

BRAINTREE LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL MINUTES – 3rd October 2022 at 4.00pm

Meeting held ‘In Person’

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| Chairman: | Councillor C Siddall (Chairman) (ECC) |
| Panel Members: | Councillor Mrs L Bowers-Flint (from 4.12pm) (ECC) Councillor T Cunningham (ECC) Councillor D Louis (ECC) Councillor P Schwier (ECC) Councillor P Thorogood (ECC) Councillor Mrs M Cunningham (BDC) Councillor P Euesden (BDC) Councillor R van Dulken (BDC) Councillor Mrs S Wilson (BDC) Councillor K Barnes (BALC) Councillor D Gronland (BALC) |
| Officers: | Dan Maclean – Highway Liaison Team Leader (EH) Samir Pandya – Operations Strategy and Policy Manager (BDC) Also in Attendance:- Lisa Hinman – Area Manager (North Essex Parking Partnership) |
| Secretariat: | Alison Webb – Governance and Members Officer (BDC) (EH – Essex Highways) (ECC - Essex County Council) (BDC - Braintree District Council) (BALC - Braintree Association of Local Councils) |

| Item | | Owner |
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| 1. | Welcome and Introductions: Councillor C Siddall welcomed everyone to the meeting. | |
| 2. | Apologies for Absence, Declarations of Interest and Public Questions: Apologies for Absence: Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Butland (ECC) and Councillor R Playle (ECC). | |

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| | <p>Declarations of Interest:</p> <p>There were no interests declared.</p> <p>Public Questions:</p> <p>There were no questions asked, or statements made.</p> | |
| 3. | <p>Minutes:</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting of Braintree Local Highways Panel held on 3rd August 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.</p> | |
| 4. | <p>Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 3rd August 2022:</p> <p><u>Minute 6 - 'Funded Schemes 2022/23'</u></p> <p>Reference was made to the discussion which had taken place at the last meeting regarding the need to install raised kerbs at bus stops, as some bus operators now used vehicles which could be lowered to provide easier access by passengers.</p> <p>This issue had been raised with the Essex Passenger Transport Team who had advised that most vehicles operated by 'First Bus' were able to 'kneel' (lower) at bus stops. Furthermore, proposed new legislation would require this adaptation. However, kneeling buses still do not provide full accessibility and the installation of raised kerbs at bus stops remained the preferred method for assisting all passengers to safely enter/exit the bus.</p> | |
| 5. | <p>Funded Schemes 2022/23:</p> <p>Consideration was given to a report on the Panel's Funded Schemes for 2022/23, which had been recommended for approval. The report provided an update on the current position of all schemes in the 2022/23 programme of work.</p> <p>Members of the Panel were reminded that funding of £407,600 had originally been allocated to Braintree Local Highways Panel for the year 2022/23. Subsequently, further sums of £100,000 in 2021/22 and £200,000 in 2022/23 had been allocated together with a sum of £177,594 following the re-profiling of schemes in 2021/22. It was reported that £656,000 of the Panel's budget had been allocated to various schemes within the programme of work and that £59,612 had been allocated specifically to</p> | |

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| | <p>casualty reduction schemes. This meant that a total of £169,582 was available for expenditure in 2022/23.</p> <p>In discussing this Item, it was noted that schemes LBRA192046 – Junction improvements, Witham Road, j/w Church Road, Black Notley, Estimated Cost £6,500; LBRA193009 – Dropped kerbs, Jeffrey's Road, j/w Mill Lane, Cressing, Estimated Cost £6,500; and LBRA185010 – Raised kerbs, Boars Tye Road bus stop, Silver Street, Silver End, Estimated Cost £9,000 had been cancelled for the reasons set out in the report.</p> | |
| 6. | <p>Schemes Awaiting Funding:</p> <p>Consideration was given to a 'Schemes Awaiting Funding' report, which included details of requests received for funding from the Panel's budget for the year 2022/23.</p> <p>It was noted that a sum of £169,582 remained in the capital budget for 2022/23 and that the total value of unallocated schemes on the 'Schemes Awaiting Funding' list was £49,000.</p> <p>Members of the Panel were not required to recommend which schemes should be included in the Panel's programme of work at this time, as this would be considered at a future meeting of the Panel. However, it was proposed that Members should endorse removal from the list of potential schemes some which had been assessed as having a 'red' status as they did not meet Essex County Council's criteria.</p> <p>In discussing this Item specific reference was made to speed surveys undertaken on behalf of Highways Panels across Essex. These surveys were funded via a revenue budget. However, following a backlog caused by the Covid-19 pandemic there had been an increase in the number of surveys undertaken and the budget had been exhausted. Currently, it was not possible to complete any surveys. It was hoped that further funding would be provided and that the requisite surveys could be undertaken. It was agreed that a document explaining how Essex Highways assesses speed limits should be circulated to Members of the Panel.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that significant funding was allocated to investigate and resolve speeding, but that such investment was ineffective unless speed limits and restrictions were enforced against the minority of drivers who exceeded them. It was noted that a new automated speed check device called 'Tru-Cam' was now available, which enabled speeding tickets to be issued. It was agreed that details of this scheme and its cost should be provided to Members of the Panel.</p> | |

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| | <p>Reference was also made to an issue raised by Councillor D Gronland at the last meeting of Braintree Local Highways Panel regarding the possible introduction of 20mph speed limit zones across Essex. Councillor Gronland referred to an article which had been published in The Times newspaper on 30th September 2022 regarding the experience of other towns and cities across the Country where a 20mph speed limit had been introduced. It was agreed that a copy of the article should be circulated to Members of the Panel for information.</p> <p>Councillor P Euesden reported a problem with overgrown vegetation along Rayne Road (between Rayne village and Springwood Drive), Braintree, which was forcing pedestrians to walk in the road. Councillor Euesden asked if the vegetation could be cut back regularly, particularly as the route was used by children walking to school. It was acknowledged that it may be possible to assign this work to the Highway Rangers Team and it was agreed that this should be investigated.</p> <p>Action By: Dan Maclean, Essex Highways. To circulate to Members of the Panel a copy of a document explaining how Essex Highways assesses speed limits.</p> <p>Action By: Dan Maclean, Essex Highways. To circulate to Members of the Panel details of the ‘Tru-Cam’ automated speed checking device and its cost.</p> <p>Action By: Dan Maclean, Essex Highways. To circulate to Members of the Panel a copy of an article published in The Times newspaper on 30th September 2022 regarding the experience of other towns and cities across the Country where a 20mph speed limit had been introduced.</p> <p>Action By: Dan Maclean, Essex Highways. To investigate if the cutting back of overgrown vegetation along Rayne Road (between Rayne village and Springwood Drive), Braintree may be assigned to the Highway Rangers Team.</p> <p>DECISION:</p> <p>(1) 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 the list of potential schemes:-</p> <p><u>Traffic Management</u></p> <p>LBRA212041 - Traffic management improvements, Tey Road, j/w Colne Road, Coggeshall Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> | <p>D Maclean (HLO Team Leader)</p> <p>D Maclean (HLO Team Leader)</p> <p>D Maclean (HLO Team Leader)</p> <p>D Maclean (HLO Team Leader)</p> |
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| | <p>LBRA202023 - HGV signage, Elms Hall Road, Colne Engaine Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA192052 - Traffic management improvements, London Road, Feering Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA212002 - - Salt Bin, Vicarage Road, Finchingfield Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA202020 - Traffic management improvements, Braintree Road, Gosfield Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA202018 - Traffic calming, Mount Hill, Halstead Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA202031 - Traffic calming, Blue Bridge, Halstead Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA222048 - Salt bin, Tilbury Road, Great Yeldham Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA192056 - Traffic calming, Church Road, Rivenhall Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA202008 - Traffic management improvements, A1017 Swan Street, Sible Hedingham Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA222041 - Speed limit compliance, Piccotts Lane, Great Saling Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA212021 - Traffic management improvements, The Street, White Notley Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA212009 - Traffic management improvements, Blunts Hall Road, Witham Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA222045 - Speed limit compliance, Holst Avenue, Witham Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p><u>Walking</u></p> | |
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| | <p>LBRA213005 - Provision of a footway, Water Lane and Bridge Hall Road, Stisted (duplicate of scheme LBRA223001 below) Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA223001 - Provision of a footway, Water Lane and Bridge Hall Road, Stisted Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>(2) That the following schemes be subject to the specific comments denoted:-</p> <p><u>Traffic Management</u></p> <p>LBRA172010 - Dedicated left hand lane and junction improvements from Colne Road to the Colchester bound carriageway of the A120, Coggeshall Estimated Cost:- Not known (Note:- (Classified as 'red'). K Louis to discuss with National Highways and report back to the Panel)</p> <p>LBRA212052 - Implementation of a 20mph zone, Stoneham Street, Coggeshall Estimated Cost:- Not known (Note:- (Classified as 'red'). D Maclean and K Louis to discuss with Councillor P Thorogood, Essex County Councillor for Braintree Eastern Division)</p> <p>LBRA212042 - Parking, Jeffreys Road, j/w Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing Estimated Cost:- Not known (Note:- (Classified as 'red'). D Maclean to discuss with Ms L Hinman at North Essex Parking Partnership)</p> <p>LBRA212028 – Work to kerbs, Colneford Hill/Colne Park Road, White Colne Estimated Cost:- Not known (Note:- (Classified as 'red'). K Louis to make enquiries regarding the need for this scheme)</p> <p>LBRA212047 - Speed limit compliance, Bridge End Lane, Great Notley Estimated Cost:- Not known (Note:- (Classified as 'red'). K Louis to discuss scheme with Essex Highways Engineers' Team)</p> <p>LBRA222030 – Reduction to 50mph speed limit, bypass A131, Great Notley Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> | |
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| | <p>(Note:- (Classified as 'red'). The scheme relates to the route taken by pedestrians to The Astronomer Public House and is a traffic calming issue)</p> <p>LBRA202029 – Signage, Chapel Hill, Halstead Estimated Cost:- Not known (Note:- (Classified as 'red'). The scheme relates to the safety of children walking to and from school)</p> <p>LBRA222001 - Safety Measures, Rayne Road (between Springwood Drive/Pods Brook Roundabout and Rayne village), Braintree Estimated Cost:- £12,000 (Note:- (Classified as 'green'). This scheme relates to two issues. D Maclean to discuss with Councillor T Cunningham, Essex County Councillor for Braintree Town Division and Councillor Mrs M Cunningham, Braintree District Council)</p> <p>LBRA222044 - Street scheme, London Road, Feering Estimated Cost:- Not known (Note:- (Classified as 'in validation'). This scheme is within Braintree Eastern Division, not Braintree Town Division)</p> <p>LBRA162064 – Implementation of 20mph speed limit, Francis Way, j/w Broadway, Silver End Estimated Cost:- Not known (Note:- (Classified as 'red'). This scheme should be classified as 'amber')</p> <p><u>Passenger Transport</u></p> <p>LBRA195006 - Bus shelter, Hatfield Road, Witham Estimated Cost:- Not known (Note:- (Classified as 'red'). This scheme should be classified as 'in validation'. It was noted that an audit of bus shelters was currently taking place County-wide. It was agreed that Officers should investigate the cost of relocating redundant bus shelters and if new shelters had to be a standard design, or could be different in order to complement their surroundings eg. a more rustic design for rural locations)</p> <p><u>Cycling</u></p> <p>LBRA194001 – Cycleway signage, St Johns Avenue, Braintree Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> | |
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| | <p>(Note:- (Classified as 'red'). This scheme should be classified as 'green')</p> <p>Action By: Kandice Louis and Dan Maclean - Essex Highways, as indicated.</p> | <p>D Maclean (HLO Team Leader) and K Louis (HLO)</p> |
| 7. | <p>Any Other Business:</p> <p><u>Sign at Notley Cross, Great Notley</u></p> <p>Councillor Mrs M Cunningham queried the status of a blue sign with a white arrow, which was located at Notley Cross, Great Notley. The sign requested drivers of vehicles exiting from the road serving the Holiday Inn, the Toby Carvery and the BP Petrol Station to turn left onto the B1256. Councillor Mrs Cunningham stated that turning right onto the B1256 could be hazardous and that in her experience some drivers did not comply with the sign.</p> <p>In response, it was reported that the Highway Code classified a blue sign with white lettering as a positive instruction, which was not enforceable.</p> <p>It was understood that Councillor G Butland, Essex County Councillor for Three Fields with Great Notley Division, had submitted a request for additional signage in the area which, if approved, might help to alleviate road safety issues.</p> <p><u>Damaged and Outdated Directional Signs</u></p> <p>Councillor R van Dulken referred to a number of road signs across the District which were damaged, obscured, or out of date and which reflected poorly on the image of the area, particularly on entry to and exit from the District.</p> <p>Members of the Panel considered that Essex County Council should be proactive in addressing this issue. In discussing this matter, it was reported that Braintree District Council had previously allocated approximately £100,000 towards the replacement and maintenance of signs in Braintree town, but that an action plan had yet to be drawn up by the County Council. Dan Maclean, Essex Highways agreed to investigate this.</p> <p>Action By: Dan Maclean, Essex Highways. To investigate if a proactive approach towards the replacement and maintenance of road signs in the Braintree District might be implemented and how a sum of approximately £100,000</p> | <p>D Maclean (HLO Team Leader)</p> |

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| | <p>allocated by Braintree District Council for such work in Braintree town might be utilised.</p> <p><u>Potholes</u></p> <p>Councillor P Euesden reported that several potholes had appeared at Great Saling along the road connecting Great Bardfield and the B1256. An increasing number of HGV vehicles were using this road, which required the drivers of oncoming vehicles to manoeuvre closer to the verge and into deep potholes. Some of these potholes were difficult to see, particularly at night or after rain. In some cases, the grass verge and the road were crumbling away.</p> <p>It was reported that Essex County Council administered a pothole repair fund to which County Councillors could apply for the repair of potholes within their Division. Councillor Euesden was advised to ask his local County Councillor to take this matter forward with a view to resolving the problem.</p> <p>Action By: Councillor P Euesden, BDC. To report pothole issues at Great Saling to Councillor G Butland, Essex County Councillor for Three Fields with Great Notley and to request him to make an application to Essex County Council's pothole repair fund for work to be undertaken.</p> | <p>Cllr P Euesden</p> |
| 8. | <p>Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>It was noted that the next meeting of Braintree Local Highways Panel would take place in December 2022 on a date and at a time to be agreed. Members of the Panel would be advised of the date and time of the meeting via E-Mail.</p> <p>The meeting commenced at 4.00pm and closed at 4.45pm.</p> <p>Councillor C Siddall (Chairman)</p> | |