

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (RUNNYMEDE)

Item 6 – Written Public Question

DATE: 25 September 2017



Please accept our written question to the Local Committee regarding road safety at Bishopsgate School in Englefield Green.

The School's entrance and exit is located on an area of Bishopsgate Road where there are currently no speed restrictions in place. The speed that vehicles travel when passing the school is, at times, excessive (greater than the 60 miles per hour speed limit) and combined with inconsiderate parking which obscures entrances and exits means that the staff are extremely concerned that the situation is an 'accident waiting to happen'.

Our question is:

Would the local committee consider reducing the speed limit and implement measures to eliminate dangerous parking outside of the school?

Officer response

Thank you for raising your concerns about parking and road safety in the area of Bishopsgate Road near the entrance and exit to Bishopsgate School.

The Local Committee understands that representatives from the school met with county council officers from the North West Area Highway and School Sustainable Travel teams in November 2016 to consider the concerns raised. During that meeting the following points were highlighted by the county council officers:

- The section of Bishopsgate Road near the school has a good safety record with only one personal injury accident having occurred in the last 10 years. This accident involved a rider falling from a horse. (There have been no personal injury accidents since the meeting took place up to the end of June 2017, which is the latest available data).
- There are signs on the westbound approach to warn drivers of the school and to expect children in the road. However, the signs previously present on the eastbound approach are no longer in place. In addition to the need to replace the missing signs on the eastbound approach there is potential to upgrade the signing to provide a more prominent warning to motorists.

- Parking problems exist outside most schools at drop off/pick up times and this is not an issue that is easily resolved. The level of parking that takes place outside Bishopsgate School is lower than outside many schools since children can be dropped off and picked up inside the school grounds. The county council could consider introducing waiting restrictions. However, experience from other locations suggests that these would not necessarily be effective in resolving school parking issues. It should also be noted that waiting restrictions would not prohibit parents from stopping to drop off/pick up children or from parking for short periods (since parking enforcement officers have to allow an observation period before issuing a ticket).
- Whilst Bishopsgate Road is subject to a 60mph speed limit, this is not unusual for rural roads of this type. However, the nature of the road means that most drivers will be travelling below this speed especially at times when there are vehicles parked near the school. A change in speed limit could only be considered after a speed limit assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the county council's "Setting Local Speed Limits" policy. Given that other connecting roads in the area are similar in nature and are also subject to national speed limit (60mph) it would be more appropriate to consider the area as a whole rather than just assess Bishopsgate Road in isolation.

Following the meeting it was agreed that improved warning signs would be installed on both approaches to the school and that "SLOW" markings would be painted on the carriageway adjacent to the signs. Unfortunately, there has been a delay in delivering the proposals due to funding constraints. However, the Local Committee has been reassured that the works are now being progressed and should be completed within the next 3-4 months.

In response to the further concerns raised by the School about the existing speed limit, a proposal to undertake a speed limit assessment for Bishopsgate Road (as part of an area wide review) has been added to the list of schemes to be assessed for inclusion in the Local Committee's 2018/19 programme of works (subject to there being a budget available to enable a programme of works to be agreed). The proposals on this list will be assessed against a number of criteria and ranked to assist the Local Committee in determining which schemes it wishes to prioritise.

Further to the above comments about waiting restrictions an alternative way of controlling parking would be to consider installing a school keep clear marking. This would prohibit parents from stopping on the markings at specified times. However, School Keep Clear marking can only be installed over a limited length.

The county council carries out a parking review in each of the boroughs and districts every 12-18 months. In each review it is considered if the area needs any new parking controls or changes to existing ones, based on any requests for changes or new restrictions that have been received since the previous review.