

CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Decision:

Petition1 – River Ash Action Group

(i) Details of decision

That the response, attached as Appendix 1, be approved.

(ii) Reasons for decision

To respond to the petition

(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected

None

(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report

Also, in attendance: Mrs Denise Saliagopoulos, local Member for Staines.

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding confirmed that OFWAT was the regulatory authority for Thames Water.

He also requested that officers obtained a copy of the protocol from the Environment Agency and that he would confirm outside the meeting whether Surrey County Council was a signatory to it.

He advised the petitioner that Surrey County Council would be publishing the Surrey Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in December 2014.

He agreed to respond to any further emails from the petitioner, following this meeting.

The petitioner and Mrs Saliagopoulos referred to a protocol commissioned by Runnymede and Spelthorne Borough Councils, following the 2003 flooding – the Cabinet Member requested that officers obtain a copy of this document.

Finally, it was suggested that the action group contacted local MPs to alert them to their issues and concerns.

Conflicts of Interest and any Dispensations Granted

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded and any dispensations granted by the Audit and Governance Committee)

None

Decision taken by:

(i) **Name:** John Furey

(ii) **Portfolio:** Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding

Date of Decision: 12 November 2014

Date of Publication of Record of Decision: 13 November 2014

Decision:

Petition 2 – Road Safety Campaign outside Sandcross School in Woodhatch

(i) Details of decision

That the response, attached as Appendix 2, be approved.

(ii) Reasons for decision

To respond to the petition

(iii) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected

None

(iv) Details of any consultation and representations received not included in the published report

That the petition and the response be considered at the next available Reigate and Banstead Local Committee meeting and details of the Local Community Partnership and Committee Officer were given to the petitioner.

Also, a site visit was being arranged.

The petitioner was advised to contact the Headteacher of Sandcross Primary School to obtain a copy of the school's travel plan.

Conflicts of Interest and any Dispensations Granted

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded and any dispensations granted by the Audit and Governance Committee)

None

Decision taken by:

(i) Name: John Furey

(ii) Portfolio: Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding

Date of Decision: 12 November 2014

Date of Publication of Record of Decision: 13 November 2014

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND FLOODING

Wednesday 12 November 2014

RESPONSE TO PETITION CONCERNING RIVER ASH ACTION GROUP

The Petition

It states: 'In February 2014 dozens of houses around the River Ash were flooded, when flood water spilled into it from the Thames Water Aqueduct. The Thames Water Aqueduct carried flood water away from a remote, relatively unpopulated area into a residential part of Staines upon Thames. This was a repetition of a smaller incident that happened in 2003. Over 500 homes in Staines upon Thames are at risk of flooding if such floodwater is not contained in the Thames Water Aqueduct.

A. On 10 February 2014, Surrey County Council was party to a decision to ask residents in the area around the River Ash to evacuate their homes. It was also party to a decision to order Thames Water to close a sluice gate on their aqueduct on 12 February 2014 in accordance with a pre-existing Protocol to prevent flooding in the area. We believe such decisions should be carefully made and clearly documented.

The County Council should account for:

- (i) what factors were taken into account when these decisions were made?
- (ii) why were emergency measures not taken to contain the flood water in the aqueduct before residents were flooded on 11 February 2014?
- (iii) Why did it take until 12 February 2014 before the formal order to close the sluice gate was given to Thames Water by Surrey Gold Control?

B. The Flooding was caused by flood water spilling out from a facility wholly owned and operated by Thames Water. The subsequent costs to the community have so far been absorbed by local residents and local and national taxpayers. Surrey County Council should seek to recover that proportion of the public cost of dealing with the February 2014 floods that is attributable to Thames Water, taking legal action to recover these costs if necessary.

C. Surrey County Council should formally support 'passive' measures to prevent flood water spilling out of the Thames Water Aqueduct in the future. Preventative measures should not rely on mechanical infrastructure such as pumps and sluice gates but should be based upon substantial physical barriers to prevent flood water spilling into the River Ash in any circumstances.

Submitted by Mr Martin Cherrett

Signatures: 109

Response

Item A

The resident's petition refers to 'Surrey Gold Control' this is old terminology for the Surrey Strategic Coordinating Group, but is still used by some officers from the Surrey Partnership. The Surrey Strategic Coordinating Group, chaired by the Police, was established to oversee the arrangements for the response to the flooding. This is in line with the Surrey Major

Incident Plan and supports the national arrangements and supported the national reporting into COBRA.

The purpose of the Strategic level of management is to establish a framework of policy within which the Tactical Commanders (Silver) will work. They give consideration to the provision of resources and prioritisation of demands from the Tactical Commanders.

The key issues for consideration by the Strategic Coordinating Group are:

- Agree strategic aims and objectives in responding to the incident
- Determine policy for implementation by Silver Commander(s)
- Assess and arrange for adequate resources
- Prioritise allocation of resources to Silver Commander(s)
- Implement adequate financial controls;
- Act as an interface with Regional & National Government
- Liaise with neighbouring police forces or regional partner agencies
- Coordinate communications internally and to the public
- Provide liaison with the media at a strategic level.

Membership of the SCG will vary according to the scale and nature of the incident. It must remain a strategic decision making body, and each representative must have executive level decision making authority on behalf of their organisation. During the flooding the Strategic Coordination Group consisted of Emergency Services, Local Authorities (Borough and County Council), Health Partners, Environment Agency and other partners.

On the 9th and 10th of February the Surrey County Council Duty Director did attend the Surrey Strategic Coordinating group where there was a discussion regarding evacuation of areas covered by the Severe Flood Warnings that had been issued by the Environment Agency. The decision was made that those residents in the Severe Flood Warning and Flood Warning areas should be made aware of the risk and advised to make arrangements to evacuate, this was not specific to the area around the River Ash. The decision was made as 9 Severe Flood warnings had been issued for the area and as a Severe Flood Warning indicates a risk to life the Strategic Coordinating Group gave this direction to coordinate evacuees.

As with any incident, officers from organisations including Surrey Police and Surrey Fire and Rescue Service who are trained in dynamic risk assessment and who are working on the ground, would undertake actions relating to public safety on their own account if a risk was identified locally. It would not be expected that if such a risk was identified that there would be a need to refer to the Strategic Coordinating Group for a decision to undertake actions in this scenario.

From the Email trail we have been given by Thames Water, the conversation regarding the activation of the Sluice Gate was between Thames Water and the Environment Agency Representative at the Strategic Coordinating Group, not the Surrey County Council Representative at the Strategic Coordinating Group. The Surrey County Council Representative was not part of a decision for the operation of the sluice gate as they are not part of the protocol for the River Ash. The sluice gate is owned and managed by Thames Water and is not part of Surrey County Council's water management assets.

Item B

As part of Surrey's Flood Risk Management Strategy, which is in line with the National Strategy, the County works with all authorities and organisations through the Surrey Flood Risk Partnership Board. In this context the Council will discuss with Thames Water their response to the concerns expressed by local residents and give consideration to any appropriate action it might take.

Item C

As a Lead Local Flood Risk authority, Surrey County Council is generally supportive of any measures that reduce the risk of flooding in the county. The County Council works with all organisations and authorities with risk management responsibilities through the Surrey Flood Risk Partnership Board. As part of the County's approach to flooding, we have to be certain that in preventing flooding at one location we are not moving that flooding to another location.

The proposed new modelling by the Environment Agency and the proposed changes to the Environment Agency's and Thames Water's protocol for the operation of the sluice gate will enable a better understanding of the risks at the site and any potential works that may be required.

Mr John Furey
Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding
12 November 2014

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND FLOODING

Wednesday 12 November 2014

RESPONSE TO PETITION CONCERNING A ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGN OUTSIDE THE SANDCROSS SCHOOL, WOODHATCH

The Petition

It states: 'We are sending you this petition for road safety campaign outside the Sandcross School in Woodhatch. We have tried to call, send emails, asked and begged for help but it falls on deaf ears. What will it take before action takes place, a child to be hurt or even killed? Ever since the 2 Sandcross schools have been put on 1 site nothing has been done to aid the issues with road safety.

We need the parking laws to be enforced as many people are parking either on double yellow lines or parking on the pavement not leaving room for people to walk on the path. People are also stopping just before railings and allowing kids to jump out of cars thus blocking the road and causing congestion.

We need the crossing to be put in correctly with a drop curb allowing disabled access and ease for buggies and the kids with scooters. A drain is desperately needed because when it rains there is a huge puddle at the crossing and people drive through the puddles and splash people walking on the path. Also, the kids are having to spend the day with wet feet as they have to walk through the puddle to get to the path. The railings along the path must be extended for the safety of the children.

As for the speed limit, why on earth have we not got a 20 mile speed restriction, this is an infant and primary school It is so dangerous as some drivers go far too fast and a child will get seriously hurt if not killed. Is that what is needed before you do anything about it?

Other schools in the area have had restrictions put in place yet this school has nothing. Why is it at other schools such as Reigate, secondary kids had to get seriously hurt and killed before you do anything about road safety, many children have been hurt please do not allow this to happen to such small children at the Sandcross school.

We have approached the school however they are unable to do anything about the issues as its outside their school premises, and it is down to Surrey County Council.

There have been so many near misses where children or even adults have been nearly hit by vehicles, including the lollipop lady as so many people flout the laws.

Please do not ignore these concerns as they are shared by all that have signed the petition for road safety.

We look forward to your speedy reply and quick actions to get the issues resolved as soon as possible.

We hereby submit the signed petition asking Surrey County Council to make safe the roads and pathways around Sandcross School, we are requesting that the following is dealt with as soon as possible:

- Barriers to be extended
- Reduce the speed limit to 20mph during school times
- Drain to be put in place at the crossing as huge puddle occurs when it is wet
- Drop the curb at crossing to allow disabled access to crossing and ease for buggies
- Better enforcement of the road laws and parking laws

Submitted by Mrs Joanne Breeden-West

Signatures: 532

Response

Sandcross School is located in Sandcross Lane, Reigate at the junction with Whitehall Lane. Sandcross Lane is a 30mph road and forms part of a bus route. There are School warning signs with flashing wig-wag lights to warn of the operation of a school crossing patrol in place on both approaches to the school. Pedestrian guard railing has been provided by the pedestrian entrance and opposite Allingham Road. There are School Keep Clear restrictions in Sandcross Lane outside the school entrance and some double yellow line waiting restrictions.

The County has recently approved a Road Safety Outside Schools policy. The policy sets out an assessment process, led by the Sustainable Transport Team, which involves the school, the divisional Member, the Area Team engineers, Road Safety Team engineers and Police road safety officers. Following the assessment, a report will be produced which will include recommendations on potential road safety education and/or highway improvements measures that could be implemented, subject to the allocation of funding. This report will be presented to the relevant Local Committee Chairman, Vice-Chairman and divisional Member and to the school. The Local Committee will then need to decide whether to include any proposals for highway improvements on their Integrated Transport Schemes forward programme and allocate funding for design and implementation. A copy of the Road Safety Outside Schools Policy is attached to this response as **Annex 1**.

It is proposed that the Sustainable Transport Team be asked to investigate road safety outside Sandcross School in accordance with the Road Safety Outside Schools policy later this financial year. This would highlight anything that the school may be able to undertake (such as "Park SMART" or walking buses) that may help to alleviate the situation alongside any additional highway measures that are considered necessary. The petitioners request for a 20mph speed limit during school times would be considered as part of this assessment. To help inform the consideration of a reduced speed limit, it is proposed to carry out speed surveys in advance of the assessment. This would need to be funded through the Reigate and Banstead's Local Committee's revenue budget.

The lack of dropped kerbs and the drainage issue has already been identified as part of the School Crossing Patrol assessment carried out earlier this year. It is proposed that Reigate and Banstead Local Committee be asked to agree to allocate funding from the Local Committee's Small Safety Scheme budget to enable the provision of dropped kerbs and drainage works to be progressed this financial year.

The petition does not specify how far it is considered the pedestrian guard railing should be extended. Department for Transport guidance on pedestrian guard railing recommends that it should be installed only where it is considered absolutely necessary to ensure safety. It is proposed that officers meet on site with the petitioner and a representative from the school to discuss the request. If additional guard railing is considered necessary to ensure pedestrian safety, the Reigate and Banstead Local Committee will need to agree to allocate funding from the Local Committee's Small Safety Scheme budget to enable the work to be carried out.

In terms of parking enforcement, Reigate and Banstead Council and Surrey Police have formed a Joint Enforcement Team (JET) in the borough to better tackle antisocial and dangerous parking. The JET team consists of Police Officers, PCSO's and Civil Enforcement Officers. The team have commenced regular visits to Sandcross School and have issued a number of Penalty Charge Notices for parking offences. Whilst the team cannot be outside every school in the borough twice a day to monitor the school run, Sandcross School has been prioritised for enforcement in future months. The team will work with the school and county council to help identify any safety improvements. Any changes to parking restrictions can be taken forward as part of the Borough's 2015 Parking Review.

Mr John Furey
Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding
12 November 2014