

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 22 APRIL 2014****REPORT OF: MRS HELYN CLACK, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES****LEAD OFFICER: YVONNE REES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES****SUBJECT: JOINT WORKING THROUGH GUILDFORD LOCAL COMMITTEE****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

It is proposed to strengthen and extend the remit of the existing Local Committee arrangements between Surrey County Council (SCC) and Guildford Borough Council (GBC) through the creation of an enhanced Local Committee, with a wider set of advisory functions in the areas of parking, transportation and infrastructure and a greater focus on community involvement through local divisional 'Cluster' meetings.

These proposals will build on the strong track record of collaborative working to date between both Councils and are put forward as a result of the joint work between SCC and GBC which has been a shared process. The objective 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 improved partnership working.

Surrey County Council Cabinet approval is sought to agree minor amendments to the advisory functions of Guildford Local Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Support the proposals to enhance joint working arrangements between the Councils through the Guildford Local Committee from the new municipal year.
2. Agree the proposed updated terms of reference for the Guildford Local Committee (Annex A).
3. Agree to setting up 'cluster' budgets for grouped divisions jointly funded by SCC and GBC, with the rules and criteria to be agreed by Guildford Local Committee.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

Cabinet's endorsement of closer working between SCC and GBC is sought, along with the approval of the recommended amendments to the advisory functions of the Guildford Local Committee.

DETAILS:

Business Case

1. The Community Partnership Public Value Review (PVR) presented to Cabinet in November 2012 took its direction from David Hodge, Leader of Surrey County Councils aim "to improve outcomes for residents by strengthening local democracy and placing much greater emphasis on partnership working."
2. One of the PVR recommendations, agreed by Cabinet and Full Council on 26 February and 19 March 2013 respectively, was to 'review the governance model of the Local Committees and the practice of substitutes to make voting on Local Committees equal.' For consideration was the option to enhance the remit of the County Council's Local Committee with a wider list of functions and a greater focus on engagement.
3. 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 (GBC Leader) and Borough Councillor James Palmer (GBC Deputy Leader). There was a shared process of review and the outcomes of the joint working between SCC and GBC were presented to the Local Committee members informally 11 December 2013.
4. In this financial year GBC will make a contribution to the members Local Allocation for Guildford of £35,000. This will match the capital element of the Allocation. It is proposed that there will be a local budget for the 'Cluster' meetings of £70,000 to address local issues and support local initiatives raised through the meetings.
5. Guildford Local Committee formally reviewed the existing functions and on 12 March 2014 agreed that it would like to strengthen and extend its remit. Through an expanded remit, the Guildford Local Committee will further drive forward the aims of the PVR to:
 - i. Increase the involvement of residents, local communities, businesses and partners
 - ii. Improve decision making and speed-up processes
 - iii. Support Members in their role as community leaders and champions
 - iv. Promote greater accountability and local scrutiny.
6. SCC Cabinet is requested to consider the proposals and agree the necessary changes to the SCC Constitution to enable the new arrangements for the Guildford Local Committee to run from the first meeting of the new municipal year.

Remit of the Guildford Local Committee

RECOMMENDATION 1: Support the proposals to enhance joint working arrangements between the Councils through the Guildford Local Committee from the new municipal year.

7. 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, Guildford will benefit from GBC and SCC working more closely together to deliver infrastructure improvements. The Local Committee will have a key part to play in this process.
8. The new arrangements for Guildford Local Committee 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. The following functions are proposed for closer joint working:

Parking

9. It is intended to develop closer and more integrated management of parking and Park & 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.
10. 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.
11. 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 Joint Parking Strategy for the Borough.
 - (ii) As a legal mechanism, the Local Committee will be responsible for recommending the Joint Parking Strategy 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 Joint Parking Strategy 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)

12. The Local Committee would act as an advisory body in this area, working to integrate infrastructure improvements proposed by both authorities. These infrastructure initiatives include:

- (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 Limit Policy.

13. The Local Committee would utilise the strategies produced by both GBC and SCC into a local committee framework and create a unified approach to ensure the strategic vision for the Borough is successfully implemented by both Councils.
14. The proposed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulation 123 List creates a hierarchy of infrastructure projects ranging from large scale schemes to small projects. By linking the 123 List to this unified and consistent approach there would be co-ordination in progressing the strategic objectives of the local GBC vision and wider County infrastructure needs.
15. A unified approach to local infrastructure would be pursued by translating the strategies into a series of local projects which would be supported by the CIL123 List.
16. It is therefore proposed that the Local Committee act in a consultative capacity on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and infrastructure matters.

Operation of Guildford Local Committee

17. Local Committee Transportation Task Group: This Task Group will take on an enhanced advisory role, considering strategic highways and transportation issues within the borough. The terms of reference and membership of the Task Group will be reviewed to reflect the expanded role.
18. Guildford Surrey Board: The Guildford Surrey Board is an ongoing arrangement between Surrey County Council and Guildford Borough Council to liaise on key strategic issues affecting Guildford. The Local Committee will continue to form a close two- way relationship with the Guildford Surrey Board incorporating recommendations from the Guildford Surrey Board in its work and referring matters to Guildford Surrey Board for consideration.

Governance of Guildford Local Committee

RECOMMENDATION 2: To agree the proposed updated terms of reference for the Guildford Local Committee

19. Guildford Local Committee will continue to operate as a Surrey County Council constituted committee and as such will only make decisions on SCC delegated functions.
20. In order to address the issues of parking and strategic infrastructure as proposed in this report, Cabinet approval is sought for an additional advisory function solely for Guildford Local Committee at the current time, as set out in **Annex A**.

21. The Committee will continue to be chaired by a County Councillor. 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.

Engagement

22. 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.
23. To increase public access to the Local Committee the four quarterly formal meetings will be held in the GBC Council Chamber and will be webcast so that the meetings can be broadcast online, with associated equipment costs met by Guildford Borough Council.

Cluster meetings

24. A series of informal local meetings in public will be convened as Cluster meetings. These meetings will divide the Borough into four areas by divisional boundary to allow a more local engagement with residents.
25. The objective of these meetings is to allow the Guildford Local Committee to provide a greater focus on public engagement and transparency through a member led dialogue with communities on local issues of importance
26. It is proposed that the informal Cluster meetings take place annually, providing a forum for members of both Councils to engage with residents within a locality. 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 the Autumn of each year.
27. 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 **Annex B** for a geographical representation

28. It is envisaged that the Cluster meetings will provide greater engagement with residents as an informal means to discuss local issues and priorities. Guildford Local Committee will continue to receive formal questions and petitions from residents and local stakeholders.
29. Each Cluster will comprise the County Councillors for the area and an equivalent number of Borough Councillors nominated by GBC.

Finance

RECOMMENDATION 3: Agree to setting up 'cluster' budgets for grouped divisions jointly funded by SCC and GBC, with the rules and criteria to be agreed by Guildford Local Committee.

30. In 2014/15 it is proposed that there will be a jointly supported budget for the Clusters of £70,000 to address local issues and support local initiatives raised through the meetings. The fund will be administered by SCC with equal funding contributions from SCC and GBC. The SCC portion will come from the Guildford Local Committee Capital Allocation budget. 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 agreed by Guildford Local Committee in June 2014.

CONSULTATION:

31. The Community Partnership PVR, which ran from January 2012 to November 2012, involved a range of stakeholders as set out in the Cabinet report taken on 26 February 2013.
32. Guildford Local Committee have been fully involved in the development of the proposals through a member steering group, informal meetings and a formal meeting on 12 March 2014.
33. The Leader, the Cabinet Member for Community Services and the Cabinet Member for Transport, Highways and Environment have also been consulted in the development of the proposals.
34. The Guildford Borough Parish Councils via the GBC Parish Clerks Liaison meeting with regard to the 'Cluster' meetings proposal.
35. Discussions have been held with officers from Legal and Democratic Services from both authorities. Officers from the following relevant SCC and GBC service functions have also been fully involved in the development:
- 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

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

33. There are no significant risk management implications arising from this report.

34. A more unified approach through the work of Guildford Local Committee could reduce the risks of fragmented service delivery and duplication or omission.
35. The additional functions for Guildford Local Committee are of an advisory nature, and therefore should positively support and enhance the decision making process of both authorities.
36. The Guildford Local Committee Capital Allocation will continue to be administered by Surrey County Council.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

37. There are no direct financial implications for SCC. Recommendations for use of SCC funds through a cluster arrangement, as detailed in paragraph 28, will be put to the June Local Committee. This fund will be administered by Surrey County Council Officers.
38. The SCC half of the cluster funding will come from the Guildford Local Committee Capital allocation budget, so can only be used for capital expenditure. The GBC half of the cluster funding is from a revenue budget so could be used for either revenue or capital expenditure.
39. Working in partnership can provide added value in terms of cost and time savings and produce more effective, coordinated responses to service delivery.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

40. There are no direct financial implications of the proposed joint working. However, due to the increased remit of the committee and the administration of a larger jointly funded budget, there may be an increase in administrative time required by the Community Partnerships Team in servicing the needs of the committee. This will be managed within existing staff resources. It is anticipated that this may be offset in part by improved partnership working between the two authorities and reduced duplication in governance arrangements, with this in turn leading to increased value for money
41. Due to the different sources of the cluster funding, when determining the rules governing its use, the local committee will need to consider whether to operate each cluster fund as one large capital fund or two separate revenue and capital funds.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

42. The Guildford Local Committee is an SCC Committee established in accordance with the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000. It comprises all the Guildford County Councillors together with an equal number of Borough Councillors who are co-opted to the Committee. The Committee deals with a mixture of County Council executive and non-executive functions which include providing advice and recommendations on a number of issues. The proposals in this report are to enhance the range of advisory functions to enable the Committee to be consulted on Borough Council matters relating to parking and infrastructure. Any decisions arising from these consultations will still need to be made by GBC where they relate to Borough Council functions. As this consultative role is an executive function it can be delegated to the Local Committee by the Cabinet and does not need to be approved by the full Council.

43. The report also proposes the future appointment of the Committee's vice-chairman from amongst the co-opted Borough Council members. This is permitted by the County Council's constitution.

Equalities and Diversity

44. 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.
45. By delivering against the recommendations of the original Cabinet Report, the formation of the Guildford Local Committee 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.
46. Equalities issues, particularly in relation to any disabilities, will be given consideration in the arrangements for public participation the Guildford Local Committee to ensure that anyone with a protected characteristic is not disadvantaged.
47. There are no further impacts arising from this report.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

48. Following Cabinet agreement, the first meeting of the Guildford Local Committee with its enhanced remit will take place on 25 June 2014.
49. There will be a report to the GBC Executive to endorse the proposals
50. The SCC Constitution will be updated to reflect the decision of the Cabinet.
51. Cabinet will receive a progress report back in due course.

Contact Officer:

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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

Annexes:

- A. Changes to SCC Constitution
- B. Cluster arrangements

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
 - Community Partnerships Team Cabinet Report November 2012
 - Public Value Reviews – Year Two Report, Cabinet 27 September 2011
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