

MINUTES: of the meeting of the Mole Valley Local Committee held at 14.00 on Wednesday 4th March 2009 in the Council Chamber, Pippbrook, Dorking

Members Present - Surrey County Council

Timothy Ashton, Chairman
Tim Hall – Vice Chairman
Helyn Clack
Stephen Cooksey
Jim Smith
Hazel Watson

Members Present - Mole Valley District Council

Valerie Homewood
David Howell
Ann Howarth
Chris Hunt
Jean Pearson
David Sharland

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

PART ONE - IN PUBLIC

01/09 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTIONS** [Item 1]

There were no apologies for absence.

02/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** [Item 2]

Hazel Watson declared a personal interest in agenda item 09 – School Organisation Plan virtue of being a school governor at the Aschombe School in Dorking. Councillors Chris Hunt and David Sharland also declared a person interest in agenda item 09 – School Organisation Plan, by virtue of being school governors.

Tim Hall declared a personal interest in agenda item 09 – School Organisation Plan by virtue of being a school governor and a member of the Bfree management board.

03/09 **MINUTES OF THE LAST** [Item 3]

The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record of the meeting, which took place on the 3rd December 2008.

04/09 **PUBLIC WRITTEN QUESTIONS** [Item 4A]

There were no public written questions.

05/09 **MEMBER QUESTIONS** [Item 4B]

Five Member questions were received. The questions and answers are set



out in annex A to the minutes. There were several supplementary questions with regards to clarity. With regards to David Howells question, Roger Archer-Reeves assured the committee that the bollards would be in shortly but he would also write to Tesco's to explain the situation and seek a contribution towards the cost of the bollards and repairs to the verge.

Stephen Cooksey submitted two written questions after the agreed deadline. Officers assured him that the responses would be sent to him by the 6th March and the questions would be included in agenda item 4C at the June Committee.

06/09 PUBLIC OPEN QUESTION SESSION [Item 4C]

One public question was asked with regards to the heavy snow in February and the local stations, namely Ashted not being gritted to allow access by the public. Roger Archer-Reeves explained that Surrey Highways only grit main routes and do not grit the stations. This is mainly because the area belongs to Network Rail, however he agreed to check whose land the area around Ashted station belonged to.

07/09 PETITIONS [Item 5]

Two petitions were received.

A), Abinger Common

Malcolm Johnson presented two petitions on behalf of the residents and regular users of Abinger Common. Mr. Johnson had successfully collected the required signatures. It was noted that Residents had signed two petitions, the first raising concerns about the gritting procedures. Following the heavy snow in February 2009 many residents found themselves stranded on the common and little action was taken by Surrey Highways to resolve the problem. Mr. Johnson requested that the main routes in and out of the area are considered as part of the gritting route.

Mr. Johnson submitted a second petition requesting that cars using the common often travel too fast and they are concerned for the safety of themselves and their families. They requested that the committee explore reducing the speed limit to 30mph.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Johnson for his efforts and confirmed that two formal reports would be brought back to the next Local Committee meeting, in this instance the 24th June 2009.

08/09 SOUTH STREET BUS STAND UPDATE REPORT [Item 6]

The bus stand for service 465 was previously sited at the Townfield Court bus stop. Due to the number of buses calling at this stop buses often had to stop in the middle of the road. Thus passengers were often forced to get on and off the buses in the road, creating a highway safety issue and also problems for the elderly or less mobile. To solve the problem a new bus stand was created in South Street outside Mays Garage. The terminus for the 465 was then relocated to it.

Members were reminded that a petition was submitted in June 2008 by the



local residents complaining about the loss of local parking, environmental concerns, driver behaviour and length of the bus stand. A report was brought back to the committee in September detailing the reasoning for moving the bus stand. Officers at that meeting agreed to meet with the concerned residents in a public meeting held on the 17th September 2008.

Following that meeting the local member Stephen Cooksey requested an update report, as the residents were still not happy.

Following advice from Surrey County Council's legal department the Local Committee (Mole Valley) was advised they could only comment on the options set out in the report, as the final decision has to be made by Head of Transport for Surrey and the Executive Member for Transport.

RESOLVED

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) agreed to:

- (i) Note the comments from South Street Residents
- (ii) Note the comments from the bus users
- (iii) To submit comment on the options set out in this report to the Head of Transport for Surrey and the Executive Member for Transport for their consideration.

09/09 RESPONSE TO PETITION –TO THE PETITION COBHAM ROAD [Item 7]

Members received a brief report on the petition, signed by 88 signatories with regards to the speeding problems on Cobham Road, Fetcham. Members were provided with a number of options, including installation of 30 mph signs, speed cameras and a puffin crossing.

The ward member was supportive of the puffin crossing to aid residents crossing the road.

Members were informed that a new recommendation had been submitted by the Highways Office to support the option of a puffin crossing and make the recommendation clearer. Members were happy with this suggestion.

RESOLVED

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) agreed that:

- (i) the petition is noted
- (ii) the puffin crossing is considered for local allocation funding within the LTP process

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

Out of the three suggestions made by the petitioners only one is deemed to be a possibility and the only other option that may be available in the short term is that of mobile enforcement.

10/09

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN MOLE VALLEY [Item 08]

Following a member briefing on Looked After Children and a recommendation from the Children and Young People Select Committee, members requested a formal report on Looked After Children in Mole Valley. There was special detail given on the virtual school new head teacher.

Liz Woolford went through the report which detailed the measures taken to deliver the County Council's vision for the children and young people in its care: that they are able to enjoy the same support and opportunities enjoyed by all children and young people growing up in Surrey.

Members thanked the officer for the report but expressed concern over the shortage of foster carers. It was noted that work was being done to attract people but the process is long and complex.

There was support for using Mole Valley leisure facilities and the officer stressed the importance of cost effective and free leisure activities for those families with foster children. There was some concern over the housing situation and the shortage of safe housing. The officer again stressed this is being looked into.

Finally member were concerned by the data shown in the report which showed a number of children not in a school under the term 'not recorded'. Members asked what this meant and if the issues were being resolved. The officer felt it was a matter of children moving schools and/or poor data collection. She agreed to find out more and pass the information back to the members.

RESOLVED

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) agreed to:

- (i) Note the information provided on the position of children and young people in care in Mole Valley.
- (ii) Consider ways in which it might further support children and young people in care in Mole Valley.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

The recommendations support efforts to narrow the gap between Children and Young People in Care and other children.

11/09 **SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN [Item 09]**

Members on request received a report on the draft School Organisation Plan. Liz Hanrahan explained this is the first plan in five years following the move away from a statutory plan. The plan was currently going through its consultation stage and any comments would be sent back to the projects team.

Members thanked the Officer but raised some concerns about the projected

school places. District Councillor Valerie Homewood stressed that there will be a shortage in the village schools and the situation needs to be tackled.

Tim Hall encouraged officers and the committee to view north Mole Valley with extra care. He explained that with planning projections high, the north of the district would find itself inundated with children who will need to be found a place. Overall the geographical picture of Mole Valley is very different.

Members also noted that Ashted does not have a secondary school therefore move into Leatherhead and Epsom. Liz agreed to send round the formula to show how they make their projections.

RESOLVED

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) noted the report

12/09 **LOCAL COMMITTEE FUNDING** [Item 10]

Members were asked to support the fifteen proposals for formal approval from the funding from the Members' Local Allocation. Detailed proposals are outlined in Annexe A to the report:

- £1000 Ashted Churches Together
- £1000 Mynthurst Colts
- £5362 Surrey Fire & Rescue Service
- £2000 Mobility and access schemes in Bookham & Fetcham
- £1200 Ashted Football Club Patio
- £1800 New Dorking Museum, Printing costs
- £1000 Costa Coffee Youth Club
- £2567 Churches Together, Youth Development Worker
- £1364 capital Buses 4U Mole Valley Demand Responsive Transport
- £2366 capital Dorking & District Operatic Society
- £1000 capital St Giles Church
- £3500 capital Ashted Vehicle Activated Sign
- £2000 capital Willow Green Bus Shelter
- £1172 capital Bfree Youth Café
- £2,000 capital Dorking Car Park Security (CCTV)

Members were also asked to note eleven bids that fall below the £1,000 threshold:

- £500 St Martins After School Club
- £500 Ashted Bowling Club
- £250 Leatherhead Mental Health
- £500 The Dawnay School
- £500 Bookham Traders
- £500 capital Ashted Tennis Club
- £523 capital Pixham Resident Association
- £800 Poleden Lacey Shakespeare Project
- £500 Transition Dorking
- £500 Dorking and District Twinning
- £953 capital Leatherhead Museum accessibility project
- £760 Leigh Village Hall hearing loop system

- £750 Leigh Cricket Club

RESOLVED

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) agreed;

- (i) To approve the proposals detailed in Appendix A to the report totalling £29,331
- (ii) To note the approval of proposals which fall below the £1,000 threshold totalling £7,536

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

The spending proposals put forward for this meeting have been assessed against the County standards for appropriateness and value for money and it is recommended that they should be approved.

13/09 **SPEED LIMITS PROGRESS REPORT** [Item 13]

Members received an update on the progress of the current agreed speed limit request list.

RESOLVED

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) agreed to:

- (i) note the progress on the Speed Limit Request List.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) The available budget for this financial year will be sufficient to implement the 4 advertised roads and survey the outstanding 11 roads.
- (ii) Surrey County Council has accepted challenging road safety targets to reduce injuries on its roads.
- (iii) Good speed management can contribute to this.

14/09 **CAPITAL AND MAINTENANCE PROJECTS PROGRESS REPORT** [Item 14]

Members were reminded that at the Local Committee on the 11 June 2008 they agreed a programme of work for the 2008/09-2010/2011 financial year funded from the Integrated Transport Budget and Local Allocation. The authority was delegated to the East Area Group Manager, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in relation to any amendments to the 2008/2009-2010/2011 scheme list, as a result of changes in available funding following the closing of the 2007/2008 accounts. The committee was updated on the progress made against the schemes.

RESOLVED

That the Local Committee noted the report.

[Meeting ended: 16.30]

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Chairman

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Annex A Member Questions

The following questions were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 46.

Questions from Hazel Watson, County Councillor for Dorking Hills

A24, Deepdene

When planning the Pippbrook Bridge traffic management on the A24 at Dorking, were any estimates made as to the expected traffic queue lengths and if so how do the estimated queue lengths compare with the actual queue lengths? Given the unacceptably long queue lengths on the A24, particularly during the rush hour, as a result of the Pippbrook bridge works, can the traffic management be altered to reduce the queue lengths and reduce the disruption to the town?

Response from Surrey Structures

No specific traffic modelling was carried out to estimate the length of the traffic queue. However, we did anticipate disruption to road users due to the bridge works and considered several options to minimise this disruption.

Discussions were held with Area Highways colleagues during the planning stage. Detailed consideration was given to the use of a tidal contraflow system using three narrow lanes. Such a system would have substantially increased the cost and time required to carry out the work, partly because of the adverse impact on the large amount of utility company apparatus in the vicinity. There were also significant safety implications for the work force. On balance, it was felt that it would be better to opt for the shortest construction time.

The use of a temporary bridge over the existing bridge was also considered. This option was ruled out due to the lack of space available on site. Furthermore, as the railway bridge is located very close to Pippbrook Bridge there would not have been sufficient length to build the temporary bridge and the ramps.

The traffic management arrangements were approved by the police and the Traffic Manager. These arrangements are being reviewed with the contractor. Since the work has started the settings of the pedestrian crossing traffic signals located adjacent to Deepdene station have been modified to allow more traffic along the A24. The right turn out of Dorking station has been reinstated which will reduce the amount of traffic having to turn back at Deepdene roundabout. The lane closure restriction on the northbound approach to Deepdene roundabout is also being reviewed with the contractor. The safety of road users is a prime consideration as these adjustments are considered.

Salting the Road

Can an assurance be given that the County Council will comply with its former policy and practice to salt non-A roads including roads with bus routes to ensure that villages such as Box Hill, Headley and Abinger Common are accessible and to enable bus services to operate in icy conditions?

Response from Asset Planning Group

In response to the concerns raised that bus routes off the "A" road network are not being salted. I can confirm that the strategic bus routes into Box Hill, Headley and Abinger Common are included on the precautionary salting network and attach a map detailing the full precautionary salting network within Mole Valley for information. Through the deregulation of the bus services it may be that some routes are no longer covered and as part of the annual winter maintenance review we will be requesting updated schedules from the bus companies.

Please note that during the period 6 to 13 February precautionary salting was only being undertaken on the "A" road network due to a national shortage in salt supplies and the need to conserve stocks, the full precautionary salting network is now in operation.

Resurfacing Roads

Given that Boxhill Road in Box Hill and Rothes Road in Dorking were due to be resurfaced in the current financial year, when will they now be resurfaced

Response from Local Highways Manager

20 April 2009 Start - Rothes
29 April 2009 Start - Boxhill

Questions from David Howell, District Councillor for Ashted Common

Drainage Problems

Officers are aware of the drainage problems at the end of Overdale in Ashted near to the station. When the road underwent a major re-make around 3 years ago, the contractor did not correct the levels to ensure that the drainage was at the low points. As a result, the road floods seriously causing great inconvenience to both motorists and commuters or pedestrians who happen to be on the footpath after heavy rain. The splashing from cars is now starting to wash out the mortar from adjacent boundary walls. Why wasn't this problem addressed when the work was done, and when will remedial action be taken? Unlike the problem in Dene Road, where major works had to be undertaken to install drainage, there is drainage here; it is just not at the low point and an additional gully is required.

Response from the Local Highways Manager

Surrey County Council is aware of the additional surface water at this location in severe weather conditions and will address when the necessary funding becomes available. Any damage caused to private property should be reported to Surrey County Council to enable the officers to carry out a proper investigation to ascertain responsibility.

Parking and Damaging to Verges

At the recent informal meeting of this committee, Roger Archer Reeves confirmed that parking and damaging verges is an offence and that the County could take action. When will action start being taken? There are two serious issues that I am aware of; one in Dene Road, Ashted, where part of the grass verge bank was removed during building works by the householder, and the area is now used as a mud-based parking bay, and the second is adjacent to the Tesco Express parking bay in Woodfield Lane, where wheel

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ruts in the verge are so deep that they are a real hazard to pedestrians. In fact the whole of the central area owned by the Council near the store has been completely ruined thus destroying an amenity area. Perhaps posts should be put up.

Response from the Local Highways Manager

The County did react to the offence at Dene Road by erecting temporarily bollards to deter motorists from illegally mounting the kerb. However the location of this illegal practise has changed and the bollards will need to be moved to address this issue. Surrey County Council cannot police all verges and will react when reported.

Two Utility Companies carrying out work to their network for a period of four months damaged the location on the verge outside the Tesco. The County was waiting for the works to be completed before erecting the bollards.

Questions from Stephen Cooksey, County Councillor for Dorking South

Snow Clearing

In the Surrey Highways Bulletin dated February 2009 it is stated that during the period of the heavy snowfall at the beginning of February 'community gangs were working on clearing pavements next to main roads, in town centres and around specific special schools'. Would the Chairman please explain the extent of this work undertaken in Mole Valley, where priority was given, and the criteria on which priorities were based?

Response from the Local Highways Manager

The Community Gang in Mole Valley consist of two men in a flat-bed lorry. The instruction was issued to them to clear pavements next to main roads, town centres and around specific special schools. In those two days of heavy snowfall I received numerous messages from councillors, schools, police etc to clear specific locations. We could in the end only action the locations that were accessible to them and tried to re-act to the most dangerous locations first. As you could imagine we did not have time to compile a list of locations with a criteria to prioritise these works.

Flooding

Would the Chairman please indicate when action is to be taken to alleviate the flooding problems at Mill Road/Henfold Lane and the A24 North Holmwood Roundabout?

Response from the Local Highways Manager

The flooding problem on the A24 at the North Holmwood Roundabout was rectified by clearing out the system completely and will not cause any further flooding if we could increase the maintenance at the location. This location will be monitored until the necessary budgets are made available for next financial to allow us to plan accordingly.

The flooding problem at Mill Road/Henfold Lane was cleared out previously and we will be waiting for appropriate funding to rectify the problem. I will ask Mr. Howe to add this location to the list for the Local Committee Revenue Funding for next year, we will however carry out the excess work of this financial year first.