



Minutes of meeting

LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)

Date: FRIDAY 30 JANUARY 2009

Time: 3.15PM

Place: GODALMING BAPTIST CHURCH

Members present:

Surrey County Council

Dr A Povey (Waverley Eastern Villages) (Chairman)
Mrs P Frost (Farnham Central) (Vice-Chairman)
Mr D Harmer (Waverley Western Villages)
Mr P Martin (Godalming South, Milford and Witley)
Mr D Munro (Farnham South)
Mr C Slyfield (Godalming North)

Waverley Borough Council

Mr M W Byham (Bramley, Busbridge and Hascombe)
Mr S P Connolly (Godalming Farncombe and Catteshall)
Mr B A Ellis (Cranleigh West)
Mr R A Gordon-Smith (Godalming Charterhouse)
Mr R A Knowles (Haslemere East and Grayswood)
Mr A Lovell (Farnham Upper Hale)
Mr J A Ward (Farnham Shortheath and Boundstone)
Mr K Webster (Milford)

All references to Items refer to the Agenda for the meeting.

01/09 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS (Item 1)

Apologies were received from Mr C Baily, Mr J Farmer, Mr R Steel and Mrs C Stevens.

02/09 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: 12 December 2008 (Item 2)

The minutes were agreed to be a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

03/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 3)

Mr R Knowles declared a personal interest in Item 9 on the grounds that he is Executive portfolio holder with responsibility for parking enforcement at Waverley Borough Council.

04/09 PETITIONS (Item 4)

One petition was received: Mr Carl Tanner presented a petition on behalf of residents and staff of the Chandler School, Witley requesting the construction of a speed cushion in Roke Lane in the vicinity of the school to act as a traffic calming measure and as a means of helping pupils to cross the road safely.

05/09 FORMAL PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 5)

Four public questions were received; these are set out with responses at **Annex 1**.

06/09 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS (Item 6)

There were three members' questions; these are set out with responses at **Annex 2**.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS: NON-TRANSPORTATION MATTERS

07/09 SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2008-2017: CONSULTATION (Item 7)

The Committee noted the increasing demand for school places in Waverley, currently at primary level in particular, and the likelihood that significant pressure would be experienced in certain areas in the near future. Members drew attention to the need for the Plan to take account of cross-district movement of students, especially with Guildford, and for the need for local sensitivity when grouping schools to analyse demand: this is particularly in relation to access in rural areas. Reassurance was provided that officers would value the local intelligence of members and others to ensure that plans reflect the reality of pupil movements and sensible planning areas are achieved. It was also recognised that the demand for places at successful schools can also generate pressure in some areas.

Members referred to the possibility that the current economic situation would lead to a shift of pupils from the independent sector to maintained schools, adding particular urgency to the need to address growing pressures. Officers

were reminded of the serious implications for accommodation and the County Council's capital budget.

It was confirmed that future editions of the Plan would cover Special Educational Needs in greater detail.

Members were invited to make comments individually before the 23 February deadline and those who are school governors were urged to ensure that their schools respond.

Resolved to request that the Committee's comments be noted.

Reason for decision: The Committee had an opportunity to comment on the draft Plan during the consultation period.

NON-EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS: NON-TRANSPORTATION MATTERS

08/09 LOCAL COMMITTEE BUDGETS 2008-2009 (Item 8)

Resolved to:

- (i) Approve the applications for expenditure annexed to the report.
- (ii) Note the actions carried out under delegated authority since the last meeting.

Reason for decision: The Committee is required to ensure the timely and appropriate deployment of its budgets.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS: TRANSPORTATION MATTERS

09/09 REVIEW OF ON-STREET PARKING IN GODALMING FOLLOWING TRANSFER OF ENFORCEMENT TO WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL (Item 9)

The Committee was reminded of the intention to undertake an annual review of parking restrictions: this would provide an important opportunity to understand and respond to changing situations and residents' requests. The Committee agreed to Mr D Munro's proposal that it should record its appreciation of the work of the officers involved in preparing the current proposals.

Resolved to agree:

- (i) That the proposed amendments to on-street parking restrictions in Godalming, as described in this report and indicated on the drawings to be tabled at the meeting, are agreed.
- (ii) That the Local Highway manager be authorised to make final adjustments to the proposed amendments, having consulted the chairman of the Godalming, Milford and Witley Transportation Task Group.
- (iii) That the intention of Surrey County Council to make an Order under the relevant parts of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 be

advertised to give effect to the proposals in the above recommendation and that if no objections are maintained the Order be made.

- (iv) Subject to approval of recommendations (i), (ii) and (iii), to authorise the Local Highways Manager, in consultation with the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman of the Local Committee and relevant local councillors, to consider and determine any maintained objections submitted following the statutory advertisement, and agree any reductions on the proposed restrictions, following which the Order, as so amended, be made.
- (v) To thank residents for their contributions to the review process.
- (vi) To note the intention of the County Council to carry out an annual review of on-street parking in Waverley from 2009/10 onwards.

Reason for decision: To comply with a commitment to review the situation and to follow the objectives of improving safety and preserving access.

10/09 **REDUCED SPEED LIMITS ON THE A31 AND A325 AT THE SHEPHERD AND FLOCK JUNCTION, FARNHAM (Item 10)**

The Committee welcomed the report and agreed slightly amended recommendations.

Resolved to agree:

- (i) That the intention of the County Council to make an Order under Sections 84, 85 & 86 and Part III and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to impose the following speed limits be advertised and that, if no objections are maintained, the Order be made:
 - a 50mph speed limit on those sections of the A31, A325, Hale Road and Weybourne Road in the vicinity of the Shepherd and Flock, Six Bells and Water Lane roundabouts described in section 1 below
 - a 30mph speed limit on the section of the A325 Guildford Road described in section 1 below
- (ii) That the consideration and resolution of any objections or representations received as a result of advertising and consultation for the proposed Traffic Regulation Order be delegated to the Local Highways Manager in consultation with the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman of the Local Committee and relevant local councillors.

Reason for decision: Reducing the speed limit on the A31 through the Shepherd and Flock junction from 70mph to 50mph is expected to contribute to road safety at a junction that some drivers find difficult to use. The lower speed limits proposed for the A325 and other approach roads are a logical extension of the lower limit at the Shepherd and Flock junction.

The meeting closed at 4.30pm

..... (Chairman)

Contact:

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ANNEX 1

Item 5: Public Questions and Responses

1. From Mr John Page (Grafham Grange Educational Trust)

For some time the Grafham Grange Educational Trust has been concerned about the lack of speed restrictions adjacent to the two special needs schools which students attend during the week. At a site meeting with the Local Highways Manager in February 2008, the School suggested:

- A reduction in the speed limit on this section of the A281
- Additional School signs, both beside the road and marked on the road surface
- Signs with flashing amber lights that can be activated by staff on departure
- Other road markings to warn approaching traffic of the hazard
- Construction of a "slip" lane for traffic turning left from the main road into Woodyer House
- Construction of a central reservation on the brow of the hill adjacent to the main entrance

Our suggestions were mostly considered too costly and we were not convinced that the limited additional road markings proposed would sufficiently improve safety. To our knowledge the only alterations made have been the painting of SLOW signs on both sides of the road on the approach to the bends. The Trust has forbidden drivers from taking a right hand exit out of Woodyer House. It is understood that the "sight lines" for both school entrances are such that drivers would not have time to stop even if travelling at 30mph.

Travelling southwards from Bramley, the speed limit changes from 40mph to 50mph in the vicinity of the Grafham Room and continues at this level past both Woodyer House School on the east and Grafham Grange on the west side. There is a road sign just prior to the Grafham Grange entrance indicating the bend and recommending a reduction in speed. Shortly afterwards a School is indicated on the left and a further sign warns of bends for 680 yards. When leaving Woodyer House and turning left vision is badly restricted by a bend in the road.

Travelling northwards the 50mph limit begins before Bottle Cottage and extends past the Grafham Grange entrances; there are slow signs for dangerous bends and a school sign. Drivers turning left out of Grafham Grange have restricted vision because of the blind hill and turning right is extremely hazardous. Attempts to widen the entrance, allowing school traffic both in and out by moving the gateposts, have been thwarted by English Heritage as both the building and the gate are listed.

Traffic on both sides of the road can proceed at 50mph past both schools. As Chairman of the Governors' Health and Safety Committee I would like to ask the Committee what action it will take to address these concerns and to prevent a fatal accident at this location.

Response

Early in 2008 all the old road signs on the A281 through Grafham advising drivers of bends, side roads and the schools were renewed and augmented with additional high visibility chevron and other signs. The road markings were refreshed, with additional SLOW markings as mentioned in the question, and new cats' eyes were installed. This work was aimed at encouraging drivers to proceed with care through the bends at Grafham, improve road safety and reduce accidents.

It is intended to reduce the speed limit past the Grafham Grange Educational Trust schools, much as suggested in the question, and as a direct result of the meeting with County Council officers in March. Earlier in January the County Council advertised proposed changes to speed limits on a number of roads in the areas of Cranleigh and Alfold, including the A281 at Grafham. Subject to any objections that may be received, the 40mph limit which currently terminates at the Rushett Common cricket field will be extended southwards to a point to the south of Woodyer House, which is Trust school premises. The new limit is expected to be introduced in the spring and should add to the measures already in place encouraging careful driving.

In a supplementary question Mr Page, having welcomed the proposed introduction of a 40 mph limit, asked if more could be done to increase drivers' awareness of the school sites, e.g. by painting SCHOOL on the carriageway, and drew attention to the limited sight lines available to vehicles joining the A281. The Local Highways Manager agreed to investigate the matter further.

2. From Mr Paul Charlton (Godalming: Frith Hill Area Residents' Association)

We estimate that approximately 600 of the residents of our 740 represented households use one or both of the Deanery Road (Godalming) junctions every time that they use their car. At the March 2008 meeting of the Local Committee a budget programme was agreed that included preparatory work for improvement of the Deanery Road / Borough Road / Charterhouse Road / Chalk Road junction in Godalming. Following that meeting this Association delivered a letter to Surrey CC welcoming this development, and welcoming Councillor Slyfield's support of it. Noting Councillor Peter Martin's comments about awaiting the introduction of possible links to redevelopment of the Charterhouse Garage site, we expressed the hope that safety would not be compromised by any further delays unless it was clear that the garage site was to be redeveloped in the very near future.

The other troublesome junction in Deanery Road involves the sharp, blind corner where the very steep downhill slope of Frith Hill Road joins Deanery Road at an acute angle. We also asked what the plans were for that junction, at which there was yet another (virtually head-on) collision as recently as 13th January 2009.

We are aware that the County Council has been involved in a change of contact personnel at about the time of our letter and have therefore waited patiently for a response to the points raised within it.

The particular points regarding Deanery Road that we would seek to raise are:

- Observations are based upon the version of plans that we have seen, dated 18/11/08. Although we welcome the likelihood that double yellow lines opposite the Frith Hill Road junction may reduce the prevalence of dangerous illegal parking there, we do not believe that the lines alone will make a significant contribution to the inherent safety of this dangerous junction.
- We welcome the proposal to deregulate the Borough Road zone, thus potentially deflecting rail commuters from all-day parking in Deanery Road. We hope that due consideration will be given to drivers having to navigate around long bays of parked cars in the face of oncoming traffic.
- We believe that the proposals regarding the easterly 'restricted waiting' bay in Deanery Road could potentially encounter a minor localised problem because the house known as 'Frith Hatch' has two extant planning permissions involving vehicular access uphill onto Deanery Road in this vicinity, introducing a potential conflict of access.
- Our residents advise us that there is an ongoing tendency for all preceding junction works over the last 20 years on the Borough Road junction to have suffered from a pattern of noticeable but very localised mid-road ground subsidence within a few months of each project's completion. This is observed to significantly disturb the stability of all traffic passing through the junction.
- We welcome the potential improvements to the Deanery Road / Charterhouse Road / Borough Road junction, but would like to remind the committee that traffic entering this junction from Charterhouse Road will approach from a downhill blind curve. We receive many reports from residents that the steep downhill gradient encourages higher than permissible speeds on Charterhouse Road.

May we please ask that these points be taken into account by the Committee, and ask whether we may be kept informed as plans for these two Deanery Road junctions develop ?

Response

The agenda for this meeting includes a report on proposed amendments to on-street parking in Godalming and Farncombe (Item 9). The points included in the question refer to various details of these proposals, and will be considered as responses to the planned formal consultation, programmed to start at the end of February.

The Committee allocated £6,000 towards design of the Deanery Road/Borough Road/Charterhouse Road/Chalk Road junction in the current financial year, and an initial engineering assessment was completed shortly before Christmas. It is suggested that the next step is for officers to discuss options for improving the junction with representatives of the Residents' Association.

In a supplementary question Mr Charlton noted that the Residents' Association's original letter to the County Council had not received a reply and that some matters remained to be addressed. The Local Highways Manager agreed to meet residents on site.

3. From Mr David Somner (Godalming: Frith Hill Area Residents' Association)

The question concerns urgent safety issues involving Charterhouse Road/Twycross Road Roundabout in Godalming. We estimate that approximately 400 of the residents of our 740 represented households use this roundabout every time that they use their car. Several months ago, the blue 'roundabout advisory' sign facing drivers using the Hurtmore Road approach to the Charterhouse Road / Twycross Road mini-roundabout was knocked down. This Association, amongst others, alerted the County Council on 13th November 2008. Since then the broken sign and pole have been collected and the hole filled in. Most importantly though, the sign has not yet been replaced, meaning that there is no roundabout warning in place at all.

There is a very serious risk that vehicles may proceed at full speed into the roundabout on the basis that they are not aware of its existence at all, which could cause a collision with uphill traffic using their right of way to turn right from Charterhouse Road into Twycross Road. This potential turning traffic only becomes visible during the last few seconds of approach.

Specific risk factors include :-

- The sudden increase in downward slope just before the junction lowering the visibility of the road markings, especially in wet-road conditions when the slope also increases risk of skidding.
- The 'partially blind' approach due to the distinct bend in the road at that point masking any indication of traffic approaching uphill from the opposite side of the roundabout.
- The speed of traffic approaching from the Hurtmore Road direction is higher than average because drivers have often recently left the A3, and are often not aware that this is a 30mph zone.
- Our law-abiding residents regularly inform us that they are 'tailgated' and pressurised by the gesticulations of increasingly aggressive drivers urging them to go faster. It appears that this is particularly prevalent on the section past Charterhouse School fields and does not happen to anywhere near the same extent within other 30mph zones in Godalming.
- The Hurtmore Road that approaches the roundabout is particularly open and wide along its length, and most of the lampposts that may otherwise reinforce the impression that this is a 30 mph zone are hidden or partially hidden by vegetation for much of this section. We would not advocate a fierce cutback of this vegetation though, as it would soon regrow. This greenery greatly assists in maintaining a leafy approach to Godalming from the A3.

Possible options may include repeater signs showing '30 mph' as used on the earlier approaches from the A3, or failing that a DoT dispensation to use '30 mph' painted street-level roundels may be a possible alternative, especially as this section of road runs alongside Charterhouse School playing fields and all of the main school exit routes emerge into this road. Most importantly, we strongly advocate reinforcement of the approach warnings well before the Twycross Road roundabout. Perhaps this could involve introducing a clearly marked 'Give Way in 80 Yards' warning sign, as already installed near the junction with Priorsfield Road.

May we therefore please ask that the original form of roundabout advisory sign be replaced as soon as is possible, and also ask that due consideration be given to the particular problems presented by this dangerous section of road ?

Response

An order was placed some time ago for replacing the missing roundabout sign, and this should be installed in the near future. With regard to the concerns expressed, and the suggestions put forward, the Local Highways Manager will visit the site to assess whether additional road signs and markings are likely to benefit road safety, and arrange for installation as appropriate.

Mr P Charlton, speaking on behalf of Mr Somner, asked if 30mph roundels could be painted on the carriageway in Charterhouse Road as many of the lamp-posts were concealed by vegetation, and reiterated the need to replace the roundabout sign. The Local Highways Manager undertook to investigate these matters.

4. From Mr Peter Monk (Alton Line Users' Association)

The Alton Line Users' Association (ALUA), the Rail User Group for the Alton Line, is aware that South West Trains (SWT) has made a bid to the Department for Transport's (DfT) 'Access for All' Small Schemes Fund for matched funding to carry out improvements at passenger stations to improve access for disabled users, including the provision of a split-height ticket office counter and accessible drop-off facilities at Farnham Station.

These are relatively minor, but nevertheless welcome, improvements and ALUA supports these whole-heartedly:

- The accessible drop-off bay at Farnham will enhance the drop-off opportunities further by providing a dedicated area at the front of the station allowing passengers to be dropped off in order to meet connecting trains.
- The split height ticket counter will provide facilities for wheelchair users and persons of small stature allowing them easier access to the ticket office.

South West Trains state that the scheme will indirectly increase usage by providing additional facilities as part of their strategy to provide consistent

facilities for disabled passengers on the South West Trains network. It should also be noted that Farnham is the accessible station closest to Alton in the event of operational problems or due to some longer trains blocking the access at Alton, and that that station is not staffed throughout service. Farnham station is often used as point from which to forward passengers by taxi to Alton, particularly in an evening.

The total scheme cost is £30,500 and the DfT has been requested to provide 50% of this amount under match funding arrangements. Any financial contribution from the community benefiting from the provision of such facilities would emphasise the importance with which the affected community views these. Subject to approval of funding the work would be scheduled for June/July 2009.

All of the planned improvements will be installed in accordance with the Accessible Train and Station Design: A Code of Practice (2008). Should any unforeseen difficulties make compliance impossible SWT will notify the DfT and seek guidance as to the most suitable way to progress.

In the light of the above will the Local Committee agree to write to the DfT endorsing SWT's bid and is there any means by which the Committee could offer a financial contribution towards the cost in order to emphasise the value of these facilities to the Farnham community ?

Response

The Local Committee notes the proposed improvements at Farnham Station and, subject to the agreement of members, is prepared to endorse the need for these and the benefits which they will bring to users.

Local County Councillors have agreed to consider in principle the possibility of allocating funding from the Local Committee budget, but will defer a decision until the viability of the project and the amount of any additional funding required is confirmed.

ANNEX 2

Item 6: Members' Questions and Responses

1. From Mr Alan Lovell

On 12 September 2008 this Committee received a report on Waverley Borough Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). The report rightly concentrated on the situation in Farnham town centre, which has the worst air pollution levels in the Borough. The Committee resolved to focus its work on a package of actions outlined in the report, even though the report itself acknowledged that "many of these options would have small impact on air quality".

The Committee will be aware that a number of WBC Councillors have previously expressed their concerns about the lack of substance in the AQAP and I understand that an annual progress report to DEFRA is due by the end of April 2009. This report should set out the dates by which the air quality targets are expected to be achieved.

It is widely recognised that the major impact in improving air quality can only be achieved through traffic measures which are the responsibility of the County Council. So far we have had no indication of any progress in developing the new approach which Farnham needs. We also know that the recently approved East Street development, which is expected to fund a number of traffic alterations and the modelling of other potential proposals, is unlikely to proceed for a number of years.

In these circumstances can the Committee now tell me when we can expect some substantive action by the County Council to address the significant air quality issues in Farnham within the context of both traffic management proposals for the town centre and a broader transport strategy for the surrounding area?

Response

The questioner's point linking air quality in town centre roads and the volume of traffic using those roads is well made. The Committee has yet to consider traffic management strategies for the town centre, and broader transport strategies for the surrounding area, and arrangements will be made for the matter to be included in the agenda for the next meeting of the Farnham Transportation Task Group, which has yet to be scheduled.

In a supplementary question, having noted the intention to refer the matter to the Farnham Transportation Task Group, Mr Lovell asked if there could be a comprehensive discussion covering the implications of the Air Quality Action Plan, the East Street redevelopment and the recent Scott Wilson report into traffic conditions in Farnham. Mrs P Frost, as Chairman of the Task Group, responded and agreed that there were concerns about air quality in Farnham. Mrs Frost felt that the remedy would involve large-scale schemes on which it had proved difficult to achieve local consensus. She would welcome, however, suggestions from the Task Group on possible sources for the significant amounts of funding that would be required.

2. From Mr Robert Knowles

Does the Local Committee agree that the on street parking in the vicinity of Haslemere Railway Station is generated by commuter parking ?

Response

Undoubtedly there is a significant element of commuter parking associated with Haslemere Station on the surrounding road network, indicated by the difference in parking patterns on weekdays compared with weekends.

It is understood that transport consultants acting on behalf of the South West Trains intend to undertake surveys in an attempt to quantify the degree of commuter parking in the town.

In his supplementary question, Mr Knowles reflected local concerns that the extent to which the station generated parking was not acknowledged. The Local Highways Manager indicated that the surveys currently being undertaken by South West Trains should demonstrate the extent of parking by rail-users in the vicinity of Haslemere Station.

3. From Mr David Munro

In view of the two separate serious accidents on Wrecclesham Hill in the last week which has rightly caused a great deal of concern locally, could the Local Committee ask highways officers to investigate the causes urgently and put in hand any measures necessary to prevent further accidents of this kind.

Response

Such an investigation is already underway, both into local circumstances pertaining at Wrecclesham Hill, and the wider issue of winter maintenance across Surrey.

In Wrecclesham Hill, officers are taking all practicable steps to prevent similar accidents to those that occurred over the past few days.

Mr Munro noted the response but referred to long-term underlying problems of leaks and surface water in this location and looked forward to a speedy resolution.

ANNEX 3

Prior to the meeting the Chairman allowed a short informal question time and seven residents of Godalming made detailed comments about the proposed review of parking restrictions in Godalming (Item 9).