

**EPSOM & EWELL LOCAL COMMITTEE****Item under consideration: *Highways Update*****Date Considered: 25 March 2019****Key points raised during the discussion:**

- The Local Highways Manager reported that since the previous meeting of the Committee, where the provisional highways allocation for the Committee in 2019/20 had been discussed, the total capital and revenue budget allocation of £219,318 had been reduced to a final allocation of £193,056. This was as a result of changes in the criteria used to allocate the capital funding.
- Members felt that it was inconsistent for the County Council to lobby the Government, seeking for highway funding to be allocated on road usage rather than road length and then to allocate funding to Local Committees based on road length.
- Epsom & Ewell although a small Borough in terms of road length has one of the most heavily used road networks in the County and now has the lowest level of local funding to address issues with these roads.

**The Committee agreed:**

To note with concern that, since it last met in December, there has been an additional cut to the proposed Epsom and Ewell local highway budget for 2019/20 based on a criteria that does not take into account road usage and which provides insufficient funding to address locally identified need. The Local Committee therefore calls upon the Cabinet to review both the funding of, and the criteria for, the allocation of the Local Highway budget for 2020/2021.

**Cllr John Beckett**

Chairman of the Epsom &amp; Ewell Local Committee

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**Reply from Mr Matt Furniss, Cabinet Member for Highways**

I am pleased that the County Council has been able to ensure Local and Joint Committees continue to have funding under their direct control to target issues in their areas. As the Epsom & Ewell Local Committee recognises, the County Council had been lobbying government to address the unfairness of government allocations that do not consider road usage, but are based on road length and classification. Surrey has some of the busiest urban and rural roads in the Country that suffer from both high traffic levels and utility works.

Each Member is allocated £7,500 revenue and each Committee is allocated a share of £2,000,000 capital. This capital allocation is distinct from centrally managed budgets and can be used to tackle a range of local issues. The central budgets follow approved asset management principles to ensure the roads and other highway assets in most need, regardless of location, are prioritised. I would encourage Members, where possible, to pool their individual revenue budgets. This already happens in some Boroughs and enables Members to engage desirable resources, such a local maintenance gangs, in a more efficient and cost effective manner.

The number of County Members in each Local / Joint committee is broadly based on population. This ranges from 5 members, up to 10 in the larger Boroughs. The £2,000,000 has not been split according to road length, this is a misunderstanding. As I explained in my email to all Members on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018

*“Each Local/ Joint Committee will receive core £100,000, this will give every committee a base funding level for the year 2019/20. The remainder of the budget (£900,000) will be fairly split according to how many County Divisions each committee has, taking into account the comments received about population levels etc. This ensures that all committees will have a reasonable base budget to undertake improvements in their areas, while those with larger populations get a greater allocation of the remainder to reflect some additional demand”*

By allocating £100,000 before applying the formula, it narrows the funding variation between the smaller and larger Boroughs in the County.

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