

DRAFT

MINUTES:

**of the meeting of the Surrey County Council Local
Committee held at 7.00pm on Monday November 1st 2010
at the Magna Carta School, Egham Hythe.**

Surrey County Council Members

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

Runnymede Borough Council appointed members

Councillor P. Roberts
Councillor A Alderson
Councillor D. Cotty
Councillor R. Edis
Councillor D Parr
Councillor P. Francis (apologies)

PART ONE - IN PUBLIC

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

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm.

45/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies for absence received from Councillor P. Francis.

46/10 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON JULY 5th 2010 [Item 2]

The minutes were approved and signed.

47/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None received.

48/10 WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4]

Two questions had been received:

1. Question from Ms Meyer Oliaji on Airtrack modelling

I would like to ask the committee:

"Regarding Cabinet's proposed change of stance of a tunnel below the railway line in Egham, based on the results of a modelling exercise, will Surrey County Council commit itself to releasing and publishing full details of the model, and the inputs?"

Whilst not in the remit of the local committee, the Chairman has asked officers if they could investigate:

Surrey County Council has published the full report on the modelling used to assess the underpass at Pooley Green on its website, as a background paper under the Airtrack item for the Local Committee (Runnymede) under its committee papers section. This document is in pdf format and is 66 pages long, and may be downloaded.

2. Question from Mrs Aileen Owen-Davis on level crossing data

I attach the results of a survey at the Station Road level crossing (between 6 am to 8 pm on the 30th September 2010) undertaken by members and friends of the Local Greenpeace Support group and the local Green Party.

Each volunteer did a two hour stint noting each time the barrier closed and opened. The same timing piece was used by each person. From these figures we extrapolated an average closing time for each hour and an overall closing average for the 14 hours surveyed.

The results show that the amount of time per hour that the barrier is down of 22 minutes is significantly different to the figure of 15 minutes quoted in the **Heathrow Airtrack Position Statement: Level Crossings in the Egham Area** dated 9th September 2010 which came with a letter to me dated 13th October 2010 (ref.232/312/OBJ/255).

My question is:

Can you show how Airtrack's figure of 15 minutes closure time in an average hour can be reconciled with our figures shown in the attached document and explained above, and can you explain what is an "average hour" as it is used in the report ?"

Whilst not in the remit of the local committee, the Chairman has asked officers if they could investigate:

As this question relates to the information provided by BAA/HAL in the Environmental Assessment, this question was passed to BAA/HAL and their consultants to respond. The response is given below:

Actual barrier downtime is a function of the number of trains, whether they are fast or stopping services, the timetable in operation, the location of level crossing in relation to signals and stations, the extent to which there are perturbations in train services on any given day (e.g. operation of trains outside of timetable such that delays in arrival and departure from defined locations occur) and, for manually controlled barriers, daily operating circumstances affecting the decisions and opportunities of the signalmen to actuate the barrier closures.

Generally, conditions are constantly changing on the rail network: it's a dynamic system with complex interfaces between road, rail and people, so comparisons will always show variations. This has attempted to be overcome by modelling the way the timetable would actually work. The modelling is based on 12-hour video surveys and a methodology agreed with local authorities and Network Rail.

HAL's surveys were undertaken in Spring 2009 with additional CCTV and traffic count (and at some crossings also origin and destination). The survey submitted with the question was undertaken on 30 September 2010. From late September alterations have to be made on some routes because of problems caused by leaf fall. Fallen leaves are crushed by passing trains, creating a slippery film, which coats the rails. This means that drivers have to approach stations more slowly than normal and trains pull away from station stops more slowly than normal. Network Rail runs special rail cleaning trains but these can only reduce, not completely eliminate, this problem. Leaf Fall Timetables (<http://www.southwesttrains.co.uk/timetables.aspx>).

In respect of the definition of an average hour used in the report: the surveys were undertaken over a 12 hour period with downtimes measured during each hour. The total downtimes were then divided by the total 12 hour survey period to provide an average hour figure.

Each questioner asked a supplementary question at the meeting.

Mrs Oliaji: "Thank you for publishing the modelling data. As expected, this is a traffic only model. It does not consider non-highways impacts such as safety, emergency services access, impact on bus services, economic value of employment or access to services and facilities. Has any attempt been made to quantify the non-highways benefits of the tunnel?"

She received the following written response from Mr Iain Reeve:

To date the County Council have used a traffic only model. This shows that the underpass increases traffic and vehicle delay, because it would attract through traffic. The economic, social and environmental impact of the underpass would therefore be detrimental rather than beneficial.

The proposed mitigation package seeks to mitigate the impact of Airtrack by considering all modes of travel to maintain overall journey times as outlined in the Local Committee presentation. It is important to note that the County Council can only seek mitigation measures for the additional impacts caused by Airtrack and not to resolve existing problems. This is a key issue as the Inspector at the Public Inquiry would only consider mitigation of the additional impact of Airtrack.

Discussions are taking place with bus operators regarding impacts on their journey times and measures are being identified to address pinch points on the network which result in delays to buses. Similarly a comprehensive range of walking and cycling measures are being investigated to address barriers to movement. In addition traffic improvements to the Runnymede Roundabout have been identified to address vehicle travel times. These measures will address issues of safety, emergency services access, impact on bus services and access to services and facilities.

It is important to note also that the Airtrack scheme would provide businesses in Chertsey with a 22 minute link to Heathrow and improve access for employees working at Heathrow. Studies have shown that the Airtrack scheme would provide improved economics and employment for the County as a whole.

Mrs Owen-Davies asked:

“Given the discrepancy between BAA's survey figures of a level crossing downtime of 15 minutes per hour, and our local survey of 22 minutes per hour, how and why are these BAA figures being put out?”

and was referred to the previous response given to her original question.

49/10 **WRITTEN MEMBERS' QUESTIONS** [Item 5]

No questions had been received.

50/10 **PETITIONS** [Item 6]

No petitions had been received.

51/10 **HEATHROW AIRTRACK: OBJECTIONS TO THE TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT ORDER 1992** [Item 7]

Mr Iain Reeve gave a Powerpoint presentation, explaining the process of modelling the options for mitigating Airtrack's impact on level crossing downtimes, the reasons why the option of an underpass in Vicarage Road would not resolve the problem of traffic delays in Egham, and the negotiations with BAA which had led to the offer of a mitigation package to the value of £11.4 million. He advised members that the county council had three choices: to object to the Airtrack scheme to stop it, to object to the scheme to change it, or to support the scheme.

Members raised the following questions:

- why had the scheme's promoters estimated a high number of users would switch to rail access when they would still have to change (with luggage) at Terminal 5 for other Heathrow terminals? as would users from the Guildford area;
- why must Surrey County Council give a response at this point, given that no Government funding was anticipated to contribute to Airtrack costs in the current financial climate?
- could officers run a model which assumed that all of the Egham crossings had automated barriers (like Prune Hill) as pre- 2002, with equivalent reduced downtimes?
- could part of the £11.4 million on the table be used for mitigation measures at and around Chertsey station?
- could the assessment of the need for a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) around Chertsey station be undertaken before Airtrack became operational, rather than as stated at 4.3, “if a problem does arise” ?
- how was the figure of £11.4 million made up in cost estimates for each of the measures listed under Proposed Mitigation Package?

Mr Reeve advised that the County Council may only request mitigation for the **additional** problems from level crossing delays which were anticipated to arise from the introduction of Airtrack. He acknowledged that travellers using terminals other than Terminal 5 would have to change trains with their luggage, but that the promoters judged with increasing use of this terminal there would be sufficient rail users to justify Airtrack's cost. He agreed to amend 4.3 to propose assessment of a CPZ before significant problems arose. He advised that the mitigation package would be for the benefit of Surrey including Spelthorne, but

that the bulk of it would be for measures in the Runnymede area. Officers gave cost estimates for each of the measures as follows:

1. Runnymede Roundabout - £4m;
2. The Avenue/Vicarage Road junction - £750k;
3. Carbon reduction/environmental measures - £5m (possible footbridges);
4. Egham & Staines bus priority measures - £500k;
5. Improved cycle parking at 5 Airtrack stations - £150k;
6. Staines and Chertsey stations CPZ - £200k
7. Rusham Level Crossing -£500k
8. Addlestone level crossing bus priority as in 4. above.

A number of members commented that given Egham's existing problems with level crossing downtimes, efforts must be redoubled to address this in the short to medium term, by negotiating with Network Rail to find a signalling or other solution. It was noted that the problem had become significantly worse since 2002 when automated half barriers were removed, following a bus accident which had blocked the rail line at the Pooley Green crossing. One member questioned whether the reduced journey times which were projected as a result of proposed improvements to the Runnymede roundabout could be achieved.

Members acknowledged that mitigation could only be argued for and applied to the problem of level crossing delays to the extent that this would become worse as a result of additional Airtrack services in future. It was also recognised that there was no legal basis to prevent Network Rail from increasing use of the line for services other than Airtrack.

In the light of this, the chairman summarised the comments of the Local Committee as follows:

- a) that the County Council should continue to seek reductions to existing level crossing downtimes by pressing Network Rail for improvements;
- b) that acceptance of the proposed mitigation package and withdrawal of the County Council's TWA objections was broadly supported;
- c) that the package of £11million should be ring-fenced for use largely in the Runnymede area, as outlined at the meeting;
- d) that the Local Committee requested a further update at its February 2011 meeting (to include the proposed public consultation on the detail of mitigation measures).

52/10 HIGHWAYS UPDATE REPORT [Item 8]

Mr Healey highlighted the amended sections in the tabled report, which had been updated to reflect further capital funding of £65,000 allocated to the budget in the week prior to the Committee, making a total of £97,000 budget for 2010-11.

Mr Furey requested a detailed written update on progress towards scheduled revenue maintenance including tree works and road marking, and Mr Healey undertook to send this on.

RESOLVED

- i) to note progress with delivery of ITS schemes;

- ii) to add the Green Lane, Chertsey, speed assessment to the approved list of schemes;
- iii) to note the position its Capital and Revenue budgets;
- iv) to approve funding for Thorpe Bypass capital maintenance (£65,000), Staines Road jw St Ann's Road (£19,000), two speed assessments (£13,100) namely Lyne Lane/Almners Road and Green Lane, Chertsey;
- v) to authorise the Area Team Manager to re-allocate Committee's Revenue Maintenance budget in consultation with the chairman if the need arise;
- vi) to authorise the Area Team Manager, in consultation with the chairman and divisional member, to progress feasibility work as staff resources allow;
- vii) to authorise the Area Team Manager to commission detailed design, advertise statutory notices and construct any scheme in the approved list in consultation with the chairman and divisional member, should funding be identified.

53/10 FRANKLANDS DRIVE, ADDLESTONE: PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES [Item 9]

Mr Healey noted that there had been a good response to the consultation on these measures, with many residents calling for implementation of a "banned right turn" at the junction of the road leading into the new housing development. However, he advised that this suggested measure would be difficult to enforce, and would require permission from the developer to use their agreed funding contribution for this purpose.

The local member noted that permission for the development had imposed at appeal by the Secretary of State, and indicated that an earlier consultation in 1997 had included the banned right turn as an option, requesting that a decision be deferred until further public consultation with a wider range of options could be undertaken.

Mr Healey proposed an alternative recommendation:

RESOLVED

- i) **to defer any decision until further consultation has been undertaken;**

54/10 FOXHILLS ROAD SPEED LIMIT [Item 10]

Mr Healey put forward an amendment to his second recommendation, adding "for decision" after "reported to Committee".

RESOLVED

- i) to authorise the advertisement of a traffic regulation order to make changes to the speed limit in Foxhills Road as detailed in Section 2, and shown in Annex A;
- ii) that any objections should be considered and resolved by the Area Team Manager (NW) in consultation with the Divisional Member and Chairman, but if any objections prove insurmountable that the matter is reported to Committee **for decision**;
- iii) that once any objections have been considered and resolved that the order

be made and the changes implemented.

55/10 THE 14-19 STRATEGY AND PLAN [Item 11]

Mrs Alison Bromley (Surrey County Council's 14-19 Commissioning Partnership Manager, West, and Miss Helen Johnson (Runnymede 14-19 Learning Partnership manager) presented the report. Mrs Bromley outlined the statutory role of Surrey County Council as commissioning authority for 14-19 education and as the funding body for school sixth forms. This was a new role from April 2010. From July 2010 funding responsibility for colleges (which had originally transferred to the County Council) reverted to the Young Peoples' Learning Agency, although the overall commissioning role remains unchanged.

She noted that students in Runnymede were exceeding the Surrey average for achieving five GCSEs, and that 28% of Runnymede students were taking up some form of vocational training. At the last count there had been 62 young people who "NEET" (not in employment, education or training) and working with them was a key focus.

Miss Helen Johnston outlined the considerable progress made over the past year in arranging vocational places for local students, with 130 students engaged in 12 courses as at October 2010. She referred to a Behaviour and Attendance partnership involving the heads from Jubilee High, Magna Carta and Salesian schools, and the youth conference organised by the Partnership and Surrey Police at Foxhills Club in July 2010 – noting that the next one would be held on January 27th 2011 with capacity for up to 500 students, to focus on Careers.

Members asked about the omission of Fullbrook School from the partnership (Miss Johnston advised that the school joined the Woking partnership in 2009) and congratulated the Runnymede partnership on its engagement with business locally which enabled young people to make a successful transition into the world of work. It was suggested that students be invited to attend the Runnymede Business Partnership, and that the 14-19 officers should work with the Youth Service as the Transformation project moved forward.

56/10 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL FUNDING OF VOLUNTARY SECTOR GROUPS, RUNNYMEDE [Item 12]

Mrs Monica Wambu outlined the key points in the report, noting the county council's drive for greater consistency and coherence in its approach to the sector. She also noted a correction to the report at 2.3, advising that the decision had been taken recently to maintain the Community Buildings Grant in 2011-12. In reference to concerns about the future of the sector at a time of budget reductions, she advised that the county council's Cabinet member was holding regular meetings to brief VCFS representatives and maintain dialogue.

Mrs Wambu introduced the chief officer of Runnymede Association of Voluntary Services, Mrs Solette Sheppardson, who was available to answer members' questions.

Cabinet member Mrs Angell noted that the County Council now had not £180 million as previously identified but £250 million to save from its budgets and this would mean a very different landscape in the coming years – she said that the Aim Higher grant would cease from April 2011, and the Children and Youth Peoples' Directorate

may lose up to £40 million over the period, so the voluntary sector would not be exempt from reductions in grant. Mr Furey and other members emphasised the need for consultation between partner agencies before decisions to remove funding were taken, and the chairman agreed that this was an important principle and that she would write to the Cabinet member for the VCFS to make this point. Members observed that a “salami slicing” approach to reducing budgets may not be the best approach, and that taking the decision to remove a grant in its entirety may be necessary.

Miss Solette Sheppardson was invited to comment and observed that there were 200 small voluntary groups in the borough, many of which were seeking short-term fixes to funding problems currently.

57/10 SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL TRADING STANDARDS [Item 13]

Mr Steve Playle gave a brief outline of the service structure and recent successes of the Surrey Trading Standards service, including:

- direct and indirect savings achieved by the Rapid Action Team
- an overall decline in under-age sales to young people
- satisfaction rates of 92% amongst consumers and 83% amongst businesses
- an agreement from the Big Six energy companies to respect No Cold Calling zones and not to door knock in those areas.

The chairman congratulated the Trading Standards service on their work and members asked about enforcement of excess packaging legislation, promotion of “refusal” books in shops, availability of door stickers to deter cold callers (see http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/sccwebsite/sccwspages.nsf/LookupWebPagesByTITLE_RTF/Doorstep+crime+resources?opendocument), and detail of efficiencies achieved by the Rapid Action Team.

58/10 SMALL DISADVANTAGED AREAS FUND [Item 14]

The chairman introduced this item, suggesting that the Committee should put forward all three bids with equal priority.

Mr Furey stated that it would be important to monitor the outcomes of the successful bids, including the youth facility in the Hythe.

RESOLVED

- i) to consider all the bids detailed in 2.4 (and attached at Annexes 1-3);
- ii) to submit all three bids to the Small Disadvantaged Areas Fund Panel;
- iii) to submit all three with equal priority.

59/10 MEMBER ALLOCATIONS FUNDING: FOR DECISION [Item 15]

Mr Chris Norman advised that two of the grit bins requested at 2.15 were due for replacement as part of normal highways budget, therefore he asked that the amount requested be amended to read “£1,900 revenue, £600 capital” for a grit bin with one annual refill in Ruxbury Road, Chertsey.

Mrs Yvonna Lay advised that she wished to contribute £2000 to the Young Witness Scheme from her individual member allocation, and asked for an amendment at 2.6 to add "Mrs Yvonna Lay" and adjust the amount to a total of £2,500.

Miss Marisa Heath asked that, in reference to 2.4, the agreement with Birchlands Residential Home should specify that funding should not be used to purchase a cat as they could be obtained free of charge from a rescue centre.

RESOLVED

- i) to consider and agree the proposed expenditure (described in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.17) from the Member Allocations budget 2010-11 **as amended at paragraphs 2.4, 2.6, and 2.15**
- ii) to note the expenditure approved by the Area Director under delegated powers, as described at 3.0.

60/10 FORWARD PROGRAMME: FOR DECISION [Item 16]

RESOLVED

to agree the Forward Programme as contained in the report.

61/10 LOCAL UPDATES: FOR INFORMATION [Item 17]

The information was noted.

[Meeting ended at 21.48 pm]

Chairman's signature _____