



## **SCC LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY) 13 December 2019**

### **AGENDA ITEM 6**

#### **WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

1. Waverley Borough Councillors for Bramley, Busbridge and Hascombe, Richard Seaborne and Martin D'Arcy, will ask the following question:

**"Utility company repairs affecting the A281 in Bramley and Shalford:**

Planned and emergency utility company repairs to services located under the A281 in Bramley and Shalford are becoming so frequent that when a notification was recently posted on Facebook of yet another emergency repair by Thames Water, a resident responded: "Why tell us when there are repairs taking place? It would be far easier to tell us when the road is fully open, because it is for much less of the time!" Our understanding is that both Thames Water and Southern Gas Networks have old mains located under a road that is often running at capacity and has multiple HGVs using it. The mains cannot accommodate the continuous vibration and consequently fracture on a regular basis. This situation will only deteriorate as more and more houses are built at Dunsfold Park and Cranleigh.

Both Waverley and Surrey have recently declared climate emergencies. Prevention of the incremental emissions generated by traffic queuing on the A281 when repairs are being carried out must justify the pursuit of a solution in itself.

Our question to this committee is:

"Would Waverley Local Committee invite representatives of Thames Water and Southern Gas Networks to attend a future meeting to advise members what plans they have to replace the old infrastructure under the A281 with more durable mains, so that the regular need for temporary traffic lights can be addressed?"

**Matthew Jezzard, Traffic Manager, SCC Traffic & Streetworks Team, will give the following answer:**

"Surrey CC's Streetworks Team uses powers under the New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) 1991 and the Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004 to coordinate all Utility Company activities across the County. These powers allow us to grant permits for each activity, identifying date ranges for planned works which best minimise disruption and also placing 'conditions' on the works, such as working hours, traffic management type etc. However, these powers do not enable us to stop such activities from taking place. In the case of emergency

gas and water leaks we cannot defer the works, but can still agree a reasonable duration for such works and place conditions on the granted emergency permit.

Over the past 3 years along this section of the A281 there have been 45 emergency Thames Water works, 17 of which featured either temporary traffic lights or use of stop/go boards and 10 emergency SGN works, 8 of which featured either temporary traffic lights or use of stop/go boards.

Each Utility Company has its own asset management plans, often lead by their regulatory body (OFGAS, OFWAT) instructions/targets/budgets and whilst we do liaise with the Utility Companies on such matters, we are unable to formally directly instruct replacement of an asset as opposed ad-hoc 'emergency' repairs."

The Chairman of the Waverley Local Committee, Mrs Victoria Young, has said that she will invite Thames Water and SGN to a future Formal or Informal Local Committee meeting.

**2. Witley Parish Council will ask the following question:**

"As your committee will know by now, there is a continual problem with flooding on Station Lane in Milford. The culverts under the bridge have been blocked for some time. Three clear culverts should exist to allow the Ock to be free flowing, but at present two of them are fully blocked, and one is partially blocked. This is having a huge impact on surface water flooding along Station Road as the water has nowhere to go. It is not only the Parish Council who is concerned about this, a significant number of local residents are extremely dissatisfied with the current situation.

Councillor Christine Baker asked a question about planned works to improve the drainage on Station Lane at the last meeting but was not given a satisfactory answer. Adrian Selby advised that the developer of the Milford Golf Club site is required to provide some mitigation relating to drainage along Station Lane. We would argue that this is in no way a 'done deal'. There are several outstanding issues relating to this site that could affect its deliverability, so it seems unlikely that any culvert clearance work is likely to take place in the near future. This is a problem that is occurring now.

In addition to this, I have had an email exchange with a SCC officer who appeared to confirm that they would be scheduling in the work, timing to be confirmed. I have yet to receive an update on this.

We have reviewed the previous projects schedules for the local area committee and note that in 2016, drainage on Station Lane in Milford was assessed as being a high priority, with the estimated cost for drainage improvements identified as £10,000 (page 62). We were somewhat surprised therefore to see at the latest meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September that the same issue had been given zero weighting. This is shown as item 16 on the following document.

<https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s63288/ITEM%2010%20Annex%201%20-%20Waverley%20Scheme%20Assessment%20List%202019-20.pdf>

We would like to understand why the priority of this issue has been downgraded, and would urge the committee to reassess this road in relation to drainage as we find it extremely hard to believe that it was scored zero on accessibility and safety, particularly for pedestrians using the road. This is an extremely important route that is heavily used by both vehicles and pedestrians.

Could the Committee please provide an explanation of what funds are available to be spent in this particular ward and advise when these works can be scheduled? At present it is unclear how much money, if any, is available for maintenance items which as this, which have been neglected in recent years, are expensive and overdue.”

**Frank Apicella, SCC Area Highway Manager (South West), will give the following answer:**

“The Station Lane Milford drainage issue was first identified and added to the October 2016 Godalming Task Group. At this time the Task Group did not rank schemes, they either prioritised or did not prioritise schemes for funding and progression the following financial year. The scheme was identified as a maintenance funded item and not part of the capital expenditure.

Since the task groups have been disbanded, now all 11 Joint/Local Committees use the Integrated transport scheme assessment list which scores schemes using 5 themes:

Congestion  
Accessibility  
Safety  
Environment  
Economy

Schemes are scored using a weighting system focusing primarily on safety/collision reduction and then ranks all schemes by their cost benefit. Using this formula it enables the local committees to prioritise the capital funds for safety related works that have the potential to reduce collisions and improve road safety, whilst also assessing their impact on other themes.

Our records show that the Station Lane drainage scheme has been placed on the assessment list but has received a zero score under the weighting system due to the fact that there are no recorded injury accidents relating to this particular issue therefore not providing a cost benefit in terms of collision reduction. Please note that some schemes scored a negative benefit.

Since the introduction of the assessment list, the County Councillors have reassessed their priority schemes in an effort to rationalise the list in terms of the funding allocated to the Local Committee. At the first introduction of the

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assessment list the total value of work was estimated in excess of £1.5m; however, the annual committee capital allocation was £36,363. The list of scheme was reduced which removed many schemes of similar or lower scoring, and whilst the scoring of this scheme remains unaffected it now is the lowest ranked project.

While the scheme is effectively a maintenance scheme and is not deemed to be capital expenditure, County Councillor Peter Martin requested that the Station Lane drainage scheme remained on the assessment list as a potential scheme, despite a zero revenue budget for the whole county council this financial year.

Station Lane also forms part of the wet spot programme (Wav007) with a score of 107 and is currently with the flood resilience team for further investigation and design.

The structures team have already carried out an assessment and their recommendation is to remove a tree / vegetation from the site, to facilitate silt and debris removal from under the bridge. Land ownership on each side of the bridge also requires further investigation in order to facilitate any future drainage schemes on private land.

At the present time the river level is very high and the surrounding area to wet to enable any works to be carried out, hence any clearance work would have to wait until the water level drops and the ground dries out. Any works carried from the bridge would require a road closure, whilst care is also needed in the area not to damage the existing sewer pipe which runs alongside the bridge.”

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