

FELSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Highways and Road Safety Committee Meeting held on 10 March at 5:00 pm using the Zoom online platform

- Present:** Councillors Richard Freeman, Andy Bennett, Alec Fox and Frances Marshall.
In attendance: Clare Schorah. There were no members of the public present.
- H21 **Public Forum**
No members of the public were present.
- H21/01 **Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**
Apologies had been received from Peter Rose and there were no Declarations of Interest.
- H21/02 **Minutes of meeting held on 11 November 2020**
The Minutes were approved and would be signed by the Chairman at the next meeting held in person.
- H21/03 **Matters arising from the November meeting**
- 03.1 New vehicle access created opposite The Bungalow, Causeway End Road (Item H20/04.1)** – The Chairman reminded Members that ECC Highways had given permission for the temporary vehicular access to remain until January 2021. The planning application to build residential dwellings on the site had been refused by UDC and refused on appeal. It was agreed, after the expiry date, to ask UDC to take enforcement action to remove the temporary access. The Assistant Clerk has emailed Enforcement about this but has been asked to provide paperwork to prove that the access is temporary, so that it can be removed. Councillor Freeman reported that this issue is now being dealt with by Planning.
- 03.2 Faulty mobile VAS sign in Station Road (Item H20/05)** – The ULHP had indicated that they would be willing to replace the faulty sign but because of financial constraints this would not be in the near future. Members noted that the PC could purchase a replacement sign at a cost of £2775.00 plus VAT and the Finance Committee had considered the matter but agreed to defer purchase until the 2021-22 financial year. The Assistant Clerk will arrange for this to be put on the next Parish Council meeting agenda.
- 03.4 Overgrown and uneven footpath surface in Chelmsford Road (Item H20/21.1)** – This problem, affecting the pavement south of the Bakers Lane junction, had previously been reported to the ULHP but due to Covid 19 restrictions their activities have been temporarily on hold. The Assistant Clerk has contacted Highways Rangers to arrange to get this reorganised.
- 03.5 Leez Priory direction sign in Chelmsford Road (Item H20/18.1)** – The Village Attendant had turned the sign so it was pointing in the correct direction. The base of one of the poles had deteriorated further and was now completely rotten. The Assistant Clerk has contacted Leez Priory to enquire whether they would be able to make a financial contribution to help get it fixed and has contacted AJB Steel to obtain a quote for the work.
- 03.6 Deer crossing the road between Crix Green and Bartholomew Green (Item H20/22.3)**
– A herd of 30 deer frequently crossed this stretch of road which posed a threat to vehicle drivers. It was agreed to ask the ULHP to erect 2 deer warning signs at Pyes Bridge and Bartholomew Green (near former telephone box). The Assistant Clerk has filled out an application for this under the Highways Panel and sent to Councillor Walsh.
- 03.7 Passing place in Jollyboys Lane North (Item H20/22.2)** – At the Full Council meeting on 3rd March 2021 it was resolved (Minute 21/63) to accept the quote from Anderson & Co for £3945.70 for the construction of the passing place.
- H21/04 **Uttlesford Local Highway Panel applications**
The Assistant Clerk provided an update as follows:
- 04.1 Outstanding application for 2015-16 – Second VAS sign at Main Road, Willows Green** – The ULHP had agreed earlier in the year to undertake a new traffic survey. This was undertaken and did not meet the criteria for a VAS to be funded by the LHP however if the Parish Council funded a mobile VAS it could be progressed.
- 04.2 Applications for 2016-17** – Two of the applications originally submitted for the 2016-17 financial year (Double yellow lines in Stebbing Road and school zig zags outside Prep School) This has been forwarded to Parking Partnerships who have responded advising that they

should be dealt with soon.

a) Stebbing Road-Braintree Road junction Keep Clear – This had been assessed by a validating engineer and ECC Highways had concluded that “it would not resolve the issues and not therefore be an effective use of budget”. It was agreed to respond to the ULHP saying that the PC and Felsted School had already worked together over several years to improve the traffic congestion and this project was considered to be the next step. The ULHP has been asked to reconsider their decision.

b) 20mph zone at Primary School) – The ULHP had been asked to replace the existing flashing warning signs with a School 20 mph zone which Members considered would be more effective at slowing traffic. ULHP reports that there is a school crossing patrol here and suggested working with the school to implement a ‘20’s plenty’ zone, which the committee will go ahead with.

04.3 Applications for 2017-18 and 2018-19

a) HGV restriction on Molehill Green Road – This was being considered by the ULHP

b) Gated signage at Hartford End (formerly discussed under ‘Reduction of speed limit at Hartford End to 30 mph heading’) - ULHP had requested up to date photos of the approach to Hartford End on the B1417 to enable them to design a ‘gated entrance’. This has been provided.

c) Installation of second and third posts, at Watch House Green, for the mobile VAS sign – The PC were including funds for a replacement mobile VAS in their 2021-22 budget (see Items above) so it was important to have these additional posts erected as soon as possible. It was agreed to inform the ULHP accordingly. The Assistant Clerk will make an application for these under the Highways Panel.

04.4 Application for 2019-20 – The application submitted for the 2019-20 financial year (to install double yellow lines for a distance of 10m around the corners of Watch House Green to prevent parking and ease traffic congestion) was awaiting full assessment by the ULHP. Parking Partnerships have reported that this will be dealt with soon.

H21/05

Highway Ranger work

Members noted that the Highway Rangers team were now willing to meet on site to discuss projects. Assistant Clerk has contacted the team for the Chairman to meet the team to look at the overgrown pavement in Chelmsford Road (see Item above) in the hope of expediting the project.

H21/06

Highway maintenance work

06.1 Issues that have been reported

- a) Defective furniture on footpath 61.(awaiting inspection)
- b) Pothole at entrance of carpark Station Road/Bury Chase (work completed)
- c) Highway drainage issues Littley Park Lane (inspected and will be monitored)
- d) Highway drainage issues opposite the cemetery on Chelmsford Road (inspected and will be monitored)
- e) Highway drainage issues in Hartford End (inspected and has had works completed. It has been re-reported because there is still an issue with frozen water on the road in cold weather and status is awaiting inspection)
- f) Broken streetlight at the junction of Mill Road and Station Road (has been fixed)
- g) Highway Drainage issues at Chelmer cottage, Stebbing Road (inspected and will be monitored)
- h) Fly-tipping at Molehill Green
- i) Flooding at Barn End, Stevens Lane (investigated and no recordable issue was found)
- j) Abandoned Vehicle on Flitch Way between Felsted and Flitch Green (will be removed once the weather is better)
- k) Broken ‘Quiet Lane’ Sign (Part of planned maintenance)

06.2 Flooding Issues:

a) Causeway End

There were 5 reports of blocked connections or blocked gullies each with the status ‘defect is to be considered for repair as part of the planned maintenance programme’ on Chelmsford Road

There was a highway drainage problem reported in August 2020 on Causeway End Road (Near Pudneys) with this status: 'On investigation there was no recordable issue at this location, it may be because the issue is not something that relates to the highway (not the responsibility of Essex Highways, but not something we are able to pass onto another organisation), the issue may not yet be at a level that we would consider it needed recording or the issue have already been resolved.'

There is a highway drainage problem further up the road towards Cobbler's Green (reported in August 2020) with a blocked ditch and the status on that issue is 'We've investigated and assessed this issue, and we're scheduling work to be carried out' The Assistant Clerk received an email on behalf of a resident reporting flooding and considerable damage in this area.

Note: This was discussed at the March PC meeting and the Clerk is in communication with Floods Essex who had advised they were in communication with the landowner. The PC has requested that Floods Essex follow this up.

b) Braintree Road, opposite Merrybones

Resident at Sparlings Farm emailed in February to let the Parish Council know that they had received a visit from the flood and water management team. There are 8 reports in this area on the Highways website, with statuses that show that it has been assessed and they are deciding what action to take.

c) Molehill Green

There were 4 reports of blocked gullies/standing water each with the status 'defect is to be considered for repair as part of the planned maintenance programme.' In August 2020 there were 3 reports on highway drainage problem and one with the status ' A defect has been identified and made safe, the issue will be prioritised for repair or passed to the relevant organisation'

d) Milch Hill

5 reports of blocked gullies/standing water each with the status 'defect is to be considered for repair as part of the planned maintenance programme.' A report in January 2021 of highway drainage problems with a status 'We've carried out an initial assessment of this issue. We are getting more information to decide what action to take.'

e) Stevens Lane

A resident has repeatedly reported a long standing problem of a blocked drain resulting in flooding outside the property. The status of this report on the Highways website was as follows: 'On investigation there was no recordable issue at this location, it may be because the issue is not something that relates to the highway (not the responsibility of Essex Highways, but not something we are able to pass onto another organisation), the issue may not yet be at a level that we would consider it needed recording or the issue have already been resolved.'

There have been 5 reported incidents of highway drainage problems in that area, and one of them says that they have scheduled work. There have been a couple of reports of standing water and a blocked gully and the defect is to be considered for repair as part of the planned maintenance programme.

Progress by ECC Highways on the above items will be monitored by the PC

H21/07

a) Community Speedwatch

The Speedwatch group managed to do one Speedwatch session on 17th December 2020 in Braintree Road. It recorded 12 motorists 36mph and over and the highest 46mph. Speedwatch activity has been suspended again due to lockdown restrictions but the group are looking forward to getting back to it.

b) Parish Paths Partnership (P3)

P3 work has largely been put on hold because of coronavirus restrictions. However, individuals and couples have continued to tidy up around waymarks and fingerposts and cleared some vegetation where it has been possible to access it safely.

They have been given permission to install 4 waymarks in the Parish. The others that had been asked for were declined as they are too near services and have to be installed by

Highways themselves.

They have installed 2 waymarks at Gransmore Green. Teams have been set up to install the rest at Willows Green and Bannister Green. The paths have been very well used though this latest lockdown, but the recent poor weather has left many of them very muddy. P3 are happy to carry out any items of minor remedial work that can be undertaken while maintaining social distance.

Essex contracts out the annual cutting of some paths. However last year there were at least two locally that were omitted from the schedule P3 has queried this and found that there is no checking mechanism in place. P3 would like the Parish Council to raise it on their behalf and would be happy to supply details.

The Assistant Clerk has checked on the Essex Highways website and they have a status saying 'Due to a higher than normal volume of enquiries currently being raised regarding our Public Rights of Way network we ask that you only report safety issues at this time.' The Assistant Clerk will find out which paths have not been cut and see whether it is possible to obtain a status report on those paths.

H21/08

Public notice TRAF/7490 - Proposed Zebra Crossing, Felsted School & Proposed Formalising of 30mph Speed Limit, Various Roads. This was discussed at the last Planning meeting and the planning committee had submitted a comment in support of the proposal.

H21/09

Other urgent matters and items for the next Agenda

09.1 Highway Maintenance Report - Councillor Freeman reported a broken gate on Stebbing Road (direction towards the A120) and the Assistant Clerk will report this issue to Highways.

09.2 Speed Surveys – Essex Highways undertook speed surveys in Felsted during November in the following 4 locations:

1. Hartford End
2. Station Road
3. Main Road, Willows Green
4. Rayne Road

Main Road and Station Road were with a view to assessing for a possible VAS however the results indicate that the mean speeds are both under the 35mph marker where it is considered that there is a speeding problem. Neither site would therefore meet the criteria for a VAS to be funded by the LHP however if the Parish were minded to fund the units then it is possible for them to be progressed.

For Hartford End they were assessing in general if there was a speeding problem but the results indicate good compliance with the 40mph speed limit and also the Rayne Road location was with a view to identifying speeds in the vicinity of the school and shows good compliance.

The Assistant Clerk will contact Speedwatch to find out whether it is possible to arrange Speedwatch sessions in those areas to assess the issue further.

H21/10

Next Meeting

The meeting closed at 6pm.

Next meeting to be held on 14 July 2021 at 5pm.

..... Committee Chairman

14 July 2021