



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(MOLE VALLEY)**

MEMBER WRITTEN QUESTIONS

08 JUNE 2011

The following questions were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 47.

1. Two questions from District Councillor Chris Hunt (Ashted Village)

1. What work has been undertaken on an idea to widen Woodfield Lane in Ashted? Was a similar idea investigated some years ago? What is the anticipated total cost of the works and design fees etc.?

Response from SCC Highways

This question will be answered verbally on the day of committee.

2. Can grass cutting be scheduled so as to avoid domestic refuse collection days? If the decision as to exactly when to cut grass is for the contractor to decide, can officers pass on details of the bin collection days to the contractor so that they try to avoid the days when rubbish bins are left on grass verges, resulting in sections under those bins not being cut?

Response from SCC Highways

This question will be answered verbally on the day of committee.

2. Two questions from County Councillor Hazel Watson (Dorking Hills)

1. The gateways on either side of the A25 on the eastern side of Westcott village were damaged and dislodged several months ago. What is the reason for the delay in replacing these gateways which are important for slowing down traffic entering the village? When will these gateways be replaced and can an assurance be given that they will be replaced by the end of June 2011 before the judging of Westcott in Bloom takes place in early July?

Response from SCC Highways

There has been a delay in replacing the gateway feature on the A25 eastern side of Westcott due to the change over from the County Councils previous highway maintenance contractor to our new contractor May Gurney. Unfortunately there were a number of jobs that remained outstanding during the demobilisation period of the previous contract and these are to be re programmed and prioritised in conjunction with our new contractor. There is no confirmed programmed date for the work at this current time and it is unlikely that the work will be completed within the next month due to the volume of work involved. Colleagues will however continue to press for completion at the earliest opportunity.

2. Large foreign lorries regularly get stuck on Coldharbour Lane in Coldharbour whilst following satnav directions to Coldharbour Lane, although they seek to go to Coldharbour Lane in Brixton. Can width and height limit signs be placed on Coldharbour Lane in Dorking, at the start of Abinger Road and at the junction of Broomehall Road with Stane Street to inform HGV drivers and to prevent damage to the high sided banks and mature trees in the road?

Response from SCC Highways

Width and height signs are both regulatory signs as defined by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 and as such require the legal backing of a Traffic Regulation Order. As part of this process, formal consultation would be required.

Height restrictions are provided mainly at non-arch bridges and other physical structures with a headroom of less than 16'6" (5.03m). They are not intended to be used to protect trees as the crowns can be raised to provide the necessary height clearance.

Width restrictions may be imposed to prevent entry to roads physically incapable of accommodating larger vehicles or to protect the environment by preventing unnecessary intrusion by large vehicles. When a width restriction is introduced, it is important that vehicles exceeding the width stated are given the

opportunity to take an alternative route. Signing would be required not only at the start of the length of road to which the restriction applies but also at junctions along its entire length. Again, for each of these points, vehicles would need to be given the opportunity to re-route. Detailed consideration would have to be given to the extent of any restriction and its signing. It is possible, therefore, that a width restriction scheme would have to cover a wider area than just Coldharbour Lane alone and certainly would require more signing than envisaged in the question.

Where a width limit has been imposed for environmental reasons, the traffic order often provides an exception for access to premises and land adjacent to the road. The need to provide an exemption for access would form part of any detailed consideration of a width restriction scheme for the area.

There is no funding allocated at the present time to progress a width restriction scheme for Coldharbour Lane. Local Committee approval would be required to advertise the Traffic Regulation Order and implement the scheme. If Members so wished, feasibility could be started later this financial year with a view to reporting to Local Committee early in 2012 and funding sought for implementation in 2012/13. Consideration can be given to the provision of advisory "Unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles" as an interim measure.

3. Two questions from District Councillor Philip Harris (Bookham South)

1. In light of the recent incident on the lower road where a child was injured, is Surrey County Council inclined to install a crossing facility adjacent to the alley leading to Middlemead, Bookham? This is something residents have been campaigning for many years without success.

Response from SCC Highways

A petition was presented to Local Committee in June 2009 seeking 'the urgent provision of a safe crossing of the Lower Road, opposite the Recreational Ground'. Two options for measures had been considered some years previously when an area of hardstanding was provided on the south side of Lower Road to assist pedestrians crossing by the alley to Middlemead. A signalised crossing was investigated but was not considered feasible for a number of reasons, including the need for land take, visual intrusion to local residents and cost. A central pedestrian island to enable pedestrians to cross the road in two halves was also considered. This was not pursued at the time as localised road widening would have been required which would have resulted in significant costs and there were concerns about maintaining vehicle access to nearby residential properties. The petitioners were advised that conditions on site had not changed and therefore the provision of a new facility was not likely to be any easier than when it had been originally considered.

A number of alternative locations for the crossing point were subsequently suggested. Taking into account that generally pedestrians will only walk up to 50 metres to use a facility, some of the suggested locations were too far from the acknowledged desire line at the alleyway leading to Middlemead. Other locations were considered in too close proximity to the junction with Middlemead. It is also necessary to achieve inter-visibility requirements between drivers and pedestrians, which might not have been possible at some locations. A feasibility study would, of course, be able to determine these issues.

Surrey County Council does not have a problem with the concept of providing a pedestrian crossing point in Lower Road near the Recreation Ground. Regardless of which of the suggestions would prove to be the preferred option, there is no funding allocated this financial year for a feasibility study and funding would then need to be identified and agreed for the subsequent design and construction.

In view of the recent incident in Lower Road and continuing public demand for a crossing point, it is suggested that Lower Road is assessed and prioritised against set criteria in accordance with the County's Local Transport Plan (Congestion, Accessibility, Safety, Environment and Maintenance). Allocation of future funding for a scheme in Lower Road would then be considered by Local Committee together with other requests for schemes across the District.

2. Despite apologies in chamber and personal visits, Mr and Mrs Kirby of Newenham Rd, Bookham are still awaiting their disabled bay marking. This has been going on for three years, will the county confirm if and when this will be installed.

Response from SCC Highways

This question will be answered verbally on the day of committee.

4. Question from County Councillor Stephen Cooksey (Dorking and Holmwoods)

The County Council agreed last year, in order firmly to establish the Total Place pilot in Mole Valley, that the Vice-Chairman of the Local Committee should be a District Councillor.

In the light of this decision would the Chairman:

1. outline the process by which the Vice-Chairman is now selected and appointed;

2. indicate whether the County Council has conditioned the District Council's ability to recommend a Vice-Chairman of its own choice by for example specifying which political group the District nominee should belong to or whether a member of any political group or groups would not be acceptable.'

Response from SCC Democratic Services Team

The Council on 10 May 2011 appointed Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of committees for the council year 2011/12 and in doing so, agreed to leave the Vice-Chairmen of Woking Local Committee and Mole Valley Local Committee vacant, inviting nominations from the respective District/Borough. The Chief Executive wrote to the Chief Executives of all 11 Districts and Boroughs following the Annual Meeting outlining the Council's decision to appoint District/Borough Members to the local committees this year and highlighting the two vice-chairmen vacancies.

Last year, Mole Valley District Council agreed its Vice-Chairman nomination via its Executive. The District Council has commented that they have yet to make a nomination for the position of Vice-Chairman. Any nomination received will be reported to the County Council at its next Council meeting on 14 June. At this stage, had no nomination been received it would be possible for Members to decide to appoint a County Councillor as Vice-Chairman of this local committee instead.

5. Question from County Councillor Chris Townsend (Ashtead)

With regard to SCC's proposed car parking charges. Please could officers advise if disabled people will be exempt from these charges if they are introduced?

Response from SCC Operations, Highways and Countryside Team

Officers can confirm that Blue badge holders will be exempt.