

MINUTES: of the meeting of the Mole Valley Local Committee held at 14.00 on Wednesday 3rd March 2010 in the Council Chamber, Pippbrook, Dorking

Members Present - Surrey County Council

Helyn Clack, Chairman
Clare Curran – Vice Chairman
Stephen Cooksey
Tim Hall
Christopher Townsend
Hazel Watson

Members Present - Mole Valley District Council

Valerie Homewood
David Howell
Rosemary Dickson
Donn Webb
Chris Hunt
Ann Howarth

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

PART ONE - IN PUBLIC

18/08 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTIONS**
[Item 1]

There were apologies for absence from Jean Pearson and David Sharland. Donn Webb and Rosemary Dickson were substituting.

19/08 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** [Item 2]

Christopher Townsend declared an interest in Item 13 regarding the funding proposal from Ashtead Tennis Players Club.
Stephen Cooksey declared an interest in Item 13 regarding his Local Allocations and his position as Director of the Dorking Chamber of Commerce

20/08 **MINUTES OF THE LAST** [Item 3]

The minutes from the last Local Committee meeting were agreed and signed off by the Chairman. Stephen Cooksey requested in update on the letter sent to Cabinet from the Chairman of the Mole Valley Local Committee regarding Dorking Nursery School. Tim Hall will receive the response shortly and share with councillors.

21/08 **PUBLIC WRITTEN QUESTIONS** [Item 4A]

All public written questions were responded to in the Local Committee (see Annexe A).

Tim Hall left the meeting at 14:07pm and returned at 15:10pm.

22/08 **MEMBER QUESTIONS** [Item 4B]

Five Member questions were received. The questions and answers are set out in Annex B. There were several supplementary questions with regards to clarity, which were responded to in the meeting.

Councillors expressed concerns over;

1. Time it is taking contractors to carry out works
2. The quality of pothole repairs
3. Contractors leaving road signage after works are complete

The Local Highways Manager noted this and recognises the need to improve this when highways contracts are reviewed in 2011.

24/08 **PETITIONS** [Item 5]

No petitions were received.

25/08 **YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PLAN 2010-2011** [Item 6]

This item was removed due to insufficient information being provided by the Youth Development Service.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman will arrange a meeting with the Head of Youth Development Services to discuss how this can be progressed.

26/08 **QUALITY BUS PARTNERSHIP REVIEW** [Item 7]

This report seeks to note the development of the Route 479 Quality Bus Corridor in Mole Valley, between Guildford and Epsom via Bookham, Leatherhead and Ashted.

The Transport Manager has agreed to arrange site visits with councillors who have requested bus shelters in their local area where the bus service is well used by residents.

RESOLVED

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) is asked to agree that:

1. They will endorse the Route 479 Quality Bus Partnership
2. They will support further improvements to the route where they can be shown to have benefit for residents of Mole Valley

27/08 **RIGHTS OF WAY** [Item 8]

This report seeks the approval to make the Order for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for Byways Open to All Traffic 515 (Shere) & 137 (Abinger).

RESOLVED

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) agreed:

1. The grounds for making a TRO as outlined below are met, and an Order should be made for Byways Open to All Traffic 515 (Shere) & 137 (Abinger) as shown on Drawing No. 3/1/68/H28 (see appendix 1).

28/08 **WINTER SERVICE REPORT** [Item 9]

This report provides an update on the winter event effecting highways in Mole Valley during 2009/2010.

The local Highways and Manager and Local Committee expressed thanks to all partners and residents that worked together to help efforts in December and January when Mole Valley saw heavy snow fall.

RESOLVED

1. The Local Committee agreed to note the report.

In addition to this the Chairman has agreed to write to the select committees, which are reviewing the Winter Service Policy, with comments and suggestions from councillors at the Local Committee Meeting.

Anne Howarth left the meeting and 15:07pm and returned at 15:10pm

29/08 **A25 WESTCOTT TO DORKING PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT** [Item 10]

This report asks the Local Committee to formally consider an objection to the proposal to install a 40mph speed limit on the A25 between Dorking and Westcott.

RESOLVED

The Local Committee has agreed that;

1. The order to impose a 40mph speed on the A25 between Westcott and Dorking be made and the associated measures be installed.

32/08 **CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY BIDS REPORT** [Item 11]

Councillors are asked to agree Mole Valley bids for submission to the judging

panel for the Climate Change Fund for Local Committees.

RESOLVED

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) agreed to:

1. Consider the **£17,800** funding proposals received.
2. Decide on the proposal(s) to be submitted to the judging panel, to a total of up to **£10,000**.

Councillors agreed to put forward the £1500 proposal from Transition Ashtead Initiating Group, allocate £4250 to Temple Lane Allotment Society and allocate £4250 to the ELP Confederation leading on Cycling Initiative.

32/08 PROGRESS OF HIGHWAYS REPORT [Item 12]

To update the Local Committee with exceptional items only.

There are no exceptional items to report.

33/08 LOCAL COMMITTEE FUNDING [Item 12]

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

- Strood Green Shop Association, £1,280 revenue
- Reigate Beekeepers Association, £1,000 capital
- St Michaels Church Betchworth, £1,000 revenue
- Mid Surrey Dementia Care Trust, £2,000 capital
- Surrey Youth Services - Dorking Youth Café, £2,094 capital
- Capel Parish Council – Beare Green survey, £1,000 revenue
- Surrey Youth Services – Ashtead Youth Club, £3,500 revenue
- Abinger First School, £2,000 revenue
- ALDAG, £3410 revenue
- Dorking Cricket Club, £5,000 capital
- Ashtead Peace Memorial Trust, £5,000 capital
- Betchworth Parish Council, £1,100 capital
- PLAY - Leigh Active Youth, £1,000 capital
- Leigh Parish Council, £1,000 capital
- Bookham Resident Association, £3530 capital
- Holmwood Parish Council, £1,124 capital
- Harvest Community Church, £2,527 capital
- Dorking Chamber of Commerce, £6,316 (£1189 capital £5127 revenue)
- Westcott Youth Centre, £2,856 revenue
- BFree Youth Café, £3,000

Members are also asked to note five bids that falls below the £1,000 threshold:

- Capel Parish Council – Beare Green Pavillion, £500 revenue
- Dorking Community Orchard – Plant community orchard, £600
- Food Float for Dorking, £384

- Leatherhead Trinity School, £900
- Leatherhead Shopmobility, £500
- **Rejected** Miss Bliss, £999 (further information sought)

Members agreed the Rotary Club of Ashted could use the allocated £1,548 towards the cost of erecting a new archway at the entrance to Ashted Recreation Ground instead of a wrought iron gate which was what the funding was originally applied for.

Members agreed that £211.08 of unspent allocations to Ashted Tennis Players Club must be repaid to the Local Committee, and any additional funding for a new sign needs to be reapplied for.

Members noted the withdrawal of funding from Mole Valley District Council awarded for improvements to car park security in Dorking on 4 March 2009. Councillor Cooksey has reallocated the money.

RESOLVED

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) is agreed to:

1. Approve the proposals detailed in Annexe A totalling £49,737
2. Note the delegated approval of those proposals which fell below the £1,000 threshold totalling £2,884
3. Make a decision regarding the amended proposal detailed in Annexe B totalling £1,548
4. Make a decision regarding the changes to Ashted Tennis Players Club local allocation 2008/2009
5. Note the withdrawal of £2000 capital funding from Mole Valley District Council.

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

Meeting finished at 15:30pm

Chairman

Annexe A Public Questions

Question from Edward Bennett For the Westcott in Bloom Committee

The section of pavement between Westcott House and Lince Lane on the north side of the A25, Westcott

This pavement sees heavy usage by people, including young children and mothers with prams and push chairs walking between Westcott and the Village Sports Ground, the offices of UNUM and Dorking.

On the inside of the pavement is a wall which originally defined the pavement width as 1.3M, but following years of neglect, the shrub growth on the bank and weed growth in soil washed down from the bank on to the pavement has reduced this to 60cm in places, so that it is now impossible for two people to pass without one walking into the main road. The danger is exacerbated by the narrowness of the road at this point so that when two large vehicles pass the near side one is forced to within centimetres of the pavement edge so that even a single pedestrian is in danger of being be struck by a truck wing mirror

This very dangerous situation has been brought to the attention of the County Council's Highways department for some time, culminating in a site meeting in September last year arranged by our County Councillor Hazel Watson, Highways representative Wally Howe and members of the Westcott in Bloom committee. Since then no response has been received despite frequent requests for information.

Please could The County Council Highways Department confirm that road safety, especially as it relates to pedestrians, is given the highest priority when allocating funds and if so when this essential work will be carried out.

Response from Local Highway Manager

Following the meeting in 2009 arranged by County Councillor Hazel Watson with Mr Edward Bennett and a Surrey Highways Maintenance Engineer, it was agreed that funding was needed to reduce the foliage overgrowth and to side out the footway next to the wall. It was considered that mechanical flailing would be the most appropriate method to deal with the foliage. It was also considered that manual labour would be most appropriate to side out and clear the footway.

As the location is narrow and adjacent to the A25 carriageway, work could be hazardous and correct traffic management would be essential. Temporary traffic signals would probably be necessary, which would add greatly to the cost. Funding has not yet been allocated for this work although discussions with a suitable contractor have been held.

It is of course confirmed that road safety for all highway users, including pedestrians, is given the highest priority when works are considered by Surrey Highways. Regarding the works to improve safety on the A25 between Westcott and Lince Lane, I confirm that a cost estimate and funding is being sought, having regard to the many priorities for safety work that exist in current circumstances.

Question from Rosie Norris

Access Group

At the last meeting of MVDC's Access Group on 26 January SCC Highways Authority notified the Group it would no longer be able to attend Group meetings in the future. Issues relating to dropped kerbs (or lack of), narrow pavements, obstructions (from parked cars, barriers to footpaths) are a significant part of MVDC's Access Group's considerations and we rely totally on HA input for any improvements in these areas. It's not going too far to say that lack of HA input will radically undermine the purpose of the Group. Progress in these areas has already been severely restricted by very limited HA attendance during 2008/9.

I recognise that funding/time is at a premium - are there other ways HA could continue (1) to have an in-put to the Group and (2) bring about road/footpath accessibility improvements? Could the Group meet at the HA office for example or a set period of time be allocated to two-way email communication between HA and the LAF?

Response from Local Highway Manager

Surrey Highways appreciates the work of the Access Group in relation to the maintenance and improvement of the public highways. Officers have not ruled out attending future meetings of the Access Group but did decline a recent invitation to give a presentation on highway matters relating to disability. The Local Highways Manager thanked the Chairman of the Access Group for the kind invitation and commented that he would like to go along to the meeting and other meetings held by many other organisations in Mole Valley. Unfortunately, commitments for the many other highways matters in Surrey rarely leave time for officers to attend such meetings. We try to be consistent in our attendance policy and generally would attend such a meeting only if a County Councillor requested officer support on technical issues associated with a specific highway improvement scheme or issue.

The Chairman of the Access Group, Anne Howarth, kindly met with Surrey Highways officers in August last year to review the Group's list of accessibility issues related to highways in Mole Valley. This was a useful meeting and the Local Highways Manager has confirmed that officers should be able to attend similar meetings from time to time. The next meeting has been arranged for 16th March 2010 with the Chairman of the Mole Valley Access Group.

Regarding the suggestion for the Access Group to meet at the HA office, it is probably more effective for officers to meet with just the Chairman of the Group and perhaps one other member. The meeting is of course open to any County Councillor who would like to attend.

Regarding the suggestion for allocating a set period of time to two-way email communication between HA and the LAF, Access Group members are welcome at any time to use the defect reporting facility on the County Council's website and send email communications to the east Surrey Highways email address east Surrey Highways@surreycc.gov.uk . Emails are recorded on a customer communication database and allocated to an appropriate officer for response.

Question from Ray Adams

Would Mole Valley be better served by having its own resources to restore our roads to the satisfaction of all our ratepayers?

For example, an “in house” repair contractor, which could deal with the most urgent pot holes in the Mole Valley area. This could help preserve the roads, prevent serious injury, damage to vehicles, and save money from unnecessary claims.

Previous letter send to Head of Surrey Highways: (for information only)

This letter is to report to you about the state of our roads, and in particular the single-track road called Abinger Common Road, which connects Hollow Lane to Abinger Bottom. From the house called Green Pastures to Hollow Lane is about half mile long and now has 27 potholes, which we list in centimetres, the last measurement represents the depth of the potholes:

*60x30x20	50x50x2	40x35x5	40x30x5	60x30x5
50x30x5	40x50x5	90x70x5	60x50x4	*100x75x10
*70x70x15	*90x70x12	60x40x8	60x25x4	*90x60x10
*120x70x12	*110x100x10	*100x70x10	40x40x7	30x20x3
*100x40x10	43x35x5	60x30x4	60x46x5	*80x100x10
50x50x4	40x50x7			

The 10 potholes marked (asterisk and bold type) are deadly, and recently a woman suffered personal injury visiting Abinger Bottom. The danger means “accidents waiting to happen”. Most of these potholes were marked (in red) for attention sometime in the autumn, but never repaired. Our neighbours have made repeated telephone calls about the state of our road. If this continues without remedial action, the outcome could be serious for us all, with damage to vehicles, and injury to people.

Help us now - please!

Response from Local Highways Manager

The resources to repair roads in Mole Valley are sourced from a contract providing delivery of highway service functions across five districts and boroughs in the east of Surrey. Resources are varied in type and quantity depending on demand for work to be done and funding available. Coordination of resources across a larger area than just one district provides opportunities to benefit from economies of scale and better flexibility.

More resources have been deployed to repair the roads in Mole Valley since the deterioration caused by the damaging effects of the winter event from late December 2009 to mid January 2010. An indication of what is being achieved with this extra resource is the 865 urgent defects that were repaired in the east of the County in the first six weeks of this year, which is as many as in the first three months of 2009.

Urgent defects, known as Category 1, should be dealt with quickly, and within 24 hours if possible. Quick fill methods are used to deal with the current high demand for such urgent reactive refilling of potholes. However, planned patching and surfacing is also being carried out to provide better and more permanent repairs. There are 25 gangs at present in the east of the County undertaking a mixture of planned and reactive highway defect repairs.

The carriageway potholes in Abinger Common Road have been identified for repair and should be completed by 5th March. A highway inspection last year recorded a number of defects for repair but resources were not available to carry out the required work. With the helpful information provided by Mr. Adams, a further inspection last week resulted in the identification of urgent and more potholes for repair.

Annexe B Member Questions

Question from County Councillor Stephen Cooksey, Dorking and Holmwoods

Bollards on the high pavement in Dorking High Street

'In May 2009 a metal bar joining two bollards on the high pavement in Dorking High Street was broken. An unsightly temporary plastic barrier was erected in its place. This is a sensitive site in a conservation area and the bar acted as a safety barrier-protecting people from the steep drop onto the A25. Despite continued requests during the course of the last 9 months no action to replace the bar has been taken.

Would the Local Highways Manager or the appropriate officer:

1. Explain why this bar has not been replaced during the course of the last 4 months?
2. Indicate when action will be taken in the immediate future to replace the bar?
3. Indicate when it is expected that the bar will be replaced?'

Response from Highways

A bespoke metal bar is required to replace the broken section that was removed last year. Surrey Highways has sought to achieve this and has kept County Councillor Stephen Cooksey informed.

1. The bar has not been replaced during the course of the last 4 months due to difficulties with the supply of a suitable replacement metal bar. The work must be commissioned through Surrey Highway's partner, Carillion, since it is maintenance work on the public highway. A specialist sub-contractor capable of supplying the required metal bar was identified but the company was not on Carillion's list of preferred suppliers. The process for commissioning work from the sub-contractor was commenced but the company's terms and conditions were not acceptable to Carillion.

2. Action is being taken to replace the bar. Colleagues in Mole Valley District Council have provided details of an alternative specialist sub-contractor to supply a bespoke metal bar and details have been passed to Carillion. The Operations Manager at Carillion has acknowledged that the requirement to replace the bar has been going on for an extended period and is seeking to arrange the works as soon as possible.

3. A timescale has not yet been provided for replacement of the metal bar. However, Carillion is seeking to arrange the works as soon as possible and officers will endeavour to keep the Chairman of the Local Committee and County Councillor Stephen Cooksey fully informed.

Question from County Councillor Hazel Cooksey, Dorking Hills

Potholes on the A25

Given that many pothole repairs particularly on the A25 at Westcott and in Dorking near the junction with Station Road have not lasted even one month since the repairs were carried out in January, what action is taken by Highways to check the quality of the repairs to ensure that they last a reasonable period of time?

Response from Highways

The unprecedented number of potholes in our road carriageways following the period of snow and ice is being dealt with by Quick Fill. This repair method is being effective to address the many deep potholes in order to try to keep our roads safe, although some Quick Fills have not lasted. Continuing bad weather has caused further deterioration to the network, sometimes to the initial repair and often to the section of road adjacent to the original repair. Continual water flow from adjacent saturated land is just one example of why this deterioration occurs. The action of traffic, combined with the recent conditions has meant that some sites have needed repeat visits to keep them safe for the time being.

Roads are monitored by Surrey Highways officers. However, we are receiving many urgent pothole defect notifications each day and this helps to ensure our highways are kept safe. Anyone can report defects needing urgent repair on Surrey County Council's website www.surreycc.gov.uk or phone number 0300 200 1003.

The County Council's partner constructor is required to supervise work to ensure compliance with specifications required under the contract. Surrey Highways officers also carry out quality checks on a sample of the work completed each

month as a part of the contract performance monitoring. Quality issues are raised with the constructor in order to continually improve the service provided.

Permanent repairs are being undertaken on roads in Mole Valley including 'A' roads and priority routes throughout the district. Work on the A25, including the section from Abinger through Westcott to Dorking, is currently in progress. Permanent repairs on the A25 near the junction with Station Road are scheduled for night working on 4th and 5th March 2010.

Pixham Annexe

Has the County Council or St Martin's School in Dorking done any research to test the viability of building on the Pixham Annexe site before deciding whether or not to fund additional buildings on the Ranmore Road site of the school?

Response from Surrey County Council

The schools preference was very much driven by the educational benefits of bringing the school together on one site, however Surrey CC Estates and Planning investigated the implications of accommodating the additional children at both Pixham and Ranmore Road.

Surrey CC Estates and Planning found that the Pixham Annexe is an inefficient building to run and has cost the school some lost days in education due to the boiler breaking down etc. It is not really fit for purpose for 21st Century education without a lot of investment. The site is small and there is hardly any room to build onto it. Staff and visitors have to park on the front playground and the entrance is very difficult to manoeuvre into. There would be insufficient outdoor learning and play areas for additional children, were the site to be expanded.

There are different planning constraints for both Pixham and Ranmore Road sites. However, Pixham is in a conservation area and adjacent to several listed buildings. The design of any development on the Pixham site would need to reflect the existing and surrounding buildings. This would make any development on this site significantly more expensive and much more difficult to achieve a suitable 21st century teaching and learning environment.

The results on their investigations were reported at both the public meetings we held and were covered in the paper which we prepared and made available to attendees at the meetings and on our website.

Children's Centres

Why has the catchment area for the Dorking Children's Centre been drawn to exclude Westcott so that Westcott residents will have to pass the Dorking Children's Centre to reach the Children's Centre at the St John's site which they are supposed to attend?

Response from Surrey County Council

Westcott does fall in the catchment for area 72 which is served by St Johns, however Dorking Nursery School have the management responsibility for both

Area 23 (Dorking Children Centre) and area 72 based at St Johns. Families living in Westcott can access services at both sites whichever is the most appropriate for them.

Westcott has also been identified as a potential venue for the rural bus, and we are currently looking for a venue to park the bus. The Children Centre will be looking at delivering outreach to these families.

Question from District Councillor David Howell, Ashted

Knoll Roundabout

The works at Knoll Roundabout appear to be completed but the contractor, Conway, still seems to have exclusive use of the car park adjacent to the roundabout as a free storage area. Why is this so, and when will it return to a car park?

Response from Highways

The car park area off Leatherhead By-pass Road, just south of Knoll roundabout, has been closed to the public during the works period for Knoll Roundabout and Epsom Road. Conway under contract to Surrey County Council has used the car park and is intending to vacate the area before the end of next week. Removal of equipment should start this week. Reinstatement of the area including grass seeding and bollard replacement is scheduled for next week.

