



Allocating Local Committee Funding: Members' Allocations

**Local Committee for Woking
19 January 2005**

KEY ISSUE:

The Local Committee has £110,000 Members' Allocation budget in 2004/2005, of which £12,446 is available to allocate.

SUMMARY:

This report lists and makes recommendations on bids received for Members' Allocations which have been sponsored by at least one Member.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to:

Agree the recommended allocations with, where appropriate, the recommended conditions.

Member allocations 2004/05

1. The Surrey County Council Local Committee for Woking has £110,000 in 2004/05 to spend on projects which will benefit the people of Woking.
2. The Local Committee has allocated £97,554 of this year's money. Some of these allocations are conditional; for example, on the recipients raising matching funding from other sources, or on their providing detailed budgets. It is possible or even likely that some of this will be returned for the Committee to allocate to other purposes.

Criteria for allocations

3. On 19 March 2003, Members set criteria to assess bids, and in January 2004, Members agreed to carry this forward into the new financial year, with a minor amendment agreed on 26 April 2004. The criteria, with this amendment, are in annex 1.

Bids received

4. The table below shows all bids received which have been sponsored by a member. They are therefore all eligible for decision by the Local Committee.

Project summary	Member	£	£	see para.
	sponsor requested		recommended	
Sheerwater Senior Citizens Club	Mr Rousell	?		5
South West Woking Neighbourhood Care Scheme (SWAN)	Mrs Gruselle	1000	1000	6
St Johns Care	Elizabeth Compton	750	750	7
Planter/Bin/Bench in Gloster Road, Old Woking	Mrs Gruselle	1033.41	880	8
West Byfleet Evergreen Club, entertainment & outings	Mr Marlow	1220	1220	9
Cornerhouse – self harm group	Mrs Gruselle	1,000	1000	10
Woking District Scout Camp disabled WC	Mrs Diana Smith	1500	1500	11
Basingstoke Canal	Elizabeth Compton	3000	3000	12
British Red Cross		22000	3076	13
Byfleet Amenity Group	Mr Marlow	1201	1020	14
TOTAL		40,704.41	12,446	
Total available to this meeting		£12,446	£12,446	
Balance for future use			Nil	

5. Despite repeated attempts to clarify with Sheerwater Senior Citizens' Club, it is still not clear what scale of expenditure their desire to purchase lightweight tables and chairs would involve and, therefore, it is impossible to arrive at a figure to recommend to the Committee. Officers will continue to pursue this bid in an attempt to get further and better particulars.
6. SWAN is an embryonic neighbourhood care organisation on the same lines as organisations that the Committee has assisted in the past. The bid is for pump priming funding to get the scheme off the ground. The organisation has been established under the auspices of the Adults and Community Care service and with the assistance of Surrey Community Action. It currently has a steering committee which hopes to launch the organisation formally in 2005. Any award should be on the basis that the organisation is launched and begins work.
7. Similarly, the application from St Johns Care seeks funds for administrative and associated costs.
8. The Gloster Road and Priors Croft Residents' Committee have planned an environmental improvement in their area involving supplying a bench and planters at the entrance to their estate. They have obtained consent to put these items on the highway and donations of planters and plants. They have also volunteers to maintain the display. They have asked for funds to buy a bench and a bin and to move the planters to the site. This will cost £1,033.41 including VAT. As these items and works are things that the Council could and does purchase and the outcome is in keeping with the Council's objects, it is suggested that the Committee provide the bench, bin and transport and reclaim the VAT that the Residents' Committee would otherwise have to pay.
9. The West Byfleet Evergreen Club organises activities to provide social contact for older people in the area which does not benefit from having a day centre. The bid is for a contribution towards the running costs of the club.
10. CornerHouse is an umbrella organisation providing space and support to a range of groups concerned with promoting mental health. This bid is for the costs of establishing a self harm support group. The rate of self harming in Britain have risen over the last decade and is now amongst the highest in Europe. Self harm is an indication of underlying problems and is often kept secret. It is thought that as many as 1 in 10 teenagers self harm and the stigma around self harming often prevents people from seeking help. The bid for £1,000 would provide for the start up costs and maintain the group for the first year. There are a number of potential sources of funding for the continuing costs.
11. The Committee awarded a grant of £9,000 for this project in April and most of the work has been completed using, where possible, volunteer labour to keep the costs down. The tiling of the shower area for disabled users, however, needs to be undertaken by a specialist due to the complex floor draining design and a mechanical ventilation system installed. The costs of these additional works is estimated to be £1,500.
- 12.1 The Basingstoke Canal back pumping project has been considered by the Committee before. At that time, the then Local Director advised that the project did not seem to accord with the priorities set by the Committee and she did not

make a recommendation. This application is for a smaller sum and has fashioned a case that does demonstrate local outcomes, sustainability, a variety of groups who will benefit and coherence with County Council policy. In particular, the new application has drawn attention to the status of the Canal as a site of special scientific interest due to its flora and fauna both of which are endangered by falling water levels in the summer months. The plants and animals can only be safeguarded by closing the locks, which negates the purpose of a canal as a means of navigation.

12.2 The overall cost of the scheme is £148,000 of which £125,000 has already been raised. Of the remaining £23,000, £10,000 has been earmarked from the Section 106 agreement for the new County Hall. The scale of the funds raised to date suggests that this is a project which will be implemented and which overcomes previous reservations about tying up funds for years while match funding is sought. It is likely that the scheme will be implemented in the next year. If the application is approved, it would be appropriate to seek a guarantee that the funds will either be used within two years or returned.

13. The application from the British Red Cross is for a contribution towards the costs of a new ambulance. There is a precedent in that the Committee helped the Woking St John's Ambulance Brigade pay off a loan with which they had purchased a vehicle in 2003. In this case, the Society needs to raise £42,000 and has obtained pledges amounting to £20,000. It is probable, therefore, that the funds awarded would not be used in the immediate future. There is legitimate concern that County Council funds can be contributed to projects which either take some years to come to fruition, thereby reducing through inflation the value of the contribution, or which are never implemented. In this instance, however, it is recommended that the balance £3,076 left in the budget should be awarded to the Red Cross but not paid until they have increased their funds to £40,000.

14. Byfleet Amenity Group propose to acquire and maintain planters to replace the dilapidated tubs by the war memorial in Byfleet Village. Like the Gloster Road application, the Byfleet Group's application includes an element for VAT for what would otherwise be Council functions. It is, therefore, recommended that the Committee award planters with a value of £1020 exclusive of VAT rather than cash.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: The listed bids for Members' Allocations

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Annex 1 – Criteria for allocation

To be considered, projects must

- a. support the priorities of the Surrey Corporate Plan and Woking Community Strategy.
- b. be possible to implement within the time and budget, and offer value for money.

In choosing what to fund, the Local Committee aims for a portfolio which overall:

1. includes at least one comparatively large project of benefit to Woking;
2. benefits a variety of communities of interest (for example, young people, old people, ethnic minorities, disabled people), and different areas of Woking;
3. includes a mix of large and small projects, but not a lot of very small ones.

A large project that benefits a lot of people will take priority over a project that benefits only a few people.

Within this framework, projects are more likely to be funded if:

1. The funding is needed “one-off”.
2. The project will demonstrate its impact within 12 months.
3. The project will give long-term benefit.
4. The project is preventive in purpose.
5. The project targets more disadvantaged areas or communities.
6. Local Committee funding will unlock much more funding from other sources.
7. If small and local, the project has a significant impact on the quality of life of the people affected.