

**MEETING TO DISCUSS SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S PROPOSALS FOR ON-STREET PARKING RESTRICTIONS IN HASLEMERE**

**6 March 2012 at 7.00pm**

**Present:**

Pat Frost (Chairman)	Surrey County Council: Chairman of Local Committee (Waverley)
David North (Notes)	Surrey County Council (Community Partnership and Committee Officer)
The following organisations were represented:	
Haslemere Town Council	Derby Road Residents' Association
Haslemere Chamber of Trade	Weydown Road Residents' Association
St Stephen's Church, Shottermill	King's Road Residents' Association
St Bartholomew's School	Pope's Mead Residents
Haslemere Educational Museum	Courts Hill Road Residents' Association
Haslemere Hall	Beech Road Residents
Shottermill Infant School	Roads in Shottermill
John Greer	Haslemere Action Group
Courts Mount Road (West) Residents' Association	
<b>Apologies</b>	Lower Street and Shepherd's Hill Residents' Association

**SUMMARY NOTE**

1. The Chairman explained the purpose of the meeting: she had noted the strong views of a number of local organisations and stakeholders who had made representations to the County Council and wished to understand their concerns. Parking is a County Council responsibility, delegated to Local Committees who may not themselves delegate it further. The Local Committee (Waverley) would consider the results of the statutory consultation on the proposals on 16 March and come to a decision.
2. The meeting would be informal and private, although a note would be made and circulated to those present; it would also be made publicly available to the Local Committee prior to its meeting so that members could be aware of the views expressed prior to making their decision. Motions or resolutions would not be accepted.
3. Significant concern was expressed, notably by the Haslemere-wide organisations, that consultation prior to publication of the proposals had been inadequate and not based on sufficient information. These organisations wished to explore alternative solutions and undertake consultation on a local basis. There was a shared concern about the need to sustain the independent retailers in the town and address all-day parking, ideally via a solution at the station.
4. Residents of some roads, however, supported the proposals relating to their local area. Those in King's Road, after campaigning for many years, wanted residents' parking permits (but opposed zoning) and supported the introduction of charges

in the area adjacent to the bridge. They also wished to prohibit HGVs from using the road and the Chairman undertook to refer this to the Area Highways Manager. Residents of Derby Road were understood to be content with the proposals to charge for all-day parking on the north side of the road and would be happy to work with St Bartholomew's School to develop a satisfactory solution for parking at the east end. The School's priority is to ensure that adequate parking is available for staff and volunteers and that dropping-off/collection arrangements are safe; it was felt that consultation had been piecemeal and divisive and had not provided an opportunity to seek a satisfactory compromise with residents in Derby Road.

5. A wider perspective was offered, principally again by the Haslemere-wide organisations, that the parking problems are best examined holistically and with the support of additional evidence. Recognising that all-day/commuter parking is the fundamental problem it was suggested that the best solution to guarantee residents' parking would be the creation of additional off-street parking, either by South West Trains/Network Rail or Waverley Borough Council. There was some optimism that additional parking adjacent to the station and provided by Network Rail might begin to become available within 18 months. It was also understood that the planning permission granted by the Borough Council in 2009 for a multi-storey car-park at the station had contained an undertaking for the County Council to implement a Controlled Parking Zone in the vicinity of the station. It was pointed out, however, that residents of King's Road had waited some years for the current proposal and would not want any further delay. Likewise Pope's Mead residents, reflecting the architecture and layout of this area, were happy to purchase permits. It was understood, on the other hand, that residents of Saint Christopher's Green, while strongly supporting more parking for residents, were in favour of charging for commuters and that residents of Saint Christopher's Road were not in favour of charging for shoppers.
6. There were widespread concerns about the style of the localised consultation meetings which had taken place between County Council representatives and residents and schools. It was felt that the focus had been on tweaking existing proposals rather than on understanding the fundamental problems and both St Bartholomew's and Shottermill Infants' School reported that their opposition to Pay and Display had not been reflected in the notes of their respective meetings. The latter had not received satisfactory evidence of the need for charges in Lion Lane and believed that Pay and Display would have severe negative consequences for the local community.
7. While St Stephen's Church had not been consulted, its representative echoed the view that consultation had been poor and that the County Council's stance had been defensive. It was pointed out that Haslemere benefits from a great deal of voluntary activity and it was feared that the proposed Pay and Display arrangements would in effect charge people for their goodwill. There was a genuine wish to collaborate and find an appropriate solution, starting with a proper consultation process. The Museum had not been consulted, but likewise the trustees oppose Pay and Display.
8. There was a discussion about the viability of Pay and Display. While there was a recognition that all-day parkers/commuters should make a contribution for their use of the town, it was nevertheless suggested that on-street charging would be likely to cause displacement into uncharged areas. It was accepted that the proposed restrictions may be appropriate in certain narrow roads, but that more detailed research and consultation would be helpful. It was equally important to

understand commuter behaviour. The Town Council and Transition Haslemere are looking at the possibility of providing a local bus service for commuters and the need to prepare for the future impact of additional residential development outside of Surrey, e.g. at Fernhurst, King Edward's Hospital and Bordon-Whitehill, is understood. In this connection the Chairman noted the possibility of negotiating contributions from developers – via the Community Infrastructure Levy in the future – towards alleviating consequent problems in Haslemere.

9. Some representatives shared a suspicion that the Pay and Display proposals had been developed principally as a money-raising exercise. The Chairman explained that it was not the County Council's intention to generate a large income from parking-meters, but that enforcement costs need to be met – it was not felt to be acceptable that enforcement in Haslemere should be subsidised from elsewhere. The current deficit in Waverley amounts to approximately £141,000 per annum: the Chairman undertook to request a disaggregated figure for Haslemere. It was suggested that a unified enforcement service, covering both on- and off-street parking, may be cost-effective. The possibility of establishing a Community Interest Company to manage car-parking was also mentioned.
10. The preferences of residents in the following roads were reported. Longdene Road: many residents support residents' parking and multi-road zoning (with some concerns, however, about the location of "residents only" zones) and Pay and Display would be accepted if necessary; Weydown Road: many residents oppose restrictions in the retail area and Pay and Display; Chestnut Avenue: residents support "residents only" parking (but on a street-by-street basis rather than by zones), oppose Pay and Display and are in favour of a multi-storey car-park; Beech Road: residents do not support Pay and Display (as the road is used by Hospital visitors) and prefer a Controlled Parking Zone with a mid-day restriction. The Chamber of Trade opposes Pay and Display in the Town Centre and does not believe there to be a problem with "churn", which the County Council's proposals were intended to improve.
11. The Chairman thanked those present for their attendance and contributions. She had noted the anger felt by many about the approach and style of the County Council's consultation – this had not, on the whole, met residents' expectations, who would wish to have been involved in the process from beginning to end. There were learning points for the Council with respect to communications, although it would be difficult to meet everyone's preference without compromise. She recognised a need for all three levels of local government to collaborate with local organisations to develop coherent solutions. The Local Committee would consider the outcome of the statutory consultation at its meeting on 16 March and has the capacity to amend officer recommendations. Any decisions would in any case be subject to review after implementation.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

### **Specific actions for Surrey County Council**

- Obtain details of deficit in parking enforcement account in Haslemere
- Request that Parking Team reviews terms of 2009 planning permission to Network Rail for multi-storey car-park
- Investigate progress of requested HGV restriction in King's Road