

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL MINUTES – 11 JANUARY 2021 14:00 HRS

VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL

Chairman:	Councillor Simon Walsh (ECC Member)
Panel Members:	Councillors Susan Barker (ECC Member), Ray Gooding (ECC Member), John Moran (ECC Member), Geof Driscoll (UDC Member), Deryk Eke (UDC Member), Rod Jones (UDC Member), Geoffrey Sell (UDC Member).
Also Present:	Terry Gibson, Sarah Warne, Simon Carpenter
Officers:	Essex Highways – Rissa Long, Highway Liaison Officer Essex Highways – Sonia Church, Highway Liaison Manager ECC – Matt Bradley, Strategic Development Manager
Secretariat:	UDC – Clare Edwards, Democratic Services Officer

Item		
1.	Welcome and Introductions: The Chair welcomed the Panel.	
2.	Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest: No apologies or declarations of interest were received.	
3.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2020 were agreed as a correct record.	
4.	Matters Arising from Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Minor amendments to the minutes were requested as follows: Sequential numbering to be amended. Spelling mistake under Agenda Item 5, Public Questions, paragraph 6, adverse instead of averse. Councillor Barker said she had been unable to find out more information regarding the £100K budget held at Uttlesford District Council (UDC) and discussed at the last meeting. She said there had been no match funding scheme offered by ECC in this financial year. Councillor Driscoll said that the money was still available.	

	<p>Councillor Eke suggested that either Angela Knight or Adrian Webb from UDC were approached for details. It was agreed to discuss further outside of the meeting.</p> <p>The Highway Liaison Officer said she had visited Church End and confirmed that all the relevant signage was in place- 'bend warning' and 'ice on the road'. She said that there was nothing else she could do to progress this item.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Public Questions</p> <p>Terry Gibson, a resident of Dunmow, raised concerns about the B1256 near his home. To access his property he has to make a right turn across the road and had been involved in several near misses and recently a collision. He said that although cars directly behind him were aware of his intention to turn, cars further behind had attempted to overtake, driving at speeds in excess of 60mph.</p> <p>There had been a request for Rangers to clear the road of vegetation but due to the lack of speed restrictions, it was deemed unsafe.</p> <p>Sarah Warne, Parish Councillor at Little Canfield, added that the speed limit was 30mph through Priors Green and 40mph thereafter up to the A120 roundabout. She suggested that this speed limit restriction was increased and said that the current chevrons provided no deterrent.</p> <p>Simon Carpenter, a resident of Dunmow also had concerns about the B1256 by the junction near St Edmunds Lane. He wanted to make the Panel aware of the frequent and serious accidents on this stretch of road. He said he had posted his concerns on Facebook and within the last 24 hours had received 85 comments and 50 likes. He had also set up a change.org petition which already had over 200 signatories. He thought there needed to be a reduction in the speed limit, traffic lights or cameras. He asked what had been done or considered, what could be done in the future and what help was needed from the Community.</p> <p>The Highway Liaison Manager said that she understood the issues and the junction had been subject to an accident reduction scheme. The vegetation had been cleared and other options considered, which included banning the right turn or adding a roundabout; however the costs for the roundabout option were very high, approximately £1.5 million.</p> <p>The Strategic Development Manager said this road had also been looked at when a new residential development had been considered; however this had not gone ahead and therefore the options were not pursued. Both traffic lights and a roundabout had been options under discussion, the additional problem of the availability of land for the roundabout had been raised.</p> <p>The Highway Liaison Officer said that a roundabout had been considered but was bound by safety limitations and the poor visibility of approach and the sharp bend raised safety concerns that cars would not have time to slow down.</p>	

	<p>Councillor Barker said there was a new development in the planning stage at Ford Farm which was near this junction and the safety concerns could be considered within that process and tied in together.</p> <p>Councillor Jones said the B1256 had been an on going problem for years. He again raised the question of match funding and the potential pot of money which could be used for measures to improve road safety and a proper study into the number of accidents. He requested that the Chair raise this with Councillor Bentley as discussed at the last meeting.</p> <p>Item 25 also related to this stretch of road with regards to signage and lining.</p> <p>Councillor Gooding asked for the exact location, the Highway Liaison Officer sent a map to Members.</p> <p>Councillor Moran said both sites were on the casualty reduction scheme.</p> <p>The Highway Liaison Officer explained that the number of reportable accidents was one of the triggers for a casualty reduction scheme. The B1256 had been investigated, the vegetation cut back and safety barriers added. There had been 3 major accidents there in the last 3 years.</p> <p>It was agreed that this junction would be looked at again.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Development Q and A and Casualty Reduction Discussion</p> <p>Casualty reduction had been discussed in the previous item and there were no further questions raised.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Report on Funded Schemes 2020/2021</p> <p>The Highway Liaison Officer explained that a number of the funded schemes regarding speed limits were being held up by objections. These were in the process of being dealt with and should be concluded by the end of the year.</p> <p>Councillor Moran asked about Item 24, Audley End, speed limit amendments. The Highway Liaison Officer said because it had been against Essex County Council (ECC) policy, it had been signed off by the Cabinet Member. She said it would be formally advertised in the new financial year and barring any objections could be implemented in the new financial year.</p> <p>Councillor Moran asked whether there was a pattern to the objections and whether it was from a particular individual or group. The Highway Liaison Officer said she could not see a pattern, she agreed to pass on the general nature of the objections she was receiving.</p> <p>Further to a question from Councillor Driscoll, the Highway Liaison Officer said there were differing opinions on the speed reduction proposals; some objections said the limits were too high and others too low.</p>	

	<p>In response to an update request from Councillor Eke regarding Item 3, Ashdon Road, traffic flow improvements and Item 6 Saffron Walden market amendments, the Highway Liaison Officer confirmed these were due to finish by the end of March 2021.</p> <p>In response to questions from Councillor Jones regarding Item 1, the B184 West of Clapton Hall Lane, casualty reduction measures and Item 4 Chelmsford Road, road widening, the Highway Liaison Officer gave the following update:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The scope of the works had been extended slightly, but signage and clearing of vegetation would take place by the end of February 2021. 4 This was in the budget and was expected to be finished by the end of March 2021. <p>The Highway Liaison Officer stated there was a small surplus budget that could be utilised if any schemes were slightly more expensive than expected.</p> <p>Councillor Eke questioned Item 15, Langley Lower Green, 30 mph speed limit; The Highway Liaison Officer explained that the Engineering Team's recommendations had not matched what the Parish Council wanted. Councillor Moran said he supported the Parish and residents; they had a clear idea of what they wanted and understood it would take more time to be agreed.</p> <p>Councillor Sell asked for more information regarding Item 8, Stansted Mountfitchet, signage review, The Highway Liaison Officer said she was confident that the review would be completed and funding agreed in 2021/22.</p> <p>The Highway Liaison Officer said that the safety audit for Item 17, Rosemary Lane junction with North Street, mini roundabout deflection had been completed and was on target to progress.</p> <p>The Highway Liaison Officer asked if there were any queries on the S106 sheet circulated before the meeting. She shared pictures of completed zebra crossings at Ashdon Road and Peaslands Road; both were well received by the Panel.</p> <p>Councillor Jones highlighted the Ongar Road Parallel Crossing for cyclists. The Highway Liaison Officer said the initial analysis had not been good, in the course of the survey no one had crossed the road and the speed of the approaching cars was too fast. This had delayed the project and a 40mph buffer to slow the traffic down on the lead up to the crossing would be investigated in the meantime. To ensure safety, the speed of approaching cars had to be less than 35 mph.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Report on Schemes Awaiting Funding</p> <p>The Highway Liaison Officer thanked Councillor Barker who had noticed that Items 26 and 38 were the same scheme; one would be deleted.</p>	

	<p>Councillor Sell questioned whether Item 17, which related to Cambridge Road, Stansted, should be changed; he said the issue of slowing down HGV lorries related more to Elsenham as they drove down Grove Hill. Councillor Gooding asked for this to be left until the outcome of the review and therefore which sites were validated.</p> <p>Councillor Driscoll asked about Item 15, Hatfield Broad Oak, he explained that the deterrent did not work. He said that the roads through Finchingfield were used by large 32 tonne trucks as a cut through to the airport and at times these vehicles had mounted the pavement to get through. The Highway Liaison Officer said this would continue to be taken forward.</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor Moran, the Highway Liaison Officer said that the Great Chesterford to Saffron Walden cycleway validation had been completed, she hoped this would be funded by a S106 scheme but said it did not include the design phase. She also stated in respect of Item 2, Saffron Walden Town Centre, that cycling would be reassessed due to the change of criteria by the Department of Transport.</p>	
9.	<p>AOB</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor Driscoll regarding Birchanger, the Highway Liaison Manager said that the Parish would be required to pay for the improvements as the implementation did not meet the Highways policy. She agreed to send the costings to the Parish.</p> <p>Further to a question from Councillor Eke, the Highway Liaison Officer confirmed that there would be no more surgeries held as discussed at the last meeting. All issues should be taken up with Essex County Council Members, who would start the process if they thought the issue was valid.</p> <p>Councillors Gooding and Eke raised the issue of the road defect in Widdington; this was on the verge not the road and was therefore considered a Parish Council matter.</p> <p>There was some discussion regarding the remit of Highway Rangers and guidance was requested. The Highway Liaison Officer said there was information on the Essex Highways website and a page to report an issue or check a query called 'Tell us about something or Check a Query' was available.</p> <p>Further to a question from Councillor Driscoll, The Highway Liaison Officer said that the widening of Barnston Road related to the footpath being widened and not the road.</p> <p>The Highway Liaison Officer asked for all new schemes to be sent through as soon as possible.</p>	
10.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>March 2021 – exact date to be confirmed</p>	

Meeting closed at 3.25pm