

Local Highway Improvement (LHI) Proposed Member Working Group

To: Highways & Transport Committee
Meeting Date: 1st December 2020
From: Steve Cox – Executive Director, Place and Economy

Electoral division(s): All
Forward Plan ref: N/A
Key decision: No

Outcome: To establish a member working group to review the Local Highway Improvement (LHI) scheme with any changes to be implemented for schemes to be delivered in the 2022/23 financial year.

Recommendation: Committee is asked to:

a) Nominate 6 Members to form the working group
b) Agree the timescale for the outcome of the review to be returned to Committee based on the options outlined in 2.9 and 2.10.

Officer contact:
Name: Matt Staton
Post: Highway Projects & Road Safety Manager
Email: matt.staton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01223 699652

Member contacts:
Names: Councillors Ian Bates & Mark Howell
Post: Chair/Vice-Chair
Email: ian.bates@cambridgeshire.gov.uk, mark.howell@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01223 706398

1. Background

- 1.1 The Local Highway Improvement scheme is a popular initiative that allows local communities the opportunity to bid for Council funding towards local highway projects.
- 1.2 For 2020/21 the scheme has an overall budget of £807k and 90 schemes approved for delivery. In addition, 152 applications have been received for delivery in 2021/22.
- 1.3 Applications are invited once a year for the scheme which then follows a three stage process as outlined below:

- Stage 1 - Feasibility

Once an initial application has been submitted, it will be assessed by the local highways project team. They will consider the options available that best meet the objectives of the application, including any solutions suggested. A road safety and policy review will also be included and an estimate of the cost (including any ongoing maintenance impacts) and delivery timescale will also be established.

Once these checks have been completed, the highways team will contact the applicant to discuss the outcome and work with them to refine the application throughout May to September. The applicant will then need to decide whether to submit this final updated application for assessment by the LHI Member Advisory Panel for the area, which are held in October each year.

If the feasibility assessment identifies that any solutions suggested are not deliverable and we are not able to agree on any suitable alternatives, then we will not take the application forward to the LHI Member Advisory Panel. The applicant may appeal this decision in writing via the local County Councillor, who will bring the appeal to the Chair of the Highways and Infrastructure Committee and Executive Director of Place and Economy for a final decision.

- Stage 2 - Prioritisation

The application will be scored out of five against each of the aims of the LHI Initiative by the Member Advisory Panel, made up of County Councillors from the district area, or County and City Councillors in Cambridge. The applicant will also be invited to present the application directly to the panel. This is the chance to highlight the benefits of the scheme and will give Councillors an opportunity to ask any further questions to help them prioritise your proposal.

The average score across the four LHI aims will be used to prioritise applications into a list for each district area. These district lists are then presented to the Highways and Transport Committee for approval. Funding is allocated to applications in priority order until fully allocated.

- Stage 3 - Delivery

If the application receives funding, the applicant will be asked to confirm in writing that they agree to provide the agreed contribution and approve commencement of the scheme.

If we do not receive the above, or if circumstances have changed, we will reallocate funding to the next prioritised application. Funding cannot be carried forward into future years.

The applicant will be invoiced for their contribution to the scheme on completion of the works

- 1.4 Small-scale refinements to the process have been undertaken in previous years, however, discussion and actions raised from previous committee meetings suggest a wider review is required and this paper outlines terms of reference for a member working party to lead this work.

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 It is proposed a cross-party working group of 6 members is formed in order to work with officers to review the LHI scheme. In order to ensure appropriate representation, based on a working group of 6 members, the group should consist of the following:
- 2.2 Four [4] members from the Conservative group, one [1] member from the Liberal Democrat group and one [1] member from the Labour group.
- 2.3 The above representatives should be from divisions covering the range of communities across Cambridgeshire, including small and large parishes, towns and city wards.
- 2.4 In addition to Members, other stakeholders or community groups should be considered in relation to how their views and ideas could be taken into account as part of the review.
- 2.5 The working group will be facilitated by the Highway Projects & Road Safety Manager and include any other Council Officers agreed by the working group.
- 2.6 The working group is expected to focus on the following elements of the scheme:
- a) Financial contributions
 - b) The number of applications per area
 - c) Member panels, including their composition, operation and scoring criteria
 - d) Applications for Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs/Speed Indicating Devices
 - e) Officer resourcing
- 2.7 As the 2021/22 LHI scheme process is already underway, with applications having closed on 27th September, this review is expected to inform applications for LHI schemes to be delivered in the 2022/23 financial year.
- 2.8 Ordinarily the application window for 2022/23 would be opened following the Council elections in May 2021. In order to minimise delay to the process, the following timescale for the working group to undertake the review is proposed:
- 1st December 2020 – Working group established by Highways and Transport Committee subject to approval/decision
 - December 2020 – January 2021 – review to be undertaken
 - End January 2021 – draft report outlining the review findings and recommendations

- 9th March 2021 – review findings and recommendations presented to Highways and Transport Committee
- May/June 2021 – Application window for 2022/23 schemes opened

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

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, such as the young, elderly or particular user types, such as pedestrians and cyclists.
- The review will consider how the scheme can further support this priority

3.2 Thriving places for people to live

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 all local residents.
- The review will consider how the scheme can further support this priority

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.4 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

There are no significant implications for this priority

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category. Any changes resulting from the review will require an Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form to be completed.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

The report above sets out details of significant implications in paragraphs 2.1-2.4 and 2.8-2.11.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The report above sets out details of significant implications in paragraphs 2.1-2.4.

4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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: Gus de Silva

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: Richard Lumley

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

Name of Officer: Iain Greene

5. Source documents

5.1 Source documents

None