



meeting	HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE	
date	5 March 2007	agenda item number

Report of the Service Director for Highways

Highways Management Budgets

Purpose of the report

1. To inform Members of the current process for requests to the Highways Area Managers for minor maintenance works to be undertaken on the highway.

Background

2. Prior to the last restructuring of the Highways Division budgets for maintenance issues in the directly maintained Districts were held by the Area Manager. This provided flexibility for the Area Manager to assess requests from Members and the public and determine, on balance, if the request could be accommodated. Although this did have merits if it was felt that if the budgets from all the directly maintained Districts were pooled and managed by Highways Operations it would provide:-
 - improved scope for Highway Operations to take a global over view in the way they carry out functions
 - overall service standards and adoption of a consistent approach
 - removed possibility of conflicting priorities
 - reduced complexities in budget control, dealing with over and underspends etc.
 - better value for money with economies of scale
 - improved management of limited budgets

Current Process

3. To ensure that the Highways Area Manager has influence in the allocation of budgets managed by Operations it was and is necessary to work closely with Highway Operations to maintain :-

- a clear overview of purpose, policy and priority within each budget head
- good working relations between HM and other staff, typically Operations, in addressing issues
- mutual understanding of each other's problems and priorities between Highway Management and Operations staff
- a degree of flexibility in budget allocation and approach to enable problem areas to be looked at and addressed from the customer perspective as a priority rather than the service perspective

Future improvements

4. Following the completion of the restructuring a working group will be established to look again at the particular issues involved and to highlight the changing role of the Authority in line with external drivers such as the recent Government White Paper on Strong and Prosperous Communities .

BOB HART
Service Director Highways

5 March 2007

Background papers: nil.