
Meeting: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 4th August 2009
Subject: Proposals for developing the Forward Programme of Highway Works
Report of: Director of Sustainable Communities
Summary: A strategy for developing a 5 year forward programme of highway maintenance and improvement works has been developed which aims, through consultation, to ensure that budgets and work programmes are managed in a way which delivers the Council's highway priorities at best value. The Committee's views on this strategy are being sought.

Contact Officer: Basil Jackson – Assistant Director Highways and Transport
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Key Decision No
**Reason for urgency/
Exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. That members comment on the proposals for developing the forward programme of highway works.**
- 2. That members make recommendations on the proportion of the highways budget to be allocated to the parish partnership scheme**

Reason for Recommendations: So that best value may be obtained from the capital allocation for highways maintenance and improvement works.

Forward Programme Strategy

1. In order to get the best outcomes in terms of the Council's transport policies, its targets and the views of local people, the various highways work streams need to be prioritised and budgets reallocated across those work streams. To achieve this a strategy has been adopted which will:
 - 1.1 Inform members and town and parish councils on the forward programme process through correspondence and roadshows. (see draft letter at App A)
 - 1.2 Encourage members and town and parish councils to suggest highway schemes in their community which they would like to see included in the forward programme. (see draft proforma at App B)
 - 1.2 Establish workgroups for each service area eg road maintenance, parking, traffic management etc, which will develop prioritisation mechanisms for their own work area and recommend a prioritised scheme list. (see workgroup list at App C and terms of reference at App D)
 - 1.3 Recommend to the Portfolio Holder and Director of Sustainable Communities the allocation of available budgets and the resultant scheme lists for each service area, in order to obtain the best fit in terms of desirable outcomes.
 - 1.4 Set up and consult with a member advisory group on the proposed programme of highway works
 - 1.5 Present the proposed programme to members and town and parish councils at a series of road shows and open evenings.

A flow chart showing the above process is at appendix E.

2. A proportion of the capital budget is set aside for parish partnership funding. The purpose of this fund is to allow town and parish councils to contribute to schemes which they wish to see progressed but which would not normally find priority within the forward programme. This fund is invaluable in maintaining the satisfaction levels of local people but often makes only a small contribution to the Council's priorities and targets. Increasing the fund would be welcomed by local people but would put the delivery of the Council's priorities and targets at risk.

At present the fund is set at £0.64m or 5% of the £13.8m highways capital allocation and members' views on the level of the parish partnership allocation are sought.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The strategy will contribute towards the following Council priorities:

- Restraining council tax through value for money
- Managing growth effectively

Financial:

There are no budgetary implications but value for money is a consideration

Legal:

None

Risk Management:

None

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None

Equalities/Human Rights:

None

Community Development/Safety:

None

Sustainability:

None

Appendices:

Appendix A – Letter to town and parish councils

Appendix B – Scheme suggestion proforma

Appendix C – List of Workgroups

Appendix D – Terms of reference for workgroups

Appendix E – Forward programme process flow chart

Background Papers (open to public inspection):

None...

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands