

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)**

**DATE: 24 September 2014**



**LEAD OFFICER: John Hilder / Helen Treasure**

**SUBJECT: Guildford Local Committee prioritisation framework**

**DIVISION: All**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Annual funding is devolved to the Guildford Local Committee by Surrey County Council to commission minor Highways works in the locality. Currently the committee receives frequent requests and petitions for safety improvements (e.g. 20 mph speed limits). To date there has not been a recognised process for prioritising these requests. The committee Chairman has asked for a framework to be developed to assist the members of the committee to evaluate and to prioritise them. This paper provides a draft for framework for the committee to consider.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Local Committee (Guildford) is asked to note:**

- (i) A draft prioritisation framework is under development subject to committee feedback and comments.
- (ii) The proposed scheme proforma as presented in **Annex 1**. Subject to committee comments, it is proposed that this is used to assess how each scheme performs in relation to policy alignment, route importance and deliverability.
- (iii) The proposed scheme prioritisation process as presented in **Annex 2**. Subject to committee comments, it is proposed that this is used to support and guide effective decision-making as to which schemes should be prioritised, while leaving scope for discussion, challenge, debate and committee judgement.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The proposed framework process will assist members to ensure that limited funds are directed towards interventions that will deliver the greatest benefits and value for money for residents.

### **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 1.1 Guildford Local Committee have annual funding devolved to them by Surrey County Council for minor works in the locality. Currently the committee receives a lot of requests and petitions for safety improvements (e.g. requests for 20 mph speed limits) and there hasn't been a recognised process for prioritising these. The committee chair has raised concerns regarding the number of these requests received and has asked for a framework to be developed to help prioritise them.
- 1.2 This item is for information and comments. The final proposals will be subject to committee approval in December 2014.

### **2. ANALYSIS:**

- 2.1 The prioritisation framework aims to provide a robust and consistent method for prioritising committee spend on road safety and other highway interventions.
- 2.2 The prioritisation framework has been developed to take account of Surrey County Council and Guildford Borough Council policies and strategic objectives. This includes the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) objectives (informed by the Guildford Core Strategy Spatial Vision and the vision and objectives of the Surrey Transport Plan).
- 2.3 The Local Transport Strategy for Guildford includes the following objectives:
  - Managing congestion at congestion hotspots within the borough
  - Promoting movement by public transport between towns and villages and major destinations both within and outside the borough
  - Promoting movement on foot and by bicycle within Guildford towns and villages and to their neighbouring communities

The above objectives are reflected in the prioritisation criteria within the framework.

- 2.4 The framework is consistent with other policies and strategies including Surrey County Council's Speed Limit and Road Safety Outside Schools policies, and recommendations from the Guildford Transport and Movement Study (GTAMS).

### **3. OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 The main options considered were whether to develop a process based on numerical scoring against various criteria, or whether to adopt an approach based on categories such as red/amber/green or high/medium/low.
- 3.2 Initial conversations indicate a general preference for using categories rather than scoring although there have been a mixture of views on this question.

- 3.3 The main benefits of scoring are that it can provide order to and help distinguish between a long list of potential schemes. It also means that schemes that are more closely aligned to the criteria set out in the framework are more likely to be selected. The drawbacks of scoring are that results can be sensitive to the way the process is designed (e.g. the number of criteria, the importance / weight assigned to each criteria, overlap between related criteria etc). Best practice guidance suggests that either approach can be effective, as long as it is flexible, transparent, evidence based and open to discussion and challenge.
- 3.4 There are also choices to be made in relation to the detail of the process, for example the choice and number of categories, and the extent to which the process aims to achieve a geographical spread of investment.

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS:**

- 4.1 The proposals have been to the Transportation Task Group for consideration and received broad support. There were a few detailed suggestions that will be taken into account as the proposals are further developed. In particular regarding scoring proposals there was an interest in 'trying both' i.e. working up and testing both a score based and category based method.

#### **5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 There are no direct costs to implementing the prioritisation framework, apart from the time required to assess proposals. The process design aims to minimise the administrative effort required. Overall, use of the prioritisation framework should significantly improve how limited committee funds are spent, increasing value for money.

#### **6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 The proposals aim to ensure that committee spend on road safety and other highways improvements are prioritised in accordance with strategic objectives. This should have a positive impact on all residents including those in protected groups. Proposals to encourage modal shift to sustainable modes of transport will create improved travel choice, particularly for those without access to a car. Equalities and diversity benefits could be further considered in the development of scheme assessment criteria.

#### **7. LOCALISM:**

- 7.1 The proposals will help ensure that limited committee funds are spent effectively in accordance with locally agreed criteria. Within the framework, the degree of local support for a scheme is factored into the prioritisation process.

#### **8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Set out below
Corporate Parenting/Looked After	No significant implications arising

Children	from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	Set out below.

#### 8.1 Sustainability implications

The criteria for prioritising schemes includes those that encourage modal shift from the car and sustainable modes of transport. Schemes that meet these criteria are more likely to be selected, with positive implications for sustainability.

#### 8.2 Public Health implications

The criteria for prioritising schemes includes those that encourage active travel such as walking and cycling. Schemes that meet these criteria are more likely to be selected, with positive implications for public health.

### **9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 9.1 This report recommends that Guildford Local Committee supports the development of a prioritisation framework and provides any feedback and comments relating to the proforma in **Annex 1** and the process in **Annex 2** that might contribute to improving the current proposals to maximise effectiveness.

### **10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- 10.1 Following committee comments the proposals will be further developed and tested in relation to previous / existing schemes.
- 10.2 The final proposals will be presented to committee in December for approval.

#### **Contact Officer:**

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#### **Consulted:**

Guildford Local Committee Transportation Task Group

#### **Annexes:**

Annex 1: Draft proforma to assess schemes

Annex 2: Draft prioritisation process

#### **Sources/background papers:**

- Guildford Local Transport Strategy
- Surrey County Council Setting Local Speed Limits Policy
- Surrey County Council Road Safety Outside Schools Policy
- Guildford Transport and Movement Study
- Advice on the Prioritisation of Smaller Transport Schemes (Atkins / DfT, 2008)