

**HIGHWAYS PANEL held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD  
SAFFRON WALDEN at 5pm on 12 September 2016**

Present: Councillor S Walsh (Chairman)  
Councillors S Barker and J Lodge (Essex County Council).  
Councillors J Davey and A Townsend (Uttlesford Association of  
Local Councils).  
Councillors R Chambers, A Mills and J Freeman (Uttlesford  
District Council).

Officers in attendance: S Church (Highways Liaison Manager –  
(Essex Highways), R Long (Highways Liaison Officer – Essex  
Highways), G Glenday (Assistant Director – Planning - UDC) and  
K Vinton (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer – UDC).

Also Present: Councillor V Ranger (UDC)

HP9 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Gooding.

HP10 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2016 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to an amendment to show that Councillor Chambers had given his apologies for that meeting.

HP11 **MATTERS ARISING**

The Highways Liaison Officer updated the Panel as follows:

(i) **HP2 – Potential Schemes**

**Duck Street, Wendens Ambo – implementation of a 20mph zone**

As the scheme was not unanimously supported the Cabinet Member had requested a report outlining the justification for the scheme. The Highways Liaison Officer said she would bring a report on the outcome to members before the next meeting of Highways Panel.

**High Easter – extension to speed limit**

Although Members had initially agreed not to fund the scheme, a slightly different option had now been proposed. The parish council was happy to proceed with 40mph buffer on the outskirts of High Easter towards Chelmsford.

**Thaxted Road, Wimbish – reduction in speed limit to 30mph**

The Highways Liaison Officer said this scheme was in a similar situation to the Wendens Ambo proposal. Members would receive an update before the next panel meeting.

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING**

The Chairman invited Cllr Ranger, Member for Gt Dunmow South and Barnston to speak.

Councillor Ranger said he had concerns for the residents of Barnston and those who travelled through the village. He said the B1008 was re-designated from the A130 following the A120 being made a dual carriageway, with the promise the road would become quieter, this has not happened and Essex County Council is aware traffic volume has increased year on year.

The Highways Panel had made some consideration on a pedestrian crossing; it was unclear how much this had progressed.

The primary issue was that of Buttles Hill, having brought this to the attention of the Highways Panel previously believing there was an ongoing appraisal for the road. At the point the road narrows it is impossible for two Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) to pass, with a footpath on one side of the road currently overgrown by the grass verge. HGVs travelling up the hill are mounting the footpath in order to pass HGVs heading in the opposite direction.

Councillor Ranger asked the Highways Panel to consider making recommendations to other bodies in the preplanning, the road is a priority route (PR1) and has to left clear of any traffic calming in the event of any diversions from A131/A120. If traffic were to be diverted along the B1008 unfamiliar drivers may cause a bottle neck at the narrowest point of the road.

Councillor Ranger invited members of the panel to walk down the footpath to the school site at 08:30 in order to experience the traffic volumes he describes.

Councillor Barker said a traffic survey of B1008 had been completed in respect of the local plan. Evidence from Cllr J Aldridge, Ford End Parish Council, indicates 37,000 vehicles are using the road.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Ranger for his statement and invited the Highways Liaison Officer to respond.

The Highways Liaison Officer said the Highways Panel agreed funding to complete a feasibility study into the width of the road at Buttles Hill, this is expected to be made available in time to consider funding in the 2017/18. She had nothing more to report at this stage.

The Highways Liaison Manager said work on a technical note regarding Ford End was being drafted and Councillor Aldridge will be meeting with Councillor Johnson in the Highways surgery on 13<sup>th</sup> September to be appraised of its content. The Highways Liaison Manager said the volume of traffic using the B1008 is currently 32,000 per week. The parish will be putting in to the cabinet member to reduce the PR1 status to PR2 following the formal process. Highways have looked at speed reduction measures through the village, the

option of a mini round-a-bout would not be going ahead, as it does not meet Essex County Council policy nor does it meet the national standards under the design guide for roads and bridges due to the sight lines.

When available the technical note for Ford End will be shared with the Highways Liaison Officer as it contains information relevant to Barnston and if permitted will be shared with the parish and the Highways Panel.

Councillor Ranger said the parish has looked to endorse a weight limit through Barnston, the Highways Liaison Manager suggested undergoing a survey similar to that completed in Ford End to establish where the HGVs are travelling to, proposing Barnston wait until the Ford End results are available which will assist Barnston with their continued investigations.

The Highways Liaison Officer said she had no record of a formal scheme application for a traffic calming scheme for High Easter Road and asked that the parish formally submit the scheme on the usual form.

HP12

## **UPDATE ON SCHEMES APPROVED IN 2016-17**

The Highways Liaison Officer updated the panel on the following schemes:

**(i) High Street, Hempstead – phase 2 of the footway construction**

A date in November has been made available for the removal of the vegetation, the tree and the utility posts.

Arrangements are being made with local bus operators in order to reroute buses during works. All work to be completed by January 2017.

**(ii) Byway 30 and 31 Debden and 36 Wimbish, and Jacks Lane, Takeley – refurbishment of the byways**

Parts of the works have been undertaken by volunteers. The Highways works will start shortly, the gang allocated will make this project their next priority.

Members asked about the following schemes:

**(iii) Ashdon Road, Saffron Walden – installation of pedestrian build out as designed in 2015-16**

The Highways Liaison Officer said along the top of the common there are limited waiting bays followed by double yellow lines, a slight amendment to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) covering the limited waiting resulted in a couple of metres being removed from the parking bays. The TRO was part of amendment 40. The Highways Liaison Officer said she did not anticipate any problems with TRO regarding access.

**(iv) Dunmow Road, Great Easton – 2 x permanent VAS to replace the mobile VAS currently in operation for each direction on the approach to the school**

The Highways Liaison Officer said the posts with two sign faces will be set in a good enough position to have 70metres worth of detection on both sides of the road.

Councillor Freeman queried why the posts could not be positioned one on the Dutton Hill side of the school and other by the council houses. The Highways Liaison Officer said the choice of position was what the parish initially requested, as it was the school area they are wanted to protect. She said the speed limit outside the school is of a short distance and for the VAS had to be installed within 70 meters of the speed limit.

The Highways Liaison Officer offered two reasons why the posts could not be erected on the grass verge opposite the school, (i) the verge does not belong to Highways (ii) there was a sight line issue. She said the chosen locations were no means final.

There is meeting scheduled with the sign manufacturers, it was suggested Councillor Freeman and a representative of parish council be invited to attend. Councillor Walsh said he would attend if Councillor Freeman was not available for the meeting.

**(v) Bardfield Road, Thaxted - parish council lead concerns about speeding on the Bardfield Road. Request for the existing traffic calming measures to be re-evaluated**

The Highways Liaison Officer said the Highways Panel had agreed to the funding for the investigations into what is required for the area. This scheme together with other feasibility studies will be completed towards the end of 2016/17; it will then be up to the panel to decide on funding a scheme. The Highways Liaison Officer said Highways had completed speed surveys in the area which had been found inconclusive.

**(vi) High Street Saffron Walden Southbound and High street Saffron Walden Northbound – request for RTPI Unit**

The Highways Liaison Officer said there were no Real-Time Passenger Information (RTPI) units in Uttlesford; the technology has only just become available to make installation possible.

The Highways Liaison Manager said a similar project was being rolled out in Chelmsford but it was experiencing some difficulties with the installation of the RTPI equipment on to the buses, there was no issues installing them on to bus stops.

Councillor Lodge said he had noticed RTPI on bus stops across neighbouring Cambridgeshire, the Highways Liaison Manger said Cambridge County Council had paid for the RTPI bus improvements.

The Highways Liaison Officer said her report was for information and invited Councillors to raise any queries about the schemes or highlight anything missing the parishes had already requested. She said to allow Highways the time to complete the surveys and validations required for a new scheme, she will need all new evidence sent to her. Correspondence will be sent out to the parish councils informing them of the deadline for information.

The Highways Liaison Manager proposed the panel set a provisional program during the January 2017 meeting, putting in place all resources and information enabling the sign off new schemes in March.

Councillor Barker asked if the Highways Liaison Officer had received two new requests from Gt Dunmow Town Council

- (i) Railings outside the Library
- (ii) A request for 50mph along the old A120

The Highways Liaison Officer said she had not seen either application prior to producing her report.

Although it was unclear who owned the land outside the library the council has erected temporary railings. The Highways Liaison Officer said there had been a question of boundary when completing the White Street amendments, highlighting the requirement for all the information to come in from the parish in order to help investigations.

The Highways Liaison Officer said the panel had agreed funding for some schemes in 2017-18 and when the feasibility studies have been returned there will still be an opportunity for members to make amendments to the 2017-18 program.

Councillor Freeman said footpath 38 in Thaxted needed to be re-instated; the Public Rights of Way Officer (PROW) had visited the site and identified a ditch required some drainage. The Highways Liaison Officer said the PROW Officers often submitted schemes to Highways on behalf of the parish, she will follow it up.

HP14

## **HIGHWAYS RANGERS**

The Highways Liaison Officer said the Rangers had been continuing with their good work. The Rangers have a slight back log of work due to a heavy work load.

The Highways Liaison Officer said the Rangers would not replace kerb stones, they can remove them to make safe and in some scenarios they can reset them but only within the parameters of the equipment they have, anything in addition would fall under a formal maintenance request via the Essex website.

Since Essex County Council had adopted the roads from the developer there had been lack of road maintenance in and around the Priors Green Estate in Little Canfield. It appears there has been no communication from Essex County

Council to Uttlesford District Council with regards to the general maintenance of these roads.

Councillor Walsh said this process was beyond the Highways Panel.

Highways Liaison Manager said Essex County Council contracts the road maintenance to Ringway Jacobs, they had taking on the estate roads without updating the contracts and not to adding the roads into the system of maintenance. Councillor Barker had been informed Uttlesford District Council has to commission for the maintenance to be completed.

The Highways Liaison Officer reminded the panel how to make a request to the Highways Rangers via the report function on the Essex County Council website.

#### HP15      **SECTION 106 REPORT**

The Highways Liaison Officer said the report lists the schemes where section 106 funding has been allocated and Ringway Jacobs have been commissioned to deliver.

The report was noted.

#### HP16      **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Mills said the diversion surrounding the closure of Station Road, Felsted was sending traffic down Stebbing Road, a completely unsuitable road for the diversion. Councillor Mills asked why the road has been closed for six weeks, when it had been closed previously for twelve weeks with traffic lights. Councillor Walsh said Essex County Council has to respond to requests from developers for road closures, adding the senior officer responsible will be on site Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September. Extra signage has been arranged to go to the end of Stebbing Road to discourage vehicles from using it.

Council Walsh said he appreciated the situation remains frustrating for local residents.

The Highway Liaison Officer said surveys for two Quiet Lane requests in Littlebury have been undertaken, survey reports will be available to the parish and the full validation will be completed shortly afterwards.

The Highways Manger said there were no Quiet Lane schemes to be delivered in this financial year.

#### HP17      **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 6pm

The meeting ended at 5:45pm