

**Mole Valley Local Committee – 29 September 2021****Written Public Question****Question 1 from Mr John Moyer, Leatherhead Living**

A number of us in Leatherhead have been trying without success to get a firm date for the SCC contractor to repaint the 'Waterless Feature' in Leatherhead High Street. We have established via Lucy Quinnell that an on site meeting with the contractor was held to choose the paint colour. And that the contractor was awaiting a spell of dry weather.

When is the work scheduled to start and can it now be done before the winter? Why has it been left all summer if it needed dry weather? Is it better to leave it to next summer and perhaps allow some temporary public art or banners over the winter?

Local district councillors and MVDC are being constantly blamed for delays but it seems this is not the case.

**Response**

The colour was discussed at the site meeting held at the end of July and subsequently agreed with the divisional member in August. A number of questions were raised by Lucy Quinnell of the Fire and Iron Gallery at the site meeting which were then passed to the specialist contractor for response. A job has been raised with the contractor but the work has not yet been scheduled. It is important for the correct materials and application to be used on this job so that the paint does not flake again. Unfortunately this has resulted in a delay to work starting on site.

It is agreed that the work should not be started if there is a risk that the wall is not dry and so the paint will flake due to moisture in the concrete. Officers will take advice from the specialist contractors but it is likely that the job may need to be postponed until Spring/early Summer 2022. Officers would support finding a temporary solution to address the current condition of the feature and will instigate discussions with the divisional member, Mole Valley District Council, and the Fire and Iron Gallery.

**Question 2 from Andrea Bradley and Janice Brown, Dorking**

A recent example in Claremont Court, Dorking (see attached photos) has highlighted poor technical consideration and decision making in respect of Surrey County Council's Equalities Act obligations. The scheme suggests a lack of understanding of the needs of the disabled in the location and design requirements for both advisory and statutory parking bays. Experience of other projects in Mole Valley suggests that this lack of understanding in infrastructure development and design extends beyond parking bays (information can be supplied).

Could the council please explain its application/location screening, design and consultation policies for disabled parking bays, specifically, and for transport infrastructure in general?

Further, would councillors ensure that:

Mole Valley Access Forum is included as a "Stakeholder" organization in all future traffic and transport consultations;

location of the parking bay in Claremont Court is reconsidered with a view to moving it to a more suitable location nearby, not only for the specific user but also of wider value to nearby residents;

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in future, all transport facilities under Surrey County Council control or participation are located and designed within nationally recognised guidance and regulations for the disabled.

We would also suggest that, in pursuit of that goal, Surrey's Environment Transport and Infrastructure staff undergo a training and development programme design to improve their understanding of the needs of the disabled.

### **Response**

The county council installs different types of disabled parking bays for different purposes. It installs them for general use by all blue badge holders where it is beneficial to assist with access to amenities, for example in front of a row of shops, and it installs them in response to an application from an individual blue badge holder in order to help them be able to park close to their home. The bay in Claremont Court falls into the second category. On the application form, the applicant is asked to describe where they would like the bay to be installed, which is normally right outside their property. Where this is not possible, the council, bearing in mind the applicant's suggestion, will locate the bay in the nearest suitable location, taking into account the needs of the applicant. The council sometimes takes a pragmatic approach, and there is therefore more flexibility in the design and location of bays of this sort than where bays are being installed that fall into the first category.

For an application to be successful, the applicant must be a blue badge holder, their vehicle must be registered and kept at their address and they cannot have access to usable off-street parking, such as a driveway. The applicant has to submit a copy of their blue badge and their vehicle registration document with their application form and the council carries out a site visit to check the situation with regard to off-street parking space and to select the location of the bay.

When installing bays in response to an application from an individual, the council notifies the properties closest to the proposed location of the bay, which is normally just those neighbouring the applicant's address, but this may include more properties, depending on the particular circumstances, at the discretion of the officer carrying out the site visit.

When the council installs a statutory disabled parking bay, there is a more extensive consultation process, which includes publishing a notice of its intention to install the bay in a local newspaper, and taking steps to bring it to the attention of those likely to be affected, such as putting up notices at or near to the location and a letter drop to nearby properties. There are also statutory consultees, which vary depending on the location of the bay, such as the emergency services and bus operators.

It is appreciated that the Mole Valley Access Forum have raised important accessibility issues with us, and these are taken into consideration when schemes and policies are developed. Different accessibility requirements are also considered as part of national statutory regulations and design guides.

The Equality Act 2010 requires Local Authorities to have due regard to the equalities implications of their decision making rather than imposing a requirement to undertake specific works.

Equality Impact Assessments are assessments that public authorities may carry out as part of the decision-making process prior to implementing or amending a policy in order to ascertain its potential impact on equality. They are not required by law but are a way of understanding the impact on equality of our policies and services.

It is very helpful if all residents engage on these important transport issues and there is still time for responding to the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) consultation that remains open until

24th October 2021. The new LTP4, that puts climate change at the core of new strategies, has proposals to 2030 and beyond. These proposals include: increasing safer and improved walking and cycling routes (including for those who may need to use mobility aids) to encourage people out of their cars; providing more charging points and parking for electric vehicles; more bus services; charging for transport use and introducing car clubs; as well as improving internet connections and redesigning neighbourhoods to enable easier access to local services, reducing the need to travel by car.

Surrey County Council takes the needs of resident groups with different accessibility requirements very seriously. Stakeholders are identified for each project that has community engagement and consultation, and the Mole Valley Access Forum will be put forward as a stakeholder for future projects.

There are training opportunities available to all colleagues on a variety of equalities issues, including for the engineers and street scene designers who work on our projects. They are all qualified, trained, skilled and experienced in assessing projects for accessibility and are kept up to date on all aspects of highway and transport design.

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