PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Environment & Infrastructure Committee

20 March 2019

Road Safety Projects Assessment Criteria

Report by Depute Director (Housing and Environment) (Report No. 19/83)

This report proposes a criteria-based system approach for prioritising the large number of ad-hoc requests that the Traffic Management and Roads Safety team receives for additional road safety measures. Over 500 such requests have been received by the team.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Council's Traffic and Network Team undertakes a significant volume of work which originates from various sources. These can include budget proposals for specific initiatives, delivery of central-government driven proposals such as Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets, Safer Routes to Schools and the promotion of sustainable transport. The proposals contained within this report do not apply to any of these initiatives, nor to any pre-programmed work undertaken by the team.

1.2 The team is also the initial point of contact for elected members, members of the public, and public bodies to raise any concerns they may have regarding traffic and road safety issues.

1.3 In order to identify the causes of any crashes on the local road network, the team undertakes detailed examinations of reported road traffic collisions, traffic data, road layouts and road maintenance issues.

1.4 Remedial measures identified from analysis of the data are delivered within available budgets. They can include the provision of traffic calming schemes, School Exclusion Zones, traffic restrictions, pedestrian crossings as well as the provision of safety barriers, road signs and carriageway lining.

1.5 This work is carried out in conjunction with Police Scotland and Safety Cameras Scotland. The team also carries out road safety audits on new road schemes, as well as carrying out street audits for vulnerable road users.

1.6 Responsibility for the promotion of initiatives which encourage healthier and safer lifestyles through walking and cycling also sits with the team. These initiatives can assist in the reduction of traffic congestion and improve the local environment. Transport Scotland has set a challenging target that, by 2020, 10% of all journeys will be by sustainable transport. A number of projects that the team undertakes are intended to provide infrastructure to help reach that target.

1.7   The team receives annual capital funding from the Scottish Government to deliver projects that will provide infrastructure for Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets (CWSS). In 2018/19, the Scottish Ministers provided a capital grant for CWSS projects up to £205,000. As in previous years, projects to be carried out during 2018/19 were identified and approved by the Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee in May 2018 (Report No. 18/175 refers).

1.8   The team also received capital funding of £160,000 from the Council's capital budget for road safety initiatives to provide measures to deliver road safety initiatives along with a revenue budget for traffic engineering projects.

1.9   In recent years, significant investment has been made by the Council to improve road safety in Perth and Kinross. These are detailed below:

- £1.6m in April 2017 to respond to a backlog of demand for vehicle activated signs (VAS) and pedestrian crossings.
- £0.6m in April 2017 for A977 traffic mitigation measures.
- £0.9m in April 2018 for road safety schemes, footways and cycleways in 2018/19 & 2019/20

1.10   In summary, this additional funding has enabled the team to deliver a major programme of traffic management and road safety initiatives. These include vehicle-activated signs at entrances to towns and villages, new rural footways and Puffin crossings for pedestrians, shared-use paths for pedestrians and cyclists, traffic mitigation measures along the A977, Traffic Regulation Orders for reduced speed limits and waiting restrictions, and anti-skid surfacing at rural collision sites.

1.11   Significant progress has been made in delivering these targeted improvements. However, it has co-incided with an increasing number of requests for the implementation of additional road safety measures from elected members, community councils and members of public. This has created a very challenging level of demand in addition to the team's programmed workloads. Part of the additional funding was allocated to provide additional staffing resource

1.12   Officers are spending significant amounts of time processing requests and responding to enquiries about progress with requested schemes. This has deflected time away from delivering planned works as well as the requested schemes. The high level of demand experienced by the team makes it extremely difficult to timeously investigate and feedback comments to customers, while endeavouring to deliver current and future agreed priorities.

1.13   It is recognised that the level and frequency of these demands have impacted on the team's ability to deliver the best possible customer service with the inevitable perception that these matters are not being given due attention within a reasonable timescale. This combination of circumstances has been a source of frustration to elected members, community councils and members of the public, who are seeing little or no progress with the schemes they want

to have implemented in their area. They are also unaware of the level of priority of their requests, compared to the hundreds of other requests the team is dealing with.

1.14   There is currently a backlog list of requests for over 500 schemes which are waiting to be added to the existing programme of works. Each newly requested scheme requires a design and consultation stage before the work can be implemented which adds to the timescale for completing each request. In addition, these emerging schemes have not been budgeted for.

1.15   As an interim solution to start to address this issue, the team have instigated the following improvement measures:

- the appointment of a Modern Apprentice to provide business support to administer the incoming requests
- all outstanding requests have been captured in a series of ward lists prior to an agreed set of assessment criteria being approved
- three technical staff vacancies have been recruited and these appointees support service delivery moving forward.

1.16   It is also necessary to provide a medium to long term resolution. This includes:

- agreeing an objective and transparent criteria based system for prioritising incoming requests for road safety schemes, to ensure staff and financial resources are targeted at activities which deliver the maximum impact.
- all requests will be listed in descending order of priority with the highest scoring requests being programmed into the work stream, as resources allow, once assessed and scored against the criteria.
- the prioritised list will be recorded on a sharepoint site which will allow officers and elected members to check on the ongoing status of any request, and its position within the priority programme. This "self-serve" approach will help the capacity of the team to deliver agreed and funded areas of work, as they will spend less time dealing with enquiries over the status of requested schemes.
- an online prioritised list will be available by the end of the year to community councils and members of the public through myPKC (see section 2.7).

2.   PROPOSALS

2.1   All Roads Authorities have a statutory duty under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to keep a record of road traffic collisions, investigate the circumstances surrounding these collisions and identify a programme of measures to address them. The Scottish Government has set national casualty reduction targets for 2020.

2.2   To address the issues outlined above, it is proposed to operate an assessment criteria for prioritising schemes based on collision and casualty

reduction. In addition, other assessment criteria have been identified – road environment, road alignment, school travel planning and sustainable transport and cost (including income generation / third party funding).

2.3   It is proposed that each requested road safety scheme will be allocated risk weighting points under each of the six criteria, with the highest scoring schemes deemed to be highest priority. The proposed assessment criteria is attached as Appendix 1.

2.4   A Benefit Cost Ratio will be calculated by dividing the cost for each scheme by the weighting points scored. Dependent on available budgets, priority will then be given to those schemes which have the highest Benefit Cost Ratios. A worked example of the assessment criteria model is also shown is Appendix 2. It is recognised that there may be occasions when it is more practical and cost-effective to combine projects located in a similar geographic area, or utilising the same/similar equipment, even if projects are not all of a similar priority ranking.

2.5   The Benefit Cost ratio can be influenced by funding contributions (over and above the Council core funding). For example, if a community can identify additional third party funding for their proposed scheme, this will reduce the actual cost to the Council for that scheme. Therefore, in that instance, the Benefits Cost ratio will be higher, and the scheme is likely to receive a greater priority. This is an incentive for communities to contribute to their proposal by seeking alternative, additional funding.

2.6   Over 2019, the team will also work with IT colleagues to develop an online service, to include self-service functionality for the input of new requests by customers. This online solution will allow elected members, community councils and members of the public access to viewable lists using myPKC. As such, every enquirer will be able to see the current status of their request in relation to all other prioritised proposals.

2.7   Elected member support will be essential for the implementation of requests made for road safety. The team will ensure all local ward members continue to be consulted on any proposals.

3.   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1   The Traffic and Network Team is tasked with delivering road safety schemes throughout Perth and Kinross in line with annual targets, workloads and available budgets.

3.2   The team is receiving increasing numbers of requests from elected members, community councils and members of the public to consider additional road safety measures in addition to the agreed annual programmes, which are outwith both funding and staffing resources.

3.3   The volume of requests being received make it difficult for the team to deal with these efficiently and effectively, while endeavouring to complete their current and future workloads. As a result, it is proving challenging to communicate progress back to those submitting the original requests.

3.4   The measures proposed in this report will help to both manage the demand, and also provide readily available information to requestors. The proposals will allow them to view their enquiry, and where it sits in the prioritisation ranking, compared to other requests, the list of requests will be dealt with on a prioritisation basis. As such, it is not a waiting list. If subsequent requests are received which are deemed a priority, they will be placed higher on the list than existing requests which have been on the list for some time.

3.5   It is recommended that the Committee:

i)   notes the work underway to respond to the demand challenges facing the Traffic and Network Team
ii)   approves the assessment criteria for use in prioritising requests for traffic management and road safety schemes as detailed at paragraphs 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 above and in Appendix 1

Author

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Approved

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1.   **IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION**

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan	**Yes**
Corporate Plan	**Yes**
Resource Implications	
Financial	**Yes**
Workforce	**None**
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	**None**
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	**Yes**
Strategic Environmental Assessment	**Yes**
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	**Yes**
Legal and Governance	**Yes**
Risk	**None**
Consultation	
Internal	**Yes**
External	**No**
Communication	
Communications Plan	**Yes**

1.   **Strategic Implications**

Community Plan

1.1   The Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership (CPP) brings together organisations to plan and deliver services for the people of Perth and Kinross. Together the CPP has developed the Perth and Kinross Community Plan which outlines the key things we think are important to Perth and Kinross.

(i)   Giving every child the best start in life
(ii)   Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
(iii)   Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
(iv)   Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
(v)   Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

1.2   It is considered that the actions contained within the report contribute to all the above objectives.

Corporate Plan

1.3   The Council's Corporate Plan outlines the same five objectives as those detailed above in the Community Plan. These objectives provide a clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resource allocation. It is considered that the actions contained in the report contribute to the objectives as outlined in paragraph 1.3 above. These

objectives are met by implementing schemes which promote traffic management and road safety.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Once schemes have been assessed and ranked according to the assessment criteria contained within this report, funding from both the future Capital and Revenue budgets will have to be identified to enable implementation and ongoing maintenance.

Workforce

2.2 There are no workforce implications arising from this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 There are no land and property, or information technology implications arising from the contents of this report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

3.1 An Equality Impact Assessment needs to be carried out for functions, policies, procedures or strategies in relation to race, gender and disability and other relevant protected characteristics. This supports the Council's legal requirement to comply with the duty to assess and consult on relevant new and existing policies.

3.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

i) Assessed as **relevant** and the following positive outcomes expected following implementation:

a) The measures, for example improved crossing facilities, footways and traffic calming features, will provide improved amenities for communities, and improve road safety particularly for disabled people with mobility issues, sight or hearing impairment, children, elderly people & parent/carers walking with children in pushchairs/buggies.

b) The measures will provide improvements for road users of all ages, but particularly for children and elderly people. This will include facilities to enable them to cross roads safely and access local amenities.

c) The measures will also encourage children to walk or cycle to school, and reduce dependence on vehicular transport, thus bringing health benefits.

d) The measures will provide opportunities for increased travel by foot and cycle for all age groups.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).

3.4 The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

3.5 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.   Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, the Council also has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environment and economic impacts of its actions.

Legal and Governance

3.6 Any Traffic Regulation Orders will be promoted in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

Risk

3.7 There are no significant risks associated with the implementation of this project.

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 The Head of Legal and Governance, the Head of Finance and Police Scotland have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

4.2 As part of the scheme design, consultation will be carried out with the relevant parties where appropriate, including the local elected members.

5. Communication

5.1   All works are contained within the road boundary and are recognised as permitted development. No approvals or statutory consultations are required.

2.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

- E&I Committee Report – 18/173 - Vehicle-Activated Signs Programme
- E&I Committee Report – 18/175 - Active Travel Strategy: Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets Projects 2018/19
- E&I Committee Report – 18/177 New Rural Footways Assessment Criteria
- E&I Committee Report – 18/273 - New Rural Footways were referenced in the preparation of this report.

3.   APPENDICES

3.1   Appendix 1 – Proposed assessment criteria for road safety requests