

Question, Answers and Actions - Crawley County Local Forum –3 March 2022

In Attendance:

County Councillors

Zack Ali, Brenda Burgess, Richard Burrett, Alison Cornell, Duncan Crow, Bob Lanzer, Chris Oxlade, Natalie Pudaloff, Brian Quinn.

Question 1 from Mr & Mrs Halliday:

Bearing in mind the emphasis being given to encouraging tree planting as part of the steps to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, what steps are being taken by WSCC with regard to this matter? It would be interesting to know the location and types of any such planned trees for Crawley?

Response to Question 1:

We have just completed our highway tree planting programme for this season but none of the trees were planted specifically for the Jubilee. Tree Planting season is November to February.

An example of recent tree planting in Crawley was part of the Eastern Gateway works. tree locations - The Boulevard, roundabout and College Road.

We do offer a [donate a tree scheme](#) where residents can contribute to the cost of planting a tree, we will also issue a licence to Town, Borough or Parish Council should they wish to plant and maintain a tree on the Highway.

The Woodland Trust are encouraging community groups and schools to consider tree planting for the queen's jubilee – details can be found on their website <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/queens-green-canopy/>

Crawley Borough Council manage parks and open space so they may have plans to plant for the jubilee. Some District/Borough Councils have community funding that could be applied for this purpose, and some have announced specific funding for the jubilee.

Question 2 from Sue Case:

I'd like to ask the Councillor about roads. I'm interested in companies that are turning waste plastic into road fill as opposed to landfill! MacRebur and Roadfill are two companies that I know of and I wonder if our local Council have considered this for Crawley and/or West Sussex generally. If not, why not?

Response to Question 2:

Thank you for your enquiry with regard to incorporating plastic into highway resurfacing materials. On the face of it, it would seem that there is an abundant supply of waste plastic readily available for use resurfacing materials and we do use polymer modified binders in the production of bituminous road materials, but these are manufactured for that specific use and their quality and consistency is controlled.

It is important to realise that recycling plastic is quite complicated. There are numerous types of plastic, and they have very different chemical compositions displaying different chemical and physical properties. Each individual component of the unprocessed or partially processed recycled plastics has different physicochemical properties, which may result in mixtures being produced with inconsistent quality and performance properties. It's vital that the chemical and physical properties of the recycled plastic additives are consistent as any variability adds uncertainty to the exact properties that the recycled plastics are adding to the asphalt mixture. In order to achieve the consistency required to control the production of the mixtures to appropriate standards, the recycled plastics need to be processed and depending on the source of the plastic, this processing may be expensive e.g., household waste plastic which is likely to need manual sorting before being further processed.

From a Health and Safety perspective some recycled plastics e.g., PVC can release dioxins when heated which have serious health implications and so cannot be used in asphalt manufacture and from an environmental point of view there are serious concerns about the ability to recycle asphalt mixes containing recycled plastics at the end of their service life, including the release of microplastics.

In order for recycled plastics to be used in asphalt mixes, they must be safe to use, recyclable, cost effective and provide equivalent or improved service life. While significant effort has gone in to understanding the impacts of recycling plastics in asphalts, more research needs to be undertaken by the asphalt, plastics, and petrochemical industries to better understand whether the use of recycled plastics is viable. As a consumer of road materials, the County Council is reliant on the asphalt industry to develop and test new products and then offer them to us with a degree of certainty over their performance once sufficient testing has been carried out. There have numerous recent demonstration projects using proprietary products made of recycled plastics in Australia, Canada, Indonesia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Many of these projects are only a few years old, and thus, the long-term durability of the pavements has yet to be determined.

Unfortunately, at present, it seems that road materials in the quantities required to be for municipal highway works are not a viable end-market for recycling plastic waste, however, this position may change as more investigation and study is carried out. Nevertheless, the amount of polymer(plastic) that can be incorporated into an asphalt mix is small, approximately 22kg per Tonne, so although some recycled plastic could be used in the production of road paving materials, the impact that this might have on the amount of waste plastic that we all produce, will be minimal.

Suppliers are however recycling the safe materials in asphalt mixes to reduce the need for premium grade aggregate materials being excavated in the production of surfacing materials. Suppliers will have different thresholds for the

percentage of recycled material they use and guarantees given. To this end we will investigate this recycling element with our contractors when we award the contracts for our schemes and at this stage we determine if any of our works' schemes are suitable for this option with the specification of works required.

For example, WSCC and our current surfacing contractor have used recycled asphalt planings in the recently completed Southbound and Northbound sections of the A24 from Washington to Highden Bridge Findon. In these schemes 50% of the aggregate was recycled planings excavated from the original surface.

Question 3 from Mr Hathaway:

Recently three LED advertising hoardings have appeared on private land at Three Bridges Football club and opposite Three Bridges station entrance facing motorists and others travelling along Haslett Road East.

I wish the Forum councillors to register opposition to this form of advertising. Although sited off WSCC property I believe a five-year licence to erect such signage falls due for renewal in 2022 and seek clarification of the powers to allow, promote or ban such signs.

My concerns take four aspects.

- 1) Obtrusive appearance. They make the road scape ugly and even less aesthetically pleasing.
- 2) Climate change objectives. Gigabit broadband will increase the many ways advertising can be aimed at consumers without us directly recognising the huge power consumption of the servers processing such data. Here we can at least see that considerable electricity consumption replaces wood and paper. This is surely counter to WSCC and CBC Climate change objectives.
- 3) Thin edge of the wedge. If these signs are not opposed there will be many others both in Crawley and elsewhere in the County. There are already many complaints in cities where LED scrolling advertising panels block sight lines and obstruct pedestrian use.
- 4) Most importantly these signs are reported already by many observers to be dangerous...bright lighting changes suddenly to scroll adverts in contrasting colour etc. This is distracting to road users and endangers pedestrians at nearby controlled road crossings.

I raised this matter at the AGM of Three Bridges Forum on 17th February. Cllr Burgess can be contacted to confirm that the meeting made clear its disapproval of these signs for the above reasons. I also copy this notice to officers of Three Bridges Forum who were asked to make separate representations.

Response to Question 3:

Thank you for your enquiry and raising the concerns you have in relation to the recent LED advertising hoardings that have been implemented along Haslett Avenue East (A2220). This is principally a matter for Crawley Borough Council (CBC) as these advertisements require planning permission and CBC have ultimate decision-making responsibility in their role as Local Planning Authority.

In terms of the specific concerns, you raise these are matters that CBC would take into account when assessing the material planning considerations of a planning application. WSCC as Highway Authority are consulted on certain advertisement applications and have provided standing advice to the Local Planning Authorities who generally assess the transport impact of advertisements based on this guidance. When consulted WSCC officers assess advertisements from a highway safety perspective and provide advice to the LPAs on the potential for the advertisement to block sight lines, affect pedestrian or cycle movements, confuse road users or obscure highway signage or signals. Checks are also undertaken in relation to the illuminance levels of these signs against the latest guidance produced by the Institution of Lighting Professionals.

Cllr Brenda Burgess suggested Mr Hathaway speak to the Football Club directly and ask if the brightness could be controlled.

Cllr Richard Burrett stated that the permissions for this signage last for 5 years and if a new application was submitted residents would have a chance to submit comments formally at that stage. This would be an application to Crawley Borough Council.

Question 4 from Mr Millar:

Residents of Tinsley Lane have notified the County Council on numerous occasions over the past two years on the atrocious state of Maxwell Way.

It floods whenever it rains as the drain is not at the lowest point and lorries and vans park on the grass verge making an unsightly mess and the pavement impassable for pedestrians. No replies have been received.

If funds are insufficient for a major project a layer of tarmac to fill in the dip in the road could solve the flooding and bollards or a layby could prevent damage to the grass verge.

Maxwell Way is the main access route to the Tinsley Lane Residential area as well as being part of the Manor Royal Business District which is being promoted as a key source of revenue for the County and as such should be treated as top priority.

What action is the County Council taking to solve this problem?

Response to Question 4:

Richard Speller, Area Highways Manager, has discussed this issue with Mr Millar on numerous occasions. Until we can resolve the verge parking issue, mud will be continually dragged onto the roads blocking the drains. The Highway Authority has cleaned these drains, but they become blocked again shortly afterwards.

Richard Speller would be happy to meet Mr Millar and the local member again to discuss options.

Cllr Brenda Burges agreed to set up the meeting with Mr Millar and Richard Speller. Mr Millar asked if Steve Sawyer could also be included.

Question 5 from Mr Sandhu:

Wants to meet Crawley Councillors and discuss Electric cars and their chargers. He already drives an electric car.

Response to Question 5:

In December 2019, the County Council adopted an Electric Vehicle Strategy which sets out an ambitious vision for electric vehicle take up across the county. The Strategy sets out that the County Council wants to see one consistent, affordable, easy to use, reliable, widely accessible and recognisable charging network across the county, providing renewable energy charging.

Whilst developing the Strategy, WSCC recognised the benefits of broadening our thinking about an EV chargepoint network beyond our own assets and highway to community land, believing this approach will enable chargepoints to be provided more rapidly and enable a wider and better range of locations.

We initially concentrated on forming a partnership with the district and borough councils across the county, including Crawley, and worked together to procure a market-based supplier to deliver a West Sussex chargepoint network.

In November 2021 we signed a 15-year 100% concession contract to install a countywide chargepoint network with Connected Kerb, a UK based EV charging specialist with experience of working with other local authorities and public sector organisations.

The first installations are due to start in the coming weeks, and work is ongoing to develop a countywide network plan which will set out a longer-term delivery plan for chargepoints across the county.

We are keen to get residents input to shape this plan, and to record where they would like chargepoints to be via our [online form](#) on the West Sussex Chargepoint Network website.

Although we cannot guarantee a chargepoint will be installed in any location suggested as it is dependent on a number of factors such as safety and likely usage, it will help us understand demand across the county and will provide valuable insight during network planning and delivery.

Question 6 from Mr Fox

Mr Fox attended the previous online Forum meeting asking for help and advice about the terrible parking in camber close. He stated that a Community Highways Scheme had been submitted but was refused. The issue has still not been resolved.

Response to Question 6:

Cllr Brenda Burgess stated that she was aware of the issue and was in discussion with Richard Speller about possible solutions. Cllr Burgess stated she would follow this up with Mr Speller and report back to residents.

Cllr Bob Lanzer stated that Camber Close had previously had a scheme to convert grass areas to parking spaces. He stated that another option could involve extending the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). Cllr Lanzer agreed to work with Cllr Burgess to look into these options again.

Cllr Pudaloff also suggested that the local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) be contacted to see if they could help with the issue of cars blocking driveway entrances.

Mr Halliday asked if public space protection orders could be applied for verge parking. Cllr Zac Ali confirmed that this is a national issue that was being looked into at a national level so may result in policy change.

Question 7 from Tina Belben

On behalf of residents can I request more 30mph signage for Worth Park Avenue to remind and reduce the speed of traffic?

Response to Question 7

Cllr Richard Burrett suggested Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS). Cllr Burrett stated that an application for a Community Highway Scheme had previously been submitted but had not meet criteria. Cllr Burrett said he would be happy to look into this again to try and increase the score of a new application.

Question 8 from Mr Millar

There is currently a stop on large new housing developments due to water shortage. Do we know how long this will be in place?

Response to Question 8

Cllr Duncan Crow confirmed that Natural England do have a temporary stop on developments in Horsham, Chichester and Crawley where the water use would be greater than prior to the development. The County Council was not aware how long this temporary stop will be in place but has asked the local MPs to raise the issue at the national level.