

Paul Gadd County Councillor Update

Saffron Walden Town Council – Planning and Transport Committee

13/4/23

[Note, items in italics are repeats from last month, still unresolved]

1. Flooding and drainage issues:

- a. *[Essex Highways have programmed in the South Road blocked drain for major investigative work in early January 2023; This was meant to start on 9/1/23, but there is no sign of activity so I've chased]* BT Openreach have now admitted their responsibility – they laid a cable through the drainpipe! In theory they are repairing it, but seem to be taking a long time – I'm chasing
- b. Bridge Street – I met the drainage expert at Bridge St on 7/3/23; they've jetted all the drains and they seem to be free of obstruction and working properly now despite recent rains, so hopefully this issue is resolved;
- c. Not in Saffron Walden, but I've managed to get Essex Highways to put a new surface road gully on Station Road, Wendens Ambo, just off the junction with the B1383, where there has been regular flooding, and again it's dealt with the recent heavy rain.
- d. *As before; ECC Highways are saying that the High St pavement isn't bad enough to warrant attention*

2. LHP schemes:

- a. The LHP goes from bad to worse - the usual March meeting has now been postponed to some unspecified time in May, we haven't been told what the budget will be for 2023/24, most of the schemes I put forward which should have been completed by 31/3/23 still haven't, and I haven't heard of any progress on any of the outstanding validations
- b. In terms of the LHP schemes that were due for delivery by 31/3/23:
 - i. the following have gone in: Lankester bollards; the town centre 20mph and the dropped kerbs (and I had a very nice letter from someone who is using them regularly);
 - ii. the following should have been completed but haven't:
 1. the TROs for the market square regularisation and pedestrianisation – ECC have clearly only just started looking at them. I'm trying to arrange a meeting with their design engineer, Terry, Lisa, Georgia and me to make some progress;
 2. George St / Hill St builds out – they have produced a design for the George St one which looks fine, but decided not to do the Hill St one! I've asked for both;
 3. Review of SW cycle scheme options and Gt Chesterford to SW cycle path – it seems to be impossible even to get a date for completion;
 4. Path on the west side of Thaxted Rd from Bellway to Peaslands Rd – now sometime this year
 5. Street clutter – I still can't get a date for when this will happen
 6. Water Tower Place – design work apparently now being carried out but I can't get a date for completion;

- c. In terms of the schemes which hadn't even got to validation, I'm still chasing on the various zebra crossing requests and whether we can use the Linden Homes money for some of them and am still waiting for answers. I haven't yet had any new validations, and have now written to the Cabinet Member responsible for Highways to complain – am waiting for him to come back.
- 3. Highways matters affecting the parish
 - a. Lots of reports of broken street lights, which I'm trying to chase;
 - b. The pothole situation is obviously awful. I've tried to report whole streets where they are riddled with potholes (South Rd, Rowntree Way, Peaslands Rd), but have now been told that every one has to be reported separately, so could do with some help.
- 4. Cycling and other sustainable transport:
 - a. I'm still waiting to hear on the LHP schemes and where they have got to – see above;
 - b. UDC have commissioned the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, so that's progress;
 - c. On Kier, Essex Highways have now gone back with their consultation response saying that they aren't sure if they can get cycle paths in along Thaxted Rd and Peaslands Rd so can they have money instead, which is the same hopeless consultation response we have been getting for years. SWTC are drafting a further objection on the basis that either a cycle path is feasible, in which case Kier should pay for a specific one, or if not then it shouldn't be taken into account
 - d. Nothing positive from ECC on sustainable transport – the Place Services Scrutiny Committee that I'm on can't get an answer either on when progress will be made on Essex Highways policies