

Guidance notes for Local Highway & Footway Improvement Groups (LHFIGs)

Attendance

To enable meetings to be conducted efficiently, it is encouraged that participants are limited to those who need to attend and ideally below 10. It is however recognised that in certain community areas this is difficult to achieve due to their geographical size. In these circumstances, multiple attendees from groups or councils are discouraged.

All meetings will be supported by Wiltshire Council officers, with attendance from the relevant Community Engagement Manager, and from the council's Highway service; Traffic Engineering, Area Highway Maintenance, and Sustainable Transport teams. Others service areas may attend depending on the issues raised, including (but not limited too) Passenger Transport and Rights of Way.

Several specific community groups exist with special interest in particular topics such as cycling and walking. At the discretion of each LHFIG chair these groups could be represented at LHFIG meetings, as they may provide access to potential funding opportunities that do not exist elsewhere.

The meetings are not open to members of the public, but where an issue may benefit from further information, the public may be asked to attend by invitation and agreement of the Chair. This should be communicated to the wider group beforehand.

Decision making

The LHFIGs do not have decision-making powers but make recommendations to the relevant Area Board to ratify the decisions taken at the meetings.

Meeting dates and programme

Meetings should ideally take place in the following periods with the intended meeting purpose, as set out below: Ideally the meetings should be 2 to 4 weeks in advance of the Area Board meetings.

April: Budget confirmation and budget allocation to projects.

July: Progress meeting. Budget allocation (note: projects allocated beyond this meeting may not be delivered by the end of March).

October: Progress meeting. Agree projects to be put forward for funding from Substantive bid, ahead of end of November submission deadline. Small scale and low-cost projects at this meeting may be delivered before end of year deadline.

January: Progress meeting. Agreement of any funding to be returned for redistribution. Any projects prioritised at this meeting will not be delivered within this financial year.

Meetings can be held in either in person or online.

The above programme is indicative, and it will be up to individual groups to determine how and when priorities are identified. It should be noted there remains an increased risk to groups who identify schemes later than suggested. Early identification will provide the maximum timescales for delivery and reduce the risk of funds being unspent.

Early identification of projects will help enable officers to allocate resource, particularly those with a Civil Engineering element. Lower cost, smaller scale projects such as simple road

signing and markings may be prioritised throughout the year, however it needs to be recognised there remains a risk that completion by the end of a year may not be achieved.

Submission of Issues

Issues must be submitted via the Highway Improvement Request Form to the relevant parish/town council, which must give its support. For issues to be given consideration at the relevant meeting, parish/town councils must submit to Wiltshire Council no later than 14 days in advance of the advertised meeting date and must attend the meeting.

Previous guidance for CATGs encouraged a maximum of five active projects at any one time. This is no longer the case, as the LHFIG's priorities will be identified at the April meeting to allow the maximum delivery time.

The LHFIG's can be directed to look at issues identified by Highways Officers when considered appropriate. For example, when a highways issue is raised with the Council for which other centrally held resource does not exist.

Funding

The funding allocation for each group is set out in the following table:

Area Board Name	2021/22 CATG Allocation (£'s)	2022/23 Highway Allocation (£'s)	2022/23 Wiltshire Council Allocation (£'s)	2022/23 LHFIFG Allocation Total (£'s)
Bradford on Avon	10,382	10,382	10,382	20,764
Calne	12,396	12,396	12,396	24,792
Chippenham	17,403	17,403	17,403	34,806
Corsham	10,819	10,819	10,819	21,638
Devizes	15,984	15,984	15,984	31,968
Malmesbury	13,255	13,255	13,255	26,510
Marlborough	12,623	12,623	12,623	25,246
Melksham	12,169	12,169	12,169	24,338
Pewsey	13,356	13,356	13,356	26,712
RWB & Cricklade	15,093	15,093	15,093	30,186
Salisbury	14,180	14,180	14,180	28,360
South West Wilts	17,291	17,291	17,291	34,582
Southern Wilts	16,172	16,172	16,172	32,344
Stonehenge	16,803	16,803	16,803	33,606
Tidworth	11,085	11,085	11,085	22,170
Trowbridge	15,629	15,629	15,629	31,258
Warminster	14,905	14,905	14,905	29,812
Westbury	10,455	10,455	10,455	20,910
Total	250,000	250,000	250,000	500,000

At the end of the financial year uncommitted (where no commitment has been placed with a contractor for delivery) Integrated Transport Block (ITB) funding will be removed from the Groups and reallocated within the overall ITB budget. The table below provides an example of this.

Note: Allocations to projects which will take place in a subsequent financial year will only be acceptable where external circumstances do not permit delivery i.e., unable to obtain road space booking, or materials. Final decision on this will remain with the Cabinet Member.

Example

Area Board Name	2022/23 LHFIFG Allocation Total (£'s)	2022/23 Expended (£'s)	To be reallocated 2023/24 (£'s)
Group A	20,124	19,675	449
Group B	24,930	21,589	3,341
Group C	36,174	35,666	508
Group D	21,902	21,852	50
Group E	31,502	24,697	6,804
Group F	26,720	25,157	1,563
Group G	27,230	22,587	4,643
Group H	26,450	24,699	1,751
Group I	24,674	18,621	6,053
Group J	28,410	27,958	452
Group K	29,516	27,234	2,282

Group L	34,158	33,201	957
Group M	27,352	26,547	805
Group N	35,462	34,308	1,154
Group O	23,514	25,685	-2,171
Group P	30,708	29,567	1,141
Group Q	30,452	24,685	5,767
Group R	20,640	19,819	821
Total	500,000	463,574	38,541

Commentary on example;

In this scenario, £38,541 would be included in the 2023/24 Integrated Transport Block.

Where a particular group exceed their budget allocation for a year, these funds will not be recouped from underspends from other groups, but the allocation they receive in a future will be deducted. In the example above Group O exceeded its allocation by £2,171 in 2022/23. In 2023/24 its allocation £23,514 would be reduced to £21,343.

Other points to note

There are many reasons why costs exceed the estimated value, including the consequences of weather conditions, additional traffic management and uncharted services and contractual price indices uplifts.

Groups are encouraged to continue to seek additional contributions from third parties towards schemes. Full discretion is given to the LHFIGs in terms of the level of third party funding, but it is suggested this is set at a minimum of 20%.

As the funding is classified as capital expenditure, it must be spent on items which result in a new asset to the Council i.e. something exists upon completion of the work. It *cannot* be used to fund activities which are routine, provide betterment to an individual / group or property, or provide a subsidy.

Responsibilities & Types of projects

The following table sets out the types of projects that can be funded through the groups, along with responsibilities of the various attendees to enable the meetings to function and priorities to be delivered. The list is not exhaustive and intended to be a guide, in addition are examples of projects which will not be considered for funding by the group.

Traffic Engineering Team	
Pedestrian Improvements	Substantive Improvements and New Footways Pedestrian Crossing Assessments and Crossing Installation
Cycle Improvements	New Cycle facilities Cycle Parking / storage Cycle Signing
Bus Infrastructure	New Shelters* Bus Boarder Kerbs Bus Stop Road Markings
Traffic Signing	New Traffic Signs Village Gateways
Road Markings	New Road Markings
Speed Limits	Assessments Implementation
Waiting / Parking restrictions	Assessments Implementation
Street Lighting	New installations
Traffic Management	General Traffic Management measures
Local Highways	
Pedestrian Improvements	Dropped Kerbs Improvement to existing footways
Bus Infrastructure	Replacement Shelters*
Traffic Signing	Replacement signs (inc posts) Street Name Plates Sockets & Posts for SID Equipment
Road Markings	Replacement & Minor alterations of existing markings
Rights of Way	
Footpaths	Stiles / Gates Surface Improvements (Council Maintainable paths only)
Drainage	
	Minor Improvements New Gullies
Community Engagement	
	Meeting Booking Venue Action Note recording
Sustainable Transport	
	Advice on Council Policies Local Cycling & Walking infrastructure Plan Highway Developments

*(Subject to agreement on future maintenance liability)

Note;

Footways (commonly referred to as pavements) abut the Highway (road)

Footpaths are routes which are defined as Public Rights of Way and cross land not classified as highway

Example of projects which cannot be funded include;

Routine Maintenance – Gully emptying, Ditch Clearing, Hedgerow cutting, pot hole repairs.

Service subsidy – Bus Services

Promotional Campaigns

SID Equipment

Improvements for Individuals and Properties

Weight Limit (Freight) assessments

Substantive bids

Some of the priorities identified by the groups will exceed their annual financial allocation.

To assist groups in delivering these types of projects, a dedicated, centrally allocated fund will continue to be available to help bridge the funding gap. This will be set at £250,000 for the year 2022/23. As outlined in the funding section, this may also be supplemented in future years by utilising any unspent allocation from across the 18 community areas. For example, if each group underspends by £1,000 in 2022/23, then the substantive allocation for 2023/24 could be £268,000 (£250k + (18 x £1,000)).

The rules associated with applying for funding will remain the same as in previous years i.e. that the cost of the project must exceed the annual allocation for the community area in which the bid is submitted. In addition to this criteria, groups submit a minimum contribution to the application equivalent to a third of their annual allocation.

The substantive bid submission deadline is the end of November each year. This will enable projects to be developed throughout the year and ensure accuracy of submissions (e.g. designs, costs etc), rather than speculative applications where minimal design activities have been undertaken. All applications will be assessed and ranked in accordance with the agreed protocol during the January to March period. Successful bids will then be allocated funding for the following April, to match the level of substantive budget. The outcome of the bid process will be subject to a Cabinet Member decision.

Substantive projects will then be delivered in the April to March period of the following year, so bids submitted by November 2022 and identified as successful will receive funding from the 2022/23 allocation, with delivery anticipated in 2023/24.