

STOCKPORT COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE REPORT – SUMMARY SHEET

Subject: Amendments to the Area Committee Highway Ward Spokespersons Protocol

Report to: (a) All Area Committee and Cabinet Member for Highways, Parks and Leisure Services **Date:** 1st – 4th August 2022

Report of: (b) Director for Place Management

Key Decision: (c) **NO / ~~YES~~** (Please circle)

Forward Plan ☐ General Exception ☐ Special Urgency ☐ (Tick box)

Summary:

To consider the current arrangements in relation to the role of Highway Ward Spokespersons (HWS) and the monitoring of the Area Committee Delegated Budgets. Specifically, it is proposed to make changes to the financial thresholds for decisions to be taken under delegated authority by the Director of Place Management.

The Area Committee last gave approval to an increase in the level of the delegation in 2011 at which point this was set at up to £300 for certain minor, non-regulatory, matters and up to £1,000 for a pedestrian dropped crossing.

No further changes have been made to the level of this delegation since that time and costs have changed significantly in the intervening period which has meant that schemes that didn't need area committee approval in 2011 are now routinely being progressed as area committee decisions.

It is proposed to make increases in the level of delegation to take account of these cost increases and to ensure that decisions that were intended to be taken under delegated authority can continue to be.

Recommendation(s):

The Area Committee is recommended to authorise the Director of Place Management, in consultation with the Highway Ward Spokesperson(s), to spend up to £1,000 from the Area Committee's Delegated Budget in connection with the schedule of minor, non-regulatory, matters identified in Section 2.6 of the report; and up to £2,500 in connection with pedestrian dropped crossings subject to all area committees giving approval to the revision of the delegation thresholds.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee (if decision called in): **(d)**
Communities & Housing Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers (if report for publication): **(e)**

There are none.

Contact person for accessing
background papers and discussing the report

Officer: Eraina Smith
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'Urgent Business': (f) YES / NO (please circle)

Certification (if applicable)

This report should be considered as 'urgent business' and the decision exempted from 'call-in' for the following reason(s):

The written consent of Councillor _____ and the Chief Executive/Monitoring Officer/Borough Treasurer for the decision to be treated as 'urgent business' was obtained on _____/will be obtained before the decision is implemented.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AREA COMMITTEE HIGHWAY WARD SPOKESPERSONS PROTOCOL

Report of the Director of Place Management

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the first meeting of Area Committees at the start of the Municipal Year, Highway Ward Spokespersons (HWS) are nominated for the ensuing year. The Director of Place Management, in consultation with the HWS, has the authority to authorise the implementation of schemes with non-regulatory matters to the value of £300 without the requirement for Area Committee approval.
- 1.2 The Area Committee last gave approval to an increase in the level of the delegation in 2011 at which point this was set at up to £300 for certain minor, non-regulatory, matters and up to £1,000 for a pedestrian dropped crossing.
- 1.3 No further changes have been made to the level of this delegation since that time and costs have changed significantly in the intervening period which has meant that schemes that didn't need area committee approval in 2011 are now routinely being progressed as area committee decisions.
- 1.4 It is proposed to make increases in the level of delegation to take account of these cost increases and to ensure that decisions that were intended to be taken under delegated authority can continue to be.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 No other changes are proposed with regard to the remainder of the protocol including the maintenance of the quarterly Highway Ward Briefing where ward councillors and highway officers from maintenance and network management can discuss programmes and area's that require further investigation.
- 2.2 However, in order to achieve consistency between all Area Committees, it is important that all area committees give approval to the changes to the delegation arrangements for those minor, nonregulatory, matters (including authority to spend up to £1,000 from the area committees' delegated budgets) being delegated to the Director of Place Management in consultation with the HWS. Should it not be possible to secure approval from all area committees, then the delegation arrangements will be retained at their existing level.
- 2.3 The increase from the previous limit of £300 is due to the increased cost of materials, and specialist design staff for feasibility studies to produce outline plans and potential cost for minor road safety improvement schemes. Any such decisions will be reported via the Area Committee's progress report. All spend will be reported on the ward resumes and progress reports submitted to all area committees as at present.
- 2.4 Area Committees have also delegated spends of up to £1,000 to the Director of Place Management in consultation with a Ward spokesperson certain for costs associated

with pedestrian dropped crossings. As per the above, it is proposed that this amount to be increased to £2,500.

- 2.5 At each Area Committee meeting a position statement is submitted as part of the 'Progress Report' providing as up-to-date as possible details of commitments and expenditure in relation to the delegated budget. This enables the Area Committee to monitor the expenditure and identify early when resources are running low to avoid schemes being agreed for which there is insufficient budget.
- 2.6 The following schedule outlines the matters that are currently delegated to the Director of Place Management, in consultation with the HWS, but which are funded from the Area Committees Highways Delegated Budget and indicative costs:
- Traffic counter (ATC automated traffic count) £350
 - Advisory Disable Bays installation or removal £150
 - White road markings £2.50/m (excluding traffic management)
 - Pedestrian dropped crossing – with tactile flags and dropped kerbs – a pair – and no drainage problems – approx £2,500
 - Bollards £350
 - Signs – can vary widely depending on simple pole / plate £300 to pole, lit, reflective - £2,000 – plus UU supply
 - Guardrails – £350/m
- 2.7 Note these prices are approximate and may increase due to out of hours working, inflation and amount of works being carried out and subject to access times and traffic management. However, should costs exceed the delegated financial thresholds, the matter would be remitted to the Area Committee for approval
- 2.8 It is proposed that is the revised arrangements would start immediately subject to all Area Committee's giving approval to the proposed revised arrangements.
- 2.9 Officers will investigate on request from the HWS or resolution of the area committee only, therefore, requests coming direct from other councillors will be forwarded to the HWS for approval to progress.

3. RECOMMENDATION

The Area Committee is recommended to authorise the Director of Place Management, in consultation with the Highway Ward Spokesperson(s), to spend up to £1,000 from the Area Committee's Delegated Budget in connection with the schedule of minor, non-regulatory, matters identified in Section 2.6 of the report; and up to £2,500 in connection with pedestrian dropped crossings subject to all area committees giving approval to the revision of the delegation thresholds.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none.

Anyone wishing further information please contact Eraina Smith on telephone number Tel: 0161 474 4911 or by email on eraina.smith@stockport.gov.uk