

WORKING GROUP UPDATE REPORT
Lead Working Group Members

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides an update in respect of the recently reconvened Working Group of the Panel reviewing highway maintenance and the newly formed Commercial Sponsorship Member Reference Group.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 **That this update report be noted.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Highway Maintenance

- 3.1 A working group was established by the Panel in September 2009 to review highway maintenance. The Working Group met on three occasions between September and December 2009. At its first meeting, the Working Group received an introductory briefing in respect of highway maintenance and discussed the scope of the review. The scope was agreed by the Working Group at its second meeting when it received a presentation concerning highway asset management. The Working Group received a briefing at its third meeting in respect of the financial and other resources given over to highway maintenance, the sufficiency of the current level of investment to maintain the quality of the highway asset, whether the Council maximised government funding and how the Council's expenditure compared to other local authorities. In the light of the proposed 2010/11 highway maintenance budget reduction of £315,000, Members decided that in times of financial constraint, safeguarding the existing highway asset had a higher priority than improving that asset and submitted a report to this effect to the Panel to consider at the time they met to consider the proposed budget for 2010/11.
- 3.2 The highway maintenance review was discontinued in January 2010 owing to a reduction in staffing resources. However, as other Overview and Scrutiny review work has subsequently been completed, resources have now become available to resume the review and the Working Group is being reconvened. The Lead Member has agreed that the review will adhere to the original scoping document and arrangements are in hand for its next meeting which will feature a recap of past work, asset management data concerning the condition of the Borough's highways, examples of highway projects and funding arrangements.

Commercial Sponsorship

- 3.3 The Council's Corporate Management Team have requested that the possibility of the Council attracting some income through an organised commercial sponsorship scheme be looked into and a Member Reference Group has been established to provide views and advice to the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities on

a prospective procurement of an agency service to attract commercial sponsorship income for Bracknell Forest. It has been labelled a Member Reference Group instead of an Overview and Scrutiny Working Group as the membership includes the Chairman of the Planning and Highways Committee and the Executive Member for Finance, Resources and Assets in addition to Members and Substitute Members of this Panel.

- 3.4 The Member Reference Group's first meeting was held on 20 September 2010 when it agreed that a commercial sponsorship scheme would be acceptable in principle and that the possibility of introducing a viable scheme be explored. A second meeting of the Group is being arranged to receive briefings in respect of the Council's corporate identity standards and the planning policies and constraints applying to signage and other issues relating to sponsorship. The briefings will inform a discussion to develop a framework around key policy, infrastructure and other limitations / issues which could apply to commercial sponsorship for briefing representatives of prospective agents who will be invited to the Group's third meeting.

Background Papers

None.

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