

**TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL OFFICES
HIGH STREET GREAT DUNMOW at 7.30 pm on 11 NOVEMBER 2004**

Present:- Councillor G Sell – Vice Chairman in the Chair.
Councillors E C Abrahams, K R Artus, C M Dean, D W Gregory,
B M Hughes, J E Menell and A M Wattebot.

Officers in attendance:- M Cox, J Mitchell, P O'Dell and J G Pine.

TH27 STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Prior to the meeting a statement was made by Mrs Lizzie Sanders concerning the proposed Highways and Transportation Local Service Agreement with Essex County Council and its effect on the local road safety service, and by Councillor Susan Flack concerning parking arrangements outside the new Dunmow Primary School.

TH28 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors W F Bowker and R F Freeman. The Committee passed its best wishes to Councillor Bowker, who was still in hospital.

**TH29 LOCAL SERVICE AGREEMENT FOR HIGHWAYS AND
TRANSPORTATION SERVICE FOR ESSEX**

Tony Ciaburro, the County Council's Head of Highways and Transportation and Paul Hardy, the Area Highway Manager, attended the meeting for this item.

Mr Ciaburro updated Members on the progress of the Local Service Agreement for Uttlesford. It was part of a major change to the way in which the Highways service was to be delivered in the interests of consistency and transparency. Existing agency arrangements were to be replaced with the Local Service Agreement and the highways function would now be delivered from four centres of excellence throughout the county. For the short/medium term the area office in Great Dunmow had been identified as one of the centres, although this might be subject to a future review. A further meeting with officers to discuss the Agreement for Uttlesford was scheduled for 22 November, with a Member to Member meeting following the next day. From those meetings, the County would take on board any views or concerns, which would hopefully be addressed by the New Year. District Member approval would then be sought, with the Agreement coming into force from 1 April 2005.

Members expressed concern about the future of the road safety function in Uttlesford. This had developed significantly over the last few years, but the County Council's Review made little reference to its future role. Members

asked where the Road Safety Officers were to be based and the area they would be required to cover. Mr Ciaburro replied that as from 31 March the agency arrangements would be terminated and the officers transferred to Essex County Council employment. They would remain based in Saffron Walden in the short and medium term, but would be part of the wider County Council function and the support that that would provide. He said that the County was currently failing on its road safety targets and planned to revisit its strategy to strengthen the whole function throughout the county. He confirmed that the County's Human Resources section would be having individual discussions with the affected staff. Mr Ciaburro said that he could not give any guarantees as to the location of the Road Safety Officers in the longer term, as this could be complicated by the arrival of the County's new Chief Executive.

In answer to a question from Councillor Dean it was confirmed that local Members and Parish Councils would continue to propose Traffic Regulation Orders in the same way as now. It was also explained that in terms of sorting out any highway problems the first point of contact would still be the Highways Office. Members were given details of the proposed split between local and county roads. Generally, A and B roads, bus routes and gritted routes would be the County's responsibility, with all others falling to the District. The split between the two was about 50/50 and the arrangement would be reviewed regularly. Once the Agreement had been finalised a definitive map of the routes would be produced together with a list of roads, and this will be supplied to all Members and to Town and Parish Councils. It was confirmed that if the District Council subsequently wanted to terminate the Agreement, it would lose its delegated responsibility for decision-making on local roads.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the progress being made with the preparation of the LSA and requested that the Road Safety Officers remain based in the Saffron Walden office, and that this issue be brought to the next Local Service Agreement meetings on 22 and 23 November 2004.

TH30 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2004 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the inclusion of Councillor C M Dean in the list of apologies.

TH31 **BUSINESS ARISING**

(i) Minute TH18 (ii) – Uttlesford Cycle Network Plan Progress Update

It was reported that a meeting had been held with the County Council, the Town Council and Wendens Ambo Parish Council to discuss possible options for the Saffron Walden/Audley End cycle route. It had been concluded that it might not be practical to provide a bona fide cycleway, but measures could be considered to enable a safer route for all road users. There was money available in the budget and the County's Highways consultants, Mouchel Parkman, were to be asked to provide an estimate for this study in time for a

report to be made to the next meeting of this Committee requesting Members to authorise the carrying out of the study.

TH32

AREA ACCESS GROUP – PARKING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN CENTRE

The Chairman had received a letter from the Uttlesford Area Access Group expressing concern that none of the recommendations following the Town Centre Traffic Management Meeting on 19 February 2004 had been included in the Committee's resolution on 21 June 2004. This had stated that two blue badge spaces be provided on the existing taxi bay in Market Street and the proposal to allocate the Rose and Crown Car Park for blue badge holders should not be proceeded with.

Officers commented that the views of the Access Group had been taken into account but there were clear reasons why additional blue badge spaces in Market Place and Market Row were not favoured. It was recognised that the proposals would result in only two additional blue badge spaces, but decriminalisation might result in better utility of the existing spaces in King Street. The point raised about taxi rank availability was noted but it was local perception that the existing rank was under-utilised. Relocation of the taxi rank to the High Street was only one option. In any event Members would be asked to review their resolution in the light of any objections received in respect of a Traffic Regulation Order.

Councillor Hughes referred to a recent presentation from the Saffron Walden Initiative, which would be putting forward more radical proposals for traffic management in Saffron Walden Town Centre. This might also have a bearing on the proposals for blue badge spaces. Councillor Dean commented that there were a number of groups that appeared to be discussing traffic issues in Saffron Walden and suggested that a representative from the Uttlesford Area Access Group should be invited to attend the Saffron Walden Town Centre Management Committee meetings.

RESOLVED that officers draft a reply for the Chairman to send to the Uttlesford Area Access Group based on the explanation given in the report.

TH33

AMENDED TRAVEL PLAN

The Committee received a report, which considered the initial findings of the Travel Plan Working Group following a survey of the Travel to Work arrangements of staff. The report identified the need to attempt to increase other modes of travel and to decrease/reduce personal travel and work related travel. The report gave some suggestions on how improvements could be made, in particular greater accessibility of public transport and by publicising relevant information.

In respect of the possible provision of season ticket loans, Officers were asked to find out whether discounts were available and if any staff would be interested in such a scheme.

RESOLVED that

- 1 access to information on current public transport services should be reviewed at the Uttlesford Transport Forum on a regular basis with a view to seeking appropriate improvements via the Web and leaflets, and by the provision of reliable up to date timetables at all bus stops.
- 2 the Chairman of the Committee, together with the Policy and Development Control Officer, lobby the County Council in order to
 - (i) promote an increased frequency of local bus services especially at peak times. In conjunction with this a bus shelter, specifically close to the Council Offices, could be provided and consideration be given to the provision of real time information at bus stops and possibly in the Council foyer.
 - (ii) consider the initiation of a shuttle service (source of funding, timetable and practicalities to be agreed) to run between Swan Meadow car park and Audley End Station, via the Council Offices to enable staff and public to attend the Council Offices; and for officers to report back to the Committee within the next twelve months.
- 3 In due course, following the development of enhanced service provision, to consider schemes for season ticket loans and an initial report on the feasibility to be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

TH34

SERVICE PLANS BUDGETS AND COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2005/06

The Executive Manager Finance and Asset Strategy presented a report outlining the Committee's initial draft General Fund Revised Estimates of Direct Costs and Income for 2004/05 and Estimates for 2005/06, prepared on the basis of existing approved levels of service. Draft service plans had also been circulated within the report, including an indication of spending pressures likely to arise next year and results from the privatisation exercise carried out recently by the Working Group set up by the Resources Committee. The Resources Committee would consider the service plans and the results of the prioritisation exercise and issue further guidance to committees in due course.

Members questioned the estimated income from the recently introduced Saturday charging at the London Road Offices car park. Officers would keep this under review.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the revised 2004/05 Budget and the draft 2005/06 Budget be approved and submitted to the Resources Committee;
- 2 the elements of the draft service plans relating to this Committee's activities be approved for consideration by the Resources Committee;
- 3 the prioritisation analysis in Appendix 3 to the report be noted without particular comment at this stage.

TH35

DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/06

The Executive Manager (Finance and Asset Strategy) gave details of items in this Committee's General Fund Capital Programme for 2005/06. He informed Members that 3 items needed to be added to the list as they had originally been thought to be within the remit of the Environment Committee. These were:

1. Linking Green Lanes (£10,000)
2. Cycle Tracks (£25,000), and
3. Surfacing Stansted Coach Park (£35,000)

RESOLVED that the Draft Capital Programme as amended be noted for consideration by the Resources Committee.

TH36

DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT TASK GROUPS

The Committee received the Minutes of the Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement Task Group held on 22 September 2004.

RESOLVED that the recommendation in Minute DPE27 be approved – that the Task Group be kept in place for a further year and that the Chairman of the Transport and Highways Committee be included in the membership.

The Committee commented on the smooth implementation of the new parking regime and thanked all those officers involved. Members thought that the Task Group should now look at existing waiting restrictions to see whether they were still relevant. They also asked that the Task Group take on the issues associated with fly parking and consider extending parking restrictions where appropriate.

TH37

UTTLESFORD TRANSPORT FORUM

The Committee received the Minutes of the Uttlesford Transport Forum held on 20 October 2004. The Policy /DC Officer referred to a meeting that was taking place tomorrow at the offices of Stansted Parish Council to discuss issues relating to rail safety and problems with vandalism.

TH38

LOCAL ROAD SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Committee received the Minutes of the Local Road Safety Advisory Committees held in Great Dunmow on 4 October and Saffron Walden on 6 October 2004.

RESOLVED that a representative of the Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow Road Safety Advisory Committees be invited to attend future Committee meetings.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mrs Lizzie Sanders – Littlebury Parish Council and representative of the Saffron Walden Local Road Safety Advisory Committee

Mrs Sanders expressed concern about the role of the Uttlesford's Road Safety Function in the proposed Local Service Agreement with the County Council. She said that road safety education and training did not appear within the County's key issues, and with the highways function being moved to 4 new centres the local provision of the service would be lost. She commended the existing service, which was low cost but very effective. She was worried about the relocation of staff and the corresponding loss of key local knowledge. She asked for reassurance that the service would continue to be provided locally.

Councillor Susan Flack

Cllr Flack was concerned about a recent article in a local newspaper concerning a proposed lay-by outside the new Dunmow Junior School. She said that when the planning application for the school had come before the Development Control meeting, the Committee had been concerned about the lack of facilities proposed for dropping off and picking up children, and had asked that a lay-by be provided on the old A120. When the County had not taken this on board Councillor Copping had asked for a meeting to discuss possible options. Mrs Flack, as the County Member, had arranged a meeting on site with Cllr Bass, a representative of the school, Paul Hardy, Tony Ciaburro and Councillor Copping. The meeting had considered the requirements of the school and had come up with a plan to provide an extended lay-by. She was upset that she was now being harangued in the press for doing what the District Council had asked her to do. She asked for the Transport and Highways Committee to give its views on this.