

# Guidance Note

## Community Networks Highways Scheme Programme Guidance Note –

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. In 2018 Cornwall Council committed to [Strengthening Community Networks](#) by giving Community Network Panels (CNPs) an annual Community Network Highways Budget for a term of 4 years.
- 1.2. The Portfolio Holder for Transport has reviewed this programme and this updated guidance sets out an annual budget split equally between Cornwall Councillors for allocation to the Network Areas dependent upon the number of Councillors in an area. At present, this continued programme, which is funded from Government Local Transport Plan Funding, is intended to run until March 2025; this is on the basis that the Council has received a provisional 3-year funding settlement from Government.
- 1.3. This Guidance Note should be read in conjunction with the Local Transport Plan (LTP).

### 2. Background

- 2.1. The CNPs are the local key point of contact for engagement and consultation in delivery of major capital transport schemes in or affecting their Community Network Area (CNA) and whilst they can still influence such schemes this revised budget enables CNPs to target investment for their local smaller highway improvement schemes: the **Community Networks Highways Scheme (CNHS)**.
- 2.2. The CNHS has successfully committed to deliver over 500 schemes to help local communities either by providing better access or to increase safety of the highway. The current round of funding ends in March 2022.
- 2.3. Many schemes coming through this process were attempts to control inappropriate parking or speed. These require Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) for yellow lines or speed limits. Such a workload has meant that the current commitment from Cormac is to have all schemes either delivered or ready to deliver by March 2022 and completed by the end April\*.

Note: \*Timescales are subject to unforeseen circumstances that could have an impact on the delivery programme such as adverse weather or substantial objection at the scheme consultation stage.

### 3. Proposed CNP Funding

3.1. A further round of funding has been allocated to continue this local programme. This has been updated to provide greater fairness between CNP's and to significantly improve the efficiency of the programme.

3.2. Key principles are:

3.2.1. **Community Networks Highways Budget:** A new annual amount of £1.05m per annum is to be allocated from the Integrated Transport Block of the Local Transport Plan budget of £4.137m per annum.

3.2.2. **Budget Distribution:** The previous four-year programme allocated funding equally between the CNA's (£50,000 each), with £50,000 in reserve for potential overspends, on an annual basis. The budget will now be split equally between Members and allocated to the Community Network Areas (CNAs) dependent upon the number of Members in a CNA. See table 1 below for the funding allocation from April 2022.

Table 1 CNA Funding Distribution

CNP		Member no.s	Allocation
1	Bodmin	3	£34,398
2	Bude	3	£34,398
3	CPIR	10	£114,660
4	Camelford	2	£22,932
5	Caradon	3	£34,398
6	China Clay	4	£45,864
7	Cornwall Gateway	5	£57,330
8	Falmouth & Penryn	7	£80,262
9	Hayle & St. Ives	4*	£45,864
10	Helston & South Kerrier	5	£57,330
11	Launceston	3	£34,398
12	Liskeard and Looe	5*	£57,330
13	Newquay & St. Columb	5	£57,330
14	St. Agnes Perranporth	3	£34,398
15	St.Austell & Mevagissey	5*	£57,330
16	St. Blazey, Fowey & Lostwithiel	3*	£34,398
17	Truro & The Roseland	8*	£91,728
18	Wadebridge and Padstow	3*	£34,398
19	West Penwith	6*	£68,796
X	Portfolio		£52,458
		87	<b>£1,050,000</b>

\* some share a CNP

- 3.3. **A common CNP TRO:** To ensure the whole scheme costs are captured it is intended that all Traffic Regulation Order costs would be attributed to the CNP schemes. This change will ensure that the whole scheme cost is understood. The premise that there is one TRO per CNA per financial year would still be recommended to the CNP to avoid additional costs.
- 3.4. **Timeline Protocols:** To ensure this round of schemes is delivered as effectively as possible, firm deadlines throughout the commissioning process and programme efficiencies are required. A particular challenge is ensuring the TRO procedural and delivery timescales are as streamlined as possible. As such individual schemes that emerge as significantly controversial and cannot be resolved within the time scales allocated for inclusion would, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder(s) for Transport and Neighbourhoods, be allocated to the following years to ensure that they do not hold up the overall programme of work. The deadlines and timescales are as follows:
- 2022/23 Schemes –Final recommendations must be submitted for approval to the Portfolio Holder by April 2022. This means that EOIs will need to be submitted and reviewed by the CNP and Members before this date. The full process is set out below (Section 4).
  - 2023/24 & 2024/25 - Schemes must be submitted as soon as possible, and no later than March 2023. Panels are encouraged to discuss and prioritise their proposed schemes as far in advance as possible.
- 3.5. **Expressions of Interest:** The CNPs will be tasked to provide a list of nominations through an Expression of Interest form. These forms should reflect the issue affecting the community not the potential solution. Technical advice will be available from Cormac’s Highways Managers, supported by Cormac’s Engineering Design Group (EDG), about potential solutions which reflect the concepts of the LTP and resolve the issues communicated.
- 3.6. **Scheme Commitment:** Each CNP will then consider and come to a collective view on which schemes are their priorities. The CNP’s views will then be considered by the CNA’s Divisional Members, who will make a final recommendation to the Portfolio Holder for Transport. The CNP and members would be responsible for identifying the inclusion of any available additional supplementary funding (e.g., match- funding from local Parish and Town Councils or S106 funding), with appropriate support and advice from officers
- 3.7. **Roll Over:** If a CNP wishes to roll forward the funding into the next financial year to fund a larger project this must be approved by the Portfolio Holder in line with the new protocol.
- 3.8. **Monitoring:** Monthly monitoring reports are to be provided to CNP’s on the progress of approved schemes, from formal consultation to scheme completion.
- 3.9. **Programme of Enactment:** It is proposed that the new programme would run in parallel to the duration of the Integrated Transport Block funding, which is three years from April 2022.

## 4. Process

### Stage 1: Review

4.1 Each Member will ask the local councils in their part of the CNP to provide them with a list of proposed local highways issues. They will provide these to the Member by way of the Expression of Interest form. The Member may submit their own proposals if they wish. The CNP and Member (supported by the Highway Manager and Community Link Officer) will then consider them to create a proposed programme of highway improvements for their area, the

aim of which will be to benefit all. To be eligible for funding, schemes must support highway improvements that meet the revised 2022 Cornwall Transport Plan Vision *‘Transport in Cornwall will be excellent and carbon neutral. Our transport system will connect people, communities, businesses and services in a way that enhances quality of life, is reliable, efficient, safe, healthy and inclusive. People will choose to travel in ways that will have a low impact upon the environment and other people’.*

4.2 Schemes should include proposals to deliver against one or more of the six goals of The Cornwall Transport Plan listed below:

1. **Tackle Climate Change** - Respond to the challenges of climate change by ensuring we have a resilient, carbon neutral transport network, and we support communities to live locally.

This is the overarching goal of the Cornwall Transport Plan and schemes that support modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport, reducing the need to travel or switching to electric or cleaner fuels will be given high priority.

2. **Support economic prosperity** by improving sustainable transport links for business and access to employment, education and training.

Suitable schemes include those that improve sustainable transport access to shops and business activities and to contribute to local events or facilities. This can be for customers or deliveries e.g., cargo bikes.

Respect and enhance our beautiful natural and historic environment through the way in which we travel and deliver transport.

Suitable schemes include those that improve access to the environment for more people, especially those who currently have limited access e.g., children, people with disabilities.

3. **Support healthy active lifestyles and wellbeing** by providing the right facilities and environment for walking and cycling to become the natural choice for local trips

Suitable schemes include those that deliver a town and village street scene that respects our Cornwall heritage and culture, provides a safe, accessible, and attractive place for residents whilst substantially reducing environmental harm from vehicle operations including air pollution. Improvements to make walking and cycling easier will also be supported.

4. **Support community and road safety** - Ensure our communities are safer and more enjoyable places to live by reducing the negative impacts of transport.

Suitable schemes include those that reduce speeds or traffic volumes or reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime whilst travelling.

5. **Provide equal opportunities for everyone**, regardless of age, postcode, income level or ability; to access the services they need and to have a say on transport solutions in their communities.

Suitable schemes include those which particularly benefit people with limited transport options due to geography, disability, age or affordability.

**Extent:** Improvements to any part of the highway network would qualify (i.e., A, B, C and U class roads).

4.3 It is recommended that should a CNA require a Traffic Regulation Order as part of their schemes then they only carry out one TRO consultation per financial year to avoid additional costs.

#### 4.4 Gateways

4.4.1 Where viable, seeking to enhance the “Healthy” and “Living Streets” concept for Town and Village Streets should be a priority.

4.4.2 For example, provide gateway features that demonstrate to vehicle users they are entering a safe street environment and that pedestrian and cyclists are the principal, entitled users.

4.4.3 The design of the gateways is important. Not a simple utilitarian Highway sign, but a feature that incorporates urban and landscaping design, reflecting where possible local heritage.

### 5. Stage 2: Prioritise and Recommend

5.1. The Highways Managers will review the expression of interest forms from the CNPs alongside the Members. The annual quantity of schemes needs to be manageable, therefore expression of interest forms should be because of prioritisation at a Parish and CNA level. The Highways Managers will prepare a schedule setting out brief comments on the listed schemes, covering issues including estimated cost, deliverability, match with the Cornwall LTP objectives, policy, strategy, legal or other implications.

5.2. The schedule will indicate if the listed schemes have any relationship with any existing or planned schemes (within the LTP programme or arising from Section 106 funding or other funding streams) and if there is any potential to link schemes together and/or bring them forward early.

5.3. A schedule will be presented to each CNP by the Members for prioritisation. CNPs will discuss the schedule and conduct consultations with Town & Parish Councils in their CNP as they deem appropriate (e.g., during the meetings and/or by correspondence as necessary). Highways Managers will attend CNPs to provide technical advice and answer questions (this should be linked to the regular Highways visits to CNPs).

5.4. CNPs should use the criteria from the Cornwall Transport Plan to assist them with the prioritisation process.

5.5. Each CNP working with their Members will then consider which schemes should be progressed as their top priorities, within the available funding, to be taken to full design and formal consultation stage. When the CNP has considered its priorities and come to a collective view on this, it should make a recommendation to the CNP’s Divisional Members. The Divisional Members will then consider the CNP’s views and submit a final recommendation to the Portfolio Holder.

#### 5.6. Funding Sources:

5.6.1. The Community Network Highway Budget for the CNA. A CNP may carry forward funds for more costly or contentious schemes in later years but at the Portfolio Holder’s discretion.

- 5.6.2. Additional funding identified in S106 or larger LTP schemes
- 5.6.3. Match-funding. CNPs and members may invite Town & Parish Councils to consider if they wish to offer match-funding to a scheme within their Parish.

## **6. Stage 3: Evaluation and Approval**

- 6.1. The CLO will prepare a draft report for each CNA, setting out the CNP's and Members' recommendations. This report will include a completed project brief for each scheme, together with the Highway Manager's evaluation and comments. The project brief will include brief reasons setting out the business case for the proposal in question.
- 6.2. The report will then be submitted to the Head of the Highways Service and the Portfolio Holder for Transport for approval in accordance with Cornwall Council's approved procedures for decision-making. The Portfolio Holder's decision will be recorded in writing and published in accordance with Cornwall Council's usual procedures, including the reasons for approving or declining the recommendations. The CNP and Members will be informed of the outcome as soon as possible after the Portfolio Holder's decision is made.
- 6.3. A deadline will be in place for these reports and briefs to be issued to the Portfolio Holder. Any report or brief issued after this date will automatically enter part of the next year's round of schemes and be delayed by 12 months. It will be at the Portfolio Holder's discretion whether the budget is carried forward.

## **7. Stage 4: Design, Consultation and Delivery**

- 7.1. The project briefs for each scheme will be used to commission Cormac to design, consult and deliver each scheme, depending upon the size and scale of the scheme this may include preparation of a Comprehensive Impact Assessment. CNPs will be consulted on design and cost changes that may arise. The more accurate the brief at conception stage the quicker the scheme can be progressed.

### **7.2. Consultations**

- 7.2.1. The level of consultation would be dependent upon the impact the scheme may have on the highway network. Those requiring a Traffic Regulation Order will have to follow the agreed statutory process. However, with the Member and CNP both being aware of the agreed proposals at the outset this should shorten the time frame for the informal consultation and before formal consultation commences.
- 7.2.2. Schemes will vary in complexity and as such their consultation phase may vary in length. It is therefore intended that clear timelines are agreed for each scheme upon commission and where these timelines are affected by increased complexity at consultation stage this is to be made clear as soon as possible to the Member and CNP.
- 7.2.3. For efficiency, approved schemes will be in one package for the TRO procedures. This will enable a faster on-site delivery.
- 7.2.4. Where a scheme within a TRO package increases in complexity causing delay, so as not to prejudice the package delivery in a timely manner, the Portfolio Holder for Transport will mitigate these circumstances by moving such schemes into the following year's list of schemes.

## 8. Stage 5: Monitoring and Review

- 8.1. A monitoring report will be submitted to CNPs each month setting out progress from formal consultation to scheme completion. This will be linked to regular 6 monthly visits of Highways Managers to CNP's.
- 8.2. An annual summary document will be published at the end of each financial year setting out how the CNP has contributed to each of the objectives set out in 4.2.

## 9. Notes:

- 9.1. CNP's and Members are encouraged to reach a consensus view at all stages where they are involved. CLOs should continue to ensure that, where a vote is required at CNPs on the Highways Scheme, voting procedures are clear with one vote per parish and per Cornwall Councillor as the standard approach. The Divisional Members would come to their final recommendation by taking a vote between themselves, where there is not unanimous agreement.
- 9.2. This note and particularly any timescales are for guidance only. The deadlines introduced for this round of CNP funding are to ensure that resource issues within Cormac can be planned to avoid, as far as possible, foreseeable time delays. Phasing over three years is therefore proposed. Early delivery of briefs (within the timescale protocol) would also significantly assist the delivery teams in programming the specialist resources available to these tasks and for this to occur, the protocol on timelines for the procedures will apply.
- 9.3. Enforcement can only commence once the necessary lines and signs are in place. If the area of new restriction falls into an existing priority enforcement route, it will be included in regular patrols by Civil Enforcement Officers. However, if the restrictions are in a location that are patrolled on an ad-hoc basis or in an area that does not have visits, it is very unlikely the area would receive regular patrols at present.