

Report to the Council

Committee: Council

Date: 22 December 2009

Subject: Community Safety and Transport Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ms S-A Stavrou Item: 8(c)

Recommending:

That the report of the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Transport be noted.

Highways

(a) M25 Highways Widening Scheme

Although not strictly my portfolio, members may have seen the Skanska Balfour Beatty Joint Venture project newsletter for the M25 junctions 25-30 Widening Scheme which appeared in my inbox the other day. If interested, members can access it on line at www.highways.gov.uk/roads/projects/5739.aspx. There is also a community helpline on 01708 256000 or email communityrelations27-30.m25@sbbjv.co.uk. The newsletter appears in pdf format.

(b) Local Highways Panel The last meeting of the Local Highways Panel was on Tuesday 24 November and the Panel received a presentation from the County Roads Manager, Lawrence McKeogh reporting on the Highways Maintenance Strategy. The ECC pledge for 2009/10 had been determined to improve residential streets and a total budget of £10 million pounds had been allocated for highways across the County. The allocation of capital and revenue funding was determined by The County Roads Manager.

The Panel also received a presentation from the Highways Liaison Officer, Rosa Tanfield who reported on highways issues with Epping Forest District. The majority of capital funded highway maintenance schemes had been completed and the capital budget for 2009/10 had been fully committed. The County Council Cabinet member for Highways and Transportation, Councillor Norman Hume, had provisionally approved an additional £4 million pounds of capital finance for highways maintenance in 2009/10 which would provide Epping Forest District with £659K for schemes.

The CIF bidding process for 2009/10 had now closed and 20 applications from the EF District had been submitted. Highways officers would now carry out the viability analysis and estimates to be submitted with the applications, which would be judged in March/April 2010.

Panel members were advised that the highways ranger service had been reduced to 6 months (the programme had been split equally between Epping Forest District Council and Harlow Council for 2008/09 as ECC were only able to provide 6 months funding). It was anticipated that the highways ranger service would resume next year, funding permitting,

and the Panel expressed an interest in having more control over the work schedule and timing.

The Area Highways Manager presented the Panel with the officers' assessments of the programme of works 2010/11 for Carriageways, Footways and Traffic Improvement requests and the Area Highways Manger explained that the budget would dictate the amount of schemes that would be included in 2009/10 programme of works. The Panel agreed the priority 1 and 2 schemes to be costed and assessed for the next meeting. This programme included Parish and Town Councils' requests, other works that the ECC officers had identified and previous suggestions received.

A full set of the minutes of this meeting will be available to all members on the website and the date of the next meeting is Tuesday 26 January 2010 in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices.

Parking Reviews

The formal public consultation process for Epping and Buckhurst Hill will start after Christmas following the publication of Traffic Regulation Orders. If you would like to see a copy of the amended maps for these areas please contact Kim Durrani in the Environment & Street Scene Directorate. Debden Loughton Broadway initial consultation responses are still being assessed.

Safer Communities

The Epping Forest District Safer Communities Partnership met on 14 December. Various matters were discussed at length including amongst others the Essex Probation Payback Scheme, Governance, the Constitution of the Panel, Funding applications, and Prevent – part of the Government's anti-terrorism strategy.

Following a successful pilot scheme at St John's School in Epping, a "Reality Roadshow" was delivered at Debden Park School last week. "Reality Roadshow" is targeted at year 9 students and provides them with knowledge and understanding across a number of key issues, including drug and alcohol abuse, road safety, internet safety, sexual health, bullying and dealing with peer pressures. This is a natural extension to "Crucial Crew" which provides similar training but is targeted at the younger year 6 students. We hope to provide "Reality Roadshow" at a number of secondary schools in the future.

The Safer Communities public event held at Waltham Abbey in November was a great success. All who attended appeared to enjoy the information provided and exhibitions given by a number of safer communities partners and the evening "question time" proved to be challenging for those on the panel. A poll of those who attended indicated that the top local priorities were anti-social behaviour, road safety, drug related crime and burglary. The Partnership will ensure these are considered as part of next year's strategic assessment.

Whilst crime currently remains higher than our target reduction of 5% (on last years excellent 8% reduction), the numbers of actual crimes still remain at a level lower than at this time last year. A lot of emphasis is currently being given to dealing with domestic burglary as well as cross border criminality.

LVRPA

The LVRPA is consulting about its Park Development Framework and has asked for views and opinions. Please have a look at the site on www.leevalleypark.org.uk/pdfconsultation and forward your comments to LVRPA on www.leevalleypark.org.uk