

County Council Meeting – 15 July 2014

REPORT OF THE PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE

- * Mr Keith Taylor (Chairman)
- * Mr Tim Hall (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mr Ian Beardsmore
- * Mrs Natalie Bramhall
- * Mrs Carol Coleman
- * Mr Jonathan Essex
- * Mrs Margaret Hicks
- * Mr George Johnson
- Christian Mahne
- * Mr Ernest Mallett MBE
- * Mr Michael Sydney
- * Mr Richard Wilson

* = Present

A = Apologies

A. THE SURREY CODE OF BEST PRACTICE IN RIGHTS OF WAY PROCEDURES

1. The Committee considered a draft Code of Best Practice in Rights of Way Procedures. This had been drawn up in response to a petition by Michael Wheaton of the Trail Riders Fellowship and in consultation with the Surrey Countryside Access Forum, Local Committee Chairmen's Meeting and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Planning & Regulatory Committee. The Code of Best Practice in Rights of Way Procedures was based on the Surrey Code of Best Practice in Planning Procedures and aimed to improve the processes and procedures involved when Rights of Way reports go to Local Committees.
2. The Code clarifies what Members can expect from Officers and the public from Members. In summary:
 - 2.1 All rights of way decisions considered by a Local Committee (or other decision making committee) will be the subject of full, written reports from officers incorporating firm recommendations. The reasons given by the committee for refusing or granting a recommendation should be fully minuted, especially where these are contrary to officer advice and/or Surrey County Council or other policies.
 - 2.2 Members are encouraged to undertake a period of training in rights of way procedures before taking part in the formal consideration (and voting) of items relating to rights of way issues.
 - 2.3 Members and officers should avoid indicating the likely decision on a procedure or otherwise committing the Authority prior to consideration by the Local Committee.
 - 2.4 Members will make oral declarations at a Local Committee of significant contact with applicants and objectors, in addition to the usual disclosure of pecuniary interests.
 - 2.5 Members of the public and their representatives may address the Local Committee on applications relating to public rights of way being considered by

the Committee. Speakers must register to speak and have previously made written representations to the Countryside Access Team.

2.6 The Surrey Countryside Access Forum and the Local Committee Chairmen's meeting considered the Code and their comments have been incorporated.

3. The Committee APPROVED the Code (attached as Annex A) and COMMENDS it to Council for inclusion in the Constitution.

Keith Taylor

Chairman of the Planning & Regulatory Committee

May 2014