

Runnymede Borough Council

ENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE

20 October 2020 at 7.30 pm via MS Teams

Members of the Committee present: Councillors N King (Chairman) M Heath  
N Prescott and J Sohi

Residents' Representative: Mr N Bromilow

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor M Kusneraitis (Vice-Chairman)

246 MR ANDREW PANTER

The Chairman opened the meeting by expressing his sadness at the loss of Mr Andrew Panter who had passed away earlier in the year. Andrew had served on the Englefield Green Committee as a resident's representative since 1998. Andrew cared deeply about the Green and the wider community and was sadly missed. Mr Bromilow also expressed his sadness and described Andrew as a charming and interesting man and the value he had brought to the Committee would always be appreciated.

247 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 February 2020, subject to amendments for clarification were confirmed as a correct record to be signed when the Chairman was physically able to do so

248 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor M Kusneraitis

249 MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF THE GREEN

The Committee was updated on management and maintenance of the Green.

The Committee was advised that with Officers working from home for much of the time along with contractors furloughing staff and one contractor closing his business completely, Covid-19 had had a significant impact on the ability to satisfactory progress works on and around the Green this year. However, Officers reported that a number of tasks had successfully been completed.

Improvement and maintenance of the grass surface

As had been discussed by the Committee previously, the grass surface of the Green was in poor condition in some areas. The aim of the additional maintenance undertaken had been, and would continue to be, to reduce the presence of moss and

weeds, remove as much thatch as possible, reduce the number and size of bare areas, improve surface drainage and thereby achieve a more even cover of healthy grass.

At its meeting in February the Committee was informed that the Green was about to have soluble iron and fertiliser applied which would kill moss and boost grass growth. This had been completed by mid-March. The scarifying and re-seeding which should have followed was unfortunately delayed due to contractors furloughing staff for a period, but was completed by mid-May. The scarifying was successful but the re-seeding less so.

The Committee was advised that under the Council's Constitution decisions on grounds maintenance issues on the Green were already delegated to Officers, however the additional spend (over and above the standard grounds maintenance budget) was not. At its meeting in October 2019 the Committee resolved that the earmarked reserves be used for additional works on the Green, but it was right that Members retained control of that spend. It was therefore proposed to utilise the sum of £4,000 from reserves, which currently stood at £243,143 to fund works to improve the quality of the grass surface over the next 12 months. This would be a selection of scarifying, fertiliser application, weed killing, moss control, seeding or aerating depending on the condition of the grass and prevailing climatic and ground conditions. Details of the works completed, the cost and the effect could then be reported to the Committee at the end of that period. The Committee had been pleased to see the Green particularly being enjoyed during the lockdown period and thanked the Green Space team for their continued efforts in keeping the Green tidy. Officers thanked Committee members for their assistance with litter picking on the Green during such a busy time for them.

**RESOLVED that –**

- i) The Committee approve the sum of £4,000 from its reserves to fund further works to improve the quality of the grass surface over the next 12 months; and**
- ii) Officers report to the Committee in October 2021 detailing the work completed, the costs and the effect on the quality of the grass.**

Site Security

As agreed at the last Committee, timber bollards around the Green had been replaced with new steel-cored plastic bollards. Following additional concerns expressed by Members of the Committee about possible access points beside the field gate and at the junction of Bishopsgate Road and the Green two additional steel-cored posts had been installed in each location. The Committee felt the composite posts were a great improvement and were very pleased with how they looked.

CCTV

At the last meeting in February it was agreed that Mr Bromilow and Mr Winfield would investigate options for CCTV provision around the Green further and report back to the next meeting. A number of discussions had been had with owners of various properties around the Green, but as yet, no firm proposals had been developed. Further options would be explored, and options would be reported back to the next meeting of the Committee in February 2021.

### Road speed

Following the meeting in February Officers approached Surrey County Council (SCC) to ask that St. Jude's Road, adjacent to the Green be assessed for traffic calming measures. In response, SCC confirmed that a traffic speed survey had already been requested for the location and that survey equipment had been erected in the location on 12 March and was due to be collected two weeks later. However, at that time and in response to government Covid-19 guidance, County Council staff were only visiting sites to investigate safety critical issues. This delayed the equipment being retrieved and the data downloaded. SCC also noted that, as there had been a significant reduction in traffic on the roads during lockdown, any data recorded over that period would not be representative of normal conditions. The integrity of the data would be checked and if necessary, a further survey would be carried out. Officers had been liaising with SCC regarding an update on the survey results but to date had not received them. Officers would continue to liaise with SCC on this matter.

### Oak Processionary Moth

The caterpillars of the oak processionary moth live on and construct nests in oak trees, where they gather. The caterpillars are covered in small hairs which when shed can cause health issues in humans. This year a number of nests were found on oak trees on the Green. The Green was one of a growing number of affected sites in Runnymede and action was taken as part of a borough wide programme to minimise the risk of the public coming into contact with the caterpillars or their nests. At Englefield Green the action involved the erection of warning notices and the physical removal of nests reachable from the ground by specialist contractors. The Committee was advised it was likely that infestations would be seen around the Green next year and similar or possibly greater remedial action may be required.

### Woodland Management

A Woodland Management Plan for Englefield Green had been adopted by this Committee in June 2019 and Officers were asked to start commissioning the works prescribed in the plan. Best practice was that most woodland management work was undertaken during the Autumn and Winter months to avoid the bird nesting season and when most vegetation and wildlife was dormant. Officers advised the Committee that they were therefore planning for works to commence this winter. The work proposed was to remove woodland holly and laurel which would improve the biodiversity of the woodland, opening along public footpath 19 and create one or two glades. Officers would commence the work when conditions were at their optimum and the cost was expected to be around £5,000 to £6,000

### Cricket Club Works

In October 2019 the Committee approved a grant of £2,440 to be made to the Englefield Green Cricket Club to help fund essential repairs to the pavilion. The Cricket Club were extremely grateful for these funds and have utilised them to complete a range of repairs and improvements. The Committee was shown images of the work completed and agreed the work undertaken was very beneficial.

### PARKING

Mr Bromlow asked if Officers could look at the installation of yellow lines at the junction of St. Jude's Road and the Green. The Committee was advised that there was already a parking consultation ongoing at the eastern side of the ward and Members were shown the proposed parking restrictions proposed within the current consultation. Any additional yellow lines would need to be discussed at the Surrey Joint Management Committee.

**RESOLVED that –**

**In consultation with Councillors Heath and Sohi, Mr Bromilow to forward a map of where he felt additional yellow lines should be installed to Councillor N Prescott for consideration at the Surrey Joint Management Committee**

250 PROPOSED WORKS TO ACCESSWAY AT COOPERS HILL LANE

The Committee was asked to consent for works to upgrade the accessway of Chelsea Lodge, The Manor Cottage, Stables Cottage, Rustlings and Coopers Hill Lodge as described in the report, subject to the Crown Commissioners (Crown Estate) also consenting to the works.

Officers reported that a representative for residents of Chelsea Lodge, The Manor Cottage, Stables Cottage, Rustlings and Coopers Hill Lodge had contacted Officers earlier this year to request permission for upgrading and repair works to the accessway which crosses the Green from Coopers Hill Lane. The Committee reviewed the plan of the area of the proposed work and the extent of the Englefield Green in the location.

Officers advised the Committee that as a deed of easement was in place covering access to these properties the residents needed to get approval from both the Council (through this Committee) and then subsequently permission from the Crown Commissioners.

The proposals consisted of 3 main items;

1. Block paving the accessway
2. Works on Trees in the Conservation Area
3. Reseeding the Council's land

**RESOLVED that –**

**Consent be given for the works to upgrade the accessway of Chelsea Lodge, The Manor Cottage, Stables Cottage, Rustlings and Coopers Hill Lodge as described in the report, subject to the Crown Commissioners (Crown Estate) also consenting to the works**

251 EVENTS ON THE GREEN

The Committee was updated on events that had taken place or were planned to take place on the Green.

Officers reported that due to social distancing and other restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic all the usual events had been cancelled this year.

Members would recall that in June 2018 the Committee approved some trial yoga classes on the Green, but for a number of reasons they never took place. In August this year the yoga instructor approached Officers again seeking permission to run a few trial sessions. Several sessions were held during September and October but the uptake was very low. The instructor was keen to try again next year and it was expected that further proposals would be put to the Committee at its next meeting in February.

252     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 was updated on recent communications the Council's Solicitors had had with the Crown Estate. The Committee felt it was still appropriate to continue with the proposed course of action to regularise the various activities and structures on the Green, including continuing the dialogue with the Crown Estate. However, the Committee felt it would also be beneficial to arrange a public consultation to ascertain residents' views and aspirations for the Green.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 9.16 pm)