

LOCAL HIGHWAY PANEL

2 JUNE 2015

Present:- County Councillors Kevin Bentley, Anne Brown, Sue Lissimore and Julie Young
Borough Councillors Jessica Scott-Boutell and Dennis Willetts

Substitute Members:- Borough Councillors Nick Cope for Lyn Barton and Justin Knight for Ray Gamble
Parish Councillor Robert Johnstone for John Gili-Ross

Other attendees: County Councillor Ray Howard, Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways Transportation
County Councillor Theresa Higgins
Borough Councillor Dominic Graham, Portfolio Holder for Street and Waste Services
Sonia Church (County Highways Liaison Manager),
Charles Mitson (County Highways Liaison Officer)
Amanda Chidgey (Borough Democratic Services Officer)

1. Chairman

Councillor Anne Brown was elected Chairman of the Panel for the forthcoming Municipal Year

2. Deputy Chairman

Councillor Lyn Barton was elected Deputy Chairman of the Panel for the forthcoming Municipal Year

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

4. Public Question Time

Parish Councillor Stella Hounslow, Chairman of Wakes Colne Parish Council addressed the Panel regarding the traffic calming scheme at Station Road, Wakes Colne. She asked for details of the fourth option now being considered and the requirement for residents to consent to relinquish part of their land holding to the front of their properties. Sonia Church, Highways Liaison Manager, explained that the Parish Council were being required to secure the consent of the residents involved. However the Parish Council Chairman was of the view that this was a matter for the Local Highway Panel.

Borough Councillor Gerard Oxford referred to three schemes for the Highwoods ward which had been lodged with Essex County Council Highways. He was seeking an update on the light controlled crossing proposal for Severalls Lane and questioned the timescale for the removal of the tactile paving and dropped kerbs near the roundabout on Brinkley Grove Road. Councillor Oxford also handed in a petition which was received by Charles Mitson,

County Highways Liaison Officer. **(Action – Highways Liaison Officer)**

Borough Councillor Roger Buston asked about the current situation regarding the proposed scheme for a traffic island at the north end of Glen Avenue, Lexden ward. **(Action – Highways Liaison Officer)**

Jim Burns, on behalf of the Riverside Residents Association addressed the Panel seeking an update on the proposed 20 mph speed limit for the Riverside estate and stability problem being experienced by users of mobility scooters when negotiating dropped kerbs along footways.

Susan Allen, Clerk to East Donyland Parish Council referred to the four applications which had been submitted by the Parish Council, a further proposal for cycling provision which the Parish Council also supported and a petition from residents in support of an application for the reinstatement of a very small length of footpath on the left hand side of High Street, just after Rectory Road, Rowhedge. County Councillor Kevin Bentley also confirmed his support for the scheme. **(Action – Highways Liaison Officer)**

County Councillor Dave Harris addressed the panel and referred to the traffic management scheme in Thaxted Walk, explaining that his discussions with residents had indicated that they were not in support of bollards at this location as it would simply transfer the problem to another location. He also mentioned the problems for mobility scooter users as a consequence of the installation of a camera in Britannia Mews. He was concerned that mobility scooters should not be prevented from using the route for their journeys but that there was now potential for scooters to tip over or to drift into the path of road vehicles. He requested a site visit in order to determine a better location for the camera. **(Action – Highways Liaison Officer)**

5. Potential Schemes for Consideration of the Panel

The Panel considered the schemes set out in the Schedule. Sonia Church, Highways Liaison Officer, explained that schemes to the value of £525,195 had been re-profiled and were being delivered in 2015-16. In addition at the Local Highway panel meeting in March 2015 schemes to the value of £249,825 had been recommended, leaving a remaining capital budget of £224,980. However it was recommended that the Panel allocate this budget in its entirety. The remaining revenue budget was £10,971.

In discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- Safer Roads Scheme Green screens – the Panel members sought further information on which body would be required to assume responsibility for the planting and maintenance, the need for a visual representation of the screens to be considered prior to approval, skepticism about the principle and whether any evidence was available to confirm the effectiveness of reducing visibility for road users on the approach to roundabouts in order to reduce accidents. Sonia Church agreed to submit designs and further information about green screens to the Panel for further consideration **(Action – Highways Liaison Manager)**
- Traffic Management Scheme at London Road / Lucy lane South, Stanway – the Panel referred to the need for more feasibility work to be undertaken at this location and Sonia Church agreed to come back to the Panel with more details **(Action – Highways Liaison Manager)**
- Traffic Management Scheme at Warren lane, Stanway – it was explained that this

scheme was unlikely to proceed as it was not feasible to narrow the road and a reduction in the size of residents gardens would not receive support. A discussion took place about the need to inform local Borough and Parish Councillors and residents and the appropriate mechanism for doing so **(Action – Highways Liaison Manager)**

- Traffic Management Scheme at Lexden Springs School, Halstead Road – Councillor Lissimore explained the importance of considering this scheme despite it not meeting the criteria for a crossing or a 20 mph limit as it was a special school for children with a range of disabilities and, as such, should warrant an exception to the standard policy. Sonia Church explained that she would be willing to refer the scheme to the cabinet member for special consideration and, given this was the last opportunity to approve funding, recommended the Panel allocate £45k for the full scheme, pending the outcome of the cabinet member's consideration. **(Action – Highways Liaison Manager)**

The Panel discussed the funding allocation for each category of improvement scheme and the way in which safer road schemes could be prioritised over those schemes, which whilst important do not increase the safety of the road user. Councillors also requested that a brief history of the scheme be included on the list to provide further information when making a decision. **(Action – Highways Liaison Manager)**

Members also questioned the possibility of installing dropped kerbs for temporary bus stops, but Sonia Church stated that whilst this would be ideal the cost of installing dropped kerbs makes this move prohibitive.

With regard to specific projects the Panel discussed the replacement of flags and poles across Colchester within the Passenger transport segment, it was agreed that other projects would take a priority due to the other schemes resulting in improvements in safety. The Panel did note that having uniform poles across Colchester Borough Council would aid navigation for those travelling on the buses. The Panel agreed that those schemes which included dropped kerbs would be approved.

During the discussion on the Safer Roads schemes, Councillor Higgins stated that the A134 Hythe Hill needed to be redesigned, as it would not be possible to see the oncoming vehicles with the current design. In addition the suggestion of grey screening boards was not supported by Members, and a preference of repainting the road markings be pursued. The Panel challenged the decision that this should be paid by the Local Highways Panel budget, and requested that questions be asked to the Cabinet member regarding the ECC maintenance budget funding this scheme and future line repainting schemes. **(Action – Highways Liaison Manager)**

As part of the Public Rights of Way schemes the Panel requested further information on the footpath between Hythe and Rowhedge, as further local knowledge would be required to make a decision. **(Action – Highways Liaison Manager)**.

Under the Traffic Management Schemes, Councillor Scott-Boutell recommended that the design work at the London Road Junction with Lucy Lane South and Warren Lane, Stanway be removed from the list until redesigned. Councillor Lissimore stated that the scheme on Milton Close junction with Scott Drive be delayed until further information can be sought from the utility companies.

Councillor Brown recommended that the Ardleigh Road Scheme in Dedham go back to the

Parish Council for discussion as there is already an existing Vehicle Activated Sign on that road. With regard to the scheme on Thaxted Walk, Councillor Brown requested that information be circulated to all members on whether to use grasscrete or bollards to protect the verge. **(Action – Highways Liaison Manager)**

Councillor Knight confirmed that the documentation for the Cycling scheme at Rowhedge Road had been submitted and requested £3k be approved to enable the scheme to proceed.

Parish Councillor Robert Johnstone referred to the Public Right of Way which existed along the route of the Brinkley Grove Road and Mill Road cycling scheme and questioned why no reference had been made to its existence and the implications for the delivery of the scheme. The Panel members agreed the need for rights of way implications to be taken into account in consideration of schemes and Sonia Church explained that it was intended to submit details of the updated Cycle Plan Strategy to a future meeting of the Panel.

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

Safer Roads

- B1027 Brightlingsea Road / Elmstead Road, Wivenhoe
- B1025 Mersea Road North / Normandy Avenue, Berechurch, subject to satisfactory consultation with County Councillor Fisher

Traffic Management

- Ardleigh Road Dedham
- Thaxted Walk, Maypole – grasscrete option
- Stratford Road, Dedham – feasibility and designs to be submitted to Panel for implementation in the next financial year
- Lexden Springs School, Halstead Road - £45k for the full crossing scheme
- Berechurch Hall Road between Hooper Avenue and William Harris Way
- Newbridge Road, Tiptree
- B1025 / Mersea Road, Colchester
- Tollgate Roundabout, Stanway
- Mill Road, Colchester – for implementation in 2016-17
- Engineers Square, Mile End
- High Street and Wivenhoe Quay area

Cycling

- Rowhedge Road - £3k
- Brinkley Grove, Road and Mill Road, subject to rights of way implications being investigated

Passenger Transport

- Moy Road / Monkwick Avenue, Colchester
- Avignon Close / Mountbatten Drive, Colchester
- Two schemes at The Angel, Maldon Road, Heckfordbridge
- Lower Road / St. Ives Road, Peldon
- Kiln Cottage, Crown Street, Dedham
- The Heath, Dedham
- Ardleigh Road / Long Road West, Dedham

- Two schemes at The Anchor, Castle Hill, Dedham Heath
- Dedham Heath
- A £50k District wide pot of money for various small scale pieces of infrastructure

Public Rights of Way

- Hythe to Rowhedge along the River, East Donyland
- Footpath 8, Wivenhoe - adjacent to Wivenhoe train station

Walking

- Rowhedge Road to widen footway between Old Heath and Rowhedge - £4k for validation work in 2015-16
- High Street, Rowhedge - £8k to construct new linked footpath

Potential Revenue

- District wide pot of money for surveys

6. Approved Schemes List

The Panel considered the Approved Schemes List. In discussion, the following issues were raised:-

Reference was made to the very poor implementation of the zebra crossing at Hawthorn Avenue and the need for the arrangements to be improved for the future so that schemes are not started unless there is an assurance they can be delivered within a reasonable timescale and updates were also requested on the progress in relation crossings on Butt Road and Oxford Road. County Councillor Howard acknowledged the situation was not acceptable and indicated he would raise the matter again with the cabinet member.

Sonia Church explained that there had been ongoing contractual issues with UKPN Connections which had caused delays in the completion of the crossing installations. Completion dates in July had now been confirmed. Sonia also confirmed that the schemes for 20mph zones in Roach Vale and road markings in George Williams Way were due to be completed in the current year.

Councillor Brown offered to attend the forthcoming Parish Council meeting at Wakes Colne in order to discuss the appropriate way forward for the traffic calming scheme at Station Road referred to by Parish Councillor Stella Hounslow during public question time.

The proposal for a pedestrian footway and refuge along Severalls Lane needed to be considered again given the estimated cost of implementing the scheme and the Panel members agreed that the allocation of £5k be utilised to commission an alternative, more suitable scheme.

RESOLVED that status of the schemes on the Approved Schemes List be noted. And the following be agreed:

- Birch Park – Heckfordbridge scheme to be continued
- Vine Drive, Wivenhoe – £3k feasibility study to be implemented

7. Rangers Report

The Panel considered the contents of the Ranger's report.

Prior to the start of the meeting the Panel members had received a presentation from Terry Knights, the Rangers Manager for Colchester, Tendring and Braintree giving details of improvements in the Rangers Service, the type of works the Rangers were able to undertake, the works within and outside of the scope of the Service and the ways to report matters for attention.

RESOLVED that the Ranger's report be noted.

8. Any Other Business

Councillors Scott-Boutell and Graham asked for updates regarding numerous applications which had been submitted last year for consideration but which had not yet been included in the list of potential schemes. Sonia Church confirmed that she intended to have individual discussions with all the members of the Panel and would take the opportunity to address these requests at that time (**Action – Highways Liaison Manager**)

In response to questions regarding incompleting schemes and reporting ongoing maintenance issues, Sonia confirmed that County Councillors could utilise Members' Enquiries whilst members of the public were required to report using Essex County Council's Customer Services.

In response to Councillor Brown's enquiry about the safety of footways along the A120 through Marks Tey in the light of the level of traffic using this route, Councillor Howard confirmed that the A120 was being considered on a very regular basis and he would pass on the concerns expressed to the cabinet member.