
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP
AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 11 JULY 2016 AT 7.30PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WEELEY**

Present: Councillors Fairley (Chairman), Baker (Vice-Chairman), Amos, Davis, I J Henderson, Parsons, Poonian, Raby and White

Also Present: Councillors Hughes (Corporate Services Portfolio Holder), Councillor Heaney, Councillor Massey and Councillor Nicholls

In Attendance: Head of Planning (Cath Bicknell), Management and Members' Support Manager (Karen Neath) and Democratic Services Officers (Janey Nice and Katie Sullivan)

Also in Attendance: Alan Lindsay (Essex County Council – Transport Strategy and Engagement Manager), Martin Raymer and Susan Anderson (Mistley Parish Council)

9. WELCOME

The Chairman of the Committee extended a warm welcome to Mr Alan Lindsay, Transport Strategy and Engagement Manger for Essex County Council (ECC).

10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor Yallop (with Councillor White substituting) and Councillor Newton (with Councillor Davis substituting).

11. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held 23 May 2016, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Baker declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was the Ward Member for Lawford and later in the meeting, Councillor I J Henderson declared an interest (Minute 13 refers) as he was an Essex County Councillor.

13. REVIEW OF HIGHWAY ISSUES

The Chairman invited (Essex County Council's Transport Strategy and Engagement Manager) Mr Alan Lindsay to address the Committee on the matter of Highway issues.

Mr Lindsay informed the Committee how Essex County Council (ECC) engaged with Tendring District Council (TDC) in relation to the Local Plan and other issues as they arose. He gave details of the size of the highways network and infrastructure and explained that Highways England were responsible for the trunk roads, such the A120 and A12, with other 'A' roads and minor roads being the responsibility of ECC. He explained to the Committee how schemes were funded and said that it was a case of having to do far more with a lot less budget and how ECC were looking at funding opportunities through development with S.78 or S.106 and securing funding bids.

Mr Lindsay said was proud that all of the 9 bids made to the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (Selep) for funding had succeeded. He said he was looking at growth funding and mentioned that TDC had a representative on the Strategic Transport Board and they looked at how schemes were developed and explained that a number of schemes get onto the work needed list, they looked at management issues and he gave an example of the A137 which, while now being on the list, did not have any funding in place yet. He added that the A120/A12 Braintree/Colchester section of road was a key part of the infrastructure and it was being looked at for development now. Mr Lindsay informed the Committee of how the Council could lobby for funding as the A12 needed to improve sooner rather than later and he wanted to target and lobby for the Tendring section.

He said that the Harwich road scheme was being led by Highways England and ECC were showing their willingness to fund the scheme and there was a very close contact with Highways England. However, he said, Highways England were based in Bedford and did not know the Tendring area and informed the Committee that an event which had been due about a month ago had been postponed until the end of July. He said that he was anticipating more details soon from Highways England about the scheme funding and said that the Leader of TDC had been invited to attend an event along with a number of the Council's Members and perhaps a few other stakeholders. He explained that it was intended to retain access for other users of the roads including cyclists, horse riders etc.

Mr Lindsay went on to say that the A133 was one of the bids that had been put in for and ECC were looking at the whole length of road from Clacton to Colchester and added that there were safety issues such as cyclists, pedestrians and other crossing problems. He said it was needed to see where congestion needed to be reduced to improve safety and reduce commuting times. Junction widening schemes, he said, would take away 'pinch points' and then the maintenance scheme such as drainage and lighting amongst other things. He added that recent events on the A133 highlighted safety being a big issue and that a safety team was looking to see if there is a common link and other contributing factors, but that this was an expensive piece of work. He added that passenger transport was being looked at to see where it could be improved and identify the inadequately provided areas and ensure that the Clacton/Colchester passenger journey was made a lot better.

He then went on to talk to the Committee about the A137 at Manningtree which was a known issue on a number of fronts and said that modelling was being undertaken to look at the various problems in the vicinity and how to deal with congestion. He said that the structure of the level crossing made congestion a major factor and that there were a number of different aspects occurring. A Manningtree transport study was being developed to look at where future development fitted in, look at the level crossing and, look at the railway station parking where there was no space to develop. He asked the question could there be parking spaces made available on the other side of the railway line, perhaps another crossing being built in the future. He was looking at scheme in the pipeline, this would be developing over coming months and years, and he wanted a solution to ease the situation, firstly in the short term then in the long term, which could include another crossing over or under the railway line but such a scheme would cost millions of pounds which was not forthcoming, however the longer term solution could be looked at along with the Local Plan. He said, train fares were cheaper at railway stations on the other side of the railway bridge than they were on the Manningtree side.

A Member then commented on the A133 that originally another bridge was going to be built to take another carriageway but unfortunately that scheme ran out of money and asked why start a scheme in the first place if there was not enough money to complete the job? He then added that the A133/A120 link got frequently snarled up and there were potholes on both sides of the A12, he felt that nothing was being done, especially with side roads, other roads in Clacton and told Mr Lindsay that he wanted a note of his comments taken back to ECC.

Mr Lindsay informed the Member that design standards changed with time and gave an example of the A.12 and said the design standard had changed from when it was built to the present day, and if it was being built now, the A12 would be vastly different and there would not be a gap for the A133 access point. He said that he had been looking at the A133 as developments came forward and commented that Junction 28 on the A12 had been intended to serve north Colchester but again, only when funding came in. He added that this funding should come from Highways England and he got frustrated when work on the roads was being started but not being finished.

Mr Lindsay said where the A120 was concerned there were two potential schemes for a link, one was tied to the garden settlement work which was a fairly substantial site and the other for a Clacton to Harwich link as well. He added it was planned to build an extra lane on the road between Rettendon and Hare Green and this would commence before the end of 2016.

A Councillor informed Mr Lindsay that on matters of local planning TDC were major consultees which stemmed from the large number of houses being built, Manningtree Station would be affected by 1,000 houses being built in Lawford as the roads around the station are clogged up during morning and evening rush hours and also there were plans for another 3,000 houses on the other side of the river. He said that the suggestion that traffic lights be put in place at a cost of £150,000 would actually hinder traffic movement and not help matters.

The Head of Planning (Cath Bicknell) said that Tendring and Babergh were under different County Councils with ECC and the Suffolk authority working together but said that ECC did not have sufficient information to have a definite view on building matters and she added that work was being done to look at the cumulative affect and financial contributions from the Developers to assist where needed. The Chairman asked Mr Lindsay about the amount of contributions the Developers had to make.

Mr Lindsay explained how ECC fed in as a Highway Authority and how they had to determine the figure required, it had to be reasonable and for an example, ECC could not ask a Developer to pay to dual the A133. He added there was a strict criteria that had to be adhered to and that ECC had to judge how to mitigate the building impact on the road network. He said that at Manningtree, the ECC had put in a holding objection through a S.106 to secure funding to make changes. He commented that road signals are showing an improvement at Manningtree.

Mr Lindsay then explained about modelling work which needed accurate data to be entered, but there was always a human element that needed to be factored in. He believed that signalling would show benefits at Manningtree. He said that in the bigger scheme of things ECC were looking at working with TDC with a big focus on the Local Plan as it developed. He commented that TDC was a good example of involving ECC from the outset of drafting the Local Plan.

A Councillor questioned Mr Lindsay about the modelling work and asked if was taken into account how traffic was moving at the present time and if the outline planning permission for 350 houses at Babergh and another 1,000 houses towards Ipswich. Mr Lindsay said it was taken into account with data collection, the use of CCTV cameras, and the input of traffic flows. With all of this information fed into the modelling, he said, it could mean that ECC would have to think differently by 2030 which might mean a bigger junction needed.

At this time Councillor Ivan Henderson declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was a County Councillor for ECC and was on a Bus Transport Board. He said that the transport model needed to look at the impact around proposed developments and asked what work was being done with rail and transport operators. He commented that Network Rail were working well ahead and were already funded and if they would change to meet the needs of the Tendring District.. He asked also if ECC were talking to the bus companies to see if they could meet the residents' needs, about road schemes and the intervention fund. He asked if

local fund growth depended on European funding and if so, would it be affected by the recent EU Referendum result. Mr Lindsay said yes to all of Councillor Henderson's queries except for the very last one on the EU Referendum as nobody knew at this present time.

Mr Lindsay mentioned where road congestion was concerned ECC were looking at working with the railway company, although ECC was waiting for the announcement as to the new rail franchise holder would be which was due to be announced very shortly. He commented when working with Network Rail, wheels turned very slowly and that they had been building a relationship with Network Rail over the last year.

A Member asked that when ECC were looking at trunk roads and improvements to more minor roads what was the process. Mr Lindsay responded by saying that roads such as the A12 and A120 being trunk roads were Highway England's responsibility and that on the minor roads ECC looked at the status of the road, i.e. potholes, where it was, what size it was and other factors, it might need urgent work and if not so urgent it would be put into a programme to be fixed at some point in time

Mr Lindsay was asked about a heavily congested roundabout and if there were any plans to improve that particular stretch of road and he responded that there were no plans at the present time. He said that there were various priorities that were taken into consideration and if graded Priority 1 it would be inspected within 2 hours, if Priority 2 then it would be the next day and that the various priorities went downwards depending on what works were needed and that local and minor problems could be Priority 4 which could be a month's time or even in the next financial year.

A Member suggested that between Weeley and Clacton average speed cameras be put in place as the majority of accidents on that stretch of road were caused by speed. He added that the cameras on the A120 had had a dramatic effect on the reduction of accidents.

Mr Lindsay responded by saying that putting average speed cameras in place carried an immense amount of work with the road safety team looking at and determining the work required. He said if average speed cameras were the solution it could happen in a couple of months time including a public consultation process and collection of data from different times of day, different days and taking into account holiday and other activities that could affect data collection.

On the A12 at Hatfield Peverel a Member asked where the income from them went and Mr Lindsay said that ECC had not funded them and said that they were from Highways England from capital bid from funding. The Member also commented about a dangerous corner at Kelevedon where there must be accidents and Mr Lindsay shared the Member's frustration as Highways England had looked at it and had decided the road needed a full depth reconstruction which would mean a lengthy closure for road traffic.

The Chairman then invited Mr Martin Rayner from Mistley Parish Council to comment and ask questions and Mr Rayner asked if the £150,000 would be sufficient for the traffic lights and that as it as it would come from S.106 ;money there would be a delay until some houses had been built, and asked if there was any pot of money which could provide for the traffic lights to be built and repaid from S.106 money when it was received from the developers. He also mentioned traffic modelling which seemed to be just one model but that it did not fit all situations and mentioned the long traffic queues at a large supermarket in Tollgate, Colchester.

Mr Lindsay said that had been incidents of forward funding but there was no real pot of money for it and that he would like a lot more funding to be made available. He also explained how modelling was worked and results arrived at.

A Member mentioned that at the Fire Station roundabout in Clacton there were road signs that were no longer needed but were still in place and Mr Lindsay said that he would ensure they would be collected.

Members raised other concerns which included:

- the number of rail crossings along the rail network and the safety issues involved;
- provision of dual carriageway for the A133;
- the back-up of traffic all the way up Cox's Hill at Lawford;
- the short slip road for north bound traffic at J.28 on the A12 which meant sighting of oncoming traffic was difficult;
- how much money had been spent by ECC on road improvements in Colchester and if any money could be released to free up ditches and gullies in rural areas;
- when calls were made to the flood telephone line, that they went unanswered;
- a way of using forward monies especially at the Manningtree railway bridge;
- Grass growing in the middle of roadways and again the danger of potholes; and
- the amount of money that ECC had paid out in compensation to drivers whose cars had been damaged by potholes.

Mr Lindsay answered and commented on all of the above.

After Members had thoroughly discussed the issues, it was **AGREED** that:-

- (a) the following comments and recommendations be made to Cabinet; that
 - i. A letter be sent to Essex County Council urging them to forward fund £150,000 to enable the traffic lights at Manningtree to be installed as soon as possible with the funding to be recovered from S.106 agreements as developments proceeded;
 - ii. that all Members, through engagement with their County Councillor, be encouraged to submit schemes to the Local Highways Panel and to attend the regular meetings; and
 - iii. that the availability of funding to assist householders with flooding be investigated and promoted with home owners in affected areas as appropriate.
- (b) Essex County Council be asked to send a representative to a future Committee meeting to discuss the subjects of road safety and road maintenance
- (c) the issue of the Manningtree road transport study be put back on the Community Leadership and Partnerships work programme for a future meeting; and
- (d) once the rail franchise had been awarded to the successful Eastern Region bidder they be invited to attend a future meeting of the Community Leadership and Partnerships Committee;

The Chairman thank Mr Lindsay for attending the Committee and for the information he had given to Members and hoped the answers he had given had let the Members feel that their concerns had been taken into account.

The Chairman also thanked Mr Rayner and Ms Anderson from Mistley Parish Council for attending the meeting.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.15 p.m.

Chairman