

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Local Highways Panel **Date:** Tuesday, 21 September 2010

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.00 - 9.15 pm

Members Present: Ms S Stavrou (Chairman), R Bassett (Vice-Chairman), Ms C Edwards, D Jacobs, B Judd, L Leonard, A Lion, Mrs J Sutcliffe, Ms S Watson, D Wixley, J Markham and Mrs P Smith

Parish Reps: K Angold-Stephens, Mrs D Borton, C Buttlng and A Purkiss

Other Councillors: Mrs L Wagland

Apologies: R Barrett, W Breare-Hall, C Finn and Mrs S Jones

Officers Present: Mrs R Tanfield (Highways Liaison Officer), S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer), K Durrani (Assistant Director Technical (Environment and Street Scene)), R Perrin (Democratic Services Assistant) and P Rose (District Manager, Traffic and Projects)

Also in Attendance: V Metcalf

62. Substitute Members

It was noted that Councillor Mrs P Smith had substituted for Councillor W Breare-Hall and Councillor J Markham for Councillor C Finn.

63. Minutes

A resident of Meadow Road, Loughton had requested an update on the communication between ECC and the DoT regarding a cul-sac pilot scheme for parking restrictions on Meadow Road, Loughton.

The District Manager, Traffic and Projects, Peter Rose advised that no further progress had been made between ECC and DoT on the pilot scheme, although he would endeavour to get a response for the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2010 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

64. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference were noted.

65. Local Highways Panel Report

The Highways Liaison Officer provided Members with a report on the Capital works programme for 2010/11 along with the budget and programmes that had been

adjusted following the Government spending announcements within Epping Forest District.

A reduction of funding for the Safer Roads Improvement Programmes had resulted in schemes that had been started in 2009/10, being given priority. In addition the Passenger Transport Improvements budget had been reduced which affected improvements to the bus infrastructure upgrades and a reduction in the Safer Journeys to School Programmes.

The Developer Section 106 funding secured for A1168 Chigwell Lane/Langston Road/Oakwood Hill junction would enable improvements on the traffic capacity. Although officers reported that it had not been possible to install pedestrian phases into the traffic signal design because of the reduction in traffic capacity. Members asked officers to provide them with an explanation on the why the pedestrian phases would not be included in the junction improvements.

Members raised concerns over other Developer Section 106 funding secured for a pedestrian crossing at High Street, Ongar. An increase in traffic volumes and a recent accident had increased resident's pressure, to progress negotiations with the required land owners and create a retaining structure. Members felt that if the situation was not resolved shortly the funding would diminish and result in no further progress. The District Manager, Traffic and Projects advised that he would provide a progress report for the next meeting.

The locally determined revenue budget remained at £129,275 for Epping Forest District. The budget had been allocated to include the completion of 2009/10 schemes, disabled bays, signs and lines, Highway Rangers and two options to fund the Manor Road, Chigwell pedestrian crossing agreed at the meeting. The Panel were asked to consider options A and B, which involved either a reduction in the Highways Rangers Service or a further reduction in the footway maintenance scheme at Mount Pleasant Road, Chigwell.

The Chairman asked the Assistant Director (Technical), Kim Durrani to advise the panel why EFDC were now unable to provide an alternative low-cost Highway Rangers Service. The Assistant Director (Technical) informed the panel that after consultation with EFDC procurement officer, it was established that European Procurement Regulation prevented this work being awarded to the District Council contractor. In order to comply with Regulations a fresh tendering exercise would be required and this would not be possible in the time available.

Members discussed the options and considered the Highways Rangers service, to be more beneficial to the District as a whole and that although the footway maintenance scheme would be reduced at Mount Pleasant Road, Chigwell, the funding would remain within Chigwell.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report of the Highways Liaison Officer be noted;
2. That the District Manager report back to panel on the why pedestrian phased traffic lights would not be included in the junction improvements at A1168 Chigwell Lane/Langston Road/Oakwood Hill junction;
3. That the District Manager will investigate the progress of the pedestrian crossing and Developer Section 106 funding for the High Road, Ongar; and
4. That Members' agreed to Option B for the provision of Highway Ranger service, which would reduce the footway maintenance scheme on Mount

Pleasant Road, Chigwell in order to fund the pedestrian crossing at Manor Road, Chigwell.

66. Parking Reviews

The Assistant Director (Technical) informed the panel that no decision had been made regarding the commencement of the three area wide parking reviews and work on the schemes in Epping, Buckhurst Hill and Loughton Broadway remain suspended. Although EFDC had funded the work undertaken on the schemes, the Highways Authority and powers to make the necessary traffic restrictions required for the parking schemes remain with Essex County Council.

The provisional cost estimated for completing the three parking reviews remains around £600,000, against an available budget of £650,000 with costs escalating with advertising and large number of resident's responding to the consultation.

The Assistant Director (Technical) asked the panel to consider the following four options for the parking reviews;

- 1) all three of the parking reviews are abandoned and any remaining balances reallocated to the capital fund;
- 2) scale back the schemes and carry out a review within the original parking review areas, as was intended, to address any issues and safety concerns;
- 3) implement the three schemes in a phased manner i.e. implement one at a time and only after one scheme is completed the next one can commence; or
- 4) carry on with the three reviews regardless and allocate additional funding as and when necessary.

Members discussed at length the Parking Reviews and the impact they had on residents within the areas under review, with what appeared to be continuous displacement of vehicular traffic from commuters and school areas.

Concerns were raised about the suggested phased approach because of the estimated costs and the possibility of the funding running out before all the reviews had been completed. Members felt that residents had been continuously promised the parking reviews and expectations had been raised, therefore all reviews would have to be completed. Suggestions were made to phase the reviews with Epping initially, so that costs could be worked out for the remaining reviews and budgeted for accordingly, with a promise for some of the funding available to be ring fenced for the Loughton Broadway parking review.

RESOLVED:

That the Local Highways Panel recommends to the Cabinet that a phased approach be taken to the parking reviews starting with Epping, to ensure that costs could be estimated for the sequential reviews in Buckhurst Hill and Loughton Broadway.

67. Any Other Business

Members enquired about the salt for the Town and Parish Councils grit bins through out the winter period and whether they would be only be replenished once by ECC, with Town and Parish Councils having to store and maintain the salt accordingly.

The District Manager, Traffic and Projects would liaise with the maintenance officers at Highways to establish the details and report back to Members at the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

The District Manager, Traffic and Projects would advise Members of the grit bin arrangements for the Winter 2010/11.

68. Date of Next Meeting

Noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 25 November 2010 at 7.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Epping.

CHAIRMAN