

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-071-2016/17

Date of meeting: 6 April 2017



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Safer, Greener and Transport

Subject: Epping Forest Local Highways Panel

Responsible Officer: Qasim (Kim) Durrani (01992 564055).

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) To agree to recommend to the Council a supplementary DDF estimate of £50,000 in 2017/18 to match fund the contribution from Essex County Council for the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel to implement highway improvement schemes within the District; and

(2) Subject to approval of the recommendation above to only release the funds once the Essex County Council's share of the match funding has been spent first

Executive Summary:

The Epping Forest Local Highways Panel (LHP) was formed in 2009. It consists of all seven County Councillors and an equal number of District members. The Panel is supported by Essex Highways and carries out highway improvement schemes within the District.

The County Council has offered to match fund £50,000 for the LHP to implement schemes within the District. If match funding is agreed by the Council then a number of highway schemes will be enabled in the District which would otherwise not get funding.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To enable highway improvement schemes to be implemented over and above those for which funding is available.

Other Options for Action:

The Council can decline the offer of match funding.

Report:

1. The Epping Forest Local Highway Panel was formed in 2009 when Cabinet agreed the membership and constitutional arrangements proposed under Essex Localism Agenda. The scope and membership of the LHP has since changed however the focus remains delivery of highway improvement schemes within the District. The membership of the Panel consists of seven county division members and an equal number of district members. The LHP is allocated budget by the Essex County Council (ECC), in 2017/18 it has a budget allocation of £450,000 for carrying out capital improvement schemes.

2. The LHP can only undertake capital improvement schemes, all revenue and maintenance schemes are delivered directly by Essex Highways, and the types of schemes that the LHP can undertake include: Passenger transport, public rights of way schemes, traffic management and walk way schemes. In addition the Panel keeps an oversight on any highway related Section 106 schemes as well as the work of the Highway Rangers.

3. Although the LHP has significant budget allocation there is high demand for highway improvement and new road safety schemes. This forces scheme prioritisation and some schemes lose out. There are currently 50 approved, both minor and major, highway schemes on the LHP work programme. There are a further potential 49 schemes that the Panel will review for consideration for 2017/18.

4. Last year the Council match funded ECC's £50,000 for highway improvements. This funding enabled feasibility studies, detailed designs and the implementation of capital schemes. The schemes funded through the match funding budget are listed below

1. Honey Lane (east of Wood Green Road), Waltham Abbey
2. A121 Woodriven Hill approach to Wakes Arms Roundabout
3. B 181 Epping Upland by Chambers Manor
4. Alderton Hill junction with Alderton Hall Lane, Loughton
5. Middle Street Nazeing – South of golf course entrance
6. B 181 Epping Road junction with Common Road, Broadley Common
7. Traps Hill junction Rowans Way and Church Lane, Loughton
8. Horseshoe Hill, Waltham Abbey
9. Reeves Lane/Typers Road/Hamlet Hill, Roydon Hamlet
10. Alderton Hall lane/Alderton Hill, Loughton
11. Vicarage Lane junction with Manor Road
12. A113 Abridge Road, Chigwell
13. Moreton Bridge, Moreton Road, Moreton
14. Ivy Chimney Road, Epping – installation of a bus cage
15. Daws Hill/Sewardstone Road, Sewardstone
16. St Leonards Road
17. A113 Ongar Road, Abridge
18. Ivy Chimneys Primary School, Centre Drive, Epping
19. B1393 London Road junction with access to MacDonalDs – pedestrian safety scheme
20. Milton Crescent – Shelley Primary School
21. Church Road, Moreton

5. The ECC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation Councillor Eddie Johnson wrote to the Leader of the Council on 3 March 2017, letter attached at appendix, offering to match fund up to £50,000 of District Council contribution to the Panel. Given that the additional funding, £100,000 in total, will enable the delivery of a number of priority schemes which would otherwise not be possible it is recommended that the Council accepts the offer of match funding by ECC.

Resource Implications:

DDF allocation of £50,000 will be required to match fund the contribution made by Essex County Council. This is being requested as a supplementary estimate as the offer from the Essex County Council was made on 3 March, after this Council's budget for 2017/18 had been set on 21 February 2017.

The Epping Forest Local Highways Panel has, after deducting the costs of the schemes already approved, a balance of £104,000 remaining to be allocated for schemes in 2017/18.

By agreeing the recommendations in this report this fund will increase to £204,000.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The responsibility for carrying out capital improvement schemes on the public highway is that of the Essex County Council. All schemes recommended by the LHP are considered for approval by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport at Essex County Council and all schemes are in line with County Council policies, strategies and guidelines.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

The nature of schemes implemented with the match funding will be for highway safety, casualty reduction and pedestrian walk way improvements. These will improve the road network in the District.

Consultation Undertaken:

Chairman of the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel and the lead officers of Essex County Council.

Background Papers:

Previous reports on the formation of the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel.

Risk Management:

If the recommendations in this report are not agreed then a significant number of schemes will not be implemented. This could cause reputational damage to the Council by neglecting to benefit from the opportunity to match fund Essex County Council's contribution.