



Self-reliance – progress report and future planning

**Local Committee for Woking
26 April 2004**

KEY ISSUE:

Surrey County Council's self-reliance policy aims to

- target help on disadvantaged individuals and communities so that they can become more self-reliant and enjoy a better quality of life
- work at long-term solutions which will break the dependency cycle
- work in partnership with other government organisations, the business community and the voluntary sector.

Sheerwater and Maybury ward is a Surrey County Council top priority self-reliance area. £150,000 has been allocated to Sheerwater and Maybury to be spent over three years, starting 2004/05, on projects which will then be mainstreamed.

SUMMARY:

The budget has already benefited Woking Citizens Advice Bureau Welfare Rights Service, the Saturday School at Bishop David Brown School, and recruitment of ethnic minorities to hard-to-fill vacancies.

A report on previous research into needs in Sheerwater and Maybury, identifying previous activities and the outcomes of their evaluations, gaps and priority needs, will be available shortly. This report will be used to inform decisions about the use of the remainder of the budget, together with the views of the Sheerwater Maybury Partnership, of Local Committee and of the managers of services in Woking (both Surrey County Council and partner agencies).

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to

- a) approve the report and use of the budget so far
- b) guide the Local Director on priorities for use of this funding.

The Surrey County Council self-reliance policy

1. Surrey is a county of considerable affluence with a very successful commercial sector, high levels of employment and generally low levels of disadvantage. However, there are many people in Surrey whose ability to take part in society is impaired, and who cannot contribute fully to society and lead fulfilled lives. The County Council and others currently spend a considerable amount of money on disadvantaged groups. The policy for self-reliance benefits individuals, public services and business in Surrey.
2. The self-reliance policy aims to
 - target help on disadvantaged individuals and communities so that they can become more self-reliant and enjoy a better quality of life
 - work at long-term solutions which will break the dependency cycle
 - work in partnership with other government organisations, the business community and the voluntary sector.
3. To help individuals and communities break out of the cycle of deprivation, it concentrates on the most disadvantaged communities, and the most vulnerable groups. The self-reliance agenda links with the corporate plan, Community Safety Strategy and service strategies, and is a driving force for the development of plans for disadvantaged people and groups.
4. The key outcomes of the self-reliance policy should be:
 - To build the independence of people most likely to depend on public service without stigmatising them, reinforcing their dependence or simply providing them with services.
 - To shift balance of our investment in identified areas of deprivation from crisis response to prevention.
 - To reduce crisis demands on our services in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and create a more equitable distribution of resources across the county.
5. There is a rolling programme focusing on five neighbourhoods at a time, chosen because of their level of disadvantage and the costs incurred there by Surrey County Council.

6. All Surrey County Council services are involved at local level in a crosscutting approach to tackling deprivation in these areas, working in partnership with other organisations.
7. Surrey County Council allocates additional expenditure in the short/medium term (three years) in these areas, focusing on early intervention to promote independence. The views of local people inform decisions about allocation of resources.

Self-reliance in Sheerwater and Maybury

8. As Local Director, I am responsible for ensuring that the Surrey County Council self-reliance policy is implemented in Woking. Sheerwater and Maybury is identified as a Surrey County Council top priority self-reliance area. £150,000 has been allocated to be spent over three years starting 2004/05. It can only be spent on projects which will be mainstreamed at the end of self-reliance funding. "Mainstreaming" means that services make a commitment to fund the activities from their main budget. If possible, self-reliance should fund activities which will be mainstreamed by Surrey County Council services, though mainstreaming by other agencies can also be considered.

Achievements to 31 March 2004

9. My view, backed by service heads, is that it is better to use the self-reliance budget to prioritise funding to continue activities which have already proved their value above new activities – subject to satisfying the Surrey County Council rule that anything funded from self-reliance must then be mainstreamed. In two cases, this has meant that it has been necessary to use the budget to bridge a funding gap to keep projects going until mainstreaming is secured.
10. £10,000 to Woking Citizens Advice Bureau Welfare Rights Service combined with £5,000 Surrey wide self-reliance underspend, £40,000 from Adults and Community Care, £20,000 from the Local Committee Members' Allocations and £20,000 from Woking Borough Council, has secured the funding for the service for 2003/04 and 2004/05. I am now trying to find a way for it to be funded longer term.
11. The Saturday School at Bishop David Brown will be able to continue to the end of this academic year thanks to £2,500 self-reliance funding, and similar

sums from Sheerwater Maybury Partnership and Woking Borough Council. I am supporting their efforts to secure mainstream funding for the future.

12. £2,000 supported the Surrey County Council recruitment campaign for unqualified Social Services vacancies by distributing adverts and posters in Urdu to community locations. We have heard that two Asian women have become care assistants. HR is keen to mainstream targeting at ethnic minorities into their campaigns for other hard-to-fill vacancies, and is liaising with us about how to achieve this.
13. I have been leading the planning for a PSA (Public Service Agreement) on income maximisation across the whole of Surrey, involving a range of partners including Government agencies (Pensions Service, Inland Revenue, Jobcentre Plus), boroughs/districts, Primary Care Trust and voluntary advice agencies. This has been progressing more slowly than predicted, but is on course for detailed discussion with Government.
14. For 10 months from September 2003 Surrey County Council's Self-Reliance Policy Implementation Group has funded a part-time project officer, Nerma Begic, a student from Surrey University, to support self-reliance activities.

Self-reliance in 2004/05

15. Service heads for Woking are writing sections for a report identifying the contribution of each service to self-reliance in Sheerwater and Maybury. This will be available at the Local Committee meeting or shortly afterwards.
16. The Project Officer has been identifying previous research into needs in Sheerwater Maybury, previous activities, the outcomes of evaluations, gaps and priority needs. Her report will be available shortly. She is also drawing together information from the census at smaller than ward level to identify specific needs in Sheerwater and Maybury.
17. I have been consulting Surrey County Council service heads and colleagues from other agencies, especially Sheerwater Maybury Partnership and Woking Borough Council, to identify what is already planned in Sheerwater and Maybury and to pool ideas about what is needed. Meanwhile, I am supporting efforts to find mainstream funding for the Asian Home/School Liaison project, with the possibility of self-reliance funding to provide a phased handover.

18. The Sheerwater Maybury Partnership Board have given the view that young people should be a high priority for use of the self-reliance funding, and described their concerns about drug use.
19. The Local Strategic Partnership meeting in March focussed on health and well-being. It noted that health inequalities affect Sheerwater and Maybury in particular, and decided that the Community Strategy Action Plan for 2004/05 should focus on poverty, drug use among schoolchildren, and the coronary heart disease-related issues of smoking, exercise and diet.
20. Several people have pointed out the key role played by the Bishop David Brown School. As well as providing secondary education, it is also a centre for community learning, with strong links to Surrey County Council adult and community learning and to Woking College, and may become a focus for local sports activities in the community.
21. Discussions with colleagues from Surrey County Council Children's Service have suggested developing a co-ordinated set of activities centred on the new Neighbourhood Nursery and Children's Centre in Sheerwater, which opened on 5 January, and close to the Bishop David Brown School.
22. I plan to take a report to the Surrey County Council Self-reliance Policy and Implementation Group a few days after the Local Committee meeting in April, with recommendations for self-reliance funding in Sheerwater and Maybury.

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