

Runnymede Borough Council

ENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE

26 February 2019 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors Miss M N Heath (Chairman), N H Prescott, Miss J K Sohi and P J Taylor

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

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors N M King and M T Kusneraitis

488. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 October 2018 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

489. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor N M King

490. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Prescott declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to the item on Bishopsgate School using the Cricket Square. His wife works at the School and his children were both pupils. Councillor Prescott remained in the room but did not participate in the debate or vote thereon.

491. 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

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

ii) Maintenance of the grass surface

As previously reported in October 2018, the Green had been vertidraind and scarified towards the end of 2018. Following the hot, dry summer, the work had been delayed until ground conditions were suitable. Officers would continue to monitor the surface of the Green and were considering, with the Council's grounds

maintenance contractor, further work over the coming months to improve the condition of the sward and grass cover.

Concerns were raised by a Member of the Committee regarding the current condition of the Green. It was noted that the Committee had previously agreed that both vertidrainage and scarifying would be carried out on an annual basis. Officers advised the Committee that both vertidrainage and scarifying did not bring instant results but were a long term treatment for improving the condition of the Green. The Committee considered other options to bring the Green up to a good standard, thereby enhancing the ongoing maintenance along with the introduction of a seeding programme for the Green. The Committee asked Officers to obtain quotes for getting the Green up to a good standard and costings for an enhanced ongoing maintenance and seeding programme.

It was reported that a Member of the Committee had been contacted regarding the possibility of widening the ditch adjacent to St Jude's Road being considered. The soil taken would be used to build a small earth bund therefore making vehicular access onto the Green difficult. The Committee was supportive of this suggestion and asked Officers to obtain quotes and circulate to Members for consideration.

iii) Woodland Management Plan

Members of the Committee were advised that 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 had been incorporated into a draft woodland plan. Officers had also 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 which he supported. The draft plan and a five year work programme was now being finalised both of which would be ready to be considered at the next meeting.

iv) Site security

Following discussions at the previous meeting of the Committee in October 2018 regarding 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 soon after the meeting and the new vehicle gate was installed in early February.

v) Parking around the Green

At the last meeting of the Committee Officers were asked to consider improving the parking signage around the Green. Enforcement of parking on the adopted highway, including relevant signage, was the responsibility of Surrey County Council. Most of the roads around the Green were adopted highway. However Members were advised three areas were not, namely; the road in front of Crown Lodge, the road and parking bays behind the cricket pavilion and the layby on the Green. Only parking issues in those locations fell to Runnymede Borough Council and this Committee, however Parking Services had no powers to enforce any restrictions in these areas, therefore advisory signage was the only realistic option. Members received a detailed plan of the Green which indicated the parking areas which fell within their remit. The Committee expressed concerns regarding the danger of vehicles reversing out onto St Jude's Road. Members recalled that Surrey County Council had previously been approached regarding the

installation of yellow lines on the remaining side of St Jude's Road but this had been unsuccessful. Surrey County Council would be contacted again regarding this to ascertain reasoning for their decision. Members of the Committee also felt it would be beneficial for Highway Officers to meet with Committee Members to walk around the Green so the danger and problem areas could be highlighted. It was suggested that immediately prior to the next meeting of the Committee would be an ideal opportunity to facilitate this.

vi) Use of Deed of Easement Monies

Following on from the last meeting of the Committee, Members were advised that the amount left in the 'ring-fenced' funds for Englefield Green as of 6 November was £265,420. As requested by the Committee at the last meeting, Officers had been in touch with the Cricket Club to identify items of work that the Committee might be able to support the Club with. The Cricket Club had identified a couple of options but no costings had been obtained to date. Officers would further liaise with the Cricket Club and bring back suggestions and costings to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee was advised that a suggestion had come forward that it might be beneficial to have CCTV coverage of the Green. The Committee was supportive of this suggestion and noted that this would provide evidence of ASB, illegal dumping and trespassing. Members were unsure how cameras would be installed and discussed whether a camera could be added to an existing building for example; the Cricket Club or the Barley Mow Public House or whether the camera would need to be installed on a free standing column. It was noted that it would be beneficial for cameras to be linked to Safer Runnymede. Officers would liaise with Safer Runnymede and establish possible positioning and costings, and bring a report back to the next meeting.

vii) Cricket

The Englefield Green Cricket Club had approached the Council to ask whether the Bishopsgate School could be permitted to use the cricket square. The school wished to use the cricket square on Wednesday afternoons between 2.30pm and 5.30pm on 8th, 15th and 22nd May, 12th, 19th and 26th June and 3rd July. The Committee fully supported this proposal.

viii) Additional Strip

On the evening of the meeting Officers advised Members of the Committee that the Cricket Club had asked if permission could be given for a 2nd additional strip to be cut for one occasion on 16th June 2019. Members of the Committee were happy to authorise this.

RESOLVED that –

- i) **Officers obtain quotes for getting the Green up to a good standard and circulate to Members;**
- ii) **A report on costings for ongoing maintenance and seeding programme be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee;**

- iii) **Officers to obtain quotes for widening the drainage ditch adjacent to St.Jude's Road and creating a small earth bund and circulate to Members;**
- iv) **Surrey County Council be contacted regarding installation of yellow lines on the remaining unmarked side of St Jude's Road. Additionally, Highway Officers to be contacted to arrange to meet the Committee at the Green immediately prior to the next meeting, to facilitate a walk around the Green with them to show problem and danger areas;**
- v) **Officers to liaise with the Cricket Club to discuss items of work needing financial support and costings, and report back to the next meeting;**
- vi) **Officers liaise with Safer Runnymede regarding the possible positions and costings of installing CCTV cameras on the Green and bring a report back to the next Committee thereon;**
- vii) **Bishopsgate School be permitted to use the Cricket Square on days, times detailed in the preamble to this resolution; and**
- viii) **The Cricket Club be authorised to cut a 2nd additional strip for one occasion on 16th June 2019**

492. EVENTS ON THE GREEN

i) Carters Steam Fair

Members of the Committee were advised that Carters Entertainment Ltd had applied to hold their Steam Fair on the Green again this year. They intended 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 would confirm with Carters if the Committee agreed. The Committee agreed to the request. It was noted that the fair was always very well attended and a very popular event.

ii) Village Fair

The Englefield Green Residents Association had not yet submitted a formal event application but they had indicated that they intended to hold the Village Fair on the Green on 22 June. Officers therefore sought the Committee's approval to authorise their application when received, subject to the usual checks. The Committee was fully supportive of the use of the Green for the Village Fair

iii) Community Litter Pick

The Committee was advised that a member of the local community had organised a village wide litter pick for Saturday 2 March. As part of this it was proposed that some of the volunteers tackled litter in the woodlands to the north of the Green. The event was supported by the Englefield Green Residents Association and the Council. The Council's Green Space team would be providing litter pickers and bags and the Depot would be taking the litter away after the event. Volunteers would be meeting at the Victoria Street Car Park at 10am and all were welcome.

RESOLVED that –

- i) **Carters Steam Fair be authorised to use the Green on the dates detailed in the report; and**
- ii) **Officers approve formal application from EGVRA for their Village Fair to be held on the Green on 22 June 2019**

493. **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.

In response to an enquiry from a Member, Officers confirmed the Council's established procedure for minuting matters which contained exempt information. Nevertheless, points raised as part of such items were included in the internal Action Sheet.

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

Members of the Committee discussed elements of the recent redrafted document from Counsel. Arising from the debate and some of the points raised by the Committee thereon it was agreed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman would liaise with the Council's solicitor to re-draft the document. Subsequent to this, the redrafted document would be sent to Counsel. A further report thereon would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee in June.

It was noted that subsequent to Committee approval of the document, the Crown Estate would be consulted.

RESOLVED that –

- i) **The Council's Assistant Solicitor be authorised to liaise with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee in redrafting the document;**
- ii) **Officers to further instruct Counsel and forward further advice and information to Members prior to the next meeting; and**
- iii) **A report incorporating Counsel's advice and further information be brought back to the next meeting in June**

(The meeting ended at 9.12pm)

Chairman