

Local Committee business champion

The two main aims of Surrey County Council's large bid to the Dept for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund, are to help drive economic growth and reduce carbon emissions. As part of the proposed package we have designed a suite of measures, to provide benefits to the business community whilst delivering against the aims.

In order to maximise the impact of these measures, and to provide businesses with a genuine say in local travel improvements in their area, we are currently in the process setting up a Woking town centre business travel forum. The forum is an opportunity for local businesses to discuss the impacts of travel on their productivity and to enable both the county and borough council to feedback information on improvements and schemes being delivered as part of the wider Travel SMART programme.

The businesses will have a key role in deciding how to spend £50,000 worth of LSTF funding (half revenue and half capital) each financial year for three years until 2014/15. Ideas generated by the forum will be presented in the form of a written bid to the local committee who will decide if the idea can be funded and is in agreement with Travel SMART objectives. The forum will be facilitated by additional support by way of an advisor working alongside the Travel SMART team to help facilitate discussion and develop ideas and bids.

It is important that the local committee is represented on the business forum to help develop and champion ideas formulated and to understand the priorities of the membership, and therefore we would like to create a 'business champion' from a member of the local committee to form part of the forum membership. Whilst we would encourage a chair to come from the business community, we would envisage the local committee member could provide insight into possible improvements, and develop a cohesive approach to ideas and measures generated from the forum. The business champion would also take ideas from the group to the local committee for approval.

Our current proposal is that the forum would meet quarterly, and look to take proposals of capital expenditure to the December local committee, for delivery prior to the end of the financial year.

We would anticipate the Local Committee to appoint the business champion at its September meeting, and for the role to last 12 months initially.

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