



**Minutes of the meeting of the Local Committee for Woking
held at 4.15 pm on 19 March 2003
at the Council Chamber, Woking Borough Civic Offices, Woking.**

Members Present

Mr David Rousell - Chairman
Mr Geoff Marlow – Vice-Chairman
Mrs Elizabeth Compton
Mrs Sheila Gruselle
Mrs Margaret Hill
Mrs Val Tinney

Part One – In Public

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

17/03 Apologies for absence [Item 1]

None received.

18/03 Minutes of last meeting held on 22 January 2003 [Item 2]

Confirmed and signed by the Chairman

19/03 Declarations of interests [Item 3]

No declarations of interest in accordance with Standing Order 58 were made.

20/03 Petitions [Item 4]

No petitions in accordance with Standing Order 62 were received.

21/03 Public Questions [Item 5]

No public questions were received.

22/03 Members' Questions [Item 6]

This question was received from Mr Geoff Marlow:

"The Local Committee allocated £12,000 towards the cost of providing CCTV that could be used in different parts of Woking, on condition that a priority would be tackling vandalism and anti-social behaviour in Byfleet and West Byfleet. What has happened to implement this decision? And is more CCTV required to protect the library from further burglaries?"

Chris Holloway, Local Director, responded:

"As you know, the Local Committee earmarked £12,000 to contribute to the cost of providing new CCTV facilities that could be used in different locations in Woking, on the understanding that a priority would be combating vandalism and anti-social behaviour in Byfleet / West Byfleet.

"It was clear from the start that more CCTV cameras, by themselves, are not a good use of money. Unless there is someone watching the picture at the times when antisocial behaviour occurs, a camera does not help prevent such behaviour. And unless the camera saves good quality pictures, they do not help catch or convict offenders.

"So the Local Committee asked Woking Borough Council and Surrey Police if they could help to find the most effective way of using the money. They have a lot of expertise in CCTV, and are jointly responsible for the CCTV in the town centre and Sheerwater.

"We are pleased to report that Surrey County Council, Woking Borough Council and the Police have agreed an exciting new project, with CCTV on a police vehicle. This will be officially launched within a few weeks. Full details will then be sent to all members of the Local Committee and made public.

"The Library Service will be liaising with the police to discuss how this new CCTV facility can best be used to protect the library from future problems."

The following motion was proposed by Mrs. Val Tinney, seconded by Mrs. Sheila Gruselle and approved by the Committee:

"The Post Office is proposing to close the branch at 89 Walton Road. Because of the problems this will cause to people who live nearby and need to be able to get to a post office without going into the middle of town, or having to cross the railway line - in particular, parents of young children and older people - and the language problems faced by some local people, the Local Director should reply to the Post Office

consultation about their proposal to close this branch on behalf of the Local Committee and ask them to find a way forward that keeps a local post office facility."

Executive Functions

23/03 Policing in Woking and the Policing Plan [Item 7]

Chief Superintendent Adrian Leppard and Inspector Peter Fulton gave a presentation to inform Members about the policing structure for Surrey Police with particular reference to North West Surrey Division.

In reply to a question from Mrs Tinney about the impact on Woking of the imminent international conflict, Adrian Leppard said that the police are assessing premises in Woking for risk, and that guidance would be given to the public if necessary.

Mrs Gruselle gave members a fact-sheet produced by Surrey Police Authority which said that the cost of policing services in Surrey is about 40p per person per day, emphasised what good value this is. Adrian Leppard added that if funding was cut the police would have to concentrate on emergencies, whereas at present, they respond to what people want of them: reassurance, being out in the community, and answering the telephone.

24/03 Structure Plan [Item 8]

Hilary Herbert gave a verbal report on the results of the public consultation and the findings for Woking. Two thousand six hundred responses, more than before, had been received by the end of the formal six week deposit period, of which 750 were standard letters from GAIN, the Guildford group opposing the incinerator.

Officers are partway through analysing the comments. So far, almost all of the objections from the public relate to NE and NW Guildford and the gap between Guildford and Woking; others about the impact on the green belt and nature conservation.

The draft plan will be amended and published, if possible on 27 June 2003, as "pre-examination in public changes" for a further six weeks consultation. The examination in public is scheduled to start on 18 November 2003.

In reply to a question from Mrs Tinney, Hilary Herbert said that the structure plan opposes further expansion of Gatwick Airport and does not predict this will change. Mr. Rousell added that the Surrey County Council Environment and Select Committee has reconvened the

Airport Task Group, and this is likely to reiterate what has been said previously.

In reply to Margaret Hill who pointed out that the latest census shows only 1 per cent population growth in Surrey over 10 years, Hilary Herbert said that the census did not show a reduced need for new housing because of the continued trend towards more, smaller, households.

25/03 **Local Education Attainment Report** [Item 9]

Members received and discussed an annual report about the educational attainment of pupils attending schools in Woking and commented on the findings of the report.

In reply to a question from Mr. Marlow, Rowan Swan said that he would find out if there are any differences in the attainment of children who go to different infant and junior schools compared with those who attend the same school throughout.

In reply to questions from Mrs. Compton and Mr. Rousell, Rowan Swan confirmed that performance on maths and science is low for Surrey, and suggested that recruitment problems might be the cause.

Mrs Tinney pointed out that because of the diverse community in Woking, children may take longer to attain grades but that when they do, the schools are actually doing better than most.

In reply to a question from Margaret Hill asking how the figures compared to previous years, Rowan Swan said that these statistics did not include children with special needs or those at Pupil Referral Units, unlike the figures given in July 2002. John Ambrose added that schools in the SHNE partnership, funded by the Sheerwater Maybury Partnership, was an example of the benefit of confederations of schools who can combine to buy in extra support.

26/03 **Surrey Children's Service – services for children with special needs** [Item 10]

Members received and discussed a report about the new structure of Children's Services, the services for children with special needs and the development of multi-professional teams including the Physical and Sensory Support Service and Traveller Education Support Service to provide schools, children and families with a more efficient service through more integrated and effective multi-agency working. Paula Evans, Multi-disciplinary Team leader, attended in place of Judy Wright who was unwell. She and John Ambrose, Local Education Officer, described how closer working between social care and education staff

means that they are now working together on cases which used to fall down the gap.

In reply to a question from Mr Rousell, Paula Evans said that responsibility for education lies with the school; but where a child has a statement of special education needs, the Local Education Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that the targets on the statement are met.

Mrs Gruselle asked if it was still true that more children are statemented in Surrey than other areas. In reply, Paula Evans said that Surrey is still slightly above the national average, and that they are planning to audit those to get schools to reduce the number.

In reply to a question from Mrs Gruselle, Paula Evans said extra attention is being paid to the educational needs of looked-after children, including a new post. Margaret Hill commented that the changes have already shown benefits in improving co-ordination in supporting the education of looked-after children, and asked what extra help could be given to schools in deprived areas. Paula Evans said that each school will have one co-ordinator who will identify what support is available. By September 2003, when the new arrangements will be fully implemented there will be five multi-disciplinary teams in Woking – one extra because of the minority ethnic communities in Woking.

In reply to a question from Mrs Compton about ways to increase the opportunities of children who attend special schools for disabled pupils, Paula Evans said that once the teams are set up in September, they will develop work plans to address needs.

27/03 Surrey's Rural Strategy: consultation [Item 11]

Members received a summary of the Rural Strategy and a covering report outlining some important rural issues in Woking. Mike Dawson explained that Surrey County Council uses the Countryside Agency definition of "rural", which includes land in town which links through to the countryside. The Rural Strategy identifies the need to do more in NW Surrey. Officers are exploring, with Woking Borough Council, a more proactive management of the landscape adjoining the highways. This is often about the management of trees, which are left alone until they get too large and dangerous.

Mrs Tinney had a number of specific points and questions. It was agreed that she would send these direct to Mike Dawson, copying them to other members of the Committee.

28/03 Surrey Minerals Local Plan [Item 12]

Members noted that work has begun on the replacement minerals local plan and discussed its impact on Woking. They noted that the aggregates depot is the only operating depot in Surrey. It is safeguarded in the plan and would be in the revised plan. Members noted that the depot causes traffic problems and is on land which could be used for housing, and therefore asked officers to consider alternative locations for the depot.

29/03 Annual Plan for the Local Committee and Community Support Team for Woking [Item 13]

Members amended one action by deleting "reduce friction" and replacing it with "further improve relations", and then approved the priorities for the Community Support Team staff and the Local Committee for Woking in 2003/2004. In reply to a comment from Mrs Tinney, the Local Director confirmed that staff will be drawing up a detailed work programme, which will include looking at the implications of the weight restrictions in the centre of town on the mobile Trading Standards service.

Members considered and approved the appendix setting out how the Local Committee will manage its business in the coming year. They agreed that Members should be offered the opportunity to report briefly on any significant developments in relation to their lead area each meeting.

Margaret Hill reported that she had attended the second meeting of the Youth Council and had been impressed at the diversity and energy of the young people there.

30/03 Allocating Local Committee Funding 2003/2004 [Item 14]

The Local Director circulated a paper supplanting the report, setting out the questions which Audit requires the Local Director to check before members consider a proposal for use of Members' Allocations, and reminded Members that with that minor change, the criteria and systems recommended were those used in 2002/2003. Members agreed that:

- a) decisions about the use of the Members' allocation will be made according to the process and criteria described in paragraphs 4 to 13 of the report
- b) decisions about the use of the capital allocation will be made according to the process and criteria described in paragraphs 16 to 20 of the report
- c) £15,000 of the community safety budget will be allocated to the domestic violence outreach project, and the remainder to a maximum of £3,000 to the administration of the community safety strategy through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

In response to a question from Mrs Tinney, the Local Director confirmed that all the Members' Allocations for 2002/03 had been spent and that she was arranging payments.

31/03 Forward Programme [Item 15]

Members amended the forward programme for the Local Committee so that decisions about the allocation of capital funding would be made in June instead of July. With that change, the programme was approved.

14/03 Exclusion of Press and Public [Item 14]

There was no business that required the public to be excluded from the meeting under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972.

[The meeting ended at 6.10 pm]