

BRAINTREE LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL MINUTES – 29th August 2024 at 5.00pm

Meeting held ‘In Person’

Chairman:	Councillor R Playle (Vice-Chairman in the Chair) (ECC)
Panel Members:	<p>Councillor L Bowers-Flint (ECC) Councillor G Butland (ECC) Councillor P Schwier (ECC) Councillor P Thorogood (ECC)</p> <p>Councillor M Cunningham (BDC) Councillor G Spray (BDC) Councillor R van Dulken (BDC)</p> <p>Councillor K Bowers (BDC) and Councillor M Staines (BDC) attended the meeting to observe.</p>
Officers:	<p>Dan Maclean – Highway Liaison Team Leader (EH) Esme McCambridge – Operations Strategy and Business Support Manager (BDC)</p> <p>Also in Attendance:- Lisa Hinman – Area Manager (North Essex Parking Partnership) Neil Jones – Lead Principal Planner (BDC) Charlotte Paine – Head of Operations (BDC)</p>
Secretariat:	<p>Alison Webb – Governance and Members Officer (BDC)</p> <p>(EH – Essex Highways) (ECC - Essex County Council) (BDC - Braintree District Council) (BALC - Braintree Association of Local Councils)</p>

Item		Owner
1.	<p>Welcome:</p> <p>Councillor R Playle, Vice-Chairman in the Chair, welcomed all attendees to the meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies for Absence, Declarations of Interest and Public Questions:</p> <p>Apologies for Absence:</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T Cunningham (ECC), Councillor A Hanson (BALC), Councillor D</p>	

<p>Louis (ECC), Councillor P Rawlinson (BALC), Councillor C Siddall (ECC) and Councillor G Warren (BALC).</p> <p>An apology for absence was also received from Jennifer Boxall, Highway Liaison Officer (EH).</p> <p>Declaration of Interest:</p> <p>The following interest was declared:-</p> <p>Councillor L Bowers-Flint (ECC) declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Public Question as Mr D Price, who was speaking at the meeting, was known to her.</p> <p>Public Question:</p> <p>The meeting was not held in public, but Councillor Playle, the Vice-Chairman, allowed Mr D Price to make a statement, the details of which are set out below.</p> <p><u>Statement by Mr D Price</u></p> <p>Mr Price referred to problems associated with the use of Bulford Mill Lane, Cressing, which was a narrow, bending lane situated between Cressing and Black Notley. In particular, Mr Price made reference to the use of the lane by Heavy Goods Vehicles, which sometimes became stuck and had to be recovered, and about the speed of vehicles using the lane. Recently, there had been a number of accidents along the lane. The lane was also subject to flooding and drainage channels had become blocked. Although there was no footpath, the lane was used by pedestrians, particularly people walking to and from Cressing railway station, which posed a danger. The condition of the lane was deteriorating due to overuse and wildlife was being destroyed. Mr Price asked Members of the Panel to support a scheme which had been submitted to introduce traffic calming measures in the lane with a view to slowing the speed of traffic and reducing its use by Heavy Goods Vehicles. The scheme (LBRA242020) was currently subject to validation. It was anticipated that the outcome of the validation process would be reported to the next meeting of Braintree Local Highways Panel.</p> <p>It was noted that a scheme had previously been submitted to the Highways Panel to address problems affecting the lane, but that this scheme had been rejected on the basis that no action could be taken. However, it was acknowledged that the situation had changed and that many more vehicles were now using the lane, particularly as a shortcut to avoid the A120 at Galleys Corner, Braintree and as a result of many new houses being built at Cressing and Silver End.</p>	
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	<p>The Vice-Chairman thanked Mr Price for attending the meeting and for raising this issue. Mr Price left the meeting at this point.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes:</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting of Braintree Local Highways Panel held on 29th April 2024 were approved as a correct record.</p>	
4.	<p>Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 29th April 2024:</p> <p>Dan Maclean, Essex Highways, provided an update on matters which had been raised at the last meeting.</p> <p>Particular reference was made to two matters and the following update was provided:-</p> <p><u>Minute 5 - 'Funded Schemes 2023/24'</u></p> <p>LBRA162029 – Quiet lane, Water Lane, Shalford Estimated Cost:- £1,250</p> <p>It had been reported, that although this scheme had been completed, it was unlikely to allay the concerns of local residents about the use of the lane. The lane was a single track with a 60mph speed limit and it was used as a 'rat run' if there was traffic congestion elsewhere.</p> <p>Dan Maclean, Essex Highways, had been asked to review the scheme to determine if anything could be done to alleviate the issues affecting the lane.</p> <p><u>Update:</u> - Dan Maclean, Essex Highways, stated that he had spoken to Officers within Essex Highways' Design Team who had suggested that a speed and volume survey could be carried out to ascertain whether the 'Quiet lane' status of Water Lane was relevant. Members of the Panel agreed that the speed and volume survey should be carried out.</p> <p><u>Minute 6 - 'Schemes Awaiting Funding'</u></p> <p>LBRA202009 – Design for 20mph zone/limit, Windermere Drive, Great Notley Estimated Cost:- £7,000</p> <p>Dan Maclean, Essex Highways, had been asked to contact Great Notley Parish Council regarding a possible financial</p>	<p>D Maclean (HLTL)</p>

	<p>contribution from the Parish Council towards the cost of this scheme.</p> <p><u>Update:</u> - Dan Maclean, Essex Highways, stated that the design work for this scheme was yet to be finalised and that the cost had not been determined. Dan Maclean was requested to inform Great Notley Parish Council about the current status of the scheme prior to the Parish Council's next meeting on 2nd September 2024.</p> <p>Action By: D Maclean, Essex Highways, as indicated.</p>	<p>D Maclean (HLTL)</p> <p>D Maclean (HLTL)</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Funded Schemes 2024/25:</p> <p>Consideration was given to a report on the Panel's Funded Schemes for 2024/25, which had been recommended for approval. The report provided an update on the current position of all schemes in the 2024/25 programme of work.</p> <p>Members of the Panel were advised that funding of £203,894 had been allocated to Braintree Local Highways Panel for the year 2024/25 and that the schemes which had been approved had a total value of £180,000. A sum of £23,894 remained available for expenditure. However, it was proposed that this sum should not be allocated at this time and that it should be retained as a buffer for any unforeseen costs.</p> <p>Members of the Panel were reminded that a Chairmen's Panel comprising Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport and the Chairmen of each Local Highways Panel across the County had been established to consider larger scale and more expensive highway schemes and to determine if these should be funded. Details of the schemes within the Braintree District which had been approved by the Chairmen's Panel were set out in the report. These schemes had a total value of £117,000.</p> <p>In discussing this report, specific reference was made to scheme LBRA222079 – (Traffic Management) Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS)/speed reduction measure, cutting back vegetation and 30mph roundel, Rayne Road, Braintree Budget:- £3,500. It was noted that this scheme was scheduled for completion in Quarter 4 (January to March 2025). However, Members of the Panel requested that it be carried out sooner, particularly the cutting back of vegetation, as a pathway which would be used by school children returning to school next week, was currently impassable.</p> <p>Dan Maclean, Essex Highways, to request an earlier date for the cutting back of vegetation.</p>	<p>D Maclean (HLTL)</p>

	<p>DECISION: That the report on the Panel’s Funded Schemes and the Chairmen’s Panel schemes for 2024/25 be noted.</p> <p>Action By: D Maclean, Essex Highways, as indicated.</p>	<p>D Maclean (HLTL)</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Schemes Awaiting Funding:</p> <p>Consideration was given to a ‘Schemes Awaiting Funding’ report, which included information about proposed schemes submitted for funding. These schemes had a total estimated value of £306,000.</p> <p>It was reported that Braintree Local Highways Panel’s budget for 2024/25 was £203,894 and that schemes with an estimated value of £47,500 had been identified for possible funding.</p> <p>Members of the Panel were reminded that a Chairmen’s Panel comprising Essex County Council’s Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport and the Chairmen of each Local Highways Panel across the County had been established to consider larger scale and more expensive highway schemes and to determine if these should be funded. It was reported that schemes within the Braintree District which had an estimated value of £258,500 had been identified for possible funding.</p> <p>Casualty reduction schemes would be funded from a central fund derived from the budget for the Chairmen’s Panel.</p> <p>Members of the Highways Panel were not requested to recommend any schemes for inclusion in the Panel’s programme of work for 2024/25, but they were asked to endorse removal from the list those schemes which had been categorised as ‘red’ as they did not meet Essex County Council’s criteria.</p> <p>In discussing this Item, it was reported that a representative of Essex County Council’s Passenger Transport Team had not been able to attend this meeting of Braintree Local Highways Panel as planned. However, Members of the Panel were advised that bus shelter schemes which had been submitted for funding were currently on hold pending the conclusion of a County-wide audit. Furthermore, Jennifer Boxall, Highway Liaison Officer, would be contacting Essex County Councillors to confirm the location of and the need for the proposed shelters which had been submitted for inclusion in the Panel’s programme of work.</p>	

	<p>It was also reported that Essex County Council's website was currently being reviewed to include updated information about Highways Panels, including Terms of Reference; the criteria against which proposed schemes were assessed; and assessments completed by engineers during the validation process. This information would be available publicly.</p> <p>When considering scheme LBRA213001 – (Walking) Footway improvements to provide pedestrian route to Colne Valley Railway, Yeldham Road, Castle Hedingham, Estimated Cost:- Not applicable, Members of the Panel were advised that a local landowner might be willing to gift an area of land to facilitate footway improvements. Although this scheme had been categorised as 'red' as it did not meet Essex County Council's criteria, it was agreed that it should remain on the schedule of 'Schemes Awaiting Funding' to enable further investigation to be undertaken.</p> <p>DECISION: That it be recommended that the following schemes, the status of which has been assessed as 'red' as they do not meet the criteria, are removed from Braintree Local Highways Panel's list of potential schemes:-</p> <p><u>Traffic Management</u></p> <p>LBRA212034 – Speed reduction, West Street, Coggeshall Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA212046 – Replacement of damaged fingerpost, Priors Green, Stisted Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA212052 – Implementation of safety measures and 20mph zone, Stoneham Street, Coggeshall Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA212011 – Safety measures (farm access), Hall Green, Little Yeldham (duplicate of scheme LBRA222054) Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA212023 – Speed reduction (extension of 40mph limit up to 30mph limit on entrance to Hatfield Peverel), Maldon Road, Witham Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA222041 – Measures to address speeding, Piccotts Lane, Great Saling Estimated Cost:- Not applicable (Note: Location incorrectly described as Braintree in report)</p>	
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<p>LBRA222046 – Speed reduction measures, Maldon Road, Witham Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA222055 – Provision of roundels on road at entrance to 30mph area, main entrances to Little Yeldham Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA222049 – Vehicle activated sign (VAS)/safety measures/speed reduction, Rickstones Road, Witham Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA222063 – Signage to restrict heavy goods vehicles entering road, Queen Street, Coggeshall Estimated Cost:- Not applicable (Note: Location incorrectly described as Braintree in report)</p> <p>LBRA222066 – Re-location of 30mph sign, Finchingfield Road, Steeple Bumpstead Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA222067 – Speed reduction, Water Lane, Steeple Bumpstead Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA192018 – Bennett island one way, Park View leading to Patten Farm Road, Blackmore End Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA222071 – Heavy goods vehicle restrictions, Stisted Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA232082 – Installation of bell bollards, Bradford Street, Braintree Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA232086 – Removal of yellow hatched box road marking, Swan Street, Sible Hedingham Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA222081 – 40mph speed limit, Bardfield Road, Great Saling Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA242013 – Relocation of 30mph speed signs, Wethersfield Road, Sible Hedingham Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p> <p>LBRA242001 – Parking restrictions, Alexandra Road / School Road, Sible Hedingham Estimated Cost:- Not applicable</p>	
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	<p>Action By: D Maclean, Essex Highways, as indicated.</p>	<p>D Maclean (HLTL)</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <p><u>Section 106 Agreements – Benefits</u></p> <p>A Member of the Panel queried if a process was in place to match Local Highways Panels’ schemes with contributions arising from Section 106 Planning Agreements in order to secure benefits for communities.</p> <p>It was reported that Essex Highways Officers met regularly with Essex County Council Officers to establish whether funds might be available via Section 106 Agreements to fund, or part fund, Highways Panels’ schemes. Officers of Essex County Council also met with District Council Officers to discuss possible schemes which might be funded in whole, or in part, via Section 106 Agreements. It was noted that possible contributions could only be determined when a planning application for development was being processed and they had to be secured for a specified purpose. Furthermore, highway schemes funded via Section 106 Agreements had to comply with the policies of Essex Highways.</p> <p><u>Deer and Horse Warning Signs</u></p> <p>A Member of the Panel made reference to the proliferation and cost of signs warning of deer and horses, particularly in rural parts of the Braintree District. The Member queried whether criteria were in place to control the provision of such signs and if statistics were available to quantify the effectiveness of these signs compared to their cost.</p> <p>It was reported that no criteria existed regarding the erection of signs warning of deer and that any requests for signage were determined on the basis of the evidence presented in respect of deer crossing a particular road. Signs warning of horses could only be erected along roads in the vicinity of an equestrian centre.</p> <p>Advice provided to Highway Authorities recommend that ‘signage clutter’ should be reduced and that, in general, signage should only be erected if it was absolutely necessary. It was not known if data existed to quantify the effectiveness of such warning signs.</p>	

8.	<p>Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>It was reported that the meeting of Braintree Local Highways Panel scheduled for Thursday, 26th September 2024 at 5.00pm had been cancelled.</p> <p>The next meeting of Braintree Local Highways Panel is scheduled to take place 'in person' on Thursday, 16th January 2025 at Causeway House, Bocking End, Braintree starting at 5.00pm. This is subject to confirmation.</p> <p>The meeting commenced at 5.00pm and closed at 6.06pm.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Councillor R Playle (Vice-Chairman in the Chair)</p>	
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