

Questions from Local Committee Members

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)**

**DATE: 22 JANUARY 2020**



**LEAD OFFICER: JESS EDMUNDSON, PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE OFFICER**

**SUBJECT: QUESTIONS FROM LOCAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**DIVISION: ALL**

**1. Question submitted by Mrs Hazel Watson:**

A request is for a controlled pedestrian crossing on Chalkpit Lane at the end of the path from Meadowbank to Triangle Stores (where the traffic island already is and where a controlled crossing was previously situated many years ago) has been made by both St Martin's School and The Ashcombe School as many pupils from both schools cross the road at this point.

The request was made by the two schools when they presented a petition with a very significant number of signatures to the Local Committee calling for such a crossing to be installed. The request followed a meeting with County Officers where the significant number of children crossing the road at this point was clearly seen and followed the withdrawal of the school crossing patrol officer (lollypop lady) as it was deemed too dangerous for this service to be continued at this location.

The introduction of the controlled crossing would meet two major criteria: it will create a safe walking route to two schools and it will reduce congestion at peak times as cars will be removed from the road in the rush hour as more children will walk to school.

The latest report on CIL shows that the following CIL has been collected and remains unused: Dorking Neighbourhood CIL £11,585 - Dorking Strategic CIL £66,689.

The County Council has stated:

*"The identified estimated cost of this proposed scheme is beyond the funding available to the Local Committee at this time. The scheme remains on the ITS list until such time as there is revenue funding identified for feasibility and scheme development. If at that point a crossing is still feasible then the costs of delivery will be identified and any available funding sought. This could be CIL funding and would be dependent on there being development in the vicinity that could provide that level of funding."*

The District Council, which has responsibility for CIL, has stated:

*"The project is currently not on the list of the Local Committee's short term projects. In principle this sort of project could be eligible for CIL funding, but at the moment the solution to the problem has not been agreed and there is no costed design. If the project is promoted by the County Council we can consider an application at that stage, but we are not there at the moment."*

and

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*“The matter is one for the Local Committee, not MVDC; the issues are purely highway-related. You will understand that funds cannot be allocated from CIL for a scheme that currently does not exist and for which there are no costs. The nature of the project is such that it could qualify as a potential project if the Local Committee agrees to prioritise it and undertake some design and costing.”*

The scheme is thus stalled as the County Council will not consider this project as it will not undertake the preliminary work necessary to underpin the project and the District Council, even though it acknowledges that the project is one that could be eligible for CIL funding, cannot consider the project as the County Council will not undertake the necessary initial work to get the project “off the ground” notwithstanding that the District Council has collected, and will continue to collect, CIL that could potentially be used to fund the project.

Can an explanation be provided how:

- (i) the Dorking Neighbourhood CIL can be accessed, given that there is no third tier council that covers Dorking Town, in order to fund the necessary preliminary work that is needed to kick-start this vital project;
- (ii) the County Council is progressing schemes on the ITS list that may not be the highest priority on the list but for which there is potential CIL money available for implementation, the CIL having been received from development projects in that neighbourhood ie how it is ensuring that the maximum number of requested schemes are actually implemented through recognising what funding is potentially available for use; and how
- (iii) this project can be considered and developed through the emerging Mole Valley Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan given the “chicken and egg” nature of the responses by the County and District Council which simply results in complete inertia and gives two-tier local government a bad name.

### **Response:**

- i. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced by the Planning Act 2008, as a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of their area. It came in to force on April 2010 through the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, and now as amended by the 2012 and 2013 Regulations.

The levy can be used to fund a wide range of strategic infrastructure including transport, flood defences, schools, hospitals, and other health and social facilities. The largest portion of the levy is allocated to this Strategic CIL, with between 15% and 25% of the levy allocated to Neighbourhood CIL.

Where all or part of a chargeable development is within the area of a Parish Council, the charging authority must pass a proportion of the CIL receipts from the development to the Parish Council to support addressing the demands that development places on the area.

The community can still benefit from the neighbourhood portion of the levy where there is no Parish Council, such as in Dorking. The charging authority, in this case Mole Valley District Council, will retain the levy receipts and engage with the community where development has taken place and agree with them how best to spend the neighbourhood funding.

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The law does not set out a specific process for agreeing how the neighbourhood portion of the levy should be spent. Surrey Highways are an eligible body under the Regulations to receive and use Neighbourhood CIL funds. There has not yet been a request to submit bids for neighbourhood CIL funding and it is not yet known what level of scheme development (feasibility) would be required for any future bids. However, there is an application form and guidance available from Mole Valley District Council.

Mole Valley District Council have been contacted about the currently available CIL contributions, and have advised that there is currently insufficient funding available to enable the construction of a signal controlled pedestrian crossing. The construction of a Zebra crossing would likely also not be possible, or require all of the Neighbourhood CIL funding currently available. Neighbourhood CIL can be used to fund all types of infrastructure including flood defences, schools, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities and open spaces. Therefore there is a significant demand on this funding.

There are broadly concerns about using limited neighbourhood CIL funding for feasibility where a project may not go ahead, following feasibility assessment, for a variety of reasons. The initial site visits in Chalkpit Lane have indicated concerns about a feasible location for a formal signalised crossing. Therefore there is a risk that the project may not be able to go ahead after using limited funds on a feasibility assessment.

- ii. The Strategic and Neighbourhood CIL is a levy on new development to support growth in the area, and is operated and managed by Mole Valley District Council.

The ITS list is a list of schemes that have been requested from local communities regarding an existing highway issue rather than new infrastructure needed to support new development in the area. Therefore the vast majority of schemes listed within the ITS list, such as traffic calming, new pedestrian crossings and speed limit reductions would not be eligible for Neighbourhood CIL funding. Also any highway schemes that would be eligible for Strategic CIL funding will be identified through Mole Valley District Council's emerging Local Plan.

The ITS list is prioritised, as guidance to Members of the Local Committee, for deciding on the future programme of schemes funded from the delegated budget. Wherever possible, external funding is sought to progress schemes on the ITS list. The future programme is presented to the Local Committee for decision, and there is not always sufficient budget or resources available to progress the highest priority schemes.

- iii. The construction of a formal pedestrian crossing in Chalkpit Lane will serve the local neighbourhood, rather than a wider area of Dorking, and it is therefore most likely to be considered as a Neighbourhood CIL funded scheme.

The proposed pedestrian crossing on Chalkpit Lane could be considered for Strategic CIL funding, by Mole Valley District Council, if it was part of a series of highway improvements on the west side of Dorking. This would be required to be linked to new housing sites if these progress through the local plan process. Any proposals of this nature would be identified later in the local plan

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process when there is more certainty about where new development is to take place.

#### **2. Question submitted by Cllr Claire Malcomson:**

We were advised that other dangerous hot spots will be getting the opportunity of having average speed cameras installed before Mole Valley. Please can we be updated as to how long the A24, through The Holmwoods and up to Beare Green, will have to wait for its own cameras?

#### **Response:**

The provision of average speed cameras is considered together by the police and county council at locations where there has been a serious history of collisions and where speeds have been measured and confirmed as excessive and part of the problem. At the present time the county council are in the process of procuring average speed cameras for the A320 St Peter's Way in Chertsey, and for a portion of the A31 Hogs Back in Guildford. The feasibility of providing average speed cameras on the "Pirbright Bends" (Mytchett Place Road, Gole Road and Gapemouth Road) in Pirbright, Guildford is also being investigated. For the latter there has been 24 collisions in the three years to the end of 2018, including eight resulting in serious injury. On the A24 Horsham Road between the roundabout junction with Flint Hill in Dorking to the Beare Green roundabout, there has been a total of 14 collisions in the same period, with three of these resulting in serious injury. (Summary information on personal injury collisions can be viewed on [www.crashmap.co.uk](http://www.crashmap.co.uk)). Consequently the council and police do not currently have any plans to introduce average speed cameras on A24 Horsham Road. Data on collisions throughout Surrey is continually updated, and analysis is undertaken to prioritise resources towards the worst collision hotspots.

#### **3. Question submitted by Cllr Claire Malcomson:**

As the assessment of the verges was done in September, to see where they need to be cut and where they can be left for wildflowers to grow and attract pollinators, can SCC reassure us that a new programme of cutting will be implemented in the Spring, that makes sure as little is cut as possible, whilst keeping the road safe? And what this strategy will be? Will SCC invest in Cut and Collect machines to maximise this?

#### **Response:**

SCC have assessed the A24 between North Holmwood and Clarks Green roundabout and identified some central reservation areas, where they will only cut a 1m swathe in both directions, leaving the rest (on cut 1) uncut to allow wild flowers to grow. All the verges will be cut full width on cut 2.

There is also one area where lane 1 will have a 1m swathe cut, allowing the rest of the verge to be left, until cut 2.

This will be a trial only for 2020 initially.

Lane 1 verges will not be allowed to be uncut, where there are numerous trees and bushes. If these areas were uncut, the areas would quickly become overgrown with woody vegetation leading to high costs for future maintenance, and little chance of flowers surviving.

In Lane 2, the verges that have been identified do not have a ditch or French drain running along them, and are wide enough to permit a 1m swathe in both directions, as well as leaving a large enough area to benefit from being left uncut.

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Sight lines will be maintained by cutting the full width 100m from any junction or crossover point.

SCC have no ability to invest in Cut and collect machines as all of the grass cutting is contracted out. The new Countryside framework is not due for award until March 2020, and whilst there is a rate for the use of cut and collect methods of working, we are unable to comment on any potential use of that methodology until the prices and contractors have been confirmed. Surrey County Council have no extra money for verge maintenance this year, and Mole Valley chose not to contribute funds to enhance the maintenance. The standard is 4 urban cuts and 2 rural cuts, without collection of arisings.

**4. Question submitted by Mrs Hazel Watson - Headley Road, Leatherhead:**

The damaged and missing chevrons on Headley Road, Leatherhead opposite Highlands Farm were reported to the County Council in July 2019 and it was confirmed under Reference 1273613 - HEADLEY ROAD, LEATHERHEAD that new road signs were to be installed. On the basis that these would have been ordered in Q3 for installation in Q4 (ie by 31 December 2019) under the standard timescale for such works, can an explanation be given as to why the chevrons – which are an essential safety feature on a sharp bend - have not yet been replaced and can a date be set in January 2020 for the replacement signs to be installed?

**Response:**

The chevrons were not ordered until January 2020, due to an administration error. These signs have now been ordered and are to be installed by the end of March 2020.

**5. Question submitted by Mrs Hazel Watson - A24 Deepdene Avenue, Dorking:**

Residents were advised in late 2019 that the A24 Deepdene Avenue northbound and southbound carriageways between the Deepdene and Denbies Roundabouts would be resurfaced, yet when the work was completed significant stretches of the road were not resurfaced. Can an explanation please be given as to why the information provided to residents (and councilors) was misleading and suggested that much more resurfacing than was intended would be carried out.

Furthermore, there are now some very significant (deep) potholes in the southbound carriageway between the Railway Bridge and the Deepdene Roundabout which need urgent attention. Can a date for the repair of the road be given and can a justification be given as to why this section of road was not resurfaced when the rest of the road was resurfaced as it would have been much more cost effective to do so?

**Response:**

A24 Deepdene Avenue, Dorking was not originally included in the 2019/20 planned maintenance programme and had also not been prioritised when compared with other roads county wide for Horizon 2 which is a long term approach to considering roads for future scheme planning.

All roads on the planned maintenance programme have been prioritised in accordance with the cabinet approved process. This process takes account of criteria including: condition; network priority; risk and network management.

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Full list of schemes is published on our website

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/horizon-highway-maintenance-investment-programme>

Criteria that had rated the scheme low in the priority process included a low percentage of structural defects and low number of risk related issues such as skidding accidents. However, urgency increased when the number of reported risk related defects went up. The scheme was therefore nominated for works utilising an additional budget allocation from the severe weather fund.

At a later date, and due to this being an A class road and the higher associated costs incurred, the scheme was moved to the major maintenance programme by officers. This happened after the start of the financial year and since budgets had already been allocated the extent of works was restricted to 3 sections of the worst deteriorated areas to keep within approved overall programme costs.

Information was provided to stakeholders in accordance with our customer engagement plan. A residents leaflet was sent out which included a map outlining the limits of closures rather than extents of surfacing and we regret any confusion caused. The website did set out in detail the extents for each of the various phases of surfacing

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/roadworks/a24-london-road-and-deepdene-avenue-resurfacing>

We have taken account of the concerns raised in the councillor's question and have schedule an assessment of the remaining sections. We will update Hazel of the outcome of that assessment.

We will continue to inspect these roads for individual Safety Defects, and arrange repairs as appropriate.

### **6. Question submitted by Mrs Hazel Watson – On- street parking in Dorking Town Centre:**

Matt Furniss, the County Council Cabinet Member responsible for Highways in Surrey has requested that the Local Committee should look at on-street parking charges again in Dorking. In order to enable the Local Committee to assess the reasonableness of this request, can the number of designated on-street parking places at each location in the town be listed together with a preliminary assessment of the number of pay machines that would be required, and comments as to how many parking spaces each payment machine would need to service for the scheme to be cost effective and produce an appropriate return on the capital invested?

### **Response:**

There is insufficient time before the committee to assess in any detail the various 'pay and display' options that could be implemented in Dorking. The SCC parking team would be happy to look at the options with local members should the local committee wish to take this proposal forward.

**7. Questions submitted by Mr Tim Hall:**

What are the On Street Parking Enforcement for Mole Valley in financial figures in the last four financial years (by year)?

1. What are the sources of income by category? (PCNs/Resident Parking Permits etc) by year.
2. Which are the costs by Budget Head (Staffing/Administration/Travel etc).
3. What are the overall deficit or surplus figures for each of the last four years for Mole Valley?
4. How do the figures in 3. Compare to the other ten Surrey Districts over the same period?

**Response:**

In response to Q1 to Q3, please see the table below showing a breakdown of parking income and expenditure supplied by MVDC for the Mole Valley on street parking account for the last 4 financial years.

Type	On Street	On Street	On Street	On Street
Accounting year end	Mar-19	Mar-18	Mar-17	Mar-16
<b>Income</b>				
Income from Resident Permits	£59	£28	£24	£12
Income from Visitor Permits				
Income from Parking Charges				
PCN Income	£124	£122	£104	£104
Other Income (Non PCN)	£4	£9	£8	£2
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£187</b>	<b>£159</b>	<b>£137</b>	<b>£119</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Enforcement Contractors	£6	£1		
Enforcement Staff	£169	£165	£86	£90
Equipment/Operations	£6	£17	£8	

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Non Enforcement Staff	£47	£46	£64	£67
Traffic Penalties Tribunal/Appeal		£2		
Overheads	£23	£16	£15	£28
Other				
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>£253</b>	<b>£249</b>	<b>£175</b>	<b>£185</b>
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>£66</b>	<b>£89</b>	<b>£38</b>	<b>£66</b>

Note, Income from visitor permits is included in Resident Permit total

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In response to 4. Please see summary table of income/expenditure for Surrey districts and boroughs.

**Summary of on street parking income and expenditure in 18/19**

Authority Name	<i>Epsom and E</i>	<i>Elmbridge</i>	<i>Guildford</i>	<i>Mole Valley</i>	<i>Runnymede</i>	<i>Reigate and Banstead</i>	<i>Spelthorne</i>	<i>Surrey Heath</i>	<i>Tandridge</i>	<i>Waverley</i>	<i>Woking</i>
Type	<i>On Street</i>	<i>On Street</i>	<i>On Street</i>	<i>On Street</i>	<i>On Street</i>	<i>On Street</i>	<i>On Street</i>	Total	<i>On Street</i>	<i>On Street</i>	<i>On Street</i>
Accounting year end	31/03/2019	31/03/2019	31/03/2019	31/03/2019	31/03/2019	31/03/2019	31/03/2019	01/04/18 to 04/11/18	31/03/2019	31/03/2019	31/03/2019
Total Income	£423,832	£1,043,094	£1,395,224	£187,830	£149,670	£298,259	£153,931	£271,860	£136,779	£392,987	£956,723
Total costs	£393,808	£666,678	£810,284	£253,925	£146,016	£633,566	£152,656	£350,110	£140,066	£210,850	£645,027
Surplus amount (-ve is deficit)	£30,023	£376,416	£584,940	-£66,095	£3,654	-£335,307	£1,275	-£78,250	-£3,287	£182,137	£311,696

**8. Question submitted by Mr Stephen Cooksey:**

Would officers please investigate the possibility of introducing a box junction at the junction of Westcott Road, Vincent Lane and Howard Road in Dorking to help relieve the problem of vehicles blocking access when traffic lights change? Such boxes have been introduced and work successfully in other parts of Dorking regardless of enforcement issues.

**Response:**

The A25 Westcott Road/Vincent Lane/Howard Road/Drill Hall Road junction is a cross roads junction on the one-way system in Dorking.

In 2017 a study was carried out into congestion problems in Dorking Town Centre, this study produced a range of small scale options to reduce congestion. The study did not identify the installation of a yellow box at this junction as a small scale option that could reduce congestion in Dorking Town Centre.

Half-yellow boxes, in which only one lane is marked, are appropriate at T-junctions where the traffic blocks back from one direction only. However, half-boxes such as this should only be used on the minor road side of the main carriageway, to allow emerging traffic to turn right where the queue of traffic in the major road is to the left, such as the yellow box marking at the A2003 Station Road/A25 Westcott Road junction. A half-box on the side of the road opposite a T-junction, which is being requested here, generally serves no useful purpose. Even though it will create a gap in a queue of traffic, drivers turning right from the minor road will not be able to enter the box as the exit will be obstructed. Also traffic travelling on the A25 Westcott Road into Dorking Town Centre will be prevented from proceeding because they will have to give way to traffic travelling out of Vincent Lane more frequently, leading to longer queues on the A25 Westcott Road.

For the reasons above Surrey County Council has no plans to introduce a half-yellow box at the junction of Westcott Road, Vincent Lane and Howard Road in Dorking.

**9. Question submitted by Mrs Clare Curran:**

In recent weeks, Bookham High Street has become very congested, often because large vehicles have been using it and cars have been unable to pass them. Sometimes this has led to tailbacks on the A246 or on Lower Road.

Some shoppers and retailers find this frustrating and suggest that congestion like this deters residents from shopping locally and from using the High Street. Other residents are concerned about the safety of pedestrians in the village centre, particularly those who cross the road.

Accordingly, I have had several suggestions that the High Street would be more convenient, safer and free flowing if it were made one way. Other residents have suggested that the High Street might be altogether safer for shoppers and a more attractive environment if it were to be pedestrianised between Lower Road and Guildford Road.

Could officers please set out how these options could be evaluated and considered? If one or other option were to be considered feasible and desirable, what would be the process to work the project through? What would be the timescales and cost? Who are the different organisations and groups of people who would be consulted? What are the different factors that would need to be taken into account?

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#### **Response:**

Bookham High Street is located off of the A246 that runs east to west between Leatherhead and Guildford. It links the A246 Leatherhead Road to the south with Lower Road to the north. The High Street is an important part of a busy and vibrant village centre, and therefore contains a number of shops and businesses, which people need to access.

There are issues with traffic flows and congestion relating to the various competing activities that have to be accommodated within the narrow highway limits on the High Street.

In 2013 concerns were raised that the narrow carriageway width on the High Street and the parking along the entire length of the east side, did not provide many opportunities for two vehicles to pass one another, particularly if being used by large vehicles.

As a result of these concerns, the South East Area Team was asked to look into carrying out improvements to address these concerns. Following consultation carried out in 2013, with residents, businesses and Bookham Residents Association, sections of double yellow lines were installed in High Street in order to provide passing spaces to make it easier for vehicles to pass each other. An informal pedestrian crossing on a raised table top road hump was also installed, in order to provide a facility for pedestrians to cross safely without having to cross between parked vehicles.

At this time the possibility of installing a one-way system in High Street was also considered, and consultation was carried out regarding whether or not a one-way system would be supported. However, opposition to the one-way system was received from residents and retailers, who were concerned about the increased vehicle speeds and the redistribution of traffic to surrounding roads, particularly East Street, which would result from the introduction of a one-way system in High Street. There were also concerns that a one-way system would have a negative impact on businesses in the High Street due to one end of the High Street being effectively closed to traffic. The pedestrianisation of High Street would raise similar concerns to those raised regarding the possibility of installing a one-way system in High Street. These concerns will remain and therefore there are no plans to introduce a one-way system or pedestrianise High Street, Great Bookham.

#### **10. Question submitted by Cllr Nancy Goodacre:**

The closure of sections of public footways during building developments causes significant inconvenience to local residents, such as the long-term closure in Keswick Road. Why are section 50 licences or other measures not being used effectively to control this?

#### **Response:**

Based on the information received, officers cannot find evidence of a long term footway closure at this location, but would be happy to work with the questioner further if more information could be provided about the specific development and/or location.