

INFORMAL QUESTIONS SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING AND THEIR RESPONSES:

Q Please can the council work with Network Rail to reduce the wait time at the level crossing in Pooley Green?

R The Committee acknowledged that this was a problem and it was believed that the problem was caused by the system being operated manually rather than being digitised. This causes wait times at all the level crossings on the borough, not just Pooley Green. It was also recognised that standing traffic impairs air quality and that drivers should be encouraged to switch off their engines to reduce emissions. Furthermore, the expansion at Heathrow may also impact this if additional services are added to these lines. Officers from Surrey County Council's Strategic Transport team are due to meet with Network Rail this week for their twice yearly review and will report back to the Committee on their progress. This will be featured on the decision tracker so members of the public will be able to view the response.

Q Wouldn't it be great to fix the footpath and staircase between Carbrera Avenue and the station in Virginia Water, especially to improve access for those with pushchairs etc.?

R The Highways officer confirmed that this the path in question is Footpath 55 and reported that this was an issue that had been investigated previously as part of the Borough Council's initiative to improve the nearby car park. In order to replace stairs with ramps with a gentle enough gradient to allow easier access, this would require quite a large piece of land and would mean taking a piece of the adjacent woodland to facilitate this. Due the environmental impact this was likely to have, this was therefore not included in the planning application and no plans, to date, exist to improve it.

**Q Resident 'RB' asked:
What is being done to enforce dangerous parking? Areas of particular concern are:**

- Parsonage Road/ Middle Hill,
- Parsonage Road/Harvest Road,
- Victoria Road/ St Judes.
- With left hand turns being hazardous at: South St/St Judes, Middle Hill/ Parsonage Road, and Middle Hill Barley Mow.

R The issues were acknowledged and it was noted that the Parking Review which was being discussed later in the meeting had put forward enforcement measures to help to alleviate the problems in South Road (where turning into St Jude's is difficult) and Barleymow Road.

The police reported that they are able to act on parking that is obstructive and/ or dangerous if this is reported to them. However, as the roads in question are very narrow, parked cars along those roads can be a deterrent to speeding.

Q Resident 'KC' asked: Why did Surrey Police twice refuse to move on traveller incursions and implement section 61 of the Police and Criminal Justice 1994 even though it appeared that the criteria for doing so had been met?

R The Police Sergeant attending reported that the police work with the councils jointly on these matters. The criteria for section 61 states that action can be taken if there is a criminal element to the activity or a community or environmental impact and they make

that judgement based on information available to them at the time. The responsibility to move on travellers lies with the duty inspector.

Cllr Nigel King added that he sympathised with the questioner, recognising the extremely close proximity of the questioner's house to the land where the incursion occurred and that the gentleman had himself, personally encountered the travellers. Having been there himself that day, Cllr King agreed that it was an abrasive situation and felt that the police had done a good job in diffusing this. He then reported that Englefield Green Committee is going to erect post alongside the green as a preventative measure.

Cllr John Furey stated that he believes that current policies do not go far enough to address protection for residents and will be approaching the Police and Crime Panel and Runnymede Borough Council to review.

There are plans for a designated transit site which would give travellers an official site to park up and thus, prevent trespass on other sites. However to date, a suitable site has not yet been agreed upon within the county. In addition to this, councillors have been liaising with the local MP about getting additional powers to tackle this issue and look forward to working with the new MP from January.

INFORMAL QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FROM THE FLOOR:

Parking

Parking was the predominant issue from this session. Please see minute item 31/19 for decisions made as part of the Parking Review.

- Q Cllr Japneet Sohi related a number of issues around parking in the village sent to her by a resident. The prime focus of these concerns were around access for emergency vehicles.** These concerns will be considered along with those put forward by other residents that were present.
- R** The Parking Officer recognises the issues in the area and acknowledges that there is no easy solution. The roads are narrow, unable to be widened and see a high volume of traffic. However, he reported that many of the recommendations he had put forward as part of the Parking Review would help to alleviate some of the pressures that had been indicated by the residents including access of emergency vehicles.
- Q Would the parking situation be improved if students from the Royal Holloway and Bedford University could park on the university site?** For example: Along the "triangle" (Spring Rise) in Egham, student parking made it very difficult for residents to park near their homes and that the difference can best be seen when the university term is not in session and the roads are clear. The university's policy is that cars should not be brought in by students whose journey is less than 1.3 miles but this is not always adhered to.
- R** It was acknowledged however that as long as cars are road-worthy, taxed and insured, anyone can use and park on the public highway as long as they do so legally.

The Divisional Member Cllr Marisa Heath, confirmed that she has observed parking on kerbs, corners and grass verges and saw first-hand that many of these cars were being driven by students. She visited this site along with the Deputy Leader for Surrey County Council and it was felt that implementing **Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs)** would be the way forward for the most affected areas. CPZs restrict parking to permit holders only and so use of available parking spaces would be restricted to householders. Schemes of this nature are resident-led and would require local people to sign up to the scheme and apply and pay for permits. A consultation would need to be carried out in order to test the will of local people to commit to this. Cllr Heath also suggested that the university could be better engaged in addressing this as many universities have come up with their own solutions to similar problems.

Q Resident A.D asked: What can be done to alleviate obstruction caused by parking around the area around the Barley Mow pub (St Jude's Road and Northcroft Road)

This area is often hampered by legal parking (and there are no yellow lines) turning it effectively into a single lane road, often forcing cars to drive on the wrong side in order to get passed, causing dangerous conditions for both drivers and motorists. This problem is likely to be exacerbated by future housing development which is going to increase the number of flats in the area. A.D further suggested that a combination of parking restrictions outside the Barley Mow and a small section of hard standing on the green area opposite to allow parking could alleviate the problem.

R Cllr Heath confirmed that restrictions had been suggested as part of the Parking Review but that the council was legally prevented from placing any hard standing on the green.

Q Resident 'B.M' asked: Cooper's Hill Road is an area that has seen an increase in residences due to recent developments. These have included student housing, affordable housing and a retirement home. This has increased traffic at the junction Priest Hill and St Jude's Road and it is a dangerous place to turn especially for large vehicles. An earlier traffic assessment concluded that there are no significant problem there but there was a serious car accident there shortly afterwards. **What is the current view on this?**

R A speed survey was held as part of a traffic impact assessment and showed a good overall level of speed compliance and these results were shared with residents. Developments can impact levels on traffic and measures to offset this impact can be made as part of the planning agreement. However, perhaps this can be reviewed again.

Q Can measures be taken to prevent damage to grass verges along Coopers Hill Lane when there are visitors to the football club parking along the road?

R It may be possible to install posts to prevent parking here. Again a CPZ might be an answer.

Q Spring Rise and Ripley Avenue also suffer from parking problems. There are some yellow lines in place, could more measures be implemented?

R Some restrictions are proposed as part of the parking review to be held later this meeting. Again residents could consider a CPZ here.

Q Are the proposed restrictions in South Road (in the Parking Review report) sufficient to address the problem?

R This comment is noted and will be considered in the Parking Review section of the meeting.

Q Please can the Committee note that a new multi-storey car park is being built on Harvest Road? It is as yet unclear how car park users will be able to turn right from this facility and the impact this may have on traffic.

In addition, please can it be noted that the gated entrances of the university residences are used by cars turning around and this is also hazardous especially when unlit?

R Both these points are noted

Speed limits and other highways issues

Q Do either the County or Borough Council have the authority to reduce speed limits in the area or does an application need to be made to central government? Should a speed limit of 20mph not be implemented?

R The Joint Committee has delegated power to determine speed limits as long as this is in line with County Council policy. A speed assessment would be undertaken as part of the process. A proposal for a 20mph speed limit within the village has been made as part of the Englefield Village Plan.

Q Concerns about speeding and speed limits were raised concerning:

- **St Judes Road and Bond Street (Lack of speed limits and repeater signs)**
- **Crimp Hill and Bishopsgate (needs a speed limit due to high level of horse traffic, cyclists and walkers)**

R The County Council in conjunction with Surrey Police run an initiative called Drive SMART which focuses on reducing road casualties and anti-social driving. Part of this work is to establish and prioritise areas of the most need and this is done by virtue of a seven day traffic survey. One has already been conducted for Bond Street (results pending) and St Jude will be put forward for assessment. Bishopsgate and the wider area was put forward for consideration in the 2019/20 Highways schedule but was not prioritised on this occasion. It will be reassessed as part of the 2020/21 programme. In addition, parking restrictions are recommended in tonight's report for these two roads and additional "School keep clear" markings outside of Bishopsgate School.

Q Can the pot holes in Middle Hill be addressed? Drivers are driving on the other side of the road to avoid them making travelling down this road hazardous.

R These points were noted and will be considered alongside the other suggestions.

Questions on future development of the village:

- Q** **What can be done about the over development of the village?** One new development in Harvest Road is providing 166 dwellings but only has an allocation of 16 parking spaces. This will exacerbate the parking difficulties.
- A** Councillors strongly opposed this development however, this is at odds with current central government priorities and national planning policy and so this objection was rejected at an appeal. Hence councillors need to look at providing solutions to the strain on local infrastructure (such as those suggested at this meeting). The Village Plan is an important part of this to try to establish more power over the developments.
- Q** **Cllr Japneet Sohi: Can Surrey County Council resume the practice of sending an appropriate officer to planning committee meetings?** In the cases where the County Council has not submitted a formal response to an application, it would be useful to know why they have chosen not to comment.
- A** If Surrey County Council does not have any valuable input to contribute to an application then they will not submit a comment. Sending along a representative to planning meetings is not considered a good use of officer time but an officer from the County Council's Transport Development Planning team will always look at each application. However they are only allowed by law to comment on individual applications and the immediate locale.

The Chairman finished this section of the meeting by re-iterating that the objective of tonight's meeting and the Joint Committee is to demonstrate and improve upon partnership working between the borough and county councils.

For formal written questions please see minutes items 28/19 and 29/19.

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