

**SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE  
REPORT TO CABINET**

**Item under consideration:**        **Report on the motion referred to Safer and Stronger Communities Select Committee by Council on 20 July 2010**

**Date Considered:** 5 August 2010

On 5 August 2010, the Safer and Stronger Communities Select Committee held a special meeting to discuss the motion to close the lay-by on A31, referred to them by Council on 20 July 2010. The motion was as follows:

'This Council shares the concern of local residents and parents that a Public Sex Environment should not be allowed to exist in close proximity to Puttenham Church of England Primary School. In order to protect the school's children, this council agrees to recommend to Cabinet to consider and take as soon as possible all the measures necessary (which may include the closure of the council's owned lay-by on the A31 which provides the major access to this sex site).'

A number of key witnesses were invited to give evidence including the Head teacher of Puttenham Church of England Infant School, Surrey Police, NHS Surrey and the tenant of a café on the lay-by. A further submission from the owners of the Hampton Estate whose fields run adjacent to the County Council's boundary forming the café site on the southern side of the Hog's Back is attached as Annex 1 to this report.

The Committee's primary concerns focused on the proximity of the sexual activity to the school (evidence submitted by the Head teacher, spokesperson from the Diocese and the petitioner suggested that sexual activity could clearly be seen from the school grounds (and that the activity had increased over time)) and the impact that closure would have on truck drivers and other visitors to the lay-by and café area. Concerns were also noted for the welfare of the café owner and his staff if the lay-by were to be closed. The café owner stated that six members of his staff (four full time and two part time) would lose their jobs.

After hearing all the evidence, the Committee concluded that the existence of a public sex environment in the village of Puttenham was largely due to easy access to the site, provided by the lay-by on the Hog's Back.

Whilst the Committee accepted that the closure of the lay-by might cause displacement into other areas of the county, it felt that the location of this site, particularly its proximity to the infant school was of paramount concern. The Committee felt that active management of the area by all the authorities had, to date, been ineffective with no real prospect of achieving engagement by all of the relevant landowners to implement an active management regime across the whole area that would significantly reduce the sexual activity. It was therefore agreed, for the protection of the school children, to recommend the closure of the lay-by.

Therefore the Committee recommends to the Cabinet:

**That Surrey County Council closes the lay-by on the A31, which provides the major access to the sex site.**

If the Cabinet decides to accept the recommendation of the Select Committee then members should acknowledge and, where appropriate, accept the consequences as set out in Annex 2 attached.

**Lavinia Sealy – Chairman of the Safer and Stronger Communities Select Committee**