

Annex B



Surrey Heath Local Area Committee
3rd July 2014

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Written Public Questions, Responses and Supplementary questions

Q. Written question from Mr Jon McClelland, Local Resident

The Hatches path, officially referred to as Bridleway BW19 by the Countryside Access Team, is long overdue maintenance. The path is overgrown on each side and is now a narrow strip of tarmac, much of which is badly potholed. In winter the path is muddy and flooded making it very difficult for pedestrians & cyclists to navigate.

Many people would like to see the path properly tarmacked across the full width of the path (approx 7-9 feet) and treated as a "[Shared Use route for Pedestrians & Cyclists](#)". I have started a blog and petition to raise awareness of this, which has 89 signatures to date. I expect more signatures as conditions get worse in the autumn.

Blog: <http://thehatchespath.blogspot.co.uk/>

Petition: <http://petitions.surreycc.gov.uk/TheHatches/>

I have been in correspondence with Luke Dawson of the Countryside Access Team who has visited the path and confirmed it needs maintenance work carried out. He has requested funds "from a bigger pot" to fund improvement works but was unsuccessful this year. He has investigated interim solutions to fix the worst of the potholes and improve drainage. He also suggested "a scrape of the surface mud to allow the full available width". I noticed this was done recently (by Mon 23rd June) but this has only cleared the existing 4 foot wide path. Potholes still need to be fixed and drainage improved.

My blog has full details of my discussions with the Countryside Access Team and sustrans. I will also update with the committee's feedback. Thank you for your time".

The question:

Can the committee help the Countryside Access Team with funding to upgrade the path properly to a Shared use route for Pedestrians & Cyclists?

A. Response from Chairman on behalf of the Committee:

The Countryside access team have been working with Mr McClelland on this issue and initial remedial work has taken place as mentioned above. The team are working with Highways officers and the cycle strategy group to provide options and costings for the committee to consider.

A report will be produced for the next meeting.

Q. Written question from Murray Rowlands, Local Resident

Concern is expressed that in response to complaints about growing use of The Avenue, Heatherley Road, Woodway, Woodlands Road as a rat run to Frimley Road Councillor Fuller is advocating closing the bus only lane on the London Road which is a crucial element in the functioning of the excellent bus service between Aldershot and Camberley.

The question:

Are there plans to close the A30 bus lane?

A. Response from Chairman on behalf of the Committee:

Thank you Murray for raising this issue as it gives me the opportunity to state the views of this Local Area Committee on the question of removing the bus lane from the A30.

You may not be aware that this Committee discussed the issue some 3-4 years ago and voted against its removal. The Members in front of you again discussed the position at a Private Meeting two weeks ago on 19 June and again recommended not to pursue the issue.

The bus lane lies wholly in Cllr Fuller's Division and he is rightly concerned with accident and rat run issues and is perfectly entitled to his own views. He would have to convince this Local Area Committee to support his opinions.

There would undoubtedly be opposition from such bodies as, County Highways Surrey Heath Borough Council, Bus operating companies and probably others.

In my opinion, even if this Local Area Committee were to recommend the removal of the bus lane (with all its drawbacks), I would very much doubt whether it could overcome the wide support for its retention.

You may wish to be aware of plans to improve the A30 from the Meadows roundabout to Knoll Rd. This does not entail the removal of the bus lane and I can reassure you that there are no plans to do so.

This, of course, should not and will not deflect Cllr Fuller from his strongly-held ambition to remove the bus lane - but I would not offer him the realistic prospect of success in his campaign.

Annex B**Q. Supplementary question from Murray Rowlands, Local Resident**

My concern was with regard to rat running along Heatherley Road. A study was undertaken some years ago, when residents petitioned for speed humps, but these were refused as they would be needed in The Avenue too. The roads have always been busy despite the bus lane. What can be done about constant traffic? Could a traffic review be undertaken? Could the top of Wood Way be closed?

A. Response from Chairman on behalf of the Committee:

The Highways department get daily requests for traffic studies. The department does meet the regulations on safety speeding issues and have a speed management plan with the Police. Road closures can be considered as a last resort as we do have to maintain free access and passageway to road users. The Avenue was recently discussed, but the surveyed residents were not in favour of speed humps. I will ask the Highways Manager to look at this and report back to the next meeting.

Written Member Questions, Responses and Supplementary questions**Q. Written question from Cllr Rodney Bates**

The question:

Why did Surrey County Council decide to reject the findings of their own independent panel on member allowances and how much public money is being spent on the total increases of these allowances?

A. Response from Chairman on behalf of the Committee:

Thank you for your question – unfortunately, this question falls outside the remit of the local committee, however, I have asked David Hodge to respond directly to you on this matter and his response is included below:

A. Response from David Hodge, Leader of the Council:

There has been little change in Members allowances for thirteen years, despite the workload for Councillors (particularly those in the Cabinet) increasingly greatly. In fact, Government has added some 42 new responsibilities to County Councils since 2010 alone. As a result, these jobs are very much full-time and bear considerable financial responsibility – Surrey is the fifth biggest local authority in the country with an overall budget of £1.7 billion.

With these considerations in mind, the IRP felt that the Council's Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) levels for the most senior posts in the Cabinet were substantially below where they assessed they should be. The increases approved by Full Council on Tuesday 6th May for allowances and SRAs for most posts were fairly close to the IRP proposals or stayed as they were pre-review. In a pre-Council group meeting, Conservative members made a decision that the

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remuneration for the Leader should be upgraded to reflect the significant responsibility of this role. I did not partake in this discussion.

Overall the package of allowances and SRAs for 81 Members (excluding new roles and posts) as voted and approved, amounted to an increase of 12.3% costing an additional £163,000 p/a compared to now. I am hopeful that they will allow more people from different walks of life to consider becoming a Councillor. Surrey County Council has improved strongly over the past 4 years, making savings of £260m whilst also improving our services to residents. It is important that we have the best leadership in place to allow us to continue this journey over the coming years.

Q. Supplementary question from Cllr Rodney Bates

Please pass onto Mr Hodge that I am very grateful for his response. I would also like to know what budgets or local services have been cut to pay for these increases and if this is a move to encourage new Councillors, why was it not brought in prior to the elections?

A response will be provided outside of the meeting.