



SURREY

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE EPSOM & EWELL
29 February 2016**

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

**Question 1 – Cllr Jean Steer
Re: Green Lanes Stream**

Question:

For the past six years at least, I have been trying to get the bed of the stream that runs along Green Lanes in West Ewell cleared of silt and vegetation. Trees have seeded in this water course and have grown into maturity. This stream is a tributary for the Hogs Mill River and therefore needs to flow freely. Some five years ago, the Environment Agency examined the stream and concluded that at least 60% of the silt could be removed along with the overgrown vegetation. There has been a considerable amount of work done by multi-agency funding to the Hogs Mill River over the past few years, but the Green Lanes stream has not been included.

It has been established that the responsibility for the bed of the stream lies with Surrey County Council, although the banks are cut by the Borough Council. Surrey County Council has accepted that it is their responsibility but, so far, has not given any assurance about its upkeep.

The widespread flooding across the whole of this country, including Surrey, has highlighted residents' concerns that the stream could flood as it did many years ago

Will the County Council look into this situation as soon as possible and particularly whilst the heavy rainfall continues.

Officer Response:

The County Council is currently registered as the owner of the bed of the stream. This watercourse is designated as a main river and the land appears to have been acquired by this Council in connection with a land drainage improvement scheme in 1957. This land is no longer required for any County Council functions and it seems it should have been transferred to the Environment Agency following the Water Act 1973 and subsequent legislation. The Environment Agency has been contacted by the County Council legal department seeking its agreement to the transfer of the title to the land and a response is awaited. The Environment Agency has indicated that this may take some time, due to pressure of work within its legal team and that the matter is not considered a priority. The County Council has no plans to carry out any work in the area in the meantime.

**Question 2 – Cllr Keith Partridge
Re: Malden Rushett Junction**

Question:

Will SCC's Highways Department please confirm their willingness to assist Epsom and Ewell Borough Councillors' with forward communications and negotiation with TfL, regarding the traffic light phasing at the main Malden Rushett crossroad junction? This we feel is now necessary, because EEBC residents travelling towards Malden Rushett westbound along Rushett Lane (B280), especially during the early morning rush-hour period, are having to queue for excessive periods of time before reaching the junction. This support could also include representation at any future meetings and possible site visits.

These delays are causing frustration and are having a detrimental effect on our residents reaching their normal places of work. During November 2015, it was observed that the green light phasing had been reduced from something like 16 seconds down to a paltry 9 seconds, with the adverse effect of queues often reaching back not only to the Horton Lane roundabout, but also beyond that to Christchurch church situated on Christ Church Road, a distance of at least 1.5 miles. Recent examples of the delays encountered by our residents from their starting to queue and then actually reaching the Malden Rushett traffic lights, are: -

1. 10th January Queuing for 31 minutes
2. 11th January 25 minutes
3. 12th January 23 minutes
4. 18th January 21 minutes
5. 19th January 22 minutes
6. 2nd February 20 minutes
7. 3rd February 20 minutes
8. 5th February 25 minutes
9. 8th February 30 minutes

TfL did provide a response on 24th November 2015 explaining their SCOOT system optimises the signal timings based on actual vehicle demand. But this does not seem to take into account, the queuing traffic along Rushett Lane and our local residents are finding that the delays are getting longer and becoming more and more frequent. We are collating further queuing times and also some photographs, which will hopefully help going forward. These will be made readily available, as deemed necessary.

Officer Response:

SCC wrote to TfL last year raising concerns about the timings on the traffic signals being unfavourable to Rushett Lane traffic, following the improvement to the junction.

TfL responded on 24th November 2015 with the following reply

“In managing London’s traffic signals, we seek to safely balance the needs of motorists, pedestrians and cyclists within a heavily used network with significant competing demands.

The signals in question are operating on a dynamic traffic control system called SCOOT that optimises signal timings based on actual vehicle demand. During peak periods there are significant queues on all approaches to the

junction with the A243 queuing back to the M25 junction 9 in the AM peak, and Bridge Road Roundabout during the PM peak. Whilst we recognise that there also significant queues on Rushett Lane during the AM peak and Fair oak Lane during the PM peak, we have tried to balance the needs of all users of the junction and feel that the current signal timings in operation represent the best balance for everybody. We will continue to monitor the junction to ensure that this remains the case.”

SCC have written again to TfL asking for the timings to be reviewed following the information supplied by Cllr Partridge.

TfL have replied with the following statement

“During the AM peak Rushett Lane receives an average of 16 seconds green time. This has been the case since November 2015. The SCOOT system detects vehicle flow on all approaches to the junction and adjusts green time according to demand. Since SCOOT has been implemented queues on certain approaches to the junction have changed in order to create a fair balance between all vehicles in the network.”

**Question 3 – Cllr Martin Olney
Re: Residents Parking Zones (RPZ)**

Question:

At the last meeting of the Local Committee many people express concern about the way in which the introduction of a RPZ was considered. The introduction of a 70% majority was a great concern. It appears to be a money saving measure given the other factors that are taken into consideration. Can we have a definitive statement on what criteria are used to select the participants in a vote for a RPZ?

As an illustration of my concerns I will use a request that I recently made. I asked for grasscrete to be put on the green outside numbers 4 to 24 Wheelers lane – 11 homes which form a crescent around the proposed CPZ. The idea was to serve the small group of people that stay at home during the day and use their cars. This would include home workers, retired people and families with young children. There is already a dropped kerb that serves no 2 Wheelers lane next to the green.

My understanding is that the whole of Wheelers Lane would be canvassed for their opinion of this change. That would be a total of 42 homes. Last time a RPZ was looked at Lane End was also included. This is a single track cul-de-sac off Wheelers Lane with 9 homes, all with off street parking.

I would like clarification on why the following groups would be included in the consultation:

- Those homes outside the crescent formed by the proposed RPZ;
- Homes with off street parking and/or garages;
- Those that do not meet the criteria for which the RPZ was required

I would also like to understand what the cost effectiveness criteria are. In my example the RPZ would have been for a small group of people that stay at home during the day. The roads are used by commuters, those employed locally and shoppers to park their cars. Therefore if the local residents move their cars there is

very little likelihood of finding a parking space anywhere near their homes on their return.

Officer Response:

There is no criteria used to select participants in a RPZ - usually the residents concerned would let us know that they wish us to look at installing a scheme and the location of the residents would determine the extents of a proposal.

The 70% criteria enables us to better manage peoples expectations and is a County wide requirement agreed by the Cabinet member to ensure consistency.

A residents permit scheme should not be introduced unless there is a majority in favour - we have set this at 70% as it makes it a clear majority with no room for questioning the outcome.

Previously it was often the case that 1 or 2 residents would request a scheme and a lot of officer time and the committee's budgets was spent on carrying out preliminary consultations, only to find that a majority of residents in the area were not in favour of a scheme.

We are now asking residents to speak to their neighbours and gain 70% in favour before we start, so that we set off on the right foot and actually look at implementing something that is required – this removes the need for us to carry out any preliminary consultations and in turn means that any schemes agreed by the Committee can be implemented more quickly.

When a RPZ was previously considered in Wheelers Lane, there was mass objection to the scheme and it was dropped. No further proposals will be considered unless the residents views have changed and the current criteria for imposing such a scheme can be met.

The criteria for a residents permit scheme does not penalise individuals within a proposed area - if there are one or two residents with off-street parking, then they will be able to apply for any additional permits that may be required. Where this would make a difference is if the entire street had ample off-street parking and a scheme was being requested to prevent others from parking in the area, essentially making it seem like a private road.

The length of the scheme is either determined by the Engineer, finding a reasonable cut off point for the scheme or those residents who have applied and their location.

As stated previously, it is not the individual, but the whole area that is looked at to determine the RPZ requirements and anyone is able to respond to the statutory advertisement of the scheme. These views are then considered before a final decision is made on whether it would be appropriate to implement a RPZ.

A resident permit scheme must be self financing - the monies that residents pay for permits is for enforcement, maintenance and administration costs.

The cost of providing grasscrete over the area between 4 and 24 Wheelers Lane is separate from any RPZ consideration and would be approx £40k, possibly more with design costs. It is unlikely to be considered a priority for the Committees limited funding at the current time.

Question 4 – Cllr David Reeve

Re: Exit from Park Avenue West at the Beggars Hill roundabout

Question:

We have had several complaints from residents about the congestion in Park Avenue West trying to enter the Ewell By-Pass at the Beggars Hill roundabout.

This was discussed with the local SCC Councillors who explained about the huge reductions in Grants making changes almost impossible.

There is a solution which, apart from a survey, could be very cheap to implement.

There are traffic lights on the By-pass just to the west of this roundabout. Currently they are pedestrian activated.

They could be programmed to operate during rush hour congestion. These lights could be sequenced with the traffic lights at Stoneleigh Park Road so that cars do not have an additional stoppage.

Would the Committee support this proposal?

Officer Response:

There is an existing pelican crossing on Kingston Road linking the bus stops near to the Beggars Hill roundabout. The pelican is activated by pedestrian demand (push button). Changing the way in which the pelican operates may lead to motorists believing the signals are not working properly as they would show a red light to vehicles when there are no pedestrians crossing and this will lead to red light abuse.

In addition, it is not possible to link the traffic signals without providing ducting between the traffic signals at Stoneleigh Park Road and the pelican crossing which is a distance of 330m. This would be an extremely expensive operation and could not be justified for what is essentially a lack of patience for motorists exiting Park Avenue West in the peak hours. Making the exit from Park Avenue West more attractive may lead to an increase in vehicles using it as a short cut.

At present when the Kingston Road (Epsom bound) traffic at Stoneleigh Park Road is held up the traffic from Stoneleigh Park Road is given a green light but the volume is not that great that it prevents Park Avenue West traffic from exiting. Often traffic in Park Avenue West is held up due to vehicles turning left on the by pass joining a queue from the London Road junction or vehicles waiting to turn right being delayed due to the queue of traffic Kingston bound.

Question 5 – Teresa Cass

Re: Grosvenor Road/ Langley Vale Road Junction

Question:

I am very pleased to see that you are recommending no change to the kerb line on the southern side of the junction apart from re aligning the tactile section of the path. Although I was not at the original petition resident, highways, county councillor meeting, as far as I am aware the concerns regarding speeding were within the village, further up the roads (mainly in Beaconsfield) I do have firsthand knowledge

that some residents of Rosebery Road had contacted Cllr Mountain with regards to speeding in their road.

Following the introduction of the speed humps in Langley Vale Road, many years ago, the speed of traffic entering the village was greatly reduced and the vehicle “knocks” that had been a regular occurrence have ceased. However speeding further into the village is still an issue which these schemes, at the entrance, would really never have addressed. I believe the origin of this scheme was always about traffic within the village, not at the entrance, and therefore - To state that the “traffic entering Grosvenor Road is now entering more slowly” and that “This is the main aim of the scheme” is incorrect and should be removed from the report.

It was previously reported that most of the speeding is done by the residents; therefore surely education of that speed is needed. So how can we do that? I'm not sure putting signs to say “you are entering a village” would really work on people who live in the village and speed - they already know they live in a village! We have spoken to the police who will not allow us to speed checks due to the classification of “cul de sac” for these roads.

I have been told that flashing signs do not make a difference however surely this does educate people as to what speed they are doing and hopefully make them slow down. We do find that the gradient of Langley Vale Village means drivers do tend to accelerate hard after entering the village and therefore would not necessarily be aware of the speed they are doing.

In view of this:

- Is there any funding left in the Langley Vale pot as this scheme was not completed fully? If yes - how much money is left?
- How much does it cost to erect a flashing speed sign?
- Can the officers please advise as to how we can get the” cul de sac” classification removed from Langley Vale

Finally - referring back to my verbal question at the September meeting are you yet able to confirm what internal procedures have been put in place to ensure that this type of situation does not happen again.

Just as an extra note – there are still occasional times when vehicles are backed in to Langley Vale Road, if Grosvenor Road is blocked, as there is no longer the curve to house the waiting vehicles.

Officer Response:

Surrey Police has attempted speed enforcement within Rosebery Road, Beaconsfield Road and Grosvenor Road but found that the level of compliance with the 30mph speed limit is very good. There is no evidence to suggest a need for traffic calming in these roads, other than residents' perceptions. These issues were explored and reported to Committee when the original petition was submitted.

The main aim of the scheme, which is now part completed, was indeed to reduce the speed of vehicles entering Grosvenor Road.

Most drivers in Rosebery Road, Beaconsfield Road and Grosvenor Road will be residents, their visitors, and parents driving their children to school. Any initiative to encourage these drivers to slow down would be most effective if promoted by the local community. Officers have observed that the local community is quite active on

social media, and this could be a useful tool in encouraging drivers to behave responsibly. Any new signs are primarily intended for visitors to Langley Vale. We would agree they are unlikely to have any impact on the behaviour of residents.

Rosebery Road, Beaconsfield Road and Grosvenor Road are all cul de sacs, by definition. If there is a disagreement with Surrey Police over the establishment of a Community Speed Watch, this should be taken up with Surrey Police. As suggested above, it is unlikely that a Community Speed Watch would find evidence of significant speeding.

The cheapest Vehicle Activated Signs cost approximately £2,500 and have been demonstrated only to have a very minimal impact of driver behaviour. Most drivers using Rosebery Road, Beaconsfield Road and Grosvenor Road will be well aware of the 30mph speed limit. A Vehicle Activated Sign would not provide these drivers with any new information.

There is a small amount of developer money remaining that would cover the cost of realigning the tactile paving on the southern side of the Grosvenor Road bellmouth. If there are any monies left over after these works, we would then discuss priorities for investing these monies with the Divisional Member.

There are no plans to extend either Rosebery Road, Beaconsfield Road or Grosvenor Road at the present time to make them into through routes leading eastwards across Epsom Downs and connecting to Tadworth. Therefore all three will remain cul de sacs for the foreseeable future.

The proposed consultation guidelines are due to be submitted to the Cabinet Member for approval, but there has not been a Cabinet Member meeting since Committee met in December so this has not happened yet.

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