

Brighton & Hove City Council

Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

Agenda Item 67

Subject: Safer, Better Streets – Highway Improvement Prioritisation Framework

Date of meeting: 17 January 2023

Report of: Executive Director, Economy, Environment & Culture

Contact Officer: Name: Tracy Beverley
Tel: 01273 293813
Email: Tracy.Beverley@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report introduces the Safer, Better Streets – Highway Improvement Prioritisation Framework which provides a process to assess concerns creating a barriers for safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists. This process enables officers to consider and prioritise improvements such as pedestrian crossings, traffic calming, speed reduction measures, modal filters and Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) infrastructure.
- 1.2 Measures introduced as a result of this framework will directly assist in delivering key priority areas for the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) & emerging fifth Local Transport Plan (LTP5), and create an integrated transport system, develop streets and places that encourage and enable safe active travel and support access to public transport.
- 1.3 Furthermore, the Brighton & Hove Climate Assembly (2020) recommended the ‘creation of healthier low traffic/pedestrianised communities’, as a key aim in supporting a transition to achieving carbon reductions across the city that can be achieved in combination with other key transport and planning policy, and programmes of work.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Environment Transport & Sustainability Committee approves the Safer, Better Streets – Highway Improvement Prioritisation Framework and grants permission to commence the assessment of outstanding concerns, listed in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 That the Environment Transport & Sustainability Committee notes that future concerns will be assessed under this framework and priority locations will be reported annually at Committee. Priority improvement measures will be

recommended at Committee and implemented, subject to available funding, through the LTP's capital programme or external funding streams.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The council receives many requests from residents and councillors to tackle the impact that cars have on the city, these concerns relate to the number of vehicles using a route (rat running), speed of vehicles and safety for pedestrians using a road or area.
- 3.2 Local surveys have shown that residents are concerned about road danger, cycle safety, and local highway conditions. By improving the highway and active travel facilities we can create healthier neighbourhoods where people want to walk and cycle, which helps to improve physical and mental wellbeing as well as create safer communities. There is also a clear demand for transport measures that will create more liveable neighbourhoods for residents and communities by reducing the volume and impacts of traffic.
- 3.3 City Transport regularly receives requests for street improvements such as traffic calming and speeding traffic reduction measures from members of the public and local Ward Members. The current approach to these requests is to focus limited road safety funding on those locations where collisions occur and to try and reduce the casualty rate. This allows finite funding to be directly allocated to high risk sites.
- 3.4 This collision-based focus does not resolve the perceived risk to people walking and cycling in the city, for example when vehicles are avoiding congested strategic roads and using often unsuitable residential streets. In tackling residents' concerns around speeding, traffic volume and improving the pedestrian environment, we can improve air pollution, encourage more walking, cycling and improve the street scene.
- 3.5 In response to these concerns officers have developed and reviewed the Pedestrian Crossing Priority Assessment and widened its criteria and remit to assess and prioritise a wider range of residents' concerns. This is the Safer, Better Streets – Highway Improvement Framework.
- 3.6 This framework introduces a new methodology which considers a range of important social factors, local walking and cycling priorities and issues which affect pedestrian movement such as public perception of danger, the impact of crossings on community cohesion, access to key services and green space, and improvements for mobility impaired people.

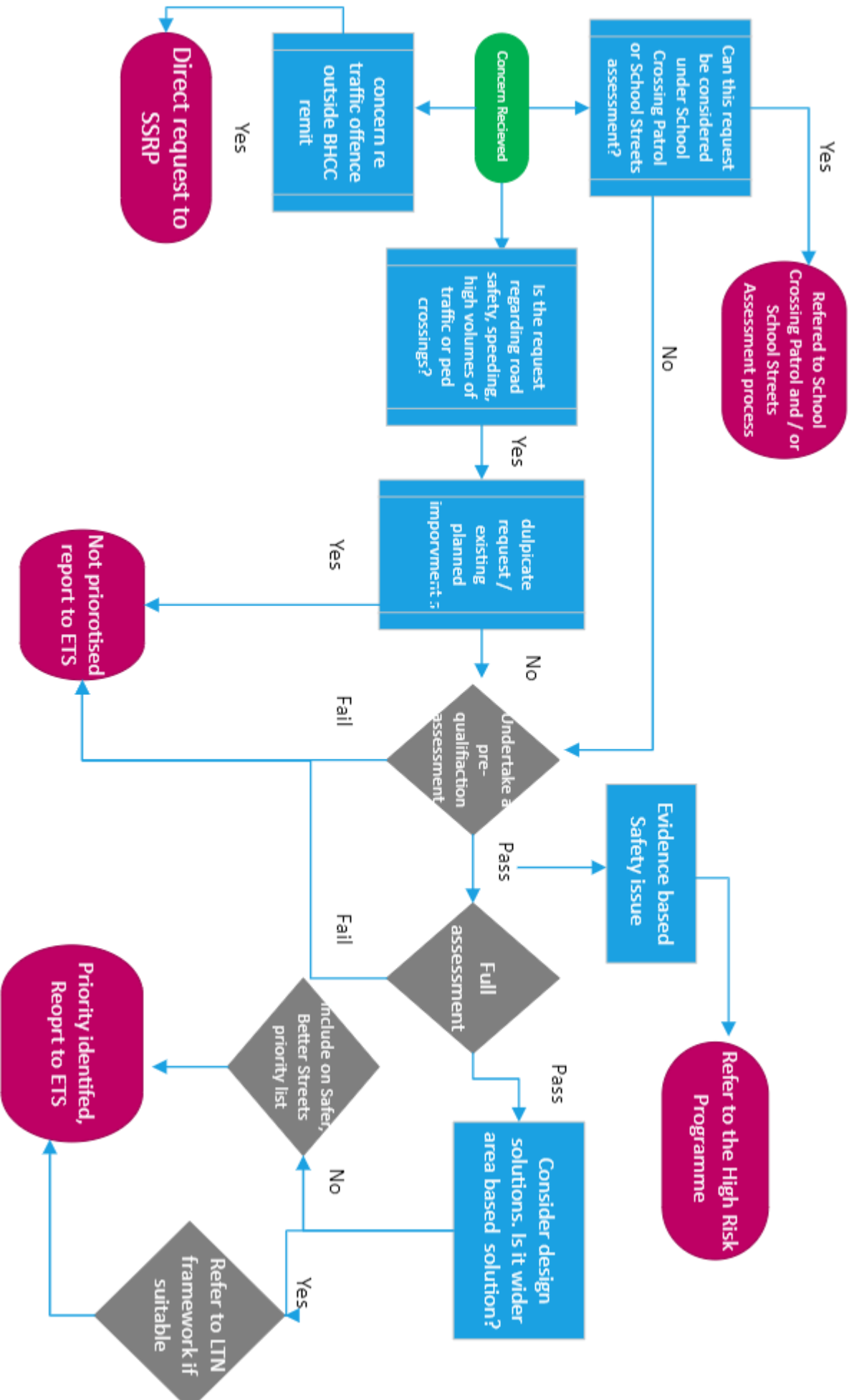
In publishing the results of the assessments on an annual basis the new methodology provides a more coherent, transparent, and proactive approach to responding to requests from our Members and our community. It will also provide documented evidence of how concerns will be dealt with in a consistent manner.

4. THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- 4.1 The full methodology is set out in Appendix 2 for assessing concerns related to road safety, speeding, high volumes of traffic or pedestrian crossings. The methodology contains 16 different categories including collisions, access to services, pedestrian movements and vehicle counts at each location. The methodology also considers LCWIP priorities.
- 4.2 Each location is triaged, checked for viability, and subject to a pre-qualification assessment see figure 1 below. Those locations with a recorded pedestrian casualty in the last 3 years within 50 metres of the request location, and / or where a sample one-hour vehicle and pedestrian count at peak time exceeded the threshold, or where recorded speeds are 20 per cent higher than the speed limit are then subject to a full assessment.
- 4.3 Where locations are close to schools, officers will consider other council-led programmes such as the School Crossing Patrol Assessment Criteria shown in Appendix 3 and the School Streets prioritisation criteria, provided in Appendix 4. If there are relatively higher number of collisions these locations may be prioritised through the council's 'High Risk' programme. Where solutions require an area-based approach these will be considered through the LTN assessment included in Appendix 5.
- 4.4 Where concerns relate to traffic offences and the enforcement of traffic offences, this will need to be reported to Sussex Police. Officers will direct concerns of this nature to the Police. In some cases, a mix of enforcement and physical measures may be appropriate.
- 4.5 In order to help manage the numbers of requests received officers will initially only assess those requests or concerns received via Council Members. This can be reviewed annually at Committee.

Figure 1, Safer, Better Streets Framework Process Flowchart
(also contained in Appendix 2)

Safer, Better Streets Process Flow chart



5. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 5.1 Those areas with the highest ranking using the proposed framework will be prioritised for funding but will not automatically qualify a particular location for implementation. For example, the cost of an improvement at a particular location may be prohibitive or upon closer investigation as it may become apparent there is no cost-effective engineering solution available.
- 5.2 In areas where actions are proposed this will be subject to further design work, associated Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), localised consultation and Road Safety Audits (RSAs).
- 5.3 The 'type' of improvement proposed is considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with Department for Transport such as LTN1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design and the emerging Manual for Streets. Measures will also be determined by the existing road network, pedestrian and vehicle volumes and funding availability.
- 5.4 Improvements introduced could range from smaller scale measures, such as new signs and lines, pedestrian crossings, junction treatments, reconfigured road layout, modal filters, to larger scale measures such as LTNs.
- 5.5 The assessment of new requests will be carried out annually, and a new priority list established accordingly. The annual priority list will be proposed for approval at the relevant Committee Meeting. Identified priority measures will be implemented subject to funding availability. Areas that have been assessed will not be reassessed unless there are demonstrable and significant changes to the use of the area.
- 5.6 There are several requests that officers have already noted which would be subjected to this assessment criteria including vehicle speeds and pedestrian safety on Shirley Drive, speeding on Upper North Street & Beaconsfield Road & Freshfield Road, traffic calming on Marmion Road & Round Hill. A full list of requests can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 5.7 This method will supersede the Pedestrian Crossing Priority Assessment. Those top 10 priority locations already identified as priority areas and agreed at October ETS will continue to be developed. Other crossings listed on the pedestrian crossing request list will be revaluated using the new methodology and assessed alongside other locations including those identified in above.
- 5.8 The assessment criteria include collisions and wider issues that create a barrier to people using active forms of travel, including the perception of safety and ease of access to shops, services, and public transport. It is not designed to tackle our higher risk locations as these have a separate focus and budget to ensure that locations with the highest collision records are addressed efficiently.
- 5.9 This is not a 'Road Danger Reduction Strategy' but is a practical tool to directly assess and manage local concerns. Our existing Road Safety Strategy complies with the criteria, in line with other Local Authorities to reduce road danger. This focuses on reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads

through prioritisation of specific hotspots where collisions and injuries are occurring if there is verifiable data supplied by Sussex Police.

- 5.10 We will continue to work closely with Sussex Safer Road Partnership (SSRP) to determine collision hotspots through our dedicated LTP funded 'High Risk Sites' programme. The process for identification of high risk sites is set out in Appendix 6.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 6.1 This methodology has been developed following requests for network improvements on the communities' streets. Requests for improvements will be encouraged from residents and Members via the Council's website. Members will be contacted annually to determine any new requests.
- 6.2 Localised consultation will take place with Ward Members, local residents and through our Active and Inclusive Travel Forum stakeholder groups. The scale and the type of consultation will depend on the size and location of the intervention.
- 6.3 Where relevant, improvements will be subject to Traffic Regulation Orders and the statutory consultation period.
- 6.4 We will continue to work with our Emergency Services partners and Sussex Safer Roads Partnership to help develop our priorities and to share data to ensure issues around enforcement and antisocial driving behaviour is reported.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The Safer, Better Streets – Highway improvement Prioritisation Framework aligns with key policy and provides a process to investigate residents' concerns around traffic related issues and provides a clear and transparent process for resolving these issues.

8. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The capital costs associated to the recommendations in the report will be funded from the approved capital programme and funded from a mixture of LTP capital funding, Carbon Neutral Funding (CNF) capital funding, Section 106 receipts and identified external grant funding.
- 8.2 Officers will continue to identify opportunities to maximise external funding sources to support the implementation of prioritised measures. External funding is potentially an important source of income, but funding conditions need to be carefully considered to ensure that they are compatible with the aims and objectives of the council.
- 8.3 Where locations do have external funding allocations, these may be progressed over other priority locations. If options do not provide betterment and value for money within the constraints of the programme, works will be suspended. This decision will be made in consultation with ward councillors and after all suitable options have been looked at. Appropriate funding will need to be sought for any unfunded schemes to be implemented. Should any locations result in changes of

parking incomes, transport officers will discuss mitigation options with parking officers to ensure no lost parking revenues are created from changes to a location. Any significant variations to budget will be reported as part of the council's monthly budget monitoring process.

Accountant Consulted: John Lack 21/12/2022

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The council's powers and duties under the Highways Act 1980 and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 must be exercised to secure the expeditious, convenient, and safe movement of all types of traffic, including pedestrians. The actions detailed in this report will assist in demonstrating that the council will be able to comply with its statutory duties.
- 9.2 The council must follow the rules on consultation set out in legislation. Such consultation depends on the individual measure being proposed and will need to be actioned on a case by case basis. If the consultation requirements are carried out, the legal implications for the Council are reduced.
- 9.3 Adequate time must be given for responses to be made to the public notice and any responses must be considered in finalising proposals.

Lawyer consulted: Katie Kam Date: 15/12/22

10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None directly related to this report however accessibility is considered during the prioritisation process. All infrastructure will be designed in line with national guidance considering accessibility issues and vulnerable road users.
- 10.2 For medium and larger scale improvements individual Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out.

11. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The implementation of measures prioritised as part of this assessment will support the council's Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and help improve active travel routes across the city. Providing better, safer streets will support people to choose active forms of travel, walking is the most sustainable form of all transport modes as it produces zero emissions, helping the council's becoming carbon neutral by 2030. It also improves public health through increased physical activity.

12. ANY OTHER SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1. List of concerns raised at Committee to be assessed through the new Framework.
2. Safer, Better Streets – Framework and Prioritisation Methodology
3. School Crossing Patrol Assessment Criteria
4. School Streets Assessment Criteria
5. Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) Prioritisation Criteria
6. High Risk Sites Assessment Criteria