

Minutes of the meeting of the
Epsom AND EWELL LOCAL COMMITTEE
held at 7.00 pm on 21 July 2021
at Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell KT17 1UF.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its next meeting.

Surrey County Council Members:

- * John Beckett (Chairman)
- * Steven McCormick (Vice-Chairman)
- * Jan Mason
- Eber Kington
- * Bernie Muir

Borough / District Members:

- * Cllr Nigel Collin
- * Cllr Neil Dallen MBE
- * Cllr Debbie Monksfield
- Cllr Phil Neale
- * Cllr Humphrey Reynolds

* In attendance

13/21 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR 2021/22 [Item 1]

The appointment by Council of Mr John Beckett as Chairman and Mr Steve McCormick as Vice-Chairman of the Local Committee for the current municipal year was noted.

14/21 APPOINTMENT OF BOROUGH COUNCIL MEMBERS [EXECUTIVE FUNCTION – FOR DECISION] [Item 2]

Resolved:

To co-opt substitutes for Borough Council members for the municipal year 2021/22.

Reasons: Standing Order 40(f) requires the Committee at its first meeting in the municipal year to agree whether it wishes Borough Council members to be permitted to have substitutes

15/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 3]

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Eber Kington and Phil Neale. There were no substitutions.

16/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 4]

In relation to the decision on the Old London Road in item 11, Mr Steve McCormick and Mrs Jan Mason declared that they are Epsom & Walton Downs Conservators.

17/21 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS [Item 5]

The Chairman reported that he had become aware that the booking system which had been in place at the Epsom Community Recycling Centre, to prevent queues forming when capacity was reduced, as a result of social distancing, had been discontinued. The Cabinet member had apologised that councillors had not been informed of this change before it took place. He had understood that the booking system had been a trial and had asked for the results which he would share with the Committee. Members were concerned that there had been queues previous to the pandemic and that there could be an environmental impact if this recurred, although they acknowledged that residents were split between a booking system and open access. The Chairman agreed to write on behalf of the Committee to raise the issues.

There was a great deal of concern over the operation of the Epsom Chalk Pit. This is a complex site with a number of different agencies involved in overseeing its operation and work to address concerns is ongoing.

Highways England has announced that the decision on the bid submitted to Government for funding to improve the M25 junction 10 has been deferred by the Secretary of State until 12 November.

Members may be aware of a car meet up which took place at the weekend at Kiln Lane but which caused side disruption in the area. Concerns have been expressed to the police who are investigating the circumstances.

18/21 WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS [Item 6]

There was one question submitted and a response was provided. Cllr Frost asked the following additional question:

Thank you for your response.

I do appreciate that this is not the easiest route to make safe and pedestrian friendly. However, the route from Langley Vale to the town by foot, for instance for Rosebery School girls, is either via Chalk Lane or down Ashley Road. As seen in the Members Questions no 1 from Cllr Collin, this route is not pedestrian friendly. It is a route I have to use not infrequently, and crossing Treadwell Road as a pedestrian is very unsafe, as you cannot see the approaching traffic in Ashley Road unless you cross onto the mini roundabout markings.

The alternative is to cross from the Langley Vale Village side of Langley Vale Road and walk down Chalk Lane. You cannot cross LVR until after the horse bridge, because there is only a pavement on the Downs / Village side.

I understand the issue with the width of the bell-mouth at the LVR traffic lights, but the request is just for a dropped kerb, not for a pedestrian phase to the lights – and there is already a traffic island there. However, as an alternative,

could a dropped kerb be installed opposite the Chalk Lane junction? This would involve only one dropped kerb and so be far less expensive. Chalk Lane is an 'access only' road for the Durdans and the equestrian fields and so traffic should be minimal. Although there is insufficient width to put a pedestrian refuge in LVR at that point, I believe that there is a similar recommended crossing point with no central refuge on A246 (3 lane fast stretch of road between A24 and Bocketts Farm B2122 junction). Similarly in recent years crossings have been put on B280, (Christchurch Road) and on Woodcote Green Road (at the rear entrance to the hospital). Neither of these has a central refuge, although they do benefit from pedestrian / traffic light crossings in contrast with the A246.

The Area Highway Manager responded that he sympathised with the issues which are common in a number of locations. Unfortunately, he was unable to support the suggestion due to the poor visibility at that location. If the Committee felt that this was a priority location for the Borough, it could be added to the Committee's priority list, for consideration to fund a feasibility study, in the next financial year. The divisional member agreed that he would welcome this approach, which was endorsed by the Committee.

19/21 PETITIONS [Item 7]

Declarations of Interest: None

Officers attending: Nick Healey, Area Highways Manager;

Petitions, Public Questions/Statements:

The petitioner, David Gulland was accompanied by Gretta Maxwell and her daughter Lauren who uses a wheelchair. The petitioner indicated that he had gained 450 signatures for the petition and not the 250 mentioned in the response which demonstrated the depth of local concern.

Improving the accessibility of the junction would mean that it is usable by all residents, he was surprised that accessibility did not have a higher weighting when schemes are being assessed. They drew attention to the Equalities Act, which sets out that reasonable adjustments should be made, where necessary, including to the built environment. Using a wheelchair in the area is currently dangerous and make users feel excluded. The provision of dropped kerbs is the minimum which should be provided.

Member discussion –key points

The Area Highways Manager Indicated that there are a number of factors which need to be taken into account when assessing whether a scheme should be taken forward and the matrix is just a guide to help the Committee in their decision making. He acknowledged that the junction is a barrier to the less able and to family groups, but the design of the junction would make it unsuitable for the addition of dropped kerbs as the sight lines are not good enough. Reconfiguration of the junction would require careful planning and could cost up to £250k. It would also probably decrease the traffic capacity at the junction leading to a possible increase in congestion. He suggested that the Committee could consider agreeing to add a feasibility study to a future work programme in order to look at possible options. There is money

available to provide dropped kerbs and he would be happy to consider suggestions for suitable locations where road reconfiguration is not required.

Members were sympathetic to the issues which are not limited to this junction and disappointed that a solution may take some time to achieve. The divisional member agreed that a feasibility study to look at costs and options would be beneficial and he'd be happy to liaise with the petitioners to get their views and to perhaps seek external funding.

Resolved:

To include a scheme to improve the pedestrian and wheelchair crossing at the College Road/Longdown Lane traffic lights in Epsom, on the prioritisation list for consideration in a future highway programme.

Reason: To consider whether the issues raised in the petition can be addressed.

20/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING [Item 8]

Confirmed as a correct record.

21/21 MEMBER QUESTION TIME [Item 9]

Seven member questions had been received and the officer responses were provided in the agenda. The following additional points were raised:

Question 2: Officers were thanked for the response and asked for timescales. The officer reported that the extension of the 470 route to the hospital may now not take place until 2023. However, the 467 will be moved to the Station and make its first stop in Waterloo Road. Transport for London will need to make some changes to the i-bus system at the Clock Tower to enable this to happen, but this should be completed in the next few weeks. The bus stand will then not be required except for emergency use, although buses will still stop in the vicinity.

Question 3: It may be possible for the divisional member to fund the bollards required from their allocated funding.

Question 4: Cllr Dallen was keen to explore the installation of red routes on key routes in the Borough and felt that the cost of this could be offset from the income arising from camera enforcement and or a bid for external funding. He was advised to speak with the Parking Strategy and Implementation Manager.

Question 6: It was confirmed that the road safety audit would take place this year. Members had received comments from both pedestrians and cyclists that it was unclear which part of the pavement they should use. The Area Highways Manager explained that this is a shared surface and he hoped that these issues would decrease as people became used to the change.

Question 7: Cllr Dallen felt that the phasing of the traffic lights had been changed which is causing traffic to queue across the junction and queried whether they were working optimally around the town centre. Officers were

unable to respond to this, but undertook to follow up and provide a response outside the meeting.

22/21 ALTERATION TO THE OPERATIONAL HOURS OF A BUS STAND CLEARWAY - EPSOM STATION [EXECUTIVE FUNCTION - FOR DECISION] [Item 10]

Declarations of Interest: None

Officers attending: Valerie Sexton, Senior Transport Officer; Alison Houghton, Senior Transport Officer

Petitions, Public Questions/Statements: None

Member discussion –key points

Members were pleased that bus services were being extended. However, they felt that a 24/7 clearway, which would cover a period when buses are not operating, could lead to it being more difficult to enforce. Officers responded that to change to only the operating hours could make it confusing and that alternative parking should be readily available outside of operating hours. An amendment to the times of operation was proposed by Cllr Dallen and seconded by Cllr McCormick and it was:

Resolved that:

- (i) the operating hours of the bus stand clearway at bus stop N, Station Approach, Epsom are 6am to 12 midnight Monday to Saturday and 9am to 6pm on Sunday, subject to 28-day consultation period.
- (ii) if any objections cannot be resolved, the Area Highway Manager, in consultation with the chair/vice chair of this committee and the county councillor for the division, decides whether or not they should be acceded to and therefore whether the proposed change should be made, with or without modifications

Reasons:

To ensure that the bus stand clearway at bus stop N, Station Approach is operational during the hours of service so that the bus can access the bus stand and wait between journeys at this stand without the obstruction of parked vehicles, and provide stepfree access to those wishing to use the bus stop and thus support the extended operating hours of the E9 & E10 bus routes.

23/21 HIGHWAYS UPDATE [EXECUTIVE FUNCTION - FOR DECISION] [Item 11]

Declarations of Interest: Cllrs Jan Mason and Steve McCormick declared that they are Epsom & Walton Downs Conservators

Officers attending: Nick Healey, Area Highways Manager;

Petitions, Public Questions/Statements: None

Member discussion –key points

Cllr Collin asked whether the additional signage requested on College Road had been added to the Committee's prioritisation list? The Area Highways Manager undertook to do this if Cllr Collin could provide him with the details of the request.

In relation to recommendation (iii) the Area Highways Manager stated that a traffic regulation had previously been agreed for an overnight closure of the Old London Road, but a sealed order could not be located. The current recommendation slightly amends the hours previously agreed, in order to restrict public access when training is taking place on the Downs as this could be dangerous to the public. A member queried why the road is closing at 7pm in the summer when it is light later at this time. It was explained that the road needs to be closed by a downs keeper and the earlier time is for their safety when working alone. It was noted that whilst the police acknowledge that there has been anti-social behaviour in the area, they do not support the road closure.

The proposed timings reflect the wishes of the Conservators and the race horse trainers. They will be advertised with an opportunity for all to submit their comments. It is likely that the final decision will be brought back to the Committee. It was noted that the top car park is owned by the Jockey club and managed by the Conservators and that it's hours of operation are a matter for them.

Resolved:

- (i) Agreed the 2021-22 programme of Capital Maintenance schemes, as detailed in Table 2 of the report, and to authorised the Area Team Manager, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Divisional Member to amend this programme as appropriate should unforeseen circumstances arise that would put the programme at risk of delivery;
- (ii) Authorised the Area Highway Manager, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Divisional Member, to advertise a legal notice for a new Puffin Crossing on the A240 Kingston Road, between Aldi on one side of the road and Timbercroft on the other, and to resolve any representations that are received;
- (iii) [by 5 votes FOR to 2 AGAINST] Authorised the Area Highway Manager, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Divisional Member, to advertise a permanent prohibition of traffic order to prevent motor vehicles entering the section of Old London Road between Tattenham Corner Road and the Top Car Park on Epsom Downs overnight, as detailed in Table 3 below, and to resolve any objections that may arise;
- (iv) Authorised 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.

Reasons:

A programme of capital maintenance schemes needs to be agreed to invest Committee's £217,000 allocation for this purpose. Officers have worked with

Members to agree priorities. However, should unforeseen circumstances arise that might put the programme at risk, the Area Highway Manager needs flexibility to amend the programme as appropriate.

A new Puffin Crossing is due to be implemented this Financial Year 2021-22 on the A240 Kingston Road between Aldi and Timbercroft. Before any new traffic signal controlled crossing is installed, a legal notice is necessary to inform the local community and give opportunity for representations to be made.

24/21 LOCAL COMMITTEE DECISION TRACKER [FOR DECISION] [Item 12]

It was requested that item 1 on the decision tracker should be retained and marked “substantially complete, pending road safety audit stage 3”

In relation to item 2, whilst the road has been improved the pavement is still uneven and subject to puddling. The Area Highways Manager asked members to submit photos if possible. The item would remain on the decision tracker.

It was agreed that the remaining items marked as closed on the tracker would be removed.

25/21 FORWARD PLAN [FOR INFORMATION] [Item 13]

Some members expressed concern that a reduction to three meetings per year would limit the opportunities for public engagement. The Partnership Committee Officer explained that the intention is to move engagement away from the formal environment of the Committee and to engage directly with communities to take forward issues. Some examples of how this has been done already were given.

26/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 14]

Monday 8 November at 7pm

Meeting ended at: 9.38 pm

Chairman