

ROCHFORD LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL MINUTES 13 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 10.00AM

REMOTE MEETING

Chairman:	Cllr Mrs June Lumley (ECC)
Vice-Chairman:	Cllr Mike Steptoe (ECC)
Panel Members:	Cllr Craig Cannell (ECC), Cllr Michael Hoy (ECC), Cllr Mrs Laureen Shaw (ECC), Cllr Phil Shaw (RDC), Cllr Ian Ward (RDC), Cllr Mrs Carole Weston (RDC)
Officers:	S Church – Highway Liaison Manager T Eng – Assistant Highway Liaison Officer
Secretariat:	L Morris – RDC Democratic Services Officer

Item		Owner
1.	The Chairman requested for 'any other business' to be removed from the agenda in future.	
2.	<p>Apologies were received from Cllr Cheryl Roe.</p> <p>All Members present declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of membership of Rochford District Council.</p> <p>Cllr June Lumley and Cllr Ian Ward declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of membership of Rayleigh Town Council. Cllr Mike Steptoe declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of membership of Barling Magna Parish Council. Cllr Phil Shaw declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of membership of Stambridge Parish Council.</p> <p>Cllr Michael Hoy declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being associated with a resident of Thorpe Road (Item 3 on Schemes Awaiting Funding).</p>	
3.	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record, subject to the below amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Mike Steptoe to be added as Vice-Chairman on page 1 • Cllr Michael Hoy highlighted that he put forward the 	

	<p>scheme referred to on page 10, rather than Cllr Craig Cannell as stated in the minutes</p>	
4.	<p>No matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting were raised.</p>	
5.	<p>Sonia Church gave a verbal presentation of Vehicle Activated Signs.</p> <p>Sonia Church advised that the Highways Practice Note had been updated approximately five months ago, and was now ready to be rolled out.</p> <p>Sonia Church advised that parishes would now be able to choose to buy their own VAS or SID signs if they have a perceived speeding problem, while non-parished areas would still be able to continue to use the LPH process. The LPH would now only be able to fund VAS signs if speeding issues were significant (10mph average over limit) and with a proven speed survey. Sonia Church also advised that any signs beyond their serviceable life would be offered to the parishes to maintain.</p> <p>Parishes would be able to install these signs in certain places in order to ensure that they are safe. Parishes would be able to apply via the licensing process and would be able to find the criteria for these signs on the website.</p> <p>Cllr Mike Steptoe raised the issue of cost for the parishes and queried if there were any expectations of what the cost would be. Sonia Church advised that the cost would be approximately £3,500. Cllr Mike Steptoe further queried if County Council engineers would survey the location prior to installation to ensure that it was fit for purpose, to which Sonia Church advised that this would be the parishes responsibility and would need to employ a contractor that was suitable for working on the network, and that any ongoing maintenance would also be the parishes responsibility. Members were reassured that there would be plenty of information on the website to aid parishes with this decision.</p> <p>Cllr Mike Steptoe queried what would be counted as a 'significant speeding issue' and was advised that this would be an average of 10mph over the existing speed limit.</p> <p>Regarding the removal of existing VAS signs, Cllr Mike Steptoe asked if a survey would be conducted to ensure that there was no further requirement for this sign. SC advised that if there were signs that were beyond repair</p>	

	<p>(other than those that would cost less than £1,000, which would be deducted from the LHP revenue budget) and would contact the County Member to ask if they would require the site to be assessed prior to removal.</p> <p>Cllr Ian Ward raised that he had seen a large imbalance in speed measures in the south of the county and felt that VAS signs were extremely helpful but was unaware of any within the Rochford District. Sonia Church advised that there were 17 within the district, and the new policy would give continuity across the Council where it may not have existed before.</p> <p>Regarding the cut off of £1,000 to repair signs, Cllr Michael Hoy queried if the parish would have the option to replace the sign if it was deemed to be over £1,000. Sonia Church clarified that this would be the case and that the parish would simply need to fill in a licensing application. Cllr June Lumley queried when this scheme was due to begin and was advised that this would be towards the end of September. Sonia Church advised that the surveys had already been undertaken during lockdown, and were currently looking for a company to advise upon repairs.</p> <p>Cllr Laureen Shaw raised that there was a VAS sign in Stambridge that had been inspected, but was advised that this sign was slightly different as it was maintained by the ITS Team who had investigated this and determined that it was beyond repair. Therefore, a new sign would need to be installed and Thomas Eng was in the process of finding out what the cost would be and advised that this could either be funded by the LHP or taken care of by the ITS team, but did advise that the latter option could take some time. Cllr Laureen Shaw raised that there had been a significant number of accidents in this area, which was near a school.</p> <p>Cllr Mike Steptoe asked if it would be possible for Members to receive a list of all of the signs within the District, and who was responsible for them. Sonia Church advised that the current list was for internal use and could distribute this to the Councillors, but requested that this be kept private. Cllr Mike Steptoe suggested that the Members could look at the VAS signs within their ward and update Sonia Church.</p> <p>Cllr Ian Ward requested for the presentation to be circulated, which Sonia Church confirmed she would do following the completion of the panels. Cllr Ian Ward also</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SC</p>
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	<p>queried if any VAS signs had been affected by issues with power, and was advised that there were no records of any issues, and any new signs installed would no go into the power grid and would instead be battery operated.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Thomas Eng indicated that there was a remaining budget of £69,250 and had been advised that this budget could go into next year, and advised that it would be best not to allocate any further funding from this point as there was quite a backlog. Sonia Church further advised that if there were any schemes that the panel would like to allocate funding to, then this would form the beginning of the following years' projects.</p> <p>Rochford Town Centre, Market Square Improvements – Cllr Mike Steptoe advised that he would be keen to ensure that the survey takes place at the appropriate time, and asked to be communicated with when this was due to take place. Cllr Mike Steptoe asked when Quarter 4 would begin, and was advised by Tom Eng that this would be at the beginning of March.</p> <p>Little Wheatley Chase, Rayleigh – 20 When Lights Flash – CMA was currently with the Cabinet Member for consideration and stated that if the zebra crossing proceeded then they would be unable to install the '20 When Lights Flash'.</p> <p>PROW 71, Rayleigh – Street Lighting – Thomas Eng advised that he was aware that there had been a meeting between Rochford District Council officers and Members but had not received any feedback on this as of yet. Cllr June Lumley advised that she had spoken with the Portfolio Holder to ask that an official response was received from this site visit. Thomas Eng confirmed that he would advise Cllr June Lumley when he received this response. Sonia Church advised that Rochford District Council would carry out this work and maintain it, but that it could be funded by the LHP.</p> <p>High Street/Eastwood Road/Crown Hill, Rayleigh – Mini RAB Improvements – Cllr Ian Ward asked if they would be able to look at a proper traffic management system in this location, as it was felt that there are a significant amount of issues here. Thomas Eng advised that this was a location that would be looked at, but that there was a concern that if anything was put in place then it may impact the traffic sensitivity in a way that could make it worse. Cllr Michael Hoy recalled that a major</p>	<p>TE</p> <p>SC</p>

	<p>presentation had previously been given on Rayleigh Town Centre with a lot of information included as to what would and would not work, and suggested that this may be updated. Cllr June Lumley advised that there was a concern from Rayleigh Town Council that they had been waiting for over two years on further involvement on a previous exercise and had many obstacles along the way. Sonia Church advised that the LHP had spent around £80,000 on a strategic look at the whole of Rayleigh, with specialists looking at congestion issues and considered a number of changes but the conclusion was that Rayleigh is at maximum capacity and any measures installed would simply cause issues elsewhere within the area. Sonia Church advised that she would share this information with the Members, but could not see a solution.</p> <p>Cllr Ian Ward was concerned that a number of issues were identified including problems with traffic lights and issues with pedestrian crossings, but that the cost of rectifying the problem was far too expensive and it was not able to be funded. Cllr Craig Cannell queried if it would be possible to have access to both of the previous surveys that had been carried out. Sonia Church confirmed that she would send this out, and advised that this was completed in 2015.</p> <p>Wakering Road, Great Wakering – 40mph Speed Limit – Cllr Mike Steptoe advised that he had queried if it would be possible for this work to be carried out at the same time as the work on Poynters Lane/Great Wakering Road and asked for an update. Thomas Eng advised that one was a casualty reduction speed, while the other was a speed limit change, therefore the latter had a lot of legal work that may take a long time. Thomas Eng advised that the Casualty Reduction Team had asked for this particular site to be made a priority, so suspected that this scheme would be taking place imminently.</p> <p>Cheapside West, Rayleigh – Grasscrete – Cllr June Lumley asked if a site visit for this scheme had taken place yet and was advised by Sonia Church that this had not yet taken place, and would like to meet Cllr June Lumley on site. Cllr Craig Cannell also asked to attend this visit.</p> <p>Upway, Rayleigh – Grasscrete – Cllr Ian Ward asked for an update on this scheme and was advised that this was down for design only and the only commission that would be undertaken this year would be the detailed design element.</p>	
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	<p>Little Wakering Road, Barling – Wig-Wag – Cllr Mike Steptoe queried who would be taking up the responsibility for maintenance of wig-wag signs. Sonia Church advised that there were two sets of wig-wags that come under different responsibility, with some maintained at the cost of the school crossing patrol, with the other being maintained by the LHP revenue budget. Thomas Eng also advised that this had been pushed forward in the programme, and was now scheduled for 29 November 2021.</p> <p>Little Wheatley Chase, Rayleigh – Pedestrian Crossing – Cllr June Lumley asked if there was an indication of a time frame on a decision for this and was advised by Thomas Eng that this was a decision that usually took 3-4 weeks, but had not yet received an update on this, and that the recommendation within the report had been changed for the zebra crossing to proceed.</p> <p>Poynters Lane/Great Wakering Road – Casualty Reduction Scheme – Cllr Mike Steptoe queried who would be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the VAS sign installed at this location and was advised that this would come under the LHP remit. Sonia Church further advised that it may be that the Casualty Reduction and Road Safety scheme may have their own budget in future that may cover this.</p>	
7.	<p>Thomas Eng advised that the total budget for schemes that had been deemed to be deliverable was £25,000 as set out on page 18. Members would be able to agree these schemes, but they would not be started until the following year.</p> <p>Thorpe Road, Hockley – Vehicular Access Restriction – engineering team had visited the site and advised that there was currently an ‘unsuitable for HGV’s’ sign in place. Cllr Laureen Shaw advised that this was an unadopted road and that she had sent communications to Thomas Eng to advise that residents wanted to implement planters and restrict access. Thomas Eng advised that this scheme could be removed. Cllr Mike Steptoe raised that residents were looking to clarify if there were highways rights over this road for vehicular access. Sonia Church advised that she had spoken to the relevant department about this and would return to Councillors to confirm what the conclusion was. Cllr Laureen Shaw advised that she had sent a petition to</p>	SC

	<p>Thomas Eng signed by all of the residents. Cllr June Lumley advised all that it would be best to take this item offline.</p> <p>Barling Road, Great Wakering – Speed Limit – Validation results show that a blanket 30mph would not be adhered to, therefore the recommendation was to remove the scheme from the list. Cllr Mike Steptoe advised that he was happy for this to be removed, but would find it very useful to be given a policy document to outline criteria regarding changing speed limits. Thomas Eng advised that the speed management strategy was being rewritten, but could distribute the current policy to the panel.</p> <p>Thomas Eng asked the panel if they would like to make funding recommendations for the next financial year, or if they would prefer to wait for the return of the validations and further costings in March. Cllr June Lumley asked when these decisions would need to be made, and was advised that the majority of decisions would usually be made in March.</p> <p>High Road/Brook Road – Signing AND High Road/Brook Road, Rayleigh Weir – Junction Improvements – Cllr Ian Ward requested to take Item 5 and 6 together as he wished to gain an understanding of safety issues. Cllr Ward advised that he had often witnessed people turning right at the ‘no right turn’ junction and suggested the installation of cameras may deter people from doing this. Thomas Eng advised that the site had been inspected and the ‘no right turn’ sign was faded and therefore, one of the recommendations would be to replace this sign. It was also proposed that a feasibility study to change the junction was being investigated.</p> <p>Dawes Heath Road, Rayleigh – Horse Warning Signs – in validation. Once results were received, Thomas Eng would share these with County Members.</p> <p>Shoebury Road, Great Wakering – in validation. Once results were received, Thomas Eng would share these with County Members.</p> <p>Canewdon Road, Ashingdon & Lark Hill Road, Canewdon – Signage Improvements – Thomas Eng had visited the site and noted that there was a lack of available verge width to be able to provide these signs, therefore, they would be unable to do so. Cllr Laureen</p>	<p>TE</p> <p>TE</p> <p>TE</p>
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	<p>Shaw agreed that this would not be feasible, and the panel agreed to remove this item.</p> <p>Lesney Gardens, Ashingdon – Bollards – in validation. Once results were received, Thomas Eng would share these with County Members.</p> <p>Crown Hill/Castle Terrace, Rayleigh – Visibility – in validation. Once results were received, Thomas Eng would share these with County Members.</p> <p>Thomas Eng advised that all six of the walking schemes were currently in validation. Cllr Mike Steptoe questioned if the results would be returned by March 2022 and was advised by Thomas Eng that he was hopeful they would be completed by December 2021.</p> <p>Anchor Lane, Canewdon – Bus Shelter – in validation. Thomas Eng advised that unfortunately, no further progress had been made on this. Cllr Laureen Shaw raised that there was a mistake on the report which showed that this was listed under Rochford South, while it should have been Rochford North. Cllr Mike Steptoe raised that his parish had been looking at supplying bus shelters and queried if this could be part of the devolution process for bus shelters. Sonia Church advised that she had received an email from the team working on this who were formulating an updated timeline which was not ready to be shared. Sonia Church advised that when this was finalised, the announcement about devolution would be made and delays were being faced due to the impact of COVID-19.</p> <p>PROW 71, Rayleigh – Footway Improvements – RDC had been informed that this was not part of the public highway, therefore Essex Highways would not recommend proceeding with this scheme. Sonia Church advised Members that as this was a bridleway, there was a restriction to the type of surfacing that could be applied and an issue with the width of the path, as this had not been made wide enough upon installation. Cllr June Lumley confirmed that she had pursued this with officers and the Portfolio Holder at the District Councillor. Cllr Craig Cannell also advised that there were some issues at the moment with the signage on site which had to be replaced frequently. Cllr June Lumley advised that she had not received an update on this recently, and advised that this was taken offline.</p> <p>Cllr Mike Steptoe asked if there were any implications</p>	<p>TE</p> <p>TE</p> <p>TE</p>
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	<p>coming forward from the coastal path from Battlesbridge to Shoebury that the LHP would need to pick up on. Sonia Church advised that she was unsure how this would be managed. Cllr Mike Steptoe further advised that a lot of footpaths were owned by landowners, but there was a section in the Hullbridge area that had collapsed. Cllr June Lumley advised that this was being discussed at the River Crouch Coastal Community Team meetings, and further added that she would also be interested to know what LHP could do in this area. Sonia Church advised that she would investigate outside of the meeting and return to Members with an answer.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>The date of the next meeting was agreed for Monday 13 December 2021 at 10am.</p>	