

DRAFT

MINUTES:

**of the meeting of the Surrey County Council Local
Committee held at 10.00 on Friday 22nd September 2006 at
the Runnymede Centre, Chertsey**

Surrey County Council Members

Mrs Mary Angell - Chairman
Mr Terry Dicks
Mrs Yvonna Lay
Mr R A N Lowther – Vice Chairman
Mrs Elise Whiteley

Runnymede Borough Council appointed members

Councillor John Furey
Councillor Jeffrey Haas*
Councillor Alan Alderson
Councillor Linda Gillham

* indicates not present

PART ONE - IN PUBLIC

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

The meeting commenced at 10.05 am.

25/06 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Councillor Jeffrey Haas (Runnymede Borough Councillor) sent his apologies.

26/06 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 2ND JUNE 2006 [Item 2]

Noted that the minutes should be amended to state that all members were present.
The Minutes were then agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

27/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

No declarations of interest were received.

**28/06 WELCOME TO RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS APPOINTED
TO THE LOCAL COMMITTEE [Item 4]**

The Chairman welcomed the appointed borough councillors who were present – Councillor Furey, Councillor Alderson and Councillor Mrs Gillham - to the Committee, and explained that as appointees they would be able to vote on rights of way, highways and transportation items, but not on general items including member allocations funding and community safety.
Councillor Furey thanked the Chairman for her welcome.

29/06 WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 5]

Councillor Tony Davis had asked the following question:

“What precisely is meant by a "licence to cultivate" where residents take on responsibility for a stretch of verge or green space adjoining a highway? What obligations and liabilities would residents be taking on, and if the expectation is that they would fund and maintain any future planting, is 'seedcorn' funding available in recognition of future revenue savings?”

Answer from Surrey County Council's Local Transportation Team

Licenses to cultivate have been issued to residents for many years, normally by an exchange of letters. This is a practice first adopted by Runnymede Borough Council when they were responsible for highways under the agency agreement. The County Council undertakes verge maintenance to a standard suitable to ensure highway safety. These licenses permit residents to maintain the highway to their own standard, although safeguards are in place to ensure that it does not fall below a minimum standard. There is a need to maintain public liability insurance, and for the resident to ensure that the section of highway is returned to its previous condition if either party chooses to end the agreement. Residents are not obliged to enter into these agreements and are at liberty to let the highway be maintained by the County Council. These agreements give no formal claim on the land, which remains as public highway. The financial saving achieved to the County by issuing these licenses is minimal, and there is no scope to provide any County funds to license holders. To ensure consistency, a standard license agreement has been introduced across the county for any new applications.

Councillor Davis asked a supplementary question:

“May I have written answers to my other questions on maintenance, which were not admitted (because only one written question per resident is allowed), together with a copy of the model agreement to which you refer?”

Mr Richard Bolton agreed to supply written answers and the agreement form.

Ms Harriet Manning-Grant of Almnors Road, Lyne asked the following question:

“I keep being told that it is matter of cost to reduce the speed of Almnors Road, but what does it actually cost? Do we have to wait until it is a child or an adult that is hurt or even killed on Almnors Road? Myself and other neighbours are extremely concerned about the road, especially as there are many children living here. Cars drive at high speed because the road is long and this goes completely unsupervised. Even a few slow signs could help”.

Answer from Surrey County Council's Local Transportation Team

The residential section of Almnors Road is a link between Lyne Lane and Hardwick Lane. It is a wide road, with a footway running along the entire length of the road (it does switch sides approximately half way along the road). The residential properties are generously set back from the carriageway. The speed limit is 40mph, and there is a full system of street lighting.

The road has an excellent safety record, with only three recorded injury accidents along its length since modern records began (1987). These three accidents all have extenuating circumstances and two cannot be attributed to speed.

We receive a great many requests for minor improvements (including traffic calming) throughout Runnymede. It is not feasible or practical to satisfy all requests made. There is no real justification for undertaking any measures on Almnors Road. It is not possible to give a simplistic cost figure to reduce the speed, as it depends on what measures are introduced.

“SLOW” signs should be reserved for hazardous situations, eg on the approach to a bend at the end of a straight section of high-speed road. Proliferation of the marking will reduce its impact in situations where it is needed. Such markings are not appropriate on Almnors Road.

Surrey Police do not regard the road as a problem site. Nevertheless they have agreed to undertake a speed survey and if this reveals that there is a widespread speeding problem will consider undertaking targeted enforcement.

Ms Manning-Grant asked a supplementary question:

“If traffic calming measures were to be undertaken, what measures would be suitable for Almnors Road?”

Mr Richard Bolton explained that the location would be unlikely to attract sufficient priority to justify the use of public funds for any measures. He said that new reminder signs stating the speed limit might be considered, depending on the results of the speed survey which police had agreed to undertake. The Chairman asked that the Committee be informed of the results of the speed survey.

30/06 WRITTEN MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 6]

No member questions had been received.

31/06 PETITIONS [Item 7]

A petition had been received with 165 signatories from parents of children attending St Anne's Catholic Primary School, Chertsey, to highlight their concerns about pedestrian crossing facilities on Guildford Street, between the library footpath and the exit from Gogmore Farm Park, and to request a sign and pelican crossing.

Mrs Gahir, the lead petitioner, explained that at school drop-off and collection times there was an additional surge of traffic in this area as parents arrived to park at the library car-park in nearby Heriot Road. She also highlighted the risk of children running ahead of their parents along the footpath and asked if a metal guard-rail might be provided at the junction with Guildford Street.

Local member Mr Lowther suggested that the 20mph speed limit on this street was sometimes exceeded, and also raised his concern about the large tree which obstructed part of the narrow pavement adjacent to the library footpath, the roots of

which made the footway uneven. Mr Bolton agreed to inspect the tree and to consider whether it should be removed, and also to review the scope for a guard rail, although he noted that there may not be sufficient space on the footway because of the need to enable access for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

RESOLVED

- a) That the Committee notes the concerns of the petitioners,
- b) that appropriate warning signs are erected to advise motorists that there may be people crossing,
- c) that the site is considered at the next Members' tour for a feasibility study into a controlled pedestrian crossing and inclusion in the forward programme,
- d) that the petitioners, through the Head Teacher, are advised of the outcome from the Members' Tour.

32/06 ON STREET PARKING REVIEW 2006 [Item 8]

Mr Richard Bolton presented the conclusions of the joint working group, which comprised two county councillors and two borough councillors. The group had considered all the changes suggested (by local residents) and recommended that 13 should proceed and 33 be declined. Mr Bolton said that, following the Committee's decision, a traffic order would be advertised in 2006-7 and implementation would follow as soon as practicable.

Members gave comments on the additional disabled parking bay in Virginia Water, Abbey Rangers ground in Addlestone Moor, Highfield Road junction with Eastworth Road and Drill Hall Road junction with London Street in Chertsey. Mr Dicks, a member of the working group, highlighted the aims of the review (1.3) and added that he considered the second aim to be of greatest significance: "the desire to provide unobstructed passage to people who wish to drive".

RESOLVED

- a) that the intention of the County Council to make an Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as detailed in Annex 1 to the report, be advertised and that, if no objections are maintained, the Order be made;
- b) that the Local Transportation Manager be authorised, following consultation with the Chairman and Divisional Member, to consider and if possible resolve any objections received;
- c) that the DPE Joint Member Working Group should review any further suggested changes to the parking and waiting restrictions within Runnymede annually.

33/06 EGHAM BYPASS FOOTWAY LINK [Item 9]

Mr Nick Healey of the Local Transportation Team explained that the original scheme considered by the Local Committee in 2004 had been reviewed in light of the significant cost, and amended in discussion with the local member (until recently

Mrs Carole Jones). The revised proposal would connect the footway from Coopers Hill Lane to Footpath 17, following an existing desire line, and in parallel with the cycle path already in place on the opposite side of the carriageway. Councillor Alderson, a borough councillor for Egham, commended the scheme.

RESOLVED

that the proposed cycleway link between Cooper's Hill Lane and along Footpath 12 to Windsor Road be removed from the forward programme;

that a new footway link between Cooper's Hill Lane and Footpath 17 replace the original scheme in the forward programme, and be progressed to detailed design and construction in consultation with the Local Member.

34/06 CHERTSEY TO THORPE CYCLEWAY [Item 10]

Mr Nick Healey explained that an earlier report to the Committee in December 2004 had proposed an outline design for the route through Thorpe, but that following further public consultation and discussion with the local members for Thorpe and Chertsey, it had been concluded that the footpath should be upgraded to the status of a bridleway, with appropriate surfacing and without any additional lighting. He explained that a creation order would have to be advertised, and that if any objections at all were received the consent of the Secretary of State would be required. He also noted that thanks were due to the Association for Improvement of Runnymede, which had pledged £20,000 towards the cost of re-siting the historic stile at the entrance to the footpath beside Thorpe Church. Mr Lowther sought and received confirmation that the design would prevent use of the footpath by motorcyclists.

RESOLVED

that the Creation Order for Public Footpaths Nos. 6 and 7 Chertsey and 51 Egham (Monks' Walk) to become a bridleway be made under section 26 of the Highways Act 1980 and advertised for the statutory period; in the event that one or more objections are received and maintained the Order will be forwarded to the Secretary of State for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs for determination;

that if the Creation Order is successful a bridleway be constructed along the route, as detailed in Annex 1 of the report.

35/06 UPDATE OF LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMME [Item 11]

Mr Richard Bolton introduced the report and highlighted the updates contained in Annex 1, following the annual members' tour of eight sites in June. He gave a verbal report on two actions identified on the tour:

- to investigate relocation of the letterbox on Bakeham Lane, Englefield Green to the opposite footway – Royal Mail had refused this request because it was of historic importance (1920) and because it was considered that there was reasonable visibility to cross to it;

- to check with TAsIS school on their request for a controlled crossing point in Coldharbour Lane, Thorpe – Mr Bolton had visited the school, which had offered to contribute 50% of the cost of installing a crossing: he suggested that members may wish to review this in 2007.

Mr Bolton highlighted an encouraging development in negotiations with Network Rail towards a cycle channel on Green Lane pedestrian bridge, Chertsey. He said that Sustrans (a national cycle charity) had agreed to take on responsibility for the channel, so it was anticipated that previous legal obstacles could be overcome.

Members sought clarification as to the duration of the feasibility study for the Runnymede Roundabout scheme, and raised concerns about recent highways work which had exposed the brickwork of a historic wall in Coldharbour Lane, Thorpe.

Mr Bolton explained that, because of the roundabout scheme's complexity and the need to negotiate land requirements with three other landowners (National Trust, Highways Agency and Runnymede Hotel), further feasibility work would be necessary and it was anticipated that funding (via the County Council's Executive) would not be forthcoming until 2010 at the earliest.

He confirmed that scrub vegetation had been cleared and hardcore material applied on the verge next to the width restriction point in Coldharbour Lane, to prevent emergency vehicles becoming bogged down when access was required, and said that there were no plans to provide planting next to the ancient wall.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted and approved the rolling feasibility, design and construction programme, and funding arrangements, as contained in the report and annex 1.

36/06 COMMUNITY SAFETY [Item 12]

The Chairman welcomed Surrey Police Divisional Commander Sue Warren, Inspector Roger Nield, and Runnymede Borough Council's David Dodd.

Area Director (North West) Carolyn Rowe introduced the report, noting that community safety was a partnership exercise and that a good deal of preventative work, often unseen, had been undertaken through multi-agency groups such as the JAG (Joint Action Group) and CIAG (Community Incidents Action Group). She highlighted the change in funding distribution mechanisms, noting that in future the county-wide Safer and Stronger Communities partnership board would distribute funds to each Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP).

Inspector Nield introduced Annex 4 (tabled at the meeting), noting that the most recent monthly crime figures for the borough showed fewer domestic burglaries compared to the same period in 2005, and a reduction in violent crime. He also highlighted a rise in auto-crime across the County, in particular thefts of numberplates and satellite navigation systems, and said that a taskforce had been assembled to tackle this.

David Dodd asked members to encourage the public to make use of the borough information system to report anti-social behaviour on-line, and noted that the current average number of reports per month was sixty, with members of the public generally pleased by the speed of response. He was able to report that Stagecoach had won the south-east rail franchise, which would enable Safer Runnymede to continue its fruitful relationship with them to monitor station safety.

Members asked questions about prosecutions for cycling on the pavement, prosecutions for possession of illegal drugs, detection of prior drug use amongst drivers stopped for speeding or accidents, publicity about convictions for domestic burglary, staffing of police stations at night, and Surrey Police policy for providing cover when officers were absent or promoted.

Their questions were answered by Inspector Nield and Divisional Commander Warren.

RESOLVED

To note the progress made in promoting community safety in Runnymede, and recent crime statistics;

To delegate responsibility for expenditure of the County Council's local crime and disorder funding in Runnymede to the Area Director;

To endorse the importance of the contribution of all services to community safety in Runnymede, and to comment on matters of concern.

37/06 SURREY FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE [Item 13] – for information

Mr Alan Oakes (Fire and Rescue borough manager) and Mr Sean Ruth (Fire and Rescue area manager for North West Surrey) highlighted recent developments, including the new appliance which would be delivered in November 2006, and the forthcoming Safe Drive, Stay Alive education presentation at Dorking Halls.

In particular, the YES programme targeting young men, which had been piloted in Elmbridge, was mentioned as a potential project for Local Committee funding.

Members asked about the high-rise platform, means of escape from buildings, delays caused by level crossing downtimes at Egham, and the future of Egham fire station as the Service was reviewing its property portfolio.

Mr Ruth said that there were no plans to dispose of any properties in Runnymede. Mr Oakes said that the standard response to all emergency calls was to send two appliances, so that even if one were delayed at a crossing barrier or traffic jam, the other would arrive promptly.

38/06 TRADING STANDARDS [Item 14] – for information

Mr Surriya Subramaniam, Consumer Complaints Team Manager for Trading Standards, answered members questions arising from his report.

He confirmed that 9 Runnymede traders had had action taken against them, and said that the borough was quieter than most. He explained that counterfeiting of

videos and DVDs was not targeted pro-actively, although officers would seize goods when they came upon them. Mr Subramaniam agreed that the recent loss of 11 staff members from a department of 75 (following the Business Delivery Review) had resulted in a reduction in some public education work, including the high-profile House of Horrors campaign and provision of a Mobile Advice Centre.

39/06 MEMBERS' ALLOCATIONS [Item 15]

Mr Dicks requested a correction to the proposal at 2.3 (Carers Trust) from £2,000 to £3,000.

RESOLVED

to approve all the proposed expenditure from the Members' Allocation budget as detailed in the report.

40/06 INFORMATION ITEM - LYNE LANE RECYCLING SITE [Item 16]

No report was presented.

The Chairman noted that planning permission was being sought for redevelopment of the Lyne Lane recycling site in 2007, and that copies of an information sheet giving details of the improvements were available in the meeting room. She also noted that the Executive was due to consider a report recommending that Virginia Water library should remain open.

[Meeting ended 11.55 am]

Chairman's signature