

Runnymede Borough Council

ENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE

21 June 2016 at 7.00 pm

Members of the Committee present Councillors Miss M N Heath, N M King and Miss J K Sohi

Residents' Representatives: Mr A Panter (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Band

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors M T Kusneraitis, N H Prescott and P I Roberts

87 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that -

Councillor Miss M N Heath be elected Chairman for the Municipal Year 2016/17.

88 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that -

Mr A Panter be elected Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2016/17.

89 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 February 2016 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

90 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Kusneraitis, Prescott and Roberts

91 MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF THE GREEN

Parking on the Green

The Committee was advised that Officers had arranged for stone boulders to be placed on the grass triangle to the front of Crown House, in locations agreed at the last meeting. There had been one report of parking on this area since the boulders were installed.

On Sunday 8 May, in response to a complaint of parking on the Green one of the Honorary Wardens had approached the drivers of two vehicles who had partially parked on the Green and across the pavement, adjacent to the bend at St. Jude's Road. Unfortunately this had resulted in the Honorary Warden suffering verbal abuse from both drivers, before they left. Due to the dangerous nature of the parking, photographic evidence was taken, the police were informed and registration numbers and other details were passed on. It was noted that the highway authority could prosecute but Surrey Council Officers had advised that they would not be pursuing this case. Members of the Committee discussed the possibility of issuing of penalty notices. Councillor Miss Heath advised the Committee that inconsiderate and illegal parking was a Borough wide problem which she would raise with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Littering

In late February a resident informed Officers that a large number of small gas canisters had been found by the parking bays behind the cricket pavilion. Officers had inspected the area and removed almost 100 small nitrous oxide canisters and other litter. This appeared to have been an isolated incident. However, members of the Committee were advised that should this become a regular occurrence Officers would pass on to appropriate agencies via the Joint Action Group (JAG)

Unauthorised activities

A Romany style caravan was reported to have been pitched on the Green, close to Crown Lodge, overnight on Saturday 16 April and moved off on 17 April. The resident reporting it had advised that it had caused no problems other than having an open fire on the Green. The following week Officers had inspected that area and although there was evidence of a small fire, it was not necessary to instigate any repairs.

During April, Officers had become aware of two separate activities planned for the Green which had been advised locally; A Qigong (Chinese exercise) taster session and a fitness boot camp. Both of these would have been commercial activities and neither had authority to use the Green. Officers wrote to both organisations informing them of the status of the Green and that no clubs or organisations were permitted to use the Green, except for the Englefield Green Cricket Club. It was believed that the letters had the desired effect and the activities did not go ahead. Officers had recently learnt of a 'Sport for Kids' club being advertised to be held on Green. Officers were currently investigating and contact would be made with the organiser advising them they did not have the authority to use the Green. The Committee was pleased to note that the volleyball sessions appeared to have ceased.

Maintenance

Officers had recently met with a local resident who had concerns about the maintenance of the Green and offered some suggestions as to how it might be improved. These related to litter collection and the capacity of the bins, dog fouling, weed control, drains and ditches and the rope around the cricket square. A productive meeting resulted in agreement that:

- suggestions would be made to the Committee regarding turf maintenance and weed control on the Green
- the recent introduction of some newer bins with a larger capacity would help throughout the Summer months
- in addition to the regular Council litter picking Royal Holloway students would do another litter pick this year and EGVRA had organised a litter pick on 4 June
- Officers would suggest to the Committee that ditch clearance would be introduced each year once the leaves were down
- Runnymede Borough Council would remind Surrey County Council regarding a drain on the highway which was blocked and had been referred to them previously

Members of the Committee advised Officers that they were dissatisfied with the work carried out by the grass cutting contractors. Several areas were missed and the grass clippings were left on the Green which then washed into the drains in wet weather. Officers advised the Committee that the current contract with the contractors did not include removal of the grass clippings but this could be added to the contract for an additional cost. Members of the Committee were very keen to look at this option and asked Officers to advise the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of costs. In relation to the missed areas, Officers would liaise with the contractors regarding this and the Committee was asked to keep Officers advised of any further problems.

Members of the Committee were very impressed with the litter pick undertaken by EGVRA and asked Officers to send out a formal thank you to the Association.

In May, a member of the Committee passed on concerns raised by residents about the small oak tree in the corner of the Green at the junction of St. Jude's Road and Barley Mow Road.

Following an inspection Officers had agreed that the lower branches were restricting access to adjacent bins and also noted that they were making it difficult for contractors to maintain the grass around the base of the tree and should be removed. It was also agreed that a self-sown sycamore at the base of the oak should be removed. As the tree was within the conservation area, Officers sought advice from Planning colleagues and it was confirmed that an application for consent to carry out this work would be required. This was currently being progressed.

Unauthorised tree work

In late February Officers had been made aware of a number of lime trees on the corner of Barley Mow Road and St. Jude's Road that had been heavily pruned. These trees were subject to Tree Preservation Orders and consent should have been gained from the Local Planning Authority (Runnymede Borough Council) prior to any works being carried out. Planning Enforcement Officers were currently gathering evidence on this case regarding possible prosecution. The Committee was concerned that this was the second incident of this nature and asked Officers to liaise with the Council's legal team regarding sending letters to occupiers of properties adjacent to the Green advising them of the need for consent before undertaking certain works around the Green.

Priorities for future expenditure

At its last meeting the Committee resolved that members of the Committee, Wardens and Officers would suggest items to be included on a list of priorities for the wider budget to be considered at this meeting.

Peter Winfield presented the Committee with a list of priorities drawn up by Officers for the Committee's consideration. The Committee agreed the following:-

- Regular ditch clearance when the leaves were all down at a cost of approximately £135 per occasion
- Officers to cost and bring back to the next meeting of the Committee the cost of improving the drainage across the surface of the Green
- Officers to cost and bring back to the next meeting of the Committee the cost of scarifying the Green
- A woodland management plan be produced
- Look at the management of paths in the woodland and consider more suitable surfaces

Members of the Committee asked Officers to liaise with the Council's Head of Finance regarding investment options. Dependant on the options available Officers were requested to ask the Council's Head of Finance to attend the next meeting of the Committee

The possibility of replacing some of the play equipment with wooden play equipment was also discussed. It was noted that no expansion to the existing play area could be considered.

92 EVENTS ON THE GREEN

The Englefield Green Village Fair had been held on Saturday 18 June. Officers reported that some damage had been caused to the Green. Officers had a post event meeting with EGVRA and it was agreed that EGVRA would fill in the ruts in the Green, when the weather was appropriate.

93 URGENT ACTION – STANDING ORDER 42

The following action taken after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee under Standing Order 42 was noted.

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Central Index No</u>
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Open Space and Allotments Manager	Consent be given for a Queen's 90 th birthday street party event for local residents on Coopers Hill Lane on 12 June	867

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.04pm)