



## **OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (SPELTHORNE)**

### **MEMBERS' FUNDS**

**4 February 2008**

#### **KEY ISSUE**

To make decisions on funding proposals.

#### **SUMMARY**

The report makes recommendations on a number of proposals.

#### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Local Committee (Spelthorne) is asked:

1. To consider an application for funding of £3556 for school hall curtains at Laleham Church of England School.
2. To consider an application for funding of £5022 from Spelthorne Borough Council for the installation of a Bus shelter in Long Lane Stanwell.
3. To consider an application for funding of £10000 for the Walton Firs Foundation to be part funded from the capital allocation.

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The budget for 2006/07 made the following funds available - £11,000 per Member and £35,000 capital allocation. These figures show the amounts still available.

### Member's Revenue Allocation

	Balance Remaining £
Mrs Saliagopoulos	4836
Ms Turner	7108
Mr Agarwal	8667
Mr Beardsmore	2900
Mr Burrell	0
Mrs Coleman	5909
Mr Davies	5140

**Total £34562**

### Committee Capital Allocation

**Total £ 6175**

## 2.0 MEMBER'S REVENUE ALLOCATION

### FUNDING BIDS

The following new requests for funding have been received since the last meeting of the Local Committee. The name of the Divisional Member or Member proposing the scheme is in brackets and, where the project would benefit Spelthorne residents Borough wide, these have been proposed by the Chairman.

#### 2.1 Laleham Church of England School £3556 (Laurie Burrell)

Laleham Church of England school is seeking funding of £3556 for the installation of new curtains for the school hall. The curtains are required to improve the thermal insulation for the hall and protect the children from the sun. Members are asked if they wish to contribute to this project and if so how much and by whom.

#### 2.2 Bus Shelter £5022 (Victor Agarwal)

The Divisional Member expressed an interest in funding a bus shelter for Stanwell and, as this is their area of responsibility, Spelthorne Borough Council have submitted an application seeking funding of £5102 to install a 2 bay, roofed bus shelter along the Carlone Bus route 591 between Staines and Stanwell Moor. This route serves many elderly users of Lord Knyvett's Day Centre as their only means of transport and representations have been made by the Day Centre Manager. The centre currently holds 3 sessions per week and has approximately 30 users per session. The provision of this shelter would increase safety and comfort both for centre users and local residents.

The total cost of the project is £5022 and Spelthorne Borough Council is seeking funding for the whole amount. Members are asked if they wish to contribute to this project and if so how much and by whom.

### **3.00 Capital Allocation**

#### **3.1 Walton Firs Foundation (Carol Coleman)**

*This project was included on the report to the Local Committee on 8 October and 10 December 2007, but a decision was deferred pending further information about Surrey County Council's corporate response to this bid. Following further research additional information is set out below. As this total bid for capital exceeds the amount remaining, Members should determine whether funding should be awarded and how this should be funded. Mrs Coleman and Mrs Saliagopoulos have indicated that they are willing to part-fund this request from their own allocations.*

Walton Firs Activity Centre is a 28 area of open space near Cobham. The facilities include, amongst others, three Accommodation Huts (sleeping a total of 60) and a Training Hut, Adventure Course, Climbing/Abseiling Wall, Skittle Alley/Shooting Gallery and the Centre is operated on a profit-making basis with a turnover for 2006/7 being £179000. It is used by schools, sports teams, special needs clubs as well as scouts and brownies etc and has 25000 camping nights per year. The majority of the visitors come from Surrey and North London although it also attracts visitors from all around the UK. The site is currently owned and managed by the Surrey County Scout Association. The Scout Association have now decided to sell Walton Firs Activity Centre to raise capital for developing other sites in the country and have given the Walton Firs Foundation (a charity established to save the site) an option to purchase the site, including all fixtures, for £818400 (which also includes legal costs). The aims of the Foundation are to secure and develop Walton Firs as a facility for young people in perpetuity and thereby guarantee the future of the site for the current purpose. The Foundation intend to establish an operational and management contract with Surrey Scouts to ensure continuity of management. During the option period Surrey Scout Council took on the lease to manage the site (previously managed by Scouts from Bedfordshire). It is anticipated that the Surrey Scout Council will manage the site after its purchase and non-scouting groups will be encouraged to make even more use of the site. Local Scout Groups and Districts are involved in the fund raising process as many of them use it regularly and they are keen that it should remain available. Any money raised by local groups would benefit them directly not only in terms of reduced transport costs but also because they can receive a discount on future camp fees. Funds in and pledged so far amount to a total of £512,717. The Walton Firs Foundation has been named as the nominated charity for 2007/8 by the Mayor of Elmbridge, and the Elmbridge Local Committee gave £2000 towards this. There is no SCC corporate direction on funding for Walton Firs. In February 2006 the Surrey Scout Council applied for a grant from the Youth Development Service to help purchase Walton Firs. The application was unsuccessful as the future ownership of the site was unclear and also because the members on the panel felt it was more appropriate to support the development at Bentley

Copse, which is owned by Surrey Scouts. However there has been very little contribution to Bentley Copse from Members' Allocations beyond Guildford (£1000) and Spelthorne (£500). The total spend on Scouts from Members' Allocations across SCC exceeds £83k since the inception of Members' Allocations.

*This is the further information received in response to a Member's questions.*

- 1) The National (UK) Scout Association currently owns the site. They have taken the decision to sell Walton Firs (and other sites across the UK) to raise funds to build a number of 'super activity centres' nationwide (none in Surrey). The Walton Firs Foundation negotiated a option to purchase the site so that it could continue as a camping and activity centre for all young people of Surrey. This option runs out in June 2008. The site would probably then be sold to the highest bidder (probably for residential development) and the money used to build a 'super activity centre', as mentioned earlier. However, the Foundation is on course to raise the money, provided that funds continue to roll in.
- 2) It is the National Scout Association who will benefit from the sale and the money will not be available to local Scout Districts. The Spelthorne District Scouts would lose the use of a popular local campsite. The 'super activity centres' will take time to develop, will be more expensive and are likely to be further away, increasing travel costs.
- 3) Usage in 2007 by Spelthorne organisations has mainly been by Scouts. Details are below.  
In previous years schools in Spelthorne have also used the site but it appears that they didn't in 2007.
  - In 2007 a number of Troops from Spelthorne District used Walton Firs for weekend camps, two of which were 6th Staines and 15th Sunbury. 25 to 30 Scouts in each case.
  - 5th Sunbury Brownies took part in a weekend camp - 40 girls.
  - Spelthorne Scout District used it for their Cub Weekend - 300 plus young people.
  - Spelthorne District St George's Day event was held at Walton Firs. This comprised of Cubs, Scouts, Beavers Explorer Scouts - in all 500+ young people, with corresponding parents involved in the Sunday Service.
  - Spelthorne District Scout Fellowship also used the site for one day.

For 2008 Walton Firs at the moment has bookings for weekend camps for 3rd Staines and 3rd Ashford Scouts along with a Guide group. In addition Spelthorne District Cub Camp will return, again approximately 300 participants.

Finally 2 of the 8 Service Teams are supplied by Spelthorne, therefore as it runs on a two monthly cycle, one weekend in every month Walton Firs is run and maintained by a group of youths from the Spelthorne District. (The Service Teams consist of volunteer young people (and older) who run the

activities on the site and carry out maintenance of the facilities - they are generally people who used the site when they were younger and who now want to keep it going so the next generation of young people can enjoy a similar experience.)

The following Spelthorne organisations have contributed towards the fund:-  
1st Sunbury Guides - £250, Staines Rotary - £500, Staines & Ashford Lions Club - £500 & Spelthorne BC Ward Budget, John Packman - £500

These may not be complete lists, but are what is available at short notice.

4) The Surrey County Council Youth Development Service are committed to supporting the provision and development of facilities for young people across Surrey, 'Providing places to go and things to do'. If Walton Firs Campsite is bought for the young people of Surrey, then Surrey Outdoor Learning & Development (SCC Outdoor Education Centres) have agreed to work in collaboration with the Campsite to maintain and improve activities offered to young people at the campsite.

The Spelthorne part of the SCC Youth Development Service is funded to run specific programmes of benefit to Spelthorne young people, as outlined in its Business Delivery Plan. This may or may not include activities at a centre such as Walton Firs. If the Walton Firs Foundation is successful in purchasing the campsite, then its use by the local Youth Development Service remains an option.

#### **4. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

Paragraph 1.1 sets out what remains of both the individual Members revenue allocation and the capital. There are sufficient funds for the revenue projects to be funded. The bid for capital funding exceeds the allocation left and Members should agree how this should be distributed.

#### **5 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

The contributions proposed will benefit a wide range of adults and children in Spelthorne, some of whom may have disabilities.

#### **6. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

These proposals meet the criteria agreed by the Local Committee for financial support.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **CRITERIA FOR USE OF FUNDS**

#### **1. MEMBER'S ALLOCATIONS**

- a) Support for any one project will not normally exceed £10,000.
- b) Any proposal to be considered by Committee must be proposed by at least one Member who is willing to provide at least some financial support to the project. However, Members whose funds are totally committed may still put proposals forward for support by the Committee.
- c) The funds will not be used to cover revenue costs – expenditure must be of a one-off nature or serve as “pump-priming”.
- d) Contributions will not normally be made to cover funding gaps arising from budget reduction decisions.
- e) Priority will be given to proposals attracting an element of match funding.
- f) Proposals will be considered from SCC services, other statutory bodies and voluntary organisations.

#### **2. FUNDING PAID UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

The decision to pay funding of not more than £1000 can be delegated to the Area Director, in consultation with the Chairman of the Local Committee. Funding paid under delegated authority is subject to the criteria laid down in paragraph 1 above, **and** the following additional criteria:

- a) the application must have been endorsed by the appropriate local Member
- b) the application should be for a maximum of £1000
- c) applications from private clubs or other membership organisations must clearly demonstrate the wider community benefit of the project
- d) projects must not contravene any of the Council's agreed policies or priorities
- e) the application should be for a future project, not a retrospective request.
- f) the application should not be to cover ongoing revenue costs.

#### **3. COMMITTEE CAPITAL ALLOCATION**

The balance of the £35,000 initially allocated to support capital projects through voluntary organisations will be used for any suitable project promoting well being in Spelthorne and agreed by the Committee. These funds are not allocated to individual Members but are allocated by Committee decision.

The following is a definition for “capital” in these circumstances:

Capital expenditure is defined as the acquisition, construction, enhancement or replacement of an asset. An asset can be land & buildings, vehicles, plant, furniture & equipment or infrastructure. In order for an asset to be capitalised it should yield benefits for a period of more than one year.

It is proposed that the following criteria should apply to this fund:

- a) Any proposal to be considered by Committee must be put forward by at least one Member.
- b) Priority will be given to proposals attracting an element of match funding.
- c) Proposals must be of a local nature and be for the benefit of the people of Spelthorne.

**APPENDIX B****GUIDANCE NOTE****SCC LOCAL COMMITTEE SPELTHORNE - MEMBERS' ALLOCATIONS**

This guidance note is designed to assist in the consideration of applications for requests for funding from Members' Allocations, and should be used in conjunction with the formal criteria laid down for funding.

**1. FUNDING CEILINGS**

- i) There is a general presumption against requests for 100% funding of projects and the Local Committee would wish to see evidence of fund raising and/or other partner contributions. However the Local Committee reserves the right to fund 100% of projects, taking into account the overall resources of the organisation, the sum requested and any previous fundraising by the organisation.
- ii) Individual bids should generally be for no more than £10,000.

**2. REPEAT REVENUE FUNDING**

There is a general presumption against requests for repeat funding for the same project, as over time this would reduce the scope to fulfil the original aim of allocations which was to enable Members to respond to local issues. However, the Local Committee reserves the right to vary this rule where it is felt that the project is making an exceptional contribution to the community and more time may be required to secure alternative funding.

**3. RETROSPECTIVE FUNDING**

- i) As a general rule, it is not considered good practice to fund projects retrospectively and funding will not be considered for projects where the group has already committed, or decided to commit, funds.
- ii) Applications that are retrospective due to the timing of the Local Committee meetings may be considered provided that the proposed allocation has been brought to the attention of the Area Director before the event/purchase/expenditure takes place. However the group should be advised by the proposing Member that the Local Committee decision is not a 'rubber stamping' exercise and that any expenditure they commit in the hope of receiving funding is entirely at their own risk.
- iii) Applications for retrospective projects cannot be funded under the delegated authority powers.

**4. PRIVATE CLUBS OR MEMBERSHIP ORGANISATIONS**

Such organisations need to demonstrate clearly the wider community benefit that their project would bring.

**5. HIGHWAYS PROJECTS**



- i) Members' allocations should rarely be used to 'top up' the Highways budget agreed by the County Council, especially where the additional £100,000 capital allocation has been allocated by the Local Committee for Highways purposes. However, it is recognised that small street scene improvements, i.e. additional tree cutting or planting, can be a positive and welcome use of Members' Allocations.
- ii) Any such proposals should initially be shared with the West Area Group Manager/Local Transportation Manager for a view on appropriateness of the proposed expenditure bearing in mind any priority lists and the capacity for additional work to be carried out without damaging the implementation of the agreed work programme for the service.