

LOCAL COMMITTEE FUNDING SCHEME OF DELEGATION AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

BRIEFING NOTE

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The County Council has approved changes to the scheme of delegation that allow Local Committees to delegate power to the Area Director for approving small amounts of local committee funding.
- 1.2 This briefing note outlines the decision, and provides an opportunity for members to discuss whether, or how, the local committee in Tandridge would like to implement the new powers.
- 1.3 Since their inception in 2002, Local Committees have received delegated funding to allocate in their local area. The funding was allocated to promote social, environmental and community wellbeing.
- 1.4 Each Member of the Council receives an annual revenue allocation to spend on local projects. In 2006/7 this sum is £11,000 per Member. In addition, each Local Committee receives: -
 - A capital allocation of £35,000 for voluntary & community organisations
 - A further capital allocation of £100,000, largely used for transportation purposes but which Local Committees can use for other purposes.
- 1.5 Under the scheme of delegation, authority to approve grants from local allocations was delegated to Local Committees.
- 1.6 Many committees were keen that there be more flexibility within the process, and in 4 areas (Mole Valley, Waverley, Spelthorne and Runnymede), the committee agreed a local scheme of delegation to include the Area Director.
- 1.7 Subsequently, in response to findings from an internal audit of local arrangements, advice from legal services indicated that this practice was questionable, and recommended amendments be made to the scheme of delegation within the County Council's constitution to address the situation. This was subsequently discussed by the County Council's Executive on 12th September 2006 and recommendations were approved at full Council on 17th October 2006.

2 CHANGES TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

2.1 The meeting of the County Council on 17th October 2006 resolved that

The scheme of delegation be amended:

- (1) To give Area Directors authority to approve grants from Members' revenue allocations, in consultation with the appropriate Local Committee Chairman, subject to agreed criteria; and
- (2) To enable Local Committees to:
 - (i) By resolution of the Committee retain the power to approve all grants from Members' revenue allocations, in which case the Area Director will have no authority to approve any such grant from an allocation of a Member of that Committee.
 - (ii) Further limit the circumstances in which the Local Director may exercise his or her delegated authority by adding to or strengthening the criteria set out in paragraph 3 of the report.

2.2 It also resolved that the following criteria, under which grants from Members' revenue allocations can be delegated to Area Directors, in consultation with the appropriate Local Committee Chairman, be agreed:

- 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 OPTIONS

3.1 The Local Committee now needs to consider whether, and if so how, they will use the extension to delegated powers and are offered the following options to consider:

3.1.1 Option 1

Maintain the previous system whereby allocations can only be agreed by full committee in a formal meeting.

3.1.2 Option 2

Delegate authority to the area director to approve allocations (subject to the conditions in paragraph 2.2), in consultation with the chairman and local members.

3.1.3 Option 3

Delegate authority to the area director to approve allocations (subject to the conditions in para 2.2) in consultation with the chairman and local members limited by agreed criteria.

3.1.4 NOTE: In all cases funding must meet the requirements of the County Council's financial framework.

3.2 **Criteria for local allocations**

The Local Committee can, if it chooses, impose further restrictions on allocating funding, as at option 3 above. (e.g. by limiting the number of allocations a single organisation can receive in a given year, or the percentage of the total required for a project that the Area Director can authorise, etc.)

4 **CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The immediate benefits of delegating powers to Area Directors are more apparent in those Committees where individual members retain responsibility for an agreed sum, as it allows flexibility. Where funds are pooled, as in Tandridge, the process for implementing delegated powers would inevitably be more complex and would require the Chairman, as well as the Area Director, to assume greater responsibility. However, this does not preclude Members from taking a decision to change current practice or to review the situation should circumstances change.
- 4.2 In the meantime, there is a constitutional requirement for Members to consider the options as laid out in 3.2-3.3 and to formally agree a local arrangement.

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