



**LOCAL COMMITTEE
(WOKING)**

WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS

7 July 2010

1. Question from: Richard Hennessy

Residents are very concerned at the traffic volumes and speeds along Park Road, and the impact on daily environmental health. Speedwatch volunteers have been in operation for 21 months and reported over 1,400 vehicles travelling at excessive speeds. Park Road has been designated as an area of Special Residential Character, but this is being eroded by the traffic. We believe the situation has been made worse by the extension of the CPZ to the whole of Park Road, increased numbers of houses locally and traffic calming and roads works in White Rose Lane. Park Road is increasingly being used as a rat run which creates additional problems.

The Department of Transport is encouraging the greater use of 20mph speed limit and zones. We would be happy for such a scheme to be trialed in Park Road with the aim of bringing down speeds and the noise pollution.

Please could you let us know what action can be taken to reduce the speed of vehicles travelling along Park Road?

Whilst not in the remit of the local committee, the Chairman has asked an officer who has given the following response:

With regard to the designation of the road as an area of Special Residential Character, I am presuming that this refers to Woking Borough Council's supplemental planning guidance from April 2000. If so, it would appear that

areas to the north and south of Park Road are included but not the road itself. However, as a Highway Authority we do not apply such descriptions to roads.

Although I was not directly involved in the scheme to extend the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) along Park Road, I am aware that the original intention was to introduce double yellow lines through the bends at the Ivy Lane junction to remove the danger caused by parking there. I am also aware that there was a considerable amount of correspondence between my former colleague and you and your fellow residents about this before the option of extending the CPZ was progressed.

The County Council's Parking Strategy and Implementation Group now deal with parking issues and I will forward your letter and this response on to them for your proposal to remove the CPZ to be considered. Reviews of waiting restrictions in an area are now undertaken once a year and because the most recent review was reported to Local Committee in February this year, it will be some time before changes in Park Road can be considered.

We have no plans to introduce traffic calming along Park Road. Our records indicate that there have been no recorded personal injury collisions along the road in the last 3 years and based on this, it is unlikely that traffic calming would be proposed. For a number of years now, our budgets have been limited and have been used with the aim of casualty reduction. We have no budget this year and not likely to have a budget for improvement work such as traffic calming, pedestrian crossings etc, for the next 4 years or so. In this regard, some on-street parking might be a more realistic option, even though I can foresee there being as much correspondence and contention involved in the reintroduction of parking as there was in its removal.

Our speed limit policy is currently under review.

Unfortunately, neither a yellow box junction, nor a KEEP CLEAR marking could be provided in Maybury Hill to ease the flow of traffic out of Park Road. These markings are only to be used adjacent to the side road to allow traffic to turn right from the major road into the side road or from the side road into the major road. They are not to be used opposite a side road.

2. Question from: Cllr Anne- Marie Barker, Woking Borough Council

Following the recent serious accident at the junction of Arthurs' Bridge Road / Well Lane and Lockfield Drive in Horsell will the Highways Department undertake a safety audit in order to see if safety can be improved on this important route to and from Horsell.

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee

Unfortunately, we do not have the full details of the incident that took place on 28 June 2010, assuming that this is the one referred to by Councillor Barker, although we have had initial discussions with Surrey Police about it.

The signal phasing does not permit conflicting flows of traffic and if drivers drive with due care and attention, abide by the traffic signals and the prohibited manoeuvres at the junction, no collisions should occur.

That having been said, we will discuss the junction and the collisions that have occurred there, at the Casualty Reduction Working Group on 21 July and will speak with our colleagues who deal with traffic signals.

Safety Audits are only undertaken on designs for proposed schemes and afterwards when those new schemes have been introduced. They are not undertaken following all road traffic collisions. However, if the collision results in a fatality an assessment of various aspects of the location, such as the condition of the carriageway, for instance, is undertaken. However, this is a significantly different assessment to the formal Road Safety Audits for designs and implemented schemes mentioned earlier, which consider the likely effects of the scheme and any potential problems that it may cause. No safety audit is proposed for this junction, although it will be discussed, as stated above.

3. Question from Ms Sandra Manton

Why have the bollards in Warbury Lane been re-instated with like for like, (bearing in mind the last two sets in this format were knocked down within 24 hours of being erected), all of the new sets have been knocked down. I thought it had been agreed that the first set of bollards outside Ringlestone Farm were to be of sterner material so they could not be knocked down so easily. Half way up the hill of the one-way section where one of the bollards has been taken right out of the ground there is a massive hole which many drivers have gone down and burst their tyres. The white lines and arrows agreed for the safety of motorists on the two way section of Warbury Lane and Chobham Road still have not been done. There have been two accidents here in the last four weeks.

I am very grateful for the bollards being re-placed as when all bollards were there, the traffic flow was much safer for walkers, cyclist and horse riders and the cottages at the top of Warbury Lane. This is because the larger vans and lorries who use this as a rat-run could not come down the road, and the ones that did were slower. It saddens me that, as resources are so limited, they have not been done cost effectively and long lasting.

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee

The bollards in Warbury Lane have not all been replaced like for like, as a visual inspection clearly shows. Although we acknowledge that most of the

bollards have been hit and have received varying degrees of damage, not all of them have been knocked down. The first and last sets of bollards ie outside Ringlestone Farm and close to Hill Place Farm, were replaced with steel-cored posts, which are specifically intended for this type of use. They were installed correctly, but even so, they have suffered much more damage than was expected. The damage to the outer casing was envisaged but the steel cores have suffered heavy, deliberate and sustained damage.

The sets of bollards in the middle were replaced like for like and two have been sheared off at the base.

Given the funding that was available, the use of these steel cored bollards was cost effective because all other affordable and suitable types of bollards would not have been able to withstand the abuse and damage that these have. A more robust scheme could possibly be put in but not with the available maintenance budget. A scheme involving kerbs and square section steel posts, similar to those used in Chertsey Road and Oyster Lane, Byfleet might be feasible but this would constitute an item in its own right within our Integrated Transport Scheme programme. Warbury Lane currently sits 33rd on that list of 48 schemes. We currently have no funding for this programme and do not expect to receive any for the next 4 years or so. When funding is made available again, the items on the programme will need to be reassessed and Warbury Lane's position within the programme may change. This matter will also be discussed with the Surrey Heath Local Committee in greater detail when the Warbury Lane item is reach on our Integrated Transport Programme due to the proximity with the Surrey Heath border.

The order for the lining work was placed with our contractor and although some initial vegetation clearance work was undertaken by our community gang to allow the lining in the one-way section to be done, our contractor has not yet done the work. We have chased this work and will continue to do so. We also need to carry out a heavy flail along the one-way section, which will require a temporary road closure and we will endeavour to get the lining work done at the same time.

4. Question from Ms Louise Morales

Could I ask the committee if there could be a lower rate for a skip hire licence for voluntary organisation/ short periods of hire or those that are not needing inspection, with a higher charge if site visits are needed as elsewhere in the country?

I need a skip for only 2 hours, parked on unused grass at the end of our road - which belongs to highways and is licenced by SCC for up to 28 days. For this licence in Surrey I need to pay £123.75. Virtually all of the others outside of London charge less than £40, several are only £10!

Could you take the time to compare the cost of a skip licence in other areas?

Are we really that much more inefficient than all the other councils in the country? Or is Surrey just taxing residents associations who want to tidy up their own street?

Whilst not in the remit of the local committee, the Chairman has asked an officer who has given the following response:

A lower rate for skip hire licences for particular groups would entail a fundamental review of how the fees and charges are derived and a change in county council policy. This is not under the remit of the Local Committee and would need to be considered by Cabinet. Advice on how to do this is set out on the following web page

http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/sccwebsite/sccwspages.nsf/LookupWebPagesByTITLE_RTF/Have+your+say+-+Asking+questions+at+Cabinet+and+Committee+meetings?opendocument

Alternatively please speak to your local county councillor.

A cost review has recently taken place to look at licence charges for skips to be placed on the highway to ensure that they reflect the actual cost involved in administering and enforcing licenses. This included looking at charges set by other authorities and the new costs will bring us more in line.

5. Question from Mr Tim Keeping, Chairman of the Woking Town Centre Partnership

I write in my capacity as Chairman of the Woking Town Centre Partnership. At a recent board meeting it was noted that the planned repairs and improvement works to Commercial Way by Surrey County Council were no longer proceeding. It was felt by all partners present that the poor state of repair of this area has a seriously detrimental effect on the experience of the town centre visitor and is presenting a significant barrier to attracting new business to the town.

This was further reinforced by focus group research carried out on behalf of the Partnership to seek to understand the views of Woking residents who do not currently see their local town centre as a place to visit, shop and spend leisure time. Unsolicited comments on the public realm in Commercial Way include "Smelly and to be avoided", "intimidating".

As many of the partners in the Town Centre Partnership continue to invest and improve the appearance and attractiveness of Woking as a place to visit, I would urge the County Council to reconsider the decision to cancel these works and play a part in giving the residents and visitors to Woking a town centre to be proud of.

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee

From a highway perspective the County Council had proposals, linked with the Cycle Woking Project, to remove two of the damaged tree planters in

Commercial Way and it is assumed that Mr Keeping's question relates to these proposals. Removal of the planters, along with other associated works, were estimated to cost approximately £50,000 and were due to be funded by surplus revenue raised from the Borough Council operated Controlled Parking Zone during 2009/10. Unfortunately much of this money was allocated to cover other costs and Members of the Local Committee were asked to prioritise schemes in the Cycle Woking programme. Members decided that the Commercial Way scheme should be deferred and recent cuts in funding mean that we are unlikely to be in a position to undertake these works for the foreseeable future.

Surrey Highways do have a commitment to make safe any highway defects that are reported to us in Commercial Way and we do undertake works as and when they are identified. Limited budgets limit the scope of works that can be undertaken from our maintenance money resulting in functional repairs such as replaced cracked paving slabs with tarmacadam.

The developer led Gateway Project involving redevelopment of Albion House and the Commercial Way frontage would resolve many of the issues although it is assumed the current economic climate will dictate when this development takes place.

Comment from Woking Borough Council:

The focus group comments are interesting and undoubtedly influenced by the selected participants who we understand were not necessarily a wide cross section of Woking residents. Licenced facilities are provided currently by Woking Borough Council within Commercial Way and continue to be in demand to serve a further cross section of our Town Centre workers and residents. In the future and subject to development proposals, improvements will undoubtedly be made to the facilities provided in the Commercial Way area.