

**HIGHWAYS PANEL held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN at 7pm on 5 JANUARY 2015**

Present: Councillor A Walters (Chairman)
Councillors C Cant and J Freeman (UDC)
Councillors S Barker, R Gooding and J Lodge (ECC).

Officers Present: A Rees (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer – UDC), A Taylor (Assistant Director Planning and Building Control – UDC), S Church (Highways Liaison Manager – ECC), R Long (Highways Liaison Officer – ECC) and D Sprunt (Principal Area Transportation Co-ordinator – ECC).

Also Present: Councillor B Martin (Stebbing Parish Council) and Mr J Savage (Access Walden).

HP15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Salmon (UDC), Councillor Walsh (ECC), Councillors M Sullivan and A Townsend (Uttlesford Association of Local Councils) and J Pine (Planning Policy/DM Liaison Officer – UDC).

HP16 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Councillor Martin and Mr Savage made speeches to the Panel, summaries of which are appended to the minutes.

HP17 UPDATE ON CAPITAL AND REVENUE SCHEMES APPROVED

Update on Wenden Road cycleway and Uttlesford cycle strategy

Members received an update on the Wenden Road cycleway from the Principal Area Transportation Co-ordinator. The scheme had now been approved in principle by the portfolio holder. The scheme would now have to undergo an internal audit in order to ensure that all the relevant processes had been undertaken and completed before the scheme could be approved, signed off and works could begin.

Councillor Walters said Uttlesford District Council's Cabinet had agreed to allocate £200,000 for the scheme so that commencement of the scheme would not be delayed until such time as Section 106 monies became available.

In response to points raised by Mr Savage regarding safety on the Wenden Road cycleway, the Principal Area Transportation Co-ordinator said raised white lines would be installed at a statutory height. A safety audit had already been undertaken and it was possible that a 40mph speed limit would

be imposed along the route of the cycleway. Delivery of the scheme should not be affected by implementation of the speed limit.

Councillor Walters said the Uttlesford cycle strategy would be published shortly as it was going to be an item at the District Council's Cabinet meeting in February.

Update on capital and revenue schemes approved

Members received an update on approved capital and revenue schemes from the Highways Liaison Officer.

i) Various roads, Great Chesterford – 20mph speed limit

The scheme had originally been allocated £11,000, but the cost was now estimated to be £27,000. A traffic regulation order was being prepared so the scheme could be formally advertised.

Councillor Lodge asked whether an advance could be sought from the budget for the next financial year in order to ensure that works began as early as possible.

The Highways Liaison Manager said an advance was not possible. However, the Panel could ask the portfolio holder for permission to overspend on the budget for the current financial year. Alternatively the Panel could wait to allocate money from the next financial year's budget.

The Highways Liaison Officer said there would be only a minimal delay if the option for seeking an allocation from next year's budget was pursued, rather than overspending on this year's budget.

ii) High Street, Hempstead – New footway

Officer reported on the new footway at the High Street, Hempstead. Some issues had been raised over land transfer, but these issues were close to being resolved. A provisional start date for works in February 2015 had been agreed. There were no firm costings for the scheme but it was likely the total cost would be around £300,000. So far £150,000 had been allocated.

iii) Bellrope Meadows, Thaxted – New footway design

The design works were now complete, but the legalities surrounding diverting the existing footpath were still being explored.

iv) Mill Lane, Littlebury – Pedestrian drop kerb for mobility scooters

The scheme had now been completed.

v) Byways 13 and 55, High Roding – New surface to link up with byway 14

The estimated cost of the scheme was now £107,000, up from £50,000.

vi) Byway 50, Clavering – New surface

The estimated cost of the scheme was now £71,000, up from £35,000.

vii) Byway 3, Great Canfield – Scheme to deal with ponding of water

The estimated cost of the scheme was now £10,000, up from £5,000.

viii) Byway 13, Radwinter – Drainage problems

The estimated cost of the scheme was now £7,000, up from £3,500.

ix) Windmill Hill, Saffron Walden – Installation of dropped kerb

The existing surface was not structurally sound, so an additional £7,000 funding was required further to the £20,000 already allocated.

Members discussed the increased estimated costs of schemes (i) and (v-ix). The Highways Liaison Manager informed members that engineers could examine whether all the works included for each of the byway schemes were essential. The increased costs of completing PROW schemes could be offset by only completing essential works.

Councillor Barker said it was important to be clear about exactly how the budget for the current financial year was allocated, in order to ensure that funding was not lost.

Members agreed that ensuring funding for byways schemes was a priority given there was a trial on the winter closure of byways and both schemes (v) and (vi) would be part of the trial.

The Panel agreed to provide additional funding for the following schemes from capital:

Location	Scheme	Previous Allocation	Additional Funding
Great Chesterford	20mph speed limit	£11,000	£16,000
Byways 13 and 55, High Roding	New surface to link up with byway 14	£50,000	£57,000
Byway 50, Clavering	New surface	£35,000	£26,000
Byway 3, Great Canfield	Scheme to deal with ponding of water	£5,000	£5,000
Byway 13, Radwinter	Drainage Problems	£3,500	£3,500
Windmill Hill, Saffron Walden	Installation of a dropped kerb	£20,000	£7,000

POTENTIAL SCHEME LIST**Summary of potential schemes for prioritisation in 2015-16**

Members discussed the prioritisation of schemes for 2015-2016. The Highways Liaison Officer said the budget was £472,041, the same as for the current financial year. £116,000 of this had already been allocated.

i) Safer road schemes

The Highways Liaison Officer outlined two safer roads schemes; one at the B1256 junction with Chelmsford Road and another on the B184 Springwell Road. These works should be seen as a priority and although the final costs were not yet known, any works would be minor.

ii) Walking schemes

The Highways Liaison Officer informed members that currently the only walking scheme with an estimated cost was the new footway at High Street, Hempstead. This had already been discussed.

iii) PROW schemes

The Highways Liaison Officer outlined three PROW schemes regarding Debden and Wimbish, Stansted and Barnston. Councillor Gooding said improvements to Bridleway 52 in Stansted were urgent and should be prioritised. He asked whether the estimated cost of delivering the three PROW schemes would increase as this had happened with other PROW schemes.

In response, the Highways Liaison Officer said the method of delivering the schemes had changed and therefore, it was likely the estimated costs would also change.

Members agreed that funding works on Bridleway 52 were urgent. Members did not consider the other two schemes referred to should be prioritised given that a number of other PROW schemes had already been allocated additional funding.

iv) Traffic management improvements

The Highways Liaison Officer outlined a traffic calming scheme at The Street, Takeley. A sum of £50,000 had already been allocated and an extra £175,000 would be required in order to complete the scheme. The scheme could be funded in stages. Members agreed to allocate an additional £50,000 towards the scheme.

Members also discussed a drainage improvement scheme on Stortford Road, Hatfield Heath where water was overflowing from pipes onto the highway. It was agreed this work was urgent.

The Panel agreed to prioritise funding for the following schemes from capital, in addition to those schemes which had already been allocated additional funding:

Location	Scheme	Cost
B1256 junction with Chelmsford Road	Improvements at the Hoblongs junction	Unknown
B184 Springwell Road	Improvements to signage and carriageway	Unknown
High Street, Hempstead	New footway	£150,000
Bridleway 52, Stansted	Improvement works to bridge structure	£15,000
The Street, Takeley	Traffic calming	£50,000
Stortford Road, Hatfield Heath	Drainage improvement	£17,162

HP19 HIGHWAYS RANGERS AND REVENUE EXPENDITURE

The Highways Liaison Officer said the Highways Rangers continued to be very busy. A new tractor had recently been purchased in order to allow the Rangers to carry out work on ditches. They had recently spent a week uncovering, and making useable, a footpath between Little and Great Chesterford.

In response to questions by Councillor Freeman, the Highways Liaison Officer said provided parish councils were properly insured and had a weeding licence, they would be able to carry out weeding works on footpaths.

HP20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Barker said she had been asked by many parish councils about the process of reducing speed limits. The Highways Liaison Officer advised members that the review into speed limits was fairly recent. Unless there were major changes to a particular A or B road it was unlikely that any changes would be made to the speed limit on that road. This was not the case with more minor roads and parish councils should contact Essex Highways with requests to have the speed limits on minor roads lowered. She would e-mail parish councils with this information.

HP21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the meeting on 9 February 2015 would no longer go ahead. A meeting would be organised for March 2015.

The meeting ended at 8.30pm

SUMMARIES OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Councillor Martin

A recent speed survey had been undertaken at Bran End, Stebbing and had shown the average speed of vehicles was 39mph. It was therefore likely that a number of vehicles had been speeding on the road. One household had been forced to install a crash barrier to protect their home as on two occasions cars had nearly crashed into the house. A speed limit of 30mph would help rectify this issue.

There was an issue on the road outside the school which was caused by excess parking. The Parish Council felt it needed the help of the Highways Panel and Essex Highways in order to help find viable solutions to both of these problems.

Mr Savage

The Wenden Road cycleway was now close to implementation following its approval in principle. The scheme's designs were the consensus option and factored in the concerns of objectors. Furthermore, the scheme would provide a number of health and social benefits throughout the district.

Once the scheme had been implemented it was important to ensure that the public perceived the cycleway as being safe, since people were often put off from cycling due to the perception it was not safe.