

Runnymede Borough CouncilCOMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE4 January 2018 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee Present: Councillors Miss M N Heath (Chairman) P J Waddell (Vice-Chairman), Mrs D V Clarke, Mrs L M Gillham and N M King.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors Miss D Khalique, S A Lewis, S M Mackay, B W Pitt and Mrs G Warner

433 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read out the Fire Precautions.

434 NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Group mentioned below had notified the Chief Executive of their wish that the change listed below be made to the membership of the Committee. The change was for a fixed period ending on the day after the meeting and thereafter the Councillor removed would be reappointed.

| <u>Group</u> | <u>Remove From Membership</u> | <u>Appoint Instead</u> |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Runnymede Independent Residents' Group | Councillor Mrs M T Harnden | Councillor Mrs L M Gillham |

The Chief Executive had given effect to this request in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

435 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 November 2017 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

436 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S A Lewis, S M Mackay and Mrs G Warner.

437 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Committee received an update on work within the Community Development team. This included a detailed and informative presentation on the Living Well Week, for which Members expressed congratulations and other positive contributions. A full report on the Living Well Week was appended to the report. Officers reported that 77 activities were held during the week, attracting 478 people.

There was a well-attended launch event involving 21 of the 30 partner organisations and businesses, including Hodders Estate Agents, who were new sponsors. Positive feedback on the week was received and Officers aimed to undertake more targeted promotion in 2018 through direct mail and more use of social media. Officers and Members wished to

record formal thanks to the sponsors and partners who delivered the Living Well Week sessions free of charge.

Members noted that Community Development covered a number of diverse areas, including Sports, the Arts, Community facilities and engagement, activities for the young and older persons, Community Safety, Chertsey Museum and other Leisure related activities and services.

There had been several other achievements across the Business Centre during 2017/2018. Officers highlighted the Surrey Youth Games, 'Get Active 50+', ParkRun, Runnymede Sportability, Chertsey Museum's exhibitions and Outreach work, Junior Citizen and the Anti-Social Behaviour Awareness Week.

The Committee was disappointed to learn that there was a shortfall in funding with regard to the Surrey Youth Games and Officers were reminded that they could contact local Councillors with regard to local projects that may be worthy of modest funding.

The Committee agreed that Community Development work changed people's lives as demonstrated by the many good news stories that had been reported locally and in the case of Park Run, internationally.

438 COMMUNITY FIRST UPDATE

The Committee received for information the annual Community First update. Officers highlighted achievements and developments in all of the targeted communities in the borough, some of which were of national importance. Other initiatives included Magna Carta School, who had been invited to the House of Parliament, as a result of their Headspace project for parents and other mental health initiatives such as the Resilience Doughnut.

Officers reported that the Forest Estate Community Hub in Englefield Green West had received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. Elsewhere, the Frog Island Fair in Egham Hythe and the Goose Fair in Chertsey Meads were both now self-financing. Unfortunately, there had been no progress with the portacabin project at Chertsey Meads. However, this did mean that funding could be diverted to repairing the roof at the Forest Estate Hub, for which local Ward Members were grateful.

The Committee wished to formally record its thanks to Suzanne Stronge and colleagues for the continued success of Community First, noting the valuable support and input from partner organisations, Ward Councillors, residents and volunteers.

Members reviewed the budgetary implications of projects undertaken, in progress and those in the planned programme, noting the spilt between the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund and the criteria for which funding source could be used for each project.

The estimated overall cost of Community First in 2017/18 was £62,180. Members agreed this sum was relatively modest when compared with the very significant benefits and positive outcomes to the Community, much of which was achieved through the work of volunteers, whose value had not yet been quantified in equivalent monetary terms.

The Committee did consider that Community First related and derived achievements could be better publicised and would counter some negative views that had been made about the Council. Therefore, Officers were requested to consider communications options with regard to promoting good news stories and ward related news to Councillors on a 3 monthly/ quarterly basis and as and when there were important items falling outside the

reporting period. Officers were also asked to reinstate the circulation of Council Press Releases to Councillors on a regular basis.

439 RUNNYMEDE COMPACT AND STRENGTHENING THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

The Committee was asked to review the Runnymede Compact with the Voluntary sector which was created in 2001. The Compact formed a framework between Local Government and voluntary bodies and was introduced in response to a national directive from Central Government. Locally, the compact had been made with Runnymede Association of Voluntary Services (now Voluntary Support North Surrey) who represented 303 voluntary and community organisations in the borough.

The Committee recalled that in 2010 the compact had been updated and six main objectives were approved. These sought to create a strong and diverse civil society which was effective, responsive and transparent in design, with clear arrangements for managing changes to programmes and public services. It also sought to promote an equal and fair society.

It was noted that the voluntary sector in Runnymede needed a significant amount of support, particularly with fundraising and communications in the digital world. A Task Group was set up in March 2017, chaired by Councillor Mrs Gillham. The Group's remit was to identify ways in which the voluntary sector could be strengthened and many positive outcomes had been achieved with partners. The Committee was very appreciative of this work and extended its gratitude to Solette Sheppardson for her valuable work with and in the voluntary sector. Councillor Mrs Gillham's offer to become the Councillor Voluntary Sector Champion was also gratefully accepted.

The Committee commented positively on Social Value and Officers were asked to calculate the financial worth of services provided through volunteers. It was acknowledged that volunteers provided invaluable work in the community which was not often quantified.

Members also stressed the importance of Social Value being integral to the procurement process. It was agreed that tender specifications should include provision for Social Value because this gave freedom to a contractor to offer 'in kind' services for example infrastructure improvements and training and employment opportunities which added value to a contract for the benefit of the wider community. Members cited a recent example of Runnymede demonstrating this which had been reported in a national newspaper.

The Vice Chairman, in his capacity as a Management Consultant, offered to provide two one day training sessions to voluntary sector representatives, free of charge, to further the Council's aim of strengthening the voluntary sector. This was welcomed and Officers would liaise with him accordingly.

The Committee noted how important the Voluntary sector was, reaching vulnerable people in the community. It was agreed that the Runnymede Compact should be reviewed annually and reported to the Committee.

Officers agreed to provide Councillor King with a list of the organisations registered with Voluntary Support North Surrey, noting that organisations need not be registered with the Charity Commission in order to access assistance and funding. This also included the opportunity for them to act as an umbrella organisation for obtaining DBS checks.

RESOLVED that –

- i) the updated Runnymede Compact with the voluntary sector be approved; and**

ii) **Councillor Mrs L M Gillham be appointed as the Councillor Voluntary Sector champion from 2018 – 2021**

440 RUNNYMEDE PLEASURE GROUNDS DRAFT ESTIMATES 2018/19

The Committee's approval was sought for the draft estimates and fees and charges in respect of Runnymede Pleasure Grounds for 2018/19.

It was agreed that, to remain competitive, the car parking charges would not be increased for 2018/19. The financial projection for 2018/19 was an estimated income of £125,418 from car parking, rents and leases and interest on internal investments and expenditure of £97,777. Members were pleased to note that approximately £27,000 would be transferred into the Trust's reserves.

Officers were asked to provide the Committee and Councillor Mrs Gillham with details of the location, dates and times for the further public consultation exercise in respect of proposals for Runnymede Pleasure Grounds in Egham. The proposals now included more lodges to be accommodated on site.

It was noted that Officers would submit an update report on the improvements to Runnymede Pleasure Grounds to the meeting of the Committee in March to include full details of the consultation responses for the Committee's scrutiny.

RESOLVED that –

the proposed financial projection for 2018/19 be approved.

441 URGENT ACTION – STANDING ORDER 42

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

The Committee received, for information, a copy of an urgent item of business which had been approved since the last meeting of the Committee, signed by both the Leader of the Council and the Chairman.

Approval had been sought to enter into a community transport contract at short notice, which would be commencing the following week. It was confirmed that the service was being piloted for an initial period of 6 months, after which it would be reviewed.

The Chairman requested that the results of the review be submitted for consideration by the Committee and in the meantime further details of the contract be circulated to Members of the Committee.

Chairman

(The meeting finished at 8.22 pm)