

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)



DATE: 12 MARCH 2014

LEAD OFFICER: JAMES PAINTER
OFFICER: COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER
SUBJECT: JOINT WORKING THROUGH THE GUILDFORD LOCAL COMMITTEE (LOCAL COMMITTEE PLUS)
DIVISION: ALL

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The Guildford Local Committee reviews issues and makes decisions on aspects of Surrey County Council's activities that might affect Guildford Borough. It comprises the ten County Councillors in the Borough of Guildford and an equal number of Guildford Borough Councillors.

Members of both authorities would like to strengthen and extend the remit of the existing Local Committee arrangements between Surrey County Council (SCC) and Guildford Borough Council (GBC) toward the creation of an enhanced Local Committee. For the purposes of this report described as Local Committee Plus.

The objectives of the change is to create a Local Committee that more closely reflects the nature of the decisions that need to be made locally, therefore improving outcomes and value for money for Surrey residents and businesses in Guildford through strengthened local democracy and improving partnership working.

The development of Local Committee Plus builds on the strong track record of collaborative working to date between both authorities in a number of areas including parking, transportation and infrastructure. The new Local Committee remit will be extended to take on a wider list of advisory functions in these areas.

A greater local focus will be applied to community engagement involving Parish Councils and Resident Associations through local meetings.

This report sets out the basis and proposed remit for Local Committee Plus based upon the outcomes of the Guildford Local Committee steering group established in 2013 to review the structure of the Local Committee, whilst remaining in line with the current legislation and scope of the Surrey County Council.

If agreed, it is proposed that Guildford Local Committee Plus will be operational from 25 June 2014.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Guildford) is asked to:

- (i) Agree the proposals contained within the report to enhance the joint working arrangements between the Councils from the next municipal year.
- (ii) Endorse the development of an updated terms of reference for the Committee Plus.
- (iii) Agree the proposed divisions and boundaries for the Cluster Group Meetings across the Borough.
- (iv) Note that following the required approval of Surrey County Council Cabinet and Council, a further report will be brought to committee in June 2014 to agree the terms of reference of the Task Groups and the financial arrangements for the cluster budget.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Working jointly and in partnership can provide added value in terms of cost and time savings and produce more effective, coordinated responses to service delivery. These recommendations seek to increase and develop joined up working between the two authorities to produce better value and coordinated services for residents.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 SCC's Local Committees were established in April 2002 to bring SCCs decision-making and services closer to the communities it serves. The committees are run under the constitution of the County Council. The agendas for the meetings and decisions essentially involve County Council business which has been delegated by the SCC Cabinet or Council to the Local Committee.
- 1.2 Under national legislation, Guildford Local Committee is constituted as a Local Area Committee. As such, it can only make decisions on County Council business and there are some restrictions on the voting rights of co-opted Borough Council members of the committee.
- 1.3 The Local Committee also has a number of advisory functions which the Borough Councillors views are sought, valued and considered. It is under these legal and statutory parameters that the proposals within this paper are made.
- 1.4 One of the roles of the Community Partnerships Team is to manage the local committees across the county. In 2012 the Public Value Review (PVR) of Community Partnerships reviewed the role of Surrey County Council's Local Committees and the Community Partnership Team in order to deliver improved outcomes and value for money for the residents of Surrey.
- 1.5 One of the recommendations from the PVR was to allow Local Committees to review their governance model. One of the options for consideration was the enhancement to the County Council's Local Committee toward the development of a Local Committee Plus with a wider list of functions and a greater focus on engagement.
- 1.6 The Guildford Local Committee convened a member Joint Working Steering Group to look at this option. Membership comprised County Councillor Mark Brett-Warburton, County (& Borough) Councillor David Goodwin, Borough Councillor Stephen Mansbridge and Borough Councillor James Palmer. The outcomes from the steering group were presented to all of the Local Committee members on 11 December 2013, those outcomes are considered in a themed manner within this report
- 1.7 The intention of this report is to provide an overall picture of the proposed changes to the running of the Guildford Local Committee. Members are required to consider the proposals, and if agreed they will be put before the SCC Cabinet and Council for implementation from the first meeting of the new municipal year.

2. ANALYSIS:

Joint Arrangements

Remit of the Local Committee Plus

2.1 The following themes were identified by the Guildford Local Committee members as relevant to Guildford for consideration on a Local Committee Plus agenda:

Parking

2.2 It is intended to develop closer and more integrated management of parking and Park and Ride services within the Borough, building on the existing close working relationship between SCC and GBC on parking matters, as set out in the existing On-street Agency Arrangements.

2.3 Currently, Off-street parking (car parks), fall under the Executive remit of GBC. Park & Ride and On-street parking services fall under the remit of SCC.

2.4 In order to arrive at a balanced and coordinated approach to traffic management, especially in the town centre, all aspects of parking should be considered together in partnership. It is proposed that

- (i) The Parking Business Plan produced by GBC, the On-street Parking Review and Park & Ride pricing review will be considered together at the Local Committee to create an integrated overall Parking Plan for the Borough.
- (ii) As a legal mechanism, the Local Committee will be responsible for recommending the Parking Plan but the decision making power will continue to rest with GBC for Off-street parking and SCC for On-street parking and Park & Ride pricing.
- (iii) The Parking Plan will work within the framework of existing agreements between GBC and SCC regarding Park & Ride funding.
- (iv) In order for this integrated approach to be considered by the Local Committee Transportation Task Group its terms of reference will be revised.

Planning, Infrastructure requirements, Developer Contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

2.5 Guildford has a vibrant and developing economy with a significant programme of change for the town centre and an evolving requirement for economic growth and housing which will be defined by the Borough Council's Core Strategy. As Guildford Borough Council's vision is developed and implemented in the future, Guildford will benefit from GBC and SCC working together to deliver infrastructure improvements in a coherent manner. The Local Committee has a key part to play in this process by integrating initiatives proposed by both authorities as an advisory body.

2.6 These initiatives include:

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- (i) Guildford Town and Approaches Movement Study (GTAMS): Strategic recommendations for transport and movement within the town centre and wider context of the Borough.
- (ii) Local Cycling Strategy: A plan that will consider issues related to cycling within the Borough.
- (iii) Local Speed Plan and 20mph Zones: A plan to consider the provision of speed limits within the Borough, within the context of the County Speed Policy.

2.7 The Local Committee Plus would integrate these disparate strategies produced by both GBC and SCC into a unified plan to help ensure the strategic vision for the Borough is successfully and coherently implemented by both authorities.

2.8 A unified approach for infrastructure could be pursued by translating the strategy into a series of projects which could form part of the proposed 123 List under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to be established in the near future.

2.9 The CIL Regulation 123 List creates a hierarchy of infrastructure projects ranging from large scale schemes to small projects. By linking the 123 List with a unified plan there will be coherence in progressing the strategic objectives of the local GBC vision and wider County infrastructure needs.

2.10 It is therefore proposed that the Local Committee act in a consultative capacity on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and infrastructure matters.

Transportation Task Group (TTG)

2.11 The TTG was initially created to consider a limited number of Integrated Transport Schemes (ITS) and transport and highways issues. There has been a significant increase in the level of strategic initiatives in the Borough, including:

- (i) The LSTF programme
- (ii) Park & Ride review
- (iii) On-street Parking Reviews
- (iv) Larger strategic schemes, such as the Guildford Gyratory proposals
- (v) The High Street setts programme

2.12 The workload for this task group is growing as it assists the Local Committee in the consideration of highways and transport issues. With an enhanced role created by a Local Committee Plus model, considering strategic highways and transportation issues the workload will be further increased. It is proposed therefore that membership of this group be increased to allow an additional member from each local authority to act as a substitute. Revised terms of reference will be presented to the committee for agreement at the first meeting of the municipal year.

Guildford Surrey Board

- 2.13 The Guildford Surrey Board is an ongoing arrangement between GBC and SCC to liaise on key strategic issues affecting Guildford. The Chairman of the Local Committee represents the committee on the board.
- 2.14 As the Local Committee will deal with strategic infrastructure issues it will continue to form a close two-way relationship with the Guildford Surrey Board both incorporating recommendations from the Guildford Surrey Board in its work and offering strategic proposals for the Guildford Surrey Board to consider.

Governance and operation of Local Committee Plus

- 2.15 The Guildford Local Committee Plus will continue to operate as a Surrey County Council constituted committee and as such will only make decisions on SCC delegated functions.
- 2.16 To address the issues of parking and strategic infrastructure issues as proposed in this report an updated terms of reference for the Committee will be produced for the approval of Cabinet and subsequently County Council.
- 2.17 The Vice-Chairmanship of the Guildford Local Committee will be offered to either the Leader or Deputy Leader of Guildford Borough Council for the next municipal year. Should they not wish to take up the role it will be offered to a County Councillor.
- 2.18 Meetings of the formal Committee will continue to be held in public, enabling local people to have their say and contribute directly to the decision making process.

Access and Engagement

- 2.19 To increase public access to the Local Committee the four annual formal meetings will be held in the GBC Council Chamber and will be webcast so that the meetings can be broadcast online. The technology provides the capacity to view the meeting as a 'live' event or as a recording. The opportunities for public engagement at the formal meetings in terms of questions and petitioning will remain unchanged.

Cluster meetings

- 2.20 In addition, a series of informal local meetings in public will be convened as Cluster Meetings. These meetings will divide the Borough into four areas to allow a more local engagement with residents.
- 2.21 The objective of these meetings is to allow the Local Committee Plus to provide a greater focus on public engagement and transparency through a member led dialogue with communities on local issues of importance
- 2.22 It is proposed that the informal Cluster meetings take place annually, providing an informal forum for members of both councils within a locality to engage with residents. Parish Council and Residents Associations will be invited to participate, publicise and assist in the organisation of the meetings. It is proposed that the cluster meetings take place during Autumn 2014.

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2.23 The proposed clusters are:

- (i) Western Parishes Cluster (Ash, Shalford and Worpleson)
- (ii) Guildford Neighbourhoods Cluster (Guildford East, North and West)
- (iii) Eastern Parishes Cluster (Shere and Horsleys)
- (iv) Town Centre Cluster (Guildford South East and South West)

Please see **Annexe 1** for a geographical representation

2.24 It is envisaged that the Cluster meetings will provide greater engagement with residents as an informal means through which to resolve local issues, allowing the Local Committee Plus to maintain a strategic focus. Guildford Local Committee Plus will continue to receive formal questions and petitions from residents and local stakeholders.

2.25 Each Cluster will comprise the County Councillors for the area and an equivalent number of Borough Councillors nominated by GBC.

Finance

2.26 In this financial year there will be a total budget for the Clusters of £70,000 to address local issues and support local initiatives raised through the meetings. The fund is created by SCC and GBC submitting equal amounts. The SCC contribution comprises the Local Committee Capital Allocation of £35,000.

2.27 This means each Cluster will have a budget of £17,500 for this year.

2.28 Officers will undertake the administration of the fund. The criteria and procedures for management of these funds will be subject to the confirmation of finance and audit within both authorities. Rules and criteria governing the expenditure will be considered by Local Committee in June 2014.

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 There were three possible options to consider with regards to addressing the constitution of the Local Committee.

- (i) No change from the existing model, which restricts the opportunities presented in this report.
- (ii) A change to a Local Committee Plus model that offers a wider remit through an advisory role on defined aspects of work, but the legal responsibility to action the recommendations rests with the relevant local authority. This allows enhanced joint working without the complexity of having to create new governance mechanisms.
- (iii) A change to a Joint Committee which allows true joint decision making through the committee itself, but creates a significant burden of requiring new Standing Orders to be agreed by both authorities and more complex governance mechanisms than required for the other options.

- 3.2 Members have considered these options and decided to focus on a Local Committee Plus model (Option II), at this time. This would not preclude development of a full Joint Committee, or reversion to the existing model, in the future, should it be desired.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Guildford Local Committee members, Borough and County Council officers.
- 4.2 A report will be produced for the SCC Cabinet and Council in due course.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications for SCC. Recommendations for use of SCC funds through a cluster arrangement will be put to the June Local Committee.
- 5.2 Working in partnership can provide added value in terms of cost and time savings and produce more effective, coordinated responses to service delivery.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was completed covering the options for change regarding Local Committees as part of the November 2012 Cabinet Report on the Public Value Review of the Community Partnership Team. A summary of the key impacts and actions was provided at this time and has been reviewed.
- 6.2 By delivering against the recommendations of the original Cabinet Report, the formation of the Guildford Local Committee Plus will effectively deliver some of the positive impacts identified through the Equality Impact Assessment, such as enabling better partnership working with improved shared outcomes for local residents and communities. There are no negative equalities implications identified.
- 6.3 Equalities issues, particularly in relation to any disabilities, will be given consideration in the arrangements for public participation the Guildford Local Committee Plus to ensure that anyone with a protected characteristic is not disadvantaged.
- 6.4 There are no further impacts arising from this report.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 The Local Committee Plus model will provide residents with greater access to local decision making on a wider range of issues.
- 7.2 The cluster meetings will provide an additional local forum, potential for consultation and discussion and also facilitate local priority setting.
- 7.3 The cluster budget will provide additional capacity to fund local projects and initiatives.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 The establishment of the Local Committee Plus will further the aims established within the Public Value Review of Community Partnerships, effectively delivering improved outcomes and value for money for the residents of Surrey by joining up local decision making. Innovations such as the formation of annual Cluster meetings involving Parishes and Residents Associations will help to promote wider engagement.
- 9.2 Guildford Local Committee Plus will offer an innovative two tier response to new central government policy initiatives and a template for other parts of Surrey to consider.
- 9.3 The Local Committee Plus would provide the opportunity to integrate infrastructure issues, traffic management and Guildford's strategic objectives and pursue ways of funding these proposals through the CIL Regulatory 123 List, On-street Parking Surplus and other budgets in a coherent manner to the benefit of the local residents.
- 9.4 The Local Committee Plus will provide the opportunity to identify local solutions and seek to jointly deliver local government service improvements for the residents, businesses and visitors to Guildford.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 Surrey County Council Cabinet and Council approval is required for the enhanced terms of reference for the committee, in order to enable the proposed Local Committee Plus to be established.
- 10.2 It is suggested that a report is presented to Surrey County Council Cabinet on the 22nd April 2014.
- 10.3 Final approval will then be sought at Surrey County Councils' Full Council meeting in May.
- 10.4 A report will be brought to the June Local Committee meeting to agree the terms of reference of the Task Groups and the budget arrangements for the Cluster meetings.

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Consulted:

All members of the Guildford Local Committee
Executive Head, GBC
Head of Planning Services, GBC
Parking Services Manager, GBC
Parking & Strategic Implementation Manager, SCC
Transport Projects Team Manager, SCC
Infrastructure Agreements Manager, SCC
Legal teams SCC and GBC

Annexe:

1. Cluster map

Sources/background papers:

- Implementation of the Public Value Review of Community Partnership – Constitutional Changes 26 February 2013
 - The Public Value Review of Community Partnership 27 November 2012
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