
From: Bryan Sweetland, Cabinet Member – Environment, Highways & Waste
John Burr - Director of Highways & Transportation

To: Environment, Highways & Waste Cabinet Committee

Date: 4 July 2012

Subject: Member Highway Fund – Public Rights of Way schemes

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

Some County Members have expressed a wish to support Public Rights of Way schemes using their Member Highway Fund. Public Rights of Way do not fall within the responsibility of Highways and Transportation, from which the Member Highway Fund budget is provided.

This report outlines the current scope of the scheme.

Recommendation:

Members consider the existing scope of the scheme and whether this should be extended to include Public Rights of Way schemes.

1. Introduction

The Member Highway Fund scheme commenced on 1st July 2009. A Member Pack was issued to all members on 1st July where the Member Highway Fund protocol, as approved by the County Council at its meeting on 25th June 2009, was comprehensively set out.

As part of the delegated approval process agreed at the Cabinet Committee on 11th May 2012, the Director of Highways and Transportation will assess all Member Highway Fund applications against current H&T policies practices and procedures, including the protocols laid down in the Member Pack.

A number of applications received for Member Highway Fund spending on Public Rights of Way schemes have been rejected by the Director of Highways and Transportation, as they are outside of the protocols of the scheme, and passed to the Cabinet Member for consideration.

2. Member Highway Fund Protocol

The Member Highway Fund Protocol 1st July 2009 states:

“The purpose of the fund is to resolve local highway issues. This should be spending in addition to Kent Highway Services’ normal activities, and should not duplicate work already planned by KHS. It can be used to enhance works already planned.

All proposed spending must comply with the law and existing KCC policies and not prejudice road safety. It should contribute to the overall objectives of Kent County Council, and represent value for money. Members should be aware of the KHS Business Plan, and the targets and objectives applying to KHS.

There is only provision for ongoing maintenance of works normally maintained by KHS; any proposal which does not meet this criterion is excluded.”

3. Debate

The budget for the Member Highway Fund is provided from the Highways and Transportation budget. The H&T Department has responsibility for the following areas on the Highway:

Programmed Work:

Surfacing, Structures, Drainage, Street Lighting, Arboriculture / soft Estate, Traffic Signals

Remit: To improve the condition and life of the highway. Includes all programmed repairs to the roads, pavements, structures, street lights, drainage systems, soft landscapes, new major capital projects and traffic signals.

Transportation:

Traffic and Safety Critical Schemes, Member Highway Fund, Traffic Manager, Road Safety, Sustainable Transport, Transport Integration, Transport & Development Planning

Remit: We promote safer use of the transport system and provide safer roads. We ensure our highway network operates as efficiently as possible. We assist developers in minimising the impact of new developments upon the travelling public and we plan transport to help the Kent economy grow. We promote and provide sustainable transport, we deliver small improvements to the highway network, and we maintain highway records.

Highway Operations:

Remit: To ensure that the highway is safe and usable by all by carrying out day to day reactive repairs, incident response and minimising day to day congestion. This includes reactive repairs, pro-active media and community communication, inspection of roads and pavements, permitting and enforcement of all who want to work on Kent’s roads.

Public Rights of Way are currently under the responsibility of the Customer and Communities Directorate, and therefore are outside of the current protocol for Member Highway Fund spending.

If County Members would like to use their Member Highway Fund on Public Rights of Way schemes, the existing protocol will need to be changed in order to accommodate this.

4. Recommendations

Members consider the existing scope of the scheme and whether this should be extended to include Public Rights of Way schemes.

5. Background Documents:

Member Highway Fund – Member Pack 1st July 2009

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