



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)

MEMBER QUESTIONS

23RD SEPTEMBER 2009

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

Questions from Councillor Hazel Watson for Dorking Hills

Community Gangs

Following cutbacks in the Highways budget this financial year, the visits by the Community Gangs are now less frequent than every 6 weeks which is causing backlogs in important Highway maintenance work. What action can be taken to restore the frequency of Community Gang visits to every 6 weeks per County Division?

Response from Local Highways Manager

Surrey Highways East has a revenue maintenance budget this financial year of £6,738,327 compared with £7,524,800 last year, and £6,595,000 the year before. The budget is divided into seven categories:

1. Highway Repairs;
2. Community Gangs;
3. Environment;
4. Drainage;
5. Signs & Lines;
6. Street Lighting & Powered Street Furniture;
7. Local Revenue.

The allocation of monies for each category is set by the Head of Service and the locally monies cannot be vired from one category to another. The funding level set this year for Community Gangs' was £497,000, which is only enough to cover approximately 3.5 gangs throughout the year. The East Group have agreed to slightly overspend this budget to allow for four gangs, however it has also been set by the Highways Service that the Community Gangs will do Accident & Emergency works during the working day as well as there work for Members. The above has resulted in a reduction of approximately a third in outcomes from last year, and for that the Service would apologies, however in these

financially difficult times with limited budgets some constraints were / are inevitable. If Cllr Watson would like or Members generally then the Group Manager is more than happy to take members through the East Revenue Budget for which there is a presentation which will be sent out prior to the meeting.

Wotton village Speed Limit

A 30mph speed limit on the A25 through the village centre of Wotton village would help people to cross the road safely and would be consistent with other village centres of Westcott and Abinger Hammer that already have 30mph speed limits. Can Highways please review the 40mph speed limit through the centre of Wotton village on the A25 with a view to reducing it to 30mph?

Response from Local Highways Manager

The A25 at Wotton village will be placed on a list for an assessment of the speed limit. It is intended that results of the assessment will be included in a report on speed limits to be prepared for the Local Committee in 2010. The report will intend to inform the Committee of the recommended prioritisation of sites for progression with allocated funds.

Question from District Councillor David Sharland, Leatherhead South

A24 Beaverbrook Roundabout to Givons Grove Roundabout

At the Local Committee on the 26th September 2007 following an accident to two pedestrians I asked the officers what action they would take to prevent further accidents at the junction of Crabtree Drive with the A24. In the past few years we have had not only the accident to the pedestrians but motorcyclists involved in fatal accidents.

The answer to my question from the officer was: "I will endeavour to negotiate the allocation of suitable resources to consider the feasibility of providing a suitable crossing as suggested and advise Councillor Sharland accordingly." So far I have not had any further response from the officers and fatal accidents continue to occur at this location.

I am now asking for urgent action to be taken to protect pedestrians, equine users, motorists and motorcyclists at this dangerous junction.

Will the officers please consider and report what measures they are proposing to take to make the area safer.

Response from Local Highways Manager

Since the Local Committee in September 2007 the resources mentioned have not become available, which in turn has meant it has not been possible to commence a scheme design. As with all fatalities on the roads, the recent incident is being investigated by Surrey Police, following on from which some weeks later, a Coroner's report should be produced. The Police feedback information to the Casualty Reduction Working Group for Mole Valley, which includes officers from Surrey Police, Transport for Surrey and Surrey Highways. The next meeting is scheduled for November 2009. Part of the background given to the Coroner is the collision history and of the previous 8 collisions resulting in injury on the length of road between the two roundabouts, 2 have involved motorcycles. These two collisions occurred for different reasons and of the others, it is difficult to find any pattern. However, the site will be reconsidered by the Casualty Reduction Working Group. A scheme design and cost would need to be determined before seeking the required funding.

Barnett Wood Lane Shared Cycleway

At the Local Committee on the 26th September 2007 I asked a question relating to the shared cycleway in Barnett Wood Lane. I was informed that the output report from the Stage 3 construction was awaited. Did the report contain any recommendations for action and if so what action has or will be taken?

I was also told that the white lines around street lights positioned in the centre of the shared surface would not be laid as the lighting columns were to be repositioned to the back of the shared surface. Since the repositioning has not occurred and two years have elapsed will the officers now consider laying white lines around the street lights?

Response from Local Highways Manager

A stage 3 Safety Audit has been carried out on the this scheme and recommendations have been made and considered by Surrey Highways. Some resultant works are suggested and it is expected that works can be progressed in 2010 after agreement of details. White lines around street lighting columns have been suggested but it may be possible to move columns to the back of footway. Other suggestions include :

- Hatched markings around the telegraph pole near to the Volvo dealership.
- Some minor adjustment to some dropped kerbs in the vicinity of the access to Business Park 8 / 9.
- Some vegetation clearance at various locations.
- Reflective bands on lamp columns located within the footway.
- Tactile paving re-laid near Heathfield Close to accord with current guidance.
- The moving of a fire hydrant.
- A sign assembly being relocated onto a straight section of footway in Barnett Wood Lane instead of being located in Caen Wood Road.
- The uncontrolled crossing point being adjusted so that only dropped kerbs exist where the tactile paving is.
- Red/white reflective bands being installed on all bollards.
- The illumination of a sign at the pedestrian refuge near to Caen Wood Road.

Question from District Councillor Valerie Homewood, Beare Green**Ockley Road**

The A29 Ockley Road between Beare Green roundabout and Henhurst Cross Lane has the national speed limit of 60 mph. However, there are 26 residences along this stretch of road clustered around Wigmore on the southern side and Smallburgh on the northern side. The road is straight and not very wide, and because of the speed of traffic residents find it difficult to access the road safely. On neither side of the road is there a footpath. 'Near misses' of cars attempting to leave Smallburgh drive entrance have been reported to me.

1. Please could the County Highways authority examine the possibility of a lower speed limit between Henhurst Cross corner and the roundabout?
2. As an interim measure, could they examine the possibility of putting up signage saying 'Concealed Driveways' near Wigmore on the southern side and Smallburgh on the northern side?

Either measure could help to protect the safety of residents on what is currently a very fast stretch of residential road.

Response from Local Highways Manager

1. The suggestion for a lower speed limit will be placed on the list for future review. An assessment against Department for Transport / County Council guidelines will be made to ascertain the correct speed limit of this section of road. As with all speed limits, if it is possible to reduce the limit then approval will need to be sought from this Committee. It is intended that results of the assessment will be included in a report on speed limits to be prepared for the Local Committee in 2010. The report will intend to inform the Committee of the recommended prioritisation of sites for progression with allocated funds.
2. The accesses leading to Smallburgh cottages and to Wigmore are private and as such the County Council would not generally provide signs. However, all signs on the highway should adhere to the Traffic Regulations and General Directions 2002, issued by the Department for Transport and the 'concealed entrance' sign is not prescribed for use as a permanent sign.

Question from District Councillor David Howell, Ashstead Common

Waste Lorries through Ashtead High Street

Residents have noted that Britannia waste lorries which are not fully covered are again routing through Ashtead High Street along the A24. The lorries had more recently been routed through Malden Rushett thus avoiding more densely populated areas. These lorries are not covered and in the dry weather have been reported as spewing unknown waste dust and particles as they pass (often at relatively high speed) through the village.

Response to be sent to Councillor Howell after Local committee and included in the Local Committee member questions in 9th December 2009

Gas Pipework Replacement in Woodfield Lane Ashtead

Having recently had the road dug up for two services causing severe disruption, it is now time for the gas pipes to be replaced. Residents were extremely critical of the very limited hours actually worked by previous utilities' contractors when undertaking the replacement of services. Out of the normal working day for most residents, the operatives were actually on site for approximately half that time. Residents believe that Surrey County Council are too lax at granting the road closures thus enabling the utility companies to adopt a very disadvantageous method of working as far as the residents are concerned. Can officers please advise what steps are being taken to ensure that things improve and that the delays on this occasion (which currently cover the period up to Christmas) will be kept to a minimum.

Response to be sent to Councillor Howell after Local committee and included in the Local Committee member questions in 9th December 2009

Parking Restrictions near St John's School Leatherhead

Residents are complaining that the situation is getting worse with more cars on both sides of the road making access even more difficult. This is actually discouraging some residents from shopping in Leatherhead. When will new traffic orders be in place, and in the meantime is it not possible to liaise with the police in order that severe congestion on a main artery to Leatherhead can be prevented.

Response to be sent to Councillor Howell after Local committee and included in the Local Committee member questions in 9th December 2009