

REPORT TO:	King's Lynn Area Consultative Committee		
DATE:	5 October 2016		
TITLE:	Amendment to the terms of reference		
TYPE OF REPORT:	Update		
PORTFOLIO(S):	Leader		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Stuart Ashworth – Assistant Director – Environment & Planning		
OPEN		WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FUTURE CABINET REPORT:	Yes

REPORT SUMMARY/COVER PAGE

PURPOSE OF REPORT/SUMMARY:

The report proposes an additional element to the Terms of Reference of the King's Lynn Area Consultative Committee, allowing the Committee to make recommendations to Cabinet about potential match funding proposals put forward through the Parish Partnership Scheme, or other similar Parish funding schemes.

The Parish Partnership Programme has been running for 5 years, aimed at delivering small co-funded highway improvements for local communities. It is open to all Town/Parish Councils in Norfolk, with the deadline for the submission of bids for 2017/18 being 16 December 2016. The scheme requires match funding, with a maximum County Council contribution of £25,000. The scheme has been expanded by the County Council, to allow bids for schemes in the unparished areas of the County.

KEY ISSUES:

At present King's Lynn & West Lynn cannot benefit from this potential 'funding pot' for small-scale highway schemes. At a County level a similar issue has arisen in Norwich and Great Yarmouth, and the County Council are now proposing a mechanism to allow such areas to bid from this pot.

A mechanism is required so that potential highway schemes in King's Lynn & West Lynn are considered by the King's Lynn Area Consultative Committee (KLACC), and put forward for consideration by Cabinet, relating to whether to commit match funding to identified highway schemes, which would then be submitted as part of the bidding process to the County Council.

It is important that the financial implications of any bid are properly considered and understood. It is proposed that a business case would need to be put forward by a Ward Member with any bid, showing the costs of any proposed scheme, along with how it is supported by local residents.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

1. Add to the terms of reference to allow KLACC to make recommendations on the Parish Partnership Programme or similar funding schemes for the benefit of King's Lynn & West Lynn.
This will allow the Committee to act as a representative body where schemes in the unparished areas can be considered and put through to Cabinet for potential match funding. It will be a more co-ordinated approach. It will also allow some potential match funding to come forward from the Borough Council, although the financial implications of each scheme will need to be carefully considered. It is understood that

Norwich City and Great Yarmouth Borough Councils will be taking a similar approach to their unparished areas, through an appointed body making recommendations on proposed schemes.

2. Do not alter the terms of reference of KLACC and leave it to local groups to submit bids through their elected County Council Member.

This is an alternative put forward by the County Council which would mean local groups would need to be co-ordinated to a level acceptable to the County Council, and bids would need to be submitted by the local County Councillor on their behalf. This approach is less likely to be effective than a co-ordinated approach. The funding required would also have to come from those local groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the King's Lynn Area Consultative Committee proposes a new term of reference with regards to the Parish Partnership Programme, or other similar funding scheme.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To provide a mechanism which will allow for funding bids under the Parish Partnership Programme, for small-scale highway improvement schemes, to come forward within the unparished areas of King's Lynn & West Lynn.

REPORT DETAIL

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The County Council has been operating the Parish Partnership Programme (PPP) from 2011, which has involved inviting Parish and Town Councils to submit bids for local highway improvements in their areas, with the County Council potentially funding up to 50% of a scheme's costs through the PPP. A total funding pot of £380,000 has currently been set aside by the County Council for the year 17/18, for this purpose.
- 1.2 In the time it has been operating, the County Council has been made aware of concerns that the Parish Partnership Programme (PPP) excluded the unparished areas of the County, including King's Lynn. As such it has agreed to amend the scheme to allow bids to come forward from unparished areas as well as from Parish Councils.
- 1.3 The deadline for the latest round of bids for the 2017/18 funding year is 16 December 2016

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is to amend the terms of reference of the King's Lynn Area Consultative Committee to allow it to make recommendations to Cabinet regarding the Borough Council match funding potential small-scale highway improvement schemes, within the unparished areas of King's Lynn and West Lynn.
- 2.2 If the terms of reference are amended as recommended, then potential highway schemes will need to be considered on an annual basis by the Committee, to be forwarded to Cabinet to allow any bids considered acceptable to be submitted to the County Council within the bid deadline.
- 2.3 Small-scale highway schemes would have to be put forward, and given the limited funding pot across the County, and indeed recognising the financial constraints within the Borough Council, it is recommended that each scheme put forward should be accompanied by a business plan. The County Council have stated that they need the following information, which would be included in a business plan
 - Details of the scheme, its cost and the match funding figure
 - Who, and how many people will benefit
 - How it supports the objectives of the Local Transport Plan
 - Local support, particularly from your local County Council Member, frontagers and land owners
 - For 'off highway' schemes, your proposals for future maintenance

3.0 Issues for the Committee to Consider

- 3.1 The County Council have previously recommended that in unparished wards they will allow bids to come forward under the PPP. They were tasked with investigating whether Councils with unparished areas would support bids in such areas, and whether they would offer a PPP pot to help support bids.
- 3.2 The County Council also proposed to invite unparished wards to submit bids via their elected County Council Members, which could be an alternative way of dealing with this issue.

- 3.3 It is understood that through further discussion that Norwich City and Great Yarmouth Borough Council (the other areas with unparished areas) are also proposing to have a group/Committee to represent the unparished areas and to consider bids put forward in the same way as proposed and recommended for this Committee.
- 3.4 The Committee may also wish to consider the mechanism by which schemes are to be put forward and considered. In Parished areas it is understood that Parish Councils will carry out initial discussions with the County Council as highway authority on the potential feasibility and costs of a scheme, before submission of a formal bid to the County Council. Within the unparished areas this is likely to be carried out by Borough Ward Members initially.
- 3.5 The Committee will need to consider how schemes put forward are to be funded. In the same way as Parishes will fund highway works in their areas through their precepts, the King's Lynn Special Expenses charge would need to be utilised to fund schemes in the unparished area. However, this could be spread over the lifetime of a scheme, which would minimise the impact on Special Expenses. For example, if £10,000 is sought for match funding, on a scheme with a lifespan of 25 years, this would be £400 per year on Special Expenses. If this is divided by the current tax base of 9636 (based on band D) in the unparished area, then this would add 4p per year to Special Expenses going forward. Last year King's Lynn Special Expenses was £43.30.
- 3.6 It is also worth noting that additional houses will of course come forward within the unparished areas of the town, thereby adding to the tax base.

4.0 Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This proposal meets the objectives of the following corporate priorities:
- Priority one: provide important local services within our available resources
 - Priority three: work with our communities to ensure they remain clean and safe
 - Priority six: work with our partners on important services for the Borough

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There will be financial implications of match funding small-scale highway improvements. Any match funding would have to be put to Special Expenses for the unparished area.

6.0 Any other Implications/Risks

- 6.1 Agreed bids may need to be coordinated and submitted by Borough Council staff.

7.0 Equal Opportunity Considerations

- 7.1 There are no particular equal opportunity concerns with this proposal.

8.0 Consultation

- 8.1 Councillor Long and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the KLACC.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 It is recommended that there is an addition to the Committee's terms of reference, to enable it to make recommendations to Cabinet regarding match funding of small-scale highway works within the unparished area of King's Lynn & West Lynn. Any scheme put forward would need to be supported by a fully informed business plan, as described in section 2.3.
- 9.2 Should the Committee support the expansion of its terms of reference then that will need to be agreed by Cabinet and Council.

10.0 Background Papers

8 July 2016 Norfolk County Council - Report to Environment Development and Transport Committee-Highway Parish Partnership Programme – unparished wards