

Runnymede Borough CouncilCOMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE17 June 2021 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee Present: Councillors C Howorth (Chairman), M Adams (Vice-Chairman), R Bromley, T Burton, D Clarke, D Coen, M Harnden, S Lewis, C Mann and S Walsh

Members of the Committee absent: None

Councillors R King and S Whyte also attended the meeting.

69 **Fire Precautions**

The Chairman read out the Fire Precautions.

70 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 March 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to a minor amendment on the School Transport item clarifying that the decision to approve the scheme was made at full Council in September 2020.

71 **Spratts Lane, Ottershaw**

The Committee's approval was sought for a resolution to an issue arising from water damage to Spratt's Lane in Ottershaw following a burst water main, and an offer by Affinity Water, who had accepted liability, to make repairs above and beyond what they were legally obliged to do, by replacing the current surface with bound tarmac.

Officers reported that Spratts Lane was an unregistered, unbound track with a number of residential properties in a side road called 'The Potteries'. Hare Hill Open Space could be accessed from Spratts Lane and adjoining Council owned land meant that the Council had Riparian responsibilities, particularly for the Northern section, where most of the damage had occurred.

Officers confirmed that Affinity Water only had to 'make good' the damage but had offered to tarmac Spratts Lane which would improve accessibility, as attested to by Members that had visited or were familiar with the area.

Officers had consulted residents but a consensus had not been reached. Some residents were concerned that the rural nature of the lane would be lost, and that if the northern end was tarmacked it would cause drainage problems for the southern section. To address this, Affinity Water had plans to introduce angled speed bumps to direct surface water to an existing drainage ditch. Officers considered it was appropriate to seek the Committee's views on the subject and determine whether to accept Affinity Water's offer, which was viewed as generous and a positive improvement for the area.

The Committee agreed that the most sensible option was to accept Affinity Water's proposal to tarmac the northern section to just beyond The Potteries, where the bollard formed a divide, beyond which the Southern end would be restored to its previous condition. This would result in a more sustainable surface to the north, improving access for bicycles and emergency vehicles, and reduced ongoing maintenance costs.

RESOLVED that –

- i) **the proposal by Affinity Water to tarmack the northern end of Spratts Lane be accepted; and**
- ii) **the necessary delegated authority be provided to the Corporate Head of Community Services and Corporate Head of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary agreement with Affinity Water to record the agreed tarmacking of the northern end of Spratts Lane.**

72 **Standing Order 27.5 – Public Space Protection Order – Egham Hythe**

The Committee's approval was sought for the next steps to address concerns raised by a former Councillor regarding anti-social behaviour in parts of Egham Hythe as set out in the report and as described at the meeting by Ward and other Councillors. In addition, approval was sought to address the borough-wide problem of Nitrous Oxide use (silver canisters).

The item had been requested under Standing Order 27.5 but the issue was under discussion with Members for some time which meant it was submitted to this meeting and not the one in March 2021.

Members noted that the areas identified to be experiencing various forms of anti-social and criminal activities were Hythe Park, Pooley Green park and car park, Pooley Green parade and Wards Place, where there had been increasingly serious incidents of vandalism at Egham Town Football Club and in the surrounding roads.

Although the Committee appreciated the information provided on Police reports, Officers agreed to provide Members with the numbers correlating to the % in the tables at 2.6 and 2.7 of the report to better understand the actual reports of anti-social behaviour recorded by the Police. Officers did not think it was possible for the Police to review their grouping of Thorpe with Egham Hythe but agreed to re-check and ask whether it was possible to have a further breakdown of figures because some Members felt that the current grouping might not reflect the true picture of events by diluting the evidence for Egham Hythe.

The role of the Joint Action Group (JAG) was noted, as was the due process for making a PSPO. Their recommendation and endorsement was based on collated evidence and the professional opinions of its members, including the local Inspector, who had intimated that even if a PSPO was put in place for the areas described, there might not be sufficient resources to enforce it, the Police being the primary enforcers in the absence of resources within the Council to enforce, perhaps through a Joint Enforcement Team (JET). Some Members suggested that savings from the forthcoming Voluntary redundancy trawl could be reinvested to support the creation of a JET.

It was reported that on the occasions that the JAG had considered whether Egham Hythe should be adopted by the JAG, the evidence suggested it should not, and although there might be under reporting, it was felt that the public's perception of incidents did not match the number of incidents. However, since the vandalism at the football club it was anticipated that the JAG would support the adoption of this area of Egham Hythe onto the agenda with an option of extending to those areas locally advocated for if there was evidence to support it. Members reported that communications between the club and the local community could be improved, and enquired whether the JAG could facilitate this.

The Vice-Chairman confirmed that Anti-Social Behaviour reporting would be discussed further at the Health and Wellbeing Member Working Party. In addition, Members requested that the Community Safety Co-ordinator work with Customer Services to identify whether the Council's existing reporting structure for Anti-Social Behaviour was adequate. Members were asked to note

that if using the on-line anti-social behaviour report form this routed direct to the Council's Community Safety Co-ordinator.

The issue of proportionality was discussed at some length. The views of those Ward Councillors present at the meeting was sought and the need to have regard to the evidence as documented and relevant Home Office guidance regarding impact and dispersal was noted. Some Members reported that residents were not reporting as much as they could due to a lack of feedback from the Police on previous occasions. It was suggested that this had led to apathy and a lack of confidence in any action being taken to address the perceived growing number of problems, which although frequently referred to on social media, was not being reported through the various official channels. It was also reported that a level of fear existed in the community, including concerns about reprisals and intimidation by the often known perpetrators of anti-social and sometimes criminal behaviour. The need for residents to feel they were being listened to was noted as well as focussing on positive activities which would distract those from engaging in anti-social behaviour.

Some Members considered that the public should be consulted prior to consideration by the JAG as an example of the evidence required by them to support a PSPO. However, Officers re-affirmed that the legal requirement to consult prior to making a PSPO had to be done after a referral to the JAG and any subsequent decision to support a PSPO.

Officers would feedback concerns with regard to Egham Hythe to the next meeting of the JAG and the views of some Members that a PSPO for Egham Hythe would be appropriate now, rather than just keeping the situation under review. It was confirmed that within limited resources some formal and informal action was taken and that Safer Runnymede were also involved. This could include, if feasible, and affordable, the use of redeployable CCTV, which it was understood had been discussed in relation to the football club.

The Community Safety Co-ordinator was thanked for her report and the Green Space team were commended, in particular Chris Dulley, for their assistance with the situation at Gogmore Farm as described in detail at the meeting.

The legal, financial and equalities implications were noted and in this regard, Officers were asked to consider the lease with Egham Town Football Club in the context of site security measures. It was confirmed that this was in hand with colleagues in Commercial Services.

Despite the revised recommendation for i) below to reflect that areas of Egham Hythe might warrant consideration of a PSPO sooner rather than later; some Members expressed their intention to raise the matter with the Chairman of the Crime and Disorder Committee and explore the appropriate mechanism for its further consideration.

An alternative recommendation calling for consultation to be instigated and affirming that a PSPO for Egham Hythe was proportionate now was lost (For 3: Against: 5 Abstentions 2)

A named (Recorded) vote was requested by Cllr Burton in accordance with Standing Order 39.2 in respect of recommendation i)

RESOLVED that –

- i) a PSPO for the whole of Egham Hythe area is not proportionate at this stage, but it will be kept under review;**

Voting for 6: Councillors M Adams, R Bromley, D Coen, C Howorth, S Lewis and S Walsh

Voting Against 3: Councillors T Burton, D Clarke and M Harnden

Abstentions 1: Councillor C Mann

- ii) **the Community Safety Coordinator to progress a PSPO for the Egham Hythe area should the JAG determine, in future, that it is proportionate and necessary; and**
- iii) **subject to the outcome of the Spelthorne exercise, further consideration of the proportionality of a Borough wide PSPO in relation to Nitrous Oxide be given and the Community Safety Coordinator to take forward through the Joint Action Group, if appropriate**

73 **Anti-Social Behaviour Pledge**

The Committee's approval was sought for the Council to sign up to an 'anti-social behaviour Pledge' created by a Charity called 'ASB Help' which had been set up to assist victims of anti-social behaviour, promote their rights and raise awareness. To do this delegated authority would need to be given to the Council's Community Safety Co-ordinator to sign the Pledge.

Members noted that the Pledge was an acrostic setting out ASB Help's message of **P**romote awareness, **L**egality, **E**nsure accessibility, **D**evelop your process, **G**enerate inclusivity, **E**stablish a precedent. Officers explained that 'Generate inclusivity' went on to encourage use of the 'Community Trigger', a legal tool available under the Crime and Policing Act 2014 for people experiencing persistent anti-social behaviour to request via the Council, a formal case review where a locally defined threshold had been reached, in order to determine whether there was further action that could be taken. A multi-agency approach would be taken and encouraged. Officers advised that in respect of dealing with anti-social behaviour, it might be useful for residents experiencing anti-social behaviour in the borough.

Officers reported that the Pledge had been piloted, Surrey being the first county to sign up to it through Surrey Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner's commitment thereto but further roll out had been hampered by Covid. It was hoped momentum would increase in the coming months.

The Committee was content for the Pledge to be signed on behalf of the Council.

RESOLVED that –

- i) **Runnymede Borough Council sign up to the ASB Help Pledge; and**
- ii) **delegated authority be given to the Council's Community Safety Coordinator for the purpose of signing the ASB pledge.**

74 **Safeguarding Update**

The Committee received for information, an update on Safeguarding. This would be an annual report as recommended by the Council's internal auditors, TIAA, who had also made four other recommendations as a result of a recent audit.

Members were informed that the first recommendation was that all staff should complete the e-learning safeguarding training module. In January 2021, 83% of staff had done so, and reminders had been sent.

The second recommendation was that safeguarding policies and procedures should be reviewed. In October 2020, Councils in Surrey had completed a section 11 audit under the Children Act 2004, as required every two years. This had revealed many areas of good practice in Runnymede, including the use of focus groups with children and young people and securing funding from Foxhills Club to run some holiday activities. This was an example of successful,

multi-agency working. Once a review of all policies and procedures had taken place, any revised policy would be submitted to Corporate Management Committee for approval.

As recommended, Officers would set up a new system for monitoring safeguarding referrals across the borough to provide better data on the numbers being submitted. Existing analysis showed that in 2020/2021 there had been 65 requests for information through a referral process. There were also 21 requests for information on individuals as part of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference which focussed mainly on domestic abuse. The Family Support Programme also had an important role in Safeguarding and was piloting a new Early Help Model.

The last recommendation was that roles and responsibilities of the Council's Safeguarding leads in the Council's services such as Housing, Environmental Health and Community Development and Community Services would be clarified. The Committee was advised that in Surrey there was a Safeguarding Lead Officers Group, on which the Council was represented along with other bodies such as the Surrey Safeguarding Children's Partnership and the Adult Safeguarding Board.

The Committee welcomed this first Annual Report on safeguarding and took the opportunity to thank Chantal Noble, in Community Development for her work in this area.

75 **Community Safety and Safer Runnymede Annual Reports 2020/2021**

The Committee received for information, the Community Safety Annual Report and the Safer Runnymede Annual Report appended thereto.

Members noted the legal and statutory framework under which Community Safety was organised in the borough and its role with partner organisations in the Community Safety Partnership whose priorities were Domestic Abuse, Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Prevent, Serious Youth Violence, Anti-Social Behaviour and Tackling High Harm Crime. The objectives of Community Safety were, amongst other things, to protect and empower communities to reduce crime and maintain public confidence by making residents feel safe and secure.

The Committee was given an overview of multi-agency work during the last year on Prevent, Domestic Abuse, Child Exploitation, Serious Organised Crime, Substance Abuse, Domestic Burglary and Anti-Social Behaviour. It was acknowledged that Covid had an effect on all these areas. For example, a number of training events and campaigns had either been cancelled or postponed to when Government Guidelines would allow for them to take place.

Officers also reported on the work of the Community Harm and Risk Management Meeting, another multi-agency body which in 2020/2021 dealt with 34 referrals of individuals who were experiencing or causing harm; the aim being to assist and reduce the negative impact of anti-social behaviour. In a similar way the Joint Action Group dealt with referrals of geographical areas experiencing negative behaviours. Another issue was fly-tipping, a form of environmental anti-social behaviour tackled mainly by Environmental Health, but working closely with other enforcement bodies including Surrey Police and the Environment Agency.

The Committee noted the summary of PSPOs in the borough, in areas of Addlestone and Englefield Green and the restrictions in place to protect the community, the use of Community Triggers and activities for young people like Junior Citizen and Respect the Water, both of which could not take place in 2020 owing to Covid.

The detailed annual report on Safer Runnymede was also noted. This covered the legislative framework of the service, an overview of the important role played by Safer Runnymede to reduce both the real and perceived level of crime. The Committee considered the detailed sections on objectives, operations and development opportunities, as well as the use of Deployable CCTV and Directed Surveillance. Members noted there had been no complaints about Safer Runnymede during 2020/2021, and were recognised as demonstrating many areas of best practice and a very high standard of work. Members endorsed the value of this service and the benefits it provided to

the community, Surrey Police and other partners. The CCTV operations were highlighted, including the number of arrests recorded where CCTV had provided vital evidence since the centre opened in 1997, now standing in excess of 3,500 and the large number of evidential material produced which significantly assisted Surrey Police.

The Committee was extremely impressed by Safer Runnymede, described as 'the jewel in our crown', and on the basis of previous visits to the centre, asked Officers to arrange a visit for Members of the Committee immediately prior to the next meeting of the Committee on 16 September and for a notification to be included when the next agenda was despatched to Members.

76 **Community Development Key Performance Indicators Quarter 4 2020/2021**

The Committee noted the Quarter 4 and year end results of the performance indicators for Community Development.

The Committee was pleased to note that despite services across the Business Centre being impacted by Covid, Safer Runnymede had continued to operate throughout the pandemic, taking a total of 35,895 careline calls over the 12 month period. The Community Halls had, and were continuing to be used as vaccination centres and Chertsey Museum, although closed for much of the time, had continued to deliver the schools educational sessions.

77 **Community Services Key Performance Indicators – Quarter 4 2020/2021**

The Committee noted the Quarter 4 and year end results of the performance indicators for Community Services.

Members noted that although some targets had not been met, owing to Covid, such as Community Transport, others had grown against the Quarter 3 actuals and exceeded their individual targets for the year. For example, the number of Meals at Home served and the number of Homesafe Plus and Handyman referrals. It was noted that the number of referrals to Social Prescribing was starting to recover.

78 **Community Services Committee Appointments 2021/2022**

The Committee considered the following appointments for 2021/2022. In doing so, the contribution made by the appointees to the Runnymede Health and Wellbeing Task Group was noted and that their terms of office did not expire until 2023 so there was no need to consider these appointments.

RESOLVED that –

- i) The Assistant Chief Executive and the Corporate Head of Community Development be re-appointed to Cabrera Trust Management Committee for 2021/2022**
- ii) Councillors Cotty and Nuti be re-appointed to Chertsey Meads Management Liaison Group for 2021/2022**
- iii) Councillor Harnden be re-appointed as the Older Persons Champion for 2021/2022**
- iv) Recommendation withdrawn as both appointees continue until 2023; and**
- v) Councillors Prescott, T Gracey and Howorth be appointed to the Community Services Partnership Board with Surrey Heath for 2021/2022**

79 **Chertsey Meads Management Liaison Group – Minutes 2 March 2021**

The Minutes of the Chertsey Meads Management Liaison Group meeting held on 2 March 2021, and attached at Appendix 'A' were received and noted.

80 **Lease Renewal at The Orchard**

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 for a lease renewal at The Orchard in Chertsey, held on charitable trust by the Council for the charity 'The Orchard', to the Council's current contractors for Grounds Maintenance of the Council's open spaces, who occupied premises to support the contract which had been extended until 31 March 2022.

Officers reported that the contractors worked closely with the Council's Green Space team, who also occupied part of The Orchard centre and the current arrangements were mutually beneficial.

Members noted that a qualified surveyor (as was required) had agreed terms with the contractor, as set out in the report, with the lease expiring at the same time as the Grounds Maintenance contract on 31 March 2022. The full terms of the occupational lease were listed in the report and Members were content that these were on the same terms as the current lease, following an analysis of the market for small storage units in Chertsey and the surrounds which justified the proposed rental as detailed in the report.

The particular legal implications were noted, the role of the Charity Commission, the purposes of the Trust and the requirement for the Committee as trustees to ensure the best terms were obtained for the Charity, which they were assured of by the qualified surveyor who had prepared the report.

The Committee was pleased to approve renewal of the lease on the agreed terms.

RESOLVED that –

the lease renewal to G Burley and Sons be approved

81 **Befriending Service**

Item withdrawn, to be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee. It was noted that options to include the providers named at the meeting would be included in the forthcoming report.

82 **Procurement of School Transport Service - Update**

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 recalled that in September 2020, full Council had approved a scheme to deliver a new school transport service to residents in Runnymede. Unfortunately, the planned and revised commencement date of September 2021, which had been agreed by the Committee in January 2021, was no longer achievable for a full service, owing to a delay in the delivery of vehicles to run the service. This was beyond the Council's control. However, Officers had made progress in liaison with colleagues, and it was considered that a reduced service, starting with the school named in the report could be feasible, expending to other schools as and when vehicles became

available. An option described in the report to hire vehicles to deliver a full service was not advisable owing to cost. Therefore, Officers considered it better to stagger the commencement and engage with the schools at an early stage to avoid any negative outcomes. Ward Councillors offered their assistance with communicating the message to schools and residents, noting limited resources within the Council. The advantages of a staggered approach in terms of staffing and other operational matters were noted. The significant cost of delivering the school transport service was noted as were other risks as detailed, including the model itself which was still to be tested and the details of the lease arrangements finalised.

Officers were currently preparing an Equality Impact Screening Assessment which, if deemed necessary, would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Committee discussed the viability of the scheme in the context of the Council's financial position and the proposed options. During the course of the debate, Officers were requested to circulate the advice given to a Member of the Committee regarding the process for reviewing decisions and the fact that an alternative recommendation could not negate the original decision of full Council, and a full Council decision was not subject to the 'call in' provisions in the Council's Constitution. Some Members considered that the provision of a School Transport Scheme should be reviewed, because they felt the demand for such a service was no longer needed given residents had, during Covid, found alternative means of transport for their children, and the Council could not afford to subsidise the service.

Officers clarified that if the demand was not high enough, the vehicles could in theory be utilised for other duties. However, Covid had negatively impacted the current Community Transport service, which might necessitate some remodelling for the future to deliver existing and potential contracts.

RESOLVED that –

Members approve a staggered commencement of the School Transport Service, starting with the school mentioned in the report in September 2021 and extending to other schools as new fleet vehicles arrive

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 10.04 pm)

Runnymede Borough CouncilCHERTSEY MEADS MANAGEMENT LIAISON GROUP2 March 2021 at 6pm on MS TeamsMembers of the
Group present:

Councillor D A Cotty	Runnymede Borough Council
Councillor M G Nuti	Runnymede Borough Council
Mr G Drake	Chertsey Society
Mrs K Drury	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Ms I Girvan	Surrey Wildlife Trust
Mrs F Harmer	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mrs J Hearne	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 C J Norman	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mr J O'Gorman	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mr D Turner	Chertsey Agricultural Association

Members of the
Group absent:

Mr R Deacock	St George's College
Dr J Denton	Invertebrates Expert
Mr H W Evans	Surrey Bird Club
Mr G James	Sustrans
Mr N Johnson	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative
Mrs C Noakes	Hamm Court Residents' Representative
Mr B Phillips	Surrey Botanical Society
Mr M Ray	Hamm Court Residents' Representative
Mrs S Ritchie	Dog Walkers Representative
Mrs T A Stevens	Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative

Advisory members of
the Group present:

Mr P Winfield	Head of Green Space, Runnymede Borough Council
Mr C Dulley	Assistant Head of Green Space, Runnymede Borough Council

Advisory members of
the Group absent:

Mrs J Harper	Projects Manager, Green Space, Runnymede Borough Council
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Action

1. The Chairman welcomed those present and advised members of the etiquette guide for the MS Teams meeting.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the group, held on 3 March 2020, were confirmed as a correct record, to be signed when the Chairman was physically present. It was noted that the meeting scheduled for September 2020 had been cancelled and replaced by an emailed update.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr R Deacock, Mr H Evans, Ms J Harper, Mr N Johnson, Mr B Phillips, Mr M Ray and Mrs T Stevens. Mrs F Harmer joined the meeting but lost connection part way through and subsequently emailed her apologies for absence.

4. Membership of the Chertsey Meads Management Liaison Group

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

[After the meeting Mr C J Norman announced his retirement from the Group owing to ill health which created a vacancy for another Chertsey Meads Residents' Representative, Mr Norman is thanked for his many years loyal service on the Group both as a Councillor and resident when he retired from the Council].

5. Actions from the last meeting

UK Power Networks (UKPN) proposal

Officers updated members on the UKPN proposal to upgrade the electricity supply to Dumpsey Stump. This would involve running an underground cable, in a narrow trench across the Meads, from a point close to Chertsey Meads Marine to Dumpsey Stump via the second car park. This would allow the Council to access the power supply for lighting, CCTV, or other electrical devices in that location in the future if needed.

Officers reported limited progress owing to Covid, but the legal representatives of the respective parties had recently been working on a Wayleave, the legal agreement required for the installation of the cable, and on seeking the consent of Fields in Trust, which was required prior to the works commencing.

Replacement Deer Sign

Members noted the deer sign reported last year had been replaced

Moorings

Officers confirmed that although many of the people mooring on The Thames at Chertsey Meads had heeded the notices and moved along,

Chris Dulley

two persisted. Officers were still pursuing various legal options and seeking a long term solution to the issue of boats that overstay on the Meads or elsewhere in the borough.

Potholes

The potholes close to Docket Moorings reported at the last meeting were repaired. However, Members had identified others that needed attention, including in the second car park. Officers would undertake an inspection.

6. Management and Maintenance of The Meads

Officers reported that after a protracted procurement process the Council had appointed a Contractor and exchanged contracts. Frontier Pitts Ltd would provide a full project management service to dismantle the old barrier and intercom system, and design, manufacture, install, and provide civil and electrical services for a new swing opening barrier and intercom. Members were pleased to learn that the new barrier would include enhanced security and safety features, including LED lighting on the boom, a stainless steel locking bolt and an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) should the barrier need to be opened urgently during a power cut. Frontier Pitts would also provide servicing and any repairs of the system for a period of five years. The aim was to install the new barrier in the Spring.

Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) Status

Members recalled that Chertsey Meads had now been formally designated as a SANG. As well as an additional level of protection for the site, access to funding was possible to enhance the visitor experience. This would include improvements on site and undertaking some of the projects in the Annual Work Programme such as works to re-instate a pond just north of the road or updating the interpretation boards and other signage. The SANG Management Plan also contained plans to replace or restore picnic benches, improving sections of some paths or planting the tree screen, previously discussed by the group. How to alleviate drainage issues at the 2nd car park was also being investigated which the Group agreed was a priority. The Group agreed that any significant changes being proposed would be brought to them for consideration, but some minor works such as new directional signage to the Meads from the top of Mead Lane, new wooden fingerposts to the car parks or replacement furniture could be progressed and reported to a subsequent meeting.

Officers shared with the Group a draft new Chertsey Meads SANG leaflet which would be made available from dispensers on site and on-line. The leaflet would be circulated to the Group for any further comments.

Esso Pipeline Proposal

Members were advised that following an extensive period of consultation the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy had granted development consent for Esso to construct a 97km cross-country fuel pipeline. The pipeline would run from Boorley Green in Hampshire to Esso's West London terminal in Hounslow, including a section that runs across Chertsey Meads. Esso were currently planning the details of the pipeline installation and anticipated

Action

Chris Dulley

Jo Harper

Jo Harper

Action

early works to commence in late 2021 and main pipeline installation to start from 2022. A location-specific timeline for construction was expected this Spring. Members noted that there had already been some activity on Chertsey Meads with geophysical and other preparatory surveys being carried out.

Timing of Hay Cut

The Group was asked for their views on when the hay cut should take place owing to its quality if taken by David Sheldrake mid-summer when the Rough Hawksbeard had become woody rendering the cut unsaleable. An early cut had taken place in 2020 on a trial basis which had attracted strong criticism from visitors concerned about Skylarks.

The Group agreed that a balance was needed between meeting Mr Sheldrake's request and protecting the Meads, specifically, the ground nesting birds which could be affected if the cut took place during one of their breeding seasons.

The group discussed a number of options including cutting just the northern side of the site early, installing signage informing visitors about the cut and inspecting the proposed cutting site for nests, and not cutting if there were any discovered that would be disturbed. It was important to know how early the cut would take place, which Officers agreed to check and also to check when was best to inspect for nests. It was confirmed that some orchids might also be lost but not in the area where historically most had been found. The group was advised that the early cut had been discussed with Mr Philips and Mr Evans and that whether the cut was needed every year would be reviewed.

Resolved that –

Mr Sheldrake to be consulted about an earlier cut once it had been established that no ground nesting birds would be disturbed by the timing of the cut; provisionally June, with the timing of the inspection for nests to be agreed with Mr Evans and Surrey Wildlife Trust and reviewed by the Group at its next meeting or by email.

Peter Winfield

Mr O'Gorman was thanked for his kind donation of a bench in memory of his late partner Norma, who loved the Meads. This would be installed as soon as practically possible. Officers advised that a second similar application to donate a bench had been received in memory of Sybil Weaver, who was resident of Mead Lane for over 40 years and had some involvement with the Chertsey Meads Association. Officers were considering where would be most appropriate to install the bench in consultation with nearby residents to the picnic area.

Chris Dulley

Catering concession

The Group was asked for its views on the possibility of some form of catering concession operating from the Meads. Although some members generally did not oppose a small scale operation (others did not want to approve any such concession at all) concerns were expressed primarily about litter and the lack of toilet facilities on site. It was agreed that any concession would need to be carefully drawn up with clear responsibility for disposal of any receptacles and not to allow plastic but also taking safety concerns about where the concession might be located bearing in mind other users of the Meads. Set timings

Peter Winfield/
Isabel Girvan

Action

would also be necessary and included in any contract should an operator make a serious approach to the Council, maybe with a view to having a trial between May and September. Ms Girvan agreed to feedback to Mr Winfield views of Surrey Wildlife Trust and options for recyclables, but it was agreed further work was needed before giving consent and taking each application on a case by case basis and considering the unique character of the Meads.

Resolved that –

a small scale catering concession be further investigated, subject to specific details being satisfied and approved by the Group via email prior to any application being approved on a trial basis

Peter Winfield

7. Annual Work Programme

The Annual Work Programme would be reviewed during 2021/2022 and progress with the current programme was noted.

8. Events

Chertsey Show

The Chertsey Show was planned for 7-8 August 2021. Mr Turner confirmed that their Covid plan was currently being updated to ensure as safe a show as possible if it could go ahead.

Annual Site Visit

Resolved that – a date in late September 2021 be approved in principle, subject to a review of the position in late June and consultation with the Group via email.

Peter Winfield

Litter Pick

Resolved that – a date after the bank holiday in August be approved in principle, subject to a review of the position in late June and consultation with the Group via email; and signage discouraging litter be considered for the car parks

Peter Winfield

The Group noted that recently some filming had been permitted on the Meads in connection with a new short film called 'Odds'.

9. Any Other Business

Kay Drury reported further collapse of the bridge between the Meads and Hamm Court which Mr Dulley had previously reported to Surrey County Council, but would chase again.

Chris Dulley

It was suggested that extending the boardwalk to reach the road to make it more accessible might be achieved with SANGs funding.

Jo Harper

10. Dates of Future Meetings

Members noted that the next two meetings (venue to be confirmed) were scheduled to take place Tuesday 31 August 2021, and Tuesday 1 March 2022.

The meeting ended at 7.19 pm

Chairman