

**Lead Member for Planning**

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**Your Ref**

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Dear Community Committee Chair and Neighbourhood Manager

I am writing to you to confirm that for the financial year 2010-11 each Community Committee has once again been allocated a sum of £100,000 from the highways capital programme. As a Committee you will be able to allocate the funds to specific projects and 'carry over' the funding to future years should the project not be implemented in the current year. I have also agreed to continue the allocation of £10,000 highways revenue expenditure for the financial year 2010-11. Details of how you can spend this money are set out in the attached leaflet.

This leaflet is part of the more effective communication we have been trying to deliver with our colleagues at Urban Vision. I hope that the more proactive role of Member Liaison Officers, led by Hayley Watson, and the regular highways bulletins have been useful.

In addition to the devolved budgets, we are trying to work closely with the community and ward councillors to make sure that our mainstream budgets tackle those roads that most need doing. I have recently approved a list of highways which are to be resurfaced using the Ralumac process. This is set out in Appendix A. I have also asked for tenders to be invited to resurface the highways set out in Appendix B. Both of these lists were compiled in consultation with Community Committee. A number of schemes suggested by Community Committees cannot use the Ralumac process for technical reasons and these are set out in Appendix C. We will examine alternative ways of dealing with the issues.

The Lead Member for Finance has made available £2.8 million additional funding to enable us to carry out further highways improvements (in addition to the extra £700,000 to fill potholes which have increased in number as a result of the recent severe winter).

Urban Vision are in the process of completing an up-date on the condition of roads in Salford, which will be used to help inform current and future priorities.

Finally, I would like to hear your views on the way that the highways budget is devolved. The £100,000 per Community Committee formula was intended to be a 'rough and ready' allocation to kickstart the process. Now it has been in operation for some years, I have received representations about the fairness of the system.

There are broadly three alternative ways in which the money could be shared. These are:

- By population. At the moment East Salford, one of the poorest areas of the city, has 16.9% of the city population while Worsley and Boothstown, one of the most prosperous areas of the city, has 9% of the population. Yet both receive the same budget allocation. Is this fair? Would an allocation according to population be a fairer system? The difficulty with dividing according to population is that it is not linked to highways issues. A large population is not necessarily an indication that an area should be prioritised for roads.
- By length of highway. Ordsall and Langworthy Ward has the greatest length of principal roads with 17.3km and Eccles the lowest with 5.2km. Is length of highway a good indicator of need? Principal roads don't take in all the sidestreets and length of highways may not be a good indicator of the condition of the highway.
- By incidence of road injuries: East Salford again comes out as not receiving its fair share if this indicator is used. It has nearly three times the casualty rate of Irlam and Cadishead – the lowest in the city – yet receives the same amount of money. Given that most of the devolved budget is spent on road safety schemes, should this be the preferred means of allocation?

**Questions** (I have asked two about changing the system and two which allow you to comment on 'no change' and abandoning the system. I include the latter options just so all options are explored. My intention is to produce a fairer distribution system):

1. Do you think one or a combination (eg 50% of money based on casualty rate and 50% on population or 33% on each indicator) of these means is a fairer way?
2. If a new system is introduced, should there be a transitional arrangement, eg no Community Committee to lose more than £10,000 in any one year.
3. Should the existing arrangements remain?
4. Should the devolved budget be ended altogether?
5. Have you any other comments?

I look forward to hearing your responses.

I would be grateful if you could circulate this letter to all members of your Community Committee so your members are fully aware of the proposal.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Derek Antrobus  
Lead Member for Planning