

**TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30 pm on 8 SEPTEMBER 2004**

Present:- Councillor G Sell – Vice-Chairman in the Chair.
Councillors E C Abrahams, B M Hughes and A M Wattebot.

Officers in attendance:- M Cox and J G Pine.

TH16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K R Artus, W F Bowker and J E Menell.

Councillor E C Abrahams declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 3 as he was a local farmer with a number of public rights of way on his land.

Councillor B M Hughes declared a personal non-prejudicial interest as a Member of SSE.

TH17 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2004 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

TH18 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Minute TH6 – Saffron Walden Town Centre Traffic Management Scheme

Following the last meeting, the Local Taxi Drivers' Association had expressed concern that it not been consulted about the two blue badge spaces being provided on the existing taxi bays in Market Street, Saffron Walden. Officers explained that Essex County Council had to prepare a Traffic Regulation Order for this proposal, which would be subject to the normal consultation process and this would include the Taxi Drivers' Association. Also, Essex County Council did not intend to advance this item until decriminalisation of parking enforcement was in place.

A letter had also been received from the Local Area Access Group expressing concern that their recommendations with regards to parking in Saffron Walden had not been taken into account by Members. Jeremy Pine said that a full report on this matter would be prepared for the next meeting of the Committee.

(ii) Minute TH7 – Uttlesford Cycle Network Plan – Progress Update

It was reported that a meeting was being arranged for mid to late October to discuss the Saffron Walden to Audley End cycle route. Participants would include the District Council, Essex County Council, Saffron Walden Town

Council and Wendens Ambo Parish Council. The meeting would revisit the original proposal and look at a possible way forward.

(iii) Minute TH10 – Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement Task Group

The Chairman reported that he and Councillor Bowker had visited Maldon District Council, which had recently implemented decriminalisation.

TH19 TRAVEL PLAN

The Committee was advised that comments were still to be received from a number of bodies and it would be sensible for these to first be taken into account by the Travel Plan Working Group before Members considered any revisions to the report.

RESOLVED that the report be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee so that the Travel Plan Working Group could consider any further comments and make revisions to the report.

TH20 PRESENTATION ON DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT

Alex Stewart, Community and Development Manager and Tricia Halford, Car Parks/Concessionary Fares Officer gave a presentation on the implementation of the decriminalisation of parking enforcement in the District. Mr Stewart explained the legislative background and the process being put in place in order to achieve the go live date on 1 October 2004.

Members asked a number of questions with regards to the operation of the scheme. It was noted that the 7 staff had been recruited and training had been completed. A leaflet explaining the changes had been produced and would be circulated to all households and many businesses in the District. Posters had been placed throughout the District. Members commented that not all areas received free newspapers and were concerned that residents might not receive the information. Officers realised that it was not possible to inform every household, so for the first few weeks only warning notices would be issued. Members were advised of the staffing arrangements and hoped that there would be an opportunity to address “hot spot” parking problem areas in the district.

The Chairman thanked the officers for their presentation and they then left the meeting.

TH21

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL NOTIFICATION OF A SEASONAL PROHIBITION OF DRIVING ORDER AND A SEASONAL PROHIBITION OF HORSES ORDER

The Committee was informed that in April 2004, 57 byways and bridleways throughout the District had been surveyed, all of which had recorded complaints from members of the public regarding surface damage. As a result, extensive resurfacing works were nearly completed on two routes, and a maintenance programme for 25 of the worst affected routes was planned. An Order was now sought to protect them following this work and to prevent similar damage next year. Also included in the request were routes for which there was no funding available.

The Orders would be operative from 11 October – 23 May each year. Once they had been served, individual routes would remain protected until more extensive works could be carried out so that they could be used all the year round without further damage. Officers considered that the Orders would be of public interest as their aim was equitable access to the countryside for all.

RESOLVED that no objections be raised to the proposed Orders.

TH22

LOCAL SERVICE AGREEMENT FOR THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICE FOR ESSEX – PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee was advised of the progress that was being made with the preparation of the Local Service Agreement. The Agreement continued to be drawn up by various meetings between County and District Members and officers. The County Council's Head of Highways and Transportation, Tony Ciaburro and the cabinet member, Councillor Bass had asked to attend the next meeting to update Members further on the preparation of the Agreement.

Councillor Wattebot asked for information on the likely split between county and local roads and requested that a copy of the plan be circulated to parish and town councils. Jeremy Pine agreed to pursue this.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Mr Ciaburro and Councillor Bass be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee.

TH23

DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT TASK GROUP

The Committee received the Minutes of the Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement Task Group held on 23 June 2004.

TH24

UTTLESFORD TRANSPORT FORUM

The Committee received the Minutes of the meeting of the Uttlesford Transport Forum held on 20 July 2004.

TH25

LOCAL ROAD SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Committee received the Minutes of the Dunmow and Saffron Walden Local Road Safety Advisory Committees held on 2 & 9 June 2004.

TH26

BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT

The Chairman agreed to the consideration of the following items, as Members required the information before the next meeting of the Committee.

It was noted that the Budgetary Control Report had not been included on the agenda. However, there were no significant variances on the Committee's budget as at the end of July. A report would be submitted to the meeting on 11 November 2004 where there would be an opportunity for Members to discuss any particular changes to the type or format of financial information that they wished to receive.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm.