

Investing in Surrey's Secondary Shopping Centres

Funding Prospectus

DRAFT



Secondary Shopping Centres Fund Prospectus

Introduction

In July 2015, the Leader announced an annual £1m fund for 4 years from 2016/17 – 2019/20 to support investment in Surrey's secondary shopping centres.

The council seeks to work with its partners in the boroughs and districts to promote economic prosperity for our residents. Many district and boroughs seek to support the development of secondary, local shopping areas. Through the use of match funding the County Council can increase the effectiveness of these investments. It is recommended that provision of up to £1m each year is made available to match funding provided by Surrey districts and boroughs to develop secondary, local shopping areas. The Deputy Leader will approve schemes after agreement with the Leader of the relevant borough or district council.

Approach

The funding will be distributed through two separate funding streams in order to enable investment at a range of levels of scales, ensure the fund meets local needs and supports borough and district plans for their centres.

Town Centre Revitalisation Fund - Up to £3m will be allocated to borough and district plans for secondary centre revitalisation, in individual proposals of up to £0.35m, requiring match funding of at least 50%. This will be planned through a 4 year investment programme in order that those boroughs with less well developed plans can have further scope to develop plans and those with developed plans can commence early implementation.

Local Centre Improvement Fund - Up to £1m will be allocated through an annual competitive process as part of the Leader's Community Improvement Fund. The fund will be open to bids from local community groups, parish councils, local business organisations etc for between £5k - £30k, with no minimum match funding requirement.

The Town Centre Revitalisation Fund

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the TCRF is to provide investment to Surrey's secondary town centres (secondary centres in large towns or district and local centres), with the primary aim of supporting economic prosperity.

The objectives of the fund are:

- To support SCC priorities:
 - Economic prosperity outcomes including business retention and attracting new businesses, improved footfall and dwell time
 - Health and well-being outcomes including encouraging cycling and walking to access, improved access for people with disabilities, supporting people to live independently
- To align with and help to deliver borough and district priorities for their centres
- To leverage at least 50% in match funding

Approach

The fund will be distributed to boroughs and districts through a 4 year programme aligned with borough plans and timescales. The total fund available for the 4 years is £3m, with any individual body entitled to bid for in the region of £250k - £350k.

Boroughs are currently drawing up outline plans with a view to agreement of a first draft 4 year investment plan by February, with Deputy Leader sign off by March 2016. The programme will be reviewed on an annual basis to confirm or amend the next tranche of schemes.

Timeline	Activity	Gateway
December 2015	Investment Panel review fund approach	Sign off funding approach and criteria and agree level of information required from Bs and Ds to approve funding
	Letter to Boroughs and Districts to confirm approach	
January/February 2016	Draft investment programme developed with boroughs and districts	Bs and Ds come forward with first tranche of funding proposals
February/March 2016	Officer review – strategic fit and deliverability	Officer review to assess compliance with SCC priorities, deliverability and funding criteria
March 2016 (bids can be taken on an ongoing basis based)	Investment panel to review to confirm value for money	Value for money assessment
April/May	Cabinet to sign off and delegation of responsibility for programme amendments to Deputy Leader	

Town Centre Revitalisation Fund Criteria

Tests	Notes and Guidance
Strategic Fit	
Is there a clear vision for the town centre	For example, set out in the Local Plan, corporate plan, economic strategy or emerging plans and proposals.
Is the proposal focused on secondary shopping centres and unlikely to attract investment from other sources	<p>For example, a secondary shopping centre in a large town centre or a district or local shopping centre</p> <p>The town centre or area targeted for funding is not part of investment currently in place and is unlikely to attract investment from other sources.</p>
Primary Criteria: How does the bid support economic development outcomes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attract and retain visitors - Diverse retail, culture and leisure offer - High quality public realm including pocket parks etc 	For example: Improving look and feel eg restoring architecturally significant buildings, public realm, public art Developing events and attractions Improved signage or installation of wayfinder scheme Improving diversity of local offer eg upgrade of pavement areas for cafes and events Improved use of digital technology to improve local offer Acquiring assets and/or better managing assets Improve use of vacant or underutilised space to expand offer eg community facilities, flexible workspace Create temporary uses for vacant sites awaiting redevelopment Supporting mixed use development Making better use of spaces above shops for employment or residential use
Secondary Criteria: Does the bid additionally support health and wellbeing outcomes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging physical activity - Supporting vulnerable groups - Supporting independent living 	For example: Additional / upgraded cycle parking Measures to improve access for people with mobility issues eg dropped kerbs Improved lighting Signage and street furniture in line with dementia friendly guidance Better pavements and crossing facilities for pedestrians Measures to address road casualty issues eg junction improvements Improved access to key services in town centre locations
Business Case	
Is there evidence of need / what data is currently collected to support evaluation of outcomes	Eg Town centre health check data Vacancy rates Measures of footfall Business turnover Modal shift Satisfaction surveys Inward investment levered Business rate income Schemes identified in Local Transport Strategy
Operational arrangements	How will the project be procured and delivered, role of BIDs / town centre management arrangements
Evidence of member engagement	Have local members (borough and county) been involved / informed and do they support the proposals.
Is there evidence of wider partnership working	Evidence of local consultation Partnership with local retailers, other businesses, residents

	associations etc
Deliverability	
Timescale	What is the proposed timescales for delivery of the project across the period 2016/17 – 2019/20
Have risks and mitigation measures been identified	Evidence of risk management plan
Funding	
How much funding is being requested?	We are proposing that each borough can bid from the 4 year fund, with bids in the region of £250k to £350k. The funding can be split across years.
Is there evidence of match funding of at least 50%	Match can be revenue funding, including a maximum of 10% of total project costs allocated to development costs. Statement of confirmation of match funding in place and committed to the project.
Is the proposed expenditure capital?	Confirm that SCC funds will be spent only on capital items
How is risk and contingency being managed?	Is there an allowance for risk and contingency? Any shortfall would need to be met by the borough and district or third party funds.
What are the longer term ownership and maintenance implications?	Need to clarify long term responsibility for additional infrastructure, eg public art, green space etc.
Procurement	
Procurement plan	Procurement in line with public sector procurement regulations

Funding Mechanism

Further consideration is being given to the funding mechanism, with advice from Finance and Legal services, to cover issues such as eligible match funding, liability for future maintenance costs, treatment of underspends, etc. A funding agreement will be in place, using SCC's standard grant funding terms & conditions, which will specify outcomes and payment terms.

Communications

A joint approach to communication on impact of the investment will be agreed with each borough and district.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the fund will be carried out annually to consider:

- Individual scheme delivery
- Achievement of fund objectives
- Amendments to future programme as required

The evaluation and revised programme will be presented to Investment Panel, Scrutiny Board and Local Committee Chairmen on an annual basis.

The Local Centre Improvement Fund

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the LCIF is to support small improvements in local shopping facilities and areas that can have a positive impact on local quality of life.

Objectives

- To support delivery of the county council's corporate priorities:
 - Health and well-being
 - Economic prosperity
 - Resident experience
- To support improvements to local shopping areas which enhance their attractiveness and value to the local community
- To support improvements to local shopping areas that improve their accessibility and attractiveness for all members of the local community including vulnerable groups
- To enable local community groups and associations to secure funds that meet local needs

Approach

This new capital fund provides local communities with the opportunity to make improvements to their local shopping parades and facilities, improving the public realm and local environment of benefit to all within the local community.

The focus of the fund is on local shopping parades and village centres rather than town centre locations. The types of measures that may be funded include: seating, signage, environmental improvements.

Bids are invited between £5,000 and £30,000 for one off capital schemes. Funders are required to provide evidence of some match funding from other sources in order to show commitment/support to the project. However this may be either financial or time offered free of charge that contributes to reducing cost of project.

Bids will be open to any organisation with an interest in their local area including town and parish councils, community and voluntary sector groups and business groups. The fund will be run as an annual competition as part of the Leader's Community Improvement Fund but with a specific focus on benefits to local shopping facilities and areas. Appropriate checks will be undertaken before any funded is agreed.

Up to £1m will be distributed over the 4 years of the funding period.

Date	Activity
1 st April	Fund goes live
15 th July	Closing date for bids
20-22 July	Scoring of bids by officers
22 – 29 July	Opportunity to request further information from bidders and amendments made
August	Final officer assessment of bids
September	Bid assessment by Panel
October	Decision by Leader

Fund Criteria

Types of Initiative that the funding might support	<p>Funding of up to £30k (or more in exceptional circumstances where need and local support can be clearly demonstrated) is available for capital schemes that improve the quality of local shopping parades and facilities. The types of improvement might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating • Highways improvements including signage, raised tables • Paving improvements • Planting • Decluttering of broken and unnecessary street furniture
Primary Criteria: The proposal must meet all of the following criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding is focused on local shopping centres or parades ▪ Improvements should be accessible to all and not for exclusive benefit of any one section of the community ▪ Funding should be focused on investments that improve the economic vitality and environmental quality of the area and / or improve local health and well-being ▪ Bidders should be able to demonstrate their role in supporting the local community in which the funds are being targeted ▪ For any proposals relating to highways activity, the support of the SCC Area Highways Manager should be sought.
Secondary Criteria: the proposal should seek to meet these additional, desirable criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence and value of any match funding – bids are welcomed that can demonstrate support from other sources – this might be financial or time offered free of charge that contributes to reducing cost of project ▪ Proposals should demonstrate the support of local elected members and/or the Local Area Committee
Deliverability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outline the timescale in which the funding will be spent ▪ Detail of any permissions required to carry out the work, including status of permissions
Grant Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must get minimum of three written quotes for any works ▪ Must provide receipts for expenditure within 12 months of being awarded the grant
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bids must be from properly constituted groups and include evidence of at least one year of audited accounts. Where this is not possible at the very least there must be a current/valid bank account and required signatory.
Restrictions. The funding cannot be used for the following activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support for any political party or affiliated organisation ▪ Ongoing revenue costs ▪ To replace funding from other sources that has been withdrawn ▪ To fund activities that are the statutory responsibility of a public sector body ▪ To fund anything that contravenes County Council policy ▪ Retrospective funding for activities already undertaken.

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