

By: Mike Austerberry – Executive Director of Environment, Highways and Waste

To: County Council – 25 June 2009

Subject: Member Highway Fund – proposed protocol

Classification: Unrestricted

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Summary: This report invites the County Council to approve the procedure and protocol for the highways budget devolved to elected Members to spend in their own electoral divisions. The proposed protocol is attached at appendix 1

FOR DECISION

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### Background

(1) This report provides the principles of the establishment of a Member Highway Fund which was announced at County Council in February 2009. The £2.1 million fund will provide £25,000 per Member to spend on local highway issues. It is proposed that the fund should commence following ratification of the operating principles at the meeting of the County Council on 25 June 2009.

### General Operating Principles

(2) The general operating principles of the Members Highway Fund are:

- The scheme will operate on an initial two year pilot (until 31 March 2011).
- To resolve local highway issues.
- Spending must be legal and comply with existing KCC policies set out in the KHS Business Plans.
- All spending must be approved by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste with decisions being taken in accordance with the Council's Constitution. The expenditure of the Cabinet Member's own fund must be approved by the Leader.
- A Member's allocation may be pooled with other Members but must meet the full cost of the project. If costs overrun, this will be rolled forward to be the first call on the Members' following year's allocation.
- Spending can be on either capital or revenue
- Funding may be rolled over one financial year only.
- Members will complete a form to seek approval for spending. This form must include any declaration of specific personal or prejudicial interests.
- All requests to spend will initially be scoped and assessed by officers within Kent Highway Services as to their compliance with the general operating principles of the scheme and reported to the Cabinet Member monthly.

- Decisions by the Cabinet Member will be taken in accordance with the Council's Constitution and therefore open to scrutiny. Works cannot be commenced until the decision/scrutiny process is complete.
- The Executive Director of Environment, Highways and Waste or a nominated representative in consultation with the Cabinet Member be authorised to approve expenditure under the terms of this scheme up to a maximum of £1000 towards the cost of undertaking relevant investigations, traffic counts or speed surveys.
- Planned and completed capital works under this scheme should be included with existing Joint Transportation Board report appendices.
- An annual report will be made to the Highways Advisory Board detailing all spending under this scheme.
- Each Member should include details of their Highway Fund spend in their Annual Reports.
- All works will be commissioned by KHS.

(3) Information on common problems, together with potential solutions and price estimates will be available to assist Members in prioritising their expenditure. It is proposed that Kent Highway Services Liaison Officers will provide the first point of contact for Members, with access to specialist officers to deal with technical issues arising from the Member Highway Fund.

#### Recommendations:

1. The County Council is recommended to approve the introduction of the Member Highway Fund at £25,000 per member per year; and
2. The County Council approves the attached protocol.

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