

## **EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MINUTES**

**Committee:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee      **Date:** Thursday, 8 March 2007

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping      **Time:** 7.30 - 9.45 pm

**Members Present:** Councillors Mrs J H Whitehouse (Chairman) Mrs H Harding (Vice-Chairman) D Bateman, M Colling, R D'Souza, P House, Mrs P Richardson, K Chana and R Frankel

**Other Councillors:** Councillors K Angold-Stephens, Mrs D Borton, Mrs D Collins, Mrs A Cooper, A Green, Mrs A Grigg, A Lee, S Murray, B Sandler, Mrs M Sartin, D Stallan, Mrs L Wagland, C Whitbread, J M Whitehouse and K Wright

**Apologies:** Councillors R Morgan, M Cohen, G Mohindra and M Woollard

**Officers Present:** J Scott (Joint Chief Executive), J Gilbert (Head of Environmental Services), D Macnab (Head of Leisure Services), S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer), A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer), Z Folley (Democratic Services Assistant) and S Mitchell (PR & Internet Assistant)

**By Invitation:** D Millership (Essex CC), T Baker (Essex CC) and S Brooks (Essex CC)

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### **74. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman made a short address to remind all present that the meeting would be broadcast on the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings. The Committee noted the Council's Protocol for Webcasting of Council and Other Meetings.

### **75. CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING**

As the Chairman of the meeting Councillor Morgan was unavailable, the Vice Chairman, Councillor Mrs Whitehouse took the Chair for the meeting.

### **76. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Mrs H Harding was appointed Vice Chairman for the duration of the meeting.

### **77. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was reported that Councillor R Frankel was substituting for Councillor M Woollard and that Councillor K Chana was substituting for Councillor M Cohen.

### **78. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor Mrs M Sartin declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 (Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Task and Finish Panel – Final Report) by virtue of being a member of the LSP Board.

She declared that her interests were not prejudicial and indicated that she would remain in the meeting during the consideration of the item.

b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor Mrs A Grigg declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 (Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Task and Finish Panel – Final Report) by virtue of being a member of the LSP Board. She declared that her interests were not prejudicial and indicated that she would remain in the meeting during the consideration of the item.

c) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor K Wright declared a personal interest in agenda item 9 (Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme) by virtue of being a member of Theatre Resources. He declared that his interests were not prejudicial and indicated that he would remain in the meeting during the consideration of the item.

d) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor Mrs J Whitehouse declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 (Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Task and Finish Panel – Final Report) by virtue of being a member of the learning partnership of the LSP. She declared that her interests were not prejudicial and indicated that she would remain in the meeting during the consideration and voting on the item.

e) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor A Lee declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 (Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Task and Finish Panel – Final Report) by virtue of being a member of the LSP. He declared that his interests were not prejudicial and indicated that he would remain in the meeting during the consideration of the item.

## **79. MINUTES**

That the minutes of the Committee held on 1 February 2006 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the correction of the spelling of Councillors Bateman name under minute number 69.

## **80. HIGHWAYS SERVICES - PRESENTATION**

The Chairman welcomed Davina Millership, the Area Highways Manager for the District, Spencer Brooks, Senior Traffic Engineer and Trevor Baker the Assistant District Manager. They were attending the meeting to give a presentation and a question and answer session on local highways issues.

Ms Millership started by saying that an area office is the implementation arm of Highways and Transportation Section. They have strategic officers at County Hall that put together programmes and get funding from Central Government. This is then fed to the four area offices for practical implementation.

Generally the area offices carry out the day to day maintenance, e.g. resurfacing of footways and carriageways, potholes, gully cleansing and traffic management schemes (including parking and general signage). They also implement road safety schemes and deal with Development Control, that is, schemes that have above five and up to fifty properties are dealt with by the area offices. They also deal with street lighting maintenance.

They have two main areas of funding for maintenance. One is a budget for basic maintenance, e.g. pothole patching and this is a reactive maintenance budget. The

other is capital funding for larger/major construction schemes and this is spread over a three year period. We are currently in the second year of the cycle. The first year concentrates on 'A' roads; the second year concentrates on 'A' and 'B' roads; and the third year on 'B' and unclassified roads.

The basic maintenance budget for 2005/06 was £2.5 million for the West Area Office – of that 31% went to Epping in 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08.

For Highways Maintenance, the West Area Office got 40% of the total amount for the County – of which 52% went to Epping in 2005/06, 33% in 2006/07 and 46 in 2007/08. This was from a £8m budget for the West Area.

Area Offices report to a Local Programme Manager, John Burr who in turn reports to Tony Ciaburro at County.

They run a Highways Panel twice a year that meets in the Harlow Offices and have a £200,000 Local Determination budget for use in consultation with Local Councils. They also use Section 106 money for specific projects and act as consultants to Local Councils.

Davina Millership then answered questions from members on highways that were sent to her prior to the meeting. The questions and answers are attached to these minutes as an appendix.

## **81. FREE SATURDAY CAR PARKING - MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Head of Environmental Services reported back to this meeting on the provision of regular operational reviews of the free car parking on Saturdays recently instituted. He reported that they were to use the existing parking attendants to monitor use of the car parks. They would be there at 10am and then again at mid afternoon to note the registration numbers of any long stay vehicles, this could be accomplished at no extra cost to the Council. A fuller feedback could be obtained from the Town Centre Partnerships, for a longer term survey.

The Portfolio Holder for Civil Engineering and Maintenance, Councillor Green added that initiative could be viewed in two ways, one, looking if the car parks were being used in a manner we did not want, and two, as a way to enhance town centres and assist traders, and this was where local ward members could provide feedback on how it's working.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse asked if it could also be noted how many cars use the parks and was assured that this would be done.

Councillor Frankel asked how long it would take to get meaningful feedback from this survey and was told that they would be collecting data every Saturday. A view would have to be taken on when the cut off point would be to get any meaningful data.

## **82. DRAFT 2006/07 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT**

The Committee noted that this was a first draft of the annual report for 2006/07. Comments were requested to be sent to Democratic Services by week ending 16 March 2007. It would then be amended and a final version put to the April meeting of the Committee.

### 83. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REVIEW

The committee noted that a new work programme was to be presented to the next meeting. They were now asked to send in any new items for consideration by 19 March, when it would be considered under the PICK system. The Chairman and Vice Chairman will sift through the new requests to determine if any new topics are to be added to the work programme of the existing Standing Panels or to constitute new task and Finish Panels.

#### Standing Panels

Councillor Colling proposed that with the current large workload on officers, was the Customer Services and ICT Standing Panel still relevant as their workload had shrunk over the last few months. Councillor Collins agreed that a lot of their work was on hold at present, so it could be closed down and the remainder of their work could be transferred to the Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel, until their Customer Service work picks up again.

The Committee agreed that any outstanding work be re-evaluated and redistributed to other panels.

#### RESOLVED:

1. That the Customer Services and ICT Standing Panel be disbanded and its remaining workload be redistributed to other panels, principally to the Finance and Performance Management Panel.
2. The Committee considered the other Standing Panels and agreed that they should continue.

#### Task and Finish Panels

Leisure – the Chairman of the Panel Councillor Mrs Harding reported that the panel would have completed three of the four tasks set out in its terms of reference, that is the Review of the Future Management of the Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve, the Review of Arts Development in the District and the District Council's role and involvement in Outdoor and Community Events. They would need more time to finish the Future Management of Waltham Abbey Sports Centre. A full report will go to the next meeting of this committee.

Town Centre and Car Parks – the antisocial elements of this Panel's terms of reference is still to be completed and probably continue into the new year.

Crime and Disorder – this Panel will be meeting again on 15 March and hopes to wind up it's terms of reference by the end of this year.

Older Persons and Disabled Persons – this Panel is currently writing its final report, which will come to the next meeting of this committee.

#### Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The work programme for the committee and the need for the Chairman of the LSP to be invited to address the Committee on a yearly basis was noted.

### **Council Plan**

Noted that a Value for Money Sub-group was currently meeting, and may call for an in-depth service review.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse commented that he had just come from that sub-group meeting and they had been looking at various areas of the Council but were constrained by the data in front of them.

Two areas that did occur to the sub-group for further investigation was:

- 1) the external management of leisure facilities by SLM, and they would like the Head of Leisure Services to bring a report to the Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel on this; and
- 2) planning applications - to ask a small sub-group or Task and Finish Panel to look at this under the Value for Money criteria.

The sub-group would recommend that a Task and Finish Panel could be set up in the new year to look at the above items.

### **84. LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TASK AND FINISH PANEL - FINAL REPORT**

The Committee received the final report of the Local Strategic Partnership Task and Finish Panel. Councillor Mary Sartin, the Chairman of the Panel, introduced the report and commended it to the meeting.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the Local Strategic Partnership Task and Finish Panel Report be endorsed.

### **85. CABINET REVIEW**

The committee looked at the cabinet agenda for the meeting to be held on 12 March 2007. The only item of business they had for it was, on the consideration of the Calendar of Meetings for 2007-08. At the recent Local Council's Liaison Committee meeting they had requested that provision be made by the District Council to leave one night a week free of meetings. This was so that they hold their own individual meetings to enable 'dual-hatted' Councillors to attend. The Local Councils thought that this might be feasible now that four Area Planning Sub-Committees had been reduced to three, thus freeing up some Wednesdays.

The Committee were sympathetic to Local Councils dilemma, but also acknowledged that the District Council's need for meetings should be paramount. They agreed that, as far as possible some spare days be kept free of meetings to help Local Councils, and this would be recommended to Cabinet.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the Committee put to the Cabinet three alternatives, that the principle not be agreed; or that where possible, the principle be agreed; or finally that the principle be accepted. The Committee would recommend the second option to the Cabinet.



## OSC 8 March 2007 – List of Member Questions for Highways

### (a) Highway Maintenance and Repair work

1. When are the pavements and roads in Chigwell going to be repaired/resurfaced? Many elderly residents living in Chigwell Row are finding it hard to cope with the poor conditions.

**Councillor B Sandler Chigwell Row**

#### **Response:**

**We do not carry out repairs by area however as and when individual defects are reported they are dealt with. If these are localized then a large area of patching is identified.**

**If there are any specific areas that Cllr Sandler would like to be flagged for attention my Acting District Manager – Trevor Baker will attend a site meeting to discuss.**

**I understand that we have identified some works on the route through Chigwell Row – the details can be discussed with TB.**

2. When will the road in School Green Lane, North Weald be repaired?

**Councillor D Stallan – North Weald Bassett**

#### **Response:**

**TB is very busy and is currently covering for two posts. He is an outstanding officer who is often the last one in the office and first one in the mornings. Unfortunately working under pressure – things slip through which I can only offer my apologies.**

**School Green Lane was inspected and does not require any works. Beamish Close, works to the kerbs was carried out and some funding has been allocated for further kerb works although this can be made available for other repairs/works.**

3. Why are the roads in the north of Essex so much better maintained than those in the south? Is it because no account has been taken of relative traffic volumes in each area? Are investment decisions based on road miles rather than traffic miles?

**Councillor K Angold – Stephens – Loughton Roding**

#### **Response:**

**Basic maintenance funding is set aside for potholes and patching and allocations are based on a formula taking into account the length of county roads (roads of more than local significance) and local roads in each district. County roads receive a greater weighting in the formula.**

**The capital funding for carriageway and footway maintenance (larger schemes) is allocated taking into account the results of our latest condition survey but in recent years it has been apparent that a formulaic approach has**

**not always reflected the anecdotal view of the areas road condition. So the Portfolio Holder exercises his judgment.**

4. Why hasn't the road repair work for Buckhurst Hill, to be implemented after the resurfacing works to the Loughton High Road, been carried out especially as the road surface is in a poor condition in places?

**Councillor K Angold – Stephens – Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

**The Loughton High road works were carried out and funded by the District as part of the Town Centre scheme. Buckhurst Hill will be machine surfaced in the next few weeks.**

5. How are you dealing with the unclassified but extremely busy roads (such as Oakwood Hill) to ensure they are not ignored.

**Councillor K Angold – Stephens – Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

**We have received more funding for unclassified roads this financial year and we have identified work in our 07/08 programme. This programme is draft and yet to be approved by our Cabinet Member.**

**(b) On Street Parking – Crossovers**

6. What is the "official" position about whether resident's cars be parked in the street or in driveways?

**Councillor Roland Frankel - Theydon Bois**

**Response:**

**The only position the highway authority has on this is that residents have a responsibility to park their cars legally and not to cause an obstruction. It is their choice whether that is on a street or in driveways.**

7. What strategies will be adopted to rectify sunken kerbs to stop cars parking on pavements causing pedestrians to be placed in hazardous situations?. This relates especially to Ongar High Street between the Post Office and Ongar Bridge

**Councillor K Wright - Chipping Ongar, Greensted & Marden Ash**

**Response:**

**This can occur historically for many reasons. Where there is a low kerb height which is deemed to be hazardous we are happy to look at assessing the location with a view to addressing the issue. This can be achieved a few ways depending upon the specific circumstances.**

8. Has any strategy for addressing the problem of parking on pavements and across car entrances, which is endemic near schools, been considered? If not will one be? Chipping Ongar Primary School is a case in point. The use of bollards could provide a solution

**Councillor Keith Wright - Chipping Ongar, Greensted & Marden Ash**

**Response:**

**Parking on pavements where vehicles are causing an obstruction can be dealt with by the Police who have enforcement powers. This is the same with crossovers or car entrances. Where a waiting restriction exists this extends for the full extent of the highway and therefore parking enforcement officers can deal with cars parked on pavements.**

**The only other way of dealing with such a situation is to formalize parking in a parking zone.**

**Chipping Ongar Primary School, does this school have a school travel plan? – bollards and other measures can be introduced as part of such a plan. It is sensible that all school issues are raised and addressed as part of a formal plan rather than ad hoc measures.**

9. What responsibilities do Essex Highways have for bollards and how is this provided? How many accidents have occurred within the vicinity of bollards in the past three years?

**Councillor Mrs J H Whitehouse – Epping Hemnall**

**Response:**

**Ultimately street furniture such as bollards is the responsibility of the highway authority. This includes its location and maintenance. I cannot answer that as personal injury accidents statistics are recorded on the basis of contributory factors and you can search the database for specific factors. It is not usual to note the accident in terms of its location relative to bollards – it is more usual to note the vicinity of zebra crossings and whether it is dark/wet or road surface is slippery. In my experience the location of the bollards would only be listed as part of the description of the accident if it was relevant.**

10. Why hasn't any emergency Traffic Regulation Orders been issued to deter all day commuter parking which has driven some traders out of business and is causing serious difficulties in Debden Broadway.

**Councillor K Angold – Stephens – Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

**The Burton road car park is the subject of traffic orders which the District are preparing and as part of this the District is seeking consent from the County. The Cabinet member is being consulted along with County members on their views although the process of producing the orders by the District is ongoing. It has been raised that Commuters will be pushed into neighbouring roads once excluded from the car parks and the County working with the District have been carrying out parking surveys with a view to developing proposals to**

address the possible problems. This will of course be the subject of discussion and consultation.

(c) **Pot Holes**

11. Why do some of our major roads such as Valley Hill and Oakwood Hill (with major traffic flows) continue to have dangerous pot holes ?

**Councillor S Murray, Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

**We continue to inspect and repair them. The frequency of pot holes is related to the general structure of the road. It has been identified that Oakwood Hill be resurfaced and we are keeping an eye on Valley Hill. We consider it a priority and we will endeavour to identify funding as soon as we can.**

(d) **Footpaths**

12. Why is a much used pedestrian footpath between Cheltenham Gardens and Highland Avenue in Loughton still unpassable after heavy rain. No indication has ever been given about when the work will be done even though both the ward members and residents have frequently reported the issue.

**Councillor S Murray, Loughton Roding/ K Angold – Stephens – Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

**The unmade section has been identified for resurfacing and the made up section has been inspected and we are currently considering what measures need to be taken to address the problems.**

(e) **Street Lighting**

13. Why is a lamp column on a busy junction (Oakwood Hill , Valley Hill and Roding Road) still not working?

**Councillor S Murray, Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

**Lamp column 17 Roding Road lamp out was received on 15 Jan and completed 28 February 2007. The delay to repairing the outage was caused by the need to use traffic management due to the location near to a busy junction.**

**Lamp column 44 Oakwood Hill lamp out 1<sup>st</sup> received on 18 November 2006 and completed 23 January 2007. The second received 15 January and completed 28 February. Another call on 5 March from Cllr Murray on Monday 5 march to inform us that Lamp column 44 Oakwood Hill was still not working – contractors attended Monday night and Tuesday morning and have assured us that the job is complete.**

**Our Contractor should attend in 7 days initially however if there is further work needed. We have raised performance issues formally with our contractor who**

has provided an undertaking to increase resources. I have recently recruited a new member of staff who will be able to assist in monitoring the contractors performance. We can report that already additional resources have been allocated and we are hopeful that our contractor will continue to improve their performance record.

14. What action will be taken to repair the two streetlight in North Weald (one in School Green Lane and one in Beamish Close)

**Councillor D Stallan – North Weald Bassett**

**Response:**

**North Weald Parish Council owns the lighting in Beamish Close and School Green Lane. We have continued to manage the repair of the NWPC lighting as a good will gesture. Given my problems with staffing I would like to bring this relationship to an end.**

**Because of the arrangements these lights do not form part of the night time scouting of the County lighting stock and we rely on reports of outages from the Parish.**

**Beamish Close**

**We have not received a report of a day burner but we have received a number of reports of outages over the last year;**

**L/C 6032 Lamp out received date 05/06/06 completed date 09/06/06 = 35w SOX lamp**

**L/C 6033A Unit leaning received date 24/11/06 completed date 19/12/06 = Replump column**

**L/C 6028 Lamp out received date 24/11/06 completed date 15/12/06 = 35w SOX lamp & ignitor**

**L/C 6030 Lamp out received date 04/12/06 completed date 18/12/06 = 35w SOX lamp & ignitor**

**L/C 6026 Lamp out received date 18/12/06 completed date 15/01/06 = 35w SOX lamp and photocell.**

**School Green Lane**

**We have not received notification of any faults since 12/10/05 for this road.**

**(Since the meeting I have been informed that the Parish reported it to a consultant who attended a meeting on ECC's behalf – it appears that this was not reported to the office)**

15. Will Highways reconsider the proposal to cut off street lighting across the District over the later part of each night? The matter is also ready causing concern to residents in the South of the District with the problems with antisocial behaviour and the later opening hours of public houses. Without adequate lighting CCTV will not be effective.

**Councillor D Bateman Chigwell**

**Response:**

**You will be consultee on the part night switch off. It is currently only being piloted in Uttlesford in the West Area.**

**Areas with CCTV are exempt from the switch off for those reasons**

**(f) Rural roads**

15. What action will Essex County Council take to eliminate/ reduce the damage caused to the County's roads by Heavy Goods Vehicle should the additional funding requested by the Portfolio for this work not be received?

**Councillor Mrs A Cooper - Lower Nazeing**

**Response:**

**My district engineers do not perceive that this is a major issue in Epping however we will continue to repair defects.**

**(g) Local Liaison Arrangements**

16. When will the step to establish local repair teams for minor work (as promised by the Portfolio Holder when he attended Loughton Town Council last year), be implemented? When will the liaison promised between the District and Local Councillors for addressing specific issues when re-surfacing takes place (e.g. damaged verges) be put into effect?

**Councillor K Angold – Stephens – Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

**Local repair teams for minor works are being discussed at present and we are currently in discussions with our contractor on how they will resource this. We have Highways Panel meeting when District Officers, District members and local County members meet with me. I also meet your lead officer once a month to update on progress and issues. I am happy to meet**

**Councillor Bass has asked me to offer to facilitate a meeting with your representatives in County Hall or at the Area Highways Office with the Service Director for Highways, myself and with the Local County Members in attendance.**

17. How would Highways respond to an EFDC forum on which they were represented, to list and prioritise approved schemes (such as lay – bys and parking improvements) which would be surveyed and costed by Highways in a similar way to which Housing have dealt with their land in the past?

**Councillor K Angold – Stephens – Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

**Tony Ciaburro, our service Director, has recently offered to seek funding for improvements in the Epping area. We are discussing priorities with John**

Gilbert and I know that he will be seeking your views. Once we have an indication of where or what you want you have identified then we will cost your the schemes and collate a bid.

(i) **Telephone Enquiries**

18. Why do some of your officers never reply to telephone messages?

**Councillor S Murray, Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

We have around 20 vacancies in an establishment of around 100. They are currently filled by agency staff. We appear to be suffering from a large turnover of certain staff mainly at inspector level and this puts additional workload pressures on our existing staff. Not responding to telephone messages is one of the issues – No-one does this deliberately and I know that I have gone for days sometimes not being able to respond to individuals. Sometimes we need a site visit before we can respond to another investigation into land ownership and this then means there is a delay and 20 other messages are left. So yes, I don't deny that this happens but I can assure you that it is not deliberate. We have given John Gilbert the direct lines for myself, Trevor Baker and Spencer Brookes. Please use them if someone has not responded and will endeavour to get a response.

19. Who should residents contact to report serious faults in pathways and roads?

**Councillor K Wright - Chipping Ongar, Greensted & Marden Ash**

**Response:**

We have a computerised system – so the office number will be manned and will be responded to. All information will go on there and be actioned. If you want to track progress then you can email Trevor Baker.

(i) **Resources**

20. Do you feel that this part of Essex with its dense population and hence heavy traffic flows is obtaining its fair share of resources from the central Essex pot ?

**Councillor S Murray, Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

Just looking at the capital for major projects – West Area received 40% of the total allocation for Essex and 33% of this was allocated to Epping and 46% of the total for the West Area will be allocated to Epping for next financial year.

Over the last three years Epping has received 31% of the total allocation for Basic Maintenance. It is worth noting that the West Area which comprises of 4 districts.

21. What is Highways doing about addressing the staff shortages in their West Area offices?

**Councillor K Angold – Stephens – Loughton Roding**

**Response:**

**We are currently using agency staff. We only filled 12 positions in Oct 06 after a recruitment drive and still currently have 22 vacancies. Some of the positions were filled by internal promotion leaving gaps in the structure behind them. Also we have since have been given a further 4 members of staff in recognition of deficiencies in our structure. The County have accepted that there are significant issues with recruitment and are considering a recruitment and retention package for West Area staff.**

22. What is the annual budget for the provision of traffic signs (eg crossroads)?

**Councillor Mrs J H Whitehouse – Epping Hemnall**

**Response:**

**I have £147,000 for minor works for the Area. New signs comes out of this budget but maintenance and replacing stolen signs comes from basic maintenance. This money I add to the LDB budget to make up around £200,000 a year for Epping. Epping gets the lion's share of the LDB pot – roughly 33% of the total allocation.**

23. To what extent has the amount spent on the replacement of signs, due to many being stolen, substantially affected the provision of new signs?

**Councillor Mrs J H Whitehouse – Epping Hemnall**

**Response:**

**It doesn't – they come from different budgets. The replacement of stolen signs does eat into the basic maintenance of roads and that includes patching and potholes.**

**(h) Traffic/congestion**

24. Does County Council feel that government policy to reduce car journeys is working in Essex? What studies have be made to determine at which point traffic density becomes unsafe?

**Councillor R Frankel - Theydon Bois**

**Response:**

**Government transport policy in Essex is shaped by the influence fo the East of England Plan and the County Council's own Local Transport Plan. Both plans include policies to manage a demand for travel and car travel in particular, and the LTP contains targets to reduce traffic volumes entering Colchester and Chelmsford, as well as the rate of growth in distance traveled across the County area. At the same time land use policies continue to put pressure on Essex to accommodate more housing and provide local employment**

opportunities as well as national priorities such as expansion of ports and airports. So managing demand for car travel needs to consider both today's demands and those from future land use pressures, which are considerable.

Both sets of LTP targets are on track at present, with reductions observed during 2005 and 2006. There may be many factors behind this trend but there is no doubt that successful transport schemes such as park and ride, increased cycle facilities, reduced travel to school by car, travel plans and quality bus routes all contribute to reductions in car use.

IN conclusion policies do work at the local level but these local successes may be tempered by a general rise in traffic growth caused by background trends such as development pressures and the tendency for the average trip length to rise over time.

25. What causes more pollution: a) stopped cars, b) stop/start congested traffic, c) constantly moving cars?

**Councillor R Frankel - Theydon Bois**

**Response:**

**According to the Highways Agency Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Vehicles operate most efficiently and produce least pollution when they are driven in freely flowing traffic at moderate speed ( 35-30mph fro NOz emissions)**

**Measurements have shown that the highest rates of emission occur in congested, slow moving traffic, and that there is also a tendency for emission rates to increase at high speeds, especially those of oxides of nitrogen. Emissions rates under stop-start driving conditions are much higher than those when vehicles are driven more slowly.**

26. Since EFDC members permitted commercial development on Chigwell Lane, is there now any possibility of a full M11 junction 5?

**Councillor R Frankel - Theydon Bois**

**Response:**

**I cannot answer this but will endeavour to obtain a response.**

27. Baring in mind the work to be carried out on the A414 from 12 March 2007, why has there been no consideration of the fact the first bus leaves Ongar just after 6am and any delay will cause residents who use this first bus service to be delayed getting to work?

**Councillor D Stallan – North Weald Bassett**

**Response:**

**When closures occur over night from 9pm to 6am – there will not be a problem as the first bus leave at 6.11am**

28. Should the cost of traffic disruption (for the road users) be an issue for the time taken on repairs?

**Councillor R Frankel - Theydon Bois**

**Response:**

**Yes, and we take this into account. Road works are programmed to avoid peak periods and we will try to do the most disruptive work at off peak periods. This is also taken into account when we allow utilities to work on the highway.**

**(j) Road Safety**

29. At the end of 2006, the total number of road deaths in Essex County Council reached 101. Can Essex Transport confirm the total number of deaths in this District and provide a breakdown of how many occurred on:

- a) National Motorways and Primary Routes
- b) County Primary Routes 1 and 2
- c) Local Routes?

**Councillor Mrs A Cooper - Lower Nazeing**

**Epping Fatalities – 17**

**M11 – double fatality**

**M11**

**M25**

**M25**

**A104 from Woodford Green**

**A113 London Road**

**A113 j/w High Road**

**A113 Double Fatality**

**A121 towards Honey Lane**

**A414 towards Harlow**

**B194**

**B194 crooked Mile**

**B181 High Road**

**B181**

**Unclassified Theydon Road**

**Trunk Road- 5**

**County Routes-10**

**Local Roads-1**

**(k) General**

30. When will we be assured of a quicker response to local issues and a better service from highways?

**Councillor K Angold – Stephens – Loughton Roding**

32. Are you beginning to understand why local residents and some district councillors are very dissatisfied with the level of service provided by Essex Highways ?

**Councillor S Murray, Loughton Roding**

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