

Please see my ECC report below.

As City Council meetings have been ceased until after the election, I do not have anything to report.

## **Member Led Pothole Scheme**

- 46 completed
- 2 rejected – 1 referred to water company, 1 rejected as multi holes
- 2 in planning

The multi-holes rejection is the A131 between Little Waltham and Gt leighs – where I entered 12 holes on the fast road, as 1 submission. Whilst this has been rejected, I have requested that this stretch be looked at and considered for urgent action.

You might like to view a Highways video about Make Safe repairs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCHfmBgTGZs>

Additional funding has been made available for a similar scheme to be carried out after May, and will include pavements. The details of how this will work are not clear yet.

## **LHP**

Schemes scheduled to be completed in Q4 of 22/23, will have the funding carried over and the work will continue. For Great Waltham this includes LCHE202036 Little Park Cottages, Little Park Lane, Hartford End - Road markings, LCHE203002: Barrack Lane j/w Cherry Garden Road, Great Waltham - Footway Improvements, and LCHE182009: B1008 Ford End - Kerbing improvements (This one may already be complete). The request to move one of the bus stops was not pursued by Highways as it would have delayed the scheme and lost the funding)

I was asked a number of questions by the Traffic Committee, which I answered directly. I am copying them below.

## **SID Poles**

LHP requests for additional SID poles require a speed survey to show speeds in excess of the speed limit by 10mph. Alternatively, the Parish Council can fund these. I previously reported that a cheaper option will soon be available whereby the Parish Council can request existing lampposts to be audited to assess.

The process is still not in place yet. The technical and engineering aspects are complete, and they are now going through with the legal aspects. It is now envisaged that a PC can pay £980 to have up to 10 lamp posts assessed. The outcome from this process will be a licence on the ECC lamp posts that are capable of supporting a SID. Such licence will last 5 years and cover SID units with a battery or a solar panel. There will be an extra process for powered SIDs which will need to meet the “unmetered” criteria – i.e., it will require implementation of a fixed charge for powering the unit.

We are probably still 3 months away from the process being finalised and the LHP guide being updated.

## Recycling Booking System

Probably the biggest complaint after potholes, pavements and flooding – the booking system is live. The test of ‘same day’ bookings went smoothly at Rayleigh Recycling Centre and was well received by customers and staff alike. Therefore the extended trial will go live with customers able to make a booking up to 1 hour in advance

### **Response to GWPC Traffic Committee questions: - with recent updates in red**

The LHP sub group met on 24<sup>th</sup> Jan – this is a smaller group of the LHP who make recommendations for the 23/24 funding use. The full LHP committee is due to meet 20<sup>th</sup> April in order to ratify or change those recommendations.

This meeting has been delayed because the LHP process has been subject to a review and will be changing. The changes are not yet in place, so I am not at liberty to describe them – mainly because it is not wholly clear.

**Update – the committee met but did not consider the recommendations of the sub-committee as the LHP process is changing and full details are not available yet.**

### **Funding:**

The amount of funding available to the LHPs is being reduced.

Each LHP will give up an amount which will be used by the Safer Roads Programme. This programme considers areas where there has been a pattern of fatalities, or serious injuries, and is the highest priority for all schemes. The investigations are carried out by the Casualty Reduction team. They do seek my approval before implementation of any measures.

In my division, there are some that are subject to this process, but not in Great Waltham

**The Chelmsford Budget has been increased to £1M, but portions of it have been ringfenced for “Additional Footway Schemes, Additional Footway minor repairs, Carriageway improvements and Casualty Reduction schemes. This ringfenced budget amounts to £750K leaving £250K for LHP schemes under the control of the LHP members. The definition of the £750K ringfencing has not yet been released, nor how members agree/bid for their area.**

### **Schemes not completed in 2022/23 - Resource shortages have caused some delays.**

Essex County Council (ECC) will allow a request to be submitted to allow the scheme (and the funds allocated to it) to Carry Forward into 2023/24. I have been advised that such request will be treated favourably and the ECC Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport, Cllr Lee Scott, fully supports the request to carry these funds forward, confirmation of which will be given in June. I will need to make such a request for my schemes for GW:

- LCHE182009: B1008 Ford End - Kerbing improvements LCHE202036;
- Littley Park Cottages, Littley Park Lane, Hartford End - Road markings
- LCHE203002: Barrack Lane j/w Cherry Garden Road, Great Waltham - Footway Improvements

In terms of the precise design to be implemented, I will liaise with Jon Simmons - but this will be subject to the request process.

Responses to your other questions:

**LCHE182051: B1008, Northern approach to Ford End - 40mph buffer**

I will ask if it is normal practice to carry out a post survey.

However, I remind you that the survey taken before the 40mph was implemented, done in Oct 2020, showed that the average speeds were 40mph Eastbound, 30mph Westbound. The survey should be done in the same place so a direct comparison can be made. It will be interesting to see if the 40mph has raised, or lowered speeds, or had no effect.

Highways will not consider a survey until a scheme is bedded in, which will be at least a year after installation. They may not be willing to consider a survey at all as the original survey results did not justify reducing the speed limit.

If GWPC wish to fund a survey, the cost is around £350.

**LCHE182010: B1008 Ford End - Footway improvements.**

The sub committee decided to recommend archiving this scheme. This will no longer be considered by the LHP

The list of "schemes awaiting funding" is very long and the LHP members wanted to reduce it by archiving schemes that they had no intention of collectively supporting. Archiving retains the records, but such schemes will not be considered again unless the originating member wishes to re-submit, but that will need a change to the justification.

**LCHE192028: Ford End - Average speed cameras**

I don't know how to make this any clearer to you! But here goes:

- Cllr Lee Scott (LHP) will not consider whether he will make match funding available until GWPC definitely commit to their half
- I believe that the match funding situation has been on the table for 4 years – the first 2 years of which had a definite decision on match funding from LHP, but the last 2 years, that commitment was not definite. However, Lee Scott has said that if GWPC come up with their half, he will **consider** LHP's half.
- I remind you that schemes are submitted by me – so it is not a question of whether I support them or not – they are my schemes!
- The ball is clearly in GWPC's court! You need to stop procrastinating and decide if you want GWPC to commit to £60,000 for their half. The ASCs directly benefit a small section of the residents, but has to be paid for by all the residents (if a loan). You need to decide whether this is acceptable in principle. Until you do this, nothing else will happen

**LCHE212013: Ringtail Green, Great Waltham - Traffic management improvements**

This has been archived and will no longer be considered by the LHP. The LHP consider that when compared with the numerous other schemes, it comes as a low priority.

**LCHE222014: Ringtail Green, Great Waltham - Gateway signs.**

This is still in validation. If it gets through, it goes into the queue for 23/24 funding for consideration by all the members of the LHP

## **LCHE223011: Great Waltham Primary School, South Street, Great Waltham - Signage improvements.**

This is still in validation. If it gets through, it goes into the queue for 23/24 funding for consideration by all the members of the LHP

I added this one because of requests from a resident and the school. Also, it is likely to be fairly cheap.

I was hoping that GWPC might decide to fund it, rather than it go to the back of a long queue. I am disappointed that you do not support it.

As a final LHP comment, I will say that there are around 50 Parish Councils and 1 District Councils sharing the funding of Chelmsford LHP, which this year is likely to be around £250K. (following the reductions). I represent 11 of those Parish councils. I will continue to lobby for all schemes in my area but I have to negotiate with 13 other LHPs members doing the same. And I will prioritise according to the justifications within my 11 areas.

I understand there may be separate footway/carriage way improvement funding, for which LHPs can make recommendations. When details are released, I can submit requests from GWPC.

## **Ref**

23/1467 To agree the Highways & Transport Committee's recommendation that the Council lobbies the relevant authorities/agencies to change the A120 back-up diversionary route from the B1008 to the B1256. -(Cllr Gilbert).

23/1469 To agree the Highways & Transport Committee's recommendation that the Council lobbies for the reinstatement of signage at Sheepcotes roundabout which directs traffic to the A131/A120. -(Cllr Gilbert).

I have already pursued both of these items, with no success. I refer you to the following correspondence:

- Response for the request for the M11 signs to be reinstated – received from Highways via the then ECC Cllr Aldridge Sept 2020
- Letter to Highways Cabinet member Nov 2020 from GWPC on both issues
- Feb meeting with Cllr Bentley Feb 2021 where it was stated that the signs would not go back – and the reason stated
- July 2022 – response to my question to ask the DfT to remove the back up status

I informed Cllr Martin that I did not see how we could make any further progress on this, until the NE Bypass was built. I have not changed that view.

**M11 signs: Sept 2020**

Thank for your further enquiry of 13 September 2020 seeking a further update on the signage for the M11 at Sheepcotes Roundabout (RAB). Further discussions have taken place with both the LHP and ECC Network Assurance regarding the signs. As mentioned in the previous correspondence, the M11 patches for Sheepcotes RAB were introduced to the Advanced Direction Signs (ADS) as an LHP scheme under LCHE142036 back in 2014 to try and direct through traffic onto the A131 from the A130 rather than going along the B1008 through the villages of Ford End and Barnston. During the detailed design the Design Team held a number of meetings with Network Assurance to discuss and agree the signing strategy at the roundabout. The conclusion from the meeting was that all signs introduced as part of the highway improvements should be developed in line with the Essex County Council Signing Strategy and a decision was taken not to sign the M11 on the new ADS signs installed as part of the project.

It should be noted that the scheme to install the M11 patches back in 2014 by the LHP was carried out against Network Assurance officer advice as this is against the normal rules on strategic route signing. Network Assurance remain of this view. Of course, in the longer term, it is anticipated that the introduction of the new Chelmsford North East Bypass which now has bid funding and is programmed for delivery by 2024 will help address the signing issues at Sheepcotes Roundabout. From a practical perspective, officers have looked at the size and dimensions of the signs that have been installed as part of the recently completed highway improvements at Sheepcotes Roundabout and advise that there is insufficient space on the existing sign faces to accommodate an appropriately sized M11 patch/sub-plate. Therefore any proposals to amend the ADS signs to include signage for the M11 would require the complete replacement of the sign face. This may also have implications upon the post size and locations and the foundations size.

As referred to previously, the Stage 3 Road Safety Audit has identified some changes that are required to signs and lane markings on the approach to Sheepcotes Roundabout to improve lane discipline. However the recommended changes to signage does not include the Advanced Direction Sign, but the smaller lane destination sign which is located on A130 Essex Regiment Way approach to Sheepcotes Roundabout.

In summary, I would like to confirm that the Advanced Direction Signs have been designed and installed following full consultation and agreement with ECC Network Assurance and comply with the Essex County Council Signing Strategy. If a decision is ultimately taken to amend the ADS signs to include signing the M11, this will require the complete replacement of the new sign face and possibly the sign posts and foundations also.

Nov202 – letter to Cabinet member

**Nov 2020 GWPC letter to Cllr Bentley,**

You will be familiar with the long standing problem of traffic related issues affecting residents of Ford End. The B1008 between Chelmsford and Great Dunmow is a very busy route which continues to attract large daily volumes of traffic including a significant number of heavy goods vehicles.

Great Waltham Parish Council and the residents of Ford End have made many attempts over the years to find ways to alleviate the problem. In fact you might recall that you met with Cllr Steel and Cllr Martin along with Cllr John Aldridge in 2018 where you supported in principle the proposal for an average speed camera system through Ford End Village.

The Parish Council and residents of Ford End are very grateful for your support and work continues to raise the necessary funds. Unfortunately the Covid situation has temporarily slowed our efforts

but we have gained the support of the LHP for 50% of the funds and Parish Council is committed to providing a further ten thousand pounds towards the project.

Unfortunately a previous measure put in place to address traffic issues has recently been removed. In 2014 following a request from the Parish Council the LHP supported an initiative to place additional direction signs at the Sheepcotes Roundabout at Little Waltham and on the A120 at Great Dunmow. The purpose of the signs was to direct traffic travelling from Chelmsford to the M11 or Stansted (and vice versa) to use the A131 and A120 rather than the B1008 through Ford End. Following the recent improvement works at Sheepcotes Roundabout, Highways did not re-instate the M11 direction signs via the A131 and A120. This may have been an oversight but it has the effect of removing the encouragement to avoid the B1008 via Ford End.

This matter was brought to the Parish Council's attention by a Ford End resident who wrote to Cllr Aldridge asking for the signs to be re-instated. Cllr Aldridge kindly looked into the matter and Highways responded to him stating that it was no longer within their policy to use M11 direction signs at this location and pointed out the cost implications of correcting the situation.

The Parish Council are very disappointed with this answer and that a decision taken by the LHP as recently as 2014 has been overturned leaving Ford End residents with the probable increase in traffic, in particular the large goods vehicles that would previously have used the directed A131/120 route. The Parish Council have also been informed that the new northern by-pass will see a possible 10% increase in traffic using the B1008 through Ford End village.

Given that the matter is out of the control of Great Waltham Parish Council and the residents of Ford End we would welcome your response to the situation. We are in no doubt that the average speed camera system is the long term solution for Ford End and would welcome any further support you can offer to reach that objective. Alternatively we would hope that you would support the re-instatement of the M11 direction signs at Sheepcotes Roundabout.

Yours sincerely

## **15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021 – meeting with K Bentley**

- M11 signs – Vickey explained logic that having just one sign doesn't help motorists who then have to negotiate 5 roundabouts further on.
- NE bypass – table possibility of signage at Cllr Bentley's meetings with them

## **July 2022 request to DfT**

When DfT approved the reclassification they did heavily caveat that the section from the A131 to Great Dunmow was required to remain available for all traffic as it was the route that traffic would expect to use if there was any event on the A120 or A131, that meant that no physical traffic calming, or weight limits could be applied. The situation to be reviewed when the Chelmsford Northeast bypass was completed

**Alan Lindsay | Transportation Planning & Infrastructure Manager**