# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT - CCC553384363

**Which service and directorate are you submitting this for (this may not be your service and directorate):**

| Directorate | Service | Team |
|---|---|---|
| Place and Sustainability | Asst Director - Project Delivery | Asst Director - Project Delivery |

**Your name:** Joshua Rutherford

**Your job title:** Group Manager

**Your directorate, service and team:**

| Directorate | Service | Team |
|---|---|---|
| Place and Sustainability | Asst Director - Project Delivery | Asst Director - Project Delivery |

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**Proposal being assessed:** Local Highway Improvement Process Changes

**Business plan proposal number:** N/A

**Key service delivery objectives and outcomes:** 1.1    The existing Local Highway Improvement (LHI) initiative provides the opportunity for local groups, including Parish and Town Councils to promote local highway improvements in their community 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. This results in sufficient funding to deliver around 70 schemes countywide per cycle out of the 170 applications received. 1.3    As the above application figures highlight the LHI process is popular and consistently oversubscribed. The existing process is a result of a recent review conducted by Members and approved by the Highways and Transport Committee in October 2022.The key issues the committee were looking to understand and address included; why certain types of projects take longer to be delivered, the time and resources needed from all parties involved in the process to progress an application, and how to improve how applications are scored and assessed. 1.4    It was agreed by the committee (in October 2022, see Document.ashx (cmis.uk.com)) following a cross party Member Working Group (MWG) that various changes to the process would be implemented. The same committee also acknowledged that there may be a further need to refine these changes following the conclusion of the 23/24 application process when any lessons learnt following use of the new process would become evident.

**What is the proposal:** All the following are minor tweaks to the process already in place and

reviewed via previous EIA -  Existing process Recommended change Reason for change Speed limit applications falling under the Non-complex part of the funding process. Move speed limit applications to the complex part of the funding process. Due to the indicative costs of these types of projects, the move to complex means more funding from CCC is made available to the applicant, reducing the amount a third party is expected to fund themselves.  Wording, question 2 of the prioritisation matrix scoring criteria.  Could the suggested scheme increase safety for highway users?  (Scoring: cumulative 0 - 5. Could the scheme increase safety for users? Evidence of how the scheme will need make it safer for different user groups should be referenced during application. Is it near to a school, or on a route used by cyclists for example, one mark for each, maximum of 5).  Amended to:  (Scoring: cumulative 0 - 6. Could the scheme increase safety for users? Evidence of how the scheme will need make it safer for different user groups should be referenced during application. Is it near to a school, or on a route used by cyclists for example, one mark for each, maximum of 5. Will the requested improvement help reduce vehicle speeds, for example the application is for an MVAS or a buffer zone, additional score of 1 mark to be awarded). This addresses an action from the committee to look at how buffer zones could be given greater prominence and support through the LHI process. Wording, question 3 of the prioritisation matrix and member scoring sheet scoring criteria.  Could the suggested scheme contribute positively to public health?  (Scoring: cumulative 0 - 5. Could the scheme increase safety for users of non-motorised forms of transport (0 - 3 marks) and will it encourage an uptake in healthy activities such as walking, cycling and horse-riding (0 - 2 marks)).  Amended to:  Could the suggested scheme contribute positively to sustainable transport, public transport & health? (Scoring: cumulative 0 - 6. Could the scheme increase the use of non-motorised forms of transport (2 marks) or provide easier access to or for public transport (2 marks) and will it encourage an uptake in healthy activities such as walking, cycling and horse-riding (2 marks)). This now allows for impacts on public transport to be scored and assessed, as well as benefits to active travel. LHI webpages and application documents Improve the accessibility, prominence, and layout of the current LHI webpages on the CCC website. Changes included amendments to graphics, text, and descriptions.  The driver behind this was to ensure the visitor experience for applicants is as easy and streamlined as possible and provide a route to application which can be understood by everyone and provide one public facing location where everyone can go to find out more about the process and progress of their successful applications.  Weight limit applications falling under the Non-complex part of the funding process. Move weight limit applications to the complex part of the LHI process. Due to the indicative costs of these types of projects and the fact members have indicated they would like to more involved in the review and approval process for these types of applications, the move to complex means more funding from CCC is made available to the applicant, and that these will now be assessed by the member panel for the relevant district area.

**What information did you use to assess who would be affected by this proposal?:** Customer feedback Member feedback User feedback Building on lessons learnt from the previous funding round.

**Are there any gaps in the information you used to assess who would be affected by this proposal?:** Yes

**Does the proposal cover:** All service users/customers/service provision countywide

**Which particular employee groups/service user groups will be affected by this proposal?:** This proposal potentially impacts all residents / users in Cambridgeshire as anyone can apply to the LHI process for funding. This is however a bottom up process which relies on individuals, parishes, towns, cities or community groups to actively apply for funding to deliver highway

improvements in their community. The change also affects the internal team which will deliver the work although it is a revised, rather than completely new process.

**Does the proposal relate to the equality objectives set by the Council's Single Equality Strategy?:** No

**Will people with particular protected characteristics or people experiencing socio-economic inequalities be over/under represented in affected groups:** Don't know

**Does the proposal relate to services that have been identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics/who are experiencing socio-economic inequalities?:** No

**Does the proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?:** Yes

**What is the significance of the impact on affected persons?:** The aim of the revised LHI process is to make it easier for users to apply, and to ensure the process reaches a wider audience than it does currently by allowing more groups to apply. The changes which are initially requested by the local communities who apply for funding will be delivered in a more timely manner than they are through the current process, and this means a positive impact on communities sooner. As this is a countywide process change this impacts those areas with known inequalities in the same way it impacts others areas within Cambridgeshire.

**Category of the work being planned:** Process

**Research, data and /or statistical evidence:** Qualitative data / feedback was used for this via a member working group review process. There was some reference to data available through Cambridgeshire Insights for the deprivation data and populations countywide. All users groups were considered during the review, an area of significant improvement will be the website with accessibility and readability being of primary focus, as well as how we reach inexperienced or irregular internet users.

**Consultation evidence:** A cross party member working group have conducted a review of the process following feedback from users and officers. Consultation on the changes to the process has been done through this group informally, acting on the feedback received from users countywide. The proposals are due to be reviewed and approved by members at an upcoming committee.

**Based on all the evidence you have reviewed/gathered, what positive impacts are anticipated from this proposal?:** Improved accessibility for users. Improved readability for users. Hoped for, greater levels of participation from across different users groups as a result of the above.

**Based on consultation evidence or similar, what negative impacts are anticipated from this proposal?:** These are in line with those identified in the previous EIA, and carryover from this as follows, although we have tried to go as far as possible to mitigate these - Age There is the potential that moving the process to wholly online will have a negative impact on users who aren't as confident using IT equipment. This is more prevalent amongst the elderly who are less inclined to use technology. Should this situation arise officers will be contactable for further discussion via email, and this will be clearly flagged on the online applicaiton form to assist the individual making the applicaiton. If needed the officer can make the online application on the individuals behalf in cooperation with them, or input from a paper copy provided to the applicant to complete in lieu of

the online form. It has been agreed that the digital approach is more acceptable in general and reduces the amount of duplication amongst applicants, officers and members, making the process as efficient as possible up front. Disability There is the potential that moving the process to wholly online will have a negative impact on users who aren't as confident using IT equipment. This is more prevalent amongst certain groups who are less inclined to use technology or find it difficult to do so. The online forms and approach will be made as accessible as possible for people with disabilities in line with CCC policies on the subject. Should a situation arise where there are issues with the online approach for the applicant then officers will be contactable for further discussion, and this will be clearly flagged on the online application form to assist the individual making the application. If needed the officer can make the online application on the individual's behalf in cooperation with them, or input from a paper copy provided to the applicant to complete in lieu of the online form. It has been agreed that the digital approach is more acceptable in general and reduces the amount of duplication amongst applicants, officers, and members, making the process as efficient as possible up front.

**How will the process of change be managed?:** Stakeholders will be updated regarding the process changes along with how to guides. Training and interactive sessions on the changes will be offered between users and officers.  These changes are minor.

**How will the impacts during the change process be monitored and improvements made (where required)?:** Drop in sessions with users at the start of the changed applications process, part way through, and at the end to pick up any issues / questions and address them before they become a big issue.

**Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan:**

| Details of negative impact (e.g. worse treatment/outcomes) | Groups affected | Severity of impact | Action to mitigate impact with reasons/evidence to support this or justification for retaining negative impact | Who by | When by |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |

| Details of negative impact (e.g. worse treatment/outcomes) | Groups affected | Severity of impact | Action to mitigate impact with reasons/evidence to support this or justification for retaining negative impact | Who by | When by |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Given how minor these adjustments are to the existing process, we don't anticipate a negative impact as a result of them. | Disability | Low | There is the potential that moving the process to wholly online will have a negative impact on users who aren't as confident using IT equipment. This is more prevalent amongst certain groups who are less inclined to use technology or find it difficult to do so. The online forms and approach will be made as accessible as possible for people with disabilities in line with CCC policies on the subject. Should a situation arise where there are issues with the online approach for the applicant then officers will be contactable for further discussion, and this will be clearly flagged on the online application form to assist the individual making the application. If needed the officer can make the online application on the individual&rsquo;s behalf in cooperation with them, or input from a paper copy provided to the applicant to complete in lieu of the online form. It has been agreed that the digital approach is more acceptable in general and reduces the amount of duplication amongst applicants, officers, and members, making the process as efficient as possible up front.   | Lead officer | 12/01/2024 |

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**Head of service:** Michael Williams

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**Confirmation:** I confirm that this HoS is correct