

Draft minutes to be signed as agreed at the Local Committee meeting 16 July

MINUTES: of the meeting of the Runnymede Local Committee held at 10.00 on Friday 4 June 2004 at the Runnymede Centre, Chertsey

Surrey County Council Members

*Mrs Elise S Whiteley - Chairman
*Mrs Moira James - Vice-Chairman
*Mr Terry Dicks
*Miss Susan Bruce
*Mr R A N Lowther

• = present

PART ONE - IN PUBLIC

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

24/04 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

No apologies for absence were received from County Council Members.

25/04 MINUTES OF THE LOCAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 MAY 2003 [Item 2]

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed.

26/04 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE – 2004/05 [Item 3]

Cllr Mrs Moira James was nominated by Cllr Mr Terry Dicks seconded by Mr Ray Lowther. All were in favour.

RESOLVED

That Mrs Moira James is elected as Chairman of the Committee for the year 2004/05.

27/04 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE – 2004/05 [Item 4]

Cllr Miss Susan Bruce was nominated by Cllr Mrs Elise Whiteley and seconded by Mrs Moira James. All were in favour

RESOLVED

That Miss Bruce is elected as Vice - Chairman of the Committee for the year 2004/05.

28/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 5]

There were no declarations of interest

29/04 **PETITIONS** [Item 6]

No petitions were received

30/04 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** [Item 7]

There were no formal public questions

Local Director Miss Carolyn Rowe read the protocol for raising formal public questions.

An informal public question time had been held at 9.30am, prior to the formal meeting, during which a number of questions were asked and answered. A record of these is appended.

31/04 **MEMBER QUESTION TIME** [Item 8]

Question 1 was received from Cllr Ray Lowther:

What is the latest situation regarding Airtrack?

A response was received from George Burnett, Head of the Local Transport Plan & Chairman of the Airtrack Forum:

In July 2003, the AirTrack Forum commissioned Atkins Transport Planning, with assistance from Price WaterhouseCoopers, to undertake an Outline Business Case Study for the AirTrack Scheme. AirTrack Forum members include a cross-selection of local authorities, businesses and community organisations from Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire as well as British Airways, Transport for London's Rail Directorate, SEERA (South East England Regional Assembly), SEEDA (South East England Development Agency) the Highways Authority and the SWELTRAC (South West London Transport Conference) partnership. Its chairman is George Burnett, Head of the Local Transport Plan Group at Surrey County Council.

AirTrack is a proposed rail project which would connect the South West Trains rail network to Heathrow Airport's Terminal 5, which is currently under construction. It would involve the building of a short section of new rail line from the existing Windsor Line, just to the west of Staines, up to Terminal 5, running immediately to the east of the M25. It would also require a new rail connection between the Windsor Line and the Reading Line by means of a short "chord" in Staines, running across the Elmsleigh Car Park, and the building of a new station just to the west of the Iron Bridge, close to the new Two Rivers shopping development. The Consultants completed their Study early in 2004. A number of alternatives were examined but the recommended base case would consist of the infrastructure described above, and three services would be operated, each one running half hourly, between 0500 hours and 2400 hours, seven days a week. These services would be from Terminal 5 to Reading (via Staines, Bracknell and Wokingham), from Terminal 5 to Guildford (via Staines, Chertsey and Woking) and from Terminal 5 to Waterloo (via Staines, Feltham, Twickenham, Richmond and Clapham Junction). The Consultants found that the business case for AirTrack was very robust, with a cost/benefit ratio of 2.7, which is particularly strong for a rail project. The services themselves should generate enough

income to cover their operating costs, which would mean a very low risk to the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) of having to provide ongoing subsidy.

The findings of the OBC Study were formally presented to the SRA in April, and have subsequently been circulated widely. The Consultants liaised closely with both the SRA and BAA during the course of the Study work, and the SRA has decided to commission a further technical study to examine the operability of the scheme at Staines. The objective of the AirTrack Forum is for the SRA to incorporate AirTrack into the national programme of rail schemes within the revised 10 Year national Transport Plan, following the current Treasury spending review. To this end, the AirTrack Forum will be publicising the findings of the OBC Study as widely as possible, particularly to important stakeholders such as the Department for Transport. The regional bodies, SEERA and SEEDA, have already agreed to support AirTrack as a Regional priority transport scheme, and it is included as such within the new Regional Transport Strategy.

Mr. Lowther asked the following supplementary question:

Mr. Lowther asked that the Local Committee in consort with the Local Transportation Service press for this scheme, as it would bring significant growth.

Mr. William Ward, Local Transportation Director responded:

This is a critical time as to whether Airtrack gets a positive decision or not. The case for it is being led by the County Council, but does need government funding to go ahead. Mr. Ward offered to bring the business case to Committee in the future.

Question 2 was received from Cllr Susan Bruce

a) Regarding Bus Stops in Englefield Green:

The newly installed bus shelters in Englefield Green have the ability to display information regarding which buses stop there. Is it possible to liaise with the appropriate agencies to remove the now redundant stop sign as part of the rationalisation of signage in the area, especially as some of these stops are positioned some distance from their corresponding new shelter?

b) Please also clarify the situation regarding the proposed repainting of the bus shelters which were delivered in black and due to be painted green in keeping with the look of the village. Could I please have a report on progress, and confirmation that the new paint finish will be to a good standard and robust.

A response was received from Gerald Cole, Senior Planning engineer, Local Transportation Service

The bus shelters in St Jude's Road have been replaced as part of a package of improvements agreed between Runnymede Borough Council and Adshel. They require some additional fittings before the information boards and bus stop flags can be transferred over.

We have recently heard that these are now in stock and are due to be installed in the near future. The shelters are programmed to be repainted in green using durable materials in June.

**32/04 OBSTRUCTION OF A FOOTPATH AT THE SAINSBURY'S SITE IN
CHERTSEY [Item 9]**

Mr Lowther described the problems to local people caused by the siting of fuel filling pipes with walls erected to either side effectively blocking a pedestrian route with clear and direct disabled access from the toilet facility and Guildford Street to the Sainsbury's Shopping Centre area in the vicinity of the fuel garage.

Mr Lowther, whilst recognising that the footpath was on private ground over which the County Council had no jurisdiction, urged the Committee to support local residents and store users, in particular those people who are disabled and require the use of a wheelchair by writing to Sainsbury's and requesting that a footpath from the Sainsbury's Centre through to the toilet block in the vicinity of the petrol filling station be reinstated.

Members discussed the fact that although there was no official right of way across the land, representation could be made via a courteous request to Sainsbury's in support of Chertsey Chambers of Commerce and the Voluntary Services whose premises are on the site.

Members voted on the recommendation, three Members were in favour and two abstained.

AGREED

That a letter be sent to Sainsbury's Management requesting the reinstatement of the safe access footpath from the Sainsbury's Centre through to the toilet block in the vicinity of the petrol filling station. This is of interest to local residents and store users, in particular those people who are disabled and requiring the use of a wheelchair.

33/04 MEMBERS INDIVIDUAL FUNDING ALLOCATION [Item 10]

Local Director, Miss Carolyn Rowe highlighted the Local Members funding allocation available for the Local Committee, the framework and the protocol for the expenditure of this money. Miss Rowe then outlined items awaiting Committee decision for funding.

RESOLVED

The Committee

- (i) Agreed the protocol for the allocation of funding available in 2004/05.
- (ii) Approved the proposed expenditure from the Members' allocations budget

34/04 REVIEW OF MEMBER ALLOCATIONS [Item 11]

Miss Carolyn Rowe, Local Director, presented a report detailing how the Members allocations for the previous year were spent.

Members felt good practice would be to have all requests for funding in writing, and where the initial approach to a Member might be verbal, it should certainly be

followed up with a written request in detail to enable the Member to forward to the Community Support Team for follow up and audit.

The question arose as to whether a Member could spend on a project in another Members area, the response being that the Member of that division would want to be consulted first.

The Community Support Team was thanked for its detailed report.

RESOLVED

The Local Committee reviewed the Members' allocations budget for the year 2003/04.

35/04 LOCAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2003/04 RESULTS AND 2004/07 PRIORITIES [Item 12]

Mr William Ward presented the Service Plan and performance priorities and targets set by the service. These included 18 measuring performance working with our customers, 7 for operations, 3 for resources, and 7 relating to staff and members.

Mr Ward reported that for the first time, comparisons would be made between the 11 Local Transportation teams, which encouraged friendly competition and allowed best practice to come out.

Mr Ward said that Ringway have their own performance measures and when available, he would bring them to Committee.

Members asked if the Local Transportation Service in Runnymede was performing satisfactorily when compared to other areas.

Mr Ward replied that all the teams had similar issues, but that he felt due to the quality of his team members and the good relationship with the Members, the team in Runnymede was very effective.

Members had concerns around the amount of time spent by officers on reports and targets, asking what percentage of his time was taken up with preparation of management paperwork.

Mr Ward replied this was performance culture and how well the service did reflected on how much funding was received. He estimated that about an hour a week on average was spent on performance paperwork.

Members asked if we were contributing financially to graffiti removal.

Mr Ward replied that £3 000 was contributed under the banner of community safety; this tackled graffiti as well as other things.

RESOLVED

This report was for information only

Section 1 Windsor Road Pedestrian Crossing

Ms Alison Coffey, Principle Project Engineer, presented the results of the investigation and subsequent options to provide pedestrian crossing facilities at A308 Windsor Road near the River Thames across Runnymede Meadows following two serious injury accidents that involved pedestrians over the last three years.

Ms Coffey reported that at one location the highway is not wide enough to build traffic islands but representatives of the National Trust have agreed in principle that a small strip of Trust land could be taken to widen the road and a traffic island built that meets safety standards.

Ms Coffey said National Trust was very keen on the agreement as it encouraged more visitors to the site in a safe environment.

Three locations were identified in all.

RESOLVED

- (i) The Local Committee agreed to the construction of two traffic islands at each of three locations to provide safe crossing places for pedestrians.

Section 2 Woburn Hill Toucan Crossing

Mr Rhys Mander, Engineer, introduced the report proposing that the existing pelican crossing on the A317 Woburn Hill be upgraded to provide a new toucan crossing (signal controlled crossing for the combined use of cyclists and pedestrians).

Mr Mander said the crossing had the full support of the police.

RESOLVED

- (ii) That the Woburn Hill Toucan Crossing scheme be progressed to detailed design and construction.
- (iii) That the public notice be advertised and that the Local Transportation Director be authorised to consider any objections received in consultation with the Chairman and local County Councillor.

Section 3 Middle Hill Traffic Calming

Mr Mander reported that following site meetings with WSP, the design team commissioned to progress the detailed design to traffic calm the top half of Middle Hill as presented to the Committee on 23rd January 2004, it is now proposed to extend the scheme to the junction with St. Jude's Road to reduce traffic

speeds prior to the first set of cushions. The proposed extension of the scheme will increase the total number of pairs of speed cushions from six to eight

Residents are in favour of this, with the only comment being around the siting of two of the speed cushions, which has since been addressed.

RESOLVED

- (iv) That the Middle Hill traffic calming scheme be extended northwest and that a total of eight speed cushions be constructed along Middle Hill between the junction of Parsonage Road and the junction of St. Jude's Road, as indicated in Annex 5.

Section 4 DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT.

Mr William Ward, Local Transportation Director reported that the program for the introduction of decriminalised parking was getting ready for implementation, and was now known as "Clearer Streets".

Mr Ward said some communication needed to be sent to drivers to let them know that when decriminalised parking was in operation, they would be at much greater risk by parking where there are parking restrictions.

Mrs Moira James thanked Elise Whiteley and Susan Bruce for the work they had put in and congratulated the joint working team from Runnymede Borough Council and Surrey County Council for an excellent example of partnership working.

Some Members felt that it was a mistake to call the project "Clearer Streets" until it was deemed to be successful, and the streets were seen to be clearer.

It was reported this was the decision of the steering group, it was felt that using the term "Decriminalised Parking" might give people the perception that parking in restricted areas was not an offence.

Mrs James asked that the comment regarding "Clearer Streets" as a name be noted and the Member concern be taken back to the steering group.

RESOLVED

This report was for information only

Section 5 SURREY CYCLE GUIDE (MAP TO PROMOTE CYCLING IN RUNNYMEDE).

Mr Ward drew the Committee's attention to the cycle maps, which are now freely available, and should help people begin to try journeys out & get to know the local area.

Members had discussion regarding the hazard of adults cycling on the pavements, particularly in town centres. Members wanted to know whether cyclists should cycle or walk across crossings.

Mr Ward replied that this was part of educating the cyclist, and signage to deter cyclists on some pavements would not work, as it might be perceived to be acceptable to cycle on pavements without signs.

Cycling on the pavement is illegal and if police enforce their stop powers could render the cyclist to a £60 fine. Mr Ward said education needs to increase in parallel with the promotion of the cycle network, and with the neighbourhood officers.

RESOLVED

This report was for information only

Section 6 UPDATE OF LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMME

Mr Ward shared with Members the updated programme of transportation schemes.

Mr. Mander reported that there had been a high rate of response regarding the Hare Hill Rowtown consultation.

Mr Lowther commented that with regard to scheme 48, London Street, Chertsey, 7 issues were raised at the last Committee meeting and approved at this meeting. Would Mr Ward please keep Mrs Harman informed of progress.

Mrs Whiteley asked that the rail company be asked to do something regarding the closure of the pedestrian crossing at Crown Lane Virginia Water as this now sends pedestrians down Lyne Road to the village to cross the line.

Mr Ward replied that Mr Cole would pass on the request, although progress looked doubtful, and suggested this be looked at further at the annual review on 12 July.

RESOLVED

- (v) The updated programme of transportation schemes as indicated in Annex 7.

Section 7 A317 WEYBRIDGE ROAD – FRIDAY 7TH MAY – CONGESTION

Mr Terry Dicks referred to the incident where works were carried out on the Weybridge Road during the peak hour traffic period on Friday the 7th May causing tailbacks of traffic and delays of up to 2½ hours, and referred to the letter from the main contractor to the sub contractor who carried out the work, the delay in sending it, and the lack of response from the sub contractor.

A Member called for the power to be given back to the Local Transportation Team, who would not have made such a mistake.

Mrs James suggested that it was important to highlight how things like this go wrong, and to be reassured that things will change for the better.

Members were concerned about the Mammoth contract and the length of contracts the County appear to be entering. Mammoth being an example of a 5 - 10-year contract.

It was suggested that this was the sort of information that could be shared at Executive who may be interested to know the local issues.

One Member mentioned the possibility of a penalty clause which could be invoked on Ringway, and that the Legal Department should be asked to look at that.

Mr Ward offered to draft a letter on behalf of, but supported by, the Committee seeking reassurance that this would not happen again.

With regard to the Member suggestion of informing Helyn Clack, Mr Ward said there was currently a review ongoing, which was due to report in June or July to the Select Committee. The Committee can feed back any comments or issues through Miss Alison Coffey to that review.

Mr Ward added that with regard to penalties, there were no “on the spot” fines, more a system of reward and sanction, whereby Surrey County Council wouldn’t expect to pay any cost incurred through the Contractors inefficiency.

Mr Ward said he would ask Alison Coffey to pursue any bills linked to this piece of work to ensure this has been the case.

One Member strongly felt that the Chair of this Committee should sign a tough letter to the Subcontractor.

The Chairman asked Carolyn Rowe for her view, to which Carolyn replied there appeared to be two steps to take, firstly, to know and understand the content of the contract by writing to the central transportation team at County Hall who were dealing with the contract and with legal position. Secondly, as a Committee to write and further express concern.

Mr Lowther was asked for his opinion, to which he responded that a strong letter of complaint be sent to Ringway from the Local Committee, with a second letter to Surrey County Council to seek advice on legal redress

Mr Dicks asked to see these letters before they are executed.

Mr Lowther moved to send the two letters
Cllr Elise Whiteley seconded the motion.

All were in favour.

RESOLVED

A letter of complaint would be sent to to Ringway from the Local Committee, with a second letter to Surrey County Council to seek advice on legal redress.

The date of the next Meeting was given as 16th July at 09.30hrs.

Meeting Ended: 12.05pm

Chairman

**Runnymede Local Committee,
Friday 6 June 2003
Annexe 1 to minutes**

Record of questions asking during Informal Question Time:

Question 1. Mr McInulty

Mr McInulty raised the issue of a piece of land next to a garage in Chertsey Lane (near Thorpe Park).

The garage had been refused planning permission on the land, which belonged not to them, but to the highways. However a fence remained erected around the land. On 21 May a letter had been sent by the County's Legal department ordering that the fence be taken down and the land returned to the highways.

The land currently is still fenced off, and Mr McInulty wanted reassurance this would happen, and expressed concern that it should happen independently of planning application, as if the garage chose to appeal on the planning process it could take further time.

He said neighbours and local residents had suffered with the fence being there, and the intrusion onto common land.

Mr Ward responded by saying that joint enforcement action was being taken with the borough and the County's most senior legal advisor to ensure the garage owners did not find any legal loopholes in which to avoid the enforcement.

Mr Ward offered to keep residents informed via Mr McInulty, if he please left his details.

Question 2. Cllr Mrs Broadhead

1. Mrs Broadhead asked whether a further list of telephone numbers for highways engineers was available, as it had been a great help.
2. Expressed her delight with the move to put road-calming measures in Rowtown.

Mr Ward said he was glad this had proved useful, the list was still current pending some new recruits to the service, at which point Mr Ward would provide further copies

Mr Dicks responded by saying that the issue regarding road calming in Rowtown would be coming to the July meeting in greater detail.

Question 3 Cllr Tony Davies

1. Mr Davies asked whether the plan for verge cutting took into account changes in weather conditions.
2. Thanked the service for cutting down the shrubbery in Rowtown.

Mr Ward responded that the programme was flexible to take account of the weather and provide additional cuts in periods of accelerated growth. Mr Ward reminded the meeting that the verges are cut for safety reasons, grass is not removed in line with County policy. He said some areas pay to have it removed, but it would cost approximately three times more to remove the grass at the time of cutting.

Mr Ward said the cut in the urban area was due for completion week commencing 7th June, and the rural cut is due in mid July.

Question 4 Cllr Mr Broadhead

1. Mr Broadhead thanked the service for cutting Ongar Place, but the grass had been so long it left furrows.
2. Mentioned a property in Addlestone outside which kerbstones had been flipped by lorries, residents had been in touch with SCC, but had received no response yet.

Mr Ward offered to look into this, saying if there was any danger, this would be dealt with in 1-2 hours.

Mr Dicks expressed his dissatisfaction at cut grass left on the verges, saying it looked awful. It gives a wrong perception of efficiency and people living on estates had the right to have the grass collected from their verges.

Mr Ward responded this was a regular concern across the County.

Mr Ward informed that the cost in Runnymede had not been tested for some time, but he estimated the cut to cost £90,000 currently, and that with collection, this could rise to £300,000.

Mr Dicks reported he would like to see a proper estimated cost for the people in Runnymede.

The Members had a discussion regarding the type of machinery used to cut and whether over time these could be replaced with machines that also collected.

Question 5. Crazy Crab, Official Monster Raving Looney Party.

Mr Crab asked when the safety barriers were going to be erected outside Meadowcroft Infant School, and what length they were going to be.

Rhys Mander, Transportation Engineer, reported these were due to be constructed in the first week of the summer holidays, although he couldn't recall if the length was due to be a 6 or 8 metre guard rail to prevent children running out of school directly onto the road.

Mr Lowther commented this was raised a year ago, and should be an easy matter to install the rail.

Question 6. Mr Thorogood, The Virginia Water Community Association.

Mr Thorogood asked he could be updated at the next committee meeting as to the procedure to ensure trees that obstructed signage were trimmed.