

MINUTES: of the meeting of the Surrey County Council Local Committee held at 10.00 on Friday 11th May 2007 at the Runnymede Centre, Chertsey

Surrey County Council Members

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

Runnymede Borough Council appointed members

Councillor John Furey*
Councillor Chris Norman
Councillor A.J. Davis
Councillor John Ashmore
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 10.00 am.

16/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

The Chairman welcomed three visitors from Shropshire County Council who were observing the meeting, and noted that County Councillors Terry Dicks and Ray Lowther, and Councillor John Furey had sent their apologies.

17/07 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 9TH FEBRUARY 2007 [Item 2]

The Minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

18/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

No declarations of interest were received.

19/07 WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4]

No written public questions were received.

20/07 WRITTEN MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 5]

The following question was received from Mrs Whiteley:

How will Virginia Water/Trumps Green residents access Longcross Station if the owners of the DERA site decide to close the footpath?

Horse riders need access to Chobham Common, so may we have some assurance from the County Council that residents will be able to access the Station and Common, without the need for motorised transport?

The question was answered in writing as follows:

Mr Mike Dawson, Countryside manager for Surrey County Council:

“Unfortunately the Countryside Access officer with local knowledge of this location is on holiday at present, but I can say that, if the footpath is a Right of Way it could not be closed without due legal process and negotiation. If the footpath is not a right of way but a permissive path, then Surrey County Council has no statutory responsibility and it is a matter for the owner.”

Mrs Debbie Spriggs, Countryside Legal Team manager, added:

“There are no public rights of way shown on the Definitive Rights of Way Map from Longcross Station running north of the railway line towards Virginia Water and Trumps Green. In a southerly direction it appears to be public highway from the station to Burma Road and Chobham Lane. If Mrs Whiteley is referring to the path running from Longcross Bridge parallel to the railway line to the Station that is not a public right of way and we would not be able to stop DERA from closing it. If the land is owned by Crown Estate it might not be possible to claim that the route has become public through 20 years use, although the status would have to be investigated. If Mrs Whiteley would like more information on this please contact Daniel Williams in the Countryside Legal Team”.

21/07 **PETITIONS** [Item 6]

Two petitions had been received each with more than 50 signatures, from:

- 1) Ottershaw residents and traders, regarding Brox Road:
 - 2) parents of children at Christchurch Infant School, Virginia Water.
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- 1) Mr Ray Clark spoke for the Ottershaw petitioners, explaining that a particular concern was the positioning of new zebra crossings, which impeded traffic flow and also offered a restricted view of oncoming traffic because of the bus shelter and parked cars in the new bays. He said that there had been no reference to restricted waiting times in the parking bays when consultation had been undertaken in 2005.

Mr Richard Bolton, Local Transportation Manager, noted that 200 residents had participated in the earlier consultation exercise. He explained that there had always been waiting restrictions adjacent to the shops albeit not often enforced, and that it was general policy to build out bus stops to prevent illegal parking and enable level access from the kerb onto the bus.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Committee noted the concerns of the petitioners;
- b) that the waiting restrictions on Brox Road would be reviewed as part of the annual review.

2) Petition regarding Christchurch Infant School.

Mrs Leigh McKay spoke for the petitioners, outlining the concerns of parents that the speed limit of 40mph for the road outside the school was excessive, especially given the poster campaign message stating that those hit by a car travelling at 40mph had an 80% risk of death.

Mr Richard Bolton noted the speed review findings for this road which indicated that the speed limit was rarely exceeded, and the safety record was good – as it was a key link road with the A30 he said that speed bumps would not be feasible, and that Surrey Police did not support a reduction in the speed limit.

Mrs Whiteley, as local member, agreed that traffic calming bumps would not be suitable, but she had proposed member allocations funding for new vehicle activated signs which could operate during school times to remind drivers to slow down and drive carefully.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Committee noted the concerns of the petitioners;
- b) that the lead petitioner should be advised that no further action is planned at this time.

22/07 A30 EGHAM BYPASS SAFETY FENCE [Item 7]

Mr Richard Bolton introduced the report, noting that the safety fencing installed to date on the Egham Bypass was funded centrally, not from the local allocation. He said that there had been 5 accidents recorded within the previous five years in which vehicles had crossed the central reservation between the Eclipse roundabout and Runnymede Road, as described in his report.

Mr Bolton reported that a second pilot of a lane closure conducted in the week preceding the Committee had resulted in significant tailbacks of traffic. He also noted comments received from Surrey Police just before the meeting, which expressed concerns about the impact of increased congestion in Egham and on Tite Hill and stated that the disadvantages could outweigh any safety advantages from installation of the barrier. As a consequence of this new information, he proposed a new recommendation, which was accepted by members after some discussion.

RESOLVED:

that a new safety fence/barrier is provided in the central reservation of the A30 Egham Bypass and the eastbound outside lane is closed or partially closed

between Egham Hill and Runnymede Road, subject to further discussions and the agreement of Surrey Police.

23/07 VIRGINIA WATER TO A30 CYCLEWAY [Item 8]

Mr Richard Bolton explained that the original proposal (discussed by the Committee in 2004) had been to widen the footway along its length, including associated drainage works, but that the cost for undertaking this had escalated. As a result, his report had suggested some alternative options to lower or spread the cost.

Members considered that, as there was sufficient budget to fund the scheme and spreading the cost would increase the total expense, they supported the original scheme.

RESOLVED

- a) to construct the scheme as originally approved in October 2004, with a shared cycleway provided on the northern footway between London Road and Station Approach.

24/07 UPDATE OF LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMME [Item 9]

Mr Richard Bolton updated members on recent works and developments in delivering the programme, including:

- Northcroft Road, Englefield Green had been removed from the programme, because of unanticipated legal costs of £30-50,000 if the necessary permissions were to be pursued;
- Monks Walk, Thorpe scheme would proceed as a cycleway only, the proposal for a bridleway had been dropped due to residents' concerns;

Members commented on the Trumps Green railway bridge works, resurfacing works to Thorpe bypass and Thorpe Lea Road, the reasons behind the amendment of the Monks Walk scheme, and potential for reducing railway crossing downtimes if Airtrack were to proceed.

RESOLVED

a) that the Committee noted and approved the rolling feasibility, design and construction programme, and funding arrangements, as contained in the report and Annex 1;

b) that the Committee noted the approved major maintenance and surface dressing programme.

25/07 CYCLE USAGE MONITORING RESULTS [Item 10]

Mr Bolton noted that Runnymede had achieved a network of almost 36 miles of dedicated cycle paths, which was an excellent record given its total road area of 281 miles. He also reminded members that the target for increase in cycle usage

would not be met by 2010. He proposed that two cycle path schemes should be removed from the forward programme:

- a) from Thorpe to Chertsey Lane – this would be duplicated by the scheme for Monks Walk which had now been agreed;
- b) a new cycleway from Ottershaw to Chobham – on grounds that the estimated costs for this had been unrealistically low, and there were no plans for the Surrey Heath part of the route to join up this route.

Members discussed the role of Sustrans in facilitating new routes, the prospects of a new route along the A30 on the Berkshire side linking Virginia Water to Sunningdale, and the costs against benefits of investment in cycle paths.

RESOLVED

a) that investment in cycling schemes is scaled back as detailed in Section 4 of the report, including the withdrawal of two schemes from the forward programme altogether.

26/07 VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR FUTURE STRATEGY (for information) [Item 11]

Mr Ben Collins introduced the report which outlined how future strategy for the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Surrey would be developed. The review had been prompted by a number of factors including more specific performance requirements for providers (under the Joint Area Review), a tighter funding climate, the government's enthusiasm for the voluntary sector provider role. He noted that a consultation event would be held in Dorking on June 20th.

Members considered and discussed the briefing, and the chairman suspended standing orders briefly to enable Mrs Rosie Hatton, chief officer of Runnymede Association of Voluntary Services (RAVS), to highlight the importance of supporting volunteers with advice, training, and locally accessible expertise. Mr Collins noted that RAVS was seen as a model for best practice within the county.

27/07 SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND THOSE WITH A PHYSICAL OR SENSORY DISABILITY – for information [Item 12]

Mr Craig Chalmers (Service Manager - Older People and Physical and Sensory Disability) highlighted the work of his service, recognising the key partnership with Surrey Primary Care Trust and Runnymede Borough Council to deliver support and independence for adults in the area. He referred to the increasing number of people in need of support, the large proportion of the budget spent on residential nursing care, and excellent progress made in appropriate discharge of patients from hospital. Looking to the future, Mr Chalmers said he wished to develop an integrated approach to prevention of falls, mental health and memory deterioration, and educating the public about the need to anticipate and plan for the problems of old age to maintain independence for as long as possible.

Members asked about the adequacy of funding, use of and promotion of Dial-A-Ride, and engagement with the public.

28/07 LOCAL PROTOCOL FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT [Item 13]

Members agreed to adopt the same arrangements as in the previous year.

RESOLVED

that the Committee would adopt the arrangements set out in the report:

- (i) that the committee will offer an opportunity for public engagement and informal questions for half an hour before each formal Local Committee meeting commences (subject to annual review);
- (ii) that written public questions, dealt with a part of the formal agenda, may be accepted up to 12noon two working days before the meeting;
- (iii) that members of the public may ask one supplementary question relevant to the subject of the original, at the discretion of the chairman.
- (iv) that the committee will accept a petition carrying 50 or more signatures, although in exceptional circumstances the Chairman may use his/her discretion to accept petitions with fewer signatures in cases where it would not be appropriate to get 50 signatures, for example where a proposed scheme would affect fewer than 50 properties.

[Mrs Yvonna Lay left the meeting after Item 13].

29/07 MEMBER ALLOCATIONS [Item 14]

RESOLVED

- i) to divide the capital funding of £35,000 between the six county councillors when making proposals for allocations expenditure;
- ii) to delegate the power to approve revenue bids up to £1000 to the Area Director, subject to provision of reasons for urgency, consultation with members, and a limit of 10% of a member's revenue allocation to be approved in this way;
- iii) to agree the proposed expenditure described in sections 2 & 3 of the report from the Member Allocations budget.

30/07 ANNUAL SUMMARY OF MEMBER ALLOCATIONS 2006-7 [Item 15]

Members noted the nature of expenditure from the member allocations' budget in 2006-7.

[Meeting ended 12.35 pm]

Chairman's signature