



## **SCC LOCAL COMMITTEE IN ELMBRIDGE – 24 June 2013**

### **AGENDA ITEM 10 MEMBER QUESTIONS**

#### **Question 1: Stuart Selleck Member for Esher & East Molesey**

Business parking permits in Molesey have increased from £35 to £500 this year. As Surrey County Council is constantly promoting its business friendly agenda, would the Committee agree that such an increase does not conform with this stance? And consequently should we review the level of the current charge?

#### **The Chairman will give the following response:**

In April 2011, the County Council published the Surrey Transport Plan, the third Local Transport Plan for the county (as required by the Local Transport Act 2008 and Transport Act 2000). The plan contained a number of strategies, among them a parking strategy, which included reference to business permits. The strategy said that "they should only be for vehicles that are essential for the operation of the business and for which no alternative parking (either on street or off street) is available. They should not be issued to allow staff to park all day while at work, and to this end it is best if their use is time limited during the course of the operational hours of the zone." In another section it said that "there may on rare occasions be a case for issuing permits to businesses, but their issue and use should be tightly controlled. Such a permit should only be issued where commercial necessity is shown, and as such it is reasonable for the charge for a permit to reflect a rate more comparable to other commercial parking provision, such as car park season tickets. The minimum fee for a business permit should be £500." The transport plan and its contents were subject to an extensive and wide-spread consultation during 2010 before its adoption by the council in 2011. A number of business organisations were consulted, including the Elmbridge Business Network. There are very few controlled parking zones in Surrey where business permits are available. In Woking they have cost £310 for a number of years and we are looking at changing the cost in the current review of parking there, and in Camberley business permits cost £995. Increasing the fee in Elmbridge has brought the cost in line with the parking strategy, and with other areas of the county.

One of the reasons for making these changes is that East Molesey is a vibrant shopping and tourist centre, located right next to Hampton Court and the River Thames. Although we allow residents to purchase permits if they have no off street parking, we feel that the primary purpose of the on street parking during the day should be to accommodate visitors and customers to the local businesses. The cost of the business permits in the East Molesey controlled parking zone had not changed for many years and they appear to have been used by businesses for what effectively amounts to commuter parking for their staff. This contributed to a lack of turnover in the parking bays intended for the use of customers of the shops, cafes and restaurants in the area. We therefore expect most of the businesses in the area

to benefit from any reduction in the number of cars parking all day with business permits as there will be more space available for customers.