

Englefield Green Committee

Tuesday 26 February 2019 7.30pm

**at
at the Jurgen Centre
Harvest Road
Englefield Green**

Members of the Committee

Councillors Miss M N Heath (Chairman), N M King, M T Kusneraitis, N H Prescott, Miss J K Sohi and P J Taylor

Residents' Representatives: Mr A E Panter (Vice-Chairman) and Mr N Bromilow

In accordance with Standing Order 29.1, any Member of the Council may attend the meeting of this Committee, but may speak only with the permission of the Chairman of the Committee, if they are not a member of this Committee.

AGENDA

Notes:

- 1) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.
- 2) The relevant 'background papers' are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Mrs C Holehouse, Democratic Services, Law and Governance Business Centre, Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone KT15 2AH** (Tel: Direct Line: 01932 425628). (Email: carol.holehouse@runnymede.gov.uk).

- 3) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please ring Mr B A Fleckney on 01932 425620. Agendas and Minutes for all the Council's Committees may also be viewed on www.runnymede.gov.uk.

4) **Filming, Audio-Recording, Photography, Tweeting and Blogging of Meetings**

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Filming should be limited to the formal meeting area and not extend to those in the public seating area.

The Chairman will make the final decision on all matters of dispute in regard to the use of social media, audio-recording, photography and filming in the Committee meeting.

LIST OF MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

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b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

1. MINUTES

To confirm and sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 30 October 2018 (**Appendix 'A'**)

Runnymede Borough Council

ENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE

30 October 2018 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors M T Kusneraitis, N H Prescott, Miss J K Sohi and P J Taylor

Residents' Representatives: Mr A Panter (Vice-Chairman in the Chair), Mr N Bromilow

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors Miss M N Heath (Chairman) and N M King

317 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 June 2018 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

318 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Miss M N Heath and N M King

319 MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF THE GREEN

The Committee was updated on management and maintenance issues relating to the Green and asked to consider additional security measures that might be appropriate for the Green.

i) Replacement benches

At the last meeting of this Committee Members had been informed of funding which had been made available by the developer Danehurst to replace some benches on the Green. The developer had now confirmed that there were sufficient funds to purchase two new benches. Officers advised the Committee that the new benches had been ordered and when delivered would be used to replace the two log seats on the Green which needed replacing.

ii) Maintenance of the grass surface

As agreed at the last meeting, the whole green (excluding the Cricket Square) had been treated with a selective herbicide in late September which was taking effect. The vertidrainage, a process which punched holes into the surface to aid drainage, had been postponed due to the ground being too hard. This would be done as soon as ground conditions were suitable. Scarifying, the mechanical removal of moss and dead grass would be carried out as soon as the conditions were suitable.

iii) Woodland Management Plan

The Committee was advised that the ecological surveys of the woodland, which would inform the new woodland plan had now been completed by Surrey Wildlife Trust. Moderate bat activity and a potential roost were noted, which would need to

be considered if any tree thinning took place. 14 species of ancient woodland vegetation had also been identified. Officers would incorporate the findings into the new woodland plan and liaise with the Crown Estate's Forestry Manager regarding recommendations. Officers would then bring a report thereon to the next meeting of the Committee in February.

iv) Unauthorised Encampments

Officers reported that Runnymede had seen an unprecedented number of unauthorised encampments on its parks and open spaces, including Englefield Green, this year and this had been replicated across the County with many other Boroughs experiencing the same issue. Whilst the Boroughs and Districts considered the longer term measures to address the problem, the Green Space team was looking at more immediate measures that could be implemented to enhance the security of Runnymede's parks and open spaces. Officers recommended to the Committee that a more secure vehicle barrier could be considered to deter future unauthorised encampments. Members were keen to support this approach to ensure the Green was protected and asked Officers to purchase a more substantial gate along with wooden poles to install close to the bridge opposite the bus shelter to prevent vehicle access onto the Green.

It was noted that the unauthorised encampments had caused disturbance to the Cricket Club. It was therefore suggested that Officers should liaise with the Cricket Club to discuss any support the Committee could offer. Officers would arrange to meet with the Cricket Club and report back to the next meeting on the discussions.

RESOLVED that –

- i) Officers be authorised to purchase replacement substantial gate and in addition wooden poles to be installed close to the bridge opposite the bus shelter; and**
- ii) Officers to meet with the Cricket Club to discuss support the Committee could offer the Club following disturbances caused by the unauthorised encampments and bring a report back to the next meeting in February**

320 EVENTS ON THE GREEN

i) Village Fair

The Village Fair took place on 23 June and EGVRA reported another successful fair. The fair was opened by the Mayor. The weather was fine, but not too hot, and visitor numbers were good. Arena events included birds of prey and dog displays, and local groups singing, dancing and displaying football skills.

ii) Carters Steam Fair

Carters had operated on the Green over the weekend of 29 and 30 September. Both Council Officers and the Cricket Club were satisfied that no damage that would not recover of its own accord was caused by the presence of the fair. Therefore, the ground deposit had been refunded in full. The Committee noted that Carters Steam Fair always left the Green in good condition and the area was left tidy. The Steam Fair was very much enjoyed by the village residents.

iii) Yoga Classes

At the last meeting the Committee had approved an application for yoga classes to be held on the Green during the summer months. Due to a combination of circumstances unfortunately these did not take place. The applicant was therefore seeking permission to re-schedule the trial period to Spring or early Summer next year, depending on the weather. The Committee was supportive of deferring the 3 month trial period with the previously agreed conditions.

RESOLVED that –

The re-scheduling of the 3 month trial period for Yoga classes be authorised with previously agreed conditions.

iv) Parking on the Green

Officers advised the Committee that Officer time had been diverted to other tasks during the Summer, predominately dealing with the immediate implications of the unauthorised encampments. Officers had therefore been unable to action the points relating to parking on the green from the previous meeting. It was reported that vehicles being parked for a long period of time, often of which were commercial vehicles, exacerbated the parking problems around the Green. Dangerous parking practices also continued which could lead to emergency vehicles being unable to obtain access to some properties around the Green. The Committee was keen to introduce some sanctions and asked Officers to liaise with the Council's Parking Manager to request that parking enforcement Officers visited the Green on a regular basis. The current 'No Parking' signs were inefficient and more prominent 'No Parking' signs together with their location needed to be explored. As reported at the last meeting Surrey County Council were undertaking a wider Controlled Parking Zone and Officers were asked to liaise with Surrey County Council on what is being considered. Additionally, Councillor Prescott would discuss the parking issues around the Green at the Runnymede Joint Committee. Thanks were passed to the wardens who addressed the parking issues when possible which Members appreciated was often an arduous task.

RESOLVED that –

- i) Officers to liaise with the Council's Parking Manager to arrange for parking enforcement Officers to visit the Green on a regular basis; and**
- ii) Councillor Prescott to discuss parking issues around the Green at the Runnymede Joint Committee; and**
- iii) Officers to liaise with Surrey County Council on wider Controlled Parking Zone currently being considered; and**
- iv) More prominent 'No Parking' signs together with their location be explored**

321 OPTIONS TO REGULARISE THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AND STRUCTURES ON THE GREEN

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following matter under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the matter in question would be likely to involve disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

The Committee gave further considerations to the options to regularise the various activities and structures on the Green taking into account further information and advice from Counsel.

The Committee stressed their commitment to conserving the Green. Members main objective was to formalise and regulate what was already in situ.

Members made various suggestions on the document drafted by Counsel. Officers would raise these with Counsel and provide Members with further advice and information prior to the next meeting and bring a report thereon to the next meeting in February.

RESOLVED that –

- i) Officers to further instruct Counsel and forward further advice and information to Members prior to the next meeting; and**
- ii) A report incorporating Counsel's advice and further information be brought back to the next meeting in February**

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 9.26pm)

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

If Members have an interest in an item, please record the interest on the form circulated with this Agenda and hand it to the Legal Representative or Democratic Services Officer at the start of the meeting. A supply of the form will also be available from the Democratic Services Officer at meetings.

Members are reminded that a non pecuniary interest includes their appointment by the Council as the Council's representative to an outside body and that this should be declared as should their membership of an outside body in their private capacity as a director, trustee, committee member or in another position of influence thereon.

Members who have previously declared interests, which are recorded in the Minutes to be considered at this meeting, need not repeat the declaration when attending the meeting. Members need take no further action unless the item in which they have interest becomes the subject of debate, in which event the Member must leave the room if the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or if the interest could reasonably be regarded as so significant to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest.

4. **MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF THE GREEN (COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT)**

Synopsis of Report:

To update the Committee on management and maintenance issues relating to the Green

Recommendations:

- i) Members consider whether they want to authorise expenditure for certain suggested uses from available 'ring-fenced' funds and instruct Officers accordingly; and**
- ii) Members consider whether Bishopsgate School be permitted to use the Cricket Square**

Replacement benches

The two new wooden benches, that had been purchased by the developer Danehurst and gifted to the Green, are being installed in locations previously occupied by the two log seats at the northern end of the Green. Danehurst have agreed to a request from a local resident that one of the benches be used as a memorial to their son. In return they have made a contribution of £100 towards the installation costs and will affix a suitable plaque to the bench.

Maintenance of the grass surface

As described at the last meeting, the Green was vertidraind and scarified towards the end of 2018. Following the hot, dry summer, this work had been delayed until ground

conditions were suitable. Officers will continue to monitor the surface of the Green and are considering, with the Council's grounds maintenance contractor, further work over the coming months to improve the condition of the sward and grass cover.

Woodland Management Plan

As reported at the last meeting, ecological surveys of the woodland were completed in 2018 and the findings reported to Officers towards the end of the year. Data from the surveys and recommendations for enhanced management of the woodland have been incorporated into a draft woodland plan. Officers have met with the Crown Estate's Chief Forester and walked the woodland with him to discuss the contents of the draft plan and the management techniques proposed. He has supported the proposals so the draft plan and a five year work programme are being finalised. These will be ready to be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

Site security

Following discussions at the last meeting around the vulnerability of the Green to unauthorised encampments it was resolved that wooden posts be installed close to one of the sleeper bridges and that the vehicle barrier be replaced with a more substantial and secure gate. The wooden posts were installed very soon after the meeting and the new vehicle gate was installed in early February.

Parking around the Green

At the last meeting Officers were asked to consider improving the parking signage around the Green. Enforcement of parking on the adopted highway, including relevant signage, is the responsibility of Surrey County Council. Most of the roads around the Green are adopted highway, but there are three areas which are not; the road in front of Crown Lodge, the road and parking bays behind the cricket pavilion and the layby on the Green. These are outlined red on the plan at (**'Appendix B'**). Dealing with parking issues in these locations falls to Runnymede Borough Council and this Committee, however Parking Services have no powers to enforce any restrictions in these areas and advisory signage is perhaps the only realistic option.

Not Highway



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Use of Deed of Easement Monies

At the last Committee Members asked Officers to advise them on the amount left in the 'ring-fenced funds' for expenditure on Englefield Green. The balance on 6 November stood at £265,420.

As requested by the Committee at their last meeting, Officers have been in touch with the Cricket Club to identify items of work that the Committee may feel able to support the club with. These will be presented at the meeting for the Committee's consideration.

A suggestion has also come forward that it might be beneficial to have CCTV coverage of the Green and the Committee is asked to consider this. Officers are assessing the implications of this and will provide a verbal update at the meeting.

Legal implications

In 2015 the authority entered into a Deed of Surrender with developer Orchid Runnymede Ltd in relation to a portion of land on the Green and in return received a substantial payment of £275,000. These funds are held by the Council as 'ring-fenced' for expenditure by this Committee in accordance with its resolution of February 2015 to be 'used solely to defray the costs of management, maintenance and enhancement of the Green'.

The Committee may decide, on the merits, whether to authorise expenditure from the fund for particular proposals.

(To resolve)

Background papers

None

Cricket

The Englefield Green Cricket Club have approached the Council asking whether the Bishopsgate School could be permitted to use the cricket square on Wednesdays this coming season. The school has also approached members of the Committee directly with a similar request. At the time of preparing this agenda the precise details around dates, times and number of matches were unknown, so a verbal report will be provided at the meeting.

(To resolve)

Background papers

None

5. **EVENTS ON THE GREEN (COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT)**

Synopsis of report:

To report to the Committee on events planned, or proposed, to take place on the Green in 2019

Recommendations:

- i) The Committee approve the use of Englefield Green by Carters Steam Fair again this year; and**
- ii) Officers be given the authority to approve an application from EGVRA for their Village Fair to be held on the Green this year when received**

Carters Steam Fair

Carters Entertainment Ltd have applied to hold their Steam Fair on the Green again this year. They intend to start setting up on Tuesday 24 September, open the fair on Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 September and depart on 1 October. Provisional approval, subject to the agreement of this Committee, had been given and Officers will confirm it with Carters if the Committee agrees.

Village Fair

Although the Englefield Green Village Residents Association have yet to submit a formal event application, they have indicated that they intend to hold the Village Fair on the Green on the 22 June. Officers are therefore seeking the Committee's approval to authorise their application when it is received, subject to the usual checks.

Community Litter Pick

Member of the local community have organised a village wide litter pick for Saturday 2 March. As part of this it is proposed that some of the volunteers tackle litter in the woodlands to the north of the Green. The event is supported by EGVRA and the Council, with the Green Space team providing litter pickers and bags and the Depot taking the litter away after the event. An Officer from the Green Space team will also be on hand to guide the volunteers to and through the woodland. Volunteers will be meeting at Victoria Street Car Park at 10am and all are welcome.

(To resolve)

Background papers

None

6. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following report under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the report in question would be likely to involve disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 5 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(To resolve)

PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection

a) Exempt Information

7. OPTIONS TO REGULARISE THE VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AND STRUCTURES ON THE GREEN

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)