

Report to: Lead Member for Transport & Environment

Date of meeting: 22 May 2023

By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Title: Community Match Schemes for 2023/24

Purpose: To authorise expenditure for 2023/24 as contribution towards Community Match schemes

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member for Transport and Environment is recommended to:

- (1) Agree that £30,000 of match funding is allocated towards the Blackboys Community Match speed limit reduction scheme for detailed design work in 2023/24 and construction in 2023/24; and**
 - (2) Delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy & Transport to approve the 50% match funding contribution for the scheme in Table 1 up to a maximum contribution of £50,000 once the design and construction costs are known.**
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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 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/town 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.

2 Supporting Information

Community Match schemes for 2023/24

2.1 The Community Match budget for 2023/24 is £250,000.

2.2 Although there have been many Community Match feasibility studies requested, only one application has been received requesting funding to take a scheme 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 scheme, together with estimated total costs, community contribution and Community Match Fund contributions, is shown in Table 1 below. The community contribution will be at least 50% of the detailed design and construction costs for the scheme. 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 the project, with a maximum contribution of £50,000, and in parallel the level of community contribution may change depending on the final cost. The County Councillor for the scheme has indicated his support.

Table 1: Indicative scheme costs

Scheme	Indicative Total cost	Indicative Community contribution	Indicative ESCC Community Match Fund contribution
Framfield Parish Council - Scheme to reduce speed limit to 40mph on B2192 at Blackboys from Hollow Lane to Brownings Farm (current 50mph limit signs north of the village).	circa £60,000	£30,000	£30,000

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 Members at a meeting of the County Council's Planning Committee. This process adds both time and cost to the scheme.

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 £250,000 allocation for 2023/24, there is sufficient funding available to provide the community match funding requests to deliver the scheme at Blackboys for which an application has been submitted.

3.2 Therefore, the Lead Member is recommended to allocate an initial £30,000 of community match funding to the speed limit reduction scheme at Blackboys. 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.

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Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

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LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor Chris Dowling.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.