a firm decision taken.

3. The new weight restriction order for Westhumble Bridge is not the same as the old one. The order that had been in force since 1967 had a number of exceptions within it to vehicle use that made it extremely difficult to enforce. Hence the lack of enforcement Cllr Tatham speaks of. The bridge is a road over rail bridge and is therefore the responsibility of Network Rail primarily and the Highway Authority secondarily. Network Rail has recently revisited a number of bridges to check their weight restrictions. The Westhumble Bridge is a cast iron deck with a concrete over slab with brick sidewalls. Network Rail engineers were not concerned particularly with the weight restriction, as long as it was enforced, but with the number of exceptions to the weight restriction. It was felt that a more enforceable order needed to be put in place to safe guard the structure. There has recently been a meeting between officers of the Local Transportation Service, the County Bridge engineer and Trading Standards to have an understanding of what is required to allow Trading Standards to enforce any weight restriction at Westhumble. Trading Standards are willing and able to make regular visits to the bridge site to enforce any order, as long as that order is clear and unambiguous.
4. With regards any date for the bridge to be strengthened, the Local Transportation Director has emphasised to the bridge engineers the very point made by Cllr Tatham. A response is expected and when the date is known it will be passed onto Members.

b) Questions from Michael Anderson, Mole Valley District Councillor for Bookham South

1. ***Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement*** - *The Committee agreed at its meeting on 12 February 2003 that "the officers should seek confirmation of support from MVDC and confirm their willingness to manage and operate DPE in Mole Valley through an agency agreement". I should be grateful to know what progress has been made on this matter, bearing in mind the significant leatime necessary to put alternative arrangements in place before the anticipated withdrawal of police enforcement of on street restrictions from 1st April 2004 and the need to determine appropriate financial arrangements which we are possibly scheduled to discuss at our July meeting.*
2. ***Sponsorship of Roundabouts*** – *Could the Local Transportation Director please advise the position on the work he has been doing on the question of the possible introduction of commercial sponsorship for the planting and maintenance of roundabouts in the Mole Valley District and when he considers he might be able to present detailed proposals for the consideration of this Committee and the District Council.*

Answer

1. Officers from the Local Transportation Service have been talking to colleagues at Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) and a report recently went to MVDC Environment Committee on the subject. Officers of MVDC are unwilling to commit themselves at present until the details of the financial model are agreed. To resolve this, officers from the Local Transportation Service, County Hall and our consultants have been working to produce a sufficiently robust model to allow MVDC officers to buy into the process. A further meeting between both groups of officers is being planned to hopefully conclude this process. There has also been a meeting between the lead County Officer and MVDC Director of Services to discuss options etc concerning DPE. It would be imprudent for me to speculate whether MVDC will buy into the process, but if they do not then Surrey County Council as the Highway Authority will have to resolve the situation itself.

2. The Local Transportation Service has had considerable interest shown from the commercial world with regards sponsorship of roundabouts. There are seventeen roundabouts in the Mole Valley area which are suitable. Various firms have had meetings with officers and have since either decided that it is not commercially expedient to sponsor, or have gone away to seek professional advice in drawing up plans etc. The Local Transportation Director expects to see some positive moves within the next few months. As regards the proposals coming before a committee, they would only need to do so if planning permission was sought or upon some matter which was beyond the delegation of the Local Transportation Director.