

## INFORMAL PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The meeting was preceded by an informal public question time. The matters raised are summarised below. This summary does not form part of the formal minutes of the meeting.

### 1. From David Beaman (Farnham)

The public transport watchdog Passenger Focus has praised Surrey County Council's consultation procedure during the recent three-phase review of local bus services and recommended it as a model of best practice for other local authorities to copy. Whilst the consultation procedure in theory is indeed a model of good practice, the translation from theory to practical implementation following the third phase review of local bus services in Waverley and Guildford has not resulted in a better bus service for Farnham. The revised bus network that was introduced in September 2012 following the consultation has provided a bus service that is significantly worse than before.

Members of the Local Committee will recall that at the last meeting on 21 September I drew attention to the problems that had arisen from the introduction of a revised timetable on Routes 17 and 18 that operate between Aldershot, Farnham, Rowledge and Whitehill – this service became highly unreliable, with buses operating up to 15 minutes late (and occasionally even later), and a timetable that was confusing for passengers to understand, with the regular Monday to Saturday daytime service that operated on a regular 30-minute frequency (timed to connect at Farnham station with trains to and from London) being replaced with a timetable that whilst providing two buses per hour now operates on a 20 then 40 minute split that now fails (if indeed it was reliable) to connect with trains at Farnham. At Wrecclesham the situation is even worse with the second bus to Farnham departing 8 minutes after the first bus, followed by a gap of 52 minutes; and to confuse passengers even more the second bus to Farnham travels in the opposite direction to the first bus and picks up passengers from bus-stops on the opposite side of the road.

Whilst service reliability has improved (although many journeys still operate late) the timetable now operated does not meet passenger needs and it should be of no surprise that in a recent response to a specific complaint that I made regarding unreliable service the response from Stagecoach stated:

“It seems that traffic conditions have changed in recent times and have impacted upon reliability. Added to this, it does appear that the major timetable revisions in September have failed to settle in terms of journey times and passenger numbers. As a result of these two factors we are currently reviewing the timetable and hope to make some improvements to improve punctuality.”

Whilst accepting that Monday to Saturday daytime journeys on Services 17 and 18 are operated by Stagecoach commercially (and over which Surrey County Council has no direct control) I would like to request that Surrey County Council now makes every effort to persuade Stagecoach to revert as much as possible to the old timetable that provided a regular 30 minute Monday to Saturday daytime service timed to connect at Farnham station with trains to and from London.

The Chairman undertook to obtain a response from the relevant officers.

**2. From Ms Fiona Attrill (Popes Mead, Haslemere)**

The question referred to the unanimous support for a residents only parking scheme in Popes Mead and Lower West Street, Haslemere. The most recent proposals were satisfactory to residents, except that an extended expiry time to coincide with that of the Waverley Borough Council car parks would be preferable. Can the Committee assure residents that there will be no further delay in the implementation of residents only parking in this location and that this will happen by the end of the first quarter of 2013.

The Chairman declined to give a response as the results of the recent consultation are being analysed and the outcome will be considered at an additional meeting of the Committee in late January.

**3. From Dr Richard Seaborne (Bramley Parish Council)**

Dr Seaborne asked the Committee whether the speed of communication by the County Council in response to matters raised by the Parish Council could be improved, reporting that a number of communications had not been responded to.

The Chairman welcomed the fact that a meeting with the County Council on the future of the library had been encouraging and it was noted that a proposal to extend the 30mph limits on the A281 would be considered in the formal agenda. It was reported that parking improvements adjacent to the parish church would be implemented in early 2013. The Chairman advised the Parish Council to consult the relevant County Councillor in the event of poor response times or to report the matter to herself.

**4. From Mr Clive Rollinson**

Mr Rollinson expressed his concern about the proposed removal of parking spaces in Petworth Road – he felt that there was insufficient evidence to justify the expense of the zebra crossing scheme and that the proposed reduction in parking capacity could have a detrimental effect on businesses.

The Chairman noted that the additional meeting of the Committee in January would only consider the results of the recent consultation. Mr Rollinson's concerns would be considered in the discussion at Item 8 on the formal agenda for today's meeting.