



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

**LOCAL COMMITTEE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROTOCOL
& TASK GROUP REPRESENTATION**

13 JUNE 2012

KEY ISSUE

The Committee is being asked to consider and approve the local protocol, task group terms of reference and task group membership for 2012/13.

SUMMARY

Local Committees are bound to comply with Standing Orders Sections 2 & 3 of the Council's Constitution except where the Committee draws up local protocols setting out minor variations to working practices based on improving public engagement (SO 41.4). The Council has also put in place arrangements for public speaking in relation to Rights of Way (ROW) matters.

This report sets out the local protocol for dealing with public engagement at the local committee for the year 2012/2013, and seeks to confirm membership of the Committee's task groups and the membership.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Area) is asked to confirm:

- (i) The provisions of the Local Protocol on Public Engagement as set out in Annexe A, and
- (ii) The terms of reference for the two Task Groups as set in Annexe B
- (iii) The membership for the Task Groups be as set out in paragraphs 1.11 and 1.14
- (iv) To appoint members of the Local Committee to the outside bodies as listed in the report (paragraphs 1.16 – 1.17)

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Local Protocol for Public Engagement

- 1.1 It is important that people who live and work in Guildford are able to influence what happens in the borough. One of the aims of the Committee is to ensure that the aspirations and concerns of residents are taken into account when decisions are made about the local area.
- 1.2 The County Council's Constitution sets out how committees can engage with members of the public at formal meetings. At its meeting on 4 May 2004, the County Council agreed that Local Committees should have the ability to operate more flexibly in relation to public engagement at its meetings in public. Subsequently, on 28 April 2009, the County Council further agreed to extend public speaking to those occasions when Local Committees are considering Rights of Way matters.
- 1.3 To enable this flexibility, it was agreed that although Local Committees should comply fully with Standing Orders (Parts 2 and 3), they might develop local protocols setting out minor variations to working practices to enhance public engagement. These protocols would be subject to consultation with the Head of Democratic and Legal Services, and the Democratic Services Lead Manager.
- 1.4 The Local Committee has developed its Protocol (Annexe A) through formal decisions at previous committee meetings. The Committee is reminded of arrangements, which have been put in place to permit local businesses to present petitions and questions to all local committees.
- 1.5 The Local Committee will be asked to review the protocol following the completion of the Community Partnerships Team Public Value Review.

Task Groups

- 1.6 Each year the Committee is asked to consider the work that would be considered at formal meetings and the relevant task groups that should be established to support the Committee in its work.
- 1.7 In 2011-12, the Committee set up the following task groups:

TRANSPORTATION TASK GROUP

- 1.8 In recent years, a Task Group of Local Committee Members has met as required to consider transportation-related matters which require informal discussion prior to meetings of the full Local Committee. These meetings are informal, and the Task Group has no decision-making powers, but the meetings enable detailed discussion in a manner which is not possible during formal meetings of the Local Committee. The recommendations of the Task Group are then reported to the full Local Committee for formal discussion and decision.

- 1.9 Matters which have been discussed in the past include the development of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, Minor Improvements and Speed Limit Programmes, the Park and Ride Strategy, the Guildford Intermediate Scheme and the Local Transport Plan.
- 1.10 While the Task Group has no decision-making powers, it is helpful if the membership of the Task Group is broadly representative of the Committee as a whole, both politically and in terms of balance between the urban and rural areas of the borough. Having said that, the role of the Task Group is primarily strategic, since one of its principal purposes is to decide which projects represent good value for money in terms of Local Transport Plan objectives and strategies. Its members therefore act in the interests of the borough as a whole, rather than representing the interests of their divisions and wards.
- 1.11 On 6 June 2002, the Committee resolved that the Task Group should comprise the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and one other County Member, together with GBC's Lead Member for Environment and two other Members from GBC. In the light of the resolution above, the Task Group should comprise Cllrs. Brett-Warburton and Ellwood as chairman and vice-chairman plus one further County Council Member and Cllr Wicks plus two further GBC Members.
- 1.12 It was resolved at the meeting of the Committee on 27 September 2007 to adopt formal Terms of Reference for the Task Group in order to assist the Committee in understanding the work of the Task Group and ensure greater transparency of decision-making for members of the public. The adopted Terms of Reference are attached as Annexe B. These have not changed since last year, and the Committee is invited to confirm its approval of these for the year ahead.

YOUTH SERVICES TASK GROUP

- 1.13 The County Council has transformed the way that it commissions services for young people so that Local Committees play an important role in the process. The Local Prevention Framework is providing Local Committees with a resource to prevent young people from becoming NEET (not in education training or employment) or entering the youth justice system.
- 1.14 It was resolved at the meeting of the Committee on 22 June 2011 to create a task group to effectively monitor the process of identifying the needs of young people within the borough and advise the Local Committee on the appointment of a contractor to undertake prevention services. Youth Services Task Group membership is formed of two County Councillors from the Local Committee and two Borough Councillors, as well as up to four young people co-opted either from the local youth council or nominated by the Youth Support Service or local youth centre.

- 1.15 The first Local Prevention Framework contract is underway and the review process of that contract has been scheduled. The Local Committee is invited to confirm the continuation of the Youth Services Task Group for the coming year. The adopted Terms of Reference are attached at Annexe B. These have not changed since last year, and the Committee is invited to confirm its approval of these for the year ahead.

Membership of Outside Bodies

GUILDFORD LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

- 1.16 The Guildford Local Strategic Partnership brings together the public, business, voluntary, community and faith sectors to promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Guildford Borough. One of the principal roles of the LSP is to develop and deliver a sustainable community strategy. This is a long-term strategy to improve the quality of life of people living and working in the Borough. Over the past few years the Chairman of the Local Committee has represented Surrey County Council on the partnership.

SAFER GUILDFORD PARTNERSHIP

- 1.17 The Safer Guildford Partnership is a statutory partnership tasked with reducing crime and disorder in the community, as well as tackling negative perceptions of crime. The Committee needs to identify a representative to sit on the Executive.

2 OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Committee can confirm the protocol as set out in Annexe A, amend the protocol or not confirm a protocol for public engagement.
- 2.2 The Committee can confirm the task groups (and corresponding terms of reference) set out within the report, consider new task groups, or not have any task groups. If a task group is established a provisional terms of reference should be agreed.
- 2.3 The Committee can either appoint the appointments onto the outside bodies as set out within the report or amend the appointments.

3 CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 The County Council has consulted on the Standing Orders set out within the Constitution. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Democratic Services Lead Manager have been consulted on the draft protocol.
- 3.2 Task Groups have been proposed in response to requests from Members in relation to the workload of the Committee for the 2012/13 year.

4 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications that arise from the recommendations in the report. Work to support the recommendations will be undertaken within current resources.

5 EQUALITIES AND DIVERISTY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The protocol seeks to extend the opportunities for all residents to engage with the work of the Local Committee.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications that arise from the recommendations in the report.

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 There are no changes to the protocol being proposed to that agreed by the Committee in 2011. The protocol has been successful in attracting a high level of public interest and it is invited to endorse the protocol set out in Annexe A.
- 7.2 There are no significant changes to the types of the task groups being proposed to that agreed by the Committee in 2011 as the task groups ran successfully last year to support the Committee.
- 7.3 Members have been consulted on who should act to represent the Council on the outside bodies set out in Section 3 above.

8 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The local protocol enables the committee to engage residents in the decision making process.
- 8.2 The work of the task group will be invaluable in considering the implications of complex issues where priorities have to be established within limited budgets
- 8.3 It is important that the Local Committee continues to play an active role in local partnerships.

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**Background
Papers:** None