

Report title: Local Highway Improvement 2022/23 Programme and Review Process

To: Highways and Transport Committee

Meeting Date: 26th April 2022

From: Steve Cox, Executive Director for Place and Economy.

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2022/054

Outcome: To inform committee of the outcome of the prioritisation of Local Highway Improvement applications for the year 2022-23 by Member Panels in each District Council area, seek approval of that programme and agree to review the process via the formation of a Member Working Group.

Recommendation: That the committee

- a) approves the prioritised list of Local Highway Improvements schemes for 2022/23 for each District Council area, provided in Appendix B numbers 1-5 inclusive; and
- b) approves the formation of a cross party Member Working Group to review the current processes and bring any proposed changes to this committee for approval in Autumn 2022.

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1. Background

- 1.1 The Local Highway Improvement (LHI) initiative invites community groups to apply for funding of up to £15,000 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 in their community that would not normally be prioritised nor funded by the Council.
- 1.2 Where applications involve ongoing operational costs such as the cost of power supplies for measures such as zebra crossings, the applicant is expected to meet these ongoing costs and become responsible for the asset itself where they are better placed to do so.
- 1.3 Section two of the report outlines the processes undertaken to identify the prioritised list of schemes annually.
- 1.4 The current LHI process, as illustrated in Appendix A is both complex and time consuming, and several Members have requested the opportunity to review the process.
- 1.5 It is proposed that a cross party Member Working Group is established to look at how LHI's are currently delivered and recommend a new way of working that delivers the objectives of the programme more efficiently. The group will work with public health to incorporate health impacts of schemes into the scoring matrix.
- 1.6 It is anticipated that any agreed changes would come into effect in time for the 2023/24 LHI process.
- 1.7 The 2021/22 LHI programme was not approved until the committee on 27th July 2021. This late approval impacted the delivery period available for the 2021/22 programme comprising of 86 number of schemes. Of these schemes 27 number have been delivered on site, meaning the 2021/22 programme is only 31 percentage complete by the end March 2022, and the remaining schemes will be delivered in 2022/23. The following table illustrates the project stage of the remaining LHI's, including those delayed from previous years, with the majority expected to delivered and constructed by the end of August 2022. A summary of the status of the outstanding schemes is provided in the table below.

Schemes being Designed	Schemes being Priced by the Contractor	Schemes being Programmed for Construction
34	12	27

- 1.8 This performance has been achieved despite significant resource pressures on the LHI Team, which is currently comprises 20 FTE posts with a vacancy rate of 60% (12 roles). The Council's partners including Milestone and Atkins have supported delivery through 2021/22. It is the Council's intention to bring in additional interim resources in the short term to support the LHI team to fill the remaining vacancies, as was supported at the 8 March 2022 committee Resources Report. It should be noted that there will be on ongoing resource pressure within this team areas whilst longer term solutions including rolling

recruitment and grow your own programmes are implemented and take effect later in 2022, again as detailed in the Resources Report to the March committee.

- 1.9 As it stands 73 LHI schemes, including those delayed from previous years, with a combined value of £440,000 are scheduled to be carried over into the new financial year.
- 1.10 Other contributing factors to programme delays include applicant approval times where local consultations have taken place, availability of supply chain resources, lead in times for street furniture and other bespoke items such as rubberised speed cushions, posts, and lighting columns. Vacancies elsewhere in the organisation, such as in the Road Safety Team who carry out the design audits prior to LHI's being priced and delivered have also been a contributing factor, with the time taken to turnaround safety audits having risen by 50%.

2. 2022/23 Local Highway Improvement Scheme Programme

- 2.1 As in previous years, officers completed feasibility studies with applicants in advance of the panel meetings, 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 have been set up 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.
- 2.3 Panel members were asked to consider and score applications to determine how the budget should be allocated. The panels adopted a scoring system assessing four categories; persistent problem, road safety, community improvement and added value. Each category was scored out of five and the average across all Panel Members was then applied to rank applications. Panel members were not permitted to score applications in their own division.
- 2.4 The rationale for proposing which applications are delivered is based upon the scoring system and available budget per district area. The scoring criteria is as follows:
 - Score 0 Fails to deliver any improvement
 - Score 1 Delivers negligible improvement/ aims of the LHI Initiative
 - Score 2 Delivers limited improvement/ aims of the LHI Initiative
 - Score 3 Delivers some improvement/ aims of the LHI Initiative
 - Score 4 Delivers substantial improvement/ aims of the LHI Initiative
 - Score 5 Delivers exceptional improvement/ aims of the LHI Initiative
- 2.5 It is recommended that applications scoring 1 or less should not be implemented, as the scoring indicates that the project delivers negligible improvements/aims of the LHI Initiative.
- 2.6 It is then recommended that projects be approved for delivery, working down from the highest score to the lowest, until the budget for the district area is fully allocated.
- 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 funding later in the year.

- 2.8 All estimated scheme costs incorporate the estimated cost of time spent by officers designing, managing, and delivering. 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.
- 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 LHI budget has increased to £820,000 for 2022/23 from £807,000 in the previous year, and has been allocated to each district area in the same way as in 2021/22 as follows:

District	Initial Budget	Feasibility	Remaining Available Budget
East Cambridgeshire	£ 106,600.00	£ 6,780.00	£ 99,820.00
Fenland	£ 131,200.00	£ 6,100.00	£ 125,100.00
Huntingdonshire	£ 229,600.00	£11,560.00	£ 218,040.00
South Cambridgeshire	£ 188,600.00	£16,660.00	£ 171,940.00
Cambridge City	£ 164,000.00	£13,260.00	£ 150,740.00
TOTAL	£ 820,000.00	£54,360.00	£ 765,640.00

- 2.11 The prioritised list of schemes for each district area can be found in Appendix B of this report. Each list also highlights the point at which the budget for each district area is fully allocated to schemes, indicated by a red dashed line.

Appendix B includes the following areas:

1. Cambridge City
2. East Cambridgeshire
3. Fenland
4. Huntingdonshire
5. South Cambridgeshire

2023/24 Local Highway Improvement Scheme Programme

- 2.12 The application window proposed below for LHI applications for the 2023/24 programme, is as follows:

Application window opens – Monday 3rd October 2022

Application window closes - Friday 18th November 2022 at midnight

Feasibility studies undertaken – December 2022 to March 2023

Panel meetings – March to April 2023

Report to committee including prioritised list for approval - June 2023

Programming, design, and consultation with applicants - July 2023 to February 2024

Pricing and construction – March 2024 to July 2024

- 2.13 This has been programmed to allow sufficient time for any agreed changes arising from the LHI working group to be implemented before the programme commences in October 2022.

- 2.14 The indicative programme detailed for 2023/24 may be adjusted, dependent on the proposed changes to the process to be brought forward by the Member Working Group and approved by the committee in Autumn 2022.

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

3.1 Communities at the heart of everything we do

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.

3.2 A good quality of life for everyone

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.

3.3 Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full

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.

3.4 Cambridgeshire: a well-connected, safe, clean, green environment

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

3.5 Protecting and caring for those who need us

There are no significant implications for this category.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

The required resources have been made available and funded from allocated budgets to deliver the LHI programme for 2022/23, which will be funded from the Highways capital budget. The review will seek possible efficiencies.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

Delivered from existing resources and the Term Service Framework with 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, each prioritising proposals within the district against their district budget (paragraphs 2.3 and 2.10). 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.

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

The majority of 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.

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: neutral

Explanation: The schemes will produce waste during the construction phases, however any impact will be minimised by the choice of construction materials and maximising opportunities for recycling, including aggregates, concrete and re-use of bituminous material. Further where suitable as the end product, existing materials will be retained within the schemes.

- 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 as a result of some of the schemes listed in the report, for example those utilising physical vertical or horizontal features such as speed cushions or kerbed build outs.
- 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 LGSS Head of Procurement? Yes

Name of Officer: Clare Ellis

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

Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?

Yes

Name of Officer: Elsa Evans

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 Proctor

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health? Yes

Name of Officer: Kate Parker

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

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

5. Source documents

5.1 Source documents

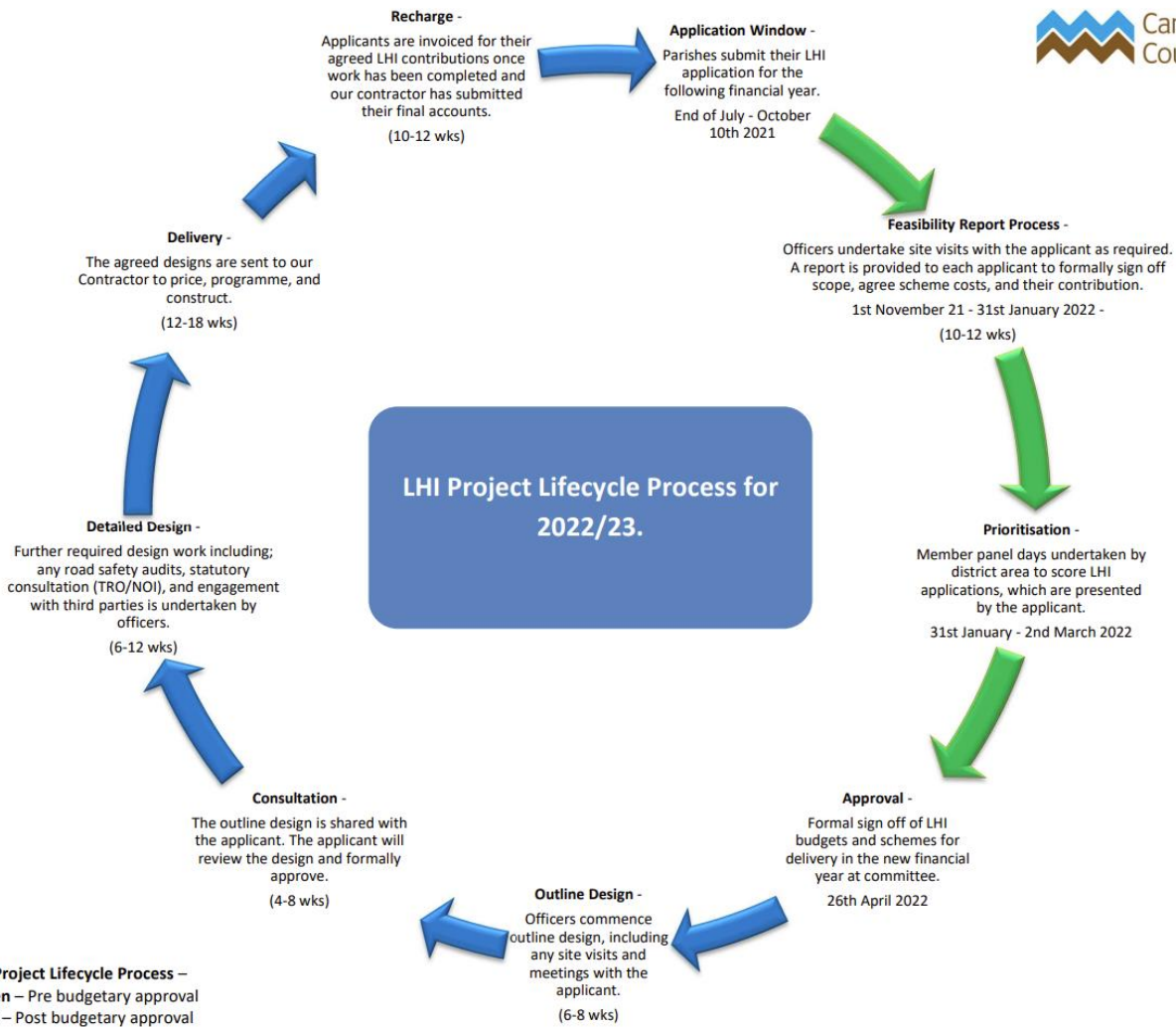
- Prioritised list of LHI schemes by District area for delivery in 2022/23.

5.2 Location

[Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Committees > Highways and Transport Committee \(cmis.uk.com\)](#)

Appendix A

LHI Project Lifecycle Process for 22/23 Schemes



Appendix B includes the following areas:

- B1. Cambridge City
- B2. East Cambridgeshire
- B3. Fenland
- B4. Huntingdonshire
- B5. South Cambridgeshire