

		AGENDA ITEM 10
		PSEG/26/16
Committee:	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	22 September 2016	
LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANELS		
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Purpose of report

At today's meeting Councillor Eddie Johnson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, has been invited to address the Committee on matters relating to the Local Highways Panels (LHPs).

Background

As part of a workshop on 30 June 2016 Committee Members received a briefing on the Local Highways Panels (LHPs) that drew attention to the introduction of a new staffing structure and other changes that will have an impact upon the delivery of local highway schemes. It was confirmed that an executive review was already underway to provide the LHPs with new terms of reference, Member guidance, and processes for submitting schemes.

At its last meeting on 12 September (report PSEG/19/16) the Committee noted a report on action arising from the briefing. In the context of conclusions reached in an earlier workshop (referred to elsewhere on this agenda) around the timeliness of scrutiny review and ability to influence decisions, it was agreed by those present that it was necessary to contribute to the existing consultation being conducted on the terms of reference and Member guidance as part of the overall review of LHPs. Consequently the relevant documentation on the terms of reference was circulated electronically to Committee Members for comments before being co-ordinated as part of a Committee response to the Cabinet Member in July.

At that time the Committee was also advised of the development of a Members' Guide and Validation process, which will be the focus of this meeting.

There are three briefing papers attached to this report as follows:

- Appendix A - Updated Terms of Reference for Local Highways Panels and the new Members' Guide
- Appendix B - Revised Members' Guide
- Appendix C - Revised Member Request Form and Validation Process

At this meeting Councillor Johnson will update the Committee on the latest position with regard to consultation being undertaken on the LHP terms of reference and Member Guidance, together with an explanation on the project validation process.

Action required by the Committee:

To consider the Cabinet Member's briefing.

Appendix A

Briefing paper on the Updated Terms of Reference for Local Highways Panels and the new Members' Guide

Prepared by Vicky Presland, Head of Design Highways on behalf of Councillor Eddie Johnson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

1. Purpose of Report

To provide the Scrutiny Committee with an update regarding the LHP Terms of Reference following Members' feedback in July.

2. Summary of issue

The draft revised Terms of Reference were presented at a workshop of the Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee on 30 June 2016, and were subsequently sent electronically to that Committee's members for their comments. The draft was also circulated to the LHP Chairmen for their comments.

The comments received back from Scrutiny Committee Members and the Chairmen of the LHPs, together with proposed amendments, were presented to the Cabinet Member.

The Terms of Reference was further revised in response to the feedback and discussion with the Cabinet Member.

The proposed changes were presented to the Cabinet Member who has now provisionally confirmed the revised the Terms of Reference prior to formal approval through a Cabinet Member Action (CMA).

The proposed Terms of Reference will be available with the CMA together with all comments and individual responses that will be set out as an appendix to the CMA. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared to accompany the CMA.

Next Steps

A CMA has been prepared for the Cabinet Member to approve the new Terms of Reference.

Once the final version has been signed off, it will be circulated to LHP Chairmen and be available on the website.

List of Background papers

The existing Terms of Reference and Members' Guide which is currently available on the Council's website – www.essexhighways.org.

Appendix B

Briefing paper on the Revised Members' Guide

Prepared by Vicky Presland, Head of Design Highways on behalf of Councillor Eddie Johnson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

1. Purpose of Report

To provide the Scrutiny Committee with details of the revised LHP Members' Guide

2. Summary of issue

The original Terms of Reference and Members' Guide document was developed to support the LHPs in both their operation and the implementation of schemes. It was published in 2013.

Following the review of the document the Members' Guide has been redrafted to provide clearer advice about highway concerns that will be raised locally.

The changes that have been made are summarised below.

The Guide has been developed as a web based document. However, it could be printed as a hard copy if required. If used as a web based document there will be links that take the reader to further information available on both the County's website and other sites, such as the Department for Transport.

A. The Introduction: This gives a broad overview of LHP schemes and the things that need to be considered by both the Panels and the Designers when developing schemes.

- **Budget:** Details how the LHP budget is derived and the priority of funding (casualty reduction schemes ahead of others). The two sub-sections highlight some common solutions which have specific maintenance liabilities and what LHP cannot fund (parking, disabled bays etc). This section also details how larger LHP schemes progress into the major scheme funding streams.
- **Things to consider:** This sections sets out considerations that should be made about LHP schemes before they can be committed. This includes land ownership, Utilities apparatus, and environmental issues. In particular it emphasises the need

for members to identify the issues, rather than solutions, as often the solution proposed does not solve the problem identified.

- **Validation and Feasibility:** Details how schemes are reviewed and assessed to make sure the proposals are both buildable, and in-line with local policies and DFT guidance.
- **Scheme Prioritisation:** Highlights that more schemes are likely to be identified than available budget to progress, and that the LHP will prioritise the listed schemes.
- **Deliverability/Timescales:** This cover issues outside of ECC's influence which can impact upon the delivery of schemes. This includes matters such as Statute Orders and the legal processes required for land negotiations. It will also link to the Costs and Timescales appendix document.
- **LHP Support- Highways Liaison Officers:** This informs Members of the support Highways Liaison Officers can provide and the limitations on their role.

B. Topic Sections

The sections consider typical concerns that are brought to the attention of Members and provides Members with an understanding of what should be considered and what options may be available.

The sections have been set out as follows:

1. Road Safety Schemes
2. Speed
3. New Pedestrian Footways
4. Signs and Road Markings
5. Crossings
6. Traffic Signals
7. Cycling Schemes
8. Passenger Transport Improvements
9. Public Rights of Way Improvements
10. Winter Issues
11. Quiet Lanes
12. Parking Restrictions
13. Removing Highway Rights
14. Highways Rangers (This section covers the typical activities that can be undertaken. The section is currently being further reviewed and this review will take a few months to complete).

C. Each topic section is set out in the following standard format.

1. Introduction

1.1 This provides some background to the legislation and some of the County Council's policies, procedures and guidance covering this element

2. Typical Problems

2.1 These are the issues that are raised to Members. Not all problems can be resolved and some may be outside the scope of the LHP budgets

3. Things to Consider

3.1 This can include a wide variety of things such as:

- Alerting Members to issues where solutions may be locally controversial.
- Advising about Environmental considerations
- Specific legislation or policy

4. Typical Measures

4.1 These are the sorts of engineering solutions that can be used to treat the issue

5. Scheme Investigation

5.1 This guides Members through what will be required by the design engineer in order to develop a scheme

6. Costs and Timescales

6.1 The Guide signposts the Member to the appendix detailing the financial arrangements and indicative costs for schemes in this section. It also highlights the key risks

List of Background papers

2.2. Current LHP Terms of Reference and Members' Guide on ECC website
<http://www.essexhighways.org/Transport-and-Roads/Highway-Schemes-and-Developments/Local-Highway-Panels.aspx>

Appendix C

Briefing paper on the revised Member Request Form and Validation Process

Prepared by Vicky Presland, Head of Design Highways on behalf of Councillor Eddie Johnson, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

1. Purpose of Report

To provide details of the revised Member Request Form and Validation Process

2. Summary of issue

The existing process for receiving requests and validating schemes has led to difficulties in scheme implementation in terms of both timescales and costs.

The process has been reviewed and the key issue that was identified was that schemes were being proposed by LHPs that would either not treat the underlying problem or would be difficult to deliver due to land requirements or other local issues. This in turn has led to delays due to redesigning the schemes to more effectively treat the concern or in undertaking land purchase agreements etc. It has also meant that indicative costs initially presented to the LHPs did not accurately reflect the actual costs of the scheme that was eventually delivered.

A new, web based, **Scheme Request Form** has been developed with Essex County Council's Digital Delivery Team. This provides Members with a bespoke form to complete which ensure that the issue/problem is identified and that any supporting evidence can be uploaded.

A user guide has been prepared for LHP Members to help them use the new process.

Once the scheme request has been submitted it will then go to the Highways Liaison Officer who will review the documents and request a validation.

- A. The validation will include whether there are engineering solutions that can effectively treat the concern that has been raised.
- B. It will also ensure that all relevant Teams within Essex Highways are aware of the scheme and have had an opportunity to comment on the options being proposed. This provides an opportunity to cross check

whether any proposals are already being developed by Teams as part of their own prioritised programmes of work

3. Next Steps

To complete the revision of the scheme request and validation process

List of Background papers

None
