

Runnymede Borough Council

ENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE

29 November 2021 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors N King (Chairman), M T Kusneraitis, N Prescott and J K Sohi

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor M Heath

Residents' Representatives: Mr N Bromilow (Vice-Chairman) and one vacancy

Councillor I Mullens also attended

337 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 June 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

338 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor M Heath

339 **Declarations of interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

340 **Management and Maintenance of the Green**

The Committee wished to record their thanks to Mr Peter Winfield (Head of Green Spaces), who had recently left the Council for all his hard work, positive attitude, and patience over many years.

The Committee was updated on management and maintenance issues relating to the Green and sought the Committee's support for the work to continue on improving the quality of grass on the Green and for a second phase of woodland management work. The Committee was also asked for their views on additional signage around the Green, the creation of wildflower areas and provision of a defibrillator.

Lawn Treatment Programme

The Committee received details of the lawn treatment program work which had been carried out from April to October 2021. The Committee's approval was sought for the lawn treatment program to continue in 2022. Overseeding would be carried out in the autumn and spring to allow the seed to germinate and establish. The approximate cost of overseeding would be around £1,500.00. The Committee expressed their thanks to the Green Space Team for all their work this year. The Green was looking much improved. With regard to future treatments Officers would inform Committee members when this was taking place.

Members asked Officers to clarify the financial details in relation to maintenance costs paid by the Council and costs taken from the Englefield Green ring-fenced funds. Officers were also asked to provide a categorised statement of financial costs incurred to the Committee in the future. The Council's Tree Officer would provide the Committee with a bi-monthly financial update of costs incurred.

RESOLVED that –

The lawn treatment programme set out in the report be continued

Signage around the Village Green

At a previous meeting the Committee had discussed the possibility of erecting further signage around the village green. Officers recommended that any new signage should:

- Be kept to a minimum to reduce 'visual noise/clutter'
- Should be of the metal type, with tamper resistant fixings on metal posts
- Be placed around the ditch/boundary to the green, next to the pedestrian entry/exit points and/or around the children's play area
- Be of a similar size and type used around the village green
- Should be justified in terms of there being a clear need, for instance, a sign with an obvious and important health and safety purpose

The Committee received images of signage used in other open spaces in the Borough and it was agreed that well targeted signs worked better.

In order to expedite this matter, the Committee delegated authority to the Green Spaces Officer in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to make the decision on signage. Officers were asked to liaise with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman on the type of signage to be installed, after proposals had also been circulated to all Members of the Committee for information.

RESOLVED that –

- i) The Green Spaces Officer be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to make the decision on signage; and**
- ii) Officers liaise directly with the Chairman and Vice Chairman with signage proposals for the Green, with proposals being circulated to all Members of the Committee for information**

Wildflower planting along St. Jude's Road

The Committee considered the sowing of wildflower seeds in locations around the Green as recommended. Given that the Green was now having regular lawn treatment programs it was felt that wildflower planting close to the main Green was not desirable due to the likelihood of seed spreading on to the improved lawn areas. The Committee agreed that the sowing of wildflower seeds by the bus stop at Castle Hill/Ridgemean Road would be a suitable alternative. The introduction of indigenous woodland species such as native bluebells into the woodland areas either side of St. Judes Road was also agreed.

Woodland Management

Members were advised that having undertaken the initial phase of woodland management last winter for the eastern half of the woodland, Officers were planning similar works for the coming winter to the western half. The proposal included removing invasive Laurel and Rhododendron from areas throughout the woodland together with the removal of some dense areas of holly and a few patches of Sycamore. An oak tree had been identified as worthy of Haloing, or creating a clearing around, the intention would be to include this in the works. Officers were asked by the Committee to ensure the costs did not exceed £4,000.

Officers were asked to provide the Committee with information on how the works already undertaken on the eastern woodland had improved biodiversity. Officers were also asked to arrange for the woodland plan to be uploaded onto the Council's website.

RESOLVED that –

The proposed woodland management works as set out in the report be agreed, along with the sowing of wildflower seeds by the bus stop at Castle Hill/Ridgemean Road and the introduction of indigenous woodland species into the woodlands.

Defibrillator

The Committee discussed the possibility of placing a defibrillator on, or in the cricket pavilion for public use. Officers, including the Council's Safety Advisor supported this proposal and recommended that, if provided, it be placed on the outside wall of the pavilion, so it was accessible at all times. The Committee strongly supported the installation of a defibrillator at the Cricket Club pavilion but did not wish for it to be purchased from the Englefield Green ring-fenced funds as other funding options were available. It was reported that discussions were already ongoing in relation to this and would be progressed outside of this Committee.

341 Events on the Green - Carters Steam Fair

The Committee was advised that Carters Steam Fair arrived during the week commencing 27th September and was due to be operational on Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd October. They were due to depart on Tuesday 5th October but following a very wet Saturday they requested to stay for a further week. Whilst the Chairman and Vice Chairman both approved this request, the Chairman was not aware that they intended trading for an additional week and was disappointed that this wasn't made clearer. Members of the Committee reported that sadly on this occasion there had been parking and litter problems and the possibility of a tightening up of the agreement may need to be considered in the future. However, the fair had been well attended.

342 Canvass of qualifying properties – Residents' Representative

Members were advised that Officers had conducted a canvass of qualifying properties during the summer to ascertain if anyone wished to sit or nominate anyone for the current vacancy of residents' representative on the Committee. No feedback or nominations were received by the closing date. Subsequently, Mr Bromilow had contacted Officers to nominate Mr Stephen

Brisby who had unfortunately been out of the country when the canvass was undertaken. A report would form part of the Full Council agenda on 9 December 2021 in order for the nomination to be considered. Officers would advise Members of the outcome following the meeting.

343 **Survey of qualifying properties**

The Committee was advised that Officers had carried out an on-foot survey of qualifying properties in August 2021. Members received a copy of the updated list. The only changes to the list was the addition of some properties which had been built on the plot of the former Principal's Office, which had been on the list when it was in situ. The properties had a view of the Green so therefore qualified in accordance with past practice. If any other properties were considered eligible, residents could contact the Chairman of the Committee so Officers could investigate and report back to the Committee accordingly.

RESOLVED that:

The updated list of properties be recommended for approval to the Crown Estate.

344 **Lighting around the Green**

Members were advised that concerns had been expressed by residents regarding the lack of lighting around the Green and Members were asked to consider the installation of additional lighting.

Officers were advised that more detailed information would be needed, including costings to enable the Committee to make a decision regarding the installation of lighting. It was noted that currently the lighting was Victorian style lamps, and any new lighting would need to have LED bulbs, which could not be fitted to the old-style lamps. Members also felt that lamps fitted with motion sensors would be a sensible approach. It was, however, noted that some members had received communications from residents who were not in support of additional lighting on the Green.

Members were advised that installation of streetlamps came under the remit of Surrey County Councils Highways team, therefore, Councillor N Prescott who was a member of the Runnymede Joint Committee would raise this at the next meeting to propose a resolution in consultation with the Englefield Green Committee.

The possibility of a resident canvassing other residents to obtain their views was discussed as a possibility in order to ascertain the level of support.

RESOLVED that –

The installation of lighting around the Green be put forward for consideration to the Runnymede Joint Committee to propose a resolution in consultation with the Englefield Green Committee

345 **Ringfenced funds**

The Englefield Green maintenance reserve was set up in 2015/16 to offset ongoing maintenance works to the village green utilising the receipt generated by the surrender of part of the long lease. As requested at the previous meeting Members of the Council received

a funding statement detailing movement of funding.

Members noted that the total balance of the fund as of 31 March 2021 was £237,109. The Committee expressed some concern regarding funds spent under miscellaneous, as this related to, pothole, sign, leaf clear and gate repair, some of which Members felt should be coming from the Council's main maintenance budget not from the ring-fenced funds. Officers were, therefore, asked to clarify costs and notify Members of the Committee accordingly.

346 **Questions raised at previous meeting concerning management of the Green – Verbal update from Legal Services**

Officers advised the Committee that this information would be forwarded to the Committee via email.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.43pm)