

LHI 24-25 Process Update Report

To: Highways & Transport Committee

Meeting Date: 5th December 2023

From: Executive Director Place & Sustainability

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2023/093

Outcome: The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of the outcome of the Local Highway Improvement (LHI) member working group (MWG) review and to consider the suggested recommendations from the group to improve the existing LHI process in time for use in the 24/25 application round.

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to

- a) Approve the list of officer recommendations as identified in the table found under item 2.1 below in time for implementation prior to the 24/25 round of LHI applications.
- b) Approve the re-formation of the LHI member working group to review the Non-complex scheme scores once the prioritisation by officers has been completed, and the re-formation of the same group to review the revised LHI process, as and when needed.
- c) Delegate authority to the Executive Director Place & Sustainability, in consultation with Chair and Vice Chair of Highways & Transport committee to make changes to the LHI process as and when required, if the proposed changes are agreed and recommended by five or more members of the cross party LHI member working group.

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1. Background

- 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.
- 1.5 The cross-party working group was politically proportional and consisted of the following members: Cllr Beckett (Chair), Cllr Shailer, Cllr Dupre, Cllr Taylor, Cllr King, Cllr Sharp and Cllr McGuire, (replaced on the group by Cllr Gardener). The group met virtually between July and October to review the current LHI process and agree changes. The group was well attended and worked through the new LHI process session by session, arriving at the recommendations below in 2.1 via majority decision.

2. Main Issues

2.1 The following table identifies the changes identified by the MWG relative to the existing part of the process:

Existing process	Recommended change	Reason for change
<p>Speed limit applications falling under the Non-complex part of the funding process.</p>	<p>Move speed limit applications to the complex part of the funding process.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Wording, question 2 of the prioritisation matrix scoring criteria.</p> <p>Could the suggested scheme increase safety for highway users?</p> <p>(Scoring: cumulative 0-5. Could the scheme increase safety for users? Evidence of how the scheme will 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)</p>	<p>Amended to:</p> <p>(Scoring: cumulative 0 - 6. Could the scheme increase safety for users? Evidence of how the scheme will 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).</p>	<p>This addresses an action from the committee to look at how buffer zones could be given greater prominence and support through the LHI process.</p>
<p>Wording, question 3 of the prioritisation matrix and member scoring sheet scoring criteria.</p> <p>Could the suggested scheme contribute positively to public health?</p>	<p>Amended to:</p> <p>Could the suggested scheme contribute positively to sustainable transport, public transport & health?</p> <p>(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</p>	<p>This now allows for impacts on public transport to be scored and assessed, as well as the benefits of active travel and positive health impacts.</p>

Existing process	Recommended change	Reason for change
<p>(Scoring: cumulative 0-5. Could the scheme increase safety for users of non-motorised forms of transport (-3 marks) and will it encourage an uptake in healthy activities such as walking, cycling and horse-riding (0-2 marks)).</p>	<p>marks) and will it encourage an uptake in healthy activities such as walking, cycling and horse-riding (2 marks)).</p>	
<p>LHI webpages and application documents</p>	<p>Improve the accessibility, prominence, and layout of the current LHI webpages on the CCC website. Changes included amendments to graphics, text, and descriptions.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Weight limit applications falling under the Non-complex part of the funding process.</p>	<p>Move weight limit applications to the complex part of the LHI process.</p>	<p>Due to the indicative costs of these types of projects and the fact members have indicated they would like to be 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.</p>
<p>N/A – New process</p>	<p>Customer satisfaction survey to be circulated to applicants upon completion of each year's delivery programme. This will collect quantitative data on the following key LHI process areas:</p>	<p>To meet a previously agreed LHI key performance indicator (KPI)</p>

Existing process	Recommended change	Reason for change
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying • Panel day • Communication • Programme • Change / Risk management • Delivery • Budget • Impact of project 	
N/A – New process	Expression of Interest survey to be circulated prior to the application window opening to provide officers and members with an idea about the volume of applications to be submitted.	Trialled this year for the 24/25 process and worked well.
N/A – New process	Cambridge City complex member scoring panel to be made up from current Cambridge Joint Area Committee (CJAC) members.	Devolving decision making for local community issues to the locally elected representatives.

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:

- 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:

- 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:

- Many of the schemes that are brought forward have outcomes that improve road safety, health, and wellbeing particularly for the vulnerable and users from more deprived areas, for example the young, elderly, or user types, such as pedestrians and cyclists in local communities by providing links to more affordable means of transport which can be accessed by all.

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

- 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:

- 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:

- 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:

- 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. The LHI programme consistently delivers improvements with a benefit to road safety in the vicinity of schools, or on routes to schools.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

This report identifies a minor change to the existing process. These changes aren't expected to have any impact on resource or cost given their relatively minor nature.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category as the LHI programme will be delivered via the existing highway term services contract procured in 2017, with all work being within scope of said contract. This paper recommends several minor changes to the existing process with no procurement implications.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

This paper recommends several minor changes to the existing process with no statutory, legal or risk implications.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implication

The officer led scoring adopts a consistent approach, prioritising proposals countywide within existing budgets. Many of the schemes will improve road safety for vulnerable users such as the young, elderly and disability groups. The LHI process empowers community groups to have an influence on implementing positive changes to the public highway in their own communities and gives local people a real influence over bringing forward improvements that benefit them. The approach to prioritisation and delivery has also been reviewed through the councils Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process, with a copy attached.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category and further engagement and consultation will take place on each project as it is developed, in conjunction with the applicant. Prior to this, the changes to process will be discussed with applicants and members at online engagement sessions.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The LHI process gives local people a real influence over speed limits 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. These changes have been arrived at via a cross-party member working group.

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. It is expected that some of the schemes, once installed will help promote and encourage Active Travel.

- 4.8 Climate Change and Environment Implications on Priority Areas (See further guidance in Appendix 2):
- 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: **Positive**
Explanation: It is likely that the suggested improvements will contribute positively to this through the increased promotion of schemes which promote non-motorised forms of 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: All projects will generate waste from excavations to install new posts, although comparative to other programmes this is minimal due to the types of schemes being installed.
- 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: **Positive**
Explanation: It is likely that the suggested improvements will contribute positively to increased used of non-motorised transport for local trips, whilst numerous studies have flagged decreased particulates and air pollution levels when vehicle speeds are lower.
- 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: Stephen Randall

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

Yes

Name of Officer: David Allatt

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: David Allatt

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

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

5.2 Location

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