



## **Notes of the Horley Residents' Forum Meeting held at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 23 November 2021**

### **Panel Members:**

Cllr Samantha Marshall (Horley Town Council Chairman) (HTC)  
Cllr Jordan Beech (Surrey County Council/Horley Town Council) (SCC/HTC)  
Cllr Richard Biggs (Reigate & Banstead Borough Council) (RBBC)

### **Participants:**

Cllr Mike George (HTC)  
Cllr Martin Saunders (HTC)

### **Apologies:**

Apologies were received from Panel Members, Cllr James Baker (RBBC/HTC) and Cllr David Powell (HTC).

1. Cllr Samantha Marshall opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present, including those attending remotely and she explained the format of the proceedings to follow.
2. **Environmental Projects**

Cllr Saunders provided an informative overview on the important work carried out by the HTC Environment Group to date. These were primarily set against three key environmental issues to tackle climate change with the aim to reach net carbon zero; to reduce waste/recycling; and to undertake a detailed study of Horley's green spaces and ecological factors through a range of environmental activities in the short and longer term.

To achieve these goals, a number of initiatives had already been undertaken, including a Residents' Environment Survey; a Young Residents' Survey in partnership with local schools; community litter picking together with opportunities for tree planting, electric vehicle charging provision and a detailed study on the use of renewable and other low carbon energy sources. Since the Town Council had declared a 'Climate Emergency that requires Urgent Action' and pledged to make improvements to help the environment, the group had also initiated collaborative working with the principal authorities to achieve common goals. Through their community engagement, they were also keen to hear back from Horley residents, across a range of demographic groups, with ideas on ways to reduce our carbon footprint through a range of possible measures and to influence change.

Cllr Saunders gave a further update on the proposed 'Works Perfect' Horley Commercial Hub with the group's vision to create a versatile and adaptable workspace in Horley Town Centre. It would be formed as a non-profit organisation to support individuals and the local business community, in particular, to benefit people adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic by increasing local employment opportunities. The project was ongoing with the objective of securing initial funding to set up the hub and further updates would be made available in due course.

He added that the group were also looking into community tree/hedge planting schemes with the aim to capture carbon from the atmosphere and offset quantities of CO2. These included the potential for developing community orchards and working with a local social housing association to promote such schemes on their land. In addition, opportunities for developing hedgerows were considered equally important for protecting the environment along with wildlife habitats.

Cllr Beech added that a part of Surrey's ambition to be a carbon neutral county by 2050, the County Council had set out its Climate Change Strategy, setting a target for the planting of 1.2 million new trees by 2030 and opportunities for tree planting would be passed on to Town and Parish Councils to help deliver these in local areas. SCC would also continue to develop its strategies and associated programmes to meet its net zero target.

Cllr Beech referred to Surrey's new draft Transport Plan and Electric Vehicle Strategy to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and to encourage more active travel. The Select Overview & Scrutiny Committee were tasked to look at more designated infrastructure in local communities. An element of this was already identified in Horley and later progressed with the addition of cycle lanes and widening of pavements (as in Bonehurst Road). The Surrey Waste Local Plan had set out how and where different types of waste would be managed in Surrey in the future and the planning policy framework for the development of waste management facilities. SCC would be preparing Surrey's joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP), including development that mitigates against and helps to adapt to climate change and combat biodiversity loss. Waste management would also have a focus on the use of Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) and considering more innovative ways to recycle, reuse, repair rather than dispose at landfill sites. Additionally, SCC had commenced work on a new model for the roll out of adequate provision of electric vehicle charging points with commercial partners to meet its commitment to reach carbon neutrality by 2050.

### **3. Gatwick Northern Runway Project (NRP) and Development Consent Order (DCO) Process**

On the matter of the public consultation by Gatwick Airport to bring its Northern Runway into routine use alongside its Main Runway, Cllr George provided a summary of the key issues and impact on Horley if the proposals presented were to be approved. With reference to PowerPoint slides, he further explained these under the sub-headings of Noise; Surface Access; Air Quality; and Flooding and that Horley Town Council (HTC) had formed a Working Group to review the lengthy consultation documents in detail. He added that HTC had been working collaboratively with Reigate & Banstead Borough Council (RBBC), as the host authority, in a consultation response and to address environmental impact concerns. Even though, the Town Council was not a statutory consultee in the DCO process, HTC would be submitting a standalone response to Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) by the deadline of 1 December 2021.

***(Supplementary Note: The Town Council's approved response to the Gatwick Northern Runway Project was subsequently submitted to GAL and is available to view on the HTC website <https://www.horleysurrey-tc.gov.uk/consultations> ).***

### **4. Topics and Questions raised for consideration**

- 4.1** Two local residents asked for an update on the [Aldi Proposal \(21/00720/F: Horley Place 17 Bonehurst Road Horley - Demolition of existing buildings and the erection of a Class E retail unit with access, car parking and associated works\)](#). Cllr Biggs advised that the application had yet to be determined. It would be brought to the RBBC Planning Committee in due course for consideration and it was thought that Planning Officers would recommend refusal

on the grounds of harm to green belt by virtue of inappropriate development, however, the Planning Committee would have to make the final decision.

Cllr Beech advised that a full Traffic Survey and Impact Assessment on the Bonehurst Road which had been requested at the pre-application stage was expected in September but had yet to be provided. Horley Town Council and Salfords & Sidlow Parish Council had previously sent a joint letter from both Councils to the Cabinet Member for Surrey Highways, Cllr Furniss, with a request for a full traffic survey be carried out on the full stretch of the A23/Bonehurst Road to consider the impact from the North Gatwick Gateway Distribution Centre on Cross Oak Lane and the junction opposite with Westvale Park as well as traffic build up from the A23 Chequers Roundabout towards East Surrey Hospital. It was therefore felt that the Highways Authority should look at the road as a whole and not just a piecemeal approach as planning applications came forward.

**4.2** Several residents similarly voiced their concerns about increased traffic congestion on the Bonehurst Road at the present time. This was more prevalent since the Highways Authority had begun constructing cycle lanes and pavement modifications which had led to significant narrowing of the road in certain sections. They felt this could compromise access for emergency vehicles with limited space to pass, especially as it was the main route to East Surrey Hospital. Another speaker asked when the traffic island outside the Cambridge Hotel which had been used by pedestrians to cross the busy road to the bus stop and to channel traffic flows, would be reinstated. The provision of box junctions on the northbound and southbound carriageways were considered vital so as to control traffic and prevent congestion along with pedestrian crossings, to ultimately avoid serious accidents. Cllr Beech said that construction works had yet to be completed with the road realigned and temporary traffic management removed and that all works must satisfy road safety regulations following reinstatement. He would, however, take the matter up with the Local Highways Service and Active Travel Teams with the concerns raised and to ensure appropriate traffic management had been covered.

**4.3** Two residents referred to a former [\*Planning Application: 19/00147/F – Land at Bonehurst Rd: Erection of 40 new 1,2,3,4 and 5 bedroom dwellings together with associated access from Bonehurst Road, car parking, landscaping and open space. Decision: Application Refused 040719.\*](#) They raised concerns about the future of the field should further proposals for redevelopment be registered with the Planning Authority. Cllr Biggs advised that the said application was refused on the grounds that the designation of the application site within the Rural Surrounds of Horley would undermine the urban areas first approach to development, potentially preventing or delaying developments of existing brownfield or urban sites. In the absence of a five-year housing supply shortfall, this would be contrary to existing Policies within the adopted Reigate and Banstead Core Strategy 2014 and the National Planning Policy Framework. Any changes to these Policies or new legislation introduced would require a further review and proposals put forward for a new development plan at some a later stage.

## **5. Any other business and questions for future consideration**

Another resident asked about the status of the site licence at the Travellers Site at Picketts Lane. Cllr Biggs said he would take up the matter outside of the meeting and respond to the resident directly with an update.

## **6. Closing Remarks**

Cllr Marshall thanked everyone who had attended they Horley Residents' Forum in-person or remotely and said it was hoped that another meeting would be arranged in the summer of 2022.

**Meeting concluded at 8.02 pm.**

HRF/JW