



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE EPSOM & EWELL
9 December 2019**

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

**Question 1 – Paul Vagg
Re: Horton Lane - Vehicle Speeding**

Vehicle speeding along Horton Lane Epsom remains a significant issue for local residents adjacent to Horton Lane and across West Epsom.

Horton Lane has a speed limit of 40mph between roundabouts but my informal surveys suggest that around 20% of motorists are speeding above this limit. Also at certain times of the day and week racing of vehicles (particularly motorbikes) takes place - often late at night or in the early hours of weekends.

Apart from the obvious safety concerns for other road users and pedestrians speeding causes significant noise pollution. Excessive engine noise carries a significant distance over the Hospital cluster area and further east towards Epsom centre.

Speed calming and control mechanisms have previously been implemented, including:

- Displays indicating speed of vehicles at key points along the road;
- Police monitor of speeding and occasional operation of police speed checks using speed guns;
- A lay helpers scheme to monitor the problem.

What is the Local Committees understanding of the current status of these and any other schemes to manage this issue - are any, or all of these, still in operation, and with what frequency and regularity are they operated?

Officer Response:

A number of years ago there were regular complaints about speeding and anti-social riding by a small number of motorcyclists who allegedly were riding and speeding between roundabouts for fun. At the time Surrey Police found it very difficult to catch any speeding motorcyclists, as they simply stopped whenever the police arrived on site. To tackle this Surrey County Council implemented rumble strips on the approaches to the roundabouts. These can make it far less fun for motorcyclists to traverse the route at high speed due to the discomfort that the motorcyclists would experience when their motorcycle judders over the strips when travelling too fast. The use of the rumble strips appeared to work and the complaints over noisy speeding motorcyclists disappeared.

More recently we have been receiving correspondence to suggest that the problem is emerging again, together with allegations of car drivers driving at excessive speeds for the benefit of videos on the internet, and a local car dealer test driving vehicles at high speeds. There is also a suggestion that the problem with motorcyclists never really diminished, and conflicting reports as to whether the rumble strips had any effect.

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Ultimately Surrey Police is responsible for speed enforcement, and the local community is advised to approach Surrey Police to explore what they may be able to offer by way of enforcement. Surrey Police would also be able to advise whether a Community Speed Watch might be feasible. Detailed information has recently been passed to Surrey Police relating to some of the allegations above, and Surrey Police have followed this up by tracing the culprits and encouraging them to desist.

Surrey County Council has previously installed two vehicle activated signs, which illuminate to remind drivers of the speed limit if they are detected travelling too fast. These can provide a helpful reminder, and can provide a helpful contribution to lowering average speeds, but have no effect on drivers who deliberately and knowingly ignore the speed limit. This section of road would not qualify for average speed cameras because generally speaking there is good compliance with the speed limit. The last speed survey we conducted on this stretch was in 2013 and showed mean speeds of 38 mph which is good in comparison with the 40 mph speed limit. Furthermore there aren't that many collisions compared to many other sites in Surrey; safety cameras are focussed at the worst collision hot spots. It is also questionable whether average speed cameras would work in this context. This is because average speed camera systems work by recording the time it takes to travel between two cameras. Deliberately reckless motorcyclists could slow down to a halt for a while after passing the "entry" camera, and then race past the "exit" camera, without the system recording a speeding offence.

Given the mixed feedback in relation to the rumble strips, it is not obvious whether there is a suitable engineering solution to address this issue. If Committee considered the location to be a priority, then the site could be investigated further in the context of a feasibility study in a future year. For their part Surrey Police have agreed to undertake speed surveys to quantify the nature and scale of the problem – this information could potentially feed into any feasibility study promoted by Committee.

Question 2 – Cllr Liz Frost **Re: Ashley Avenue**

I am concerned about the Ashley Road / Ashley Avenue junction.

This is a very busy junction and there are frequent issues, particularly during the morning and evening peak times, and busy shopping times. Vehicles entering Ashley Avenue from both the north and the south are often backed up quite a way and the junction itself is blocked.

Once the lights turn green, for either stream of traffic, the vehicles edge forward to try to force their way into the already stationary queue of traffic so that vehicles are nose to tail right across the junction.

I have had many complaints from residents about the difficulties of crossing the road at this junction, and frequently experience them myself. There is a pedestrian phase to the lights, but it is often not possible to cross safely (or at all) because the route across is blocked by vehicles – often concentrating more on rushing forward as soon as an opportunity occurs than being aware of the pedestrians trying to weave around them to cross. From both north and south this is a bus route, with two lanes accessing Ashley Avenue. For pedestrians to try to negotiate the crossing around a large stationary vehicle, such as a bus, with the possibility of a vehicle in the far lane advancing, is extremely dangerous. For those needing more than a few inches to negotiate a pathway across, e.g. parents with children in buggies, or with restricted mobility it is even more dangerous – and the children may be being pushed within inches of the exhausts of revving vehicles. Those who use mobility scooters are in an even worse position. There may be no dropped kerb in line with a gap in the stationary

vehicles, the gap between the vehicles may be too narrow for them to negotiate, and their view of the vehicles in the further lane is even more limited.

When I have raised this issue in the past, SCC was waiting for the Plan E works to be agreed or carried out, then the bus stand to be completed. It appears to me that these works are now completed and the problems have not been addressed. Please would you now look at this junction and improve it for pedestrians, e.g. by introducing yellow boxes or painted 'keep clear' notices, between the traffic lights and the end of the traffic island on both the north and south section of this junction.

Officer Response:

Now that Plan E works in Epsom Town Centre are effectively completed from an overall traffic management perspective, (barring some minor refinements to traffic signals timings), Officers will review the physical lay-out and operation of the signals at this location and make recommendations as to what can be considered to make any safety and traffic flow improvements and at what cost.

Question 3 – Cllr Liz Frost

Re: Woodcote Road junction with A24

I would be grateful if you would look at the traffic light junction where Woodcote Road joins the A24. During busy times the traffic travelling from Ashted towards the town centre often backs up past this junction. Vehicles sometimes do not stop when the light is green, but the traffic is stationary ahead of them through the junction, but travel forwards and stop in the junction. This results in no vehicles from Woodcote Road being unable to turn right into South Street. The traffic then backs up along Woodcote Road – sometimes past Avenue Road resulting in delays and understandable frustration in motorists.

When I've highlighted this in the past and requested a yellow box junction, I've been told that the problem is because of the Plan E works and the traffic lights at the Playhouse junction not having been phased yet. I understand that this work has now been done – but the problem at this junction still persists.

Please would you re-assess this junction and find a solution

Officer response:

Now that Plan E works in Epsom Town Centre are effectively completed from an overall traffic management perspective, (barring some minor refinements to traffic signals timings), Officers will review the physical lay-out and operation of the signals at this location and make recommendations as to what can be considered to make any safety and traffic flow improvements and at what cost.

Question 4 – Simon Alford

Re: Street tree planting

It is now some months since Surrey County Councillors voted unanimously in favour of a motion seeking a review of street tree planting across the county – and, in a separate move, the Council has announced the intention to plant 1.2 million trees over the next couple of decades in response to a growing appreciating of the climate emergency we are facing. What I'd like to know is:

1. Has the new street tree planting policy been finalised? If so, where can the full policy be found (as opposed to the summarised 'Planting street trees on the Highway' advice on the SCC website?)
2. If it has been finalised what, in summary, has changed with the policy itself and also the criteria against which suitable sites are assessed? How exactly does it make the planting

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of new street trees easier – thereby fulfilling the aims of the motion that triggered the review?

3. If it hasn't yet been finalised, why not, and how soon is it expected? (We're clearly now at risk of missing the 2019/2020 planting season.)
4. What is the likelihood of groups like the Epsom & Ewell Tree Advisory Board - which already has raised enough funding for nearly 50 street trees at the cost agreed with Epsom & Ewell Council of £250 a piece – being able to secure permissions for street tree planting sites within a timescale that would allow new street trees to go in by the end of March?
5. What sort of percentage of the 1.2 million trees that SCC has pledged to plant are expected to be street trees?

Officer response:

1. At the time of writing this response, no. A draft Highway tree planting best practice guide is currently being reviewed by the Cabinet Member for Highways. Once finalised it is expected that this will replace the information currently published on the Surrey County Council website.
2. We are not expecting the finalised best practice guide to be substantially different from what is currently published on our website. In terms of assessment criteria we will still need to ensure there is space for a tree to grow without causing an obstruction to road users (including visibility), that the tree is clear of underground and over ground utility services (including streetlighting), and that the species is appropriate for the location. It is expected that the new guide will make it easier by enabling people to approach the County Council directly to facilitate community funded tree planting projects, rather than having to go through the Borough, District, or Parish Council. It is also expected that the new guide will make it easier by introducing some flexibility to enable carefully selected smaller trees and woody shrubs to be planted nearer to underground utility services than would be feasible for larger species.
3. We are hoping that the new best practice guidelines will be finalised in time for the 2020-21 tree planting season. The deadline for new tree planting projects for the 2019-20 season was the end of September, which we extended to the end of October as we were aware that there were a number of community funded tree planting projects that were very nearly ready.
4. The earliest any new projects could be delivered would be the 2020-21 planting season.
5. A percentage of the 1.2M pledged new trees are expected to be on the Public Highway, but it is very challenging to find suitable sites. For example this year we expect to facilitate the planting of 50 to 60 new trees, but we have had to turn down another 30 to 40 requests for planting due to site constraints. We will continue to work with community groups to identify suitable planting sites as resources allow.

Question 5 – Gemma Garman

Re: Noble Park road safety and parking

The report "West Park Road (Noble Park) speed limit consultation update", presented and agreed at the Local Committee meeting of December 2018, led to some action on Speeding controls at the entrance to the estate but also acknowledged the feedback from consultation that there were other concerns. The committee recorded that there were "Request(s) for additional measures throughout the estate – traffic calming, junction markings, parking controls around junctions and near the entrance gateway". The Committee concluded that they were outside the scope of the immediate action remit but should be taken forward by the Local Committee stating "Parking controls may be considered as part of the scheduled Epsom Parking Reviews, which are promoted via the Local Committee".

A particular concern on the estate for a number of years is in relation to unsafe parking at the junctions of Sherwood Way, Millar Place and Longland Way. Vehicles are being parked at the junctions and also across adjacent pedestrian walkways. This has a significant impact on sight lines for other vehicles and pedestrians. The main junction itself is poorly marked to differentiate between vehicle and pedestrian zones. The lack of a clear kerb is misleading to vehicle drivers and pedestrians alike and leads to potentially unsafe actions by both. Local residents have observed instances where children and adults walk out into the road and put themselves in significant danger of the cars that speed through the junction. Despite the fact that much of the parking behaviour is in contravention of the Highway Code there aren't clear deterrents at the junction or signage making this clear. Consideration needs to be given as to whether steps can be taken to introduce changes to the road layout or furniture to change this dangerous behaviour. Introducing clearly defined kerbs to differentiate areas and no parking zone markings of some sort should, for example, be considered.



Officer response:

We have added your request for changes to the parking restrictions to a list of sites in Epsom & Ewell for which people have made a similar type of request.

We have a rolling programme of carrying out an assessment of all the requests in each borough or district in turn. Once we have completed the assessments and prioritised all the requests, we present a report of our findings to the members of the relevant Local Committee, who decide which changes will go ahead. The next assessments in Epsom & Ewell are scheduled to take place during September / October 2020 and the report on the outcome is due to be presented to the local committee in December 2020.

We will update our website once the committee report is available (usually about two weeks before the date of the meeting) so if you visit www.surreycc.gov.uk/epsomandewellparking at that time, you will be able to see which changes we are recommending to be introduced. You will also be able to follow the progress of the changes via that page from the committee meeting through to installation of the new restrictions on the ground.

The legal process involved in introducing or changing parking controls requires us to formally advertise our intention to do so, and we may also carry out consultation with residents, businesses and other stakeholders. Once we have considered any responses to the advertisement and/or consultation, we have to make a traffic regulation order, so that our enforcement staff can take action against people parking illegally. This process does take several months to complete.

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Question 6 – Cllr Bernice Froud

Re: School Bus Passes

Please could officers explain what the issues are with the continuing provision of bus passes for Rosebery School pupils living in Langley Vale?

Some children have had their passes renewed; others have not and parents are seeing this as discriminatory practise. The reason these passes were granted in the first instance, I understand, is because the Safer Travel Team, several years ago, deemed the walking route to be unsafe.

How is the walking route not safe for some children living in Langley Vale but safe for others also living in Langley Vale please?

Please can officers explain the apparent inconsistency with replies to parents?

I am also concerned that not all parents who have contacted SCC have had any response.

One parent has been told that the route is now safe but traffic monitoring of Chalk Lane was carried out at the end of the summer holidays between 08:00 and 08:30. Rosebery pupils need to be in school by 08:20 which means in winter months walking for about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile in the dark, along an unlit lane with no footpaths, used principally to take racehorses to the training grounds and also by drivers illegally using it as a cut-through. Furthermore, it has been stated that the volume of traffic on Chalk Lane is very low; however there have been two incidents recently involving speeding vehicles where pedestrians and a horse have been injured. We have also seen two large lorries become stuck in the lane, hitting and damaging property in the process.

Many people take their holiday throughout September and traffic is still light then. It is a different picture now!

The same parent has been informed that there is now a new walking route identified involving the Downs, which is safe!

Please would officers tell us what this safe route is and how long it is?

Officer response:

Please could officers explain what the issues are with the continuing provision of bus passes for Rosebery School pupils living in Langley Vale?

Every application for transport assistance is assessed in accordance with the Home to School Transport policy on the basis of the applicant's circumstances at the time of the application. Transport assistance (which could be in the form of a bus pass) will usually be provided in cases where an applicant is attending their nearest qualifying school that is over three miles away from their home assessed by safe walking distance. In assessing safe walking routes the Admissions and Transport team will consider reports from the Safer Travel Team outlining the safety of particular routes.

The route between Langley Village and Rosebery school was considered to be unsafe in the past, however following recent Safer Travel Team assessments, the route is now considered to be safe from a road traffic perspective and it is considered acceptable for students to use the route to walk school - accompanied as necessary. The Safer Travel Team have recently identified multiple routes from the Village to the School which they consider to be safe.

Please can officers explain the apparent inconsistency with replies to parents?

Although, due to the volume of recent workloads, there have been some delays in processing applications, as far as we are aware we have responded to all contacts regarding this issue with some parents progressing through the relevant complaints/appeals processes. However, if you are able to advise us of the residents who are concerned about not receiving responses we can investigate this further.

How is the walking route not safe for some children living in Langley Vale but safe for others also living in Langley Vale please?

While it is difficult to comment on individual cases, there may be a number of reasons why certain children in the village may receive transport assistance whilst other do not.

In the first instance, there is an obligation to provide assistance to children who live over the statutory walking distance of 3 miles. While some children in the village will live under 3 miles (and will not be entitled to transport assistance), it is possible that others at the more distant end of the village from the school may live over 3 miles, thereby qualifying for assistance on the basis of exceeding the distance criteria. Each transport assessment is considered on the basis of the individual applicant's circumstances.

In addition to this, the Education Act provides for extended assistance in certain cases where an applicant is entitled to either free school meals or the maximum amount of working tax credits. In particular, children who are of compulsory school age who are aged 11 or over (Year 7 to Year 11) and who are entitled to free school meals, or those whose families are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit, will qualify for assistance with travel to one of their three nearest qualifying schools, where they live between two miles (measured by the shortest walking distance) and six miles (measured by the shortest road route) from the school. Essentially, children who meet the outlined criteria will be entitled to transport assistance if they live over two miles from the school. It is possible that children meeting this criteria in the village may be entitled to transport assistance. The safety of the route would not be relevant if it was possible to provide transport in light of the applicant living over the statutory walking distance.

The Education Act also allows local authorities to exercise an element of discretion in exceptional cases, such as where a child has exceptional social or medical needs. It is therefore possible that certain children who have demonstrated exceptional social/medical needs may have been allocated with exceptional transport assistance through the county's Transport Case Review process.

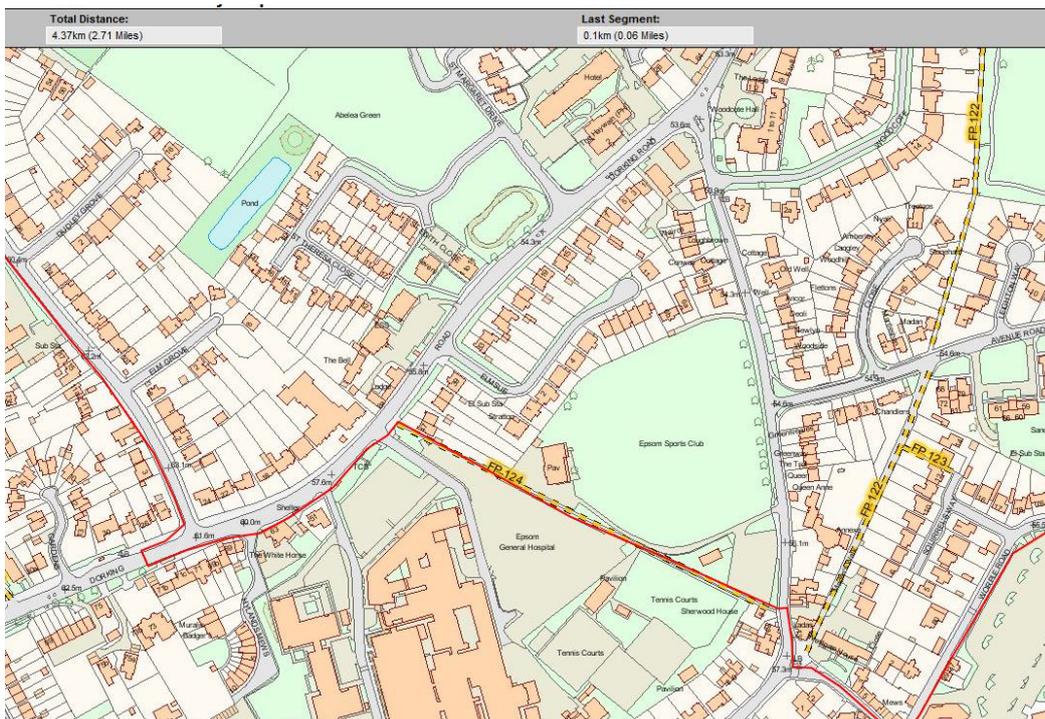
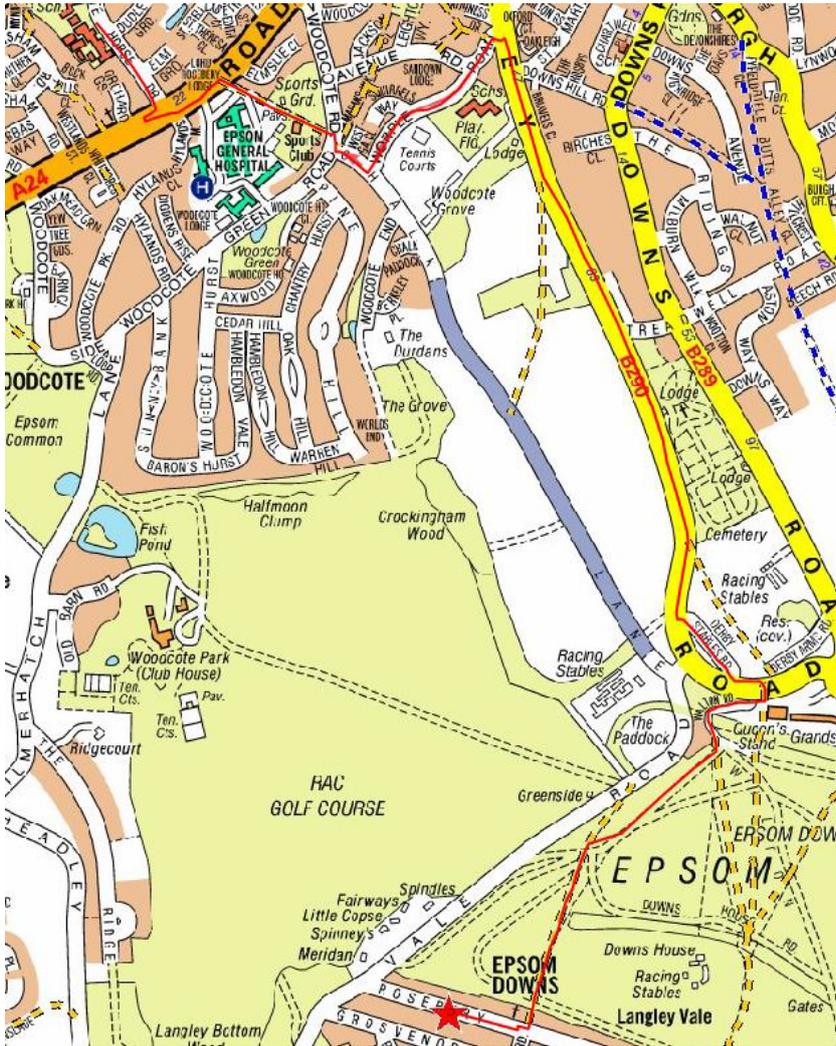
As the route was previously deemed unsafe it is also possible that transport assistance may have been provided historically in the past on the basis of the circumstances at the time of the application.

Please would officers tell us what this safe route is and how long it is?

The route is applicable to pupils living in the following roads: Rosebery Road; Grosvenor Road and Beaconsfield Road. It is important to note that this is an assessment of the road safety of a walked route by an accompanied child. According to the national guidance: *"Case law has found that assessments must look at the relationship between pedestrians and traffic only. Personal safety issues of children travelling alone are not considered. Local authorities are not legally obliged to provide free transport just because parents perceive the route to be unsafe on the grounds of personal safety and security"*. Also it is important to note that according to the national guidance the child should be *"accompanied as necessary"* and *"a route would not fail to qualify as "available" because of dangers which would arise if the child was unaccompanied"*.

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As each assessment is based on the individual circumstances of the applicant the length of route will be dependent on the distance between the individual applicant's home and the school. The route shown on the map below is 2.7 miles.



Question 7 – Chris Grice
Re: Abelea Green Parking Proposals

The council passed an unanimous Climate Emergency Motion on Tuesday 23rd July 2019. It included the following:

Epsom and Ewell Council recognises the serious and accelerating changes to the world caused by climate change, as well as the importance of responding to these concerns.

Is there an emergency or not?

If the answer to this question is yes and knowing that emergencies do not wait for items on an agenda.

Will the Local Committee recognise the importance of responding by removing the Abelea Green parking relaxation proposal?

Officer response:

The Epsom & Ewell Local Committee is a Surrey County Council Committee and so is not party to any motion made by the Borough Council. However, the UK government has committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, and on 9 July 2019 the County Council followed suit by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and committing to work with partners to agree Surrey's collective response, which will include a strategy for becoming carbon neutral as early as possible.

The Local Committee was aware of this and the Borough Council's position when it considered the recommendations of the parking review on 16 September and agreed to advertise these proposals for comments from all interested parties. The advertising period ends on 5 December and it is therefore not possible to analyse the responses in time for them to be considered at this meeting. A full report will be brought to the meeting on 30 March when the Committee will have all the information to make an informed decision.

Question 8 – Cllr Steven McCormick
Re: Heavy Goods Vehicles and Worple Road / Chalk Lane

A number of concerned residents have contacted me with regard to an increasing number of HGV's making their way into Worple Road from Avenue Road, by St. Martins School.

They seem unaware of the restricted nature of the roads that follow, namely the junction with Chalk Lane and the limited turning available.

It is the cause of continued distress to residents and damage to parked cars and property from HGVs trying to make their way out of the narrow junction with Worple Road and Chalk Lane.

Can more forceful, larger, clearer notices be placed at the Worple Road entrance and/or restrictions added to stop this type of traffic entering a narrow and road system?

Officer response:

There is already an "Unsuitable for long vehicles" sign at the entrance to Worple Road from Avenue Road. This sign is quite clear to approaching drivers. If drivers are already ignoring this sign, it is likely they would ignore any other warning that were to be placed at this junction.

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Question 9– Cllr Steven McCormick

Re: Parking in White Horse Drive

A number of concerned residents from White Horse Drive area have contacted me with regard to the proposed parking changes in White Horse Drive.

The proposals to have no waiting in the road between 09:30-10:30 and 1:30-2:30 will make street parking for the residents who live there very difficult. If visitors are expected to attend during the day where are they to park their cars if these restrictions are put in place?

Officer response:

These roads, whilst currently unrestricted, are often used by local workers for all day parking restricting the availability of visitor parking for residents. The proposals aim to make more spaces available outside of the restricted hours. If these proposals were to go ahead then residents' visitors would have to arrange to visit outside of the hours of operation or use off-street parking. The restriction, however, would not prevent loading / unloading and boarding and alighting. Disabled drivers would also be able to park on the yellow lines, as long as they are displaying their blue badge.

Question 10 – Cllr Steven McCormick

Re: Chalk Lane - barriers, top and bottom

Chalk Lane is fast becoming a rat run for car drivers. It is signed at the top of the road where it joins Langley Vale road as access only and is a 30 mph speed limit.

There are barriers top and bottom to restrict access yet are not operational and serve no purpose whatsoever. These barrier have been vandalised and previous enquiries have provided a response that they are fixed and broken again.

A longer term, more robust solution needs to be found before a fatality occurs, a race horse and or rider is injured. This road is narrow, with no lighting and limited visibility with blind spots along its length.

If barriers do not work an alternative must be sought to enforce the restrictions on this piece of road and to ensure the safety of all users, road and vulnerable.

What alternative options are there to enforce the road traffic restrictions?

Officer response:

Please see the response to the petition at Item 5 on the agenda for this meeting.

Question 11 – Cllr Steven McCormick

Re: Proposed relaxation of parking controls on St. Margarets Drive and St Elizabeths Drive

Following the proposal to relax parking in the above streets in Epsom in the latest Parking review I would like to ask the following of all members of local committee.

How can you support the only proposal to relax parking restrictions to encourage cars to be used and to drive into Epsom at peak time?

How can you support the increased air pollution in this already congested area, which the long term effects may add to ill health for residents, both young and old?

Why is it that in this time of a declared emergency climate change this committee can be viewed as adding to the climate change issue rather than taking decisive steps to say no.

Out of all of the proposed parking review items this is the ONLY one reducing or relaxing parking restrictions, why is that?

Why is the school unable to manage its travel plan independently without involving Surrey County Council or Epsom & Ewell Borough Council? All of the other schools in the borough manage, why is this situation warrant special attention?

Officer response:

At the time the Committee agreed to advertise possible changes in the parking restrictions in Abelea Green, it was not intended to express support or otherwise for the scheme. It was included so that all available options could be considered and allow all interested parties to submit their views. The opportunity to comment ended on 5 December and the comments will be analysed to enable the committee to make a decision on which, if any, of the proposals in this area should be implemented at its meeting on 30 March taking into account all the available information.

Questions in relation to the School Travel Plan should be directed to the School. However the County Council do carry out Road Safety Outside Schools assessments, when requested, and the Local Committee will consider the recommendations and decide whether any actions are appropriate. An assessment in relation to this School was reported to the June 2019 meeting of the Committee.

Question 12 – Epsom Resident

Re: Proposed relaxation of parking controls on St. Margarets Drive and St Elizabeths Drive

In 2013 one email to a councillor instigated a proposal to relax parking for the benefit of St Joseph's School on Abelea Green.

In 2019 one email to a councillor instigated yet another proposal to relax parking on Abelea Green for the same reason.

I refer to the junction of Abelea Green and the Dorking Road.

This junction is an accident hot spot as is the junction with the petrol station and traffic lights.

Creating more pollution at a place where there are already pollution concerns would not reflect well on this committee.

In the light of the council's motion on the climate emergency would it not be appropriate to remove this proposal again?

Officer response:

The advertising period for the proposals from the parking review which were agreed for advertisement ends on 5 December and it is therefore not possible to analyse the responses in time for them to be considered at this meeting. A full report will be brought to the meeting on 30 March when the Committee will have all the information to make an informed decision.

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