

**DRAFT**

Minutes of the meeting of the  
**Elmbridge LOCAL COMMITTEE**  
held at 4.00 pm on 21 March 2016  
at Council Chamber, Elmbridge Civic Centre, High Street, Esher, KT10 9SD.

**Surrey County Council Members:**

- \* Mrs Margaret Hicks (Chairman)
- \* Mr Mike Bennison (Vice-Chairman)
- \* Mr Ramon Gray
- \* Mr Peter Hickman
- \* Rachael I. Lake
- \* Mrs Mary Lewis
- \* Mr Ernest Mallett MBE
- \* Mr Tony Samuels
- \* Mr Stuart Selleck

**Borough / District Members:**

- Cllr Nigel Cooper
- \* Cllr Andrew Davis
- \* Cllr Chris Elmer
- Cllr Brian Fairclough
- \* Cllr Neil J Luxton
- \* Cllr Dorothy Mitchell
- \* Cllr T G Oliver
- \* Cllr John O'Reilly
- \* Cllr Peter Szanto

\* In attendance

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**1/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]**

Apologies for absence were received from Surrey County Councillor Mary Lewis and Borough Councillor Brian Fairclough.

**2/16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING [Item 2]**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 were agreed.

**3/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4/16 THE ROLE OF ELMBRIDGE BOROUGH COUNCIL HOUSING AND BENEFIT SERVICES [FOR INFORMATION] [Item 4]**

Julie Cook, the Head of Housing Services at Elmbridge Borough Council, introduced her presentation about the Service, which is attached as Annex A.

The current service is made up of 3 teams, Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support, Housing Options and Private Sector Housing with 45 full time equivalent (FTE) posts. The Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support team process the housing benefit claims. It is important to note that Council Tax support is a benefit and different from the Council Tax discount some residents receive. Approximately 1800 households are on the register for social housing, but only 200-250 units become available each year.

Universal Credit is being rolled out in stages. Once it is rolled out to other working age households including families which is expected to be in 2017/18 then the EBC benefit service will change, but will still deal with pension age households and Council Tax support will remain local.

When the benefit 'cap' is lowered to £20,000 later in 2016 the number of families affected is expected to increase to 200. The importance of the discretionary housing payment (dhp) is likely to increase and families will need more help to get them into work which will exempt them from the benefit 'cap'.

Affordable housing is a challenging area with the numbers available in Surrey not near the level of need.

Members raised the following points:

- Whether brand new carpets needed to be fitted for each new tenant
- The standard of the green areas around the Paragon social housing sites
- The valuation of the right to buy housing
- The links between housing and the family support programme

In response Julie Cook explained that it is the responsibility of the tenants to provide their own carpets, that Councillors can approach Paragon directly to discuss any issues, but that a session is run with Borough Councillors and Paragon to which County Councillors could be invited. She explained that the BC has a responsibility to house vulnerable people and children, but not single people or couples. The service is working to help the 200 families not in work who will be affected by the £20,000 'cap' through close links with the Family Support Programme and also it has put in a bid to the DWP.

Tenants with a tenancy of over 3 years wishing to take up the 'Right to Buy' opportunity will receive a discount of approximately £75,000 but with the current Elmbridge house prices they will still need to raise a significant sum.

#### **5/16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS [Item 5]**

Margaret Hicks, the Chairman, updated the Local Committee that all the allocations had been spent this financial year and gave a few examples of the types of projects which had been funded by the Members.

#### **6/16 LOCAL COMMITTEE DECISION TRACKER [FOR INFORMATION] [Item 6]**

The Local Committee noted the updated tracker document.

#### **7/16 PETITIONS [Item 7]**

No petitions had been received for this meeting.

**8/16 PETITION RESPONSE [FOR INFORMATION] [Item 7a]**

Nick Healey, the Area Highway Manager (NE), presented the response which detailed that the road would be kept safe, but currently was not on any programme to be resurfaced.

**9/16 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME [Item 8]**

Seven public questions had been received for this meeting and the questions and responses are attached as Annex B.

**Question 1**

Clare Hillman said she appreciated the information provided in the response, spoke about her experience in the Netherlands and asked as a supplementary question whether a feasibility study could be carried out for Ember Lane.

Comments from local Members included that:

- Ember Lane should be included in the cycling strategy
- For an effective solution funding from Government was needed

Nick Healey responded by explaining that the culture and approach to town planning was very different in the Netherlands and in addition much of the town planning had been done from scratch which had led to the building of good quality, wide segregated cycle lanes. In the UK there also exist different groups of different types of cyclists. The Local Committee has prioritised the development of a cycling strategy and expects to reach Ember Lane, but is focussing on Weybridge to start.

**Question 2**

As a supplementary question Cllr Barry Fairbank asked why the officers don't identify the shortcomings of the contractors and why we have to wait for months for the lines to be replaced.

Nick Healey explained that the service was already aware of the lines which the Councillor had identified in his original question, but due to the cost of the mobilisation of the road marking gang and the materials it is more efficient to do a number of roads at one time. He also confirmed that the re-doing of the road marking is included in the cost of the resurfacing, but as a batch not individually.

Councillor Dorothy Mitchell reminded the officers of the marking error in Freelands Road Cobham which still has not been resolved.

**Question 3**

David Bellchamber thanked County Councillor Mary Lewis for her help with this issue. As a supplementary question he asked why the public had not

been made aware earlier of the matters holding up the work and what confidence they can now have in the current promises.

Mike Bennison asked what is happening as regards the contractor breaking its permit and whether the Police are happy to do the 30 mile trial once the work is finished, which Nick Healey confirmed they were.

Richard Parr, the SCC Network Co-ordinator, explained that the contractor is being paid a price to do the whole job and is not paid on a daily rate so there is no benefit to the contractor to extend the time taken to complete the work. Once the ground was dug up plant not shown on plans was found and the work had to stop as other services cannot be 'knocked out'. A new route for the main has been identified which will not impact on the A245. A further meeting is taking place on Thursday 24 March which will provide more details of timescales and the work involved. He added that by law SCC need to give access to the utility company and that it is difficult to please all residents, as in fairness to local residents the contractor was not working 24 hours.

Margaret Hicks suggested that, although the service was liaising closely and regularly with the local Divisional Member, Mary Lewis, that perhaps it could also communicate directly with key residents.

#### **Question 4**

As a supplementary question Hussam Raouf asked whether the Council intended to continue increasing the cost of parking at Walton-on-Thames Station, and whether they could prioritise adjusting the restrictions within the existing CPZ to areas adjacent to the station as the residents of Silver Tree Close (of whom more than 75% have signed a petition) are concerned that there will be nowhere to park by the time of the next review in circa 18 months.

Local Committee Members Cllr Chris Elmer and Tony Samuels commented that the CPZs near both Walton and Hershams stations needed to be reviewed, saying that exemptions to the strategy need to be made as the current situation is not convenient.

Rikki Hill, the Parking Project Team Leader, explained that the CPZs around the stations are huge areas and there were no plans to increase the on-street parking charges in the area. He added that the number of residents parking permit spaces had been increased at the last 2 reviews to try to help improve the situation.

#### **Question 5**

Cllr John O'Reilly spoke on behalf of the resident, Sarah Tourell. As a supplementary question he asked the cost for maintaining the tree and what other options there were for funding this tree maintenance.

Nick Healey responded by explaining there is a huge demand for discretionary tree works and due to the limited budget, SCC must concentrate on safety issues. Pollarding costs between £40 & £100 per tree, but once it is started the pollarding needs to continue as trees grow faster after pollarding, therefore SCC continues to pollard any previously pollarded trees, but is not starting any new pollarding unless the cost would be greater in the long term

due to damage. The LC cannot make any long term commitment to tree maintenance and Community Infrastructure Levy cannot be used for tree maintenance. Cllr O'Reilly asked whether a householder could pay for pollarding themselves. Nick Healey said as a one-off a householder could pay to lift or thin the crown, but not pollard the tree.

#### **Question 6**

In response to the supplementary question from Mark Sugden, the Chairman confirmed that SCC's responsibility is to guarantee a school place for every child. Mike Bennison asked if school transport could be provided for those Claygate pupils who had been offered a place at a school in Epsom. The Chairman explained transport would only be offered if the pupil lived over 3 miles away from the allocated school and their first preference had been their closest school.

#### **Question 7**

Jeremy Coombs asked as a supplementary question whether the Local Committee could make an exception to the parking strategy due to his particular circumstances.

County Councillor Rachael Lake said she believed it was planned to make this bay mandatory, if unsuccessful as non-mandatory, and felt this issue was already on-going when the Parking Strategy was introduced and therefore unfair on the resident. She asked for it be added to the next review rather than waiting until the review to take place in Walton.

Rikki Hill said that at no time was it proposed to automatically make the bay mandatory. He explained that disabled bays are not usually mandatory unless they are within areas with other parking restrictions. This particular issue will be discussed at the next meeting of the Parking Task group.

Peter Hickman left the meeting.

#### **10/16 MEMBER QUESTION TIME [Item 9]**

No Member questions were received.

#### **11/16 HIGHWAYS UPDATE [EXECUTIVE FUNCTION] [Item 10]**

Nick Healey introduced the report and explained that up to paragraph 2.12 was a summary of the work for 2015/16. He added he would like a task group to oversee the Esher Transport Study, for which £50,000 from Community Infrastructure Levy fund had been allocated. Three Members, County Councillors Stuart Selleck and Mike Bennison along with Borough Councillor Tim Oliver, were proposed by Margaret Hicks and seconded by Rachael Lake, to sit on this group.

Nick continued that when the Local Committee agreed the allocation of the 2016/17 budget in September 2015, it was based on an assumed budget of

£460,050. The budget has now been confirmed as £548,700. As per table 4 it was the Pooled Revenue which was reduced in the assumed budget so the recommendation was to increase the Pooled Revenue to make it broadly similar to the 2015/16 budget.

Stuart Selleck said he did not agree with the recommendation to increase the Pooled Revenue, but proposed that the extra budget to be divided between the nine Members. Ernest Mallett seconded this proposal. A vote took place and the Local Committee voted to agree recommendation (ii).

Ernest Mallett left the meeting.

In response to a question about carried forwards, Nick said he hoped to be able to report on any at the meeting in June. He also confirmed that the list of Horizon footways and the year 4 roads will be circulated soon. Roads not listed in year 4 will be included in year 5 of the Project Horizon programme. In addition he pointed out an error in the papers – Old Esher Rd in table 7 is no longer a reserve scheme.

The Local Committee resolved to:

- (i) Appoint a member Task Group, comprising of both Borough and County Members, **County Councillors Stuart Selleck and Mike Bennison and Borough Councillor Tim Oliver**, to steer the Esher Transport Study (paragraphs 2.29 and 2.30 refer)
- (ii) Approve the recommended budget allocations for the next Financial Year 2016-17 as detailed in Table 5, now that the Local Committees' Highways budgets have been confirmed (paragraphs 2.31 to 2.34 refer)
- (iii) Authorise the Area Highway Manager in consultation with the Chairman, vice Chairman, and relevant Divisional Member(s) to undertake all necessary procedures to deliver the agreed programmes

Reason for decision: to establish a Member task group to oversee the Esher Transport Study for which Elmbridge Borough Council has allocated £50,000 of CIL funding, to approve the allocation of the confirmed Local Committees' Highways budgets and to provide the necessary authorisation to deliver the already agreed programmes of work without the need to revert to the Local Committee as a whole.

## **12/16 ELMBRIDGE JOINT YOUTH STRATEGY UPDATE [FOR INFORMATION] [Item 11]**

Chris Beck, the Services for Young People Elmbridge Team Manager, introduced the report.

Members raised the following points:

- Whether the youth service access into schools will be the same if all schools become academies
- A preference for a one page report providing more clarity and summarising what has been achieved

- A need for the organisations involved to state clearly a starting point for their work, what is being done and the current position
- The suggestion that 10 key performance indicators are identified at the youth task group meeting

In response Chris Beck explained that the schools had been successfully contacted with a combined 'youth' offer of pooled resources and a clear route has now been established. In addition a baseline data document was being put together and an outcomes document will follow. Emily Pentland added that the consultation was still at an embryonic stage, but would feed into the Joint Youth Strategy action plan.

The Local Committee noted:

- (i) How the Joint Youth Strategy has been working in partnership across the borough to achieve the goal of improving outcomes for young people in Elmbridge including a focus on those young people experiencing inequality and social exclusion.

**13/16 MEMBERS' ALLOCATIONS UPDATE [EXECUTIVE FUNCTION - FOR INFORMATION] [Item 12]**

The Local Committee noted

- (i) The amounts that have been spent from the Members' Allocation budget, as set out in Annex 1 of this report.

Meeting ended at: 6.25 pm

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**Chairman**

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Annex A

**Julie Cook**  
**Head of Housing & Benefit Services**  
**Elmbridge Borough Council**  
**Current challenges**



# Our current services

## **Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support**

- Benefit processing
- Fraud
- DHP and claim support

## **Housing Options**

- Housing Register & Allocations
- Homelessness, prevention and Temporary Accommodation

## **Private Sector Housing**

- PRS Housing standards & enforcement
- HMO's
- PSH Grants & Loans
- Care & Repair Elmbridge & Handyperson

## **Housing & Homelessness Strategy**

- Affordable Housing Delivery



## Current Issues

- Welfare Reforms
- Right To Buy extension
- Homelessness/Housing need
- Affordable Housing Provision
- HIA & Handyperson services & DFG funding
- Empty Homes
- Syrian Refugees



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# Welfare Reform Universal Credit

- Supporting national roll out through co-ordination of local support and help with DWP, SCC , CAB's and others
- Role of EBC – providing digital access and support to claim as well as helping with budgeting and assisting DWP with processing of claims which include housing costs.
- Low number of UC claims expected in first tranche (29 Feb 2016) – single working age new claims – approx. 10 – 20 claims per month.
- Roll out to other working age groups including families expected to be 2017/18 then migration of existing claims after that.
- EBC benefits service will change significantly

## Housing Benefit caseloads – August 2015

<b>Local authority</b>	<b>HB caseload</b>
Elmbridge	5,642
Epsom and Ewell	3,008
Guildford	5,788
Mole Valley	3,580
Reigate and Banstead	6,233
Runnymede	3,734
Spelthorne	4,812
Surrey Heath	2,865
Tandridge	3,635
Waverley	5,065
Woking	4,421



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## **Welfare Reform Introduction of lower benefit cap**

- Autumn 2016 – Benefit ‘cap’ will be lowered from £26,000 to £20,000 for working age households not in work.
- Households affected in Elmbridge likely to rise from about 35 families to approx. 200 families. Housing Benefit will be cut first so likely to result in homelessness.



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# Welfare Reform LHA cap for social housing tenants

- From 2017 Housing Benefit entitlement of social housing tenants (where tenancies started from 2016) will be restricted to the same level as private tenants

Two main areas of impact

- supported housing and sheltered housing where 'service charge' covers support
- Single people under 35 in self contained social housing

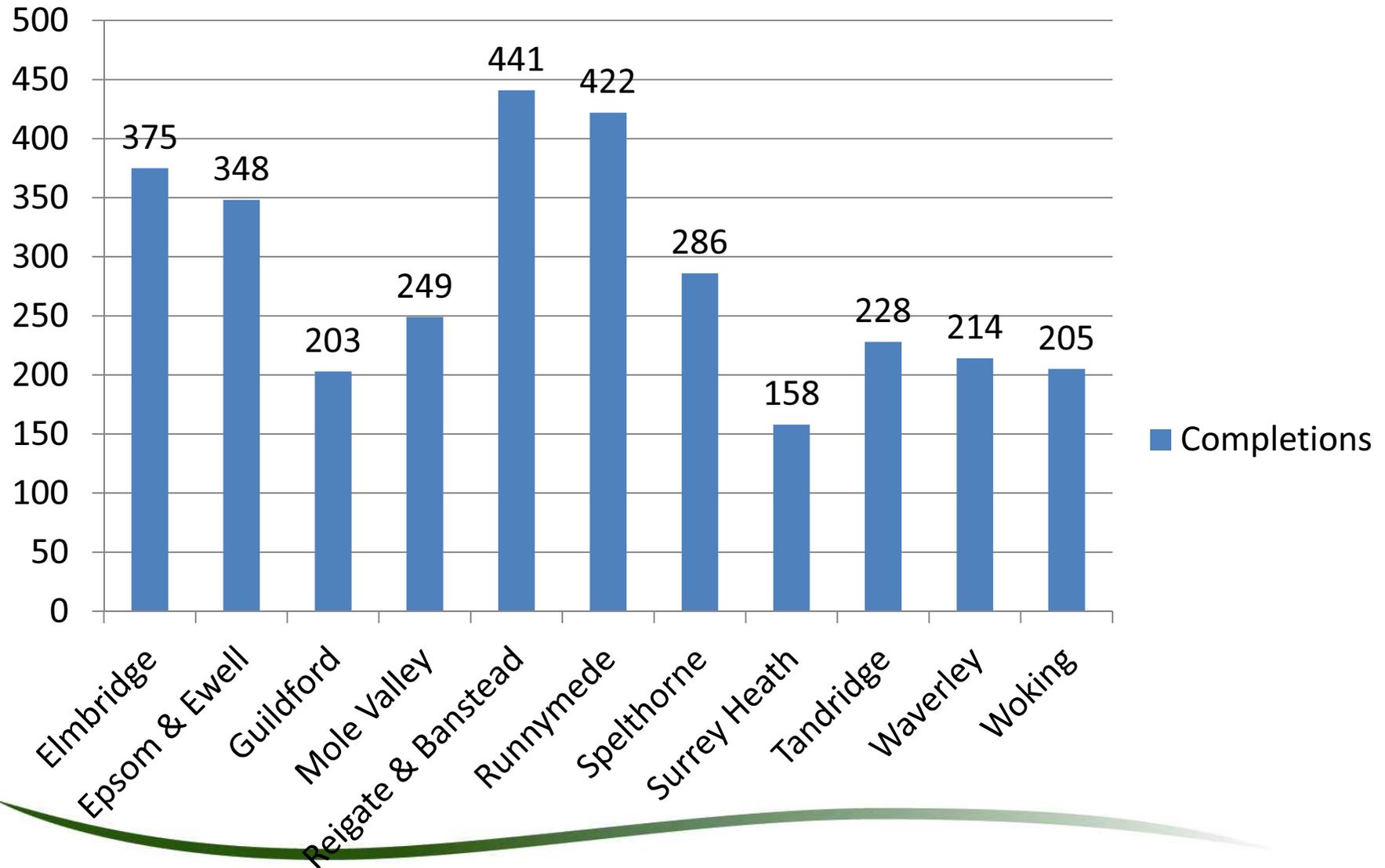


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## **Right to Buy extension to Housing Association tenants**

Likely to see significant no. of social housing units lost through RTB extension without guaranteed replacement in same locality. Expected to start in 2017 but no detail worked up locally.

# Affordable housing completions by Surrey LA April 2011 - September 2015





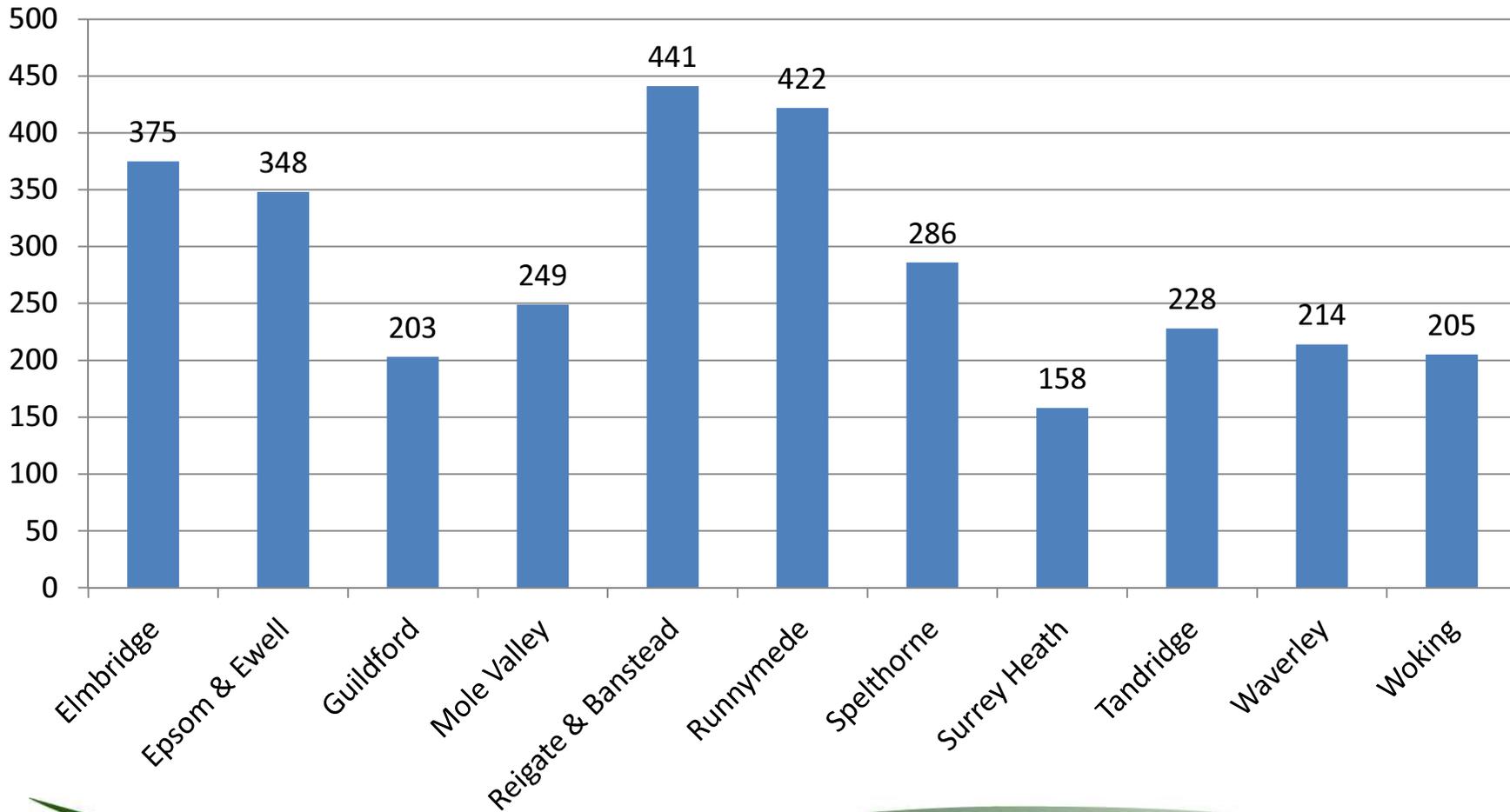
# Homelessness/ Housing Need

- **Increased demand for social housing**  
Housing Register numbers continue to increase month on month currently over 1,800 cases with supply of social housing units no more than 250 units per year (new build and existing vacancies)
- **Increasing Homelessness Pressures**  
Approx 40 households in temp accommodation (inc small no in B&B).

## Homeless h/holds in Temporary accommodation 2013 - 2015

Local Authority	30 Sep 2013 of which B&B (in brackets)	31 Dec 2013 of which B&B (in brackets)	31 Mar 2014 of which B&B (in brackets)	31 Jun 2014 of which B&B (in brackets)	30 Sep 2014 of which B&B (in brackets)	31 Dec 2014 of which B&B (in brackets)	31 Mar 2015 of which B&B (in brackets)	30 Jun 2015 of which B&B (in brackets)	30 Sep 2015 of which B&B (in brackets)
Elmbridge	34(6)	37(3)	33(1)	29(2)	32(3)	33(1)	38(3)	42(5)	44(6)
Epsom & Ewell	108(17)	114(22)	139(37)	133(38)	145(37)	143(27)	156(26)	170(18)	165(14)
Guildford	28(4)	29(4)	27(1)	26(2)	32(4)	36(3)	34(2)	34(0)	36(1)
Mole Valley	33(13)	31(8)	37(16)	35(11)	28(5)	34(6)	39(13)	41(12)	38(6)
Reigate & Banstead	95 (16 )	108(23)	101(13)	122(33)	122(29)	129(23)	136(13)	135(9)	139(10)
Runnymede	63(10)	59(3)	70(4)	76(11)	71(6)	68(20)	62(12)	51(9)	66(2)
Spelthorne	73(13)	88(13)	88(28)	100(12)	111(28)	110(30)	113(15)	139(20)	131(18)
Surrey Heath	59(2)	57(4)	67(11)	62(6)	53(3)	54(2)	44(2)	49(3)	59(8)
Tandridge	23(0)	24(0)	16(0)	19(0)	21(0)	29(1)	25(0)	29(0)	35(0)
Waverley	4(2)	5(3)	4(1)	4(0)	4(1)	3(1)	5(1)	2(1)	3(1)
Woking	28(4)	36(7)	35(5)	37(6)	57(21)	55(16)	55(13)	56(2)	58(6)
<b>Total Surrey</b>	<b>548(86)</b>	<b>558(90)</b>	<b>617(117)</b>	<b>643(121)</b>	<b>676(137)</b>	<b>694(130)</b>	<b>707(100)</b>	<b>748(79)</b>	<b>774(71)</b>

## Affordable housing completions by Surrey LA April 2011 - September 2015





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# Home Improvement Agency and Handyperson service

- Prevention services – helping older and disabled residents remain at home.
- Minor home repairs service
- Disabled Adaptations
- Contributes to improved outcomes for health and social care.
- SCC provides revenue funding - risks
- Better Care funding – ring fenced DFG funds - risks

## EMPTY HOMES

Borough/District	Number of long-term empty homes (October 2015)	Change in number of long-term empty homes (October 2014-October 2015)
Elmbridge	477	-56
Epsom & Ewell	152	-57
Guildford	369	-18
Mole Valley	265	20
Reigate & Banstead	347	6
Runnymede	189	1
Spelthorne	191	15
Surrey Heath	142	56
Tandridge	290	16
Waverley	468	-44
Woking	224	-120



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# REFUGEES

- Syrian Refugee Relocation Scheme
- Voluntary Scheme for LA's to support and house direct from Refugee camps bordering Syria
- Woking, Reigate & Banstead, Mole Valley, Runnymede have joined so far
- Elmbridge still considering

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**SCC LOCAL COMMITTEE IN ELMBRIDGE – 21 March 2016**

**AGENDA ITEM 8**

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

**Question 1: Clare Hillman (resident)**

Would you agree that Ember Lane in Esher is a near perfect location for implementing Surrey's extensive and ambitious cycling strategy, as an example of how infrastructure can influence behaviour and environment? A safe, separated cycle route along Ember Lane will fulfil nearly all the aims of the strategy, most notably:

- 1 - fulfilling the Olympic legacy aim of making it possible for all children to be able to cycle safely to school (rather than currently be driven up our road in their hundreds each morning)
- 2 - sharing the road for benefit of ALL street users (rather than currently optimised for speeding cars and lorries)
- 3 - support cycle events (as it is used by hundreds of sports and recreation cyclists each week, currently obliged to weave around potholes and deep drains with cars overtaking them even on bends)?

**Response:**

The Elmbridge Local Committee is developing an aspirational cycle strategy. This involves collecting evidence on existing travel choices. It also involves analysing origins and destinations to identify opportunities to encourage modal shift towards cycling. The intention is to develop an aspirational cycle network, starting with Weybridge and the surrounding area and spreading out to include the whole Borough. At the present time the Local Committee has not allocated any funding to develop any part of this network through feasibility, detailed design and / or construction.

One of the principles of the Cycling Strategy is that cycle facilities may be appropriate on busier roads, where slower and less confident people will probably be deterred from cycling. The cycle path on Hampton Court Way clearly fulfils this function. At the other end of the scale, if someone felt less confident about cycling on residential roads, then, in most cases, training would be the more appropriate solution. Some roads fall between the two and the most appropriate form of provision is not immediately obvious.

Ember Lane forms part of the B3379 connecting the A307 Portsmouth Road to Walton Road and Bridge Road. As such it forms part of a parallel route to the A309 Hampton Court Way. There is anecdotal evidence that Ember Lane is used by drivers to avoid congestion in Hampton Court Way. A number of traffic islands have been installed in Ember Lane in previous years, together with the central hatching, as a form of traffic calming, and also to provide pedestrian crossing opportunities.

## TABLED DOCUMENT

From a technical point of view, between the River Ember and The Woodlands, the carriageway width in Ember Lane (and Esher Road) is approximately 9m, and the total width of the Highway (including footways) is approximately 14m. With these widths it would be possible to provide a segregated cycle facility. This could take the form, for example, of on carriageway cycle lanes. It could also take the form of a shared surface on a widened footway on one or both sides of the road. To the south of The Woodlands, and to the north and west of the River Ember along Bridge Road or Walton Road, there is not sufficient space within the available Highway width to create a segregated cycle facility of any sort. This means that any new facility in Ember Lane would need to be linked to a wider network along either residential back streets, or along busy main roads with no segregation, to avoid being an isolated link. To achieve a segregated cycle facility would mean the existing pedestrian refuge islands and central hatching would need to be removed, to be able to create the space for the cycle facility. The detail and cost of a new cycle facility would need to be explored firstly through a feasibility study at a cost of approximately £5,000, and then detailed design for a further cost of approximately £5,000. Public consultation would also be essential before any significant change was constructed. Any feasibility study commissioned by the Local Committee would need to consider how best to serve the anticipated cyclists who would use the facility, noting that sports cyclists prefer to cycle on the carriageway, and less confident cyclists prefer to use off-carriageway routes. It may not be possible to design a facility suitable for both groups.

From a strategic cycle network point of view, the wide section of Ember Lane could, subject to funding, provide a cycle route of approximately 2km in length. At the present time no work has been done to assess the value that such a link would provide, in isolation. Further work would be needed to assess whether such a link could feasibly be linked to a wider network, and what additional benefits this could bring.

### **Question 2: Councillor Barry Fairbank**

#### **Reinstatement of restricted parking lines and other road markings**

It is my understanding that contractors engaged to repair/replace road surfacing on behalf of Surrey County Council are also required to replace/repair any road markings, including those relating to parking restrictions, which are damaged or removed in the process.

Can you please, therefore, explain why contractors have failed to carry out appropriate repairs /replacement of road markings in a number of locations in Long Ditton (see below) following resurfacing and why this failure appears not to have been noted by SCC Highways Officers inspecting the 'finished' work?

#### **Windmill Lane** (between Effingham Road and the railway bridge)

Double yellow lines not replaced upon completion of resurfacing but subsequently replaced several months afterwards.

#### **Windmill Lane** (between road narrowing and resident parking bays)

Section of single yellow lining has been damaged or obliterated. Replacement has yet to be carried out.

#### **Fleece Road** (opposite No 6)

Section of single yellow line not replaced upon completion of resurfacing.

Replacement has yet to be carried out.

#### **Rectory Lane**

Central road markings have not been replaced after recent road resurfacing work.

**Response:**

Replacement of road markings is indeed part and parcel of resurfacing works delivered by Surrey County Council's supply chain. There are a number of reasons why road marking replacement can be delayed. Sometimes these are missed by our sub contractor(s). Sometimes replacement is hampered either by the weather or parked vehicles. Resurfaced roads are normally batched to minimise the payment of mobilisation costs.

The work in Windmill Lane and Fleece Road is about to be ordered and, along with the road markings in Rectory Lane, should be completed by the end of May at the latest.

**Question 3: David Bellchamber (resident)**

Last June the Local Committee was asked about the monitoring of road works relating to a water main replacement being carried out by Sutton & East Surrey Water (the water company) on Stoke Road and Woodlands Lane in Cobham and Stoke D'Abernon. The Committee was satisfied that effective measures were being taken to ensure the road works were back to a schedule that would see the planned work completed by March 2016.

The position now is that the water company has had difficulty in completing even the road works from Leigh Hill Road to Blundel Lane (some 1600 metres) in the time in which it said it would complete both that and the section east from Blundel Lane, which is more than 1,000 metres and over more difficult terrain (the outstanding section).

Having put up with delays on Stoke Road for a year, it seems that the community will be experiencing a further extensive period of disruption for work to be carried out along the outstanding section. Given the failure of the water company to adhere to a schedule over the last year there is a need to restore confidence in the process. There is a need to know when resurfacing will take place, what additional work is involved, when that work will take place, the extent of the disruption and the measures in place for monitoring.

What steps has Surrey County Council taken to agree the future proposals of Sutton & East Surrey Water for both resurfacing and for the outstanding section, to ensure that the water company will continue to devote the maximum feasible resources to the extended project and minimise the time over which disruption takes place?

**Response:**

The network of under surface supply pipes and cables for the utility industry along with other plant such as surface water drainage, sewers, etc., has evolved over many years. Recent works in the east of the County involved working with pipes first laid in the 1890's. Many of these services remain unmapped. Maps that are available indicate only indicative positions of equipment and whilst techniques do exist to survey roads before works commence, an accurate picture is only established when the surface is broken and works started. This also applies to ground conditions where whilst it can reasonably be anticipated what will be found, the only certainty comes from excavation.

## TABLED DOCUMENT

Surrey County Council have liaised closely with Sutton and East Surrey throughout the works on Stoke Road, especially with regard to progress of the project. Problems with unmapped plant have been identified and this has adversely affected project progress. This can be evidenced by the circuitous route the trench has taken against the original straight line plan.

The original scope of the project included the continuation of main laying over the rail bridge, under a full road closure, and continuation to and along part of Woodlands Lane. As a consequence of pressure brought to bear by SCC it is now proposed to use an alternative route cross country to complete the substantive part of the project. Whilst the requirement for some work to continue on Stoke Road remains to secure supplies to properties, major disruption will be avoided.

Officers from Surrey County Council will shortly be holding a formal project review meeting with Sutton & East Surrey Water in order to establish the exact content of the remaining works and the schedule for completion. A Surrey County Council Information Sheet update will be released following this.

Resurfacing works on Stoke Road will follow at a suitable time following the completion of the utility works. The Divisional Member has allocated funding for this from her share of the 2016-17 Local Committee Highways budgets.

**Question 4: Hussam Raouf (resident)**

I wish to bring to the Committee's attention a problem we are experiencing with displacement parking caused by commuters.

Silver Tree Close is located near Walton-on-Thames train station and parking is restricted to permit holders between 0800-0930 on weekdays with a further 2 hour limit for non permit holders between 0930-1200. However we have recently noticed a surge in commuters parking in the Close after the end of these restrictions until late in the evening in order to avoid the parking fee at the station car parks. As a result of this residents now struggle to find a place to park their cars when they return from work.

We would therefore like to have an additional restriction placed on parking in Silvertree Close and propose that parking be restricted to Permit Holders between 16:00 and 17:00 on weekdays (in addition to the existing restrictions) to deter commuters from leaving their cars in Silvertree Close from lunchtime onwards. I understand from the Surrey County Council website that parking is only reviewed every few years and in the case of Walton-on-Thames is not expected now until 2018. I have obtained the written support of more than 70% of the properties of Silvertree Close to the above proposal. I was wondering if you could assist us in expediting the matter ahead of 2018 especially as it should be simple change to implement?

**Response:**

In 2015 the county council's parking team started a rolling programme of parking reviews, as part of the new parking strategy for Elmbridge agreed by the local committee in February of that year. The review of parking in Walton and Hersham is due to start in the third year of the programme (2017/18) and it will include a comprehensive review of the controlled parking zone (CPZ) that surrounds Walton station. The CPZ has been in place for many years during which time people's

working habits and lifestyles have changed, while the days and times of operation of the CPZ have remained the same.

Any change to parking controls requires the county council to follow a procedural as well as a legal process, with its inherent costs. In order to minimise these costs the council deals with the introduction of new parking controls en masse, rather than on an individual basis, which would be neither practical nor economically viable to do.

We have received a number of requests for changes to the existing CPZ, all of which have some merit, and all of which may seem a relatively simple change to implement, and we will consider them all during the review, but it is not possible for us to consider any one in advance of the others.

**Question 5: Sarah Tourell (resident)**

Every 5 or 6 years my neighbours and I have a problem with the lime tree in front of our houses, no.s 170 & 172 Molesey Road, Walton as there is no routine maintenance of the tree. The council own the tree and I feel the council should maintain it, and that means a regular programme of maintenance which includes a cycle of crowning and pollarding when it gets too big. The issue is that the tree drips a maple syrup solution all over the front of our houses (namely 170 and 172 Molesey Road) and cars. It's like treacle and damages the paintwork. We have to write every 5 years and get into debate with the council, causing frustration and irritation and eventually the tree outside our house might get some attention.

When can we expect the tree to be cut back and on a regular basis so it doesn't overhang our property and cause these issues?

**Response:**

There are approximately 2,000,000 trees on the Public Highway in Surrey, with an annual budget of approximately £800,000 for their maintenance - approximately 40p per tree per annum. Of necessity this means we have adopted a policy and strategy of minimal intervention. What this means in practice is that if a tree is healthy, growing according to its natural ecology and in and of itself is not presenting an immediate safety hazard, we leave it alone. We inspect all Highway trees as a matter of routine, and arrange works to address any defects that would present a safety hazard on a priority basis. We also respond to residents' reports of potentially dangerous trees. Other than that we have a very limited pollarding programme, but cannot extend this beyond the existing pollard stock. We undertake epicormic growth control to prevent obstruction of the Highway. We do not usually undertake tree works for any other reason, unless specific funding is made available in addition to the regular arboricultural budget.

Our policy is best defined by two documents - green for what we do and red for what we don't do - these documents are attached with this response.

Usually we would consider sap to be an ordinary inconvenience of life - something that we would not respond to. In this particular case the Divisional Member has previously allocated funding from her individual Members' allocation for maintenance to mitigate the sap produced. The County Council cannot offer routine maintenance of trees to reduce the effects of sap.

## TABLED DOCUMENT

**Question 6: Mark Sugden (resident)**

Many Claygate families, with children at Claygate Primary School, have not been offered a place at one of their preferred secondary schools. Could the Elmbridge Local Committee urgently press Surrey County Council to ensure that, now and in the future, there are enough first preference local secondary school places for residents of Claygate?

**Response:**

An enquiry asking for an analysis of the offers of places and an explanation of the general situation regarding Claygate children and secondary admissions in 2016 has been requested by the Local County Councillor Michael Bennison and also by the MP Dominic Raab. Officers in the School Commissioning and Admissions teams of Surrey County Council are working to provide a full reply to these requests in the next few days.

As far as the above comment/ question from Mr Sugden is concerned the Elmbridge Local Committee has no direct responsibility for the allocation of school places and is not in a position to influence this. The law states that Surrey County Council as the Local Education Authority should ensure that there is a sufficiency of school places in its area of jurisdiction. SCC also has a legal responsibility to co-ordinate the admissions arrangements of the various local admissions authorities and allocate school places based on the application of each school's admissions criteria. In doing so the LA must have due regard for parental preference **but there is no legal duty to meet first preference or indeed any preference**. Having said this, SCC always seeks to meet the highest number of first preferences that it can when allocating school places, based on the admissions criteria of each school.

For 2016 Surrey has ensured that there are sufficient secondary school places for all Claygate/Elmbridge residents who have requested one. It has made 1066 offers to parents. The majority of these Year 7 places are in Elmbridge borough secondary schools although a small minority of offers have been made out of borough to other Surrey schools with vacancies.

All Elmbridge secondary schools are academies and are responsible for setting their own admissions criteria and their published admission number (PAN - the number of places in Year 7). **SCC has no power to change the admissions criteria or to change the PAN of an academy**. LA officers do consult all Head teachers and governing bodies each year on admissions matters, particularly once the Authority has received all the parental preferences at the close of the annual admissions round. This is to make sure that the LA has met its statutory duty to supply sufficient places and can make a reasonable offer of a school place to everyone on offer day.

Therefore SCC cannot guarantee that all Claygate residents will get the offer of a place at the nearest school ie Hinchley Wood or Esher High. This is because both schools have named feeder primaries, catchment areas and criteria that give priority to siblings when allocating school places. These admissions arrangements are legal and not unusual. Both schools are now operating at maximum capacity for their sites and there are no plans by their Academy Trusts to expand either school, as far as we are aware.

In years where there are a large number of siblings at Claygate Primary and the other Hinchley Wood (or Esher High) feeder schools there will be fewer places available for children with no siblings attending Hinchley Wood or Esher High School.

This year there were 96 siblings wanting a place at Hinchley Wood, compared to 73 last year. This has meant that not all pupils attending Claygate Primary have been offered a place at Hinchley Wood because those pupils in other feeder schools must live nearer to the school. Children attending an Esher High feeder school are unlikely to be offered a place at Hinchley Wood, even if they live in Claygate. This will remain the case in the future while ever the current admissions arrangements are in place.

**Question 7: Jeremy Coombs (resident)**  
(question amended for data protection)

Fiona Coombs is a disabled senior resident of the borough and her husband Jeremy is her full-time Carer. They applied for a Disabled Parking in May 2014 and in March 2015, Surrey County Council duly installed a Disabled Bay outside their home at Oakbank Avenue, a Cul-de-Sac in Field Common. Access to the road is problematic and on two occasions an attending ambulance was unable to reach their home, however neighbours and delivery vehicles routinely utilise and abuse the provisions of the bay, despite clear markings and this has caused obstruction to their reasonable access, not least of concern, as due to Mrs.Coombs' medical condition it is necessary for Mr. Coombs to gain access to their Motability car or for an attendant Ambulance, to utilise the bay, if available to do so.

In order to legally enforce the bay for this established purpose, it is necessary for a marked signage post to be installed adjacent to the bay, this was formally applied for in February of 2015 and Mr & Mrs Coombs were then advised in writing that this would go to committee for consent in September of last year, however, no such action was undertaken and on further enquiry they were advised of a deferment until 2018 (at the earliest). This matter has already caused Mr & Mrs. Coombs considerable emotional distress as this can be life threatening and has now brought them into direct conflict with their neighbours.

We would therefore request of the committee full consent to the provision of a marked post with immediate effect. We believe the cost to be modest and the benefit to be evident and substantial, not least in light of the recent provisions of the Carers Act 2016.

**Response:**

The county council has an established procedure for considering the formalisation of parking controls, by way of reviews of parking in an area as a whole, rather than on an individual basis. One of the main reasons for this approach is to reduce the costs involved in the legal process that has to be followed, in particular the formal advertisement of the council's intention to make the relevant changes to its traffic regulation order. To place individual advertisements for each change would incur considerably more expense than placing one advertisement for a number of changes. While the council is sympathetic to the needs of vulnerable residents, and installs advisory disabled bays to try and help with their parking needs, as has happened in this case, it has to also consider the broader financial picture. At its meeting in February 2015, the Elmbridge Local Committee adopted a new approach to reviewing parking in the borough, choosing to carry out a programme of more comprehensive reviews on an area by area basis, rather than of the borough as a whole, which had previously been the case. As a result the next review of parking in Walton is not due to start until April 2017, when the possible formalisation of the disabled parking bay can be considered.

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