



## **Allocating Local Committee funding**

**22 January 2003**

### **KEY ISSUE:**

The Local Committee has to decide the priorities for use of any underspend on the £105,000 Members' allocations for 2002/03.

### **SUMMARY:**

This report recommends priorities for use of underspend, in line with the priorities of Surrey County Council Corporate Plan and Woking Community Strategy.

### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Committee is asked to:

1. note action taken in line with previous Committee decisions
2. decide which of the projects should receive the funding which has already been freed
3. agree a prioritised reserve list of projects.

## Background

1. Each Local Committee has a delegated budget of £17,500 per Member. The Local Committee agrees all proposals for the use of this funding. Each local Member has a key role in influencing the way in which £17,500 is spent.
2. On 25 July 2002 the Local Committee agreed the process by which proposals will be assessed and decisions made. This involved two stages: an officer assessment, followed by Members' decisions. The criteria against which proposals would be assessed at each stage were also agreed. The criteria and a summary of the process are in annexe 1 to this report.

## Allocations to date

3. At meetings of the Local Committee on 11 September, 15 October and 13 November 2002, the Committee agreed, in principle, allocations up to the available total of £105,000. Some of these needed further discussion before the allocation was confirmed. In some cases, the discussions showed that not all the allocation was needed. The details follow. Any allocation not described here is going ahead as decided.

## General allocations

4. The Local Committee on 11 September allocated £5,000 to Surrey Fire and Rescue Service. The Service had asked for funding for the cost of purchase and installation of smoke alarms, and for training staff such as social care home visitors to identify needs in relation to fire risk. The Committee preferred to fund smoke alarms than training, and asked the Local Director to liaise with the Fire and Rescue Service to see if this would be possible within the allocation. It has now been agreed that the full £5,000 should be spent on smoke alarm purchase and installation. If training is required, it will be funded by the Fire and Rescue Service. This allocation is now going ahead.
5. The Local Committee on 11 September allocated £12,000 to provide moveable CCTV for use first in Woking East and then in other parts of the borough. Woking Borough Council's officer with responsibility for CCTV was to be consulted about the best use of this money. We are still waiting for details about the best use of the money, but we are confident that the money can be spent.
6. The Local Committee on 11 November 2002 decided that £6,337 (the then remaining funds) should go to a project related to the Basingstoke Canal. Authority was delegated to the Chairman, in consultation with Mrs Compton, to decide on the best way to do this. The Chairman and Mrs Compton agreed that the money should be allocated to the towpath. The Local Transportation Service has confirmed that they can use the money for that purpose. This allocation is now going ahead.

7. Up to £4,000 was set aside on 11 September to improve the road safety of children and their carers outside Maybury School. The Local Director was to consult the head teacher about the value of extending the hours of the school crossing patrol. The school did not feel that this would be the best way to solve the problem because the school caretaker also does the crossing. If he spent more time at the crossing, he would have no time for his other duties. The school did, however, have suggestions about road markings which they believed would make the road safer. The Local Transport Service have promised to explore these suggestions with the school. They estimate that the cost will be under £1,000, thereby releasing at least £3,000, possibly more, for the committee to allocate to another project.
8. The Local Committee on 13 November allocated £2,000 to combat under-age sale of alcohol on condition that there are specific targets for Woking, delegating *Safer Woking* (the Crime and Disorder Partnership) the responsibility of deciding how the money can be most effectively spent. £3,000 is coming from *Safer Woking*, The Partnership has approved a proposal from Surrey County Council Trading Standards which sets out exactly what will be done. The work costs only £3,900, but Trading Standards want to allocate the balance to purchase of equipment used by the young people who test purchase, thereby using the full allocation.
9. The Local Committee on 13 November allocated up to £10,000 to Woking Hospice to buy a portable ultrasound to locate 'ascites' (abdominal fluid retention common in cancer patients). The hospice is waiting for the final bill for purchase of the equipment and warranty, but (depending on VAT) it may be only £9,750, leaving the Committee with £250 available to allocate to another project.

### **Allocations related to the ending of Sheerwater Maybury Partnership**

10. The Local Committee on 11 September set aside £28,163 of the Members' allocations to help projects which are experiencing problems because of the end of the Sheerwater Maybury Partnership, with priority to projects for Asian women.
11. At that point, the Committee identified the crèche at the Maybury Centre and the Woking Asian Women's Association as the top priorities. Both were looking for funding from other sources. Woking Asian Women's Association has not yet heard the outcome of its other funding applications. We have now heard that the crèche was successful in its application to the Community Fund, releasing £20,000 for other projects which are experiencing problems because of the end of the Sheerwater Maybury Partnership.
12. The Committee has already expressed its concern at the threat to the Welfare Rights Advice project at the Citizens Advice Bureau. This project is having more problems than it predicted in securing alternative funding. We are trying very hard to get it picked up by Adults and Community Care, but there may be a gap. In line with

our Committee decision that the money was for projects experiencing problems because of the ending of Sheerwater Maybury Partnership funding, the £20,000 freed by the Community Fund decision on the crèche has been allocated to underwrite the Welfare Rights Unit in case its applications fail, or do not start from 1 April 2003.

13. If either or both of the Welfare Rights Unit or the Woking Asian Women's Association secure funding from another source, the same allocation, up to £28,163, will be allocated to other projects which are experiencing problems because of the end of the Sheerwater Maybury Partnership.

## The financial position to date

14. The Local Committee therefore now has at least £3,000 available for immediate allocation, possibly up to about £4,500. In addition, all the projects which have been allocated funding have been told that they must return any underspend to the Committee to be re-allocated, so it is possible, though unlikely, that some more will be identified before the end of the year. Finally, it is possible that applications to other funders may mean that projects do not need Local Committee support.

15. To ensure that all the funding is allocated by the end of the year, the Committee should identify a list of projects, in priority order, that they would want to give underspend.

## Proposals

16. The Local Director has identified other projects experiencing problems because of the end of the Sheerwater Maybury Partnership and other proposals received by 6 January which were sponsored by a Member of this Committee. All these met the Local Committee's criteria for use of the allocation.

	<b>£ requested</b>
Schoolhouse tea rooms – a drop-in facility for elderly people from ethnic minorities, managed by the Maybury centre. This project is facing problems because of the end of the Sheerwater Maybury Partnership.	£3,500
Link Leisure – a local charity that offers leisure, recreational and social activities for people with learning disabilities, using community facilities. Funding is needed to address the needs of people with learning disabilities in the community and importantly those previously supported under the SRB grant administered through the Sheerwater & Maybury Partnership	£8,500
Race Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator, Woking Community Relations Forum.	up to £10,000

Coldharbour Lunch Club for the elderly	from £50 to £300
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**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** Detailed proposals for use of Members' allocations and officer assessments;  
Local Committee report and minutes of 25 July 2002;  
Local Committee reports on 11 September 2002, 15 October and 13 November 2002 entitled "Allocating Local Committee funding".

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## **Annex 1: Decision of Local Committee for Woking 25 July 2002**

### **The criteria against which proposals will be assessed and decisions made**

#### **Officer assessment**

1. The Local Director / Local Transport Manager will assess each suggestion to make sure that:
  - a. It is legal.
  - b. The project supports the priorities of the Surrey Corporate Plan and Woking Community Strategy.
  - c. It is possible to implement within the time and budget.
  - d. Funding from the Local Committee would not simply replace funding from another source.
  - e. There is no other probable alternative source of funding.

#### **Committee decision**

2. In deciding which proposals to fund, the Local Committee will aim for a portfolio of schemes which overall:
  - f. includes at least one comparatively large project of benefit to Woking;
  - g. benefits a variety of communities of interest (for example, young people, old people, ethnic minorities, disabled people), and different areas of Woking;
  - h. includes a mix of large and small projects, but not a lot of very small ones.
3. A large project that benefits a lot of people will take priority over a project that benefits only a few people.
4. Within this framework, projects are more likely to be funded if they meet the following criteria
  - i. The funding is needed "one-off".
  - j. The project will demonstrate its impact before the end of the financial year.
  - k. The project will give long-term benefit.
  - l. The project is preventive in purpose.
  - m. The project targets more disadvantaged areas or communities.
  - n. Surrey County Council funding will unlock much more funding from other sources.
  - o. If small and local, the project has a significant impact on the quality of life of the people affected.

### **The process by which proposals will be assessed and decisions made**

#### **Stage 1: Officer assessment**

1. The Local Director will assess the proposals against the criteria.

2. A proposal for use of the £105,000 (6 x £17,500) will only go to the Committee for stage 2 of the decision-making process if it is supported by at least one Member. This means that the Member feels that the project is worth serious consideration; it does not mean that the Member has made any commitment that money will be committed to the project.

### **Stage 2: Committee decision**

3. The decision on allocation of the £105,000 (6 x £17,500) is a matter for the committee. An individual Member cannot compel the committee to accept a proposal. Nor can an allocation of £17,500 be spent contrary to the individual Member's wishes. If the committee cannot agree to the proposed use of the funding then the funding will remain unspent.

### **Personal interests and conflicts of interest**

4. It is likely that Members may need to declare a personal interest, especially in relation to the allocation of the £105,000 allocated on the basis of £17,500 per member. This becomes a prejudicial interest and therefore prevents that Member from taking part in the decision to allocate his/her individual funding where the personal interest is so significant that a member of the public, knowing all of the facts, would think that the judgement of the Member would be affected.
5. Where a Member has a prejudicial interest that Member should take no part in the decision or try to influence the decision. Where a Member wishes to allocate money to an organisation in which he/she could be considered as having a prejudicial interest, the Member should declare the interest and leave the meeting, so that the remaining Members make the decision *unless* the Member concerned represents the Council on the organisations. In that case, he/she has an exemption under the Code of Conduct and can therefore take part and vote. The Member will still have a personal interest and this should be declared and recorded in the usual way.