

Councillor Eddie Johnson,
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
County Hall
Chelmsford



Cc:
Jessamy Hayes, Policy and Strategy Advisor
Vicky Presland, Development Management Group Manager
Sonia Church, Design Engineer
Anne James, Essex Highways

Councillor Derrick Louis
Chairman, Place Services and
Economic Growth Scrutiny Cttee
County Hall
Chelmsford

15 July 2016

Dear Cllr Johnson

RE: Scrutiny members' comments on Local Highways Panel briefing

As part of a committee activity day on 30th June, members of the Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee heard an update from Highways Officers about the Local Highways Panels (LHPs). In particular, officers drew attention to new staffing structures and explained that new terms of reference, guidance and processes for submitting schemes are being developed.

Members were provided with the enclosed documents and determined to focus on these issues first as part of their overall review of LHPs. To ensure that time was not lost, I asked that the briefing be circulated to the Committee Members by email for their comment.

Members' comments are appended.

In order to discuss the Committee's comments and help the committee's review of LHPs proceed, you are invited to attend the 22 September meeting of the Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee. I have asked Christine Sharland and Lisa Siggins to liaise with your office over the details of this (it will be after 25 July, when Christine returns from leave).

Thank you for your time and openness to engagement with the committee on this matter. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to be in touch.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Derrick Louis
Chairman of the Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee

Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee members'
LHP comments

Councillor	Comment
Keith Bobbin	<p>I think it is fine and will help the Highways Panels to do their work and will inform residents more, better.</p> <p>As a panel Chairman it will help me.</p>
Ian Grundy	<p>1) The consultation and redrafting of the Terms of Reference seems out of touch/premature when there is a Task and Finish Group carrying out a study of the work of LHPs.</p> <p>2) The suggestion that safety reduction schemes are to be funded by the LHP budget above all other schemes makes nonsense of the role of local members and parish councils who have put forward individual schemes in the expectation they will be delivered in a reasonable time and not just be put back and back and possibly never.</p> <p>3) Quite rightly the Chelmsford LHP have briefed Members and Parish Councils on the progress of schemes but we still have schemes agreed years ago which have not been implemented. Everything takes far too long.</p> <p>4) There have been occasions when topping up/shared funding is offered by other partners seems complicated. Is there a defined procedure.</p> <p>5) Parish Councils have expressed amazement at some of the costs on local schemes in particular repairs to bridle ways/ public rights of way. These schemes could often be done locally at a more cost efficient way and therefore quicker.</p>
Chris Pond	<p>I think the proposal re Casualty Reduction Schemes (CRS) is unacceptable. I would prefer wording such as: Due weight should be given by LHPs to CRSs, given the duty of the Highways Authority to reduce casualties. Question: Is this statutory? If so please show me the relevant statute.</p> <p>Political balance: Yesterday at the briefing we were told the balance to be maintained was that of the County Council. That is not in the wording given with the draft. Please elucidate.</p>
Stephen Robinson	<p>I would welcome clarification on membership. The PSEGC members were unanimous that ALL County Members in each District should be on the LHPs. I realise that this would make the Chelmsford, Colchester and Braintree ones quite large; but I don't imagine that everyone would attend every time. It is crucial that all county members can have input into the work of their LHP.</p> <p>Section 5 says that Agenda will be available on ECC website. For absolute clarity, this should say "in advance".</p>