

Agenda item 5



LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)

**PUBLIC QUESTION & RESPONSE 2**

DATE: 24 March 2017

A question has been received from Mr George Hesse:

Many residents of Surrey, myself included, are extremely concerned about the continuing deterioration of the condition of our roads.

- There are road signs that have fallen over.
- There are road signs falling apart.
- Many road signs are filthy never having been cleaned.
- Many signs have tree branches that have grown out partially obscuring them.
- Verges on main roads, particularly the A3 and A31 are full of rubbish and litter.

Road surfaces are in many places, sub-standard, patched badly, have subsiding inspection covers and are sometimes potholed. These conditions are damaging to cars and life threatening to Motorcyclists & Scooter riders.

I have been fobbed off by SCC Highways for months telling me work is programmed but which hasn't been done.

Our County looks utterly shabby because of this neglect. It does nothing to promote the beauty of Surrey to visitors and tourists. What are they going to see if they do visit? Surrey is dirtier, more littered and broken down than Istanbul, and towns throughout France & Germany, and even towns in Southern Portugal which are cleaner.

We all pay our road tax and deserve far better than this.

My question to the Committee is: **Can SCC Highways provide a genuine and realistic remedial programme of work to address these serious issues before our roads deteriorate further?**

Mr Hesse's attention is directed towards the 'Highways and Transport Asset Management Strategy June 2016' which is available on the SCC website ([www.surreycc.gov.uk](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk)) and sets out in detail the County Council's approach to maintaining the highway network. The response below contains extracts from the strategy in italics.

*Managing a highways network the size of Surrey is complex and challenging. As Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority, we are responsible for assets with a gross replacement cost of £7.8 billion, including over 3,000 miles of roads, 1,800 bridges and structures and 3,262 miles of pavement. Most of the assets we look after are obvious to users (roads, pavements, bridges, tunnels, street lights and so on). However we also manage assets that are less visible, such as embankments and safety barriers. Few of our assets are in an 'as new' state and with a limited budget we have to prioritise our work to achieve best value*

### **Carriageway Surfaces**

*We already have a proven track record of the application of sound asset management principles delivering value for money. In 2012 17% of Surrey's road network was in need of structural repair. We developed the innovative Horizon programme to reduce the length of the network in need of structural repair to 12% over 5 years by resurfacing around 10% of the worst condition roads. At the time that Horizon was conceived, annual programmes of work were the norm in the highways industry; working in partnership with our Highways contractor we recognised the benefits that a long term programme of works would bring. For example, contractors would be able to give discounts due to long term continuity of works and specialist programmes of work could be developed.*

Horizon 2, a second five year carriageway surfacing programme up to 2021, will be launched this April and should result in a further reduction in the proportion of the network in need of structural repair.

SCC Highways also operate a reactive maintenance system, repairing potholes and other defects as they are reported either by residents or highways safety inspectors.

### **Traffic Signs**

*Surrey has responsibility for maintaining a wide range of signs throughout the county that includes everything from small signs to direct pedestrians through to large advance direction signs on the principal road network. Following a Survey conducted in 2015 We now hold inventory data for over 111,000 signs across the county with comprehensive coverage on all classifications of road the county The survey data has not been validated but we have an ongoing programme address this during the term of the LTP.*

*A basic condition assessment was conducted as part of the 2015 Survey, this shows that*

*2 % are in need of repair*

*10% are in a serviceable condition*

*88% are in a Good/ OK condition*

*We do not have a regular programme of sign replacement or cleaning. Currently signs are replaced on a purely ad-hoc basis when identified by inspections, following reports from the public or as the result of a Road Traffic Collision (RTC).*

## **Litter**

The borough and district councils are responsible for cleansing roads, as well as providing & maintaining litter bins on the public highway.

Note that both the A3 (part of the trunk road and motorway network which is maintained by Highways England) and A31 (maintained by SCC) are high speed roads. In the interest of safety litter picks are carried out under off-peak lane closures, which are organised twice each year by HE/SCC to cut grass verges and clear silt from road drainage systems. Given the very high volumes of traffic using these roads noticeable levels of litter can accumulate between picks.

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