

**HIGHWAYS PANEL held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30pm on 23 MARCH 2015**

Present: Councillor A Walters (Chairman)
Councillors C Cant, J Freeman and J Salmon (Uttlesford District Council).
Councillors S Barker, R Gooding and S Walsh (Essex County Council).

Officers in attendance: J Pine (Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer – UDC,) A Rees (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer – UDC), A Taylor (Assistant Director Planning and Building Control – UDC), R Long (Highways Liaison Officer – ECC) and D Sprunt (Principal Transportation Co-ordinator – ECC).

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Councillor Walters said there had been one request to speak, from Newport Parish Council, which he had declined since the scheme they wished to speak about had not yet been formally submitted to Essex Highways for consideration.

HP22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sullivan and Townsend (UALC) and Councillor E Johnson (ECC).

HP23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2014 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

HP24 MATTERS ARISING

(i) HP12 – Potential Scheme List

The Highways Liaison Officer, in response to Councillor Barker, said it had been agreed that the B1008 was not within Uttlesford and therefore funding did not need to be provided by the Panel to conduct a feasibility study.

(ii) HP17 – Update on capital and revenue schemes approved

Councillor Barker said UDC's Cabinet had agreed to provide £50,000 to help fund small cycling initiatives throughout the district.

HP25 UPDATE ON CAPITAL AND REVENUE SCHEMES APPROVED

Verbal update on Wenden Road cycleway

Members received an update on the Wenden Road cycleway. Councillor Walters said the scheme had now been approved and signed off.

The Principal Transportation Co-ordinator outlined the next steps following approval of the scheme. He explained that before works could begin, an internal consultation needed to take place and the Traffic Commissioners needed to approve the changes to the bus service. The aim was for works to take place during the school summer holidays in order to minimise the level of disruption.

Responding to a question by Councillor Walters, the Principal Transportation Co-ordinator said the final cost was expected imminently and was likely to be close to the estimated cost. Completion of the scheme would take between four to six weeks.

Uttlesford cycle strategy

Members discussed the Uttlesford cycle strategy. Councillor Walters said the Panel should look at schemes in the Strategy which could be delivered in the next financial year. Although it was unlikely any grants would be given, UDC now had a cycling strategy which signalled its intent to improve cycling infrastructure.

The Principal Transportation Co-ordinator said ECC had also developed a cycle strategy which would work in conjunction with UDC's to demonstrate a commitment to cycling.

A Cambridge City Project was also looking to improve to cycling infrastructure and would also explore the possibility of linking into Uttlesford, however this would not be in the first phase of schemes unless there was some slippage in their schemes and Uttlesford had schemes which were ready to go. In the short term, it was important to get an idea of how much design works for schemes would cost.

Councillor Barker asked whether there was a three year period to begin works after a scheme had been approved as there was with planning applications. The Principal Transportation Co-ordinator explained there was no such period for traffic schemes.

In response to Councillor Salmon, the Assistant Director Planning and Building Control said that there were no Section 106 contributions, excepting Wenden Road, which could be put towards cycle provision. If the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for collecting contributions was used then part of the monies gained could be allocated for the specific purpose of improving cycling infrastructure. However, UDC had been advised that more funding would be gained through Section 106 contributions and as a result had pursued this option instead of using CIL.

Councillor Walters noted that opportunities for funding through grants were currently very limited and the Panel had to be selective in terms of what schemes within the Strategy it wished to progress.

Discussions moved onto the possibility of a cycle path going through Carver Barracks. Councillor Walsh said he had spoken to the Commanding Officer at the Barracks who had said a cycle path through the Barracks would not be a significant problem which members found surprising given the security implications.

The Principal Transportation Co-ordinator explained that the cycle path would be used almost exclusively by people living at the Barracks. It had been suggested that since the general public would not get to use the cycle path, the MoD should pay for any works.

Update on capital and revenue schemes approved

The Highways Liaison Officer outlined the following schemes:

(i) Various Roads, Great Chesterford – speed limit

Following the Panel's decision to agree top-up funding, works had now begun. The scheme was expected to be completed by July.

(ii) District wide bus shelters

The only issues that had been raised were with the bus stop in Great Dunmow.

(iii) High Street, Hempstead – new footway

Works had now commenced on the footway and were expected to be completed in the next few weeks.

(iv) Bellrope Meadows, Thaxted – new footway

Responding to Councillor Freeman, the Highways Liaison Officer said she had e-mailed the parish council about the proposed scheme.

(v) Bran End, Stebbing – relocation of VAS sign

An additional study had now been completed and the site still fell below the necessary criteria.

(vi) Dunmow Road, Little Canfield – relocation of VAS sign

The site was only marginally below the criteria and could still be considered suitable.

(vii) Barnston Road, High Easter – New post for mobile VAS and deer signage

The deer signage which had been installed was facing the wrong way. This was going to be corrected.

(viii) Byways 13 and 55, High Roding – new surface to link up with byway 14

Work had now started on the byways. Both byways would be part of the winter closure trial.

(ix) Byway 50, Clavering – new surface

Work had now started on the byway. The byway was going to be included in the winter closure trial

Members discussed the trial winter closure of certain byways. Councillor Barker said it was vital that byways which had been repaired were included in the trial closure, in order to prevent repairs from being needed in the near future.

Councillor Cant said an assessment of all the byways in Uttlesford was needed. There were a number of byways around Stebbing which needed attention.

In response, the Highways Liaison Officer said Essex Highways engineers were looking at byways throughout the district and would be examining the byways in Stebbing.

(x) Windmill Hill, Saffron Walden – dropped kerb for pedestrians and a better surface for the bus stop layby

Following the allocation of additional funds, work on the scheme had now begun.

(xi) Byway 3, Great Canfield – scheme to deal with ponding of water

Work had now commenced on the scheme.

(xii) Byway 13, Radwinter – scheme to deal with drainage problems

Work had now commenced on the scheme.

(xiii) B1256 Braintree Road, Great Dunmow – casualty reduction scheme

The estimated cost of the scheme had increased from £34,320 to £85,000 and it was now possible the scheme would not commence.

Members agreed to cancel the scheme.

(xiv) A1060 j/w B183 Hatfield Heath – installation of mini-roundabout

In response to a question by Councillor Barker, the Highways Liaison Officer said works on the scheme were expected to start in August.

The Principal Transportation Co-ordinator explained that any funding which was not allocated would be deemed to be lost.

HP26

QUIET LANES

The Highways Liaison Officer informed Members that up to two sites could be designated as quiet lanes. This was not a legally enforceable scheme and the scheme's primary aim was instead to create awareness throughout a community.

Members agreed it was a complex issue and careful consideration was needed to decide where the quiet lanes would be, if any. Similar schemes had not been implemented in the past as they had proven unpopular with residents.

The Principal Transportation Co-ordinator said Quiet Lanes had been introduced whilst he was working in Norfolk. Quiet Lanes worked more effectively when they were made into a network, as they were not an alteration to the road network, it was necessary to reiterate to the local community what Quiet Lanes aimed to achieve to maintain their effectiveness.

Councillor Walters said more information was needed about Quiet Lanes and . Members agreed that more information should be brought to the next meeting of the Panel.

HP27

POTENTIAL SCHEME LIST

The Highways Liaison Officer said the Panel had provisionally agreed to allocate £395,912 of the £472,041 budget available to the Panel for the 2015/16 financial year. This included £100,000 of top-up funding for existing schemes. She outlined the following schemes for consideration:

(i) Design costs for various casualty reduction schemes for 2015/16 - £12,000

Funding would be made available for design works for numerous casualty reduction schemes throughout the district.

(ii) Town Street, Thaxted – amendments to bus stop layout - £3,000

A study would look at the possibility of realigning the junction to enable buses to park more safely. A raised kerb for passengers would also be looked at.

Councillor Freeman said there were issues with parking on the opposite side of the road, even though there was a traffic order in place.

The Highways Liaison Officer said currently the traffic order was unenforceable. Alternatives were being looked at, which should resolve some of the issues on the road.

(iii) Ashdon Road, Saffron Walden – detailed design for a build out to improve visibility for pedestrians - £12,000

A feasibility study had now been completed and detailed design works could now take place.

(iv) Bran End, Stebbing – footway design - £2,000

This had not been included on the agenda as the feasibility study had not been completed until after the agenda for the meeting had been published. It was expected that detailed design works for the scheme would be completed before the end of the current financial year if they were approved.

Councillor Barker stated she could not vote in favour of the scheme. A request to speak at the meeting had been declined as the potential scheme which the person wished to speak on had not been formally submitted. It was inappropriate to vote on a scheme not included on the agenda given this precedent.

Councillor Walsh noted that although the scheme was not on the agenda it had appeared on previous agendas.

Councillor Walters said he felt the circumstances surrounding the scheme in Stebbing were not the same as they were for the potential scheme in Newport. It was realistically achievable in the near future and would be of benefit to the residents of Stebbing.

Members agreed to fund design works for the scheme.

The Highways Liaison Officer said all the schemes provisionally agreed at the previous meetings were highlighted in the report. Members discussed these schemes. It was agreed all these schemes should continue to be prioritised.

Discussions moved onto the number of requests received from each town or parish council. Councillor Barker observed that the number of requests received from Saffron Walden was abnormally low. Smaller parish councils throughout the district tended to be more active in suggesting schemes for the Panel to consider.

Members recognised the need to encourage the councils for larger areas of the district such as Saffron Walden and Dunmow to make requests, but appreciated more funding for schemes elsewhere in the district would be available if they did not make requests.

The Panel agreed to prioritise funding for the following schemes in addition to those which had been agreed at the previous meeting:

Location	Scheme	Cost
Various	Various casualty reduction schemes – designs	£12,000
Town Street, Thaxted	Amendments to bus stop layouts – designs	£3,000
Ashdon Road, Saffron Walden	Build out to improve visibility for pedestrians – designs	£12,000
Bran End, Stebbing	Footway design	£2,000

HP28

HIGHWAY RANGERS AND REVENUE EXPENDITURE

The Highways Liaison Officer updated the Panel on the work undertaken by the Highways Rangers since the last meeting of the Panel. The County Council was looking to standardise the way Rangers worked throughout the county.

Councillor Cant said there were a couple of protected verges in Stebbing, which could only be worked on at certain times of the year and asked whether work on the verges could be done by the Rangers?

Councillor Walters said any maintenance works on the verges should be completed by the County Council. The Highways Liaison Officer asked Councillor Cant to provide details of the verges so they could be passed onto the relevant department.

Discussions moved onto the submission of requests to the Rangers. The Assistant Director Planning and Building Control said a training session for parish council clerks had been held earlier in the day which included information about submitting requests to the Rangers.

The Highways Liaison Officer added parish councils needed to be made aware of the Ranger's remit. She said a number of requests had been received for the Rangers to compete work on roads which had speed limits greater than 40mph and due to safety concerns the Rangers would not deal with such requests.

The Highways Liaison Officer recommended to Members that they approved £2,000 to complete speed surveys on an ad-hoc basis. This would speed up the process of undertaking speed surveys.

The Panel agreed to set aside £2,000 to fund speed surveys on an ad-hoc basis.

HP29 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Gooding said he would consult with Newport Parish Council about the scheme they had requested to speak about.

HP30 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting would be agreed at a later date.

The meeting ended at 8.50pm