



Minutes of the Local Committee for Woking  
General Agenda  
Meeting held at 4.15 pm on 14 October 2004  
at  
the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Woking.

Members present:

Mr Geoff Marlow – Chairman  
Mrs Elizabeth Compton  
Mr David Rousell  
Mrs Diana Smith

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**Part One – In Public**

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

**60/04 Apologies for absence** [Item 1]

Mrs Gruselle and Mrs Tinney gave their apologies for absence.

**61/04 Minutes of last meeting: 14 July and 29 September 2004** [Item 2]

The minutes of the 14 July 2004 meeting were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

For the minutes of the 29 September an amendment was made to the annex (Martyrs Lane discussion point vii) in which the word 'incinerator' was replaced by 'gasification plant'. The minutes were then agreed and signed.

**62/04 Declarations of interests** [Item 3]

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

63/04 **Petitions** [Item 4]

There were no petitions received.

64/04 **Written Public Questions** [Item 5]

**The following questions were received about Knaphill Library:**

**Mr John Campbell on behalf of Knaphill Community Library Association asked:**

1. The proposed new site for Knaphill Library, having been available since May 2003, was approved in October 2003 by the Local Committee for Woking who agreed that Surrey County Council should seek a lease on the property. Many years of maladministration have deprived the residents of this community of their legal entitlement to a comprehensive and efficient library service; this appears to be continuing.

We understand that Surrey County Council was offered a lease in June 2004 but have still not signed it. Will the Local Committee please explain why it should take so long either to agree or decide against continuing with the proposal and revert to the previously favoured plan to replace the building on the existing Surrey County Council owned site.

**Mr Len Moles asked:**

2. When Knaphill Library in its new home is a reality, and the people of Knaphill Bisley, Brookwood, Pirbright and parts of Goldsworth Park and St Johns have a bigger and better library nearer to home than Woking Centre, or do not have to rely on a limited mobile library, what, in the opinion of members of the Committee, will be the main benefits, advantages and improvements which the people of these areas will experience, day to day, when as members of the reading public they use the new library?

**Miss I M Busby asked:**

3. I understand that a property in Knaphill is to be leased by Surrey County Council for use as a library and the present library site sold. What guarantee is there that Knaphill will keep its new library if the terms of the lease subsequently change?

**Chris Norris, Head of Libraries responded:**

Negotiations are continuing between the County Council's Property Services and the landlord. We expect these negotiations to reach a satisfactory conclusion on the expiry of the current lease at the end of March 2005. The new library will be considerably larger than the existing one with more books and computers and a greatly improved layout. On the expiry of the lease the County Council will be able to negotiate for an extension."

The questioners were not happy with the response given. Mr Howes explained that due to commercial confidentiality no further information could be provided at this time. Mrs Smith noted that when the Library Service gives her a date for the new library, she will pass it on to the Knaphill Community Library Association.

It was confirmed that no funds were available to build a new library on the current site.

In response to a supplementary question from Miss Busby, Mr Howes agreed to find out whether the land that the library is currently on can be kept by Surrey County Council.

**This question was received from Mrs P Marshall:**

If all or part of the Garibaldi land is sold to a private buyer what, in practical rather than legal terms, is to prevent that owner from enclosing it, or allowing it to become totally overgrown and derelict, a target for the dumping of rubbish and so a complete eyesore, inaccessible to the public who have always used it and whose only recourse is to the Courts?

**Mike Howes, Local Director for Woking, responded:**

There are no practical measures available to prevent any new owners of the Garibaldi Land from misusing their position by enclosing the land, by not maintaining the land or by allowing dumping on the land. The remedial actions available to members of the public and public authorities alike are legal measures to gain orders requiring that certain actions are taken or that others are not taken.

In response to a supplementary question received from Mr Marshall, Mike Howes agreed to find out if a deed under section 193 of the Law of Property Act applies to Garibaldi land.

65/04 **Written Member Questions** [Item 6]

**The following questions were received from Cllr Diana Smith:**

**Garibaldi land**

On 26 April 2004 this Committee accepted the report from Christine Holloway, then the Local Director, concerning the land at the Garibaldi Crossroads. One conclusion was:

“On the question of whether the land is manorial waste at present, despite strongly held views from some local residents that Surrey County Council should take action to investigate their claims, I do not feel that it is necessary or appropriate for Surrey County Council to spend public funds on this unless and until any action is considered which would be affected by the answer to the question. This would of course be the case if sale of the land were being considered, or transfer to the highways authority”

This Committee is now considering the dedication of a strip of this land to be public highway and the sale of some or all of the remainder.

In this event:

What inquiries will be made to establish the status of the land?  
What will the procedures be for making this investigation and reporting the results and their implications?  
What is likely to be the expense of this investigation?

**Mike Howes, Local Director for Woking, responded:**

All of the issues raised in the question are matters to be decided by the Estates Strategy Team within the County Council's Property Services. If land is to be sold, these staff will judge the merits of marketing that land on a caveat emptor basis, pointing to the possible existence of rights and obligations passing to any potential new owner, or with the benefit of a full legal history, and the effect of either course on the potential value of the land. Officers will, I imagine, outline their proposals for disposal to the Member Asset Panel in due course.

At present, the Member Asset Panel has agreed in principle that this site, amongst others, should be disposed of and have given the Local Committee the opportunity to comment. It is yet to be seen whether any comments are made by the Committee, whether any comments that are made affect the determination of the Member Asset Panel and whether the Executive approve any recommendation of the Member Asset Panel. All or any of these bodies may be influenced by Officer recommendations on investigating the legal status of the land and by any findings that might emerge.

### **Knaphill Library**

While it is not practical for SCC to take over the proposed premises for the new Knaphill Library before the present lease on the building runs out at the end of March, at what date before that can the residents of Knaphill reasonably hope to hear that firm contractual arrangements to lease the building have been made?

If firm arrangements can be made by this date, will it then be possible for the new library to be open before 18 July 2005, which is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the present library's opening in 'temporary' accommodation?

### **Chris Norris, Head of Libraries, responded:**

Chris Norris will provide a written response to Cllr Diana Smith by the end of October.

### **Executive Functions**

#### **66/04 Member Update on Lead Areas [Item 7]**

Mrs Compton circulated a briefing sheet, which updated the Committee about the Recruitment and Retention Task Group that has been established by the Adults and Community Care Select Committee and details about a stakeholder event for the Health and Social Care Plan.

#### **67/04 Garibaldi Land [Item 8]**

Mike Howes introduced the report. Since the report was written, it was reported that if the County Council Executive decided to sell the Garibaldi Land, then Woking Borough Council has offered to enter into discussions with the County Council to see if the land could be kept in public ownership.

Mrs Smith commented that there was a lot of public interest and a strong feeling of local ownership. It was noted that objections to selling the site had been received from the Open Spaces Society, the Ramblers Association and Local Borough Councillors.

Mrs Smith noted that as a result of the transfer of SCC countryside estate to Surrey Wildlife Trust, there are other areas of land like Garibaldi which need to be managed in some way. She would like the Executive to review the system of how land such as this should be looked after.

## **RESOLVED**

Woking Borough Council offered to enter into discussions about the possible transfer of Garibaldi land in the event that Surrey County Council was unable to retain ownership. The report was withdrawn.

### **68/04 Surrey Fire and Rescue Service Performance within Woking [Item 9]**

Charles Fairfull introduced the report which updated the Committee on the performance of Surrey Fire and Rescue Service in the Local Committee for Woking Area. It was noted that indicator 145b appeared low as staff from Woking Fire Station were making up shortfalls in other areas. In reality, Woking is not underperforming.

In response to a question from Mrs Compton, Mr Fairfull explained that simple advice about smoke detectors is provided in leaflets when they are fitted and is also available on the website.

Mr Rousell stated it would be useful to know how many households in Woking have smoke detectors fitted as this would give an idea about how much more funding was needed. Mr Fairfull agreed to find out and inform Mr Rousell.

The Chairman thanked the officer and complimented the service on their performance.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- (a) Note the performance of the Service within the Woking Borough Area;
- (b) Endorse the initiatives by the Service to reduce risk in the community, especially to the most vulnerable groups;
- (c) Endorse the initiatives by the Service to undertake collaboration/partnerships that may realise economies of scale or effort and influence behaviour in the Community; and
- (d) Recognise that, following evaluation of these initiatives, further funding may be required in order for them to be successfully implemented and request an approximation on the number of households with smoke detectors.

69/04 **The Library Service in Woking** [Item 11]

Rose Wilson introduced the report, which updated the Committee on the Library Service in Woking. The Library service has made a local response to the 'Framework for the Future' main themes of: books, reading and learning, digital citizenship, community and civic values, and building capacity to deliver transformation.

Mrs Compton complimented the service on the running of Woking Library and commented that a solution to Knaphill Library should be found quickly or an alternative be sought in the meantime. Rose Wilson explained that it was difficult to find an alternative, especially given the problems getting the current lease. Funding for the replacement library needs to be achieved within certain financial constraints. If new premises were to be taken over before the end of the current lease, costs would be increased and would affect the end quality of the Library.

Mrs Smith advised people not to prejudice the new library and be more patient. Mrs Smith also commented that Ash Library had been fully refurbished and has a terminal for booking in and out your own library books. She asked whether this would be available to extend opening hours. Rose Wilson replied that these terminals have been set up as pilots to see if opening hours could be extended, and it was hoped that a similar set up could be applied at the new Knaphill Library.

In response to a question from Mr Rousell about the profile of the Library service in ten years, Rose Wilson replied that she thought the stock would be arranged differently with the promotion of reading material following the lead given by book shops. Online services would be promoted and a proactive approach to marketing would have to be taken. Children services will increase in importance. At present income is made from loans of DVD and videos. Alternative sources of income will need to be found in the future as broadband in peoples homes begin to replace the need for DVDs and videos.

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- (i) Note the range of service developments in Woking; and
- (ii) Advise the Library Service of the future range of service developments in Woking in response to "Framework for the Future.

**70/04 Surrey Trading Standards Annual Report [Item 12]**

Richard Nowacki introduced the report, which updated the Committee on the service provided by Trading Standards in Woking during 2003/04 and provided a snapshot of their plans for 2004/05.

Mrs Smith suggested that Trading Standards could work closer with Community Associations and get information out in their newsletters. Mr Nowacki commented that they do work with neighbourhood watch and would welcome any further contacts.

Regarding underage sales, Mr Nowacki asked Committee Members to let Trading Standards know if they knew of any premises that they felt required investigation.

Mr Marlow commented that it was a shame that only 51% of people interviewed knew of the service, given their excellent work. If there was anything that the Local Committee could do to help, then they should just ask.

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee note the report, congratulate the service and:

- (i) Agree to help Trading Standards to combat the menace of 'uninvited workmen' preying on the elderly by encouraging other agencies to carry our campaign material; and
- (ii) Agree to encourage other agencies/individuals to pass any information to Trading Standards which may prevent the sale of age restricted goods to underage teenagers

**71/04 Planning and Countryside Annual Report [Item 10]**

Geoff Glassup introduced the report which looked at the planning and development issues and countryside and heritage issues for the year ending 31 March 2004.

It was noted that the Structure Plan would be going to the County Council for approval on 19 October 2004.

In relation to a question on parking related to development mentioned in paragraph 4.2, it was noted that the service are trying to reduce reliance on the private car, but this will only happen over a long timescale. The number of parking spaces needed for a development is worked out in part by seeing existing local need and comparing this to what the developer is proposing.

In relation to the £2million referred to in paragraph 4.2, this money was spent on:



- A canopy over Woking Station forecourt
- Dedication of land next to Victoria Arch for a future tunnel
- A contribution to funds for the tunnel
- Creation of a footway/cycleway around the current new development
- Environmental improvements.

In response to a question from Mrs Smith on improved signage and access to heathland in the west of Woking, Mr Glassup agreed to report back to Mrs Smith.

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee note the report and congratulate the service on their performance.

**72/04 New Local Standing Orders [Item 13]**

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee agree to adopt the arrangements set out in the report for handling questions from the public and petitions and, specifically:

- (i) that formal public questions are accepted up to 12.00 noon two working days before the day of the meeting;
- (ii) that the Committee will accept up to six written public questions on the general agenda and up to six written public questions on the transportation agenda; and
- (iii) that the Committee will accept a petitions containing 50 or more signatures, although in exceptional circumstances the Chairman may use his discretion to accept petitions with fewer signatures in cases where it would not be appropriate to get 50 signatures, for example where a proposed scheme affects fewer than 50 properties.

**73/04 Allocating Local Committee Funding: Members' Allocation [Item 14]**

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee agree the following allocations:

- Woking Bowls Club - £2000
- Drugs Education in Woking - £1300
- Goldsworth Care - £400

Draft minutes to be agreed on 19 January 2005

It was further agreed that money left over from the allocation to Brookwood Memorial Hall after new windows had been installed could be used to replace the floor of the stage at the Hall.

**74/04 Local Committee Forward Programme [Item 15]**

Approved as in the report.

**75/04 Exclusion of the Press and Public [Item 16]**

There was no business that involved the likely disclosure of exempt information and thus required the public to be excluded from the meeting under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972.

[The meeting ended at 5.45 pm]

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Chairman