

Report to: Lead Member for Transport & Environment
Date of meeting: 14 March 2022
By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
Title: Petition – Request to upgrade pedestrian crossing facilities in Old Town, Eastbourne
Purpose: To consider and respond to the petition presented by Councillor Ungar at Full Council on 7 December 2021 requesting the Church Street zebra crossing be upgraded to a signalised crossing and the introduction of pedestrian crossing phases at the Summerdown Road/A259 Church Street/Victoria Drive/A259 East Dean Road signalised crossroads in the Old Town area of Eastbourne

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Lead Member is recommended to advise the petitioners that:

- (1) The implementation of an upgrade of the existing zebra crossing in Church Street, Eastbourne, to a signalised crossing, is not presently a priority for funding through the County Council's 2022/23 capital programme for local transport improvements; and
 - (2) The introduction of pedestrian crossing phases at the Summerdown Road/A259 Church Street/Victoria Drive/East Dean Road signalised crossroads in the Old Town area of Eastbourne is not presently a priority for funding through the County Council's capital programme for local transport improvements
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1 Background Information

1.1. At the County Council meeting on 7 December 2021, a petition was presented by Councillor Ungar in relation to pedestrian crossings in Eastbourne Old Town. The petition, with 169 signatories, requested:

"We want the Zebra Crossing on Church Street, Eastbourne to be upgraded to a Pelican Crossing. We also want a pedestrian phase installed on the traffic lights at the junction with Summerdown Road, Church Street, Victoria Drive and East Dean Road, Eastbourne. The County Council has acknowledged that both these crossings meet the criteria to be upgraded but has not agreed to fund these upgrades. Both these crossings are used by children on their way to and from school and the roads are very busy."

1.2. A copy of the petition is available in the Members' Room. Standing Orders provide that where the Chairman considers it appropriate, petitions are considered by the relevant Committee or Lead Member and that a spokesperson for the petitioners is invited to address the Committee. The Chairman has referred this petition to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment.

2 Supporting Information

2.1 The County Council has previously received requests for the upgrade of the Church Road zebra crossing to a signalised crossing and the introduction of pedestrianised phases at the Summerdown Road/ A259 Church Street/Victoria Drive/A259 East Dean Road signalised crossroads, most recently in March 2021. A location plan is at Appendix 1.

2.2 A petition was also considered by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment in May 2019 requesting improvements at the signalised crossroads for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. The Lead Member resolved to advise the petitioners that the request had

been assessed through our high level sift and detailed assessment processes but was not a high enough priority at the time for inclusion in the 2019/20 capital programme of local transport improvements.

Scheme Assessment process

2.3 The County Council has a limited amount of funding to develop local transport improvements and we need to ensure that we target our resources to those schemes which will be of greatest benefit to our local communities. To help us prioritise the numerous requests received for improvements, we developed a two-stage process to determine which schemes should be considered for funding through our capital Programme for Transport Improvements.

2.4 The first stage is a high level sift which assesses the level to which the scheme would contribute towards delivering the County's Local Transport Plan (LTP) objectives – improve economic competitiveness and growth; improve safety, health and security; tackle climate change; improve accessibility and enhance social inclusion and improve quality of life.

2.5 Subject to meeting high level sift benchmark score, schemes are then progressed to a second, detailed appraisal stage. This detailed appraisal assesses at a more granular level the extent to which the scheme would fulfil the LTP objectives, its relative value for money, and the potential risks associated with its delivery. In addition, an assessment is made as to the level of benefit and impact the scheme would have upon the local community, whether the proposals feature within a known area for regeneration, and also whether any sources of external funding are available, such as development contributions.

2.6 The outcomes of the detailed appraisal create a prioritised list of schemes for potential inclusion in the capital programme of local transport improvements. The number of new schemes entering the programme on an annual basis will be dependent on several factors including the number of ongoing scheme commitments within the current programme, the funding associated with these that must be taken forward, time limited funding associated with particular improvements as well as the need to ensure that the scheme programme has a mix of schemes of different sizes and types to ensure that the overall programme is deliverable.

Church Street zebra crossing

2.7 Following the request received in March 2021, the conversion of the Church Street zebra crossing to a puffin crossing met the high level sift benchmark score and progressed to a detailed appraisal. Following the detailed appraisal, the scheme was ranked 22 out of 71 prioritised requests conducted in March 2021. As a result, the scheme was not put forward for possible inclusion into the capital programme for local transport improvements for 2021/22.

2.8 In February 2022, the detailed appraisal for the scheme request – as with all other prioritised schemes - has been reassessed. As a result of several new detailed appraisals having recently been added to the list, the scheme now ranks 24 out of the 79 detailed appraisals conducted. Therefore, the scheme was not included in the capital programme for local transport improvements in 2022/23.

Summerdown Road/A259 Church Street/Victoria Drive/A259 East Dean Road

2.9 Similarly, the request received in March 2021 for the introduction of a pedestrian phase to the traffic lights at the junction of Summerdown Road, Church Street, Victoria Drive and East Dean Road met the high level sift benchmark score and progressed to a detailed appraisal. Following this process, the scheme was ranked 37 out of 71 detailed appraisals assessed in March 2021 and it subsequently was not put forward for possible inclusion into the capital programme for local transport improvements in 2021/22. Because of its ranking relative to other schemes, it has not been considered for inclusion in the 2022/23 capital programme of local transport improvements.

A259 Corridor Study

2.10 The County Council commissioned a study last year relating to the A259 South Coast Corridor between Brighton and Eastbourne which forms part of the Department for Transport's

(DfT) designated Major Road Network (MRN). This multi-modal study is seeking to identify strategic corridor and specific localised interventions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, as well as localised road and junction capacity improvements, along and around the hinterland of the A259 corridor.

2.11 To date, two sets of workshops have been undertaken with stakeholders who have identified various priorities along the A259, including in the area between East Dean Road and the junction with Upperton Road, to be considered for inclusion as part of the package of interventions taken forward on the corridor. The long list of potential interventions are currently being assessed and short listed for inclusion in the proposed package. This assessment is based on background evidence regarding the current and future problems on the corridor, the appraisal against the DfT MRN as well the local study objectives, and stakeholder feedback.

2.12 The outcomes of the study, alongside Transport for the South East's Outer Orbital Study which has considered strategic interventions for the wider A259 corridor, will support the development of a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to start making the case for funding for the A259. Subject to Government approval of the SOBC, which is programmed for submission to DfT later this year, the business case will then need to be taken through the outline and final business case stages over the next 3 to 4 years before any MRN funding from Government would be available.

3 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The requests for pedestrian improvements at the Church Street zebra crossing and the Summerdown Road/A259 Church Street/Victoria Drive/A259 East Dean Road signalised crossroads in Eastbourne Old Town have been assessed using the County Council's scheme prioritisation process for local transport improvements. Whilst both have been identified as schemes for potential inclusion in the capital programme for local transport improvements through the assessment process, their ranking relative to other schemes within the prioritised list means they have not been considered for inclusion in the 2022/23 programme. Both requests will continue to be retained on record for possible inclusion in a future year's programme.

3.2 Therefore, it is recommended that the Lead Member for Transport and Environment advises the petitioners that the two scheme requests for pedestrian improvements in Eastbourne Old Town are not presently high priorities for the allocation of County Council funding in the 2022/23 capital programme for local transport improvements.

RUPERT CLUBB

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LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor Ungar

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None