

## EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

<b>Committee:</b>	Local Highways Panel	<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday, 26 January 2010
<b>Place:</b>	Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping	<b>Time:</b>	7.00 - 9.45 pm
<b>Members Present:</b>	R Bassett (Chairman), Ms S Stavrou (Vice-Chairman), A Boyce, K Chana, R Frankel, J Hart, J Philip, Mrs P Richardson, Mrs J Sutcliffe and D Wixley		
<b>Parish Representatives:</b>	Mrs C Pond		
<b>Other Councillors:</b>	D Jacobs, Mrs J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and Mrs L Wagland		
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mrs E Webster, K Angold-Stephens and Mrs D Borton		
<b>Officers Present:</b>	R Tanfield (Highways Liaison Officer), Peter Massie (Assistant Area Highways Manager, West Essex), T Baker (Assistant District Manager), A Ruffle (Senior Traffic Engineer), K Durrani (Assistant Director (Engineering Services)), S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and R Perrin (Democratic Services Assistant)		

---

### 36. Substitute Members

It was noted that Councillor D Wixley had substituted for Councillor K Angold-Stephens.

### 37. Minutes

#### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2009 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

1. In Minute 34, paragraph 3 to replace the word 'ever' with 'every'.
2. Rosa Tanfield advised that the previously reported introduction speed limit of 30mph on London Road, Abridge would actually be 40 mph.

### 38. Matters Arising

Councillor Frankel enquired about the previously discussed damage to highway surfaces through consented development (Minute 33) and whether any progress had been achieved with enforcement. The Assistant Area Highways Manager, West Essex, Peter Massie advised that large permitted developments were subject to investigation, however to investigate every development would prove unrealistic because of the cost and resources involved. Councillor J Philip requested that the discussion should be raised at a future meeting, when ECC officers could supply further information. Councillor Jacobs commented on the carriageways condition after utility companies had completed works and the quality of the repair. The Assistant Area Highways Manager advised that many utilities works are inspected

after the completion of the works and penalties were issued for unsatisfactory repairs to the carriageway and footway.

The Chairman asked that the issue be raised at the next meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

That damage to highway surfaces through consented development and utilities be report at the next panel meeting.

**39. Terms of Reference**

The Chairman decided that b) Review of Terms of Reference be taken first.

**(b) Review of Term of Reference**

The Chairman advised the panel that following a report to Council on 19 January 2010, the voting rights of Parish Representatives had been approved, and the Local Highways Panel would now have to amend the constitution to reflect the decision. It was agreed by the panel that all Parish Representatives had voting rights with immediate effect.

The Chairman advised that the Panel had been requested to review the Terms of Reference to reflect the change and to consider increasing the Parish Representatives to the suggested 25% membership of the County Council's Localism manual. The suggested membership would be;

2 Parish for the South Area  
1 Parish for the West Area  
2 Parish for the East Area  
14 District Councillors

The Parish representatives would be decided by the Local Council's Liaison Committee and the District Councillors appointed at Council.

**RESOLVED:**

That the terms of reference for the membership of the Epping Forest District Local Highways Panel are amended and reported to Annual Council in May 2010 as follows;

3. Membership

- a) 14 District Councillors appointed at each Annual Meeting of the District Council.
- b) Co-opted Members – 5 Parish representatives with voting rights, two for South, one West, two East areas covered by the District Council's area Plans Sub-committee nominated by the Local Councils' Liaison Committee for the District.

**(a) Present Terms of Reference**

To note the changes to the terms of reference.

Councillor R Bassett informed the Panel that after the interim period advised at Annual Council on 21 May 2009, he would become the Vice-Chair and the Epping Forest District Council Cabinet member with the responsibilities for Highway and

Parking Matters, Councillor Ms S Stavrou would become Chairman from 26 March 2010.

#### **40. Local Highways Panel Report**

The panel received a presentation from the Highways Liaison Officer, Rosa Tanfield reporting on highways issues within Epping Forest District. The additional capital finance for highways maintenance had provided Epping Forest with £659,000 and the maintenance schemes were due to be completed by the end of the financial year.

The Highways Liaison Officer asked members to note that recent weather conditions had not been favourable in enabling construction work to be carried out. The impact on the programme of works, particularly the remaining Highway Maintenance Schemes had caused a delay of 2 weeks, which ought to be recovered before the end of the financial year.

Members were provided with an update on the programme of works 2009/10, which included Maintenance, Traffic Management improvements, Safer Roads Programme, Public Rights of Way and Passenger Transport Improvements, Community Initiative Fund, Localism Budget, Area Parking Reviews, Developer funded schemes, reactive accelerated maintenance initiative (RAMI) and the Epping Forest Transport Strategy.

Councillor Mrs P Richardson notified officers that within appendix B, Church Hill and London Road had been transposed.

The Senior Traffic Engineer, Andy Ruffell informed the panel of the current position for the Parking Reviews. The Epping Parking Review had been finalised and currently awaited the law and administration department to process the Traffic Regulation Orders and advertise the orders with the local press and on the street lampposts affected. The officers were currently half way through assessing the Parking Review in Buckhurst Hill and estimated a 4/6 week wait until the Traffic Regulations Orders schedules were complete. The Debden, Loughton Parking Review had resulted in divided opinion therefore officers had decided to liaise with EFDC on the best way forward to find a solution. The officers estimated the review would be completed in the next financial year.

Councillor R Frankel advised that previous Traffic Regulations Orders from 2008 were still displayed in Theydon Bois and could prove to be problematic with residents not realising new orders had been posted. The Senior Traffic Engineer noted the comments and advised that he would arrange for immediate removal of the old notices. Councillor R Bassett advised that the reviews carried out recently had been posted directly to residents resulting in hopefully all residents being informed.

Councillor J Sutcliffe requested a comprehensive list of scheduled public right of way's that would be considered for the next financial year. The Highways liaison officer advised that the list had not yet been completed but would be report to the panel.

Councillor J Hart enquired how to request a parking review. The Senior Traffic Engineer advised that the reviews were in conjunction with the District Council and currently neither had any future plans to pursue additional Parking Reviews. If the concern were parking issues that could be resolved by yellow lines, then details could be forwarded onto the ECC Highways department.

Councillor J Whitehouse commented on Traffic Regulations Orders being displayed in the relevant Council buildings and the schemes that fell into the second ranked priority such as Limes Avenue would be included in the budget for next year.

Councillor L Wagland enquired about the lack of a bus shelter on Brook Parade, Chigwell. The Senior Traffic Engineer advised that the bus shelter had been received and that programme dates were being arranged with the Contractor for installing the bases ready to receive the shelters.

The Highways Liaison Officer gave a short presentation on the winter service. In the period when the unexpected weather affects Essex, 330 km of road networks in Epping Forest were precautionary salted. The priority for ECC had been A and B carriageways, access routes to emergency services and roads with public services. Also, in partnership with the District Council, additional salting had been carried out in major areas of pedestrian activity. At the height of the severe weather conditions ECC were spreading 1200-1600 tonnes of salt compared to an average of 200-400 tonnes normally expected at that time of the year. The County had 14,000 tonnes that equated to 110% of the normal winter usage at the start of the winter period, which gave 14 days resilience in excess of the Government's recommendation of 6 days. However, the Government had introduced the salt cell and the County had taken measures to conserve current stocks in line with a 50% reduction in usage demanded by central Government, achieved through reduced spread rates and operating a reduced precautionary network at the weekend. Members were advised that this would be enforced until the situation improves.

Members commented on the consequence of only gritting main roads and the aggravation residents have felt being trapped in side roads and rural areas. The Assistant Area Highways Manager advised that 8 gritters, based in Hastingwood, helped to maintain Epping Forest District with each gritting route taking on average 3-4 hours. The priorities were to grit the A and B roads. In snow the grit relied on vehicular movement to be effective and the extreme temperature could cause the salt to become ineffective.

Councillor R Bassett advised that Parish and Town Council could purchase salt bins from ECC, at a cost of £350, which would then be refilled by ECC. Members queried the responsibilities and possible accident claims associated with the salt bins. The advice had been that public liability insurance would cover Parish and Town Councils' and claims would have to prove that the situation had been made worst.

Councillor J Sutcliffe asked whether the hilly roads could be gritted in Buckhurst Hill. The Assistant Area Highways Manager advised that salting secondary roads would be considered after the essential gritting (primary routes) had been completed.

Councillor R Frankel enquired about government funding and policies on the potholes caused by recent weather conditions. Officers advised that ECC had applied last year for extra funding but had not been successful and no extra funding looked likely in the next financial year. Currently resources were being put in to the RAMI team, fixing the pot holes. All potholes could be reported directly through the ECC highways webpage <http://ehss.essexcc.gov.uk/location.asp?ETI=17>.

The Assistant Director (Engineering Services), Kim Durrani advised that whilst weather conditions prevented certain members of EFDC staff completing their regular jobs, they were otherwise deployed to spread grit on heavily used footways, car parks and OAP's accommodation.

Recommendation

1. that the report of the highways liaison officer be noted;
2. That the highways liaison officer updates the panel on the programme for 2009/10; and
3. that the Highways Liaison Officer provides a list of the Public Rights of Way schemes that were being considered for the next financial year, at a future meeting of the panel.

#### **41. Programme of Works 2010/11**

The Assistant Area Highways Manager presented the panel with the estimated costs of the programme of works 2010/11 for Carriageways, Footways and Traffic Improvement requests that had been suggested at the previous meeting.

The Assistant Area Highways Manager explained that the budget would dictate the amount of schemes that would be included in 2009/10 programme of works and a huge pressure had been placed on budget because of recent weather conditions affecting the roads. He requested that the panel agree for all the priority 1 and 2 maintenance schemes to be approved so that these schemes can be included in the ECC request for capital funding.

Councillor J Philip enquired whether the schemes set out alphabetically would actually be assessed on priority within their ranked position because of the advisory of the budget restrictions. The Assistant Area Highways Manager advised that once the budget had been confirmed, the schemes would not remain alphabetical and the panel would be making the final recommendations regarding priorities.

Councillor L Wagland requested a number of constituents regarding a scheme submitted under the traffic improvement request for the placement of signal controlled junction at B173 Manor Road West of Tomswood Road, Chigwell. The scheme had been ranked as a medium priority and Councillor L Wagland requested that the scheme be relocated to high priority for the following reasons; that the carriageway proved to be a problematic width to cross in one journey, the speed of traffic, it was a popular school route for West Hatch and King Solomon's pupils, cars turning right caused a obstruction for pedestrians and other cars view and a number of accidents had occurred, although not fatal in the location. The benefits of the crossing at this point would enable pedestrians to cross the road safely and reduce further car journeys from parents who used cars to take the journey rather than allowing children to try and cross the road.

Members gave their full support to the scheme being prioritised and requested that officers moved the scheme to high priority.

Councillor J Sutcliffe advised that the request to create a footway at Brook Road, Buckhurst Hill West had progressed with the Parish Council, on the purchase of the land from the Corporation of London. Officers requested that further information be supplied.

Councillor D Wixley questioned whether Elmhurst Way, Drayton Avenue, Cranleigh Gardens and Broomfield Avenue, Loughton already had been resurfaced. The District Manager advised that the main carriageway which all the roads lead off had been resurfaced, consequently these roads had been listed on the priority lists.

Councillor R Bassett advised that once the budget had been confirmed the panel would be in a better position to consider and prioritise schemes. Other schemes that were not possible within the 2009/10 budget would be held on record for the next

year or if funding became available. The panel would be advised with details of budget from ECC at a future meeting of the panel..

Councillor J Whitehouse commented on the usefulness of the estimated costs for carriageways, footways and traffic improvement requests for future reference. In addition he hoped that an appropriate balance would be achieved between high and low cost schemes and that heavy periods of pedestrian and traffic movements would be taken into account such as school times. He advised that Crossing Road, Epping and Allnuts Road, Epping appeared on the footways programme of works ranked in different priorities although the roads were opposite each other. Officers advised that they would combine both schemes.

Councillor D Jacobs enquired about the footways treatments and advised that Johns Street, High Ongar could possibly be The Johns, High Ongar. The officers noted his comments and advised that the footways surfaces had been assessed and costed up accordingly.

Councillor T Boyce commented on a traffic improvement request for Downhall Road/Little Laver Road/Water Lane, Matching being moved to high priority. The roads were currently being used as through roads by satellite navigation systems and HGV's and were totally unsuitable because of the width of the road and flooding. Councillor T Boyce advised that the costs were a small amount to pay, to reduce traffic through the area.

Members agreed that the scheme be moved to high priority. Councillor R Bassett advised that some routes could be potentially removed from satellite navigation routes. Officers advised that they would find out whether it would be possible.

Councillor K Chana commented on drainage problems on Chigwell road, Lambourne. Approximately 30 metres of carriageway floods that causes traffic problems after heavy rain. Officers asked for further details.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. Agreed that 1 & 2 priority ranked schemes would be put forward whilst awaiting the announcement of the budget ;
2. that the placement of signal controlled junction at B173 Manor Road West of Tomswood Road, Chigwell be moved to high priority; and
3. That traffic improvement request for Downhall Road/Little Laver Road/Water Lane, Matching be moved to high priority.

#### **42. Any Other Business**

Councillor R Frankel asked what were the utility companies' statutory requirements, when dealing with repairs on the carriageways. Problems were caused when a utility company left a three way traffic light system in Loughton, causing grid lock across the town.

Councillor R Bassett advised that some utility companies needed to leave the repair open and that the item could be placed on the next agenda. Councillor L Wagland suggested that the item be taken to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### **43. Date of Next Meeting**

Noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 23 March 2010 in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Epping.

**CHAIRMAN**

This page is intentionally left blank