
Report for:

**TRAFFIC & ROAD
SAFETY ADVISORY
PANEL**

Date of Meeting:

13th October 2020

Subject:

Transportation schemes - review of development and implementation procedure

Key Decision:

No

Responsible Officer:

Paul Walker – Corporate Director, Community

Portfolio Holder:

Varsha Parmar - Portfolio Holder for Environment

Exempt:

No

Decision subject to Call-in:

Yes, following consideration by the Portfolio Holder upon receipt of Recommendation from the Panel

Wards affected:

All

Enclosures:

Appendix A – Programme entry process

Appendix B – London Streetspace Programme funding awards

Appendix C – Transportation schemes scheme development and implementation procedure

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report updates members on a review of how walking and cycling schemes are promoted and consulted on following the experiences of delivering the Harrow Street Spaces Programme.

Recommendations:

The Panel is requested to recommend to the Portfolio Holder - Environment:

1. To note the findings of the report.
2. To implement the proposed improvements to the scheme development and implementation procedure highlighted in the report.

Reason:

To improve the quality of schemes submitted for bids and to improve the scheme development process in order to deliver higher quality schemes.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

- 2.1 On the 19th August 2020 the Deputy Leader of the Council agreed that a review of the procedure for proposing, consulting and determining highway, pedestrian and cycling schemes, be undertaken and presented to the next meeting of the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel.
- 2.2 This review is being undertaken because many of the schemes in the Harrow Street Spaces Programme included measures to support pedestrians and cyclists that were contentious due to the impact they had on other road users and the rapid delivery time scales required by the funding agencies providing the funding which required streamlined consultation processes to be used.
- 2.3 The review considers the way in which schemes are developed prior to applying for funds from the funding agencies and the public engagement processes used to deliver schemes.

Options considered

- 2.4 An approved scheme development and consultation process has been followed in recent years. It is recognised that stakeholder engagement is extremely important in developing and taking forward suitable schemes to deliver the Council's Transport Local Implementation Plan (LIP) successfully.

- 2.5 The option being considered is to undertake a review of the existing process and to recommend any necessary changes required.
- 2.6 Areas for improvement have been identified in the process and an amended process is proposed based on the findings in this report.

Scheme development process

- 2.7 Whilst this review is focussed on walking and cycling schemes the programme development process is actually common to all transportation schemes and so this will address the wider programme as a whole. It is necessary to understand the operational arrangements being used to develop and promote schemes prior to the health crisis before considering the situation with the Street Spaces Programme in 2020.

Pre Covid-19 situation

- 2.8 During the course of the year stakeholder feedback, surveys and assessments identify problems on the network and the need for improvements. Potential projects are identified and prioritised based on their strategic fit with the LIP objectives using a Programme Entry system that was agreed with TARSAP in 2012. This is an on-going process and provides the basis for developing annual work programmes as shown in the chart below. The full programme entry process is shown in **Appendix A**.



- 2.9 Each year a list of projects to be taken forward in the LIP is submitted in October / November in advance of the new financial year. The projects are not designed at this point and require Transport for London (TfL) to agree that they are a suitable strategic fit for delivering the LIP objectives. TfL subsequently confirm the LIP budgets in December or January just before the commencement of the financial year in April.
- 2.10 The vast majority of schemes have not been designed in advance and so the full cycle of activities from start to finish for a scheme takes place within the financial year. This makes delivering schemes and meeting financial deadlines very challenging. In addition to this if schemes become delayed by any contentious issues and require further design and consultation then this exacerbates the situation further. In general, the first half of the year (April –

September) has more design and consultation activity on schemes and the second half of the year (October – March) has more construction / implementation work.

- 2.11 Boroughs have been encouraged by Transport for London to design and develop transportation projects in advance so that there are some projects already ready for implementation at the start of the financial year and to allow opportunities to bid for funding. This would reduce pressure on internal resources to undertake a large amount of intensive design and consultation work at the beginning of the year and allow works implementation programmes to be spread out through the year more evenly rather than being weighted to the end of the year. This improves the overall planning and programming of works and use of the available budget.
- 2.12 However, Harrow has not been able to adopt this approach to date because of internal resource limitations and significant pressure to deliver on transport and parking schemes commitments.

Current situation (Covid-19)

- 2.13 The Coronavirus health crisis resulted in a lockdown from the end of March and caused the funding of the LIP programme to be suspended by TfL due to financial pressures. Guidance from TfL on the London Streetspace programme did not emerge until mid-May because of the on-going negotiations that took place between TfL and Government to provide TfL with financial support. The loss of LIP funding also placed financial pressures on the Boroughs as well due to the loss of the LIP programmes and placed pressure on service budgets and staffing resources.
- 2.14 Bidding for schemes under the LSP programme had significant interest from boroughs in order to provide a transport response to the Coronavirus health crisis and also to address internal financial pressures. As a consequence it was expected that TfL's funding would be oversubscribed by boroughs. This situation therefore favoured those boroughs that could develop and submit proposals quickly.
- 2.15 It should be noted that whilst the LSP guidance is aligned to the Mayor's Transport Strategy and "healthy streets" it set out a prescriptive requirement for specific types of projects that Harrow had not included in its LIP programme for 2020/21 and therefore Harrow's transportation team had no projects designed in advance ready to use. Officers proposed ideas that fitted strategically with the guidance issued by TfL and were supported by existing intelligence about network issues from stakeholders and at TARSAP. There was no opportunity to test ideas before submitting the bids as these had to be submitted quickly in order to maximise the opportunity to secure the funding.
- 2.16 On balance Harrow was reasonably successful in proposing bids that secured funding. However, it is very clear that boroughs with advanced forward plans of pre prepared and relevant proposals with a strong strategic

fit were able to secure a larger proportion of the funding with TfL. There was a very wide range of allocations to boroughs which can be seen in **Appendix B**. This emphasises the key point that having pre prepared schemes is an advantage in competitive bidding for schemes.

Way forward

- 2.17 In order to develop a range of schemes in advance so that they are on the shelf and ready to be delivered or submitted for bids it is necessary to commit more funds in one year into designing and consulting on projects with less scheme implementation. Going forward into future years a consistent balance between developing and implementing schemes would then need to be maintained so that a range of prepared schemes are always available at short notice year on year.
- 2.18 One of the key benefits of this approach is having schemes ready to be submitted for bids or funding opportunities at short notice where there is a greater understanding of the acceptability of projects with the public and members. If schemes have had some prior stakeholder engagement already and realistic costs estimates have been prepared any bid will be more attractive to the funding agency and be perceived as having less risk.
- 2.19 An indicative way forward is shown in the chart below where the full scheme development and implementation process spans 2 years.

Activity	Year 1				Year 2			
	Q1 Apr-Jun	Q2 Jul-Sep	Q3 Oct-Dec	Q4 Jan-Mar	Q1 Apr-Jun	Q2 Jul-Sep	Q3 Oct-Dec	Q4 Jan-Mar
Programme entry review	█				█			
Submit programme to TfL		█				█		
New scheme development and consultation			█	█			█	█
Scheme implementation or bidding	█	█	█		█	█	█	

Review of scheme consultation process

- 2.20 The scheme development process is common to all transportation schemes and will be reviewed as a whole. It is necessary to understand the operational arrangements being used to undertake community engagement before considering the situation with the Street Spaces Programme in 2020.

Pre Covid-19 situation

- 2.21 TARSAP is aware of the processes used to undertake informal and formal consultations on transportation schemes and the process has been very effective at providing the necessary engagement with stakeholders and members and achieving positive outcomes over recent years. The current process has been improved by reviewing experiences of undertaking schemes and accommodating suggestions from ward councillors and TARSAP.
- 2.22 The current process used for developing and consulting on transportation schemes is therefore fully comprehensive and is set out in **Appendix C**.

Current situation (Covid-19)

- 2.23 The delivery of the Street Spaces Programme did not provide the usual amount of time to undertake public consultation as set out in Appendix C. The funding agencies only provided a short timescale to deliver very challenging projects (delivery of schemes by the end of September 2020) and so an alternative public engagement process was agreed with senior members that could enable a faster delivery programme.
- 2.24 A public engagement portal was used to act as the focal point for the Street Spaces programme and to publicise the council's proposals, provide details of the schemes and to receive feedback on the schemes. The portal was publicised by using available media channels, including social media, by the Council's corporate communications team to highlight the portal.
- 2.25 It was made clear that the proposals were to be introduced as temporary or experimental measures with the key intention to review them in operation rather than have a full public consultation process in advance.
- 2.26 The feedback was to be reviewed by the Portfolio Holder – Environment to determine whether schemes should be implemented.
- 2.27 A weekly update was provided to all members to keep them advised of progress with the programme.
- 2.28 A number of problems became evident with the short engagement time scales to deliver the programme:
- Residents and businesses showed that they are more accustomed to receiving leaflets from the Council or looking for consultations on the

Council website and initially had difficulty with finding the information on the portal,

- The radical nature of the proposals coupled with the short notice provoked a hostile reaction from some sectors of the community which escalated within communities over time,
- The complex issues involved in understanding the need for the measures were not given full consideration because too much focus was on the perceived impact of the measures and fears about the worst outcomes rather than considering the pros and cons,
- The temporary / experimental nature of the schemes was not taken into account fully and proposals were treated as though they were permanent measures.

2.29 Ultimately the difficulties with the programme required a report to TARSAP on 10th August to determine the way forward but the key lesson learned is that there is no short cut to engaging with the community over challenging and contentious projects. It is always necessary to take sufficient time to explain, understand and seek consensus on these types of proposals.

Way forward

2.30 The basic process set out in Appendix C should be retained because it has been used successfully to deliver schemes and programme in recent years. All the necessary stakeholders are engaged in a logical sequence of steps and the process is flexible to adapt to circumstances. Ward councillors are engaged at the key decision-making points so that community views can be reflected in decisions appropriately.

2.31 However, some improvements are suggested to improve the engagement process for transportation schemes as follows:

- The public engagement portal is a better medium for seeking views, feelings and opinions about concepts or ideas before they have been fully developed due to the use of social media. This was used with some success for the Council's liveable neighbourhood bid. This style of engagement could be used early on in the design process to understand community views and highlight awareness of projects in advance of formal consultation.
- Provide clear and easy to understand messages about the purpose of schemes and how they deliver on the Council's approved transport policies and vision with a clear explanation of the benefits. Some concepts are hard to explain, and so clearer communications are required to ensure the key messages come across.

- Public consultations on firm proposals once designed are better done on the Council's consultation web portal as the community is familiar with finding them in this location and there will be less confusion.

2.32 These suggestions will be incorporated into the consultation process for the future.

Summary of key findings

2.33 To summarise, the key findings of the review are as follows:

- a) Proposing schemes – all transportation schemes have to deliver the Council's Transport Local Implementation Plan (LIP) policies and objectives as required by the Greater London Authority Act. A programme entry system of assessing proposals has been developed to ensure proposals have a strategic fit with the LIP which has been approved by TARSAP in 2012.
- b) Developing schemes - The way schemes are programmed should be changed so that design and consultation will take place in advance of the planned implementation year so projects are available at short notice for bids and funding opportunities. This allows time for public engagement and consultation without the time pressure of delivering schemes entirely in year.
- c) Consulting on schemes - Use the public engagement portal to seek views and opinions from the community on ideas and concepts in advance of undertaking detailed design. Use the Council's consultation web portal for public consultation on schemes with detailed designs ready for implementation. Improve the overall clarity of communications for all engagement and consultation exercises with the public.

Staffing/workforce

2.34 The delivery of the programme, including scheme development and consultation, will be undertaken by existing staff resources within the Traffic, Highways & Asset Management team supported by technical consultants as necessary.

Ward Councillors' comments

2.35 No as this affects all wards.

Performance Issues

2.36 The implementation of LIP schemes in the programme will be monitored for traffic levels of different travel modes, operational performance of the road network and public opinion.

Environmental Implications

- 2.37 There are environmental and health benefits from delivering the LIP programme. The main benefits are in improving air quality and public health.
- 2.38 Key air quality benefits identified were from reducing car travel, encouraging greener vehicles and reducing congestion.
- 2.39 Key population and human health benefits identified were from reducing casualties, encouraging active travel, health walks and as a result of improving air quality. The benefits associated with increased active travel and health walks are reduced diabetes and obesity levels.

Risk Management Implications

- 2.40 There is a requirement to undertake a design risk assessment during scheme development under the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations in order to manage any potential health and safety risks.
- 2.41 These need to be taken into account in presenting any transport schemes ideas and concepts during public engagement and consultation.

Legal implications

- 2.1 There are no imminent legal implications arising from this report.

Financial Implications

- 2.2 There are no funding implications.

Equalities Implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

- 2.3 The measures proposed in the programme accord with the Council's Transport Local Implementation Plan 3 (LIP). The LIP underwent an Equalities Impact Assessment and had due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it as required under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.4 All schemes will be subject to a design risk assessment which will incorporate a review of equality issues to assess the impacts of the interventions.

2.5 It is considered that the proposed LIP programme will be of particular benefit to the groups in the table below:

Protected characteristic	Benefit
Sex Disability Age	Improvements to scheme development and public consultation processes will improve the effectiveness of engagement with people with these protected characteristics and ensure changes to road layouts are engineered to positively affect them by identifying and addressing their specific issues and concerns during public engagement and consultation exercises.

Council Priorities

2.6 The proposed programme detailed in the report supports the Harrow Ambition Plan and will contribute to achieving the administration's priorities:

- Improving the environment and addressing climate change
- Tackling poverty and inequality
- Building homes and infrastructure
- Addressing health and social care inequality
- Thriving economy

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jessie Man	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 24/09/20		
Name: Rosemary Lansdown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 28/09/20		
Name: Nimesh Mehta	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Head of Procurement
Date: 28/09/20		

Name: Paul Walker



Corporate Director of
Community

Date: 28/09/20

Ward Councillors notified:

NO, as it impacts on all Wards

EqlA carried out:

YES,

EqlA cleared by:

**Dave Corby, Community -
Equality Task Group (DETG)
Chair**

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

David Eaglesham – Head of Traffic, Highways & Asset Management

Tel: 020 8425 - 1500

E- mail David.Eaglesham@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Programme Entry Procedure -- TARSAP Nov 2012

<https://www2.harrow.gov.uk/documents/g61198/Public%20reports%20pack%20Thursday%2029-Nov-2012%2019.30%20Traffic%20and%20Road%20Safety%20Advisory%20Panel.pdf?T=10>

Transport Local Implementation Plan 3 –

<https://www.harrow.gov.uk/downloads/file/26428/harrow-transport-local-implementation-plan>

Walking, Cycling & Sustainable Transport Strategy -

<https://www.harrow.gov.uk/downloads/file/26432/harrow-walking-cycling-and-sustainable-transport-strategy>

TfL Streetspace funding information - <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/boroughs-and-communities/streetspace-funding>

TfL Streetspace for London guidance - <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/lsp-interim-borough-guidance-main-doc.pdf>

**Call-In Waived by the
Chair of Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

NOT APPLICABLE

*(Call-in will apply following
consideration by the Portfolio
Holder upon a Recommendation
from the Panel)*