

# Minutes

## Braintree District Local Highways Panel

(Comprising representatives of:-  
Essex County Council  
Braintree District Council  
Braintree Association of Local Councils)

### 31st July 2012

Present:-

Councillor D Finch (Chairman)	Essex County Council
Councillor J Baugh	Essex County Council
Councillor M Lager	Essex County Council
Councillor J Pike	Essex County Council
K Blackburn (ECC Officer) (until 6.38pm)	Essex County Council
A Lindsay (ECC Highways Officer)	Essex County Council
R Macdonald (ECC Highways Officer)	Essex County Council
E-Mail:- rob.macdonald@essex.gov.uk	
P Rose (ECC Highways Officer)	Essex County Council

Councillor J Abbott	Braintree District Council
Councillor M Banthorpe	Braintree District Council
Councillor R Mitchell	Braintree District Council
Councillor R Walters	Braintree District Council
P Partridge (BDC Officer)	Braintree District Council

Councillor J Bendall	Braintree Association of Local Councils
Councillor J Clark	Braintree Association of Local Councils
Councillor A Hayward	Braintree Association of Local Councils

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Fincken - Braintree Association of Local Councils.

#### 1 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

**INFORMATION:** Councillor Finch, Chairman of the Panel, introduced and welcomed everyone to the first meeting of Braintree District Local Highways Panel in its new format.

#### 2 **INTRODUCTION TO THE LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANELS**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to the background to the establishment of the new Local Highways Panels which had been set up across the County, the proposed governance arrangements, and the frequency and location of meetings.

It was reported that the Local Highways Panel would enable local Councillors to consider and prioritise expenditure on highways issues in the Braintree District including capital expenditure on traffic management improvements; tackling congestion; safer roads (including casualty reduction); improvements to public rights of way; cycling schemes; passenger transport improvements; and minor improvement schemes. It was noted that responsibility for parking schemes had been delegated to the North Essex Parking Partnership and that the Local Highways Panel would not be able to promote parking restrictions unless these were intended to address a serious safety or

congestion issue. However, the Panel could make suggestions for the Parking Partnership to consider.

In discussing this item, it was proposed and agreed that all meetings of the Panel should be held in public unless there was an overriding reason why the public/press should be excluded; that 'Public Question Time' should be included as a standard item on all future Agendas, subject to people only being able to speak in respect of an item on the Agenda; that 'Declarations of Interest' should be included as a standard item on all future Agendas; that the Minutes of the Panel's meetings should be finalised within five working days of the meeting and published on Braintree District Council's web site; and that new schemes should only be considered by the Panel if they were supported by a Parish Council, or for areas without a Parish Council the District Council or County Ward Councillor; were in writing; and had been subject to prior consideration and validation by Officers. It was proposed that new schemes should be submitted to Essex County Council Officers using a standard request form (copy attached at Appendix 1); and that future meetings be held at other venues across the District. It was noted that the Panel would not take decisions, but it would instead make recommendations to Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation who would determine matters.

#### **DECISION:**

- (1) That the remit and governance arrangements for the Braintree District Local Highways Panel be as follows:-
  - The Local Highways Panel will elect a Chairman who will ordinarily be a County Councillor unless it is agreed otherwise.
  - Decision making to be agreed by the Local Highways Panel and action to be clearly recorded in the Minutes. The Minutes are to be finalised within five working days of the meeting and published on Braintree District Council's web site.
  - Meetings to be held in public unless there is an overriding reason why the public/press should be excluded. Reports of each meeting shall be submitted to the Joint Locality Board, and recommendations reported to Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.
  - Schemes for consideration by the Local Highways Panel are to be submitted to Essex County Council Officers using the standard template request and shall only be considered if they are supported by a Parish Council, or for areas without a Parish Council the District Council Ward Councillor or County Councillor, are in writing and have been subject to prior consideration and validation by Officers.
  - Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation will be minded to accept the advice of and priorities agreed by the Local Highways Panel, subject to the Highways Authority's statutory duties/duty of care obligations consistent with current legislative requirements and regulations.
  - Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation shall have the right to reject any scheme promoted by the Local Highways Panel which falls outside Essex County Council's policies and standards.
  - In the event of a dispute within the Local Highways Panel, Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation will take the final decision based on advice from Officers and existing highways policy.
  - Meetings of the Local Highways Panel should be fit for purpose, encourage partnership working and be held quarterly to link with the budget planning cycle
  - Future meetings shall be held at other venues across the District.
  - 'Public Question Time' to be included as a standard item on all Agendas, subject to people only being able to speak in respect of an item on the Agenda.
  - 'Declarations of Interest' to be included as a standard item on all Agendas.

- (2) That Essex County Council's Monitoring Officer be requested to provide advice to a future meeting on the Code of Conduct and how it relates to Members of the Panel.

### 3 **FUNDING FOR LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANELS**

**INFORMATION:** It was reported that £815,578.00 had been allocated to the Braintree District from Essex County Council's integrated transport (improvement) budget for expenditure on local highway schemes during the financial year 2012/13.

Mr K Blackburn, Essex County Council's Senior Infrastructure Funding Officer, attended the meeting and gave a presentation on Section 106 Agreement contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy and how these related to the work of the Local Highways Panel.

In discussing this item, specific reference was made to the impact of new development in Tiptree. In this respect, Councillor Mitchell declared a non-pecuniary interest as a resident of Inworth Road, Kelvedon.

Discussion took place on how Section 106 Agreements were negotiated particularly in relation to the appraisal of planning applications by Highways Officers. Reference was also made to examples of Section 106 Agreement contributions falling short of the funding required for specific schemes and concern was expressed that the Panel's limited budget might have to be used to provide the balance of funding. It was suggested instead that developers could be required to take the burden of funding shortfalls. It was agreed that Councillor Lager and Mr Blackburn should discuss this issue in more detail and report back to a future meeting of the Panel.

#### **DECISION:**

- (1) That the budget allocation and report on Section 106 Agreement contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy be noted.
- (2) That Councillor Lager and Mr Blackburn discuss the issue of shortfalls in Section 106 Agreement contributions and report back to a future meeting of the Panel.

### 4 **BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND DELIVERY OF SCHEMES**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to the proposed process for promoting, selecting, designing and implementing highways schemes. As discussed earlier in the meeting, it was acknowledged that the Panel would only consider written reports on schemes which had the support of a Parish Council, or the District Council or County Council Ward Councillor, and which had been subject to prior consideration and validation by Officers. New schemes were to be submitted to Essex County Council Officers using a standard template request. Details of the procedure to be followed would be sent to Parish Councils/Councillors in the near future.

**DECISION:** The report was noted.

### 5 **GAINING APPROVAL TO A PROGRAMME**

**INFORMATION:** Discussion took place on the Panel's proposed decision making process which it was agreed should be based on a consensus, or a majority. It was noted also that recommendations made by the Panel would be referred to Essex

County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation for approval. It was anticipated that the Cabinet Member would consider all such recommendations on a weekly basis and that decisions would not therefore be delayed. It was reported that a Toolkit was being sent to Councillors which would assist with procedures.

With regard to managing changes and additions to the programme, it was noted that schemes would only be considered by the Panel if they were supported by a Parish Council, or for areas without a Parish Council, the District Council or County Ward Councillor; were in writing; and had been subject to prior consideration and validation by Officers. New schemes were to be submitted to Essex County Council Officers using a standard request form. It was agreed that changes to the programme would be reported back to the relevant Parish Council and local District Council and County Council Ward Councillors.

**DECISION:** The report was noted.

## 6 **PRIORITY DECISION**

**INFORMATION:** Members of the Panel considered a report on a proposed priority scheme for improvements to the B1018 Witham Road at the junction with Temple Lane, White Notley (in the vicinity of Cressing Temple). Following a site inspection and an analysis of previous personal injury collisions it was proposed to:

Remove trees and vegetation on the inside of the bend to ensure motorists are provided with appropriate forward visibility when turning right into Temple Lane.

Install a yellow backed 'junction on a bend' warning sign on the southbound approach to the junction.

Relocate the existing yellow backed 'junction on a bend' warning sign on the northbound approach to the junction further away to provide more advance warning of the junction.

Renew two existing 'SLOW' road markings.

The estimated cost of the work was £3,500.

As part of this item, reference was made to a proposed on-street parking scheme for Manor Street, Braintree which would enable business owners and their customers to park along the road, as well as residents. It was agreed that as the papers relating to this scheme had not been circulated to all Members of the Panel in advance of the meeting that it should be deferred for early consideration at the next meeting together with costs.

**DECISION:**

- (1) It was **Recommended** that the priority scheme for improvements to the B1018 Witham Road at the junction with Temple Lane, White Notley be approved.
- (2) That a report on a proposed on-street parking scheme for Manor Street, Braintree and its estimated cost be presented to the next meeting.

## 7 **POTENTIAL SCHEMES**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to the capital highway improvements programme which had been circulated at the meeting. This set out a number of schemes which had been assessed by Officers and given a green (high priority), amber (low priority) or red (against policy or no engineering solution) status.

Reference was also made to the Minutes of the last meeting of the former Braintree District Local Highways Panel which had been held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2012 when the Panel had considered the 'Localism Schemes - Reserve List' and had determined whether each of the 43 schemes should be retained for possible funding in 2012/13, or removed from the list. Concern was expressed that the some of these decisions had not been reflected in the current list and that the list may contain discrepancies.

It was agreed that the Panel should consider each of the smaller valued schemes rated green in the current schedule and determine which of these could be recommended for approval. Other schemes on the list would be subject to a 'value for money' analysis with the details being reported to a future meeting.

In discussing this item, Councillor Abbott declared a non-pecuniary interest in the schemes relating to Rivenhall and Silver End as a District Council Ward Member for Bradwell, Silver End and Rivenhall and a Parish Councillor for Rivenhall.

Councillor Abbott and Councillor Mitchell drew attention to discrepancies listed in the programme. It was agreed that the five schemes referred to (listed in paragraph (2) below) should be investigated further.

In discussing the programme, it was agreed that reports and background papers should be circulated to Members of the Panel in advance of meetings and that the layout of and information contained in the spread-sheets should be consistent and should include a column to indicate that the Parish Council/Ward Councillors had been informed.

#### **DECISION:**

(1) It was **Recommended** that the following schemes be approved:-

##### Minor Schemes

5 Improvements to pedestrian crossing/tactile paving  
Newland Street j/w The Grove, Witham  
Estimated cost £3,000

Bus Stop/Route Improvements (as part of the discussion it was agreed that Officers should investigate the comparative costs of wooden/plastic bus shelters)

7 Move bus stop and install raised and dropped kerb, bus stop 150024012042  
Iron Pear Tree Farm, Braintree Road, High Garrett  
Estimated cost £3,000

8 Move bus stop to outside Hospital and install a wooden shelter, bus stop:  
150024013019  
Halstead Hospital, Hedingham Road, Halstead  
Estimated cost £10,000

17 New bus stop outside garden centre and another opposite  
Cherry Garden Centre, Coggeshall Road, Stisted  
Estimated cost £3,000

### School Crossing Patrol Sites

- 1 Dropped kerbs and tactile paving  
Templars Primary School, Cressing Road, Witham  
Estimated cost £2,950
- 2 Dropped kerbs and tactile paving  
St Michael's C of E Primary School/ St Francis Catholic Primary School, Rayne Road, Braintree  
Estimated cost £2,950
- 3 Complete removal of signs/post  
Holy Family RC Primary School, Hatfield Road (near j/w Allectus Way), Witham  
Estimated cost £2,000
- 4 Dropped kerbs and tactile paving  
John Bunyan Infant and Junior Schools, Coldnailhurst Avenue, Braintree  
Estimated cost £2,950
- 5 Dropped kerbs and tactile paving  
Beckers Green Primary School, Cressing Road, Braintree  
Estimated cost £2,950

### Essex Intelligent Traffic Systems

- 1 Replace OTUs or convert to RMS  
A120/B1018 Long Green, (Galleys roundabout), Braintree  
Estimated cost between £2,000 and £7,000.
- 2 Replace OTUs or convert to RMS  
Rayne Road (West of Hunnable Road), Braintree  
Estimated cost between £2,000 and £7,000
- 3 Replace OTUs or convert to RMS  
Railway Street/Victoria Street, Braintree  
Estimated cost between £2,000 and £7,000

### Cycling Schemes

- 2 Cycleway  
Blackwater Rail Trail, Blackwater Lane to Pasture Road, Witham  
Estimated cost £8,000

### Public Rights of Way

- 2 Surface and drainage improvements  
Byway 19, Great Bardfield  
Estimated cost £15,000
- (2) It was agreed that the following schemes be investigated further and an update submitted to the next meeting of the Panel:-

### Minor Schemes

- 10 Widen road to accommodate parking  
School Road, Silver End  
Estimated cost £150,000
  - 32 Zebra crossing crossing point  
Station Road, Kelvedon  
Estimated cost £45,000
  - 33 Zebra crossing  
Boars Tye Road, Silver End  
Estimated cost £65,000
  - 34 Signal controlled one-way system and pedestrian guard rail  
Oak Road railway bridge, Rivenhall  
Estimated cost £10,000
  - 39 7.5 tonne weight limit  
Oak Road, Rivenhall  
Estimated cost £5,000
- (3) It was agreed that the cost of the following schemes be investigated and a report submitted to the next meeting of the Panel:-

### Public Rights of Way

- 3 Surface and drainage improvements  
Footpaths 27 and 28, Boisfield Terrace and Baptist Church to Mil Lane, Halstead  
Estimated cost to be confirmed
- (4) That further information be presented to the next meeting on schemes awaiting validation (last sheet of the programme) subject to the removal of the following scheme:-
- 2 Near misses on zebra crossing  
Church Road, Tiptree  
Colchester Borough Council scheme
- (4) That all schemes on the capital highway improvements programme, other than those recommended for approval above, be subject to a 'value for money' analysis and checked against the decisions made by the former Braintree District Local Highways Panel on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2012, with the details being reported to a future meeting.
- (5) That reports and background papers be circulated to Members of the Panel in advance of meetings, and that the layout of and information contained in spreadsheets be amended to be consistent and to include a column to indicate notification to Parish Council/Ward Councillors.

## 8 **TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS – APPOINTMENT OF ADVISORY GROUP**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to a report on the proposed establishment of an Advisory Group to comment on requests for new Traffic Regulation Orders within the Braintree District prior to these being determined by the North Essex Parking

Partnership Joint Sub-Committee. Whilst the Advisory Group would not have powers to make decisions, the local knowledge and comments/ feedback of its members would be invaluable in determining new Traffic Regulation Order requests.

**DECISION:**

- (1) That an Advisory Group be established to comment on requests for new Traffic Regulation Orders within the Braintree District prior to these being determined by the North Essex Parking Partnership Joint Sub-Committee.
- (2) That Councillors Banthorpe, Baugh, Clark and Lager be appointed to the Advisory Group for the Civic Year 2012/13.

9 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**DECISION:** That the next meeting of Braintree District Local Highways Panel be held on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012 at Causeway House, Braintree starting 6.00pm.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and closed at 8.08pm.

Councillor D Finch  
(Chairman)



New Template Request

Essex Highways receives a large number of requests for items such as the one you are requesting. If we can identify that there is a genuine proven safety issue your request will be referred to the Local Highway Panel (LHP) which funds these types of works. Essex Highways is utilising arrangements for the delivery of a range of local highway services as part of the localism agenda. Under these new arrangements LHPs have been established and are the formal mechanisms through which recommendations and priorities regarding some of Essex Highways works programmes are made. The LHPs are made up of a cross-section of nominated local members representing Borough and Parish Councils.

In order for an assessment to be made on your request, there are a number of questions to be asked, which are outlined below. If you are able to offer any additional information or evidence, this would be most appreciated:

What is the problem which has resulted in this request?

*(Describe the issues being faced and the causes of the problems)*

What is the suggested solution to the problem?

*(Write full details of your project. You could include a detailed sketch or map of the project together with a full explanation of what is needed.)*

What is to be achieved by the suggested solution?

*(Describe how this project will alleviate the issues described above and what the result that you wish to achieve is.)*

What evidence is there of the need for this solution?

*(This can be provided through either a Parish Plan, survey, questionnaire, copy of letters received, petition, etc.)*

Once an assessment has been made, the decision on whether the scheme will be put forward to the Panels will be reported to you.