

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 20 SEPTEMBER 2012

**REPORT OF: IAIN REEVE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,
ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND PLANNING**

**SUBJECT: MAINTENANCE OF GRASS VERGES AT BISHOP FOX ESTATE,
WEST MOLESEY – AGREEMENT OF FINANCIAL PAYMENT**



KEY ISSUE/DECISION:

To agree to transfer £65,000 from Surrey County Council to Elmbridge Borough Council for the maintenance of grass verges at Bishop Fox Estate, West Molesey in perpetuity.

DETAILS:

Business Case

1. Over 10 years ago Surrey County Council sold a large area of land and granted planning permission for the development of over 400 houses in West Molesey. These houses, known as the Bishop Fox Estate, are now built and occupied.
2. No arrangements were put in place at the time of the disposal for the developers to carry out maintenance of the grass verges within the estate and, as a consequence, local pressure has been put on the council to carry out the maintenance.
3. Cost estimates have been sought from Elmbridge Borough Council ground maintenance contractors and it is proposed that the County Council pay a lump sum of £65,000 to Elmbridge Borough Council to maintain the grass verge across the Bishop Fox estate in perpetuity. It is envisaged that Elmbridge Borough Council ground maintenance contractors will carry out the maintenance.
4. The maintenance contribution is to be funded through developer contributions within Elmbridge that can be used as forward funding and can be refunded from future development in the area.
5. In order to facilitate the transfer of £65,000 for the maintenance of the verges at Bishop Fox Estate, Surrey County Council is required to establish a formal contribution agreement with Elmbridge Borough Council.

Consultation

6. The local Member, Ernest Mallett, has been consulted on this matter. Any further views received will be reported to the meeting.

Financial and value for money implications

7. The sum of £65,000 will be funded through Planning Infrastructure Contributions (PIC) received from developments within Elmbridge. There is currently insufficient PIC money relating to the local area, so this would require "forward funding" the works from unallocated PIC money that is not tied to a particular scheme. This will be repaid once PIC money becomes available through future developments in the local area. The spending plan for PIC monies within Elmbridge is agreed by the PIC governing authority, Elmbridge Borough Council, who support the proposed spending plan..
8. There are no risks involved, as PIC monies do not have a payback clause. PIC monies are likely to come up in the local area as they are triggered by small scale developments.

Equalities implications

9. There are no equalities implications with this proposal. Local residents will benefit from the maintenance of the grass verges.
10. There are no financial or non-financial risks

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

11. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.
12. The maintenance of the grass verges will improve the condition of local vegetation. Vegetation can have a mitigating affect on carbon emissions as plants absorb carbon dioxide.
13. Vegetation also acts as natural sustainable urban drainage.

Legal implications/legislative requirements

14. A formal contribution agreement between Surrey County Council and Elmbridge Borough Council is required.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications - None

Section 151 Officer commentary

15. The S151 officer confirms that all material, financial and business issues and risks have been considered in the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Surrey County Council transfers £65,000 to Elmbridge Borough Council to contribute towards the maintenance of grass verges at Bishop Fox Estate, West Molesey.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To agree arrangements for the maintenance of grass verges on the Bishop Fox Estate, West Molesey in perpetuity.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

Once the transfer of funding has been agreed, the council's legal department will be instructed to draw up an appropriate agreement between Elmbridge Borough Council and Surrey County Council to formally agree the transfer of funds. The funds will then be transferred to Elmbridge Borough Council. The maintenance of grass verges will be carried out in perpetuity.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted and Informed

Ernest Mallett (Local Member)
John Furey (Cabinet Member)
Trevor Pugh (Strategic Director)

Sources/background papers:

None
