

# ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Meeting held on Tuesday, 24th March, 2015 at the Council Offices,  
Farnborough at 7.00 p.m.

## **Voting Members:**

Cr. D.E. Clifford (Chairman)  
a Cr. Sophia Choudhary (Vice-Chairman)

Cr. P.I.C. Crerar  
Cr. Sue Dibble  
Cr. D.S. Gladstone

Cr. J.H. Marsh

Cr. J.J. Preece  
Cr. L.A. Taylor  
Cr. D.M. Welch

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Cr. Sophia Choudhary.

## **24. MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th January, 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **25. TRANSPORT – INFRASTRUCTURE –**

The Panel considered current issues relating to local transport infrastructure in Rushmoor and the North Hampshire area. The Panel welcomed Ms. Paula Williams from Network Rail, Mr. Richard Kempton from South West Trains, Ms. Paula Edwards from Hampshire County Council Strategic Transport Group and Mr. Kevin Travers representing the Enterprise M3 Partnership in respect of the Farnborough Growth Package Transport Schemes to the meeting. Mr. Jim Pettitt, Rushmoor Transport Strategy Officer was also present at the meeting.

Ms. Paula Williams from Network Rail presented information regarding infrastructure improvements taking place in the Rushmoor and North Hampshire area, in particular details were given about Network Rail's Track Renewal Programme. Ms. Williams explained that Network Rail was now able to deliver track renewals in a shorter space of time whilst minimising disruption and maintaining services using new technology. The advantage of the new machine was that it was able to replace track more quickly and could therefore be operated during the night instead of only at weekends. The Panel was informed that the contract was being delivered in conjunction with the contractor Amey Colas and was currently being used in the Farnborough and Blackwater Valley area. The Panel heard that further improvements were being planned to replace the canopies at Fleet Station and the continuing campaign to improve level crossing safety.

On discussing level crossing safety, the Panel asked whether there were any upgrading plans for the level crossing at Farnborough North Station where incidents of misuse regularly occurred. Members suggested that a footbridge would be a safer option. The Panel was informed that options were currently being considered because of the high number of college students using the crossing irresponsibly. However, building a bridge may not be an option, as Network Rail did not own the land required. The Panel was assured that Network Rail were doing everything possible to reduce incidents by visiting Farnborough Sixth Form College, making announcements on trains and carrying out spot checks at the crossing. The possibility of closing the crossing was discussed but the Panel emphasised that a suitable alternative was needed.

Other issues discussed included the loss of the Sturt Lane Chord (a former link between the local line and the main line for passenger traffic from Frimley and Camberley into Waterloo via Woking). It was acknowledged that the Local Enterprise Partnership had identified the lack of capacity and need for better transport links in that area and this was currently being investigated.

Mr. Richard Kempton, from South West Trains then presented a local service update. Mr. Kempton informed the Panel that a recent consultation study had forecast a 40% growth in passenger numbers by 2043 on the rail line to London, Waterloo and 20% overcrowding during peak times. Mr. Kempton outlined the measures which had been put in place to deal with the increase in capacity which would be required. This included Crossrail, station capacity work at stations in the surrounding areas, a fifth track from Surbiton to Waterloo and automatic 'in cab' signalling with the aim of being able to run twelve extra trains per peak hour. Work had also been taking place at Waterloo Station with the lengthening of tracks to accommodate longer trains and lengthening of peak service times. £7 million of work was also being carried out to boost reliability and performance at Wimbledon Station which would be critical to the smooth running of the network. Mr. Kempton also advised the Panel about a new Regional Operations Centre which would house all signalling and would improve capacity on the lines. The Centre would be in operation in 2016.

The presentation also covered the recent work completed at Farnborough Main station to the car park entrance which had provided an improved interchange for buses, taxis and passenger drop off. This had resulted in a significant increase in people using bus/rail services.

The Panel discussed the need to regenerate Aldershot Station and felt that, with the current investment taking place in Aldershot more could be done to market the town by improving the exterior of the Station. Members suggested that the office area could be developed into cafes and perhaps a convenience store. The lack of use of the station car park was also discussed. The Panel was informed that Hampshire County Council had prepared a travel plan which had found that people generally walked, cycled or were dropped off at the station. This was being discussed with South West Trains and plans were being considered to improve the drop off/pick up point

and cycle parking. Funding for the forecourt changes had been identified through the Activation Aldershot Project and improvements to the façade of the Station would be funded through the National Stations Improvement Programme via Network Rail.

Members congratulated South West Trains on the improvement works and development which had taken place at Waterloo Station. The Panel highlighted the need for more liaison between the transport police and local beat police in relation to cycle thefts. Mr. Kempton acknowledged that the process was currently cumbersome and work was required to streamline the system. Mr. Kempton also explained the education work being carried out with cyclists about the importance of good quality cycle locks. A number of other issues were raised, including:

- the cost of season tickets;
- the size of seats;
- the lack of provision of disabled ramps at Aldershot and Waterloo Stations to allow access to trains;
- the quality of the trains on the Aldershot to Guildford line; and
- the improvement of information able to be displayed on automatic ticket machines about restrictions on special fares.

Mr. Kempton advised that he would investigate the issues experienced and report back where necessary.

Mr. Kevin Travers from the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership and Ms. Paula Edwards from Hampshire County Council then presented the EM3 Farnborough Growth Package Transport Schemes to the Panel. It was explained that work on the package was at a very early stage. In March, 2014 a £6 million bid had been made to the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership for improvements to the A325, A327 and A3011 corridors. £2.3 million of funding had been allocated in the first round which had been allocated towards junction capacity improvements in Farnborough. This was to primarily look at improvements to the Pinehurst and Sulzers Roundabouts. The second round of funding had allocated £4.1 million to look at junction capacity improvements at a number of congestion points in Farnborough. A further allocation of £1.6m from Hampshire County Council meant that a total of £8 million would be available for the works which would deliver significant improvements. The Panel was informed that strategic partner, Atkins, had been commissioned to carry out a study to provide a broader understanding of transport concerns in the Farnborough area. The study would take a more strategic overview of the transport corridors rather than concentrating on specific junctions and would comprise of a number of phases:

**Phase 1** – would set out the current situation in Rushmoor in terms of transportation and would identify existing traffic and transport information.

**Phase 2** – would involve works to fill in any data gaps and the identification of current and future areas for delay and congestion.

Further works identified would include the involvement of stakeholders, the setting of objectives and a plan of action to identify specific studies. The Panel was assured that the work would be carried out in the context of the Farnborough Civic Quarter Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and would deliver some real benefits to Farnborough. A meeting would be held on 30th March, 2015 with Rushmoor and Allies Morison to discuss timetables and linkages between the growth package and the SPD and how the two projects could move forward.

The Panel asked if there would be any funds available for work to the rail network and was informed that there was a possibility of improving transport linkages to stations but, apart from that, contact would purely be on a data gathering basis. The Panel discussed the importance of more investment in roads and infrastructure to stimulate business growth and was informed that the growth package would hopefully initiate funding from other sources.

The issue of cuts to bus services, in particular Route Nos. 2 and 3 were raised. Ms. Edwards informed the Panel that cuts had been made to County Council revenue streams but service improvements would be looked at as part of the growth package work. The Panel checked the timescales for the project and was informed that, following the joint meeting on 30th March, further timescales would be set for data gathering and the wider transport study. A full package for the project would be developed by 2016/17.

The Panel **NOTED** the presentations.

26. **WORK PROGRAMME –**

The Panel **NOTED** the current work programme.

The Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

D.E. CLIFFORD  
CHAIRMAN

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