

Runnymede Borough CouncilCOMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE12 March 2020 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee Present: Councillors N King (Chairman), M Adams, T Burton, D Clarke, S Dennett, M Harnden, C Howorth, S Lewis and A Neathey.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor J Olorenshaw

557. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read out the Fire Precautions.

558. PRESENTATION – RUNNYMEDE FOODBANK

The Committee received a presentation by Helen Hallett from the Runnymede Foodbank.

The presentation covered how the foodbank operated in Runnymede, the number of clients and supporters and the reasons for referrals to the foodbanks which ranged from personal situations to economic and employment related circumstances. Councillors were impressed by the wide range of activities other than food distribution in which the Foodbank was involved. For example, providing the shower and laundry service, primarily for the homeless, in Chertsey, work with those just leaving prison, free courses to promote eating well for less and an extensive volunteer programme with local schools and colleges. In terms of challenges the foodbank required more warehouse space at ground level for ease of access and additional funding to build in more resilience to the staffing structure so as to maintain the much needed and appreciated service to the community.

Some Members commented on the economic circumstances which made the Foodbanks a vital lifeline to some of the most vulnerable members of society and asked if there was data available which might indicate a correlation between the two in terms of client need.

The Committee all wanted to thank those who ran and volunteered in the foodbanks and were keen to support the operation and made suggestions about what practical assistance could be given, which the Chairman undertook to follow up over the next few weeks in consultation with the Chief Executive, Commercial Services and other Members of the Committee and colleagues in the local Chambers of Commerce.

559. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

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

<b>Group</b>	<b>Remove From Membership</b>	<b>Appoint Instead</b>
Conservative	Councillor I Chaudhri Councillor S Walsh	Councillor S Lewis Councillor C Howorth

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

560. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 January 2020 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

561. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Olorenshaw.

562. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S Lewis declared a non-pecuniary interest (as declared as such) in the item concerning Simplemarsh Farm, as Secretary, founding member and coach at Lyne Football Club. He chose to take part in the discussion but did not vote.

563. CHERTSEY MUSEUM ACCREDITATION

The Committee's approval was sought of a range of policies and procedures necessary for the re-accreditation of Chertsey Museum to the Museum Accreditation Scheme, which was done every three years. Officers summarised a number of the 17 policies, including the Access Policy, Conservation and Collection Care Policy and Plan, Collections Development Policy and the Documentation and Forward Plans and it was explained how each contributed to the overall running of the Museum.

Accreditation, although not a legal requirement was vital for the Museum to maintain its collections, borrow from and lend to national museums and galleries and access vital funding to sponsor specialist exhibitions and acquire new pieces for the collections.

Officers provided the Committee with some of the forthcoming highlights in the Museum's calendar and confirmed that they were currently working on some further enhancements to their website, other on-line and app based features, resources permitting. The Committee would be provided with some data on the app usage.

The Committee noted that the Museum enjoyed a friendly relationship with Egham Museum and Royal Holloway University, with whom they worked on some joint projects that were mutually beneficial.

Staff at the Museum including in the Archive and Education sections were thanked for their knowledge and high standards of work, which was much appreciated.

**RESOLVED that**

**the following associated documents required to renew Chertsey Museum's accreditation, as attached at Appendices 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' and 'E' of the agenda, be approved:**

- **Access Policy**
- **Conservation and Collection Care Policy and Plan**
- **Collections Development Policy**
- **Documentation Plan**
- **Forward Plan**

564. SAFER RUNNYMEDE ANNUAL REPORT 2019

The Committee noted the annual report on the borough's well regarded Safer Runnymede service; incorporating Careline and other related calls, CCTV and work with partners in Surrey Police, other emergency services and Community Safety.

Officers outlined for the Committee the varied and often challenging work the staff did which attracted a valuable source of income for the Council as well as raising their profile in the wider community. An example of this was the expansion of the redeployable mobile CCTV being used to combat crime such as fly tipping and harm to wildlife.

Members commented on the demonstrable validity of the service with reference to the statistics provided in the report. For example over 3,500 arrests recorded where CCTV had provided evidence since the inception of Safer Runnymede in 1997. Unfortunately, the Council was unable to obtain follow up statistics as to how many successful convictions had been made as a result despite requesting this information.

The Committee was re-assured that technological developments were carefully considered and maintaining good governance through the Code of Practice and links with the CCTV Management Association was a priority for the service.

565. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – QUARTER 3, 2019/2020

The Committee reviewed the performance as reported by the Community Development Business Centre in Quarter 3 of 2019/2020.

In terms of narrative, Officers confirmed that events like Junior Citizen and the Surrey Youth Games had been well attended, and there was a forthcoming 'pupil parliament' planned for April on the theme of plastic\* to promote democracy and debate amongst young people and hosted at the Council in the Chamber. As reflected in the report elsewhere on the agenda, Chertsey Museum's attendance figures and participation in educational events were healthy.

Officers agreed to include quarterly targets where available and traffic light colour coding in future reports to mirror the table provided by Community Services.

[\*note that owing to the Covid 19 pandemic, planned events have since been cancelled or postponed]

566. COMMUNITY SERVICES KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – QUARTER 3, 2019/2020

The Committee reviewed the performance as reported by the Community Services Business Centre in Quarter 3 of 2019/2020.

Members were advised that Quarter 3 had been a very active quarter with much preparatory work being undertaken in the area of Community Transport especially and that a report would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee once some further discussions had taken place with partner organisations and neighbouring Councils.

The Committee appreciated the colour coding in the report which had been introduced to the performance table which captured quickly areas of growth against the annual and quarterly targets. Officers highlighted the uptake in the Homesafe Plus service, now being increasingly recognised for its value to the community by the Social Care Partnership, delivered with the support of Safer Runnymede.

Across the service there was positive progress, just a slight down turn in the community transport journeys which was expected as Quarter 3 covered the Christmas period. Officers assured the Committee that currently the Meals at Home service was coping with

the Covid 19 pandemic but that at some point it was likely to be necessary to ask colleagues in non-essential services to assist; this would be decided corporately. The supplier of the community meals was currently well stocked.

The Corporate Head of Community Services took the opportunity to thank his staff for all their efforts, which was echoed by the Committee.

#### 567. COMMUNITY HALLS UPDATE

The Committee noted the initial assessment of the Halls pilot, introduced following a review of the Council's two public halls in Egham Hythe and Chertsey. Members recalled that as a result of the review, a new bookings system and pricing structure had been introduced, including a new package to attract business users and the requirement to pay a deposit for bookings two months in advance. The latter had caused some cash flow difficulties for some of the smaller organisations, but it was reported that these issues had been resolved.

Members were informed that so far the pilot was going well with an increase in income of approximately £37,000 which exceeded the target set in 2019 of £25,000. The estimated budget for 2019/2020 was £151,000 and £164,000 in 2020/2021.

Over the next 12 months Officers reported that they would be working with the Communications Team to market the halls through social media and build up a series of case studies and endorsements to better promote halls. At the same time the Projects and Procurement team was assisting with the exercise to find a new concessionary contractor to supply and run the bars for events.

The Committee agreed that the community halls were a valuable asset but there was some discussion about whether they should be run in-house or by local community groups, with some examples given including Thorpe Village Hall which the Council had leased some years ago. Officers confirmed that the community run halls did still present costs to the Council in subsidised rent and building maintenance outlay for example and there were other benefits of having staff on site to assist hirers, and undertake tasks to keep the buildings clean and tidy and well organised.

On the whole Members considered that the Council's prices were reasonable and provided a good standard of service to the Community but that the issue could be looked at as part of the forthcoming full review of halls which would be submitted to the Committee at a later date.

Officers were requested to provide the Committee with a breakdown of costs of both the Council's halls.

#### 568. UK RESETTLEMENT SCHEME

The Committee's approval was sought to continue supporting the Council's participation in the Government's UK Resettlement Scheme for refugees; introduced in 2015 to help resettle families from Syria, affected by the war in their country. At the time Runnymede Council resolved to take in 10 families over a 5 year period, until March 2020, when the position would be reviewed. Members noted that the scheme was fully funded by the Government and would continue to be in 2020/2021 with the aim of resettling 5,000 refugees across the country.

To date, Officers confirmed that four families had been assisted with housing and given support through a co-ordinator to find English language courses and help the families register their children with schools.

It was reported that the Chief Executive was supportive of the Council's involvement and re-affirmation was therefore sought together with an indication of how many families Runnymede could accommodate, which was reliant on suitable housing being available.

Officers suggested that the Council could take two families (up to 10 individuals) in 2020/2021 adding that support was also given by the Muslim Society from Englefield Green and Royal Holloway University.

The Committee debated the issue of how many families could be accommodated in Council housing, some Members thought that priority should be given to existing people on the Housing waiting list whilst others thought the situation in Syria was such that the Council should be aiming to take more than two families, noting the original agreement had been to take 10 families and we had taken 4 so far.

After some discussion it was agreed that the Council should take up to 6 families, if suitable Council housing could be matched with their needs.

**RESOLVED that –**

**the UK Resettlement scheme continues to be supported with a pledge to take up to 6 families in 2020/2021, if suitable properties are available.**

569. CABRERA TRUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – MINUTES 9 JANUARY 2020

The Minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 9 January 2020, as attached at Appendix 'A', were received and noted.

570. SIMPLEMARSH FARM

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 paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

The Committee's approval was sought to investigate the option of using a parcel of open space at Simplemarsh Farm by a local sports club. It had already been established that using the land as an extension to Addlestone cemetery or as grazing land was not viable.

One sports club had expressed interest in using the land but Officers considered that anything above use of the land for grass pitches would not be suitable given its location and proximity to the M25. It would also be necessary for further investigations to be carried out before proceeding to the next stage of advertising the land through the agreed procurement process and ascertaining if other clubs wished to express an interest.

The land in question was in the green belt and near to a new residential development consisting of 12 houses, garages and a direct access onto the main road. If the proposals moved forward consultation with the residents would be required and a number of environmental and habitat surveys. Drainage would be needed which Officers confirmed would fall on any successful lessee to fund. This might also apply to the various surveys needed as described in the report.

The land was also affected by a section 106 agreement and the Committee took into consideration all the legal and planning implications as set out in the agenda report before coming to their decision to allow for further investigation to take place on its future use.

**RESOLVED that –**

**Officers investigate the option of leasing the land at Simplemarsh Farm to a local sports club for use as grass pitches only.**

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 9.36pm)

Runnymede Borough CouncilCABRERA TRUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE9 January 2020 at 2.30pm

Members of the

Committee present: Councillors P Sohi (Chairman) and C Howorth, Mr C Hunt (Honorary Secretary)

The following attended in an advisory capacity;

Mr P French, Corporate Head of Financial Services on behalf of Mr P McKenzie, Mr P Winfield, Head of Greenspace, Honorary Wardens: Mrs Lane and Mr Midwinter.

**ACTION**1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 July 2019 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor J Hulley, Mr P McKenzie (Honorary Treasurer), Mr T Ashby and Mr A Saunders

3. VOLUNTEERS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A FRIENDS GROUP

The Committee was advised that since the AGM in July 2019 there had been three further volunteer work parties, totalling 48 volunteer hours, where invasive species – Himalayan Balsam and Skunk Cabbage were tackled. In September, the Trust organised a bat walk at the Riverside Walk for volunteers as a small thank you for their efforts and support in the first year. The walk was led by the Surrey Bat Group and was well attended. The lead volunteers had recently arranged a bird walk on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020.

At the AGM in July 2019 it was agreed that the possibility of setting up a Friends group should be explored. An initial meeting was held in November, where the benefits and limitations of such a group was discussed and Officers explained the processes involved. An initial public meeting to inform residents of the proposal and an opportunity to become involved would be held on the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> April at the Virginia Water, Community Centre. Leaflets would be distributed to inform residents of the meeting. Additionally, it was suggested an item in the Connection magazine could also be beneficial. Officers would start the meeting by explaining the history of the Trust land and how it differed from other open spaces regarding management of the site.

The meeting would be followed by the legal process of setting up a constitution for the group. Once agreed practical issues, such as opening a bank account, securing public liability insurance and producing health and safety documentation would follow.

Peter  
Winfield/  
Carol  
Holehouse

**ACTION**4. **BYELAWS**

Following discussion at the AGM regarding the byelaws that applied to the Trust's land and which activities were prohibited, the Committee received a copy of the relevant byelaws for information.

Officers would ensure a copy of the byelaws were publicised on the information boards on the Trust land. Once the Friends group was set up it was hoped they would have their own webpage and the byelaws could be included.

Peter Winfield

5. **HONORARY WARDEN**

The Committee was advised that an expression of interest had been received from Mr Beesley for the role of Honorary Warden.

As agreed at the AGM, all the Trust's volunteers were invited to submit an expression of interest in the role by 8 November 2019. One such expression was received by the closing date, from Mr Phillip Beesley who had indicated his willingness to take on the role at the AGM in July. Officers considered that Mr Beesley would make an excellent Honorary Warden and the Committee was asked to approve his appointment to the role.

The Committee was fully supportive of the appointment of Mr Beesley as Honorary Warden. Officers would write to Mr Beesley to confirm his appointment.

Peter  
Winfield/Carol  
Holehouse**RESOLVED that –**

**Mr Phillip Beesley be appointed onto the Cabrera Trust Management Committee as Honorary Warden.**

6. **FOREST SCHOOL**

Members of the Committee were asked to review the current arrangements with the Forest School.

The use of Riverside Walk for Forest School activities was first discussed in January 2015. The Committee supported use of the site and agreed that no charge would be made initially but reserved the right to charge in the future. Mighty Adventurers Forest School have held an agreement for the use of the Riverside Walk since April 2015 and it was now an appropriate time for the Committee to review that agreement and consider whether a charge should now be introduced.

The Committee considered that the Forest School activities benefitted many young people and gave them valuable interest in nature and the Riverside Walk. There were no additional costs to the Council for the Forest School to use the site and Members felt it was a good use of the Trust land. It was noted that the Forest School always left the site in very good order and often undertook litter picking in other areas of the site. Members of the Committee agreed that no charge should be made at this time, but the agreement would be reviewed again in five years.

The Committee reviewed the agreement with regards to permitted and restricted activities for the Forest School. It was noted that permission



had been given to the Forest School to light fires using a firepit, but the agreement currently detailed this as a restricted activity. Officers would update the agreement accordingly.

**ACTION**

Peter Winfield

Officers were asked to ascertain from Vicki Balaam, if the Forest School was promoted to all local Schools in the Virginia Water area.

Peter Winfield

**RESOLVED that –**

**The Forest School continue to be permitted to use the Trust land for no charge.**

7. DRAFT ANNUAL ESTIMATES FOR 2020/21

The Committee was asked to approve the probable budget for 2019/20 and the draft estimates for 2020/21.

Mr P French on behalf of the Honorary Treasurer reported that the day to day running costs of the site remained relatively static year on year with the biggest cost relating to supervision of the site by Council staff which had reduced for the second year running.

The Trust's main income source was from investments held with the Charities Official Investment Fund (COIF) and the M&G Charifund. Due to the need to withdraw money from these funds each year to cover the running costs of the Trust, there would be a time when this income source would be completely diminished. At the Trust's AGM in July 2019 the Honorary Treasurer had advised that it would therefore be necessary for grant funding to be applied for to cover both the revenue and capital costs over the coming years. Additionally, options for income generation should be explored. It was estimated that an additional £10,000 would be required to be drawn down from the Trust's investment holdings in 2020/21 to offset the net cost of running and managing the site.

It was noted that when the Friends group had been set up, they would explore fundraising opportunities including; sponsorship, possible stall at Carnival Capers, along with other fundraising initiatives.

**RESOLVED that –**

**The probable budget for 2019/20 and draft estimates for 2020/21 be approved.**

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was suggested that leaflets for the 3<sup>rd</sup> April meeting could be sent to Vicki Balaam for distribution to the parents of children who attended the Forest School.

Peter Winfield

9. DATES FOR MEETINGS IN 2020/2021

The AGM and the July meeting of the Cabrera Trust Management Committee was scheduled to be held in the Committee Room at the Civic Centre on **Thursday 16 July 2020 at 2.30pm.**

The January 2021 meeting was scheduled to be held on **Thursday 7 January 2021 at 2.30pm**

(The meeting ended at 3.01 pm)

Chairman |