

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)

DATE: 6 June 2018



LEAD OFFICER: Paul Fishwick, Local Transport Programmes Manager, Transport Policy

SUBJECT: Dorking Transport Package Phase 1

DIVISION: Dorking Hills

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The Dorking Transport Package Phase 1 is a programme of cycling, walking and public transport improvements funded by the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (C2C LEP). It is the first phase of a wider three phase programme of enhancements planned for Dorking.

The C2C LEP received a complaint from the Dorking Town Forum (DTF) about the phase 1 programme relating to:

- The quality of the works undertaken
- The alleged failure to complete contracted works
- Allegations of financial mismanagement by Surrey County Council in their role as the delivery body

To appropriately manage the DTF's complaint, the C2C LEP appointed Local Partnerships to carry out an investigation. This is an independent body jointly owned by the Local Government Association and the HM Treasury meaning the investigation would be independent and transparent ensuring any learning points or improvements could be identified, understood and implemented.

Local Partnerships have concluded their investigation and a report has been presented to the C2C LEP, including a schedule of recommended actions to which the County Council has responded to where appropriate.

In understanding and learning from the complaint and recommended actions the County Council's values as set out below will be drawn upon, as this is what helps us to make a difference for Surrey residents:

- Listen - We actively listen to others and expect to be listened to.
- Responsibility - We take responsibility in all that we do at work.
- Trust - We work to inspire trust and we trust in others.
- Respect - We are supportive and inclusive and committed to learning from others.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) is asked to:

1. Support the findings of the complaint investigation completed by Local Partnerships on behalf of the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership.

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2. Support the recommended improvement actions, with progress on their implementation to be monitored by the Members Task Group appointed to oversee the Dorking Transport Package.
3. Propose that the Members Task Group appointed to oversee the Dorking Transport Package meet with representatives of the Dorking Town Forum, to see what, if any, further lessons can be learned.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 The Dorking Transport Package was included within the Local Transport Strategy and Forward Programme for Mole Valley approved by the Local Committee on 10 September 2014 (minute 27/14 refers).
- 1.2 A Business case submission was made in partnership with train operating company First Great Western Railway and Mole Valley District Council to the C2C LEP on 12 December 2014.
- 1.3 The project has a budget of £832,000, making it one of the smaller major schemes within the County Council's £56M of highway improvements that have been completed or are currently being delivered across the county using Local Growth Fund provided by the C2C and Enterprise M3 LEPs.
- 1.4 The Dorking Transport Package (Phase 1) is close to being completed with the final areas of work expected to be conclude this summer.
- 1.5 The Local Committee has been kept updated with progress at each committee meeting, whilst regular Newsletters have been issued and will continue until the project fully complete.
- 1.6 Once complete, a 3-year monitoring and evaluation programme will be undertaken and the Local Committee will be updated on an annual basis.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 The DTF raised a complaint with the C2C LEP on 2 October 2017. According to the published information displayed on the DTF's web site (www.dorkingtownforum.co.uk), they are formed of community representatives, business groups and local organisations based in and around Dorking.
- 2.2 The DTF complaint and the investigation of it focused on:
 - The quality of the works undertaken
 - The alleged failure to complete contracted works
 - Allegations of financial mismanagement by Surrey County Council in their role as the delivery body.

- 2.3 To appropriately manage the DTF's complaint, the C2C LEP appointed Local Partnerships to carry out an investigation, reporting back to the LEP. The aim was to ensure transparency and that any lessons to be learnt or improvements needed could be identified, understood and implemented.
- 2.4 The investigation included interviews by the Local Partnerships of County Council officers Paul Fishwick (Local Transport Programmes Manager) and Love Bhabuta (Business Change Manager), along with a separate interview with members of the DTF, namely Councillor Margaret Cooksey, John Meudell and Chris Heaps.
- 2.5 Following the interviews, all parties attended a site visit led by the complaint investigation team.
- 2.6 The Local Partnerships concluded their investigation and submitted a report and findings to the C2C LEP in January 2018. This can be read in full in Annex A, with a summary of their findings given below:

The quality of the works undertaken

The complaint investigation found that the finished works, particularly to highway surfaces, are to a good standard.

The alleged failure to complete contracted works

The complaint investigation found that there was a major slippage on the project, significant work at Dorking Deepdene remains to be completed including replacement shelters (now being installed) and CCTV (now completed). The investigation team also had a concern about the medium and longer term viability of further substantial investment at Dorking Deepdene station especially in light of the structural problems uncovered by the removal of the old passenger shelters.

Allegations of financial mismanagement by Surrey County Council in their role as the delivery body

The complaint investigation team found no evidence to support this element of the complaint. The financial management of the project and the way in which claims for payment have been compiled, submitted and approved has been set out for us in some detail and we find the arrangements to be sound. They did, however, have a concern about the level of charges for design fees and supervision and we make a recommendation on that matter.

- 2.7 On 10 May 2018, the Local Partnerships chaired a meeting with representatives of the C2C LEP comprising the Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, Commercial Manager and Project Administrator. It was attended by Surrey County Council Officers Paul Fishwick and Love Bhabuta, along with DTF representatives, Councillor Margaret Cooksey and John Meudell.
- 2.8 Following a review of the draft report and recommended improvement actions the County Council was tasked with updating a response to the actions taking into account of points raised by Local Partnerships. A copy of the updated response to the recommended actions from a County Council perspective is attached as Annex B.

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- 2.9 When the investigation report was drafted the Dorking Transport Package had not been completed. It is, however, expected to be completed during the summer of 2018.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 The Local Partnerships Review Team set out 10 recommended action points that involve the County Council, First Great Western, C2C LEP and West Sussex County Council as the Accountable Body.
- 3.2 As noted above, as requested by the LEP the County Council has reviewed the recommendations and an updated version is attached as Annex B.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 The C2C LEP appointed Local Partnerships to investigate the DTF complaint to ensure transparency and that any lessons to be learnt could be readily identified and actions taken. The investigation included input from the complainant - the DTF - and the County Council as the delivery body.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The business case for the Dorking Transport Package was subject to an Independent Assurance review and included a value for money assessment.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken for the Dorking Transport Package.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 The Dorking Transport Package Phase 1 provides improved directional signing for pedestrians and cyclists between the two railway stations, noting that Dorking Deepdene and Dorking Main are on separate rail lines and the bus/rail interchange is located at Dorking Main Station. Improved pedestrian and cycle signage from these stations to the town centre was also included in the package.
- 7.2 Real Time Passenger Information displays have been installed at the entrance points to Dorking Deepdene station, enabling passengers to view train times without having to access the stairs to the platforms.
- 7.3 Passengers egressing Dorking Deepdene station can view the rail and bus times at Dorking Main and local bus stop 'A' and at the bus/rail interchange.
- 7.4 New ticket machines have been installed at Dorking Deepdene, along with additional cycle parking, new lighting and CCTV.
- 7.5 An acoustic fence has been installed adjacent to Brook Close where trees were removed on the access area to the Dorking Deepdene station.

- 7.6 A new island has been introduced at the junction of Station Approach and the A24 that facilitates improved and safer access for pedestrians proceeding north of Station Approach, along with a widened shared footway/cycleway to Dorking Main station with a revised junction and road table at Lincoln Road junction with Station Approach and the A24.
- 7.7 It is the intention to install Real Time Passenger Information at bus stop 'A' (A24 northbound) as soon as practicable, once a bus shelter contract issue has been resolved.
- 7.8 First Great Western are currently installing the replacement passenger shelters on platforms 1 and 2 at Dorking Deepdene. Once complete the final works at Dorking Deepdene will be undertaken during the summer of 2018.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	Improved lighting and CCTV installed at Dorking Deepdene station
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Set out below.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	Set out below.

8.1 Sustainability implications

Increasing levels of walking, cycling, rail and bus usage can have a positive impact in congestion reduction and a consequent reduction in carbon emissions.

The creation of these improvements for both stations connecting residential, business and retail areas with key destinations will encourage modal shift which has implications for health, improved mobility, accessibility and reduced dependency on private vehicles.

8.2 Public Health implications

Active travel (walking and cycling), particularly for utility trips such as travelling to work, school and shopping, is considered a key deliverable against public health priorities such as obesity and air quality. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance – Physical Activity: walking and cycling states that walking and cycling reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, obesity and type 2 diabetes. It can help keep the musculoskeletal system healthy and promote mental wellbeing.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 The team leading partnership improvement projects such as this endeavour to engage with and develop schemes alongside key partners, whilst also seeking the views of residents and. It is disappointing therefore that the DTF determined a need to make a formal complaint to the C2C LEP. However, it is obvious that the DTF had concerns which they believed were serious enough to warrant this action, something that requires reflection and learning.
- 9.2 The Local Partnerships investigation has been completed, a report issued and a schedule of recommended actions set out, which Surrey County Council has responded to.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 The Dorking Transport Package is expected to be finalised by the end of the summer 2018. A 3-year monitoring and evaluation programme will follow and the Local Committee will be kept informed.
- 10.2 Working under the oversight of the Members Task Group it is proposed to act upon the recommended improvements, review the responses made by County Council Officers, whilst to also meet with the DTF. This meeting is not to reopen the complaint; that has been dealt with. It is to see what if any further lessons can be learned to help improve outcomes for residents.

Contact Officer:

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Annexes:

Annex A: Local Partnerships Draft Report to C2C LEP

Annex B: Revised Recommendations for Action

Sources/background papers:

Dorking Transport Package Phase 1 – Business case (December 2014)

Local Partnerships Draft Report to C2C LEP
