

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL  
LOCAL COMMITTEE IN EPSOM & EWELL  
8 December 2014**

**MEMBER QUESTIONS**

**Question 1 Cllr Neil Dallen  
Re: Streetlights**

When the replacement lights around the county was first discussed we were told that each light could be individually controlled, they would report themselves that they were not working and the response times to fix the lights were 48 hours for 'normal' failures with a penalty clause built into the contract if the response times were not met.

We now have new lights throughout the borough which is a vast improvement BUT I am still having to report lights that are not working, the response times are still weeks and not days.

How do the lights report their own failures or was that just sales talk?

What, if any, are the response times that are contracted for fixing lights?

What penalties, if any, have been paid by the contractor to SCC?

**Officer Response:**

We are unfortunately experiencing an intermittent problem with the Central Management System (CMS) which is affecting some lights across the County. This is by no means affecting all lights, but there is an increased level of faults being reported and so response times are starting to suffer. The lights rely on a combination of mobile phone and radio signals to communicate instructions for turning off/on, when to dim and when to return to full power etc - the fault results in some lights not communicating and this can mean lights on during the day or, lights coming on late and going off early - in rare cases it might mean a light not working at all over night.

Skanska are engaging additional resources (at their expense) to rectify this, however the solution requires a reconfiguration of each light to ensure the communication between it and the hub is at the optimum level. In most cases, the lights are working correctly so although it has affected lights across the County, it is less than 2% of total inventory. Unfortunately all faults first need to be checked to identify the cause (there are of course other explanations to why a light might not be working) before a fix can be applied.

To answer the specific questions raised by Cllr Dallen:

*How do the lights report their own failures or was that just sales talk?*

Lights that are communicating correctly will report successful switching, dimming etc and also any equipment failures which are sent to the control team in Skanska. Any light not communicating can be traced through the CMS. At present this is backed up by visual night time inspections which are carried out twice per month to identify lights which are not on - this is part of the additional resource planned to aid the solution.

*What, if any, are the response times that are contracted for fixing lights?*

The normal response times are 15 business days for a high speed road and 6 business days for all other faults. Some faults which require additional work such as replacing a column or

repairing the power supply then have additional time (10 and 30 business days respectively for these examples)

As described above, the increased volume of faults as a result of the CMS faults has put significant pressure on the team and them achieving these response times. This is now improving with some of the backlog cleared and fewer faults being recorded as the interventions are completed.

*What penalties, if any, have been paid by the contractor to SCC?*

No specific penalties have been applied to date. The focus at the moment is to ensure the problem is fixed as soon as possible and that the required additional resource is assigned to deal with it - in itself, this has a punitive effect to the contractor as they will not receive any additional income from the Council. Once the problem is resolved, we have the opportunity to review the performance during this period and back date failures if applicable. This is being closely monitored by Officers to ensure improvements are being made on a daily basis and the outstanding faults are addressed.

If Cllr Dallen has any outstanding issues that have not been resolved (with reference numbers) these can be investigated.

**Question 2 Cllr Michael Arthur  
Re: Kiln Lane Traffic Signals**

I have raised on several occasions over the past six months the fault with the signals in that phases are going to green for the subsidiary roads and pedestrian crossings when there is no call or activation for them to do so, thus causing unnecessary waits and delays in both directions of the busy A24 traffic on East Street and Kiln Lane exit.

I have been told that there are faults within the embedded detector loops which requires their renewal.

I was heartened one Monday about eight weeks ago when I observed slot cutting taking place to two sections of approach lanes and thus I anticipated impending resolution of the problem.

Alas, my hopes have not been fulfilled as the same faults still persist as at 2nd December.

Could I please have an update and that urgency is being given to correction of these defects.”

**Officer Response:**

Traffic Systems have informed us that slot cutting did take place a little while ago but that there was a delay in carrying out further work necessary to update the controller.

This has now been completed and there should now be an improvement in the operation of the traffic signals.

**Question 3 Cllr Tina Mountain  
Re: Town Centre Appearance**

I am extremely pleased that Chris Grayling has secured the extended use of the Oyster Card to Epsom Station. Ease of travel will hopefully encourage more visitors to our area. My concern is that when the public arrive in Epsom, there is no sign that welcomes them to our Town Centre; there is no sign telling them where to find the High Street or Market Place.

When they arrive they are confronted by pavements covered in cigarette ends, debris and stale chewing gum stains; the bench is broken, the central reservation is full of weeds and scrubby, half dead shrubs. Following our last meeting, a couple of the dead trees have been replaced and a meagre attempt to clean the pavements has been carried out. Old, soaking cigarette ends remain. Please could it be made clear, who is responsible for this work. If the County is responsible for signs, I will happily deal with the problem.

If the Developers are responsible for remedial work, what is their agenda and time schedule?

If the Borough is responsible for cleaning, how often is this carried out?

Should visitors find their way to the High Street and Market they are confronted with the same unpleasant experience: rubbish on the pavements, cigarette ends lodged in the upended paving as they cross the road; there are even no signs directing them to The Derby, for which we are so famous.

We have a Town that is steeped in history and one of which we could be proud. How can we hope to promote our Town and improve footfall when this is not reflected in its appearance?

**Officer Response:**

The footway area outside Epsom Station is not adopted so is still the responsibility of the developer of the station. A final inspection is due to take place on 16th December but the area will only be formally adopted by SCC if the developer has made good all the defects that were identified at the initial inspection stage when the works were completed.

The Borough Council (EEBC) is responsible for street cleansing. Station Approach used to be swept every morning at 5:30am by the compact (pavement) sweeper as part of the mechanical cleansing of the rest of the Town. However, following complaints from a resident in Hudson House about the noise the sweeper was making at such an unsociable hour this had to be discontinued. The sweeper cannot be used later in the morning as it is unsafe and inefficient to sweep once the volume of commuters has built up in the morning. The area is now swept manually at around 6-7am, but this has not eradicated all of the litter and cigarette ends as effectively as a sweeper/manual approach would have done.

EEBC acknowledge that it needs to reconsider its approach to cleansing in this prominent area of Town and suggests that the sweeping should be increased to three times a day Monday – Saturday. The area will also be swept on Sundays by the limited staff available on that day. This will be closely monitored by the Street Cleansing Supervisor to ensure that noticeable improvements are made.

When Hudson House was redeveloped approximately 5 years ago, a number of trees and shrubs were planted by the developer who was responsible for looking after these for the following couple of years. However, due to a period of drought the majority of these did not survive. The developer paid SCC a commuted sum for the on-going maintenance. Last year the Borough Council replanted the area with plants and trees selected by the Borough Tree Officer. Unfortunately, since the area has been replanted one of the new trees has not fared well and will need to be replaced and more shrubs are needed to completely fill the beds. SCC and EEBC will work together to ensure that the planting establishes satisfactorily.

The central reservation has recently been weed sprayed and the weeds are now beginning die out and will be removed in the next couple of weeks.

There are signs for vehicles directing motorists to Epsom Grandstand all around the Borough, including the town centre, and on all approaches to Epsom Downs there are signs reading 'Epsom Downs - Home of the Derby' I am not sure pedestrian signs in the town centre directing people on foot to the Grandstand would be helpful. However, during the Derby Festival there are temporary signs for pedestrians outside the station directing visitors to the taxi rank or to the special buses which take them directly to the racecourse.

A 'waymarker' package of pedestrian signs will form part of the proposed Plan E Project which will be delivered next year. As a result of the partnership working between EEBC and SCC substantial funding of over £2.7 million has been provided to carry out major improvements in the town including a comprehensive pedestrian signing scheme. A detailed audit has recently been completed and design work is ongoing. The full package will include map type signs in the station with information for passengers continuing their journeys and ample signing to all key destinations in the town centre as well as a number of remodelled junctions and enhanced public spaces.

**Question 4 Cllr Colin Taylor**  
**Re: Local Chemist**

Redevelopment of the shops in Manor Green Road has recently been completed. The larger of the remaining unoccupied units has been let for use as a local chemist, which would include a dispensary.

The NHS gave permission for the new dispensary, but the existing chemists appealed against this decision.

The applicant submitted a petition of support signed by local residents. The premises concerned lies at the boundary between Stamford ward and Court ward. Letters or emails were submitted showing the support all 6 borough councillors, including confirmation of the support of Stamford ward residents association.

Not only is there a widespread wish to have a dispensing chemist in a more convenient location like this, there is also a concern that these new premises should be used for a retail purpose appropriate to its location within a residential area.

Despite considerable local support and no opposition apart from rival businesses, the appeal was upheld on the grounds that there was no proposal for a dispensing chemist at this location in the relevant plan.

However, under NHS re-organisation, responsibility for licensing dispensing chemists has now passed to the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board HWB\*.

Members of this Local Committee should have received a copy of a letter to the HWB from the applicant's agent, followed by one from the applicant asking for their support.

These documents are not as clear as the explanations given me by phone, so I have asked for clearer versions, which I hope members will have received by the time of the meeting.

My questions are:

1. Do the members of this Local Committee support the wish of local residents for these new premises to be licensed for use as a dispensing chemist?

2. Will the Local Committee please formally advise the Health and Wellbeing Board of its support and urge an early decision, least the premises are taken over for a non-retail purpose?

(\* Members include county councillors Michael Gosling, Mary Angel and Mel Few, SCC officers Nick Wilson, Dave Sargeant and Public Health Director Helen Atkinson, 3 borough councillors, doctors representing Surrey's 6 Clinical Commissioning Groups, a Healthwatch representative and the Chief Constable.)

**Officer Response:**

Under the NHS Regulations (2013)ii, a person who wishes to provide NHS pharmaceutical services must generally apply to NHS England to be included on a relevant list by proving they are able to meet a pharmaceutical need as set out in the relevant Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA). The PNA is therefore an essential part of the process of making decisions about market entry for new service providers.

The application for a pharmacy in this location was rejected by the NHS as it was not included in the current PNA, which gives an overview of current services but does not name locations where additional pharmacies could be required.

Surrey's draft Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment is currently out for consultation and will be published by April 2015. The PNA aims to review the current pharmaceutical services in Surrey and identify any gaps in provision through assessment, consultation and analysis of local need. Comments on the draft are invited until Friday 31st December. Further information, a copy of the draft and a link to the online consultation can be found at <https://www.surreysays.co.uk/public-health-health-improvement/pna>

**Question 5 Cllr Colin Taylor  
Re: High Street Puddles**

I have asked numerous questions about the puddles that form in the western part of Epsom's High Street, since it was repaved about 10 years ago without proper falls for drainage.

The biggest puddles form at vehicle cross-overs, where the bottom part of the slope is lower than the adjacent carriageway. The worst location is at the one next to what is now TK Maxx. I suggested patching the surfacing to produce proper falls, but officers felt it would be better to insert additional drains instead.

Recently a new drain has been added in the carriageway adjacent to the cross-over next to TK Maxx. However as the level of the carriageway is higher than the bottom of the cross-over, the benefit is only partial. The puddle that forms at this location when rain falls is now smaller, but still quite large.

I feel sure this could be improved by adding a small patch of additional surfacing to the lower part of the slope. If the relevant county member agrees, could this be arranged please?

**Officer Response:**

We have inspected the site, and as far as we can see, the gully seems to be fully functional; and there is no ponding at that location. We will continue to monitor the location over the coming weeks; and will undertake repairs if necessary.

**Question 6 Cllr Colin Taylor**  
**Re: Ewell-Epsom cycle path – Missing Link**

At the 23rd June meeting of this committee I asked about the expected date for work to start on the off-road cycle path in Pound Lane between Lower Court Road and Eastway – a length of some 101m forming a “missing link” in the off-carriageway cycle path between Ewell and Epsom.

The reply then given was “The improvements to the footway surface are complete. Shared use cycle signs will be going up at each end within the next 3 weeks.”

As at 1st December (23 weeks later) the necessary white lines still haven’t been added and I don’t think the signs are in place either.

When can we now expect this missing link to be completed?

**Officer Response:**

The contractor had been given the signs to erect at each end of the new shared use cycleway in Pound Lane shortly after the construction work was completed. However it appears the work has not been done. The signs will be put up before the end of the year.

We had decided not to paint the cycle and pedestrian symbols at each end of the newly resurfaced cycleway as we felt this would be excessive for such a short section. We can add the road marking symbols if the Member feels they are necessary, but SCC feel the shared use cycle signs (when erected) would be sufficient to indicate the nature of the shared use space.

**Question 7 Cllr Colin Taylor**  
**Re: Safe Routes to School – Stamford Green Primary**

Although SCC no longer seems to have the pro-active “Safe Routes to School” officers who spear-headed the Safe Routes to School campaign a few years ago, I believe it is still county policy.

I understand the technical reasons why requirements for additional safe routes to Stamford Green primary school could not be included in the planning consent for the scheme for expansion to 3-form entry currently under construction.

However, with the traffic situation at school opening and closing times already at saturation outside the main entrance in Christ Church Mount, steps do still need to be taken to ensure safe access to the school for the additional 210 children expected over the next 7 years. As many of the additional pupils are expected to come from the western side, access via the school’s West Gate should be encouraged. Work is urgently needed to improve pedestrian safety in the approach road to De Mel Close where there are no separate footways, but large numbers of children pass that way on foot whilst others are dropped off from cars. With the re-development of Ethel Bailey Close now apparently imminent, a more suitable drop off point also needs to be provided somewhere between Chertsey Lane and the school’s West Gate, in the area of Cherry Tree Lane, Cuddington Glade, Oak Glade and Ethel Bailey Close, otherwise a similar problem is bound to arise in the new Ethel Bailey Close development.

Also, to avoid children cycling along the busy but narrow Manor Green Road, it has been proposed to add a spur from the new West Hill/Christ Church Road cycle path through the allotments.

Have these issues been pointed out to Highways officers by Education officers or by SCC or EEBC Planners?

How soon can steps be taken to provide safe routes to school in these areas?

**Officer Response:**

SCC would need to look into each of the points made and discuss the possibilities with a number of stakeholders. Should a suitable solution be found, we would then need to identify funding. Depending on the proposals this may need to be funded by the Local Area Committee or the local Divisional Member's allowance. We would also look at whether there was any possible developer funding available.

Realistically any agreed measures are unlikely to be in place before September 2015.

**Question 8 Cllr Colin Taylor  
Re: Highways advice to Planners**

The traffic and parking assessment accepted as part of the planning application for expanding Stamford Green primary school assumed that it would be acceptable not to increase the on-site parking provision for staff, despite a 50% increase in the size of the school, because some staff could be required to park off site in local roads, other than those required for dropping off children from cars.

One of those listed as suitable in the approved plans was Ethel Bailey Close.

However, in reviewing the current proposals to re-develop Ethel Bailey Close (replacing 5 bungalows by 48 houses), SCC highways have apparently not mentioned this to EEBC planners. Indeed no mention seems to have been made of any of the implications of expanding the school, which is right next to this site, including the probable demand to use this new development for dropping off children to use the school's West Gate.

Why is it considered acceptable to approve contradictory assumptions for projects on adjacent sites?

**Officer Response:**

The Highways advice to planners on Ethel Bailey Close did not include mention of the dropping off area for Stamford Green School because it is a private road and has not (so far) been offered for adoption by the developers. There is a footpath link from the development onto the footpath to the school so the development will be sustainable for parents from the development travelling to school. It is not appropriate to request developers to provide car parks for schools. There is on street parking space if the road becomes adopted highway and there is plenty of on street space on the approach to Ethel Bailey Close.

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