

DRAFT

Minutes of the meeting of the
Woking JOINT COMMITTEE
held at 6.00 pm on 9 March 2016
at Woking Borough Council Civic Offices, Gloucester Square, Woking GU21
6YL.

Surrey County Council Members:

- Mrs Liz Bowes (Chairman)
- * Mr Ben Carasco
- * Mr Will Forster
- * Mrs Linda Kemeny
- * Mr Saj Hussain
- * Mr Colin Kemp
- * Mr Richard Wilson

Borough / District Members:

- * Cllr Ken Howard
- * Cllr Beryl Hunwicks
- * Cllr John Kingsbury (Vice-Chairman)
- * Cllr Kevin Davis
- * Cllr Anne Roberts
- * Cllr Carl Thomson
- * Cllr Graham Chrystie

* In attendance

Notes from Open Public Questions

1/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Mrs Liz Bowes gave apologies for absence.

2/16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING [Item 2]

The minutes from the last meeting held on 2 December 2015 were agreed and signed.

3/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

Cllr Chrystie and Mrs Kemeny declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 7 as they are both Independent Trustees of WAVS.

4/16 PETITIONS [Item 4]

No petitions were received.

5/16 WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 5]

Two public questions were received and tabled. A copy of the questions and answers are annexed to these minutes. The supplementary questions and responses are set out below:

Question 1:

In response to Mrs Meinke it was noted that overhanging vegetation can grow very quickly in the spring/summer and the committee would welcome residents reporting issues via the Surrey County Council website.

Question 2:

A supplementary question from Mrs Allen regarding the criteria for red light cameras was asked by Mr Kemp on her behalf. Mr Kemp also raised the issue of the length of time of the blackout on the sequence and whether this could be reduced or taken out. It was agreed that a written response would be sent to Mrs Allen after the meeting.

6/16 WRITTEN MEMBER QUESTIONS [Item 6]

Five member questions were received and tabled and are annexed to these minutes. The supplementary questions and responses are set out below:

Question 1:

Cllr Lawrence explained that he was not asking for the priority to be changed, but believed that the junction was too narrow and pedestrian access was not good. He would like an officer to look at the junctions to see how they could work better.

Andrew Milne responded by saying that he was aware of the comments on the junctions, including those asking for the priorities to be changed. At the moment there are no grounds to amend the junction, but officers appreciate the situation and will keep monitoring it, and noted that it might be appropriate to review the junctions in light of any further development in the area.

Question 2:

Mr Forster suggested that Prey Heath Road should be treated differently as it has a mainline station on it. In response it was noted that the accident record along the road was very good. Officers need to understand the full reason for any accidents and need to take into account a lot of different factors when putting forward suggested improvements.

Question 3:

In response to a question regarding why this funding did not go through the Joint Committee for prioritisation, it was noted that the maintenance budget is managed centrally to ensure a consistent service for highway users across the county. If members are aware of any particular crossings that are now causing congestion following works then they are encouraged to report them to see whether any amendments are necessary.

Question 4:

In response to a supplementary question, it was noted that the level of spending set out within the target was not credible with the current budget available to the committee.

7/16 VOLUNTEERING IN WOKING [Item 7]

Cllr Chrystie and Mrs Kemeny declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item as they are both Independent Trustees of WAVS.

Rhea Newman from Surrey County Council, Sue Barham from Woking Borough Council and Sylvie Marshall from Woking Association of Voluntary Service (WAVS) gave an update to the committee on how the three organisations are working together to support volunteering in Woking.

During the presentation it was noted that:

- There are 340 active volunteering opportunities in Woking – both one off and ongoing
- In the previous 9 months there were 804 referrals with 260 volunteers placed.
- Referrals are already being received from the Bedser Hub at the Woking Community Hospital.
- Timebanking in Woking has just gone live and two volunteers are already in place to help administer the scheme. It is anticipated that Timebanking will work across the board, regardless of age of volunteers.
- Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council offer volunteering days for staff, and will look for any joint opportunities for their staff.

Public comments:

- Horsell Residents Association are grateful for the services of WAVS. It was noted that interests.me allows small groups and organisations to manage newsletters and was a very useful site.

Member comments:

- The Councils are keen to be acknowledged for what is put back into Surrey through volunteering. It was agreed that the Surrey County Council Volunteering Strategy would be circulated to all members of the committee.
- Surrey is exploring the role of volunteers in supporting children and families, and has just started some initial work looking at where volunteers can support children with special educational needs and disabilities. There is also work underway looking at supporting more young people to volunteer and this will include the promotion of Timebanks as one channel for young people to volunteer as well as other initiatives such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.
- Following a placement, a volunteer from WAVS will contact the organisation and the volunteer two months after the placement started. After this period 90% of volunteers are still in place which is very positive.
- The role of the part time funding advisor at WAVS was welcomed. It was noted that she is also able to support organisations with business plans if required.

To conclude it was noted that volunteering will become increasingly important and is closely linked to the health and wellbeing agenda around social isolation and loneliness.

Members thanked officers for their presentation.

8/16 HIGHWAYS UPDATE [Item 8]

Andrew Milne introduced the report which updated the committee on highway schemes within the borough. It was confirmed that the revenue budget for next year would be the same as this year, but there would be a £31k reduction in capital funding. Members noted that the crossings set out in table 5a are not listed in priority order.

Member comments:

- Members may wish to relook at the agreed programme for 2016/17 as the costings become clearer.
- The parking surplus for this year and last year has been used to support the programme of works agreed by committee. The use of these monies is agreed each year. Officers agreed to check whether any of the parking surplus to date was spent on damaged verges and update members outside the meeting.
- An update for members on Operation Horizon was expected in April.

RESOLVED

Woking Joint Committee agreed to:

- (i) Note the progress with ITS highways and developer funded schemes, and revenue funded works for the 2015/16 financial year
- (ii) Note progress with budget expenditure
- (iii) Note that a further Highways Update will be brought to the next meeting of this Committee.

9/16 WOKING TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT ANNUAL REPORT [Item 9]

Geoff McManus introduced the report which set out an update on works related to the Town Centre Management Agreement. The report also set out proposed additional areas of closer working between the county and the borough which would benefit residents. This additional work would not affect the current Joint Committee budgets, and accountability would stay with the County Council.

Member comments:

- The report was welcomed and the benefits of co-operation were clearly demonstrated.
- The work around the town centre is recognised a blue print for possible double devolution.

RESOLVED

Woking Joint Committee agreed to note the report and support the proposals for officers to work more closely providing maintenance functions across the Borough.

10/16 2015/16 WOKING PARKING REVIEW UPDATE [Item 10]

David Curl introduced the report which updated the committee on the Parking Review and also sought agreement for proposals in Portugal Road. It is

anticipated that objections to the advertisements will be resolved in April, with implementation of the parking bays likely in June/July 2016. Portugal Road was omitted from the report in December 2015 and therefore members' approval was sought. The report also provided an update on parking outside Winston Churchill School.

Public comments:

- Regarding parking outside Winston Churchill School it was noted that there were no road markings promoting safety for children that were operational in the morning. The issue is worse in the afternoon as parents wait for their children. One fifth of the pupils at the school are only 11 years old.

Member comments:

- Regarding Winston Churchill School, Members supported officers' views and agreed that they should continue to monitor the situation but no action was required at the present time. Even if double yellow lines were installed it is still permissible to wait for short periods of time. Mrs Kemeny agreed to speak to the Chair of Governors at the school to see if they or the children are concerned about the safety in this area outside the school. Mr Bennett would be kept updated.
- A further issue of cars stopping in Amstell Way on a solid white line at pick up time was raised. Officers would monitor this situation.

RESOLVED

The Woking Joint Committee agreed that:

- (i) The proposed amendments to on-street parking restrictions in Portugal Road as shown on drawing 3282_20076 in annex A are agreed and included in the 2015/16 parking review.

11/16 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND SURREY TRADING STANDARDS WORK IN WOKING - 2014/15 [Item 11]

Claire Taylor introduced the report which updated the committee on Trading Standards activity in the Borough. It was noted that the joint service with Buckinghamshire County Council was going well and has resulted in a greater pool of resources and expertise to take forward the work.

Member comments:

- Petroleum issues tend to be around the amount of petrol being dispensed and the price of petrol at the pump. Further details would be provided to members outside the meeting.
- Underage sales test purchasing is intelligence based. Further information on follow up following a failed test purchase would be circulated to members outside of the meeting.
- Promotion of TS Alerts to the wider public was discussed. Officers agreed to find out how it is promoted and whether more can be done to encourage residents associations etc to sign up.
- Trading Standards have good links with the Fire Service over electrical products and illegal tobacco.
- Regarding nuisance calls the telephone preference service is an option. There is also a project with True Call where a device can be fitted to the

phone to block unknown calls. A project is being trialled in Mole Valley to place these in peoples homes.

The Chairman thanked Claire for the report.

RESOLVED

Woking Joint Committee agreed to note:

- (i) The content of the report and provide feedback to help us enhance our understanding of, and response to local needs and issues.

12/16 SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS PROGRESS REPORT [Item 12]

Sarah Akerman and Rebecca Harrison introduced the report which updated the committee on active school travel plans in Woking.

Member comments:

Members were surprised that there were only nine active school travel plans and were keen to explore what was happening in other schools in Woking. Officers explained that the team was initially focussing on schools that are expanding, but are offering a package of measures to other schools as well. Members recognised that a number of schools in the borough do have travel plans, they are just not documented in the same way or to the same level.

There is a countywide issue with the recruitment of crossing patrol staff. There is currently a vacancy being advertised at St Hugh of Lincoln, but as yet it has not been filled.

With regard to monitoring the success and impact of travel plans on reducing congestion, officers explained that the first phase of travel plans was in the process of being monitored and it is anticipated that more tangible data on the impact would be available next year. Travel Plans are hard to enforce, but implementation will be linked back to planning conditions.

Some schools were more difficult to engage with than others, and members offered to help officers where this was an issue locally.

Woking Borough Council has considered Supplementary Planning Policy around school transport, but it was agreed that it was not appropriate as each school has unique circumstances. Planning Officers will continue to work with schools on measures appropriate for their circumstances.

Members wanted to see a list of all schools in Woking (including state schools, free schools, academies and independent schools if possible) stating when they last had a school travel plan. They would like to further explore how the number of schools with active School Travel Plans could be increased and how the committee could help make this happen, whether this was through contact with the schools, interactions with parents and the PTA or through possible Members Allocation funding for cycle racks etc.

Officers commented that the Sustainable Transport Team is focused on county schools, and would be required to charge independent schools and academies for their service.

It was noted that the Member Reference Group looking at school travel plans were due to meet shortly to look at some of the issues raised.

RESOLVED

Woking Joint Committee agreed to note:

- (i) School Travel Plans (Woking) - Progress Report.

13/16 SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE [Item 13]

Cllr Hunwicks introduced the report which updated the committee on the work of the two sub-committees covering Community Safety and Health and Wellbeing.

Member comments:

- Links between the local and the countywide Health and Wellbeing Boards, including the dissemination of information, needs to be considered going forward.
- Policing in your Neighbourhood comes into effect from 1 April 2016 and will result in more constables in Woking.

Following the review of the Joint Committee carried out earlier in the year, it was agreed that the community safety and health and wellbeing sub-committees would operate more effectively as Task Groups with any decisions coming through the main committee. This change would be agreed at next meeting of the Woking Joint Committee.

RESOLVED

Woking Joint Committee agreed to note:

- (i) The work carried out under the Community Safety Sub-Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Sub-Committee.

14/16 FORWARD PROGRAMME [Item 14]

RESOLVED

Woking Joint Committee agreed to:

- (i) Note and comment on the forward programme contained in this report and requested an additional updated report on School Travel Plans for the June 2016 meeting.

15/16 DECISION TRACKER [Item 15]

The updated Tracker was noted.

Meeting ended at: 9.35 pm

Chairman

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Annex 1

Notes of Open Public Questions

Question 1: Mr Hoyle

Mr Hoyle asked for an update on a possible 20mph speed limit on Church Hill, Horsell.

Surrey Highways would provide a response outside the meeting.

Question 2: Mr Halls, St Johns

When will the dangerous breakup of the footpath by the Old Post Office be repaired? There are two trip hazards which are covered by a puddle

Mr Milne apologised for a previous reply received from Surrey Highways. This is a difficult issue as there are private properties to the rear. The site has been inspected and officers are in dialogue with the developer to resolve. It is not possible to give a timescale at the moment, but officers will continue to inspect the site and ensure it does not become a safety defect.

Question 3: Mrs Meinke

There is no local place for children to play along Oriental Road. Can anything be done to help address this?

Sue Barham will take this back to Woking Borough Council officers who are due to update the Borough's Play Strategy this year.

Question 4: Mrs Meinke

Why has the hedging from Lyon Retail park been removed?

It was noted that this was private land, but officers would see what they could find out.

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WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 9 MARCH 2016

SUBJECT: WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS

DIVISION: WOKING

1. Question from Marianne Meinke

Roads, speeding and maintenance of pavements – Oriental and Maybury Roads

I notice that there has been traffic calming in White Rose Lane and Pembroke Road and hear of future plans for similar in Maybury and East Hills, Mount Hermon Road and Albert Drive. I believe this useful investment followed speed measurement in these roads.

In the past I have expressed concern about congestion and speed of traffic in Oriental Road, which is in a residential area. Traffic has increased with developments both at the station end of Oriental Road and at the Mosque/church/retail park end. To add to the mix a large development has been approved for White Rose Lane. Maybury Road too suffers from speeding traffic as demonstrated by the plea for drivers to “Drive slow” painted by someone on a fence panel where the road joins Maybury Hill. It is worrying that slowing traffic in nearby roads may well lead to the creation of a race track around Oriental and Maybury Roads.

Speeding and increased traffic puts pedestrians at risk along Oriental Road since they must walk in the road when vehicles are parked on the pavement opposite the Mosque. Along the length of Oriental Road it can be difficult to cross the road. Even at pedestrian crossings there is a chance that speed will prevent cars stopping.

Uneven pavements in Oriental and Maybury Roads are challenging when walking from the town and railway station at night, particularly in areas where lighting levels are much dimmer than before. Dips in the pavement are not easy to see. Overhanging branches can be tricky to see in poor light. Hedging growing onto the pavement creates shadows. I was pleased that Ray Morgan undertook (at a recent Police Commissioner’s meeting) to help pedestrians, especially the disabled, by getting hedging cut back although action has not been taken where I live as yet.

All of this leads to the question:

Could Oriental and Maybury Roads be subject to regular traffic speed measurement and, as a busy pedestrian thoroughfare, improvement in terms of provision of traffic calming (throughout its length), together with cutting back of overgrown hedging?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

Oriental Road and Maybury Road are on our Speed Management Plan. The speeds that were recorded by Surrey Police in Maybury Road showed good compliance with the speed limit. However, the recorded speeds in Oriental Road are higher and the road is subject to speed monitoring and enforcement by Surrey Police, although reduced police resources mean that this is less regular than before.

An item already appears on our work programme for speed reducing measures on Oriental Road, although the current description suggests that this would be limited to the vicinity of the mosque's access. However, as has already been stated to Mrs Meinke in previous correspondence, personal injury collisions have occurred elsewhere along Oriental Road and the scope of any scheme could be expanded to include the rest of the road.

Footways are routinely inspected to identify safety defects and ad-hoc inspections will be made in response to specific enquiries. Undulations in a footway surface will not always fall within the category of a safety defect, which is usually defined as a trip hazard with a vertical upstand of 20mm or more. However, an additional inspection of the footways can be arranged, including an inspection of any overhanging vegetation. If any over hanging, obstructive vegetation is identified, the first step would be to issue a notice to the resident, instructing them to cut the vegetation back; only if this is not done will arrangements be made for Surrey County Council's contractor to cut back the vegetation. Woking Borough Council's approach should be the same, which is likely to account for the lack of any visible progress.

The single yellow line waiting restrictions in the vicinity of the mosque are only enforceable between 9.30am and 11.30am, Monday to Friday and the footway parking that Mrs Meinke mentions could possibly be addressed by the adoption of double yellow lines in this area, which the Joint Committee may wish our colleagues in the Parking Team to pursue in a future review of waiting restrictions.

2. Question from Helen Allen

I live in Horsell and take the well-trodden route into Woking by crossing Victoria Way near the Lightbox.

I have witnessed several near misses involving pedestrians and cars on this crossing across the busy one-way system. Cars frequently go through red lights and speed up at the lights making the crossing extremely dangerous.

Last week, I saw an elderly woman almost run down at high speed. She set off when the lights were green to pedestrians but was a very slow walker and did not get across before the lights changed.

Improved safety measures are urgently required at this junction, including penalties for drivers who jump the lights.

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

Penalties can only be imposed on drivers who run red lights by the installation of a "Red Light Violation" camera, similar to the one that is in place at the nearby Victoria Way / Chobham Road junction. Strict criteria must be met before such a camera can be installed, which are not met in this instance, despite there having been 2 personal injury collisions at this crossing in the last 3 year period. It is not clear from the descriptions whether a vehicle running a red light was the cause of these incidents.

We have been advised by our colleagues in our Traffic Signals team that this crossing forms part of the Peacocks Car Park access junction which, along with other traffic signals in the vicinity, are controlled by a system known as Urban Traffic Control (UTC).

Some "stand alone" pedestrian crossings can have additional detectors fitted to them which sense the presence of a pedestrian on the crossing and which can extend the time given to that pedestrian to cross if they are slower moving. Unfortunately, such additional detectors and extendable timings cannot be used within a UTC system and the only way to give pedestrians more time to cross would be to change the timings permanently, so that more time would be given with every pedestrian phase whether the extra time was needed or not. The Joint Committee will be aware that the highway network is very sensitive to any changes to the traffic signals along this part of the A320 and any such permanent change at this crossing would have an effect on traffic flows along Victoria Way and, most likely, along Guildford Road and Lockfield Drive, too. This could result in an increase in driver frustration which could off-set any benefit for pedestrians that the changes may have initially created.

The current timings at this crossing give 6 seconds "Green man" time followed by 3 seconds of "Pedestrian blackout" (the period between the Green man and Red man, during which time vehicle signals remain at red). This should be enough time for most pedestrians to cross, although less mobile users may need a bit longer. That having been said, if someone has started to cross with a Green man and they are still on the crossing when the signals change, drivers must still let that person cross and should not re-start.

This issue will be discussed further with Traffic Signals colleagues and Surrey Police to see if there are any further measures that could improve pedestrian safety, but where signal controlled crossings are already in place, these are intended to provide the greatest level of pedestrian safety available.

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WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 9 MARCH 2016
SUBJECT: WRITTEN MEMBER QUESTIONS
DIVISION: WOKING

1. Question from Cllr John Lawrence, Woking Borough Council

Could consideration be given to amending the priorities of traffic entering Rydens Way? As the roads have different priorities to most other UK roads, could the safety aspects please be investigated as there is a school and college at one end of Rydens way and a new cost cutter shop at the other?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

It is not unusual for priorities to be changed as part of a re-development or a traffic calming scheme as a means of slowing traffic down or improving a turning manoeuvre. However, if the previous priorities are long established it can take time for the changes to become effective and accepted by long-time users of that junction.

Concern has been raised about the changed priorities at the Rydens Way junctions with Gloster Road and Coniston Road and consideration has been given to returning priorities back to their original configuration. This intention remains, but the signing and lining changes need to take place at the same time so as not to create confusion. It is noted however that since the priorities were changed, there have been no personal injury collisions at either of these junctions that could be attributed to the revised layout.

The majority of traffic making its way to and from the school and college is likely to use the Shackleford Road junction and not Gloster Road or Coniston Road and a convenience store at the eastern end of Rydens Way pre-dates the changes.

2. Question from Mr Will Forster, Surrey County Council

Following growing concerns from local residents about road safety and a serious road traffic accident before Christmas, please will the County Council consider safety improvements to Prey Heath Road such as installing more street lights, providing a safe area for pedestrians to walk, and/or introducing speed reduction measures?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

Surrey Police have been contacted about this personal injury collision. Although full details are not yet confirmed, it is understood that a pedestrian suffered slight injuries after having been struck by the wing mirror of a passing car. It appears that the pedestrian may have been walking with the flow of traffic, contrary to the good practice advised in the Highway Code, which is to walk on the right hand side of the road contrary to flow of traffic so that approaching traffic can be seen.

Prey Heath Road is classified as a rural road. It is relatively narrow with verges for pedestrians to stand aside on when traffic is passing. There are no formalised footways, and with the limited amount of pedestrian traffic, the cost of installing these could not be justified, even if there was sufficient highway width to construct them.

The 40mph speed limit is appropriate for a rural road such as Prey Heath Road and Surrey Police's most recent speed monitoring data suggests that there is good compliance with it and that as a result, speed reducing measures would not be appropriate. The recorded speeds also indicate that a 30mph speed limit would be unrealistically low.

There have been no enquiries received about public safety at this location, and Prey Heath Road has an excellent safety record, with no personal injury accidents recorded since 2009.

Based on the information available, and the safety record at this location, investment in footpaths, enhanced lighting and other safety measures could not be justified.

3. Question from Mr Will Forster, Surrey County Council

Surrey County Council has recently refurbished and replaced many traffic lights around Woking and beyond the borough boundary. Please can the Chairman confirm the cost of this work, and the expected benefits?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

Although the question makes reference to works beyond the boundary of Woking, this response has focused on those works of interest to the Woking Joint Committee, as it would be impractical to list all refurbishment works that have taken place across the County over the course of the present financial year.

The Traffic Operations Team have refurbished the following Traffic Signals; (Site Reference/Location/cost)

J405 / Garibaldi Crossroads, Knaphill/ (£27.5k)
 J403 / Anchor Hill, Knaphill (ongoing)/ (est £20-30k)
 P404 / A247 Kingfield Road, nr Vicarage Road, Woking / (£15.5k)
 P424 / A247 Kingfield Road nr Stockers Lane, Woking / (£15.5k)
 P441 / A320 Guildford Rd nr Hillview Road, Woking / (£13.5k)
 P301 / A322 Guildford Road nr Gosden Rd, West End / (£17.5k)
 P303 / A322 Guildford Road Wilcott Gardens, Bisley / (£12.8k)

The benefits of such refurbishments are to ensure resilience of correct operation ,

and longevity of such operation at each location, as part of our over-arching County Wide Asset Management function.

When each site is refurbished, if site layout changes are appropriate these are undertaken and the control method of the site is also reviewed and upgraded where appropriate, to ensure optimum efficiency of the traffic signals.

Where refurbishments are for the purpose of upgrading pedestrian crossings from pelicans to puffins, there will be additional safety benefits and reduced levels of congestion.

4. Question from Mr Will Forster, Surrey County Council

Thank you for the answer about cycle funding. As you may know, the Prime Minister and Government have set a target of spending £10 per person per year on cycling.

The transport minister (with specific responsibility for cycling), Robert Goodwill, has recently said that it is up to local authorities to bring cycle funding up to £10 per head per year. He did say that Central Government funding will help, but as this is declining, it will be principally up to councils to fund cycling infrastructure.

Therefore, my follow up question is - will Surrey and Woking Councils agree a plan to bring cycle funding up to £10 a year?

This could be done by earmarking some Community Infrastructure Levy funding and the Joint Committee's transport budget.

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council have already invested significant sums in cycling infrastructure and are committed to doing more as resources permit. The Borough Council has published its Regulation 123 list which details how CIL monies will be spent and it includes a significant number of cycling infrastructure schemes. However, it is important to stress that the CIL will never generate sufficient sums to meet all infrastructure deficits and aspirations. Neither Authority have a spend policy based on £s per head of population for any aspect of transportation. Spending plans are based on local need and achieving the greatest public benefit with the resources available. To meet the aspiration of £10 per head funding of just under £1,000,000 would be required, and this is not credible in the present economic climate.

Funding for Major transport schemes, including cycle schemes, can be obtained through the submission of successful Business cases to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), which has obtained funding from the Government for its Strategic Economic Plan through the Growth Deal Funding streams 1 and 2, covering the period 2015/16 to 2018/19. However, it should be noted that Business cases must meet the strict criteria of the LEP's priorities and objectives contained within its Strategic Economic Plan, and have sufficient local contribution secured for the project.

5. Question from Mr Will Forster, Surrey County Council

Woking Borough's road network has been significantly impacted by recent roadworks. Please can Surrey County Council confirm how many roadworks and road closures (whether full or part closures) have been taking place in Woking Borough since 5th January?

Why have so many roadworks being allowed to take place at the sametime? I appreciate several of these roadworks were classes as emergency and urgent work, but why is permission for non-urgent work on other roads not removed when emergency work is taking place to assist traffic flow?

How does the County Council monitor working hours by utility companies on roadworks? The Council often requests for long working hours and traffic lights to be manually controlled, does the Council believe these requests are always followed?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

Background

Road works are inevitable, this is due to many factors whether road safety improvements, new Developments, new technologies, maintenance of existing services and supplies, etc. and they will invariably cause some interruption to normal traffic flows, particularly given the high volume of traffic on Surrey roads. The term Road Works is used to encompass both Street Works as carried out by statutory undertakers and Works for Road Purposes, the term assigned to the highway authorities own works.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 states "It is the Duty of a local traffic authority to manage their road network with a view to achieving as far as is reasonably practicable the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network" The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 states:-

- (1) A Street Authority shall use their best endeavours to **co-ordinate** the execution of works of all kinds (including works for road purposes) in the streets for which they are responsible:-
 - (a) in the interests of safety,
 - (b) to minimise the inconvenience to persons using the street (having regard, in particular, to the needs of people with a disability), and
 - (c) to protect the structure of the street and the integrity of apparatus in it.

The Act also states that it is necessary "to balance the conflicting interests of road users and undertakers customers", meaning we also have to give due consideration to the promoter of any road works and their needs.

In Surrey County Council this Duty is fulfilled by the Network Coordination team within the Street Works department.

There are various issues that drive the timings for works. Our own ongoing resurfacing works are required as part of a multi million pound investment to bring the Counties roads up to standard. SCC also carry out general highway maintenance works including drainage upgrades, minor resurfacing and road marking refreshing and improvement works such as pedestrian crossing installation, junction safety improvements and cycle pedestrian facilities. Asset management, safety, public demand and funding availability generally being the drivers.

Utility companies have rights in statute to access, lay, maintain, inspect, adjust etc their apparatus in the highway and are primarily driven by Regulator (Ofgem, Ofwat etc.) requirements. For example water companies not meeting targets on leak rates will be subject to Regulator fines. In the case of the gas industry there is a Directive by the Health and Safety Executive to replace all metallic gas pipe work within 30 metre of property over thirty years following the explosion in Larkhall South Lanarkshire in 1999. (A programme which has a further 15 years to run). Utility companies also have a Duty of Supply whereby they are bound by Regulators to provide or to allow a new supply of gas, electricity, etc., when requested and to do so in a specific timescale. Most commonly this is associated with new Developments.

On top of this are emergency works due to such issues as gas or water leaks, power failures or telecom disconnections. In these instances statute allows for works to begin without reference to the highway authority hence they can be some of the most disruptive as they are not accounted for in any planning. Highway works are controlled by a system of Permits. For planned works, works promoters must get a Permit approved by SCC before works start. We have powers to Grant a Permit application or to Refuse until the application meets the necessary requirements. We do not have powers to ultimately prevent works from being undertaken.

There are powers under street works legislation which means Conditions can, where the works type allows, instruct certain time constraints or works methodology to reduce traffic disruption such as works being undertaken at off peak times or on occasions longer working hours to reduce the overall duration. The later tending to be time of year dependant with daylight hours generally being the controlling factor in a dangerous industry. Conditions that can be applied are set out by the Department for Transport.

Whilst each Permit application is reviewed and considered on its merits, more focus, by DfT guidance, is applied to applications that are on roads classed as traffic sensitive.

The coordination of works is carried out under the basic principles of the Department for Transport document "Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Street Works and Works for Road Purposes and Related Matters" which is aligned to the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

In simple overview, where possible major works are scheduled to encompass periods of school vacation when it is known that traffic volumes will be reduced. Smaller works will be directed to be undertaken outside of peak traffic flow times. Where this is not possible, longer working hours are instructed to reduce the duration of the works. When used on a traffic sensitive road at peak periods, temporary traffic signals are instructed to be controlled manually over riding the automated functionality as this can assist the movement of traffic.

Detail

Between the 5th of January date requested and the 29th of February – Planned Works

- 208 new planned works sites were started in the Woking Borough area.
- 68 of these were on roads classified as Traffic Sensitive under the Department for Transport criteria.

www.woking.gov.uk
www.surreycc.gov.uk/woking

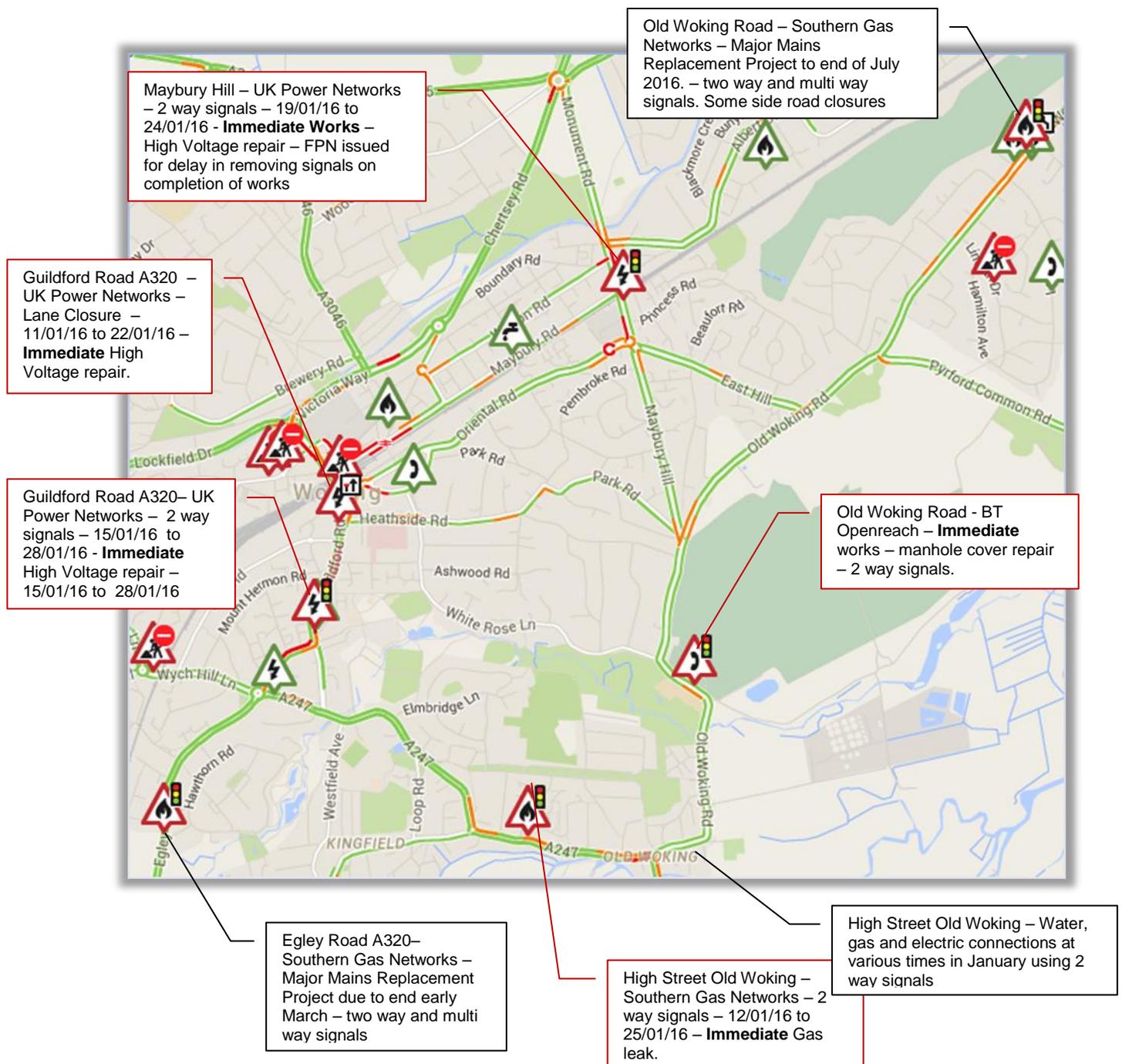
- Of the 68, 18 used temporary traffic signals and 2 used stop and go boards
- Out of the total 208 sites, 33 sites used temporary traffic signals and six sites used stop and go boards.
- 38 sets of works were undertaken by Surrey County Council ranging from lining works, footway siding works, traffic island construction to resetting a collapsed manhole.
- Of this 38, 18 were raised by Woking Borough Council for town centre works.
- 3 sets of works involved a full road closure (although in two instances, these were side roads associated with the B382 Old Woking Road Southern Gas Networks project and were closed to facilitate the movement of traffic on the main road).

Between the 5th of January date requested and the 29th of February – Immediate Works

- 272 sets of Immediate works were recorded.
- 56 of these were on roads classified as Traffic Sensitive under the Department for Transport criteria.
- Of the 56, 15 used temporary traffic signals and 1 stop and go boards
- Out of the total 272 sites, 20 sites used temporary traffic signals and 4 sites used stop and go boards.
- 83 sets of Immediate works were undertaken by Surrey County Council, primarily for pot hole repairs.
- 1 set of Immediate works was raised by Woking Borough Council for a wall repair outside of Weatherspoons Public House
- 6 sets of works required a full road closure.

A snap shot of the 1st of March shows 72 sets of works in progress across the Borough. 26 of which are listed as Immediate Works. 6 of these works involved a road closure and 10 with temporary traffic signals.

The screen shot below shows works on the 21st of January 2016 broadly in the Woking South East area.



As can be seen from the above, 5 sets of works were listed as Immediate. The South East Permit Scheme as operated by Surrey County Council does provide provision for SCC to request suspension of works at any time. In practice this relies on cooperation from the works promoter and consideration has to be given to the practicality of any request where works are in progress and open excavations evident.

To monitor works by utility companies, the Street Works department structure includes a Compliance Team which has nine mobile Officers and a team Manager. The function of this team is to check all aspects of Compliance by regular site visits. Non compliance issues are identified and recorded. Where appropriate Fixed Penalty Notices are issued and recurring issues discussed at regular performance meetings with utility companies.

With specific reference to working hour monitoring, this does represent a challenging issue with the number of Officers against the number of works against Officer working hours. High profile works sites will be targeted however in general sites will be inspected on a random sample basis as resource allows.

A small fund exists for overtime payments to enable an Officer presence out of normal working hours.

With regard to temporary traffic signals, these work with limited intelligence. They can be set to operate purely in fixed timings or run in Vehicle Activation mode. Neither method is the best possible for ensuring traffic is managed effectively in all conditions.

The automated functionality can be over ridden to allow a more reactive response to traffic conditions. This may be to avoid queues backing up past a given point, to allow for tidal flows throughout the day or simply to optimize the “all red” period required to clear the shuttle lane. At least one operative is required on site to effect manual control. Where queues are long or blind to the works site, spotters may be required to assist. Consequently there can be significant on cost to a works promoter to comply with this Condition.

Manual Control is instructed by a Condition attached to the Permit. Being a Condition it is legally binding and non compliance can be dealt with by either prosecution or by offering liability to be discharged by payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice. (There is considerable industry debate as to whether failure to comply with a Condition is a single or continuing offence with multiple FPN's issued. i.e if the Condition is not complied with on consecutive days can FPN's be issued for each day. A judicial view is that if the offence continues, prosecution should be considered).

Surrey County Council generally instruct the manual control of temporary traffic signals on roads defined as traffic sensitive at what would be considered rush hour periods to assist traffic flows. The effectiveness is always reliant on the competency and commitment of the operatives on site and enforcement is carried out in line with the enforcement of working hours.

During the period April 1st 2015 to January 31st 2016, 24 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for non compliance with the Condition relating to manual control of traffic signals.

Notes

BT Openreach have works at the Norfolk Farm Road junction with the B382 Old Woking Road, requested between the 16th and 22nd of March. These are currently refused on the basis of clashing with the SGN gas project and we are requesting collaborative working.

Southern Gas Networks have the requirement to undertake a major mains replacement project on the A247 Send Road. We have insisted these works are deferred at least until the Old Woking Road SGN project is clear.

The timing for SGN mains renewal project on the A320 Egley Road was agreed due to the forthcoming works associated with the road re layout required for the building of the new Hoe Valley Free school and also to avoid any through traffic conflict with the Affinity Water works on northern section of the A320 from this summer onwards. When there are works of a significant duration such as the major gas mains project on the Old Woking Road, it is not possible to delay all other works although as much mitigation as possible is used to reduce the combined effects and consequential traffic disruption.

A review of which streets are identified as traffic sensitive in Surrey will commence this year. It could be reasonably expected that this will increase the amount of roads falling into this criteria.

The criteria for designation is copied below:-

One or more of the following criteria should apply before a street authority may designate a street as traffic-sensitive:

- (a) The street is one on which, at any time, the street authority estimates traffic flow to be greater than 500 vehicles per hour, per lane of carriageway, excluding bus or cycle lanes.
- (b) The street is a single carriageway two-way road, the carriageway of which, is less than 6.5 metres wide, having a total traffic flow in both directions of not less than 600 vehicles per hour.
- (c) The street falls within a congestion charges area.
- (d) Traffic flow contains more than 25% heavy commercial vehicles.
- (e) The street carries more than eight buses an hour.
- (f) The street is designated for pre-salting, by the street authority as part of its programme of winter maintenance.
- (g) The street is within 100 metres of a critical signalised junction, gyratory or roundabout system.
- (h) The street, or that part of a street that, has a pedestrian flow rate in both directions at any time, of at least 1,300 persons per hour, per metre width of footway.
- (i) The street is on a tourist route or within an area where international, national, or significant major local events take place.

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