

Report to: Lead Member for Transport and Environment
Date of meeting: 21 November 2022
By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
Title: Community Match Schemes 2022/23
Purpose: To seek approval for the proposed allocation of match funding to community-led local transport improvement schemes identified in the 2022/23 programme

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member is recommended to:

- (1) Agree that £4,250 of match funding is allocated towards the Plumpton Community Match safety improvement scheme for initial detailed design work in 2022/23 and construction in 2023/24**
 - (2) Agree that £5,000 of match funding is allocated towards the Robertsbridge Community Match dropped kerbs and lining scheme for initial detailed design work in 2022/23 and construction in 2023/24;**
 - (3) Agree that £50,000 of funding is allocated towards the Frant A267 pedestrian crossing scheme which will be designed and delivered by Frant Parish Council.**
 - (4) Delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to approve the 50% match funding contribution for the schemes in recommendations 1 and 2, up to a maximum contribution of £50,000 per scheme once the design and construction costs are known.**
 - (5) Delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to agree the terms and conditions of the grant funding agreement with Frant Parish Council for the £50,000 grant from the Community Match funding allocation towards the scheme as set out in recommendation 3.**
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1 Background Information

1.1. The Community Match initiative was launched by the County Council in 2014. The initiative offered the opportunity for local communities in East Sussex (typically a parish/town council or community group) to take forward schemes identified as a local priority, but not assessed to be of sufficient priority to be delivered using County Council funding alone through the Council's capital programme of local transport improvements.

1.2. The Community Match process begins with a feasibility study to assist Parishes and communities in identifying possible solutions to locally identified traffic or transport issues and determining cost estimates. The feasibility study is undertaken by East Sussex Highways and is funded by the Parish/Town Council, residents' group or organisation promoting the scheme. Many potential schemes do not progress beyond the feasibility stage as it becomes clear that the scheme is not feasible or would be too expensive to deliver using Parish funding, or there is not agreement among local residents and businesses about the scheme proposals.

1.3. If a Parish/Town Council or community group support the measures suggested in the feasibility appraisal, they can apply to the County Council for Community Match funds to take the scheme forward to detailed design and construction. The maximum financial input from the County Council is £50,000 per scheme, which needs to be matched by the Parish Council or community group. The feasibility appraisals are only able to give approximate scheme costs and more detailed scheme costs can be provided to applicants as more design work is undertaken. As part of the Community Match funding applications, the relevant County Councillors are asked whether they are supportive of the proposed Community Match schemes in their division.

1.4 As part of the Community Match programme, the delivery of these schemes will help contribute towards the County Council priorities of making best use of resources now and for the future and keeping vulnerable people safe.

2 Supporting Information

Community Match schemes for 2022/23

2.1 A sum of £100,000 has been allocated from the County Council's 2022/23 Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements to match-fund improvement schemes of local importance through the Community Match programme.

2.2 Although there have been many Community Match feasibility studies requested, only three applications have been received requesting funding to take schemes forward. It is important that projects have strong support from the local community and that they comply with relevant County Council policies.

2.3 A summary of the schemes, together with estimated total costs, community contribution and Community Match Fund contributions, is shown below. The community contribution will be at least 50% of the detailed design and construction costs for all three schemes. The final costs will likely vary from the current estimate once the detailed design has been undertaken and the scheme fully costed. Therefore, the level of Community Match Fund contribution allocated to each project, with a maximum contribution of £50,000 per project, and in parallel the level of community contribution may change depending on the final cost. The County Councillor for each of the schemes has indicated their support.

Scheme	Total cost	Community contribution	ESCC Community Match Fund contribution
<p>Plumpton Parish Council - Scheme to improve signage and road markings along the Station Road approach to the Southdowns junction to highlight presence of school and enhance road safety.</p> <p>The scheme would be delivered through the East Sussex Highways contract</p>	circa £8,500	£4,250	£4,250
<p>Salehurst & Robertsbridge Parish Council - Knelle Rd/Langham Rd Crossroads Traffic Improvements (Robertsbridge).</p> <p>Addition of double yellow lines on the four corners of the Langham Road / Knelle Road junction. New dropped kerbs and tactile paving on the same four corners</p> <p>The scheme would be delivered through the East Sussex Highways contract.</p>	circa £10,000	£5,000	£5,000

Frant pedestrian crossing A267. Contribution towards a section 278 agreement. Majority of funding from developer contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy.	Circa £250,000	£200,000	£50,000
The scheme design and delivery would be overseen and owned by Frant Parish Council. Assets to be owned and maintained by ESCC			

Risks

2.4 Communities will be recharged their share of the detailed design and construction work. In addition, for Community Match schemes there is a notable risk around delivering schemes that include speed limit or parking changes which require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), and the increase in costs that comes with delivering these types of schemes due to the additional resource and administration required. If formal objections to TROs are received and cannot be resolved by discussion with the objector, they must be considered by Planning Committee. This process adds both time and cost to the scheme.

Frant Parish Council – proposed grant

2.5 Frant Parish Council have applied for £50,000 Community Match funding for a light-controlled pedestrian crossing to replace the existing pedestrian island on the A267 near the Abergavenny Arms public house. The scheme is estimated to cost in the region of £250,000.

2.6 A pedestrian crossing is a long-held aspiration of the Parish Council, for which they received development contributions and funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for such a scheme of around £200,000. Following discussions with the Parish Council on the various options available to expedite the scheme’s delivery, they resolved at their Parish Council meeting on 19 October 2022 that taking forward the detailed design and delivery of the scheme themselves under a section 278 agreement with the County Council, with a £50,000 contribution from the County Council, was a more prudent way to deliver the scheme in a timely fashion. This option means the same investment from the County Council that they would have received, which is capped at £50,000, if they had decided to ask the County Council to deliver the scheme.

2.8 As a consequence, the project design will be managed by Frant Parish Council, who will also take on the liability for delivering the scheme, however the design would need to be approved by the County Council before construction and entering into the s278 agreement. As with all highway schemes (including Community Match), the ownership, maintenance and energy costs for the pedestrian crossing will be taken on by the County Council’s asset management team following completion of the works.

2.9 The Parish Council will be required to enter into a grant funding agreement with the County Council to enable the transfer, and ensure the appropriate use, of the community match funding as a contribution towards the delivery of proposed pedestrian crossing on the A267.

3 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The Community Match programme continues to provide the opportunity for town/parish councils, local resident groups and organisations to secure match funding to enable local priority schemes to be delivered which otherwise would not come forward using County Council funding alone through the capital programme of local transport improvements. From the £100,000 allocation for 2022/23, there is sufficient funding available to provide the community match funding requests to deliver all three schemes that have submitted applications. These schemes will help contribute towards delivering the County Council’s priorities of making best use of resources now and for the future and keeping vulnerable people safe.

3.2 Therefore, the Lead Member is recommended to allocate £4,250 of community match funding to the safety improvement scheme in Plumpton, £5,000 to the dropped kerb and lining scheme in Robertsbridge and £50,000 to the A267 scheme in Frant. It is recommended that the Lead Member delegates authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to

approve the 50% match contribution from the Community Match Fund, up to a maximum of £50,000 once the design and construction costs are known.

3.3 As Frant Parish Council are proposing to take on the design and delivery of their scheme themselves, it is recommended that the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport is delegated authority to agree the terms and conditions of a grant funding agreement with the Parish Council in relation to the £50,000 Community Match funding allocation.

RUPERT CLUBB

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LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillors Osborne, Redstone, Standley.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None