



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE IN EPSOM & EWELL
12 March 2018**

MEMBER QUESTIONS

**Question 1: Cllr Neil Dallen
Re: Street light fault reporting**

Once again the street lights are out along High Street (East) and some in Station Approach (early January 2018).

When the lights were replaced, Skanska stated that the new lights would be able to 'report' that they were failing and also when they had failed.

Does anyone get these 'reports' and, if so, what action is taken?

If these 'reports' are not received can a process be put in place to receive them and then action the failures.

Officer Response:

Our Service Provider (Skanska) receives reports from our Central Management System (CMS) on a daily basis about any lights that are operating outside of agreed limits or are not communicating correctly.

We have observed that it is possible for lights to be 'out of communication' with the CMS for several days but still be working (i.e. they continue operating to their last known configuration). The reports are therefore monitored and programmed for repair after seven days of 'no communication'.

Skanska had received reports that these lights were 'out of communication' with the CMS and they had been programmed for repair. Subsequently we received reports from members of the public confirming that the lights were not working and the repair was prioritised.

Skanska attended on 4 January and identified that the third party festive decorations were faulty and were causing the power to 'trip'. These decorations were disconnected and the street lighting was restored.

We are making improvements to our website and in addition to reporting, it should now be possible to track and monitor faults online: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-and-cleaning/street-lights-traffic-signals-and-signs/street-lights/street-lighting-faults-and-repairs/report-or-track-faults-with-street-and-sign-lighting>

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Question 2: Cllr Michael Arthur Re: Phase 10 Parking Restrictions

I have observed that the coming into operation date of 1st March has been hampered in a number of streets in my ward and I suspect elsewhere too, by parked vehicles preventing the full lining installation.

I believe that some of the parking is seemingly permanent without any movement and by those in defiance of the parking order.

What steps can be taken to have parked vehicles removed where lining is required to be installed?

Also, under the same order, there are some time plates yet to be installed, could I be told the timescale of completion for this?

Officer response:

Due to the adverse weather conditions, the lining gangs have not been able to complete a lot of the lining works. The lines are a thermoplastic material and rely on the road surface being clean, dry and above a certain temperature.

There is also some snagging, with cars parking in areas where yellow lines are due to be installed - again, due to the weather, we have not been able to get out on site to temporarily fill the gaps before calling the lining gang back to complete the works. We are aiming to get the snagging looked at over the next couple of weeks, with proper implementation once we have sorted out a vast amount of the snagging.

The signs are due to be completed by the end of this week at the latest - again there have been issues with the weather and ground conditions.

Question 3: Cllr Neil Dallen Re: Parking permits for businesses

I have recently learnt that business parking permits are available in resident parking areas.

- (a) When and how was this decided and by who?
- (b) How was this publicised?
- (c) What consideration, if any, is made regarding lack of available space for residents.

Officer response:

There are some businesses located within the new residents permit zone (I believe there are 5) and it is only these businesses who can apply for permits.

They are limited and there is a charge of £150 per permit.

When considering the implementation of the resident permit zone, we have to be mindful of businesses that currently exist within the proposed zone and do everything we can to ensure that these businesses still thrive.

No businesses from outside of the zone are able to apply for permits.

All residents received a set of FAQs as part of the consultation process and details about business permits were included within that set of FAQs. It is only the one zone that has business permits, they are not available in any other zone.

Due to the limit on business permits, we do not anticipate that there will be any issues with residents being able to find somewhere to park. The number of vehicles that currently park in the area, will be reduced considerably as the zone becomes enforceable.

Question 4: Cllr Neil Dallen
Re: Trading Standards

Trading standards comes under Surrey County Council but SCC web site gives their number as CAB consumer help line who act as a front end can pass on any complaint to trading standards.

They will not confirm that trading standards are acting on it, nor will they give any contact details for trading standards.

- (a) Is it correct that trading standards will not confirm to the complainant receipt of any complaints?
- (b) Is it correct that trading standards are autonomous and can choose whether or not to look into complaints?
- (c) If there are a number of legitimate complaints to trading standards about a trader acting fraudulently, how does a member of the public ensure action is being taken and get some feedback?
- (d) How does a member of the public complain that action is not being taken when traders are acting illegally and information has been passed to trading standards?
- (e) What is the criteria for trading standards to investigate any case?
- (f) How do you find out the outcome of any investigation?

Officer response:

- (a) The Trading Standards service receives an extremely high volume of complaints from the Citizens Advice Consumer Service each year. The complaints are acknowledged by the Citizens Advice Consumer Service who also provide all necessary advice to the person making the complaint on what their rights are and on how best to go about resolving their problem. Details of all complaints are passed on to Trading Standards. Most complaints are not investigated any further by the Trading Standards service but are kept as intelligence and to help create a picture of the issues and businesses that are causing most concern or damage. It is only those issues that reach a threshold of risk or harm that will trigger an investigation, a small proportion of the total received. The service does not automatically acknowledge receipt of complaints received via the Citizens Advice Consumer Service.
- (b) Trading Standards reviews every complaint received into the service and makes a decision on whether or not to consider further based on a number of matters. These include the seriousness of the issue, if there are safety concerns, the level of financial harm, vulnerability of the victim, previous dealings with any of the parties involved, the scale of the issue, and any other pertinent considerations. The great majority of complaints received are not investigated further.
- (c) If the service determines that an investigation into a matter would be appropriate then the member of the public who has been affected would be contacted to discuss further. It is likely a witness statement would be sought to help clarify matters and assist with the progress of the investigation. Depending on the nature of the fraud then other agencies

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such as the Police may also be involved.

- (d) The Trading Standards service is not able to investigate all allegations of criminality and individual allegations of illegal activity do not necessarily lead to a criminal investigation. If a member of the public is unhappy with the service provided by Trading Standards then they should utilise the corporate complaints procedures. A link is here for the Surrey County Council Corporate Complaints Procedure - <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/your-council/complaints-comments-and-compliments/all-other-council-services/how-to-make-a-complaint>
- (e) A link is here for the Trading Standards Investigation Criteria, which is published on their website - <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/business-and-consumers/trading-standards/trading-standards-policies-and-plans/trading-standards-investigations-criteria>
- (f) If an investigation has been conducted, Trading Standards will keep the member of the public informed as to the progress of the investigation.