



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(GUILDFORD)**

**LOCALISM IN HIGHWAYS: AN UPDATE ON
DEVOLVED HIGHWAYS DELIVERY**

13 MARCH 2013

KEY ISSUE

Surrey County Council is working with parish and town councils and other local organisations to explore and establish, where feasible, appropriate locally-managed highway service delivery.

SUMMARY

As part of the 'localism' drive, service providers and public bodies are exploring ways of involving local organisations and communities in the delivery of services in their neighbourhoods. Surrey County Council is working with parish and town councils and other community organisations to establish some locally-managed highways service delivery. Discussions with divisional members, area highways officers, parish and town councils, and other organisations have taken place to bring together some initial proposals for Guildford as seen in **ANNEXE 1**. This paper provides the Local Committee with current bids from parish and town councils and other organisations in Guildford, and requests that members confirm support for the approach.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Guildford) is asked to agree that:

- (i) The Highways Localism initiative is supported in principle in Guildford Borough.
- (ii) Current proposals for delivering these services in ANNEXE 1 are noted.
- (iii) The Local Committee decide on the level of funding for those groups who have submitted bids, taking into account the interest shown by other groups that could be explored later in the next financial year.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Service providers and public bodies are exploring ways of involving local organisations and communities in continuing to improve the relevance, quality and effectiveness of services in their neighbourhoods. In a drive to greater 'localism', Surrey County Council is working with parish and town councils and other community organisations to establish locally-managed highway service delivery.
- 1.2 Surrey Local Committees are already facilitating an increasing proportion of local spending of highways budgets. In 2012/13 all the committees were devolved some £8m, up from around half that amount in 2011/12. The committees and individual members, through their Community Enhancement funds, noted that early decision-making has enabled this increased volume of local spend to be achieved and visible benefits to be realised.
- 1.3 In 2013/14, local committees have the opportunity to launch this increased involvement of neighbourhoods in delivery of services. Parish councils, town councils and other local groups are submitting bids to local committees for highways related works they would like to carry out, manage or commission in their area during 2013/14. The table in ANNEXE 1 summarises the bids currently received for the Local Committee in Guildford.
- 1.4 The Local Committees is invited to note and decide on these proposals from the agreed £15,000 set aside revenue budget to facilitate local initiatives from their total delegated highways budget for 2013/14. County members may also wish to consider supplementing funding future initiatives through their Community Enhancement 2013/2014 allocations, with any decision on this being made later in the year after the May elections.

2 ANALYSIS

PROCESSES

- 2.1 The county council will be working closely with parish and town councils to facilitate these processes and ensure all relevant information, support and agreements are in place to make this as easy as possible.
- 2.2 Where there are no parish or town councils, other local organisations such as residents associations have the opportunity to bid for funding to carry out small highways tasks and one-off jobs, as agreed by members and with support from the Area Highways team.
- 2.3 Where bids or associated arrangements are not sufficiently advanced to commence at the start of 2013/14, officers from

Surrey County Council will continue to work with members and partners to explore all potential opportunities for continuing to devolve decision-making and services to local communities for the future. A list of interested groups is also included in ANNEXE 1.

- 2.4 In their community leadership role, individual county members identify different opportunities to enhance local decision-making and delivery. The project team can assist in implementation of these varying approaches and to share good practice with other local committees.
- 2.5 Following discussion with the divisional member and Highways team, the parish or town council, or other local organisation may submit a bid proposal for funding to deliver identified highways tasks in their neighbourhood.
- 2.6 Once the Divisional Member or the Local Committee has agreed to support the proposal on an annual basis, the work will be established with six monthly reviews.

3 CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 The Highways Localism initiative is at an early stage and is still taking shape, having been shared initially with a first tranche of parish councils, divisional members, Local Committee Chairmen and Vice Chairmen, and the Surrey Association of Local Councils. Each proposal needs partnership agreement from members, highways officers and other appropriate partners according to the local needs and priorities in that neighbourhood. It is not a 'one-size fits all' approach.
- 3.2 Full details of bids received have been shared with the Divisional Member for the area.
- 3.3 Consultations will continue with all partners to monitor and review the outcomes and modify the processes to ensure good practice, value for money and quality delivery.
- 3.4 During the course of the next financial year officers will be approaching the Local Committees, where bids were received, asking for input into how this process worked and could be improved for subsequent years. With any feedback being shared across all the Local Committees.

4 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Budgets will be allocated, monitored and reviewed through a transparent and agreed process, with members and the Local Committee agreement and Highways support.
- 4.2 Services will be delivered where communities and neighbourhoods have identified a need, focusing funding on the key community priorities and exploring wider funding opportunities where possible.

5 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no equality or diversity implications at this time.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no crime and disorder implications at this time.

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 This paper provides the Local Committee with current proposals from parish and town councils and other organisations in Guildford, and requests that members confirm support where agreed and to note where members agreed to fund parishes or other local groups from the set aside revenue money, of £15,000.

7.2 The recommendation is that the Highways Localism initiative is supported in principle in Guildford and that current bids for delivering these Highways services in ANNEXE 1 are noted and decision made on the level of funding, taking into account the interest from other groups who were not able to make a bid at this time but could be supported later in the coming financial year.

8 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Service providers and public bodies are exploring ways of involving local organisations and communities in continuing to improve the relevance, quality and effectiveness of services in their neighbourhoods. In this drive to greater 'localism', Surrey County Council is working with parish and town councils and other community organisations to establish locally-managed quality highway service delivery, and these recommendations support this focus.

9 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

9.1 Services will be developed and delivered through partnerships with parish and town councils and other local organisations. Monitoring and review of these approaches will also be established.

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BACKGROUND
PAPERS:

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