

LOCAL HIGHWAY PANEL

13 FEBRUARY 2015

Present:- County Councillor Anne Brown (Chairman)
County Councillors Kevin Bentley, Julie Young, Sue Lissimore

Borough Councillors Nick Barlow, Theresa Higgins
Parish Councillor John Gili-Ross

Substitute Members:- Borough Councillor Pauline Hazell for Councillor Will Quince, Borough Councillor Nick Cope for Councillor Scott-Boutell

Other attendees: Alan Lindsay (Transport Strategy and Engagement Manager, ECC), Sonia Church (Highways Liaison Manager, ECC), Rob Macdonald (Highway Liaison Officer, ECC), Richard Clifford (Democratic Services, CBC)

1. Minutes

The following updates were provided on the actions arising from the draft minutes of the meeting on 10 September 2014:-

- University/Wivenhoe Cycle link: £750,000 funding was being made available for a cycle track. However the design may need to be revised to take account of wildlife.
- Secretariat: Colchester Borough Council had agreed to provide a minute taker for this and future meetings.
- Public Question Time: The Riverside Estate Scheme was included in the list of potential Improvement Schemes to be considered by the Panel.
- The Strood was also included in the list of potential Improvement Schemes to be considered by the Panel. Councillor Bentley asked if he could be kept informed as the County Councillor for Mersea.
- B1023 Inworth: A meeting had been held with parish councillors. The costs were not as high as anticipated and the scheme would go ahead at a reduced cost.
- Bollards – Quay Wivenhoe: *Councillor Young asked for an update to be provided in the minutes.*
- Highway Rangers: An update would be provided at the next meeting with further information about exactly what tasks Highway Rangers would undertake. **(Action – Highways Liaison Manager)**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

2. Public Question Time

Parish Councillor Stella Hounslow, Chairman of Wakes Colne Parish Council addressed the Panel to seek an update on the progress of the scheme for traffic calming measures on Station Road, Wakes Colne. A traffic survey had highlighted that there were 15,000 traffic movements per week, of which only 10% was local traffic. It was frequently used a “rat-run” and there was a pinch point at which two vehicles could not pass. It was understood that

Essex County Council had agreed a scheme but she asked what the next steps were to ensure the implementation of the scheme and requested that a member of the Panel be designated to work with the Parish Council.

Sonia Church, Highways Liaison Manager, explained that 3 potential options had been identified:-

- Option 1: a combination of speed tables and a priority working system. Engineers had expressed concern over the length of the stretch of road that would need to be covered by the scheme. In addition there would be a noise impact.
- Option 2: a system of priority working only with considerable signage aimed at reducing speeds.
- Option 3: the use of speed tables only with no priority working. Again there would be a potential for noise impact.

The Parish Council needed to consult with residents on these options. Details on the three options would be sent to the Parish Council (**Action – Highways Liaison Manager**). In order to implement a scheme it may be necessary to develop on land next to the highway owned by local residents. The schemes would be subject to a safety audit and it was likely that the street lighting would need to be improved, no matter which scheme was chosen.

Parish Councillor Martin Bottwood, Langham Parish Council, addressed the Panel about bus stop improvements. Following issues about bus drivers failing to stop at bus stops in the village, the Parish Council believed that a revised scheme of new bus stops had been agreed with Essex County Council. However, the Parish Council had now been informed that three out of the five locations had now been cancelled as there was no space on the highway. The Parish Council would welcome further information as to next steps and also a site visit by a highway engineer.

Sonia Church, Highway Liaison Manager, explained that colleagues in Passenger Transport were looking to reposition the stops in locations near to the originally agreed sites and she would ask them to contact the Parish Council. It was agreed that the cancellation of the schemes be put on hold until further discussions had taken place.

Parish Councillor John Gili-Ross stressed the need for Essex County Council Highways to keep parishes informed about the progress of schemes and in particular to let them know when problems were encountered.

Mr Barrow addressed the Panel to highlight problems he had accessing the town centre in his wheelchair. There were particular issues at the following points:-

- The entrance to Culver Square opposite Nationwide Building Society;
- The lack of a dropped kerb opposite the library;
- The pavements on either side of Culver Street West.

Councillor Brown explained that the Panel would be considering a scheme later in the meeting for the installation of dropped kerbs on Culver Street West. She requested that Highways keep Mr Barron informed of progress and suggested that it would be useful for Mr Barron to attend a site visit with the engineers to ensure the scheme addressed his concerns at that point.

Following a suggestion from Councillor Lissimore the Panel agreed that £20,000 be put aside for a dedicated fund to deal with dropped kerb requests that were not on the approved

schemes list. This would enable prompt action to be taken in response to requests for dropped kerbs, in particular those received from disabled residents (**Action – Highways Liaison Manager**).

3. Potential Schemes for Consideration of the Panel

The Panel considered the schemes set out in the Schedule. Rob Macdonald, Highways Liaison Officer, explained that any schemes recommended by the Panel at this meeting would be funded from the 2015/16 budget.

Improvement Schemes

The Panel agreed the Improvement Schemes as set out in the Schedule of Schemes. In respect of the scheme for the “ladder roads” running between Maldon Road and Butt Road, Sonia Church, Highways Liaison Manager, indicated that some research that indicated that 20mph speed limits increased the number of accidents. She would circulate details of the research (**Action – Highways Liaison Manager**). However, the Panel believed there was strong local support for the introduction of 20 mph limits on these roads. However, it was proposed that the roads covered by the scheme be amended so that Salisbury Road was excluded from the scheme and Wickham Road included. On this basis the scheme was agreed.

Councillor Bentley sought clarification on the criteria for the introduction of a vehicle activated signs. A sign had been installed in Langenhoe covering traffic travelling towards Mersea, but there was also an issue of traffic travelling in the other direction speeding. He asked whether it would still be necessary for the data collection and approval process to be conducted in full for a sign covering traffic travelling towards Colchester. Rob MacDonald, Highways Liaison Officer, confirmed that it would as conditions sometimes meant that the criteria may be met by traffic travelling in one direction, but not in the other.

RESOLVED that the following Improvement Schemes be agreed as set out in the Schedule of Schemes:-

- The Strood
- Riverside Estate (Feasibility Scheme only)
- London Road junction, Lucy Lane South
- Goojerat Road/Circular Road West
- Warren Lane, Stanway,
- Ardleigh Road, Dedham
- Northern Approach Road (*to a revised value of £20,000 - check*)
- Monkwick Estate
- Culver Street West
- Ladder roads between Maldon Road and Butt Road, subject to the scheme including Wickham Road, Hamilton Road, Errington Road and Constantine Road only.

4. Approved Schemes List

The Panel considered the Approved Schemes List. An updated and colour coded version of the list was circulated to the Panel. The Panel welcomed the formatting of the list and the inclusion of colour to identify completed and cancelled schemes and those on which there had been significant developments. Members of the Panel stressed the importance of

receiving the up to date list in advance of the meeting. Panel members also emphasised the need to keep local members at all levels informed of developments on schemes in the areas they represented.

In discussion, the following issues were raised:-

Junction Improvements at Warren Lane junction with B1022 at Heckfordbridge: Some surprise was expressed that this scheme had been cancelled. This was a potentially dangerous junction. Sonia Church, Highway Liaison Manager, undertook to provide further details to Councillor Bentley but explained that it may have been cancelled as the scheme may be too big to be delivered through this funding stream and that therefore alternative sources of funding were being looked into (**Action – Highways Liaison Manager**). It was stressed that Essex County Council Highway was aware of the traffic issues in this area.

Roach Vale: Residents would be consulted on plans shortly. If no objection was received, the design of the scheme and signage would be looked at. As with all schemes, if an objection was received, it would be referred to the relevant cabinet member to determine.

Wivenhoe High Street: A new scheme had been brought forward following objections from Wivenhoe Town Council to the original scheme.

Berechurch Road Bus Shelter: The scheme was more complex than originally envisaged and the scope of the scheme had been changed.

Zebra crossing on Butt Road: This would be installed imminently.

Members of the Panel also sought clarification on progress on the Quiet Roads initiative. It was confirmed that a news release containing details had recently been issued and it was suggested this should be included as an agenda item for the next meeting (**Action – Highways Liaison Manager**).

RESOLVED that status of the schemes on the Approved Schemes List be noted.

5. Any Other Business

It was suggested that in order to build in some democratic accountability on the spend of unspent section 106 money, it would be appropriate to report on this to the Panel. Sonia Church, Highways Liaison Manager, explained that a basic report would be circulated to the Panel and also arrangements would be for a member of the Planning Team to brief the Panel on the allocation of section 106 monies (**Action – Highways Liaison Manager**). A dedicated section 106 team had been set up so there would be an increased focus on section 106 in future. Only a very small proportion of section 106 funding was left unspent.

Following a request from Councillor Lissimore for further information about bus shelter designs, it was agreed that further information on the designs of shelters would be sent to Panel members (**Action – Highways Liaison Manager**).

As Rob MacDonald was moving on to other duties at Essex County Council this was the last meeting of the Panel he would attend. The Panel expressed its thanks to Rob Macdonald for the excellent support he had provided to the Panel.