



SCC LOCAL COMMITTEE IN ELMBRIDGE – 6 September 2019

AGENDA ITEM 04

WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

Question 1: Martin Elbourne

Re: Traffic calming measures on Stoke Road, Cobham

Background

After several years of campaigning by local residents, a unanimous decision was taken by the Elmbridge Local Committee in 2011 to reduce the speed limit on Stoke Road from 40 to 30 mph. The speed limit was subsequently lowered to 30 mph in 2014.

Following a number of surveys in 2017, SCC Highways, supported by Surrey Police, submitted a report to the Local Committee recommending that the 40 mph speed limit be reinstated. At the Local Committee held on 4 December 2017 to consider the report, local residents demonstrated that the Highways report and supporting documents contained inaccurate and inconsistent information. As a result, the Local Committee did not accept the report's recommendation and instead supported the residents' request to retain the 30 mph speed limit.

In a continuing effort to support the 30 mph speed limit, local residents decided in mid 2017 to establish a Community Speed Watch (CSW) Team to deploy on Stoke Road. However, a delay in receiving the necessary Police training meant that the Team could not deploy until January 2018. Since that time, the residents have successfully deployed two teams every month and as a result nearly 500 warning letters have been issued by Surrey Police to speeding drivers.

In parallel with this CSW activity, local residents also sought to improve the size and number of Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) deployed on Stoke Road, essentially to enhance the two small VAS funded by the local County Councillor, Mary Lewis. In February 2018 residents successfully secured local CIL funding to support the deployment of 4 new larger VAS. Unfortunately due to delays in Highway's procurement processes, these new VAS were not deployed until March 2019.

In addition to retaining the 30 mph speed limit, the Local Committee also agreed at their December 2017 meeting to allocate funding to support a Highways led Feasibility Study (FS) into traffic calming measures for Stoke Road; this funding was made available in April 2018. A draft output from the FS was made available to local residents (who had worked with Highways to contribute to the Study) in September 2018 to which residents provided feedback.

Highways subsequently stated that no further work would be conducted on the FS until funding had been secured for the implementation of traffic calming measures. As a result, Highways and local residents together successfully secured appropriate funding for the implementation of traffic calming measures on Stoke Road from the 2019 Strategic CIL Bidding process. Funding for both completion of the FS and

ITEM 4

implementation of traffic calming measures has now been available since April 2018 and 2019 respectively.

QUESTION.

Whilst residents recognise that Highways are addressing a number of schemes across the County, in view of the above background and the series of delays the local residents have faced to date, can Highways please:

- indicate what priority is being given to the implementation of traffic calming measures on Stoke Road, Cobham; and
- provide a timetable for:
 - completion of the related Feasibility Study;
 - when appropriate agencies (including local residents) will be consulted; and
 - when implementation of traffic calming measures can be expected to commence?

Additional notes for members of the Local Committee

Following the Local Committee meeting in December 2017, the then Chairman wrote to the Chief Inspector of Surrey Police to seek assistance with traffic speeding along Stoke Road. The Chief Inspector passed the request to the Area Inspector, who subsequently passed the request to the same individual who had compiled the Surrey Police contribution to the inaccurate and inconsistent 2017 Highways report referred to above. No action was taken.

At the same time, the Surrey Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) was also approached about the issue of speeding traffic through residential areas by the Chairman of Cobham Conservation & Heritage Trust (CCHT). The response of the PCC was to support the Police approach, which is essentially that:

- The Police will not deploy their traffic speed enforcement team (van mounted cameras) to areas where there is a lack of evidence of what they categorise as 'speed related collisions' (Note: the Crashmap website indicates 3 serious and 13 slight accidents on Stoke Road in the last 5 years), nor will they deploy to areas until all other attempts (CSW, VAS and traffic calming measures) to slow traffic have been tried.

By way of context, and as an indication of the commitment of local residents to addressing the issue of speeding traffic, there are 137 CSW sites operating across Surrey, with 8 of the sites in Elmbridge. Of the 973 warning letters issued by the Police in 2018 as a result of CSW activity involving the 8 sites in Elmbridge, over 300 arose from the Stoke Road sites.

In view of other Police priorities and resource constraints it has recently been announced that a speeding driver now has to receive 4 warning CSW letters before receiving a visit by the Police – such visits previously took place on receipt of the 3rd letter.

The Neighbourhood Watch Spring 2019 Newsletter for Cobham, Downside and Stoke d'Abernon reported that: 'When Surrey Police held monthly meetings with the public, sessions ended with the public voting on the 3 most needed attendances by the police – nearly every time "speeding motorist" came tops'.

For all of the reasons above, you will understand why it is so important to local residents that the traffic calming measures for Stoke Road, which are fully funded, are implemented as a matter of priority.

Officer Response:

At its Strategic Spending Board meeting of 14 February 2019, Elmbridge Borough Council recommended that £310,000 be awarded to Surrey County Council in respect of the Pedestrian Facilities and Improved Road Safety Programme. The programme included an application for £95,000 in respect of Stoke Road, to provide measures to encourage lower speeds and improve safety for road users and amenity for residents. The recommendation of the Strategic Spending Board was agreed by Elmbridge Borough Council's Cabinet at its meeting of 13 March 2019.

The application for CIL funding included the following timetable:

Spring 2019 – commence design

Calendar years 2019 - 2020 – completion of scheme (including statutory procedures, advertisement and traffic orders)

The Stoke Road scheme is currently in design by Surrey County Council's Highway Design Team. It is included on Elmbridge Local Committee's current (2019-20) highways programme. The design will then be subject to independent road safety audit. Any issues and recommendations arising from the safety audit will be considered before consultation on the proposed scheme.

It is anticipated that the scheme will be complete in line with the timescales stated in the CIL funding application and subsequent award."

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