

## Dorset Highways

### Highway Improvements Policy and Procedure



#### Policy Statement

Dorset Council (DC), as the Highway Authority, will improve the highway to benefit the community and meet the objectives of the Local Transport Plan (LTP). This is in accordance with part V of the Highways Act (1980). Highway improvements range from small junction upgrades to a major relief road, cycling and walking schemes, town and village speed management, public transport infrastructure or other environmental enhancements.

Projects also delivered can include schemes off the highway that are externally sponsored such as household recycling centres, housing infrastructure and drainage schemes. Consultation is an integral and important part of scheme delivery. Elected councillors, local residents, businesses and other stakeholders will be consulted on the programme and individual projects.

**Policy Authorised by:** Cabinet  
**Date of Authorisation:** February 2013

Revision	Details	Date
O	Initial Issue	February 2013
A	Appendix 3 added	July 2013
B	Minor Revisions	November 2013
C	Appendix 2 amended	April 2016
D	Updates to reflect new processes	January 2019
E	New corporate branding and authority name changes	April 2019

# Highway Improvements Policy

## 1. Policy Objectives

- To secure the safe and cost-effective delivery of Highway Improvement projects that meet LTP objectives having due regard to built and natural environmental considerations, sustainable construction methods, risk, the community, heritage and other key influences
- To ensure that the annual improvement programme is prioritised and applied consistently according to a clear set of criteria that is communicated to all interested parties
- To ensure that we consult on the programme of Highway Improvement schemes annually and notify those schemes for construction during the coming financial year
- To ensure that with reference to the protocol on involving local members, we consult on the proposals for individual schemes with Members, the public and take account of the responses to these consultations
- To ensure that the council's policy is communicated clearly and effectively to Elected Councillors, town and parish councils and the public
- To ensure that we report on progress and budgets to council members throughout the year
- To minimise the risk of any discrimination on the highway

## 2. Key Influences

### Highways Act 1980

To improve the highway under part V of the Highways Act (1980) as amended

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/66>

### Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan 2011 to 2026 (LTP3)

Sets the five key goals that guide our priority assessment process for highway improvement schemes and our approach to transport in Dorset

<http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/localtransportplan>

### Local Plans

Set out and identify development and transport improvements  
Identify funding mechanisms for transport improvements.

### **3. Definitions and Scope – Inclusions and Exclusions**

#### **Definition**

A highway improvement scheme can be any work to enhance or augment the highway network maintainable at public expense, excluding maintenance and repair work.

Highway Improvement schemes are funded from a range of sources including the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block (LTP), DC Corporate Capital Programme, the Department for Transport, private developers, external grants, or combinations of the above.

#### **Inclusions**

- Any highway within the administrative area of Dorset Council and any land acquired to further improve or construct new highway
- An externally sponsored and funded project that has been identified for delivery by Dorset Highways irrespective of location. (Subject to there being no established conflict of interest with other DC policies or procedures)

#### **Exclusions**

- Trunk roads such as the A31, A303 and A35 west of Bere Regis which are managed by Highways England or its agents
- Privately owned roads or military roads

### **4. Outline of process**

The process, which starts with scheme identification, is illustrated on the flowchart in **Appendix 1**.

#### **Scheme Identification**

Highway improvement schemes are identified, but not exclusively, from the following sources:

- Schemes identified by DC officers that meet current spatial planning policy or LTP3 goals and priorities
- Schemes identified in Local Plans neighbourhood, parish and town plans
- Traffic Engineering schemes that require more significant design beyond signs and marking measures to address traffic issues, road traffic collision cluster sites and Traffic Regulation Orders
- Schemes that meet wider DC Corporate priorities
- Traffic signal schemes identified by Network Traffic Control officers.
- Externally funded or developer led schemes, including those funded by Section 106 contributions (and or Community Infrastructure Levy from 2014) Sustrans or Department for Transport specific grant - led priorities

- Requests by the public, if they have the support of the appropriate Parish or Town Council. Requests from Members, Towns and Parishes can be made by use of a form (**see Appendix 2**)

### **Pre Feasibility**

All identified schemes (sometimes with the exception of low complexity, low cost ‘walk – talk- build’ (WTB) solutions) should be the subject of a pre-feasibility report which will outline and compare possible solutions, advise on their deliverability in terms of cost and any other constraints and provide a recommendation. Schemes that are only suitable for WTB will be subject to meeting qualifying criteria and are outside the scope of this policy.

**Note:** For a scheme to be considered for construction in the next financial year the pre – feasibility report must be completed by the preceding October.

### **Priority Assessment**

Schemes are assessed and ranked according to how well they contribute to the LTP3 goals and priorities relative to cost. This ensures value for money is achieved in the use of LTP funds and schemes that attract external funding can be given priority where they offer better value for money.

A priority list is prepared and consultation on the list is carried out with Members, District and Borough Councillors before a final decision is made on which schemes are brought into the three year improvements programme by Councillors at their January meeting.

**Note:** For a scheme to be considered for construction in the following financial year the scheme generally needs to have completed the Priority Assessment process and be in the proposed Highway Improvements programme by mid November.

### **Programme Consultation**

Consultation on the proposed programme of Highway Improvement Schemes will be carried out as part of the wider consultation for the Dorset Highways Capital Programme (which includes Bridge, Structural Maintenance and Highway Improvement schemes). Specific consultation on individual schemes is carried out as part of the individual scheme delivery process.

Works for new estate road layouts that are subject to Section 38 and 278 of the Highways Act are covered by a separate policy and consultation on these schemes takes place during the planning permission process.

### **Budget Allocation and Management**

Feedback from the Dorset Highways Capital Programme consultation is used to prepare a draft Highway Improvements programme that meets the available budget. The programme is taken through the committee process for approval.

## 5. Delivery Process

Delivery of each individual Highway Improvement scheme is managed through a gateway process with hold points at key stages.

The key gateways in the process are as below:

Gateway	Stage	Description
0	to Scheme Brief	Agreement of the scheme brief and budget
1	to Feasibility Study	Project registration
2	to Preliminary Design	Feasibility report agreed and options selected
3	to Consultation	Preliminary design options ready for scheme specific consultation
4	to Detailed Design	Consultation with stakeholders including Parish and Districts complete and design updated as a result of consultation
5	to Final Scheme Approval	Detailed design complete, roadspace booked, land acquired, contractor appointed
6	to Construction of Works	Contractors programme agreed. Residents notified in advance of the start of the works.
7	to Project Closure	Constuction complete, post project appraisal carried out
8	Project Closure	

### Scheme Specific Consultation

Consultation will also be held for individual schemes. The scope of this will depend on the nature and extent of each scheme. For some projects this will take the form of a public exhibition where drawings and diagrams are shown and explained by officers. This may be backed up by a website and questionnaire to gather feedback. The purpose is to establish the level of support, preference to options and take suggestions (the design of the scheme is unlikely to be fixed at this stage, but it is found that people prefer to comment on suggestions rather than being faced with a blank canvas).

The scheme specific consultation process is illustrated by flowchart **in Appendix 3**.

Notification of consultation will usually be carried out two weeks before the event. This will be through either posters, Members, the website ([www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)) or through the press or a combination of these.

Borough and District Council Councillors will be given scheme details via their own Local Authority liaison officers. A copy of the consultation documents will be placed with a local library for the duration of the consultation period.

The feedback from Consultation will be reviewed / analysed by officers and considered against the scope and objectives of the scheme. Subject to Portfolio holder approval for sensitive schemes, the outcome and approved way forward will be communicated to Members via regular updates.

When a scheme is approaching construction, frontagers and people living in the vicinity of the work will be notified of the start date for the work. Any diversion routes will be detailed in the letter and the contact details for the Scheme Engineer will be provided.

### **Performance Monitoring**

Highway Improvements are part of a group of capital funded highway projects delivered by Dorset Highways.

Schemes are included in the Dorset Highways Capital Programme for approval by DC Cabinet. Corporately funded Highway Improvement schemes and schemes with a value over £500,000 are reported individually.

Performance on the delivery of schemes is reported in the Budget Book and in internal monthly reporting within the Environment, Economy and Infrastructure Directorate. Exceptions or updates on more significant schemes are included in the Quarterly Asset Management Report to Cabinet.

A 'seek your views' questionnaire is issued to all frontagers, local Members and the Parish following completion of an improvement scheme on site. The responses are analysed and fed into the contractor's performance review and the post project appraisal process.

Outcomes from post project appraisals are taken into account for future scheme delivery through briefing the design teams and amending procedures and guidance notes if required.

### **Information available**

This Policy together with the appendices, plus scheme specific details, frequently asked questions, on line forms and any current consultation documents (i.e SNAP surveys) are all available online on <http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/roads>.

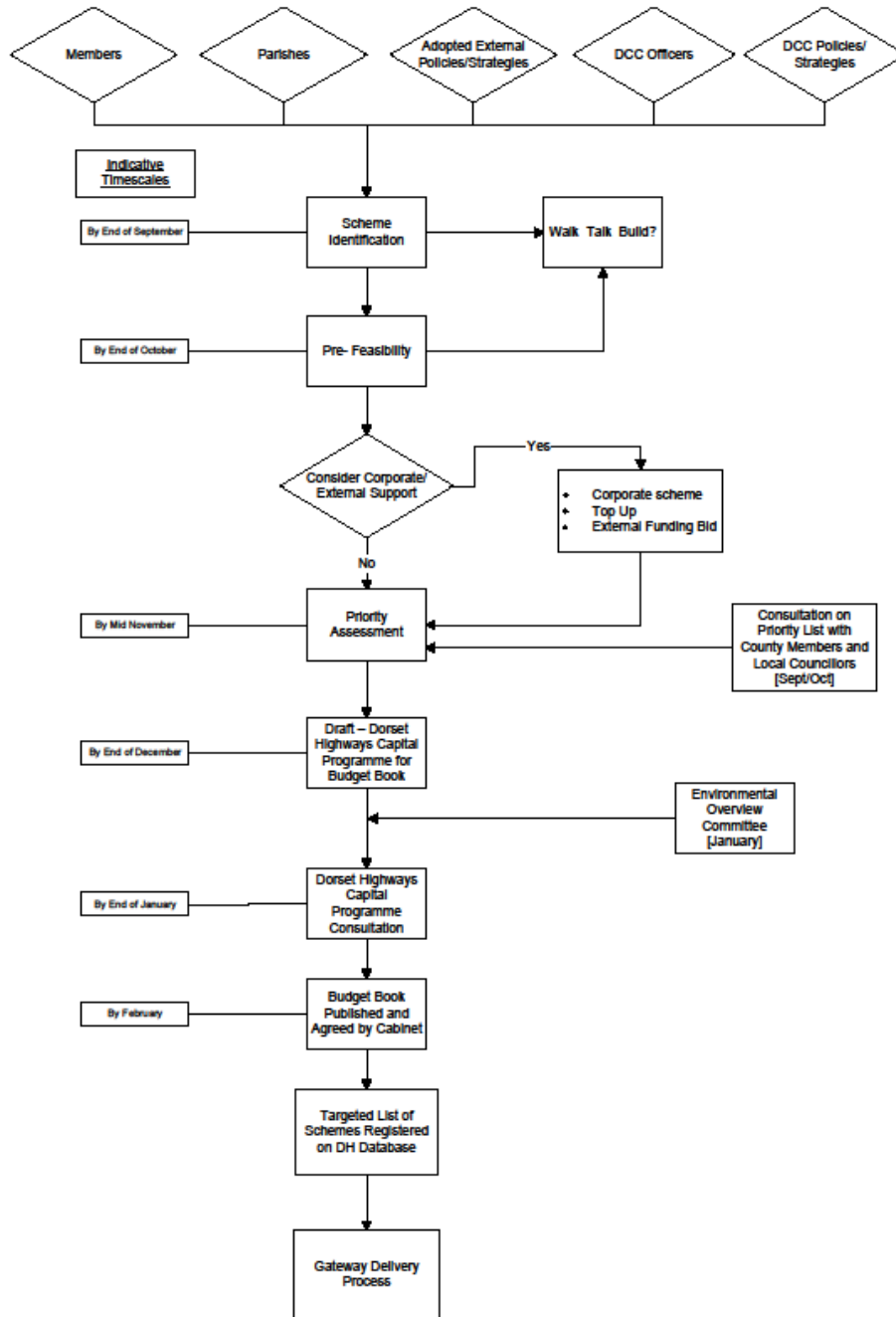
## 6. Related Documents

Documents related to the information provided in this Policy can be found on <http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/roads>.

Relevant documents from other sources include:

- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges <http://www.dft.gov.uk/ha/standards/dmrb/>
- Manual for Streets [.http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/manual-for-streets/](http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/manual-for-streets/)
- Manual for Streets 2 2010 <http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/manual-for-streets-2>
- Rural roads Protocol <http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/our-work/rural-roads/traffic-in-villages-toolkit.html>
- DC Stakeholder List by Area
- Equality Impact Assessment Screening Record

## Appendix 1





## Appendix 2

Form for suggesting a highway improvement scheme for consideration by Dorset Council (DC). To be completed by the Parish or Town Council.

Details of suggested Highway Improvement scheme:	(continue overleaf if required; max one side A4)		
Location:	(Please attach any diagram or annotated sketch that may clarify your suggestion)		
Parish/ Town:		District:	
Contact details for Parish, Town or District:			
Name:			
Address:			
Phone Number:		email:	
Other supporters/ groups endorsing the application:			
Is the Community Highways Officer (CHO) aware of the suggested scheme      Yes/No			
To contact the CHO, please phone Dorset Direct on 01305 221000			
Consultation with Parish / Town or District Council Members			
Discussed at Council meeting on    Date.....			
Comments and background information (please use additional sheet if required)			
Parish / Town Clerk: .....			
Is the Parish / Town able to contribute financially to the scheme    Yes / No			
Please email the completed form to <a href="mailto:ltp@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk">ltp@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</a> or post to Transport Planning, Dorset Council, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester DT1 1XJ You can also contact us by phoning Laura Russ (North Dorset, West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland) on 01305 228228 or Helen Jackson (East Dorset and Purbeck) on 01305 228503.			

### **Appendix 3 Highway Improvements Scheme Specific Consultation Process**

