

DRAFT
MINUTES:

of the meeting of the Surrey County Council Local
Committee held at 10.00 on Friday June 26th 2009 at the
Runnymede Centre, Addlestone.

Surrey County Council Members

Mrs Mary Angell
Miss Marisa Heath (Chairman)
Mrs Yvonna Lay (Vice Chairman)
Mr Mel Few
Mr John Furey
Mr Chris Norman

Runnymede Borough Council appointed members

Councillor P. Francis
Councillor A. Davis
Councillor J. Ashmore
Councillor Mrs Gillham
Councillor D. Parr
Councillor D. Cotty

PART ONE - IN PUBLIC

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

The chairman welcomed the new members and borough council co-optees to the meeting.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am.

14/09 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

No apologies for absence were received.

**15/09 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 13TH FEBRUARY 2009
[Item 2]**

The minutes were approved and signed.

16/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

No declarations of interest were received before the meeting.

17/09 WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4]

One written public question had been received:

1. Question on traffic lights in Egham, from Councillor Moreton Moore

“Please could the Local Highways manager update the Local Committee as to when the traffic lights at Station Road/Church Road Egham will be replaced by "intelligent" signals?”

Response from Surrey Highways

Our Traffic Systems team have advised that there have been a series of problems with this junction, dating back many months.

This has resulted in the traffic signals operating on a fixed time basis, rather than to specific demand from vehicles. The faults were rectified and the junction has been operating on an “intelligent” basis, adjusting the times on each arm according to traffic conditions. Unfortunately one of the vehicle detectors (loops in the road) has been damaged again, resulting in this arm of the junction operating as if there is a permanent demand. This means that the junction as a whole is not operating intelligently. An order has been placed for the loop to be repaired and the works will be completed within twenty-eight days.”

No supplementary question was asked.

18/09 **WRITTEN MEMBERS' QUESTIONS** [Item 5]

The following questions were received and answered:

“1. Questions from Mr Chris Norman

“Pubs, shops and cafes in Chertsey have received a letter from Surrey County Council informing them that they must apply for a licence regarding chairs and tables outside their premises. They are requested to pay a fee of £434.00 plus the cost of a planning application and the necessary drawing up of plans - costs probably totalling £1000.00. In some cases there is doubt over the ownership of the land where equipment is placed, and whether the Council can enforce rules on land owned by others.

a) Can the committee propose that the current rules are waived in light of the current recession and, in my opinion, common sense? Such furniture, two tables and chairs generally, adds to make a vibrant streetscene. Is such action being taken in our other Towns?

b) Secondly, is it the intention of the Council to take action against shopkeepers who display goods outside their properties? (This was tried several years ago and was abandoned without success).

Response from Surrey County Council’s Local Highways Manager

It is the policy of the County Council to license tables and chairs on the public highway. We will only issue a licence for a site where it is safe to do so, the holder has adequate public liability insurance and importantly there is sufficient space for all highway users to pass. We issue licences for the public highway, not private land.

During a recent street scene audit, it was apparent that there are a number of businesses across the County who extend the floor area of their business by using the public highway but do not hold a licence. It is for this reason that a number of

traders were recently contacted. The Local Highways Manager met with a number of the Chertsey traders in May 2009 and explained the reasoning behind the letters that they received.

The fees and charges for a table and chairs licence are reviewed on an annual basis and approved by the Portfolio holder.

Businesses should not store merchandise on the public highway. In the first instance issues are frequently resolved by speaking to the business. If a problem persists which is causing a nuisance or danger, the County Council may take formal action if required.”

In response to the answer received, Mr Norman proposed an emergency motion to the Local Committee, which was seconded by Mr Furey and accepted by the chairman:

“This Committee asks the Cabinet that enforcement of the charge be waived for one year across the borough.”

In debate, the following points were raised:

- a suspension of the policy should not be applied to one borough but to the county as a whole,
- the disability liaison group supported licensing of tables and chairs on the pavement;
- it was unfortunate that traders were suddenly being asked to comply with the policy at a time of recession;
- in fully or partially pedestrianising town centres, the councils were encouraging a “continental cafe culture” but then penalising traders financially;
- what would happen to traders who had complied with the policy and paid for a licence, if the Cabinet agreed to suspend the policy for a period;

Mr Bolton confirmed that the policy had been put in place in response to national legislation approximately twenty-nine years earlier, taking account of the needs of disabled and partially sighted people and insurance requirements. He also confirmed that where traders owned the land at the front of their business, they were not required to obtain a licence.

Mr Norman proposed an amendment to the motion to remove “across the borough” and substitute “county-wide”, seconded by Mr Furey, and the Committee voted on the motion which was carried.

RESOLVED

“this Committee asks the Cabinet that enforcement of the licence charge for chairs and tables on the highway be waived for one year county-wide.”

19/09 **PETITIONS** [Item 6]

No petitions were received.

20/09 **REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES AND APPOINTMENT OF JOINT WORKING GROUP: REPORT FOR DECISION** [Item 7]

RESOLVED

- a) to appoint the chairman to represent the county council (with the Area Director) on the Local Strategic Partnership;
- b) to nominate Mr Chris Norman to attend Safer Runnymede crime and disorder partnership meetings;
- c) to nominate Mrs Yvonna Lay to attend the Single Group for Services for Young People;
- d) to reconstitute the Civil Parking Enforcement joint member working group, and to appoint Miss Marisa Heath and Mrs Yvonna Lay as members to the group.

21/09 **LOCAL PROTOCOL FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT : FOR DECISION**
[Item 8]

RESOLVED

- (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 as part of the formal agenda, may be accepted up to 12.00 noon four working days before the day of the meeting;
- (iii) 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 affects fewer than 50 properties;
- (iv) that the Committee noted the changes to the County Council's standing orders concerning public participation on Rights of Way applications.

22/09 **POOLEY GREEN ROAD EGHAM: PROPOSED ROAD SAFETY MEASURES** [former Item 10]

Mr Richard Bolton introduced the report, noting that the road attracted 300 users per day and had a reported accident rate of ten over a five year period. He outlined the proposed improvements, detailed in the annexe to the report, and advised that the estimate of £92,500 total cost could increase so that it may become necessary to scale down the proposed works before construction.

The local member, Mrs Yvonna Lay, said that whilst she supported the need for measures to improve safety on the road, she was concerned by the total cost and relatively low number of residents in support and believed that by reducing the extent of the scheme at least £12,000 could be saved. She suggested that such a

saving could then be re-allocated to the joint Surrey County Council/Runnymede Borough Council scheme for New Haw Broadway. She proposed, therefore, that the officer recommendation be amended as follows:

- 1) that authority is given to undertake the detailed design of the scheme with the agreement of the Divisional member with a reduced total budget of £80,500
- 2) that authority be given to advertise a notice in accordance with the Highway Act 1980 detailing the proposed measures and subject to no objections being maintained, that measures be constructed.

Members discussed the proposed measures and whilst most supported a reduced scheme, not all were convinced of the need for any expenditure at this location given the low number of residents expressing support. It was acknowledged that the proposed scheme had been on the forward programme since a members' tour in 2006, and Mrs Angell supported Mrs Lay's amendment to the officer's recommendation. In response to a member's request, Mr Bolton agreed that the community transport service Dial-A-Ride should be consulted prior to detailed design and construction of the revised measures.

RESOLVED

- a) **that authority is given to undertake the detailed design of the scheme with the agreement of the divisional member with a reduced total budget of up to £80,500**
- b) that authority is given to advertise a notice in accordance with the Highway Act 1980 detailing the proposed measures and subject to no objections being maintained, measures be constructed

23/09 LOCAL HIGHWAYS UPDATE REPORT [former Item 9]

Mr Richard Bolton introduced the report, highlighting projects completed since the last Committee and noting that since April the borough council had taken on responsibility for the management of grass cutting and weed removal on the local highway network. He said that their standard of eight urban cuts and three rural cuts per annum represented an increase compared to the previous year. He also noted that the County's focus on addressing major maintenance meant that the overall budget for improvements remained at a standstill for 2009-10.

Members asked for clarification on how the cost of works was estimated and why final costs were considerably higher in some instances. They also raised:

- the quality of resurfacing following utility company works undertaken at Lyne;
- support for a proposed scheme at Hare Hill going ahead
- support for maintenance work to the Thorpe bypass
- type of surface dressing to be used on Callow Hill

Mr Bolton explained that payment to the contractor Ringway in 2008-9 had been on an actual cost basis, which had subsequently been altered for 2009-10 because of inaccuracies in predicting final costs. The new contract terms meant that the contractor would in future take on the risk of greater costs following inaccurate estimates.

He confirmed that the road resurfacing at Lyne would be inspected to check whether "defect correction" may be required, and explained that the Hare Hill

footway work was being held up due to planned development at Franklands Drive. He explained that the Thorpe bypass was being considered for major maintenance in 2010/11, and confirmed that the surface dressing treatment to be applied on Callow Hill was the same as that applied in Christchurch Road, Virginia Water. The chairman thanked Mr Bolton for his work for the Local Committee, as he was moving on from his role as Local Highways Manager.

Members agreed to add a new preface before agreeing the recommendations, to reflect the agreement under the previous item to redesignate savings from the Pooley Green Road scheme to the New Haw Broadway scheme.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the necessary amendments to reflect changes to the funding of Pooley Green Road and Broadway schemes as agreed in Item 10, the Committee

- a) noted and approved the rolling feasibility, design and construction programme and funding arrangements, contained in the report and annex 1;
- b) noted and approved the proposed revenue spend, as detailed within the report
and noted the approved major maintenance, surface dressing and drainage programme.

24/09 COMMUNITY SAFETY IN RUNNYMEDE: FOR DECISION [Item 11]

Miss Carolyn Rowe introduced the report, noting two amendments.

At 2.3, she reported that the SSC fund had been fully spent, and the report had omitted a further revenue sum of £59,579 (Area Based Grant), bringing the total budget in 2008-9 to £80,838. She said that the equivalent CDRP budget in 2009-10 would be £81,000.

Superintendent Rachel Tills (Surrey Police, North Division) gave a verbal update on the implications of the government's capping of the police precept. She said that this required Surrey Police to find immediate savings of £1.6 million for 2009-10, noting that the cost of re-billing Surrey households amounted to £1.2 million. A review of all back-office functions had taken place and 144 posts had already been cut, but a further fifty front-line policing posts were affected county-wide. She said she had identified three posts in the North division which would be lost, which were the Rivers specialist officer and two of the three crime reduction adviser positions.

Members noted the opportunity for the public to protest the Government's decision to cap, through the Surrey Police Authority website; welcomed the improvements in joint working following co-location of services at the new Civic Centre, and commented on the high level of anti-social behaviour complaints in Egham Hythe (in Annexe 2). The Police were asked to ensure that their neighbourhood panel meetings in Virginia Water and Ottershaw did not coincide as previously, because this prevented the local member from attending both.

Mrs Wendy Roberts (community safety officer, Runnymede Borough Council) confirmed that the borough supported an application by police to apply a Section 30 dispersal order in Pooley Green from August. Inspector Roger Nield explained that

there were two different measures of how the public regarded their local police – a local satisfaction survey for those who had been victims of crime, conducted by an external agency, and also a county-wide population survey (with 150 respondents per borough) to measure the general public's confidence in the police.

RESOLVED

- a) to delegate responsibility for expenditure of the County Council's local crime and disorder funding in Runnymede to the Area Director;
- b) endorse the contribution of all services towards community safety;
- c) to nominate a county councillor to attend the CDRP (Mr Chris Norman).

25/09 SURREY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT: FOR INFORMATION [Item 12]

Mr Les Dodd, Divisional Manager (North), introduced the report and highlighted the reductions in accidental fires and false alarms (and hoax calls) over the year. He said that this reflected the work undertaken by the Fire Service to educate the public about fire risks through home fire risk checks, fitting of smoke alarms, and partnership work to prevent fire alarms being triggered automatically.

Members noted the Firefighter for a Day initiative, the education work with young drivers through Safe Drive Stay Alive, the Fire Service offer to assist in the event of flooding and Pitt report recommendations, and Mr Dodd reported that there would be a consultation on the Fire Service's four year strategy in response to Pitt.

26/09 ANNUAL ALLOCATIONS REPORT 2008-9: FOR INFORMATION [Item 13]

Ms Sylvia Carter (Local Committee and Partnership Officer) introduced the report summarising expenditure from the member allocations budget over the preceding year, and this was noted.

27/09 MEMBERS' ALLOCATIONS FUNDING: FOR DECISION [Item 14]

The chairman asked members to note the following changes in the tabled version of the report:

at 3.1, include Mr Chris Norman under Members, and
an additional paragraph at 3.2: New Haw Communication Association summer event, resulting in an amended recommendation (iii).

RESOLVED

- i) to divide the capital funding of £35,000 between the six county councillors when making proposals for allocation 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 paragraphs 3.1 **and 3.2**) from the Members' Allocation budget, as amended.

[Meeting ended 12.10 pm]

Chairman's signature