



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(ELMBRIDGE)**

ELMBRIDGE LOCAL PROTOCOL

27 JULY 2009

KEY ISSUE

To agree the Local Protocol on Public Engagement for 2009/10.

SUMMARY

The Local Committee has previously agreed the Local Protocol on 16 June 2008, which provided for some minor variations from the Council's Constitution to improve public engagement at the Local Committee meetings.

The Local Protocol needs to be agreed annually at the first meeting of the municipal year. The Local Protocol has been amended to widen the groups that can submit petitions to the Local Committee from "electors of Surrey" to "a body of its citizens".

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Elmbridge) is asked to agree that:

- (i) The Local Protocol set out in Annex A be approved.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 According to the Council's Constitution:

“Local Committees shall comply fully with these Standing Orders (parts 2 and 3) except where they draw up local protocols allowing them discretion to make minor variations to working practices which may only relate to the arrangements for public engagement, including arrangements for the presentation of petitions, public question time etc., and monitoring service performance locally”.

2 ANALYSIS

2.1 The Local Protocol is as previously agreed subject to the following amendment to paragraph 2:

“The Surrey County Council Local Committee (Elmbridge) has agreed that if a body of its citizens wish to bring a written request to the Elmbridge Local Committee but are not electors of Surrey they may do so at the Chairman's discretion. They also do not need to have the 100 signatures necessary to meet the agreed definition of a petition and can, at the discretion of the Chairman, present this as a representation to the Local Committee”.

This change will enable residents of Elmbridge, who are not electors, to submit petitions or representations on issues that are directly affecting them. The amendment will also enable those who do not reside in the borough, but are directly affected by a Surrey County Council issue in the Elmbridge area, to petition or submit a letter of representation to the Local Committee subject to the Chairman's discretion.

The Local Committee must consider the implication of this change. The implication being that they will be receiving representations from individuals to whom they are not accountable as an electorate.

3 OPTIONS

3.1 The Committee can decide not to adopt the Local Protocol and work according to the Standing Orders on public engagement as set out in the Council's Constitution.

4 CONSULTATIONS

4.1 The amendment to the Local Protocol was proposed following consultation with the Local Committee and has been agreed with the Surrey County Council Monitoring Officer.

5 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The purpose of the Local Protocol is to ensure the Local Committee is able to engage effectively with all residents in Elmbridge or those affected by issues in the Elmbridge area.

7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None.

8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that the Local Committee approve the amended Local Protocol for 2009/10.

9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To ensure that the Local Committee can widely engage with Elmbridge residents.

10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

10.1 The Local Protocol will be implemented immediately.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Local Protocol Report – 16 June 2008

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LOCAL PROTOCOL FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN ELMBRIDGE

- 1) Standing Order 65 sets out the arrangements for presenting a petition to a meeting of Surrey County Council and states that 100 or more signatures are required to constitute a petition.
- 2) The Surrey County Council Local Committee (Elmbridge) has agreed that if a body of its citizens wish to bring a written request to the Elmbridge Local Committee but are not electors of Surrey they may do so at the Chairman's discretion. They also do not need to have the 100 signatures necessary to meet the agreed definition of a petition and can, at the discretion of the Chairman, present this as a representation to the Local Committee.
- 3) All other conditions set out in Standing Order 65 will still apply to representations made to the Elmbridge Local Committee except that notice must be given to the Area Director rather than the Chief Executive.
- 4) Standing Order 66 sets out the arrangements for the public to ask questions on matters being considered by the Committee. Standing Order 66.2 states that all questions should be submitted at least 7 days before the meeting
- 5) The Elmbridge Local Committee have agreed that recognised representatives of local organisations or elected Borough or Parish Councillors shall (at the discretion of the Chairman) be allowed to speak for up to three minutes from the public gallery on reports being considered by the Elmbridge Local Committee relevant to their constituency of interest.
- 6) Meetings will normally be no longer than two and a half hours, for example, meetings will commence at 4pm and end 6.30pm unless the majority of those present approve a formally seconded proposal that the meeting should be extended to enable the completion of the business on the agenda considered urgent, otherwise the business stands should be referred to the next formal meeting of the Local Committee. It is at the discretion of Chairman to decide if the reason for urgency is appropriate.