

Runnymede Borough Council

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

8 November 2018 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee Present: Councillors Miss M N Heath (Chairman), N M King (Vice-Chairman in the Chair for part of the meeting), M D Cressey, S L Dennett, T J F E Gracey, Mrs M T Harnden, S A Lewis, A P Tollett and Mrs G Warner.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor Ms F Dent

Councillor M T Kusneraitis also attended part of the meeting.

332. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read out the Fire Precautions.

333. PRESENTATION – EGHAM MUSEUM

The Committee received a presentation which had also been emailed to Members on Egham Museum's work to date including a proposal to enhance and develop the Museum by expanding into more of the Council owned Literary Institute in Egham, part of which had recently been vacated by Strode's College. In order to achieve their attractive and ambitious plans, significant funding was required and their ideas of how to fund raise were also outlined to the Committee. It was advised that the level of funding they required together with deciding on the future use of the building's ground floor and other areas of the building would need to be considered by Corporate Management Committee. The Museum's trustees believed that if they secured the Literary Institute, together with additional funding from the Council it would make the museum sustainable beyond 2024. The proposal met with interest from the Committee who were advised that the museum had recently benefited from a significant private investment towards their aim to procure a copy of Magna Carta for permanent display at the museum. It was considered this, together with an improved facility for the museum would contribute to the Council's Corporate Business Plan by developing the borough's tourism and leisure offer. The Museum's trustees advised that they were looking for guidance from the Chief Executive before submitting a formal bid for funding and that the proposal for the Literary Institute was still in draft form.

The Chairman, Councillor Miss Heath said that she would facilitate a meeting with herself, the Vice-Chairman, Councillor King, the Chief Executive and Egham Museum to discuss its proposals for the Literary Institute in more detail and explore the Museum's bid for funding subject to its future use being determined by Corporate Management Committee.

Officers were asked to send a revised copy of the presentation to Members of Corporate Management Committee when the Museum made it available.

Officers agreed to provide Councillor Kusneraitis with a list of additional costs to the Council following the departure of Strodes' College from the ground floor of the Literary Institute.

334. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 September 2018 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

335. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ms F Dent.

336. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES KEY PERFORMANCE/ACTIVITY INDICATORS – QUARTER 2 2018/19

The Committee noted the indicators for the Community Development and Community Services Business Centres which had recently separated, as agreed by way of a Standing Order 42, reported to the last meeting of the Committee.

Members were satisfied with the statistics as presented, noting that if necessary a new marketing campaign would be undertaken for Meals At Home and a feasibility study for further collaborative work in conjunction with Surrey Heath Borough Council was being undertaken.

337. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES FEES AND CHARGES 2019/20

The Committee considered the relevant discretionary fees and charges across the business centres. Members approved a mix of modest increases and decreases as well as some remaining unchanged to promote services and increase demand while retaining existing service users.

The Committee was concerned to learn that the number of hall bookings was not as good as anticipated and noted Officers would report the results of the Halls Services review to the Committee at a future meeting. The review would cover options for on-line booking and different packages to simplify the process and attract new business. It was noted that Runnymede's Halls service offered more facilities than other boroughs.

Officers were confident that the Meals at Home fees and charges were fair and competitive and were looking to standardise Runnymede's with those of Surrey Heath in the future.

Officers would also report the results of the Yellow Bus Service review to the Committee at a future meeting in 2019/20 as the review would not be taking place until 2019. The review would include the modelling of the service which it was considered to be central to the charging regime.

RESOLVED that –

the proposed fees and charges be approved, to be effective from the dates within the appendix to the agenda report, or as soon as practical thereafter.

338. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS CENTRE PLAN 2019/20

The Vice-Chairman assumed the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

The Committee's approval was sought for the most recent version of the Community Development Business Plan and a number of growth bids, most of which would then be subject to consideration by Corporate Management Committee.

The Plan followed the corporate template, explaining the role of the business centre, outlining its structure and detailing achievements, influences and new areas of work for 2019/20. The Committee reviewed these and the targets for 2019/20 and examined the risk matrix in relation to forthcoming projects.

Members noted the diverse range of areas and Officers confirmed that reports would be submitted on the following subjects to future meetings of the Committee:

- Playing Pitch Strategy
- Living Well Week
- Family Support Programme
- Youth Provision at Gogmore Farm
- Grounds Maintenance Contract
- Sponsorship package Options
- Egham Orbit
- Lease and Rent Grant Aid
- Section 106 projects in Englefield Green
- Feasibility study for Barrsbrook Farm Project
- Public Space Protection Orders
- Review of ANPR effectiveness and car parking charges in Runnymede Pleasure Grounds

With regard to forthcoming projects requiring additional expenditure, Members approved the business cases for additional resources to deal with unauthorised encampments, including an additional member of staff who would be shared with other enforcement issues such as encroachments and re deployable cameras for Safer Runnymede for sale or lease to generate income and combat anti-social behaviour.

A third project which was approved in principle was to develop the potential and use of an area in Barrsbrook Farm in Chertsey in line with the Playing Pitch Strategy. There was some discussion about the practical merits of the type of provision of pitches suggested. However, Officers assured Members that as plans progressed through a feasibility study they and local clubs would be consulted on the scoping document, the aim being to maximise use of facilities and cost effectiveness.

The last project was connected with the improvements at Runnymede Pleasure Grounds. Officers confirmed that the installation of an ANPR system for the car park could be funded by the Pleasure Ground Trust's reserves and should realise additional income. Members were advised that provision for the first 30 minutes parking for free was to be retained and that parking charges would be reviewed regularly.

RESOLVED that –

- i) the 2019/20 Community Development Business Centre Plan, noting the change from 'aspirational' to 'supported' of the aforementioned projects, be approved;**
- ii) those business cases requiring additional expenditure be recommended for approval by Corporate Management Committee; and**
- iii) acting as Trustees, the Committee agrees the purchase of an ANPR camera system at Runnymede Pleasure Grounds, to be funded from the Trust's reserves**

339. COMMUNITY SERVICES BUSINESS CENTRE PLAN 2019/20

The Committee's approval was sought for the new Community Services Business Centre Plan for 2019/20. It was drawn up using the corporate template to ensure that all areas were covered, risk assessed and properly costed and accounted for, especially with regard to forthcoming bids requiring additional expenditure.

Officers commented on the breadth of work being undertaken by the Business Centre, focussing on a mix of objectives, balancing social value with income generation. The direction of this business centre was towards the health and social care agenda and taking a lead therein to support some of the most vulnerable members of the community.

Officers were confident that the new staffing structure, grouping of services and the partnership with Surrey Heath Borough Council would be successful, but would be kept under review.

Officers advised that reports on the following areas would be submitted to future meetings of the Committee:

- Social Centres
- Partnership with Surrey Heath Borough Council
- Community Transport
- Home Improvement Agency
- Health and Social Care agenda

With regard to forthcoming projects requiring additional funding, the Committee approved three projects, a fourth concerning the building of a medical room and meeting room at Woodham and New Haw day centre was withdrawn at the meeting as funding was not yet required but might be brought back for approval at a later date.

The projects going forward were the extension of the Promotion and Outreach post which would be a shared post with the Corporate Communications team, an increase of hours on the post for Social Proscribing and an extension of the staff contracts in respect of the Day Care Support Assistants, the latter to be funded from within budgets across Community Services.

RESOLVED that –

- i) the 2019/20 Community Services Business Centre Plan be approved; and**
- ii) those business cases requiring additional expenditure be recommended for approval by Corporate Management Committee**

340. SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICE FUNDING – UPDATE

The Committee was advised of a recent communication to the Council's Chief Executive confirming reduced funding by Surrey County Council to several major Community Services functions. These included Community Alarms, Community Transport, the Home Improvement Agency, Meals at Home, the Social Centres. The letter ended a period of 3 years' uncertainty for the Council.

Officers confirmed an estimated consequential budget deficit of just under £58,000 in 2019/20 and outlined possible solutions to meet the shortfall through a mixture of more partnership working and income generating schemes. At the same time Officers reported what they considered to be in some cases a disproportionate increase in the County Council's monitoring requirements which Officers would struggle to achieve. It was agreed this news was most unwelcome although the County Council's financial position was acknowledged. Members were concerned that the County Council's reasoning and means of calculating how much each borough's funding would be reduced by must be demonstrated to be fair and consistently applied. Unfortunately, there was insufficient information available for both Officers and Members to be satisfied in that regard.

Some Members considered it might be worthwhile to challenge the justification of the funding cuts through the appropriate channel.

341. COMMUNITY SERVICES PARTNERSHIP WITH SURREY HEATH – UPDATE

The Committee noted how plans for further integrated working with Surrey Heath Borough Council were progressing towards a more formal and long term partnership arrangement to be proposed for implementation in the next financial year.

The current arrangement which was in its 4th year (the 2nd year of a five year formal agreement) resulted in a net payment to the Council of £94,000 per annum. The areas of joint working focussed on the Adult Social Care agenda and operationally involved two manager posts, Community Transport scheduling, Community Transport and Meals at Home software and administrative support.

Members were pleased that the partnership was working very positively with Runnymede taking the lead but reflecting an equal partnership between boroughs.

Officers planned to bring a report on recommendations for a new 5 year arrangement with the possibility of a 2 year extension (total 7 years), to a future meeting of the Committee. However entering into formal negotiations would need to take place in December subject to the full project plan being approved by the Chief Executives of both Councils. Thereafter consultation with staff and trade unions would need to be undertaken in line with relevant employment legislation if the target date of April 2019 was to be met for the partnership to start.

342. RUNNYMEDE PLEASURE GROUNDS IMPROVEMENTS – UPDATE

The Committee received an update on improvements to Runnymede Pleasure Grounds. This included details of the risk register, timeline and progress with all elements of the project in collaboration with AECOM, the employer's agents.

Members noted the Project Execution Plan and were advised that as a result of surveys and risk assessments some minor design alterations had been made to the masterplan including some re-routing of the main path around the site and the road around the lodges to the Skiff and Punt Club and a revised car parking layout.

Officers were confident that the project was on track for works being complete ready for a grand opening in July 2020 and positive discussions with regard to managing the lodges were taking place with the Runnymede Hotel.

It was planned to involve the community through creating of a dedicated website and consultation with St Jude's school in Englefield Green with regard to the play area provision on site.

Members also noted the proposed ANPR car park system which had been approved earlier in the meeting as part of the Community Development Business Centre Plan 2019/20. This would have a capital cost of approximately £50,000 with the initial outlay being recouped through an increase in parking income over 3 years. On going costs of £14,000 for licenses, maintenance and network connections were noted.

The revised masterplan would be subject to approval by Corporate Management Committee, owing to the timing of the project. However, Members of Community Services Committee would be invited to the meeting of Corporate Management Committee on 15 November accordingly.

Members were pleased with progress to date and looked forward to further updates as and when necessary.

343. CHERTSEY MEADS SANG STATUS – UPDATE

The Committee's approval was sought of a Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) Management Plan for Chertsey Meads in order for Chertsey Meads to be formally designated for that use.

The background behind the proposal was so that the Council could comply with the habitat regulations specifically in relation to the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (Chobham Common) to provide alternative facilities for recreational use and dog walking to encourage people not to frequent places where there were ground nesting birds such as the Dartford Warbler, Nightjar and Woodlark.

Designating Chertsey Meads as a SANG gave it an extra layer of protection against development and could increase opportunities to apply for funding for particular projects to reduce the impact of reduced funding previously obtained through Natural England's former Higher Stewardship Scheme.

Members were content that the detailed management plan covered all the necessary elements to attract visitors whilst maintaining the special nature of the site.

Members noted that Chertsey Meads was a Site of Nature Conservation Importance, much valued by the community and the Council and managed by the Green Space team in consultation with the Chertsey Meads Management Liaison Group.

Members asked Officers to look at the connectivity of the mown paths around the Meads because in the summer when the meadow was at its peak the designated paths were sometimes difficult to locate.

RESOLVED that –

- i) the Chertsey Meads Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space Management Plan, as attached at Appendix L of the agenda be approved; and**
- ii) use of Chertsey Meads as Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space be endorsed**

344. CHERTSEY MEADS MANAGEMENT LIAISON GROUP - MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Liaison Group held on 4 September 2018, as attached at Appendix 'A' were received and noted.

Compliments were extended to the Green Space Team for maintaining the quality of the borough's floral displays, parks and open spaces especially over the unusually hot summer months.

Chairman

(The meeting finished at 9.48pm)

Runnymede Borough CouncilCHERTSEY MEADS MANAGEMENT LIAISON GROUP4 September 2018 at 7.30pmMembers of the
Group present:

Councillor D A Cotty	Runnymede Borough Council
Councillor M G Nuti	Runnymede Borough Council
Mrs K Drury	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mr H W Evans	Surrey Bird Club
Mr N Johnson	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mrs H Lane	Surrey Wildlife Trust
Mrs C Longman	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mr D Mead	Chertsey Agricultural Association
Mrs M Nichols	Chertsey Society
Mr J O'Gorman	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mr B Phillips	Surrey Botanical Society
Mrs S Ritchie	Dog Walkers Representative
Mrs T A Stevens	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mrs A Teasdale	Hamm Court Residents' Representative
Mr D Turner	Chertsey Agricultural Association

Members of the
Group absent:

Mrs M Buck	Hamm Court Residents' Representative
Mr R Deacock	St George's College
Dr J Denton	Invertebrates Expert
Mr G Drake	Chertsey Society
Ms I Girvan	Surrey Wildlife Trust
Mrs F Harmer	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mrs J Hearne	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mr G James	Sustrans
Mrs C Noakes	Hamm Court Residents' Representative
Mr C J Norman	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative

Advisory members of
the Group present:

Mr P Winfield	Community Services Manager, Green Space Runnymede Borough Council
Mr C Dullely	Open Space and Allotments Manager, Runnymede Borough Council

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor D A Cotty was elected as Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2018/19.

2. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read out the Fire Precautions which set out the procedures to be followed in the event of fire or other emergency.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the group, held on 27 February 2018, were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr R Deacock, Dr J Denton, Mr G Drake, Ms I Girvan, Ms F Harmer, Mrs J Hearne, Mrs C Noakes and Mr C J Norman.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHERTSEY MEADS MANAGEMENT LIAISON GROUP

The new members, Mr N Johnson and Mrs C Noakes were welcomed to the Group. The Chairman expressed the fond thanks of all those present, to Mr D Wheeler, who had retired from the Group but remained close to its members and the Meads.

The vacancies for a representative for the Conservation Volunteers and the Environment Agency were noted.

5. ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING

Anti-Social Behaviour

The Group was advised that unfortunately there were too few volunteers to draw up a rota to lock and unlock the second car park to deter the reported anti-social behaviour. It was understood however that the Police were regularly patrolling the area and had rounded up some of the young people on bicycles according to the Runnymede Beat Facebook page.

Less successful was dealing with the motorcycle problem; often the youths were not wearing helmets and not displaying any vehicle registration plates. It was reported that there might be a local connection with some of those involved. It was suggested that the CCTV could be used to track anti-social behaviour, Mr Winfield agreed, provided it was reported in real time so that Safer Runnymede could record a clear image and also reported to the Police via 101. People also had the option to report via the Council's website 'report it' function, which were recorded and discussed by the Joint Action Group which included Surrey Police.

Action

Commercial Dog Walkers

Councillor Nuti advised that he had not been able to undertake the research regarding this issue but would endeavour to do so for the next meeting. Mr Winfield was due to meet a representative of the Horsell Common Preservation Society about licensing and commercial dog walkers. There was some discussion regarding control of dogs and owner/walker responsibility/ ability. It was noted that there could be exemptions granted to private individuals who had more than 4 dogs. It was agreed that the focus should be on those dog walkers who were making others' safe enjoyment of the Meads difficult and/or who posed a threat to other animals.

Councillor Nuti/
Mr Winfield

BT Telegraph Poles

Mrs Stevens reported mixed feedback on her conversations with local residents regarding a suggestion to ask BT to install telegraph poles to improve the Broadband service to residents on the Meads. It was thought that there might be plans to site a new cabinet to shorten the distance of travel but that it was not a priority for BT. Councillor Nuti had received some feedback that the service had improved as a result of the recent upgrade across on the Spelthorne side of The Thames. Opinion was mixed regarding whether the appearance of the Meads was more important than the provision of better Broadband and to what extent residents were willing to pay for the service and/or have to make improvements themselves including assistance given to BT on site.

7. Management and Maintenance

Annual Work Programme

Mr Winfield reported that owing to the small team in Green Space being diverted by other matters, including 12 unauthorised encampments over the summer, one of which was onto the Meads, very little of the work programme planned for 2017/18 had been completed. It was anticipated that SANGS funding would assist in the future.

It was requested that the reed beds be cut more extensively in the future as some members felt they were now encroaching too much onto the Meads.

Mr Dulley

There had been no sightings of otters or bats.

Unauthorised encampment

There was a lengthy discussion about unauthorised encampments and some frustration that it was a growing issue that appeared difficult to control. The encampment at Chertsey Meads had been short lived and had not affected the Chertsey Show. Members were advised that the Surrey Chief Executives Group was devising a strategy with plans to designate an additional transit site in the County.

8. CHERTSEY MEADS – SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE NATURAL GREEN SPACE (SANG) STATUS UPDATE

The Group noted progress towards the SANGS designation now that

	<u>Action</u>
<p>the Council's Local Plan had been submitted to the Secretary of State following its approval in July. Officers were currently finalising a SANG Management Plan which would then be sent to Natural England for comment. It was hoped that SANG status might be awarded by the end of the year and then Officers could actively pursue funding opportunities to deal with issues such as the Height Barrier which was reported to be a hazard to children who were apparently playing on it.</p>	<p>Mr Dulley/ Mr Winfield</p>
<p>9. <u>HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP (HLS) AGREEMENT</u></p> <p>The Group noted that funding from the current HLS agreement would cease in October 2018 and that an application had been made to the new scheme which was more restrictive could leave a shortfall of approximately £5,000. Officers had made financial provision for obtaining the former level of funding for projects in the Management Plan.</p>	
<p>10. <u>ESSO PIPELINE PROPOSALS</u></p> <p>After the last meeting in March, Officers had submitted representations on behalf of the Group regarding the replacement of the Esso Southampton to London pipeline, part of which ran under the Meads. A further consultation had been announced and a plan showing the proposed preferred route J and its effect on Chertsey Meads was circulated. The plans showed that there was more damage to some of the most important area of the Meads than first envisaged which would undo 15 years of work to promote biodiversity. Officers had met with representatives from Esso who confirmed the work would involve a 30 metre wide strip across the Meads. It was proposed to hold another meeting on site to which Mr Phillips would also be invited to discuss mitigation and how the damage could be minimised. Because Chertsey Meads was only designated as a local nature reserve and there was a risk that Esso would decide it could be sacrificed to save Dumsey Meadow which did have SSSI status. Options had been discussed such as digging up the tracks to avoid damage to the Meads, although that would mean creating a temporary road which would cause further damage. It was anticipated that work would commence in 2020 and would last approximately 3 months. The Group was keen for Officers to negotiate compensation. Officers would be preparing another response on behalf of the Group which would be circulated in due course. [since the meeting the Group was informed that there would be a consultation drop in at Chertsey Hall on Thursday 4 October from 14:30 - 20:30]</p>	<p>Mr Dulley/ Mr Winfield/ Mr Phillips</p>
<p>11. <u>MOORINGS</u></p> <p>Mrs Drury had contacted the Environment Agency and reported they were keen to help the Council address the unauthorised moorings on The Thames at Chertsey. Officers were arranging to meet with the Environment Agency. At the time of the meeting it was thought there were approximately 4 boats moored where they should not be. Mr O'Gorman agreed to give Officers the details of one of the Licensing Officers at the Environment Agency</p>	<p>Mr O'Gorman</p>
<p>12. <u>EVENTS</u></p> <p><u>Chertsey Show</u></p> <p>The Group noted that despite the weather there was a good turnout for</p>	

the show and traders had a successful weekend. Mr Turner had inspected the site and thought the ground had recovered well.

Litter Pick

The annual litter pick would take place on Sunday 7 April 2019 at 10am, meeting in the first car park on the Meads. The Group agreed that the litter problem on the Meads did seem to be improving judging from the 2018 event.

Site Visit

The Group noted that the 2018 visit had been enjoyable and were encouraged by the abundant number of Pyramidal Orchids and Bellflowers particularly in area 2C. Although the focus had been on flora, Mr Evans had recorded 12 species of birds, including several Reed Buntings and many active Meadow Brown and Small Heath butterflies.

Tuesday 18 June 2019 was agreed for the annual site visit, meeting in the second car park at 7pm. The visit would assess the numbers of Downy-fruited Sedge, Greater Dodder and Common Adder's-tongue, the monitoring of which was part of the Work Programme. Mr Phillips would be asked to provide those attending with a plan and images of these plants for ease of identification.

Mr Phillips

13. Any Other Business

Mrs Teasdale had been asked by the Hamm Court Board to raise the subject of deer in the area. The Deer Initiative UK was mentioned. It was acknowledged that deer do tend to browse areas where there were ground nesting birds but the Group was against any form of culling and Mr Winfield advised that the Council would not support it either. Mr Winfield would ask Surrey Wildlife Trust for their advice.

Mr Winfield

The Group expressed its dissatisfaction with the County Council's decision to close Lyne Amenity Site on Thursdays and Fridays and the knock on effect of fly tipping. One recent incident on the Meads had, it was understood, now been removed.

It had been observed that trees had been planted along the edge of the Traylens site on their side of the Bourne. Whilst the trees were welcome it did conceal activity such as bonfires which caused problems for Chertsey Show for example.

Members welcomed the works on the Bourne which were now complete.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted that the next two meetings were scheduled to take place on Tuesday 26 February and Tuesday 3 September 2019 both at 7.30pm, to be held at the Civic Centre in Addlestone.

Action

Chairman

The meeting ended at 9pm