

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)****PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND
RESPONSES****16 DECEMBER 2011****1. From Mr David Kirkham (Godalming)**

Almost 11 years have passed since the Public Inquiry into the Godalming High Street Pedestrian Priority Scheme. The inspector's report supported the principle of two-way cycling in the High Street, recommending an extended trial and adding that such a trial appears long overdue anyway. In 2009 the Godalming Healthcheck report also recommended the introduction of two-way cycling in the High Street. The Environmental Report for the Surrey Transport Plan specifically recommended implementation of contra-flow cycling on one-way streets as one of the measures to increase the use of cycling as a means of travelling in preference to the car. Nationally, the Department for Transport, following the "Signing the Way" Review, is introducing new signing to encourage greater use of contra-flow cycling.

With local and national support for two-way cycling when can we hope to see the trial of two-way cycling in Godalming High Street ?

Committee response

Initiatives such as this are funded from the capital allocation to this committee. The 2011/12 allocation of £267,000 is fully committed (see Item 9). The 2012/13 allocation will be announced in March and is expected to be at around the same level. There are many demands on the use of this funding, and the committee has established four task groups to consider requests and prioritise schemes within their respective areas. The Godalming, Witley and Milford Task Group meets in January and will consider this request alongside others when deciding which schemes should be included in the 2012/13 programme.

2. From Dr Jenny Masding (Alfold Parish Council)

The Alfold village centre highway improvement scheme was accepted and budgeted for in April 2011 and I met a County Council highways engineer on site in the late summer to discuss actual plans. We have not had any action or indeed seen the proposed plans which we were promised: could the Committee provide an update on progress ?

Committee response

A general update on improvement schemes is provided at Item 9. In common with almost the entire programme, installation of the Alfold village measures, which will consist of road markings, signs and village gateways, is planned for the end of the financial year. Highways officers will be in touch with the Parish Council in January to agree the proposals.

3. From Ms Diane James (Ewhurst)

Ewhurst and Surrey Hills Broadband Group successfully bid for, and was awarded, a grant of £180,000 only to see monies withheld, based on indications that BT/Openreach would be undertaking the necessary works and that independent action would be unnecessary. But it is clear that the BT/Openreach undertaking will not provide fibre to any premises or sufficient service to Ewhurst's surrounding catchment area and on this basis will the Local Committee add its support to the release of the £180,000 grant plus match-funding from Surrey County Council in line with the national finance policy for improving broadband service in rural areas ?

Committee response

Following BT Openreach's inclusion of the Cranleigh exchange (which serves Ewhurst), in their national fibre upgrade programme, the £180,000 of funding being referred to was withheld, as EU State Aid regulations do not allow public funding to be spent in areas that are included in BT Openreach's fibre upgrade areas.

SEEDA has now been abolished and officers have spoken to colleagues in DEFRA who were previously involved with Ewhurst's bid at SEEDA. The funding stream that is being referred to is no longer in place and the £180,000 cannot be accessed.

DEFRA now has a Rural Community Broadband Fund (RCBF) as part of its Rural Development Programme for England, which targets communities in hard to reach areas. DEFRA and BDUK (the government's body for national broadband policy and funding) are working together on this funding stream to ensure that the RCBF applications are tied into, and complement, each county's own broadband plan. Surrey County Council has been liaising with BDUK and DEFRA to explore if and how Ewhurst can make an application through this fund, without falling foul of State Aid regulations that saw their previous funding withdrawn. DEFRA advised that State Aid will be looked at on a case by case basis, so the Ewhurst Broadband Group can submit an Expression of Interest (EoI) for this funding. The finer details of the RCBF have been made available in December and there are two rounds for submitting an EoI. These are 31 January 2012, with a second round expected in April 2012. Details of the fund are available on DEFRA's RDPE website.

The Committee will bear this question and response in mind in its consideration of the report at Item 8 on this agenda.

4. Questions relating to on-street parking in Haslemere:

(i) From Mrs B Badger (Haslemere)

Courts Hill Road residents are greatly concerned about the increasing number of vehicles that speed along this road and are seriously disturbed about the inconsiderate and inconvenient commuter parking. We should like to know what solutions Surrey County Council proposes for the mitigation of these problems.

Committee response

Commuter parking has been an on-going issue near Haslemere rail station for many years. Surrey Highways receive reports and complaints about obstructive parking quite regularly and over the years have introduced waiting restrictions in a piecemeal way to improve safety in specific locations. It is now planned to introduce a more comprehensive parking management scheme that will improve safety and make it easier for residents to park near their homes. The proposals for Courts Hill Road are set out in the report at Item 11 on the agenda of this meeting. In Courts Hill Road, following site meetings with the committee appointed by the residents, it is planned to retain some on-street parking as this helps reduce traffic speeds. The parking spaces will, however, be positioned to make it easier and safer for residents to access their properties. It is also planned to place 'SLOW' road marking in some locations to help reduce traffic speeds in this road.

(ii) From Mr Andrew Johnston (Haslemere)

I have lived in Courts Hill Road, Haslemere for twenty years. Over recent years there has been a substantial increase in both:

- (1) Parking by commuters who use the station and show little or no consideration for residents and other users of the road; and
- (2) Traffic flowing along the road to and from the station or as a 'short-cut' from the Midhurst road to the B2131 at the station.

The parking has made access to properties and navigation along the road very difficult, and at times impossible. I believe the road is markedly less safe as a result. Residents have suffered a significant loss of amenity.

I am strongly in favour of the introduction of on-street parking charges and the proposals developed and agreed in September for Courts Hill Road as set out in Annex C Haslemere 2 attached to the paper for consideration under item 11.

Is it not time action was taken to implement these proposals, and as soon as possible, to alleviate the current barely tolerable free-for-all ?

Committee response

Commuter parking has been an on-going issue near Haslemere rail station for many years. Surrey Highways receive reports and complaints about obstructive parking quite regularly and over the years have introduced waiting restrictions in a piecemeal way to improve safety in specific locations. It is now planned to introduce a more comprehensive parking management scheme that will improve safety and make it easier for residents to park near their homes. The proposals for Courts Hill Road are set out in the report at Item 11 on the agenda of this meeting. In Courts Hill Road it is planned to retain some on-street parking as this helps reduce traffic speeds. The parking spaces will, however, be positioned to make it easier and safer for residents to access their properties. It is also planned to place 'SLOW' road marking in some locations to help reduce traffic speeds in this road.

(iii) From Mr Andrew Cundy (Haslemere)

I live in Courts Hill Road and following a meeting of residents in early August to discuss traffic management in the road, we established a small committee to represent the residents interests. After numerous e-mail exchanges and site meetings with our County Councillor (Steve Renshaw) and subsequently some officers, we reached an agreement with the County Council that the majority of residents of the road accepted.

I have now been made aware of a claim by a resident that the Department for Transport (DfT) has stated that Courts Hill Road is too narrow for the agreement reached to be implemented.

Can you please confirm to me that either:

- 1) Surrey County Council is correct in that the agreement reached with the majority of the residents can indeed be implemented and that the claims about the view of the DfT are incorrect, OR
- 2) The claims about the DfT are correct, so can you then please explain why the County Council has raised the expectations of residents in Courts Hill Road, that the agreed scheme could be implemented, when it was never deliverable?

Committee response

It is confirmed that the Department for Transport (DfT) **has not** made any statements whatsoever about the suitability of any road in Haslemere for parking. It is not their responsibility or duty to do so. Surrey County Council is the Highway Authority in Surrey and responsible for the management of the highway network (this means all public highways except motorways and trunk roads). The DfT issues directions, guidelines and good practice in relation to traffic management and the Council follows this where applicable. The Council's Parking Team has drawn up the parking management proposals in Haslemere following accepted good practice in terms of the provision of on-street parking and also in consultation with local councillors and residents. If agreed by the Local Committee on the 16th December, there will be a more formal public consultation on the proposals to more comprehensively seek the public view. This will help refine any proposals that are introduced in the best interests of residents and highway users.

(iv) From Mr Alan Blinder (Haslemere)

I understand that Waverley Borough Council has recently announced that they intend to remove the ability to park for free in the Weyhill Fairground car park in Haslemere. Due to pressure from commuters, it is very unusual for me to be able to park near my house on St Christopher's Green so I tend to have to park across the road at the Fairground; however, in the near future I will not be able to afford to do so due to the plan to introduce a charging regime. Because of these plans, I fully support the suggestions to introduce a residents' permit scheme which at £50 per annum represents very good value, charging for commuters to park on the road and to improve the levels of enforcement. This is also a view shared by the majority of those on St Christopher's Green who attended a meeting to discuss the matter. I would be grateful if you would advise me as to when this agreed scheme for St Christopher's Green will be introduced ?

Committee response

On-street commuter parking has been an on-going issue near Haslemere rail station for many years. During this time Surrey Highways have had many reports and complaints about parking in the area and have implemented waiting restrictions in a piecemeal way to tackle safety and obstruction issues. It is now planned to introduce a more comprehensive parking management scheme in the town that will better manage parking to improve safety, reduce obstruction and make it easier for residents to park near their homes. Item 11 on the agenda proposes a public consultation about parking management proposals in Haslemere. If agreed, following the consultation, a residents' parking scheme around St Christopher's Green, as discussed with the residents, could be introduced in the summer of 2012.

(v) From Ms Clare Loosley (Haslemere)

The proposals for the inclusion of the spaces in front of garages/ parking spaces in the residents' parking bays on Longdene Road has raised a number of queries. We have been advised that it is only possible to have either (a) these spaces included in the bays or (b) double yellow lines in front of these spaces [if the majority do not agree to option (a)]. Several residents are concerned that option (a) will result in their driveways being blocked, or cause other issues such as making it difficult to get in/out of driveways. Others would prefer to have white lines outside their properties as are currently available. Would the Committee be able to provide some more detail as to how the inclusion of these spaces in the planned bays would work, the advantages/disadvantages thereof, and explain why it is not possible to allow residents some degree of flexibility in their choice of whether: (a) the space is included in a bay, (b) has double yellow or (c) white lines ?

Committee response

There are a number of options available to residents in Longdene Road in terms of parking in front of, or keeping their driveways clear. These are:

- Run parking bays in front of the driveways to allow residents with a permit to block their own drives. This is proposed for consultation as it maintains the maximum amount of parking space for residents and has worked well elsewhere.
- Mark a double yellow line to keep the access clear at all times

- Mark a single yellow line that prohibits parking during the prescribed time (eg 8.30 –7pm). This would need a sign showing the times and it may not be physically possible to put one in without blocking the access.
- Mark a white 'access protection' marking. This may not be enforceable in some circumstances and has the highest probability of being ignored.

It should be possible to determine the best solution for residents of Longdene Road as part of the consultation process and incorporate the preferred solution (as long as it is practicable) in the final scheme. There are also proposals to formalise existing footway parking arrangements on some parts of Longdene Road. Again this is part of the consultation process and the Council will not make a final decision until residents' views have been considered.

(vi) From Ms Fiona Attrell (Haslemere)

I have been a resident of Popes Mead in the centre of Haslemere since 2000, and in recent years, particularly since Waitrose has opened, the issue of residents' parking (and congestion in West Street) has become an escalating problem, in part because of shop workers seeking free parking close to their place of work. To this problem must be added commuters from Haslemere Station seeking free spaces within walking distance of the station. Furthermore, the news that the King Edward hospital in Midhurst will be the site of over 400 dwellings, as well as the potential of a few hundred more homes at the Syngenta site in Fernhurst, add up to a massive existing and future traffic problem for Haslemere, which is no longer the sleepy bucolic town of a few years ago. It is marvellous that the town centre is so vibrant, but the growth has in turn created traffic problems, in common with many towns of similar size, and this escalating problem needs urgent redress for all concerned.

We, and many of our neighbours, support the notion of one parking bay per household (where there isn't already off-street parking), and, can you please assure us, on behalf of our neighbours and the majority of households in nearby streets, that fair provision will be made for residents' parking as part of the new proposals, as well as an affordable scheme for shop workers, and that, if carried, the proposals will be enacted as speedily as possible ?

Committee response

The proposals in Item 11 for residents' parking schemes in Haslemere will make it considerably more convenient for residents without off-street parking to park near their homes. It is planned to allocate parking space to residents as fairly as possible and this will take into account off-street parking availability and the road space available. The Council will listen to residents' comments about their parking needs and requirements for residents' permits during the consultation before deciding the fairest method of allocating them. It may be possible to allocate parking provision for local workers on streets around the town centre as a future development of the proposals. This would need to take into account the views of residents and the availability of off-street car parks.

(vii) From Mr Jim Edwards (on behalf of Haslemere Town Council)

It should be understood that Haslemere Town Council's (HTC) opposition to the principle of all-day on-street commuter parking is based on a Multi-Storey Car Park ("MSCP") being constructed in the short to medium term at Haslemere Station. If it were to turn out that there is no prospect of this happening, HTC's

opposition would cease. It should also be understood that HTC has no comment on the details of the on-street parking proposals agreed with the residents of the affected roads.

1. Background

Haslemere Station attracts a large daily commuting population which currently requires parking for 800-850 cars. Current car park capacity is just over 500 spaces (Station car park 250, Weydown Road car park 140, Weyhill car park 90 and Tanners Lane car park 40). The remaining 300-350 cars park in the residential roads nearest the station and in some roads cause considerable inconvenience to residents and the emergency services. HTC considers that the construction of a MSCP at Haslemere Station represents the best means of alleviating the problems associated with commuter on-street parking in the residential roads near the Station. To put it at its simplest, the right place for all commuters' cars is in car parks and not in residential roads.

2. Role of Network Rail and South West Trains

HTC is aware of and welcomes the recently renewed interest by Network Rail, either alone or in partnership with South West Trains, to construct a MSCP at the station, either offering 463 spaces (as permitted by the existing conditional permission for a three-deck MSCP granted to SWT in May 2009) or for 550-563 spaces (as contemplated by the addition of a further deck over half the area which has been discussed with the Waverley Borough Council Planning Department). HTC is aware that Network Rail's recent bids for Department for Transport funding have been unsuccessful to date but, based on information from Network Rail, remains hopeful that the project will still proceed, with an expected completion date in 2014.

3. HTC's reservations

HTC is also aware of Surrey County Council's wish to implement on-street charging in residential roads near the Station and has two significant reservations.

First, while HTC recognises that organised commuter parking in wide roads such as Derby Road and Weydown Road has the potential to offer an improved experience for residents compared to the current, unregulated situation, HTC believes that the situation in the narrower roads (e.g. Longdene Road, Courts Hill Road, Kings Road, Bunch Lane, Church Road, Tanners Lane (north of the railway bridge), Beech Road, Three Gates Lane) will only be really improved by prohibiting all-day commuter parking completely. This can only be achieved if alternative parking provision at a MSCP exists. Accordingly, HTC does not support formalising all-day parking in the narrower residential roads other than as a temporary measure until a MSCP is constructed.

Second, HTC is seriously concerned that the provision of formalised all-day parking in residential roads may weaken the business case for constructing a MSCP at the Station and thereby lead to the abandonment of the MSCP project by Network Rail. This is why HTC asks that Surrey County Council should consult with Network Rail and South West Trains as soon as possible to establish their reaction to SCC's plans and should be willing to undertake that commuter parking on the narrower residential roads will be prohibited in time for the opening of a MSCP at Haslemere Station. This is necessary to ensure that the MSCP owners can expect to fill the extra spaces almost immediately after opening and hence provide support for the revenue assumptions in the business case underpinning the MSCP project. HTC recognises that providing charged on-street parking in

Derby Road and Weydown Road will offer a useful overflow facility when the MSCP is full.

Will Surrey County Council undertake:

- (1) To discuss with Network Rail and South West Trains its proposals to introduce charging for all-day on-street parking in residential roads near Haslemere Station; and
- (2) To prohibit all-day commuter parking in residential roads in Haslemere (other than in Derby Road and Weydown Road) as soon as a Multi-Storey Car Park at Haslemere Station is open for business ?

Committee response

The County Council will notify Network Rail of our proposed parking management scheme in Haslemere and listen to their comments as part of the consultation process. Surrey Highways and the County Councillor for Haslemere, Steve Renshaw support in principle the construction of the 453 space station car park, for which outline permission has been extant for 3 years next February and agree that the preferred location for vehicles is off the road. Unfortunately funding for the enlarged station car park has so far not been agreed and it is unlikely that, if all the obstacles were resolved, it could be implemented before 2014. Even a larger car park may not be able to cope with the demand by station users so it seems reasonable to wait until details are clear before planning further changes to parking controls on streets around the station. There is no reason why any parking restrictions implemented in Haslemere as part of the current proposals could not be amended in the future if circumstances at the station change, as proposed by the question. In any case it seems that the proposal for an enlarged station car park would not be viable with so much free on-street parking around the station as is currently the case.

(viii) From Ms Julianne Evans (Haslemere Chamber of Trade)

Annex E of Item 11 in the Committee papers for December 16th shows the installation cost, maintenance cost and possible income per year of on-street parking charges but appears not to show enforcement costs. It is therefore impossible for anybody reading these to make a judgement about the financial viability of the project, especially as the proposal suggests that enforcement costs will increase, particularly in Haslemere. What are they now and what will they increase to ?

Committee response

Annex E of Item 11 shows estimated income and costs associated with the parking management proposals. At this stage Surrey Highways are confident that the cost of additional enforcement associated with the proposals could be covered by the additional income from parking charges. The current proposals are for consultation and consequently some aspects may change. The Committee will be asked to review the consultation response in March 2012 and when the proposals have been refined in response to this, it will be possible to indicate enforcement costs.

(ix) From Mr John Greer (Haslemere Society)

In relation to the proposed on-street parking charges in Haslemere:

The introduction of pay and display street parking has been rejected by several Local Committees in Surrey. There is also very considerable public opposition to these proposals in Haslemere which was clearly demonstrated at a very full public meeting in the Haslemere Hall on 27 September. Why has the Local Committee not cancelled its pay and display street parking proposals in Haslemere ? The very severe and increasing commuter parking problems around the station in Haslemere make an off-street multi-level car park essential. For this to be commercially feasible it is also essential that a parking exclusion zone is established in streets around the station. Does the Committee realise that the pay and display parking proposals are in direct conflict with this and could jeopardise the building of an off-street multi-level car park ?

Committee response

Surrey Highways and the County Councillor for Haslemere, Steve Renshaw support in principle the construction of the 453 space station car park, for which outline permission has been extant for 3 years next February and agree that the preferred location for vehicles is off the road. Unfortunately funding for the enlarged station car park has so far not been agreed and it is unlikely that, if all the obstacles were resolved, it could be implemented before 2014. Even a larger car park may not be able to cope with the demand by station users so it seems reasonable to wait until details are clear before planning further changes to parking controls on streets around the station. There is no reason why any parking restrictions implemented in Haslemere as part of the current proposals could not be amended in the future if circumstances at the station change, as proposed by the question. In any case it seems that the proposal for an enlarged station car park would not be viable with so much free on-street parking around the station, as is currently the case, and weakens the financial case for an enlarged station car park.