



WOKING TOWN CENTRE JOINT INITIATIVE

LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR WOKING 20 OCTOBER 2005

KEY ISSUE:

To consider a financial bid to facilitate partnership working with Woking Borough Council to improve the street scene and quality of the environment within Woking town centre.

SUMMARY:

The Committee has received a number of reports about partnership working with Woking Borough Council to improve the quality of life and well-being of the people of Woking. In particular, those reports identified that a pilot project to improve the street scene and quality of the environment within Woking town centre be progressed.

The Committee resolved in January 2004, to allocate £25,000 in principle to the project subject to the Local Transportation Director confirming that this can be found from within the budget delegated to the Committee by the County Council.

The Highway Maintenance programme for 2004/05 identified a sum of

£25,000 for the partnership project with Woking Borough Council. The financial allocation was time limited; the Committee has no on-going specific financial allocation to this project during 2005/06.

Woking Borough Council's Executive resolved in September 2004, that a capital contribution of £25,000 be allocated from its Investment Programme to the Town Centre Maintenance project with the aim of improving:

- i) The junction of Goldsworth Road and Church Street West;
- ii) Seating in Commercial Way; and
- iii) Town Centre maps.

In order to progress the joint working arrangements with Woking Borough Council during 2005/06, the Committee must consider supporting the three identified projects and submit a financial bid to resource its contribution towards the project.

CONSULTATIONS:

The Chairman is aware of the contents of this report.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree

- (i) that it supports the aim of jointly funding, with Woking Borough Council, improvements:**
 - a) at the junction of Goldsworth Road and Church Street West;**
 - b) the seating in Commercial Way; and**
 - c) town centre maps; and,**
- (ii) that a bid be submitted for £25,000 for 2005/06, representing the Committee's contribution towards joint working with the Borough Council.**

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1. The Committee and Woking Borough Council share a mutual concern to improve the quality of life and well-being of the people of Woking.
2. Members of both Councils met informally during 2003 to identify issues of joint concern in relation to the town centre, and to explore how the two authorities could work together more closely on this and other issues of joint interest.
3. The Committee received two reports, October 2003 and January 2004, endorsing the philosophy of partnership working and identified one project in particular 'improving the street scene and the quality of the environment in the town centre'.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

4. Officers from both authorities undertook a survey of the town centre and identified a number of improvements that could be made from existing budgets by better coordination between the two authorities. In addition, some improvements required more specific funding.
5. In brief these additional improvements are:
 - Church Street West - At the junction with Goldsworth Road is a small grass area that has become run down. It is proposed that this area be repaved, re-turfed and the street furniture updated. Estimated cost £27,500.
 - Commercial Way – Along Commercial Way is a number of bollard style capstan seats. These are rarely used as seats and are badly in need of repair and refurbishment. As they tend to add to the street clutter, it is proposed that they be removed and a more conventional seating scheme is agreed using benches. Estimated cost £18,000.
 - Map Holders – The Woking Town Centre Management Initiative is sponsoring a series of Town Centre maps for Visitors. A number of the current display boards are considered to be beyond reasonable repair and therefore it is proposed that they be replaced. Estimated cost £4,500.
6. The Local Transportation Service's Senior Maintenance Engineer in consultation with the Borough Council's Town Centre Neighbourhood Officer will manage the project.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. The intention is that the financial costs associated with this project be split 50/50 with Woking Borough Council. The inclusive cost of the three improvements listed above is estimated at £50,000.
8. Although the Committee accepted the principle of sharing costs with Woking Borough Council in January 2004, and the Local Transportation Director set aside £25,000 from budgets allocated to the Committee during 2004/05, the

Committee has no on-going specific financial allocation identified for this project.

9. In order to progress the joint working arrangements with Woking Borough Council during 2005/06, the Committee must consider submitting a financial bid to resource its contribution to the project.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

10. Partnership working between the two authorities should maximise the use of resources and minimise waste.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

11. Improvements to the street scene and quality of the environment should enhance personal safety and property security.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

12. There should be no equalities implications.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13. The principle of partnership working between the two authorities is accepted. Officers have prepared an agreed list of additional improvements within the town centre that would not normally be funded from existing budgets. To progress the pilot project the Committee must seek additional financial resources.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Committee reports - October 2003, January 2004, April 2004.

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