

Minutes

Braintree District Local Highways Panel

3rd October 2013

(Comprising representatives of:-

Essex County Council
Braintree District Council
Braintree Association of Local Councils)

Present:-

Councillor R Walters (Chairman)
Councillor J Abbott
Councillor M Banthorpe
Councillor J Bendall
Councillor M Fincken
Councillor A Hayward
Councillor M Lager
Councillor Lady Newton

Essex County Council
Braintree District Council
Braintree District Council
Braintree Association of Local Councils
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Essex County Council

Councillor E Johnson (Essex County Council), representing Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, was also in attendance.

Councillor A Everard (Braintree District Council) and Councillor G Helm (Essex County Council) were also in attendance.

Officers

Alan Lindsay – Essex County Council
Rob Macdonald - Essex County Council
Matt Valentine - Essex County Council
Rosemary Wilkins - Essex County Council (for Item 6 – Cycling Schemes)
Paul Partridge – Braintree District Council
Alison Webb – Braintree District Council

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Clark (Braintree Association of Local Councils), Councillor D Louis (Essex County Council), Councillor R Mitchell (Braintree District Council) and Councillor J Pike (Essex County Council).

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared:-

2 **MINUTES**

DECISION: That the Minutes of the meeting of Braintree District Local Highways Panel held on 4th July 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 **MATTERS ARISING**

INFORMATION:

Councillor J E Abbott raised the following issues:-

Minute 5 – Matters Arising (Terms of Reference and Budget)

It had been requested at the last meeting that the updated Terms of Reference of Braintree District Local Highways Panel and the anticipated budget allocation for 2013/14 would be reported to the next meeting.

Councillor Abbott indicated that the 'Essex Local Highway Panels Terms of Reference and Members' Guide 2013/14' had been issued by Essex County Council in July 2013 which set out new Terms of Reference. The Guide stated that Highway Panel meetings 'should be held without the press or public present unless otherwise agreed with the Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.' Councillor Abbott indicated his support for meetings of the Braintree Panel to be held in public and he queried whether the Cabinet Member had authorised this. Councillor Abbott queried also whether the four representatives who had been appointed to the Panel by Braintree Association of Local Councils would be able to attend future meetings of the Panel as the new Terms of Reference stated that Members should be appointed by Essex County Council and Braintree District Council only.

In discussing this matter, other Members of the Panel referred to articles in the Press regarding the status of the Braintree Highways Panel, and indicated also that it was unclear as to who was entitled to attend meetings.

The Chairman confirmed that he had replied to the Press article regarding the status of the Braintree Highways Panel.

In response, it was reported that the 'Essex Local Highway Panels Terms of Reference and Members' Guide 2013/14' was a 'guide' and that each of the 12 Panels across the County operated differently. Furthermore, the Chairman clarified that the membership of the Braintree Panel had been agreed by Councillor Rodney Bass and would continue as previously with an equal number of Members representing Essex County Council, Braintree District Council and Braintree Association of Local Councils. The Chairman indicated that members of the public would be able to attend Panel meetings to speak about items on the Agenda. Members of the public would be

expected to indicate their intention to attend by contacting the Clerk to the Panel in advance of the meeting.

The Chairman invited Councillor Abbott to submit any questions about the Constitution of the Panel to him in writing so that these could be answered.

It was agreed that in order to clarify the position, the particular Terms of Reference of Braintree District Local Highways Panel should be recorded in the Minutes of this meeting. These are:-

Membership:- Twelve members in total comprising an equal number (four) appointed by Essex County Council, Braintree District Council and Braintree Association of Local Councils.

Meetings:- Open to the public. Questions and statements by members of the public are permitted if they relate to items included on the Agenda, subject to advance notification to the Clerk.

Councillor Abbott asked what the Panel's budget allocation for 2013/14 would be.

In response, Councillor Walters, the Chairman of the Panel, stated that the remaining budget figure for the current financial year had not been released. However, Councillor Walters indicated that some small works could be recommended for approval and implemented. Other schemes could be investigated in terms of feasibility and cost with a view to these being implemented in 2014/15 if approved.

Minute 9 – Programme of Schemes Already Recommended for Approval

Councillor Abbott queried the current status of schemes IT 867 Oak Road, Rivenhall – 'Route unsuitable for HGVs' weight restriction', and No Ref. (IT 859?) (LBRA002023) Oak Road Railway Bridge, Rivenhall – 'Priority working' previously described incorrectly as Intelligent Traffic System (ITS) Signal Controlled One-Way.

Matt Valentine, Essex County Council Highways Officer, indicated that the Highways Agency had been consulted about the proposed 'weight restriction' and that a response was awaited from them soon. The 'priority working' scheme had been referred to the railway authority to drill test holes, and the revised drawing was still awaited.

4 **QUESTION TIME**

INFORMATION: There were four statements made. Details of the people who spoke at the meeting are contained in the Appendix to these Minutes.

Principally, these Minutes are a record of decisions made by the Panel and, where appropriate, the reasons for those decisions.

5 CYCLING SCHEMES

Rosemary Wilkins, Essex County Council Highways Cycling Officer, attended the meeting for this Item.

INFORMATION: Consideration was given to eleven Cycling Schemes, two of which had been rated as high priority 'green' schemes and the remainder had been rated as medium priority 'amber' schemes.

In discussing scheme BRA06 – sign installation it was noted that initially this would relate to Braintree town but that it would extend to surrounding villages as funding became available. The scheme related to cycleways which formed part of the national cycling network. Funds would also be sought from Sustrans and other sources.

Action Point: It was agreed that a map showing the location of the cycleways and signs should be circulated to Members of the Panel.

Action by: Rosemary Wilkins, Essex County Council Highways Cycling Officer

In discussing the 'Park That Bike' scheme, it was reported that this related to the whole of the Braintree District. The scheme provided bike racks to participating organisations which were required to install the racks at their own expense.

The schemes which had been rated as medium priority 'amber' were not discussed, but it was noted that these could be considered in future if funding was available for allocation from the Panel's budget.

DECISION: That the following schemes be recommended for approval:-

BRA 06 – Sign installation, Braintree town and surrounding villages - £50,000
No reference - 'Park That Bike', Braintree District - £4,780

6 SCHEMES FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PANEL

INFORMATION: Consideration was given to a schedule of possible schemes.

Councillor Walters, Chairman of the Panel, reiterated that whilst some small safety schemes could be recommended for approval and implemented, other schemes recommended for approval would have to be funded from the 2014/15 budget and implemented during that year.

In discussing this item, reference was made to scheme IT031 (DC242) – provision of a continuous footway along one side of Inworth Road between the junction with Feering Hill/London Road and Threshelfords Business Centre, Feering. This scheme had been approved, but implementation had been delayed as some residents had withheld their consent. In the circumstances, the scheme had been reviewed at the last meeting of the

Panel and it had been agreed that it should go ahead in part. However, it was reported that since the last meeting other home owners had withdrawn their consent which meant that it would only be possible to construct the footpath at either end. Furthermore, a £31,000 contribution towards the cost of the scheme, which had been agreed as part of a Section 106 Agreement, would not be available from January 2014. A plan showing the properties for which consent had been withheld/not provided was circulated at the meeting.

Specific reference was made to the proposed schemes for the provision of 'decorative' gateway signs. It was considered that Essex County Council should not finance such signs and Members were reminded that this stance had been recommended by the Panel at its meeting on 9th December 2010.

DECISION:

- (1) That the following schemes be recommended for approval, in principle, subject to the specific comments denoted on each:-
(NOTE: For those schemes recommended for approval to design stage, the cost of the design work equates to approximately 10% of the overall estimated cost of the scheme).

Improvement Schemes

LBRA132076 Village Green, White Colne – Installation of titan kerbs
Estimated Cost - £5,000
Estimated Design Cost - £ 500
(Recommended for approval to design stage).

LBRA132071 The Street (near Hadfelda Square), Hatfield Peverel –
Upgrade to lighting at zebra crossing
Estimated Cost - £2,500
Estimated Design Cost - £1,000
(Recommended for approval to design stage).

LBRA132049 Junction of Bawn Close and Bradford Street, Bocking –
Review of kerbs to improve visibility and installation of two dropped kerbs
Estimated Cost - £5,000
Estimated Design Cost - £1,000
(Recommended for approval to design stage).

LBRA132060 Henny Back Road and Moat Lane, Alphamstone –
Installation of 'single track' signs.
Estimated Cost - £3,000
(That Alphamstone and Lamarsh Parish Council be requested to contribute towards the cost of this scheme).

LBRA132061 Junction of Bridge Street/Colchester Road/Station Hill Bures Hamlet – Installation of central safety refuge.
Total Estimated Cost - £20,000
Estimated Design Cost - £1,500
(Recommended for approval to design stage).

LBRA132063 Station Road, Earls Colne – Additional 'junction' sign carriageway edge line across Industrial estate entrance.
Total Estimated Cost - £7,000
Estimated Design Cost - £1,000
(Recommended for approval to design stage).

LBRA132052 Rosebay Close and Calamint Road, Witham – Dropped kerbs (six locations)
Estimated Cost - £6,000
Estimated Design Cost - £1,500
(Recommended for approval to design stage).

LBRA132053 Lister Road and Notley Road, Braintree – Dropped kerbs
Estimated Cost - £2,500
Estimated Design Cost - £1,000
(Recommended for approval to design stage).

LBRA132046 Panfield Church, Panfield – Conversion of SID sign to solar power and relocation
Estimated Cost - £2,500
Estimated Design Cost - £500
(Recommended for approval to design stage and that Panfield Parish Council be requested to contribute towards the cost of this scheme).

LBRA132042 Cornish Hall End, Finchingfield – Installation of 30mph roundels
Estimated Cost - £2,500
Estimated Design Cost - £1,000
(Recommended for approval to design stage and that Finchingfield Parish Council be requested to contribute towards the cost of this scheme).

LBRA132058 Convent Lane, Braintree – Installation of advisory unsuitable for HGV sign
Estimated Cost - £2,000
Estimated Design Cost - £500

(Reference was made to the statements which had been made during Question Time in relation to this site. It was agreed that the provision of the sign should be recommended for approval to design stage and that speed surveys of Broad Road and Convent Lane should be undertaken. It was agreed also that the suggested provision of double yellow line makings and a two space parking bay at the entrance to