

MINUTES

of the

CHELMSFORD LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL

6 November 2012

Present:

County Councillor Jude Deakin	Essex County Council
Councillor Ian Grundy	Chelmsford City Council
County Councillor Norman Hume	Essex County Council
County Councillor Dick Madden	Essex County Council
Councillor Chris Rycroft	Chelmsford City Council
Councillor Roy Whitehead	Chelmsford City Council (Chairman)

In attendance:

Nick Binder	Chelmsford City Council
County Councillor Ray Howard	Essex County Council
Derek Latimer	Chelmsford City Council
Hannah Neve	Essex County Council
Averil Price	Chelmsford City Council
Jon Simmons	Essex County Council
Derek Stebbing	Chelmsford City Council
Joy Thomas	Chelmsford City Council

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Councillor Whitehead as Chairman welcomed everyone present to the fourth meeting of the Chelmsford Local Highways Panel. The Chairman thanked officers for their work in presenting the sites of proposed schemes via Google Earth.

2. **Apologies and Substitutions**

County Councillor Mackrory had submitted his apologies.

3. **Minutes of the Chelmsford Local Highways Panel Meeting on 3 September 2012**

The minutes of the Chelmsford Local Highways Panel meeting held on 3 September 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. **Matters Arising**

It was confirmed that the agenda for this meeting and the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2012 had been placed on the Chelmsford City Council website.

5. **Feedback from Members' Briefing on Parking and Highways**

Averil Price reported that at the recent Chelmsford City Council member briefing on the Chelmsford Local Highways Panel and the South Essex Parking Partnership, 28 Councillors had attended and this briefing would be repeated on 21 November for other Chelmsford City Councillors and on 28 November for Parish Councillors. Given the numbers it was suggested to merge the two briefings and just hold the briefing on the 28th November. The City Councillors present all confirmed that the meeting had been informative and useful. Councillor Grundy considered that the Parish briefing would be useful in advising them how to promote a scheme. In order that the role of the Panel was clear, it was agreed to place the Terms of Reference on the website and to distribute them to all City Councillors and to the Parish Councillors at their briefing.

It was generally felt that these briefing meetings should be held on a regular basis and it was agreed that a programme of briefings should be arranged in due course.

6 **Army and Navy Roundabout Safety Improvements**

The Panel considered a report on the Army and Navy safety improvements which was circulated at the meeting. Hannah Neve explained that three options had been developed after consultation with County Councillor Louis which would be possible to implement in a short timescale and would be less than £50,000. The three options were –

1. the removal of driver information Variable Message Sign (VMS) on Parkway outbound central reservation, which would be at an estimated cost of £7,000 and could be delivered within 3 months;
2. the removal of street lamp and vegetation clutter at an estimated cost of £23,000 and could be delivered within 3 months; and
3. providing additional backing boards/surrounds to the flyover plank signs. This option had three possible forms –
 - (a) a new backing board fixed to the sign board at an estimate of £40,000 and which could be delivered within six months. This period would be extended if DfT approval were required;
 - (b) a separate sign face to be installed behind the existing signs at an estimated cost of £17,000 which could be delivered within six months; or
 - (c) a long screen behind the existing signs at an estimated cost of £150,000 the delivery of which would take in excess of six months due to an extended design and approval period.

Essex County Council officers were not in favour of option 1 as the VMS provides useful information at a strategic location and because of its being in place it could increase visibility of the flyover signage as it would draw attention to the signage. County Councillor Hume asked for clarification of scheme 3(b) and Hannah Neve explained that it aimed to improve the visibility within a reasonable budget and timescale. It consisted of a backing board some 1 metre behind the yellow flyover sign. County Councillor Hume considered that this was a short-term option and a longer term proposal was to be preferred.

The Panel's position was it was willing to promote improvements but only if the scheme was worth implementing and it rejected all the options currently before them as it considered that better signage on the gantry was needed. The Chairman suggested that if it was required the Panel could undertake a site inspection and then review the options or have a special meeting with the Highways Team at Essex County Council responsible for the options. He also requested Essex County Council to supply details of the mechanisms for obtaining DfT approval.

ACTION

- Essex County Council to report on further options for improvements which would be longer term in effect and supply information on how to obtain DfT approval for schemes.

7. School Crossing Patrol Assessment – Linnet Drive

Jon Simmons reported on the investigation of the traffic situation in the vicinity of the proposed pedestrian crossing in Linnet Drive/Plane Tree Close. The investigations had taken place on the morning of 20 September between 08:20 and 09:10 and for comparative purposes on the same day between 14:45 and 15:45. The data on pedestrian and vehicle movements had been assessed against the Essex County Council's formula and it had not met that criteria.

County Councillor Deakin asked how the results had compared with the 2009 assessment and Jon Simmons confirmed that the data had not met the criteria for a school crossing at that stage either. A scheme for a pedestrian crossing had been pursued earlier as part of the localism arrangements but had attracted objections early in 2012 when out to public consultation. County Councillor Madden commented that on safety grounds a solution was required and County Councillor Deakin suggested that if a pedestrian crossing was in place, it would certainly be used.

The possibility of a traffic regulation order to restrict waiting was considered but it was noted that this would be a matter for the South Essex Parking Partnership rather than the Panel and it was likely that speed of vehicles could increase by removing parked vehicles. Jon Simmons advised the Panel that if consultation on a pedestrian crossing was carried out again, earlier responses would still be taken into account. It was agreed that as the data did not justify a school crossing patrol, consultation should again take place on a pedestrian crossing.

ACTION

- Essex County Council to consult on a pedestrian crossing for Linnet Drive and report back to a future meeting of the Panel.

8. Chelmsford LHP Full Reserve Scheme List

Jon Simmons introduced the revised Reserve Scheme List, which now showed whether there was any Section 106 funding relative to a particular scheme or schemes. Those schemes approved for funding at the last meeting were shown as shaded grey on the list. The list still showed deferred schemes but these would be transferred to a separate list but they could be reinstated at a later date. Councillor Rycroft asked why Section 106 monies had been earmarked for schemes which were against Essex County Council policy. Joy Thomas explained that part of the problem was due to changes since the original planning developments had been agreed and Derek Stebbing advised that part of the role of the Panel was to reconcile such differences. Hannah Neve suggested that the Panel prioritise amber schemes so that even if they could not be implemented in 2012/2013, they could be carried forward into 2013/2014.

Minor Schemes

The Panel noted that Scheme IT250 was being delayed until nearby development takes place. Joy Thomas reported that funding from the St. Johns Hospital development would not be available until work had started but the Chairman suggested that this funding could be anticipated and together with the Tesco Princes Road Section 106 funding it could be used to implement schemes.

County Councillor Hume asked for more detail on Scheme IT140 at the junction of Chignal Road and Roxwell Road and it was noted that further information should be available by the next meeting of the Panel. The Panel made the following decisions –

- Scheme 6 (IT566) be approved subject to Councillor Grundy discussing this with the Parish Council. (Note: Subsequent to the meeting Councillor Grundy discussed this scheme as agreed with Margareting Parish Council. The Parish Council were aware of the scheme and welcomed the completion of a project which started with the installation of a crossing and therefore the scheme will be progressed)
- Scheme 21 (IT261) be removed from the List and its Section 106 funding be re-allocated in Little Baddow subject to discussion with the Parish Council;
- Schemes 42 (IT150), 81 (IT 214) and 65 (IT149) be considered together and the most appropriate solution found for funding, subject to prior consultation with West Hanningfield Parish Council
- Schemes 32 (IT249), 35 (IT187), 37 (IT143) and 38 (IT168) be implemented provided Essex County Council creates a sinking fund to transfer capital monies now that can be used for future maintenance. To be confirmed at the next meeting.
- Schemes 30 and 31 (IT158 and IT 174) be removed from the list

Bus Stop/Route Improvements

The Panel agreed funding for schemes 1– 6, 8 -10 and 12 for bus stop/route improvements.

School Crossing Patrol Sites Schemes

County Councillor Deakin reported that she and the late County Councillor Smith-Hughes had been lobbied about the school crossing adjoining Melbourne Park School and asked that the exit from the roundabout should be investigated. The Panel agreed £5,000 for this scheme (50131) to have a site safety assessment. The Panel decided that Schemes 50122 and 50153 should be progressed provided their individual costs did not exceed £5,000.

Scheme 50157 is progressing and should be removed from the list.

Essex Intelligent Traffic Schemes

The Panel considered that scheme IT669 for a signs upgrade at the Army and Navy roundabout should be considered alongside the other improvements for the Army and Navy to be developed as in Minute 6 above.

Cycling Schemes

Hannah Neve in response to a query confirmed that someone had been commissioned to refresh the cycling strategy and to prioritise schemes.

The Panel agreed that an overall strategy was required including the amalgamating of schemes so that those with Section 106 funding can be implemented.

This would be considered at the next meeting of the Panel.

Public Rights of Way

The Panel considered Scheme 45 for a bridge over the River Wid at Margaretting and agreed that an alternative scheme at a cost of up to £5,000 should be prepared and implemented.

Jon Simmons reported that costs for four schemes (3, 5, 7 and 8) already approved by the Panel had increased and the details were provided. The Panel notes the reasons for this and agreed for the schemes to proceed.

Casualty Reduction Schemes

County Councillor Madden drew the Panel's attention to the report that the results of the 12 hour turning movement count (Scheme 40) at the junction of New London Road with Writtle Road and Elm Road would be implemented before a full scheme could be considered. Jon Simmons confirmed that the results are still awaited. In answer to a question from the Chairman, Jon Simmons confirmed that the costings for schemes 46, 47 and 48 were still being prepared.

9. **Section 106 Schemes Summary**

The current list of Section 106 Schemes which related to traffic management issues was reviewed. County Councillor Deakin advised the Panel of the discussions she had had concerning the funding relating to CHL/1302/07 and CHL/0757/07.

10. **Highways Rangers Summary**

The Panel received for information a summary of the Chelmsford City Highways Rangers work programme. They had undertaken a range of minor local works such as the clearing of vegetation, maintenance of signs and the repair of kerbs between August and October 2012.

11. **Programme Monitor**

The Panel received a programme of works 2012/2013 for highways maintenance and Jon Simmons confirmed that this monitor would be updated on a regular basis.

12. **Any Other Business**

Highways Drainage

In answer to a question from the Chairman, Jon Simmons confirmed that problems with drainage of highways were a matter for the Essex County Council. County Councillor Howard suggested that Lucy Shepherd should be contacted as the Essex County Council lead on this matter.

Bunny Walk, Chelmsford

In answer to a question from the Chairman, Jon Simmons confirmed that there was no information as to who had installed a sign in the Bunny Walk, Chelmsford.

School Road, Downham

Jon Simmons reported that Essex County Council Highways used to provide a skip on a regular basis for the dredging of the pond near School Road, Downham and he asked whether this was something that Chelmsford Local Highways Panel would wish to continue to fund. Councillor Grundy mentioned that his Parish had received help from Chelmsford City Council and the Chairman agreed to discuss the matter with Councillor Potter, the CCC Cabinet Member for Waste and Recycling.

Chelmsford Cycling Action Group (CCAG)

Jon Simmons reported that CCAG had contacted him to see the reserve scheme list and the Panel agreed that the Essex County Council officers dealing with cycling should contact CCAG to discuss the issues they wished to raise.

13. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be at 2:30 p.m. on 17 December 2012 at the Chelmsford City Council offices.

The meeting closed at 2:40 p.m.

Chairman