

Local Highway Improvements 2023-2024 Programme

To: Highways and Transport Committee

Meeting Date: 4th July 2023

From: Executive Director; Place and Sustainability

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2023/068

Outcome: To inform the committee of the outcome of the Local Highway Improvement (LHI) member panels and officer scoring of the Complex and Non-complex LHI applications for 23/24 and to approve the prioritised lists for delivery.

Recommendation: That the committee

a) Note the prioritised lists as attached for the 23/24 programme, and delegate authority to approve these to the Executive Director of Place & Sustainability in consultation with Chair and Vice-Chair, following a review of the moderated officer scoring for those applications in the Non-complex process by the LHI Member Working Group (MWG).

b) Delegate to the Executive Director of Place & Sustainability in consultation with Chair and Vice-Chair to remove schemes that prove to be undeliverable and add new schemes in their place as outlined in the report.

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Member contacts:

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1. Background

- 1.1 The Local Highway Improvement (LHI) initiative provides the opportunity for local community groups, including Parish and Town Councils to promote local highway improvements that would not normally be prioritised nor funded by the County Council. Through the initiative external groups are invited to apply for funding of up to £25,000 per project, subject to those groups providing at least 10% of the total cost of the scheme. The schemes are community driven, giving local people influence over bringing forward highway improvements.
- 1.2 The County Council contributes around £820,000 towards each round of the LHI initiative, with the rest of the funding being provided by the applicant on a scheme-by-scheme basis. This amounts to a total available budget per LHI cycle in the region of £1,100,000.
- 1.3 A new process for scoring and prioritising LHI applications was approved at Highways & Transport (H&T) committee on 4th October, following a cross-party Member Working Group review. Section 2 of this report outlines the processes undertaken to identify the prioritised list of schemes.
- 1.4 In previous years approximately 60 applications have been prioritised for delivery in each funding round. For the 23/24 funding round 162 applications were received countywide. As these figures highlight, the LHI process is popular.

District -	Total number of applications -
Huntingdonshire	38
Cambridge City	55
South Cambridgeshire	42
East Cambridgeshire	12
Fenland	15

An indicative split for the total quantity of Complex and Non-complex applications is as follows, please note this is before the applications went through the officer review and feasibility process:

- Complex – 46
- Non-complex - 116

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 As in previous years, officers completed feasibility studies with applicants in advance of the panel meetings for those LHI's which were classified as Complex under the process, in a bid to provide a more consistent stage of development for applications. The benefit of this stage in the process has been evident at panel meetings.

- 2.2 The panel assessment meetings remain a Member led process, where applicants are invited to present their proposal. Member Panels are used to assess the priorities for funding, based on the available budget for each district. Political Group Leaders appoint Members based on current political proportionality. A Member chair is elected from amongst the Panel Members on the day of the meeting. The panel meetings occurred on the following dates:
- Huntingdonshire – 21st April 2023
 - Cambridge City – 10th May 2023
 - South Cambridgeshire – 11th May 2023
 - East Cambridgeshire – 12th May 2023
 - Fenland – 23rd May 2023
- 2.3 Panel members were asked to consider and score applications to determine how the budget should be allocated for each district area using the newly approved member scoring sheet agreed on 4th October at H&T committee.
- 2.4 For those applications classed as Non-complex, instead of going through the panel these were scored and prioritised by officers. Scoring was undertaken initially individually, and then as a group using the prioritisation matrix approved on 4th October by H&T committee. Moderation sessions were then undertaken before a final score for each application was given.
- 2.5 Prior to this committee the LHI Member Working Group (MWG) was reformed to review the moderated officer scoring for those applications in the Non-complex process. One of these sessions was completed on 31st May 2023. A further session is required with the MWG to complete their review, this will take place shortly. To ensure that the LHI delivery programme stays on track, it is proposed that the approval of the programme / prioritised lists, following the MWG review, is delegated to the Executive Director of Place & Sustainability in consultation with Chair and Vice-Chair.
- 2.6 At this stage it is recommended that the committee note the current projects identified and falling above the red line in the appendix, subject to a final meeting of the LHI MWG, and then the delegated approval to proceed, from the Executive Director of Place & Sustainability in consultation with Chair and Vice-Chair, to ensure the LHI programme stays on track.
- 2.7 Should any applications subsequently prove unfeasible, or the actual cost be less than expected, further applications from the priority list may be allocated with the available funding later in the year if these are identified before the end of November 2023. This deadline is imposed to ensure current projects do not overrun into the next LHI programme. If schemes are discontinued after this date, then the money will roll into the next programme funding round.
- 2.8 All estimated scheme costs incorporate the estimated cost of time spent by officers designing, managing, and delivering each project. The actual cost of the new feasibility stage, which has recently been completed, has been top sliced from each district area budget before being allocated to applications and is identified in item 2.11.

- 2.9 This recharge of both the feasibility and officer project delivery costs was agreed by Highways & Infrastructure Committee in July 2017, to better reflect the actual cost to the authority of delivering the LHI Initiative.
- 2.10 The funding split for Complex and Non-complex applications was agreed to be 50% of the remaining available budget apportioned to each category, in each district area. In areas where the total value of the Complex projects applied for didn't reach this, the remainder of the budget would be reassigned to fund further Non-complex applications in the same district. Should no further funding be required within the district where the money was originally assigned, then the MWG have recommended that the next highest scoring Complex application across the county should be promoted. This is evidenced in the East Cambridgeshire funding split between the two processes in item 2.11, and why a further South Cambridgeshire application, has been prioritised for delivery using this residual funding. A similar reallocation of funding has also occurred for Fenland, moving the remaining unallocated spend from East Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire to enable the delivery of another complex application, this is a comparatively minimal amount in addition to the funding already available in Fenland as shown below in item 2.11.
- 2.11 The LHI budget has remained at the same level as for 2022/23 at £820,000 and has been allocated proportionally for each district area within Cambridgeshire. This allocation was approved in the Integrated Transport Block paper which went before H&T committee on 7th March 2023. A fixed amount has been top sliced from the budget available for each district to cover officer time during the LHI feasibility process, which is consistent with the amount taken from the 22/23 funding allocation. The allocations for each district area are as follows:

District	Initial Budget	Feasibility	Remaining budget	Complex	Non - complex	Unassigned budget
East Cambridgeshire	£106,000	£6,180	£99,820	£25,000	£48,300	£26,520 ^(*1)
Fenland	£131,200	£6,100	£125,100	£74,092	£27,950	£23,058 ^(*2)
Huntingdonshire	£229,800	£11,960	£218,040	£108,740	£106,272	£3,028 ^(*3)
South Cambridgeshire	£189,000	£16,660	£171,940	£71,138	£99,850	£952.64
Cambridge City	£164,000	£13,260	£150,740	£75,000	£73,090	£2,650
Totals	£820,000	£54,160	£765,640	£377,673	£356,787	£56,209 ^(*4)

*(*1) £25,000 of funding re-allocated to South Cambridgeshire as per item 2.10.*

*(*2/3) Residual funding re-allocated from Huntingdonshire & East Cambridgeshire to Fenland along with the existing £23,058 underspend in Fenland to deliver an additional complex LHI.*

*(*4) Not accounting for the proposed re-allocations recommended as part of this report.*

- 2.12 The prioritised list of schemes for each district area can be found in Appendix A of this report. There is a separate list of Complex and Non-Complex schemes for each District. Each list also highlights the point at which the budget for each district area is fully allocated to schemes, this is indicated by a red dashed line.
- 2.13 The delivery of the carryover projects and the new 22/23 LHI programme is ongoing and

progressing well, with interested parties being able to review progress on our dedicated LHI webpage, ([Local Highway Improvement funding - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)). Of the remaining LHI's yet to be completed on site, all but five are now with our contractor for pricing, programming and delivery meaning we can approach this next tranche without any outstanding projects.

2.14 The application window proposed for the next LHI application round will be as follows: -

- Application window opens - Friday 27th October 2023
- Application window closes - Friday 12th January 2024 at midday
- Feasibility studies undertaken - February to May 2024
- Panel meetings – June / July 2024
- Report to committee including prioritised list for approval - September 2024

3. Alignment with ambitions

3.1 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- A number of projects recommended for delivery will promote active travel and could encourage users to make a switch from motorised, to non-motorised forms of transport, especially for local journeys.
- A number of projects promote improved access to locally available public transport.
- Recycled rubberised, instead of conventionally constructed, traffic calming products are proposed as default where possible, reducing the carbon implications now and longer term.

3.2 Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- LHI schemes improve connectivity and safety on the network and introduce green features where possible, using recycled products such as rubberized traffic calming products.

3.3 Health inequalities are reduced

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Many of the schemes that are brought forward have outcomes that improve road safety, particularly for vulnerable users, for example the young, elderly, or particular user types, such as pedestrians and cyclists in local communities.

3.4 People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Many of the schemes that are brought forward have outcomes that improve road safety, particularly for vulnerable users, for example the young, elderly, or particular user types, such as pedestrians and cyclists.

3.5 Helping people out of poverty and income inequality

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Investing in local communities, particularly the issues that are often of greatest local concern, promotes community development and provides benefits to residents, at a localised level.

3.6 Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Investing in local communities, particularly the issues that are often of greatest local concern, promotes community development and provides benefits to residents, at a localised level.

3.7 Children and young people have opportunities to thrive

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Investing in local communities, particularly the issues that are often of greatest local concern, promotes community development and provides benefits to residents, (of all demographics), at a localised level.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

The required resources have been made available and funded from allocated budgets to deliver the LHI programme, the LHI budget information is detailed in section 2.11.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

Delivered from existing resources and the Term Service Framework with our contracted partner Milestone, no issues to report.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The Member led Panels adopt a consistent scoring system, as will the prioritisation matrix with each approach prioritising proposals within the district against their district budget. Many of the schemes will improve road safety for vulnerable users such as the young, elderly and disability groups. The LHI initiative empowers community groups to bring forward improvements and gives local people a real influence over bringing forward improvements that benefit their local community. The new approach to prioritisation and delivery has already been reviewed through the councils Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process and can be found in the document link below.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

Further engagement and consultation will take place on each project as it is developed, in conjunction with the applicant.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The LHI initiative gives local people a real influence over highway improvements in their community. The Council will work closely with the successful applicants and local community to help deliver the improvements that have been identified. The Local Member will be a key part of this process and will be involved throughout the development and delivery of each scheme.

4.7 Public Health Implications

Most schemes aim to improve road safety, which may subsequently contribute to reducing the risk of accident injuries on the network. Some schemes promote Active Travel.

4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas

4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: **neutral**

Explanation: No positive or negative impacts identified for works listed in the report.

4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: **neutral**

Explanation: No positive or negative impacts identified for works listed in the report, although some of the suggested improvements may contribute positively to increased use of non-motorised transport for local trips.

4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats, and land management.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: **neutral**

Explanation: No positive or negative impacts identified for works listed in the report.

4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: **negative**

Explanation: Some projects will generate waste from shallow excavations to construct new highway features, although comparative to other programmes this is minimal due to the types of schemes being installed. Wherever possible bolt down / surface level features will be utilised instead of conventional across the programme to mitigate this.

4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability, and management:

Positive/neutral/negative Status: **neutral**

Explanation: No positive or negative impacts identified for works listed in the report.

4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: **negative**

Explanation: Potential increases in air pollution because of some of the schemes listed in the report, for example those utilising vertical or horizontal calming measures such as speed cushions or build outs, could result in increased incidences of acceleration and deceleration in the vicinity of the new features.

4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: **neutral**

Explanation: No positive or negative impacts identified for works listed in the report.

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?

Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement and Commercial?

Yes

Name of Officer: Clare Ellis

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or Pathfinder Legal?

Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Emma Duncan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your EqIA Super User?

Yes

Name of Officer: Mike Williams

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?

Yes

Name of Officer: Sarah Silk

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?

Yes

Name of Officer: Sue Procter

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health?

Yes

Name of Officer: Iain Green

If a Key decision, have any Climate Change and Environment implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer?

Yes

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

5. Source documents guidance

5.1 Source documents

1. A link to the 4th of October 2022 Local Highway Improvement Member Working Group Report

2. A link to the 7th of March 2023 Integrated Transport Block Funding Allocation Approval 2023-24

5.2 Location

Please see the following links to webpages on the County Councils website -

1. [Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](#)
2. [Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](#)