

BRAINTREE LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL MINUTES - 28th January 2021 11.30am

Virtual Meeting (not held in public)

Chairman:	Councillor R Mitchell (Chairman) (ECC)
Panel Members:	Councillor J Abbott (ECC) Councillor Mrs J Beavis (ECC) Councillor G Butland (ECC) Councillor Mrs M Cunningham (BDC) Councillor P Horner (BDC) Councillor R van Dulken (BDC) Councillor Mrs S Wilson (BDC) Councillor J Bendall (BALC) Councillor D Gronland (BALC)
Officers:	Sonia Church - Highways Liaison Manager, Essex Highways Rissa Long – Highways Liaison Officer, Essex Highways Samir Pandya – Operations Strategy and Policy Manager (BDC) Also in Attendance:- Lisa Hinman (Area Manager, North Essex Parking Partnership) Neil Jones – Principal Planner (BDC) (until 12.42pm) Martin Mason - Strategic Development Engineer (ECC) (until 12.27pm) Teresa Milbourn – Strategic Development Engineer (ECC) (until 12.27pm)
Secretariat:	Alison Webb – Governance and Members Officer (BDC) (ECC - Essex County Council) (BDC - Braintree District Council) (BALC - Braintree Association of Local Councils)

Item		Owner
1.	Welcome and Introductions: Councillor R Mitchell welcomed everyone to the meeting and he asked everyone present to introduce themselves.	

2.	<p>Apologies for Absence, Declarations of Interest and Public Questions:</p> <p>Apologies for Absence:</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Finch (ECC), Councillor D Louis (ECC) and Councillor Mrs W Schmitt (ECC).</p> <p>Declarations of Interest:</p> <p>There were no interests declared.</p> <p>Public Questions:</p> <p>The meeting was not held in public. 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 17th September 2020 were approved as a correct record.</p>	
4.	<p>Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting:</p> <p>The following matter was raised:-</p> <p><u>Minute 4 – Matters Arising ('Quiet Lanes')</u></p> <p>Reference was made to discussions at previous meetings of the Panel about schemes for 'Quiet Lanes' and how these might be progressed during the coronavirus pandemic. Members of the Panel were reminded that the process for implementing such schemes included public consultation and the holding of public meetings. However, it had been suggested by Members of the Panel that the requisite public consultation could be carried out by virtual means.</p> <p>Sonia Church, Highways Liaison Manager, Essex Highways reported that she had asked Paul Turner, Essex County Council's Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer whether virtual consultation would be possible. However, Mr Turner had stated that Regulations required a public meeting to be held and advertised in advance and he had advised that implementation of the schemes should be delayed until such time that the requisite meetings could take place in a Covid-19 safe environment.</p>	

	<p>Members of the Panel expressed their disappointment with this advice and they considered that action should be taken to progress the 'Quiet Lanes' schemes as soon as possible.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Chairman of the Panel should advise Councillor Kevin Bentley (Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Infrastructure) about the current impasse and request that he asks Councillor David Finch, Leader of Essex County Council to intervene with a view to public consultation and public meetings being conducted virtually.</p> <p>Action By: Councillor Robert Mitchell, Chairman of the Panel. To advise Councillor Kevin Bentley (ECC) about the current impasse regarding the implementation of 'Quiet Lanes' schemes and to request that he asks Councillor David Finch, Leader of ECC to intervene to enable public consultation and public meetings to be conducted virtually.</p>	(Chairman)
5.	<p>Development - Questions and Answers</p> <p>Martin Mason, Strategic Development Engineer, Essex County Council attended the meeting and he answered questions raised by Members of the Panel about highway issues relating to development in the District.</p> <p>Teresa Milbourn, Strategic Development Engineer, Essex County Council was also in attendance and she contributed to the discussion.</p> <p>Members of the Panel welcomed the opportunity to speak and to submit queries. In particular, reference was made to the apparent focus by Essex Highways on increasing road capacity rather than seeking to provide alternative and more sustainable solutions to traffic issues. Frustration was also expressed by Members of the Panel that Essex Highways did not appear to acknowledge or listen to Councillors and Parish and Town Councils who were able to provide local information about development proposals and recommend how contributions from Section 106 Agreements should be spent. A number of issues and questions were raised by Members of the Panel regarding specific development sites at Cressing; Earls Cone; Churchill Avenue/Willow Park, Halstead; and Conrad Road/Forest Road, Witham.</p> <p>In response, Martin Mason reported that following an update to the National Planning Policy Framework discussions between Essex Highways and developers now focussed more on accessibility rather than capacity issues. Mr Mason stated that planning applications were determined by Braintree District Council as the Planning Authority and that Essex Highways was</p>	

	<p>a consultee. As such, Essex Highways had to be impartial and base its judgement in terms of safety on the information contained in an application. It was the Planning Authority's decision whether or not to accept the opinion of Essex Highways. Regarding Section 106 Agreements, Mr Mason stated that Essex Highways could only request measures to mitigate the impact of a particular development. A developer could not be required to meet the cost of measures which were beyond the scope of their proposals.</p> <p>During the consideration of this item, it was reported that Braintree District Councillors were able to receive notification of new planning applications submitted to the District Council for determination. Such notifications could be helpful in alerting Councillors to applications which might have implications, for example in highway terms. The notification had previously been known as the 'weekly list of planning applications' and it was now made available on request via a subscription service. Councillors could specify the types of applications they wished to be notified of. Many Councillors found this service helpful and it was suggested that it should also be made available to Essex County Councillors who represented Divisions within the Braintree District.</p> <p>Action By: Neil Jones, Braintree District Council. To arrange for details of the planning applications subscription service to be sent to Essex County Councillors who represent Divisions in the Braintree District.</p>	Neil Jones
6.	<p>Funded Schemes 2019/20 and 2020/21:</p> <p>Consideration was given to a report on the Panel's Funded Schemes for 2019/20 and 2020/21, which had been recommended for approval.</p> <p>The report provided an update on the current position of all schemes in the 2019/20 and 2020/21 programmes of work.</p> <p>DECISION:</p> <p>(1) That the report be noted.</p> <p>(2) That the following schemes, which had been included in the 2019/20 programme of work be transferred to the schedule of Schemes Awaiting Funding to be implemented if viable:-</p> <p>LBRA172010 – Feasibility study into provision of dedicated left hand lane from Colne Road to A120, Coggeshall</p>	

	<p>Estimated Cost: - £6,500</p> <p>LBRA142020 - Land negotiations and kerbing design, Colneford Hill/Colne Park Road, White Colne Estimated Cost: - £19,500</p> <p>(3) That the following scheme be removed from the list of Funded Schemes for 2020/21. It had been agreed at the last meeting that the scheme should be transferred to the Panel's 2021/22 programme of work, but it had been left on the list for 2020/21 inadvertently:-</p> <p>LBRA182030 - Gateway features, Hatfield Road, Terling Estimated Cost: - £6,000</p>	
7.	<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. The total value of unallocated schemes on the potential schemes list was £1,440,500.</p> <p>Whilst the budget to be allocated to the Panel for the year 2021/22 was not yet known and schemes could not be recommended for approval at this stage, Members of the Panel were requested to consider the list prior to the next meeting in March 2021 in order that a recommendation could be made at that time. In the meantime, it was proposed that the schemes which had been assessed as having a 'red' status as they did not meet the criteria, should be removed from the list of potential schemes. It was noted that these schemes would be transferred to an archive list and that they could be reconsidered at a future date if required. Arrangements were being made to publish details of these schemes on Essex County Council's website, in addition to the current approved schemes.</p> <p>DECISION: 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, subject to the specific comments denoted:-</p> <p><u>Traffic Management</u></p> <p>LBRA182016 - 'No through road' signage, Kenworthy Road, Braintree Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA192011 - Improvements to the mini-Roundabout, Head Street, Halstead Estimated Cost:- Not known</p>	

	<p>LBRA192014 - Hedgehog warning signs, Spa Road, Witham Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA192015 - Hedgehog warning signs, B1389 Hatfield Road, Witham Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA192016 - Salt bin, Moat Road, Birdbrook Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA192017 - 40mph buffer, Colchester Road B1508, Brook House Lane/Hall Road, Bures Hamlet Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA192045 - Rotatable Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS), Terling and Fairstead Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA202003 - Weight restriction, Pebmarsh Road, Twinstead Estimated Cost:- Not known It was agreed that this scheme should be removed from the list subject to the agreement of Councillor D Finch, ECC Hedingham Division</p> <p><u>Walking</u></p> <p>LBRA193007 - Upgrade of existing zebra crossing to a signalised crossing, Bridge Street, Halstead Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA193010 - Dropped kerb improvements, Witham Road, Black Notley Estimated Cost:- Not known It was reported that Black Notley Parish Council was considering a possible connection to the footpath. It was agreed that a reference to this should be added to the comments column of the list.</p> <p>Action By: Rissa Long, Essex Highways. To amend the list of 'Schemes Awaiting Funding' to include a reference to Black Notley Parish Council's footpath proposal.</p> <p>LBRA193012 – Footway, Station Road, Earls Colne Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>LBRA203001 - Pedestrian guard railing, New Road, Terling Estimated Cost:- Not known</p> <p>It was also noted that scheme LBRA152064 - signalised crossing, A131, Panners roundabout adj. to Hungry Horse Public</p>	<p>(HLO)</p>
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	House, Great Notley estimated cost £440,500 would be removed from the list of potential schemes as this should be dealt with as a project for possible capital funding.	
8.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>LBRA142006 - B1018 Braintree Road, Cressing – Request for Update</p> <p>At the close of the meeting, it was requested that an update should be submitted to the next meeting regarding proposed scheme LBRA142006 - carriageway widening, installation of footpath and new kerbing at the B1018 Braintree Road, Cressing, particularly in terms of the impact of a recent planning appeal decision which had allowed residential development for up to 250 dwellings on land between Braintree Road and Long Green, Cressing.</p> <p>Action By: Rissa Long, Essex Highways. To submit an update to the next meeting of the Panel on scheme LBRA142006 - B1018 Braintree Road, Cressing.</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>	(HLO)
9.	<p>Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>It was noted that the next meeting of Braintree Local Highways Panel was scheduled to take place on Thursday, 25th March 2021. The start time is to be confirmed.</p> <p>The meeting commenced at 11.30am and closed at 12.58pm.</p> <p>Councillor R Mitchell (Chairman)</p>	

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