

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)



DATE: 23rd FEBRUARY 2015
LEAD OFFICER: NICK HEALEY, AREA TEAM MANAGER (NE)

SUBJECT: HIGHWAYS UPDATE

DIVISION: ALL

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

This report summarises progress with the Local Committee's programme of Highways works for the current Financial Year 2014-15. Preparations are well advanced to deliver the Local Committee's programme of Highways works for the Financial Year 2015-16.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Elmbridge) is asked to:

- (i) agree that members identify drainage projects in their division in which to invest the £50,500 capital drainage allocation;
- (ii) agree whether or not to allocate £40,000 from the Local Committee Highways Allocation for 2015-16 to StreetSmart, as in previous financial years 2013/14 and 2014/15;
- (iii) agree an option for the allocation of the 2015-16 Local Committee Highways budgets;
- (iv) agree to extend the divisional Programme in table 5 from 2015-16 to 2015-17;
- (v) authorise the Area Team Manager in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and relevant Divisional Member(s) to undertake all necessary procedures to deliver the agreed programmes.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Programmes of work for each Division have been agreed with Divisional Members. Committee is asked to provide the necessary authorisation to deliver those programmes of work in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and relevant Divisional Member without the need to revert to the Committee as a whole.

2015-16 Budget Allocations

At Full Council on 10th February 2015 it was decided to make the following allocations to the Local Committees for 2015-16:

- £2.15m revenue, including the £5,000 per Member Community Enhancement fund;
- £2.0m capital maintenance;
- £2.0m capital integrated transport.

This represents a reduction in the revenue allocation of £1m compared to 2014-15.

As in previous years, it is for the Local Committee to determine how they choose to allocate their funds and they continue to have the flexibility to move capital between the two headings of maintenance and integrated transport. However, this year in view of the flooding challenges that have tested Surrey, the Political Leadership have determined that 25% of the capital maintenance budget under the control of the Local Committees must be used to assist with “drainage” issues such as gullies and drains. For example, Local Committees may wish to use the capital to provide additional drainage assets (new gullies / soakaways / drains etc) or perhaps the allocation will be used as part of a wider scheme to improve maintenance in an area which will have a direct positive benefit on the local drainage network – again, for example the Local Committees may wish to undertake local resurfacing works and as part of that improve the drainage channels in the carriageway, improve gully capacity and renew the drains.

The Highways Update report for the meeting of the Elmbridge Local Committee on 23rd February was drafted before Full Council, and so carries the assumption that the 2015-16 Highways budgets would be the same as the 2014-15 Highways budgets. The Area Team Manager apologises for any confusion that this may cause.

The Local Committee must now decide how to manage the impact of the changes decided and announced at Full Council.

The split of the £1m revenue reduction is not even, as the different Boroughs / Districts are not evenly sized. The Elmbridge Local Committee ordinarily receives a higher level of Highways funding, as it is one of the larger Boroughs. For Elmbridge the decision at Full Council will mean a total Highways Revenue budget reduction of £105,550. Taking into account the decisions and announcements at Full Council, the Local Committee in Elmbridge has been delegated Highway budgets in the current Financial Year 2015-16 as follows:

- Local Revenue: £161,050
- Community Enhancement: £45,000
- Capital Integrated Transport Schemes: £202,000
- Capital Maintenance (drainage): £50,500
- Capital Maintenance (general): £151,500
- **Total: £610,050**

Six options are presented below, for different possible allocations of the Local Committee's Highways budgets.

Options for next FY 2015-16 allocations:

Option A		
Pooled Revenue	£ 166,050.00	
Street Smart	£ 40,000.00	
Capital to be used for drainage	£ 50,500.00	
Divisional Allocations	£ 353,500.00	(£ 39,277.78 per Division)

Option B		
Pooled Revenue	£ 175,000.00	
Street Smart	£ 20,000.00	
Capital to be used for drainage	£ 50,500.00	
Divisional Allocations	£ 364,550.00	(£ 40,505.56 per Division)

Option C		
Pooled Revenue	£ 175,000.00	
Street Smart	£ -	
Capital to be used for drainage	£ 50,500.00	
Divisional Allocations	£ 384,550.00	(£ 42,727.78 per Division)

Option D		
Pooled Revenue	£ 150,000.00	
Street Smart	£ 40,000.00	
Capital to be used for drainage	£ 50,500.00	
Divisional Allocations	£ 369,550.00	(£ 41,061.11 per Division)

Option E		
Pooled Revenue	£ 125,000.00	
Street Smart	£ 40,000.00	
Capital to be used for drainage	£ 50,500.00	
Divisional Allocations	£ 394,550.00	(£ 43,838.89 per Division)

Option F		
Pooled Revenue	£ 100,000.00	
Street Smart	£ 40,000.00	
Capital to be used for drainage	£ 50,500.00	
Divisional Allocations	£ 419,550.00	(£ 46,616.67 per Division)

The Pooled Revenue is used to cover various revenue concerns across the Borough for example: drainage and ditching, patching and kerb works, parking, minor safety schemes, extra vegetation. The Community Gang would be funded from this allocation. A significant

reduction in the Pooled Revenue would have a significant impact on officers' ability to be able to respond to day to day maintenance concerns raised by Members and residents. The Street Smart allocation is a grant to Elmbridge Borough Council to support their ad hoc environmental maintenance gang. The Street Smart gang spend approximately 2.5 days per week attending to vegetation on the Public Highway.

The Divisional Allocations are the monies prioritised by individual Divisional Members for schemes within their respective Divisions. In 2014-15 these Divisional Allocations were approximately £55,000 per Division. A modest reduction in the Divisional Allocations could be absorbed without a significant impact on officers' ability to deliver Members' priorities. A significant reduction would result in a significant risk that officers' would be unable to deliver Members' priorities in their respective Divisions. Members' priorities for their Divisions have been reported to Committee on the main agenda for its meeting of 23rd February – detailed in Table 5 of the Highways Update report.

Committee must now decide how to manage the impact of the decisions and announcements at Full Council on 10th February 2015.

Ref.2.9

Customer Services Update

The continued mild weather in the last quarter has meant the downward trend has continued since the extremely high volume in the first part of the year. Overall volumes remain high with over 149,000 received for the 2014 calendar year, giving an average of approximately 12,400 per month, down from 13,100 in the third quarter.

For Elmbridge specifically, 15,991 enquiries have been received since January of which 7,321 were directed to the local area office for action, 96% of these have been resolved. This response rate is slightly above the countywide average of 95%. Although the response rate remains high, we are working hard in conjunction with our contractors to improve the service we provide. The new Works Management System has allowed greater visibility throughout the life of a customer enquiry and officers are able to view better information and works schedules.

Although there have been a reduction in customer contacts, complaints have remained high with 524 at Stage 1 compared to 487 for 2013. The North East have received 121. The main reasons for these being communication and the failure to carry out works to either the required standard or timescale. In addition 18 complaints have been escalated to Stage 2 of which we were found to be at fault in ten. Seven complaints have been made to the Local Government Ombudsman about the Service, none of which have been upheld.

Work continues to improve performance and we are currently undertaking a Key Driver Analysis of the annual National Highways and Transport survey to better understand customer satisfaction. In addition the Customer Service Excellence Member Reference Group is reviewing our response standards and Customer Charter.