

**CABINET – 26 NOVEMBER 2019**

**PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

**Public Questions**

**Question 1: Mr Ian Thirlwall, Resident**

This is a question regarding the Highways England A23 widening proposed through Hooley. This will have a negative impact on the residents of Hooley, particularly those living and working on the Brighton Road stretch of the proposed widening. We are concerned about the development in three areas:

- Firstly, because we believe it will have a negative impact on air pollution, which will impact our health. There are already high levels of traffic exhaust fumes which are the highest in the county, and this widening could increase traffic in this location.
- Secondly, the scheme proposes to build on the verges and pavements, which will have a negative impact on pedestrians and cyclists, bringing cars within “brushing distance “. This could increase accident risk to pedestrians and cyclists. It is not clear how this will be managed (in terms of adverse impacts on our livelihoods and local businesses) both during the twelve month construction programme and in the long-term.
- Thirdly, will the scheme address the traffic-accident-waiting-to-happen at the unofficial makeshift ‘turnaround’ on the A23 at the junction with Starbucks.
- Finally, it is unclear why this is the best option – as the benefit according to Highways England is only to the M23/ M25, rather than also providing any local benefits for the £4m cost to the taxpayer.

Surely it would be better to spend (significantly less) money on traffic management in Hooley and neighbouring Chipstead where traffic accidents are waiting to happen and reduce speeding on local roads such as Star Lane, Elmore Road, High Road and Coulsdon Lane.

In light of this:

1. Please can you confirm Surrey County Council’s view on this scheme in terms of: air pollution impact, traffic impact (particularly the way the scheme will help Surrey’s transport to become more sustainable) and the proposal to invest £4million in this way rather than on local transport improvements?
2. Please can you provide full details of the consultations with Surrey County Council to date and how the scheme has been changed to reflect local views. Please can the responses that Surrey County Council have given to Highways England on the finalised scheme also be made public?
3. How much of the £4m is being allocated to local improvements as noted above?

**Reply:**

1. This section of the A23 is a trunk road and Highways England, as the highway authority for this road, are responsible for the development, design and delivery of schemes at this location. The £4million referred to is Highways England funding, which means Surrey County Council is not able to use this funding on County local transport improvements.

Highways England have responded to previous correspondence and a Freedom of Information request about these matters, including about air quality. A meeting is being

arranged with Highways England representatives to enable resident representatives to discuss these issues further with them.

Due to a Highways England review of schemes set to be delivered this financial year (2019/20), the A23 Brighton Road Hooley improvement has been delayed.

2. A public information event took place on the 27th and 28th July 2018 and Highways England have subsequently completed their proposed scheme design following a second public information event on 15th and 16th March 2019. The Reigate & Banstead Local Committee received a question about this scheme on 3rd June 2019.

The County Council was made aware of the scheme and the proposals by Highways England, but as the proposed works are within the Highways England road network Surrey County Council's comments made to the public information event were primarily from a works coordination/concerns on traffic flows during construction phasing perspective. It was suggested that the addition of average speed cameras to the scheme would help to achieve compliance to the new lower speed limit and also help smooth traffic flow. There is no further information available.

Highways England have listed the changes to the scheme, because of the Public Interest Events, on their website.

3. As set out in question 1, the £4million referred to is Highways England funding and as such Surrey County Council is not able to use this on County local transport improvements.

**Mr Matt Furniss**  
**Cabinet Member for Highways**  
**26 November 2019**