

Local Community Network (LCN) Highways Pilot

Community Highway Schemes (Devolved Budgets)

1.0 Background

Members of the Somerset Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Programme Team spent three days visiting parishes in the Exmoor County electoral division in order to better understand the opportunities to strengthen relationships and highway service delivery.

A number of themes were identified based on the analysis of parish feedback. Work programmes were developed for the Pilot to test new ways of working. This will ultimately serve to develop the Local Community Networks (LCN's) objectives and work programme from a defined evidential base and known local priorities.

This paper is intended to set the aims and objectives around discretionary devolved budgets. The feedback stated that Parishes want to be able to have more control in setting their own priorities for highway works.

Proposal for pilot study and testing:-

- LCN to have a discretionary budget available to spend as they see fit on additional highway services. These might include, road safety education; speed limits/zones, crossing facilities, additional gully cleansing; drain jetting, grass cutting; ploughing, new speed indicator device, traffic calming features, cycling facilities, town/village centre enhancements.
- We encourage communities to identify any highway concerns they may have.

Outcomes:-

- LCN have control over a proportion of capital and revenue expenditure for agreed local priorities.

2.0 Pilot discretionary budgets and works options

The following is intended to provide an illustration into the types of work Parishes / the Panel may wish to promote through the Pilot period (2022/23).

| Works types and options (for indicative purposes only) | |
|---|--|
| Capital budget* (£10,000) | Revenue budget (£20,000) |
| Dropped kerbs | Environmental issues |
| Cycle parking facilities: e.g. cycle stands, cycle shelters, secure locker facilities etc Improved signage, Traffic Regulation orders for speed limits, weight limits, parking etc | Enhanced signing, lining, roadstud/catseye maintenance including cleaning. Fingerpost maintenance. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Provision and maintenance of trees on the highway | Enhanced grass cutting and environmental maintenance |
| Footways – Improvements to existing footways (e.g. widening, and resurfacing) and construction of new footways. | Enhanced drainage maintenance (gully emptying, drain jetting, etc) |
| Cycle Lanes, Tracks/ Paths (on and off-carriageway) .: | Enhanced ditching and associated drainage works |
| Bus lay-bys and shelters – New construction or modification to existing and TRO’s. . | Enhanced Rights of Way maintenance |
| Pedestrian/ Cyclist crossings – new and refurbishment, that may include Zebra, Puffins, Toucans, and uncontrolled crossings. | Enhanced maintenance to bridges and structures (including the riverbeds under bridges) |
| Highway lighting – new installations or upgrades to existing, either as a free-standing scheme or part of another scheme – Provision and installation of columns, extensions and higher standard of lighting units. | Enhanced cattle grid maintenance |
| Traffic calming – Area wide or localised which may include “signs and lines”, village gateways, and civil engineering interventions (e.g. road humps, chicanes, speed cushions etc). | Enhanced road safety education |
| | Enhanced Parking enforcement |
| *The definition of capital expenditure can be summarised as follows: Acquisition, construction, preparation or replacement of roads and other structures Enhancement of land which lengthens substantially the life of the asset and / or which increases substantially the extent to which the asset can be used for a function of the local authority. | |

It should be stressed that some of the options listed above, depending on the size and extent of the scheme, could far exceed the LCN Pilot capital and revenue allocation. The Panel may wish to consider alternate forms of funding, contributions, and match funding for the Pilot.

Budgets (to be committed by 31 March 2023).

With the Climate Change declaration, the Panel may wish to provide greater focus towards enhancing the environment in favour of pedestrian, cyclist, and public transport.

3.0 Process for scheme submission

Before the Parish applies for a Community Highway Scheme, it is essential they have the support of the wider community. This will help the Panel assess whether this would be a widely supported scheme with benefits for the whole community.

All Community Highway Scheme applications must be supported by your local Somerset Councillor and discussions should take place with them before submitting the application.

Consideration should also be given to the implications the proposal(s) may have on other local communities. The more details that can be included in your request the easier it will be to assess.

All requests will be reviewed and ranked. Only requests that score sufficiently will be prioritised for inclusion into a future Annual Delivery Programme.

Criteria the Panel may wish to include in the assessment of Community Highway Schemes include:

- safety
- mobility and access
- regeneration
- new business encouragement
- any impacts on the surrounding environment and contribution to Somerset Councils' climate strategy aims and objectives.

Developing and designing a highway scheme is a lengthy and costly process. For the purposes of the Pilot, the Community Highway Scheme will be 'tested' through 2022/23. In the time available, it has not been possible to provide a detailed set of guidance notes, but some useful resources are available from other local authorities. The Panel may wish to refer to the [Community Highway Scheme](#) administered by West Sussex Council for indicative purposes.

Although the Parishes can submit their application throughout the year, for a Community Highway Scheme to be considered for inclusion in the 2022/23 design programme, all proposed capital and revenue schemes will need to be decided by Parishes and presented on the proforma in Appendix A one month prior to the first LCN meeting of each financial year. Applications received after this date will be considered the following year.

The 'broker' will liaise between the Panel and Somerset Council Highways and Transport officers to develop technical and budgetary information to enable the Panel to decide, at its first meeting of the financial year, which schemes to support and promote.

The Panel will decide on the successful scheme's dependant on local priorities.

4.0 Delivery mechanisms

Depending on the Panels' priorities and the type of works promoted, delivery will be either through established procedures through Somerset Council and its supply chain, and / or local delivery using local resources (with the safeguards and check points set out in sections 5.0 and 6.0).

The delivery mechanism will be agreed following the Panel decision for scheme promotion i.e., first quarter of each financial year.

5.0 Health, Safety and Welfare - Duty of Care

Somerset Council has a duty to maintain the public highway and a legal responsibility to ensure the safety of both those working on or using the highway.

6.0 Check points prior to Parish self-delivered works on the highway

- Permission from the Highway Authority to undertake the works, together with any necessary form of licence/ legal agreement
- An approved Temporary Traffic Regulation Order and temporary traffic signals (if required)
- Risk assessment
- A plan showing the extent of proposed works
- valid public liability insurance certificate for a minimum of £10 million
- a Traffic Management Plan
- confirmation of health, safety, and welfare of operatives and those travelling through the site
- supervisor and operative's street works accreditation approval.

Appendix A – Community Highway Scheme application proforma

A1 Your details

Title

First name

Last name

Parish Council

Position in the Parish.

Email address

Phone number

(Enter a daytime phone number that we can ring you on. This can be a mobile or land line number.)

A2 Application details

Description of issues, needs and/or initiatives and benefits, with evidence to support them.

Description of the proposed works or activity.

Details of wider community support for the proposed project, with evidence to support this.

A3 Scheme objectives

Select all that you believe will have a positive impact.

- Costs - provides a cost saving to the local community/road users/council
- Safety - reduces road traffic incidents/fear of crime
- Public space - enhances experience of communal areas
- Journey times - improves journey times and traveller experience
- Mobility and access - reduces barriers and increases accessibility
- Economic growth

Select other related benefits.

- Employment - creates employment opportunities/improves connectivity
- New business - encourages private investment/opening of new businesses
- Development opportunities - encourages development investment
- Housing - could encourage housing development opportunities
- Regeneration and deprivation - addresses issues in areas of deprivation

A4 Environmental impacts

Select all that you believe will have a positive impact.

- Carbon emissions - encourages alternate transport use or routes
- Impacts on air quality - improves air quality (other than CO2 emissions)
- Impacts on surrounding environment - has a positive impact on noise/vibration/other environmental impacts

A5 Cost for the implementation of the proposed project

Details of the likely cost for the implementation of the proposed project.
Details of any funding sources you are aware of that may be available for this project.
Supporting evidence.
Please include any further evidence that may support your application.

A6 Supporting evidence

Please include any supporting evidence to support application. (eg road safety problems, pedestrian demand, community speed data)

A7 Approval and support

Name of the Somerset councillor that has agreed to support the application in principle.