



Community Services Committee

Thursday, 16 June 2022 at 7.30 pm

Council Chamber, Runnymede Civic Centre,
Addlestone

Members of the Committee

Councillors: C Howorth (Chairman), S Walsh (Vice-Chairman), A Balkan, T Burton, D Clarke, V Cunningham, S Dennett, S Jenkins, A King and C Mann

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

- 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 **Miss C Pinnock, Democratic Services Section, Law and Governance Business Centre, Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel: Direct Line: 01932 425627). (Email: clare.pinnock@runnymede.gov.uk).**
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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
Part I**

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Matters in respect of which reports have been made available for public inspection

1. **Notification of Changes to Committee Membership**
2. **Minutes** 4 - 9
3. **Apologies for Absence**
4. **Declarations of Interest**

Members are invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable and non-registrable interests in items on the agenda.
5. **Community Services Key Performance Indicators Quarter 4 2021/2022** 10 - 14
6. **Sportability 2022** 15 - 18
7. **North West Surrey Alliance Funding Report** 19 - 25
8. **Disabled Facilities Grant Update** 26 - 43
9. **Appointments to Community Services related bodies** 44
10. **Community Services Sub-Group Minutes** 45 - 55
11. **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 exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 3 of Part 1 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

12. **Safer Runnymede Resources** 56 - 60
13. **Kings Lane Bike Track Update** 61 - 63

Runnymede Borough CouncilCommunity Services CommitteeTuesday, 1 February 2022 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors C Howorth (Chairman), M Adams (Vice-Chairman), T Burton, D Clarke, D Coen, M Harnden and S Lewis.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors R Bromley, C Mann and S Walsh.

In attendance: Councillors T Gracey and S Williams

1 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2021, were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Mann and S Walsh.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

4 **Holme Farm Grant Funding Request**

The Committee's approval was sought to award a one-off grant to the local Holme Farm Community Project in the sum of £25,000. This would be drawn from underspends in various budgets under the remit of Community Services.

The Committee recalled that, at its last meeting in November 2021, representatives of the Holme Farm Community Project (HFCP), had presented an overview of the proposals for a piece of unused brownfield site land in the Woodham and Rowtown ward, belonging to DEFRA. It was confirmed that DEFRA were willing to lease the land to the HFCP who had now become a registered charity called Community Workshops and Gardens @ Holme Farm.

This was a community based project aimed at improving and enriching the lives of people through a series of activities and facilities covering educational, health and wellbeing as well as promoting environmental sustainability and biodiversity.

Members reviewed the list of projects it was planned to execute on site; including a wood workshop, sensory garden, allotments, furniture restoration and upcycling, wellbeing therapies and re-wilding. A detailed plan and business case were noted.

The Committee was very supportive of the project which was described as 'Green Social Prescribing' which fully aligned to the Council's commitment to such things and NHS England's recognition of the importance of being outside and its positive impact on mental and physical wellbeing.

Officers confirmed that the requested sum of £25,000 would be used for set up and mobilisation costs, and local ward Councillors were able to inform the Committee of how work was progressing, including the sign up of approximately 200 active volunteers to help deliver and develop the project to be a resource for the community and north Surrey. The

assistance given by Dr Ben Spencer MP was also much appreciated. Also thanked were Councillors T Gracey, S Lewis and M Cressey for their support of the project.

The Committee was keen to be updated on the project and how funds were being spent and discussed how best this might be achieved by way of for example, newsletters, a monthly bulletin, quarterly review, and inviting the charity to present again in the future. The importance of maintaining a partnership with the Council through local Ward Councillors and others involved with the project was noted.

The Committee agreed that a similar approach to all future requests for funding from other organisations would assist in providing a structure to review and account for how funding was utilised and measure outcomes in a consistent way.

Officers confirmed that should future requests for funding be received the organisation would, as with others, be required to follow the Council's existing grant aid application process.

RESOLVED that –

Approval is given for a one-off funding amount of £25,000 to Holme Farm towards the overall cost of project initiation, utilising underspends in the current Community Services budget.

5 Community Safety Update

The Committee received a detailed report on aspects of the Community Safety Co-ordinator's work around Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs), including a recommendation that the Councillor representation on the Community Safety Partnership be increased from one to two.

The Committee recalled that PSPOs had been discussed at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee in July 2021 following the call in of a decision made by the Committee in June 2021 not to recommend making a PSPO for an area of Egham Hythe. Members had requested a number of actions which were set out in detail in the report.

Firstly, Members noted all the different reporting channels that had to be used for evidence to be officially recorded and count as evidence to justify consideration of a PSPO. It was agreed these needed to be promoted widely in order to be effective as there was a perception that residents did not feel 'heard' by the official channels. Officers assured the Committee that reports in to Community Safety were logged and acknowledged.

Officers confirmed that elected members could present evidence to the Joint Action Group through the Community Safety Co-ordinator using a dedicated referral form available from Officers.

The Committee was disappointed that the Police were unable to break down anti-social behaviour data further than they already did; specifically, Members had requested this for the Hythe and Thorpe areas.

Members noted the process for making a PSPO from building up an evidence base through the various official reporting lines to its recommendation by the relevant multi-agency organisations for Officers to make the order under delegated authority following consultation. A helpful flowchart was appended for information. Members asked Officers to consider whether the reporting process could be made into simple guidance and promoted on the Council's website as well as stressing that only reports made in this way counted as evidence.

Members were given an overview of the key meetings of the different agencies and

processes within Community Safety; these being the Community Safety Partnership, (CSP) Joint Action Group and Community Harm and Risk Management Meeting.

The Committee was advised that the Community Safety Partnership fulfilled a statutory role under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for local agencies to work together to reduce crime and disorder. The local agencies included Surrey Police, the Borough and County Council, including the Fire authority, the Probation service and Clinical Commissioning Group. Additionally, in Runnymede Housing Providers were also invited. Under the CSP sat the Joint Action Group and Community Harm and Risk Management Meeting, complemented by a number of other agencies. Data on crime was reported to these groups and then to the CSP on a quarterly basis.

With regard to the CSP, the Council had appointed one Borough Councillor who was also a County Councillor and it was agreed that it would be beneficial to recommend that a Member of the Community Services Committee be nominated, subject to the new procedure for making external appointments, recently approved by Corporate Management Committee. It was noted that the second Councillor did not have to be a Member of Community Services, but that it was preferable they were and/or had the appropriate experience, as was the case with the Council's Armed Forces Champion representatives.

Officers confirmed that there was dialogue between meetings and that urgent issues could be dealt with without having a formal meeting. Evidence of this was a recent report about cruelty to wildlife reported to the Surrey Police Wildlife Officer.

Officers described other developments that might be possible following the merger of Community Development and Community Services. These were that the process for deploying CCTV be prioritised during 2022/2023, with the CSP, now chaired by the Safer Communities Manager, being able to authorise their placement and chosen locations in the borough. In addition, it was considered that further partnership working and information sharing would be beneficial to promote Community Safety and more effective working between agencies.

It was agreed that the role Members played was important in encouraging people to report issues officially so that their evidence did not remain as 'anecdotal'. Officers confirmed that if there was reluctance to report for fear of reprisals, Councillors could report on their behalf by way of one of the channels as described. Members were also asked to encourage participation in surveys such as the annual Community Safety Partnership one.

Officers were asked to consider producing an article for 'Runnymede Talks' about reporting anti-social behaviour to explain the official process and importance of 'report it' and to raise with Surrey Police promotion of 'silent solutions', a mechanism to report a crime when the person was unable to do so if in immediate danger, and feedback to residents and Councillors on incidents reported to them direct.

Officers were thanked for their comprehensive report and the Committee was pleased to support the recommendation accordingly.

RESOLVED that –

A Member of Community Services Committee be nominated to serve on the Community Safety Partnership for 2022/2023, subject to the outcome of discussions at the Community Safety Partnership and subject to the new provisions for external appointments approved by the Corporate Management Committee.

[Subsequent to the meeting, Officers confirmed that the Partnership was happy to increase the number of elected Members nominated to serve on the Partnership from one to two]

6 **Runnymede Pleasure Grounds Draft Estimates 2022/2023**

The Committee, in its role as Trustees of the Pleasure Grounds, reviewed the proposed budget for 2022/2023 as appended to the report.

Members noted that the budget remained very healthy with a projected yield of £138,777, with reserves standing at £251, 145 for 2020./2021. The installation of an ANPR system in March 2021 improved car parking income significantly, with the Pleasure Grounds being even more popular during the Covid lockdown as a local valued Open Space.

In light of the projected income, the Committee was content that car parking charges be frozen again for 2022/2023.

Members noted that the Trust was still owed £12,500 in respect of the HM Queen Statue. Officer were asked to confirm what the current position was with regard to the outstanding payment and legal agreement regarding the statue.

RESOLVED that –

The proposed financial projection for 2022/2023, be approved.

7 **Runnymede Pleasure Grounds Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) System and Update on Improvements**

The Committee received for information a report regarding Runnymede Pleasure Grounds and the first year of operation of the new Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) System. An overview of future improvements to the Pleasure Grounds was also noted.

Officers confirmed that after a delay owing to Covid and problems obtaining hardware and supplies for its installation, ANPR was introduced and went live on 22 March 2021. The Council used SAGOSS, for which a waiver was agreed with the system costing £50,000 and an annual maintenance fee of £18,000. These were funded from the Runnymede Pleasure Grounds budget, administered by Financial Services on behalf of the Trust.

Officers reported that there were a few teething issues with the system. Initially, staff were on-site to assist all the time; this reduced to the weekend in the summer of 2021 and café staff are also a point of contact should visitors have any problems with the machines.

Members noted the current charges were £1.50 for 1 hour, £3 for 2 hours, £4.50 for 3 hours and over 4 hours had a charge of £6. Visitors had the option to purchase an annual pass for £50. The first 30 minutes were free which reduced the above charges slightly and visitors were encouraged to use cashless payments, but paying by cash was retained in the interests of accessibility. Officers advised that 61% of visitors used a cashless payment, 24% RingGo and 15% cash.

Officers were asked to check whether RingGo recognised the first 30 minutes being free as some Members reported it did not appear to take it into account.

With regard to promoting equalities, all blue badge holders could enjoy 3 hours free parking if they pre-booked so that the ANPR would not register a non-payment for their stay. The Committee agreed that this and the initial 30 minutes free could be better publicised with more prominent signage on site. It was suggested that 'Runnymede Talks' and the local Talking Newspaper service would be appropriate ways of publicising the benefits of free parking for blue badge holders. Officers confirmed there were also several whitelists such as for members of the skiff and punt club on site.

Members reviewed the income received both before and after the ANPR system was installed, and the effects of the pandemic, lockdown and subsequent lifting of restrictions.

The result was income from the ANPR machines which far exceeded the budget, despite some poor weather in the early summer of 2021.

In terms of visitor numbers, Members were impressed that the ANPR had recorded 44,619 cars between April and September 2021, which according to industry standards equated to approximately 145,581 people. There were 350 blue badge holders at the Pleasure Grounds making 3,136 visits over a six month period, which equated to an additional 10,442 visitors and excluding the 4,184 visits by people on the various whitelists.

Members noted that the Pleasure Grounds Reserves stood at £251,145 at the end of the 2020/2021 financial year. Officers confirmed that this would mean making improvements at the Pleasure Grounds could be prioritised over the next three years and reports would be submitted in due course for the Committee to approve the works they would like to see realised. A priority for the Committee was the upgrading of play equipment and the Splashpark and it was confirmed this was in hand as part of a wider review of play areas and equipment, currently being undertaken by Officers in the Green Space team.

In the context of making improvements, Members also mentioned that the layout at the entrance of the Pleasure Grounds could be awkward and asked if the flow plates could be removed.

Another issue raised was the uses to which on-site CCTV could be deployed which Officers agreed to discuss the Borough Inspector.

8 Community Services Key Performance Indicators Quarters 2 & 3 2021/2022

The Committee noted the key performance indicators for Community Development in Quarters 2 and 3 and Community Services in Quarter 3.

Officers reported that since the merger of the two service areas the indicators would be reviewed and updated as part of future plans to develop the service.

In Community Development, Officers drew Members' attention to the consistently high performance of Safer Runnymede's answer rate of Careline calls, and the numbers attending Chertsey Museum and accessing their Education sessions. These had exceeded targets despite the Pandemic which was pleasing to record and reflected the hard work and diligence of staff at the Museum. Opportunities to develop additional income for the Museum were being investigated. The Community Halls continued to be used as vaccination centres and other indicators were affected by continued Covid restrictions. A full recovery plan was being developed, to be reported in due course.

In respect of Community Services, Members were advised that it had been another quarter of strong performance across the business centre, including the hospital discharge service and Home Improvement Agency, as well as showing recovery from the pandemic, especially in Community Transport and Day Centres, where service provision would be consulted on to establish current and future patterns of need and delivery. As funding became available, further developments to the hospital discharge service would be reported to the Committee.

Officers undertook to make contact with the Constellations Swimming Club to find a cost effective solution for them to make full use of transport available, where capacity had been affected by Covid restrictions.

With regard to Community Alarms, Officers planned to consider adding a performance indicator for the number of referrals in 2022/2023.

The Committee was pleased that the Social Prescribing and Home Improvement Agency had now recruited staff to some of the vacancies and those arising from the restructure.

Officers planned to re-launch the Agency when the backlog of demand had been cleared, delayed owing to staff shortages and the difficulties of carrying out work during the Pandemic. This would be the subject of a future report to the Committee.

Officers were thanked for their reports.

9 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

There was no discussion of the Exempt Appendix A to item 4, Holme Farm Grant Funding Request.

(The meeting ended at 8.20 pm.)

Chairman

Community Services Key Performance Indicators – Quarter 4 2021/2022 (Community Services, Corporate Head of Community Services, Darren Williams)

Synopsis of report:

To provide this Committee with an update on the performance of the Community Services Business Centre, against the Key Performance Indicators set out in the 2021/2022 Business Centre Plan

Recommendation:

None. This report is for information.

1. Context of report

1.1 As part of the performance monitoring process linked to the Community Services Business Centre Plan, a report on the performance of Community Services as a quarterly review against the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) set at the start of the year is required to be presented to Community Services Committee.

2. Report

2.1 This report gives an overview of levels of performance across the Community Services Business Centre in Quarter 4 of 2021/2022 against the Key Performance Indicators set out in the approved Business Centre Plan.

2.2 The report and KPIs collected provide an idea of the breadth of activity currently being undertaken, with corporate KPIs and other service specific KPIs being presented jointly.

2.3 The table below outlines the performance of all service areas against their KPIs for Quarter 4 of 2021-2022:

Table 1: 2021/2022 Q4 Key Performance Indicators:

Key- % Achievement of Target

Red: -10%+ of Quarter Target
 Amber: Up to -10% of Quarter Target
 Green: Met or exceeded target

Performance Area	Actual Q1	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Target Q4	Actual Q4	% Achievement of Target Set & Trend
Number attending Surrey Youth Games Training	n/a	242	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Numbers Attending the Sportability Festival	n/a	n/a	n/a	150	71	
Number of FAC Applications	5	2	4	2	2	
Number attending Junior Citizen	n/a	n/a	903	n/a	n/a	n/a

Number Attending Living Well Week	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Percentage of Careline Calls Answered Within 60 Seconds	99.97%	99.99%	99.95%	99.8%	99.96%	↑
Number of Community Halls Bookings	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Numbers Attending Chertsey Museum	1,971	2,223	4,217	4,600	1,505	↓
Number of Schools Accessing the Chertsey Museum Education Sessions	62	26	47	n/a	54	↑
Number of Meals at Home items served (RBC)	11,169	10,507	10,092	10,000	10,482	↑
Number of Meals at Home items served (SHBC)	12,016	11,214	10,121	10,000	9,496	↓
Total Number of Homesafe Plus Referrals for NW Surrey Boroughs	634	678	741	400	690	↓
Number of Homesafe Plus referrals received for Runnymede Residents	146	172	182	95	166	↓
Number of Homesafe Plus referrals received for Surrey Heath residents	27	46	40	0	24	↓
Total Number of Social Prescribing referrals (RBC)	164	125	138	130	221	↑
Total Number of Social Prescribing referrals (SHBC)	149	138	212	130	222	↑
Number of Handyperson referrals (RBC)	130	189	To Follow	160	184	↓
Number of Handyperson referrals (SHBC)	45	61	To Follow	75	52	↓
Number of residents accessing the Community Alarm service (RBC)	1,388	1,385	1,389	1,465	1,361	↓
Number of residents accessing the Community Alarm service (SHBC)	1,104	1,100	1,086	1,020	1,042	↑
Number of completed Community Transport journeys (RBC)	1,250	2,931	4,092	For Info	4,290	↑
Number of completed Community Transport journeys (SHBC)	926	1,227	2,007	For Info	1,665	↓
Number of Meals served at Day Centres (RBC)	0	617	2,215	For Info	2,115	
Number of Meals served at Day Centres (SHBC)	0	177	569	For Info	604	

- 2.4 The table above shows pleasing performance levels across the business unit in quarter 4 of 2021/2022, with the team showing great resilience during a time where a combination of vacancies and the loss of staff due to Covid for periods of time has had to be managed.
- 2.5 Regarding the areas where performance is highlighted as red, these do have a degree of mitigation. Firstly, the Sportability event was held for the first time since the pandemic and therefore it was likely that a loss of traction in participation numbers was to be experienced. However, with the event now completed, the baseline for 2021/2022 in attendance will become the target to exceed in 2022/2023.
- 2.6 Chertsey Museum currently has two vacant education roles. This meant that in Quarter 3 the museum was only able to fulfil a third of its usual bookings. Quarter 4 improved through use of casual staff but still fell a little short of demand. It is hoped that one of the vacant positions will be advertised shortly so the Museum will have 1.5FTE education staff. General visitor numbers are still low due to the pandemic and some people continuing to avoid indoor venues.
- 2.7 It is noted that the growth of the Handyman service in Surrey Heath locality is slower than expected and usage less than that in Runnymede. The growth in the early stages depends on referrals from health and social care partners and it is felt that this is an area for development in 2022/2023, alongside the development of Homesafe Plus in the Frimley CCG area.
- 2.8 With key performance indicators for 2021/2022 collated in full, the table below details the overall performance of service areas against the key performance indicators set:

Table 2: 2021/2022 Annual KPI Results

Key-

- Red: -10% or more against Actual
 Amber: Up to -10% against Actual
 Green: Match or exceed Actual

Performance Area	Target Total	Actual Total	Percentage Attainment of Target Set
Number attending Surrey Youth Games Training	300	242	81%
Numbers Attending the Sportability Festival	150	71	47%
Number of FAC Applications	8	13	163%
Number attending Junior Citizen	900	903	100%
Number Attending Living Well Week	500	n/a	
Percentage of Careline Calls	99.8%	99.96% (average)	

Answered Within 60 Seconds			
Number of Community Halls Bookings	600	n/a	
Numbers Attending Chertsey Museum	12,800	14,516	
Number of Schools Accessing the Chertsey Museum Education Sessions	65	54	83%
Number of Meals at Home items served (RBC)	39,700	42,250	106%
Number of Meals at Home items served (SHBC)	40,000	42,847	107%
Total Number of Homesafe Plus Referrals for NW Surrey Boroughs	1,200	2,743	228%
Number of Homesafe Plus referrals received for Runnymede Residents	350	666	190%
Number of Homesafe Plus referrals received for Surrey Heath residents	n/a	137	
Total Number of Social Prescribing referrals (RBC)	460	648	141%
Total Number of Social Prescribing referrals (SHBC)	460	721	157%
Number of Handyperson referrals (RBC)	545	698	128%
Number of Handyperson referrals (SHBC)	240	211	88%
Number of residents accessing the Community Alarm service (RBC)	1,465 (at year end)	1,361	93%
Number of residents accessing the Community Alarm service (SHBC)	1,020 (at year end)	1,042	102%
Number of completed Community Transport journeys (RBC)	n/a	8,273	
Number of completed Community Transport journeys (SHBC)	n/a	5,825	
Number of Meals served at Day Centres (RBC)	n/a	4,947	

Number of Meals served at Day Centres (SHBC)	n/a	1,350	
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- 2.9 The above table shows that whilst services continue to recover from the impact of Covid, notably Community Transport, Day Centre services and the events organised by the Community Development team, overall the performance of the whole team, across all areas has been extremely positive.
- 2.10 With the forthcoming Health and Wellbeing strategy, recruitment underway to fill the many vacant roles within the business unit and with new opportunities presenting themselves, it is expected that the breadth of work and the number of beneficiaries will only increase in 2022/2023.

(For information)

Background Papers

None stated.

Sportability 2022 (Community Services, Anthony Jones)

Synopsis of report:

The Sportability Festival is in its 6th year at Royal Holloway University of London. This reports on the 2022 event held on 17 March.

Recommendation(s):

None. This report is for information.

1. Context and background of report

- 1.1 In 2016 the Community Development Team along with key stakeholders such as Enabled Not Disabled highlighted that young people and their families living in Runnymede were unaware of the sport and physical activity offer available to them across the borough.
- 1.2 The Sportability Festival was created to engage with young people with a disability, highlighting the sporting opportunities available to them and giving a positive experience when taking part in a new sport for the first time.
- 1.3 The first Sportability Festival was held in 2017; the annual festival is held at Royal Holloway University of London (RHUL) in March from 9:30am – 2.30pm. RHUL waives any venue hire for the event allowing full use of the indoor sports hall, Multi Use Games Area, Tennis Courts and 3G pitches.
- 1.4 Between 8 and 10 Primary and Secondary schools are invited to attend the festival where they take part in a range of taster sessions provided by local sports clubs. Schools must register each child's impairment as part of the application process so clubs can cater to individual needs. Registrations are on a first come first served basis.
- 1.5 Taster sessions can include Rugby, Boccia, Polybat, Cage Cricket, Wheelchair Basketball, Judo, Boxing, Golf, Archery and Football. Each session averages 40 minutes in length.
- 1.6 Local clubs were used to make it easier for young people to transition from the taster session to attending weekly sessions in the community.
- 1.7 Each participant receives an information booklet that contains a list of sports and physical activity offers around the borough, a certificate, and a medal. This would be presented to them at the awards ceremony at the end of day.
- 1.8 The core event is funded by Runnymede Borough Council. There is a small budget of £1,000 that covers the cost of hiring wheelchairs, refreshments, medals, and information booklets. Providers volunteer their time for the event and receive a free lunch.
- 1.9 Local businesses can sponsor the event in return for promotional space in the informational booklet. RHUL provides volunteers and refreshments on the day of the festival.

1.10 Historically, the event saw between 8 and 10 schools engaging on average 110+ young people. Owing to the Covid pandemic the festival was cancelled in 2020 and 2021 experienced a drastic reduction in attendance as confidence to engage was very low.

2. **Report**

2.1 Planning for the 2022 Sportability Festival started in November 2021, following confirmation of an event date with the venue. A risk assessment was undertaken, site plan developed, and sports providers were confirmed.

2.2 Promotional flyers to 'save the date' and register their interest for the event were emailed to all schools December 2021. Registration for the event opened in January 2022. The event was held on 17 March from 9.30am – 3pm.

2.3 Eight taster sessions were on offer for 2022: Cage Cricket (Community Cricket), Boccia (Spelthorne Leisure Centre), Tennis (RBX Tennis), Boxing (Knowle Green Boxing Club), Rugby (Harlequins Rugby Foundation), Dance (Chartered Dance), Wheelchair Basketball (Enabled Not Disabled/Runnymede Raptors) and Judo (Core Judo).

2.4 Six schools attended: Salesian School, Ottershaw C of E, Hythe Community Primary School, Pycroft Grange Primary School, Manorcroft Primary School, and Phillip Southcote School.

2.5 Due to the provider capacity per activity and space at the venue a cap of 10 students per school was put in place. Some schools were able to bring additional students as not all schools filled their spaces.

2.6 72 registered young people attended, 46% registered as Autistic, 30% had a moderate learning difficulty, and 8% registered as having a physical impairment. 16% of students had a range of other impairments.

2.7 The event day was well received with positive comments from the children and teachers on the day. The event received positive feedback back from teachers:

- "I just wanted to touch base and thank you and your team for organising this event. Our pupils had an amazing time." Teacher, Hythe Community School.

Feedback in relation to the organisation of the event included:

- "Less sports at the event and more breaks to have a rest as young people were tired".
- "Aim for the event to finish at 2.30pm as children need to get taxis/school bus home".

2.8 Other feedback was that due to the event being in the daytime, some clubs fed back that their staff members had full time jobs or weren't willing to volunteer their time. Also, the event did not secure any additional funding, although Specsavers Addlestone have said they will support the 2023 event.

2.9 As a result of feedback received, future considerations include providing less physical activity on the day as young people were tired and to add some activities that could improve young people's mental health and healthy eating. Two schools wanted to attend after registration had closed. Therefore, potentially we could run the event across two days to allow more schools to attend. However, this would require an increase to the budget to fund more providers/staff to attend.

2.10 Other options include themed funding to assist clubs in improving their inclusive offer to the community and training opportunities for teachers/support staff to better cater for young people with a disability.

3. Policy framework implications

3.1 This event supports local people by improving the quality of their lives through developing healthier and safer communities, improving life chances, as well as listening to and representing local people. It also opens up opportunities to enhance the quality of lives of vulnerable/deprived individuals through continued participation in sports.

4. Resource implications/Value for Money

4.1 A total of £841 was spent on the event leaving an underspend of £159.

5. Legal implications

5.1 This event complied with requirements regarding health and safety, first aid, and safeguarding.

6. Equality implications

6.1 The event complies with the Council's Equalities Policy and supports marginalised groups.

6.2 There are positive outcomes for young people, particularly engaging the protected characteristics of age and disability.

7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

7.1 In delivering the event, environmental factors were considered. For example, the use of single use plastic packaging.

9. Conclusions

9.1 The Sportability Festival has a positive impact on young people in Runnymede, the event inspires attendees to be more active whilst taking part in sport with likeminded peers without judgement.

9.2 However, there is a desire amongst Officers to develop such opportunities further, and to increase the impact to young people, including the community and its local sports organisations having better understanding and being better equipped to cater to individual needs. More engagement is also needed throughout the year to ensure opportunities to be more active are not missed.

- 9.3 Further developments to the Sportability Festival, including the potential to increase capacity, spread over more than one day etc. are possible, and feedback from, and evaluation of, this year's event identifies demand etc. However, the ability to do so depends on the budget available to support both the development work and the event itself.

(For Information)

Background Papers

None stated.

North West Surrey Alliance Funding Report (Community Services, Darren Williams – Corporate Head of Community Services)

Synopsis of report: to

- summarise the role of the NW Surrey Alliance;
- provide a summary of the way in which the Council engages as a member of the Alliance;
- provide a summary of work undertaken to secure an allocation of funding from the NW Surrey Alliance, for projects in 2022-2023; and
- seek approval for delegated authority to the Chief Executive as set out in the recommendation below, following consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee

Recommendation that:

Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to approve the recruitment of staff and procurement of matters related to these projects, on the basis there is no cost to the Council, following consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee

1. Context of report

- 1.1 The North West (NW) Surrey Alliance (the Alliance) is a partnership of organisations working across health, local government, the voluntary sector, and private sector. The Alliance gives a place-based approach in North West Surrey, within the overall structures of the Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care System.
- 1.2 Partners in the Alliance include NHS Surrey Heartlands Clinical Commissioning Group, Ashford & St Peters Hospital, CSH Surrey (community healthcare providers), Primary Care, Surrey & Borders NHS Trust, Surrey County Council and Woking and Sam Beare Hospice.
- 1.3 Importantly, given that the NW Surrey health boundaries cover Runnymede, Woking, Spelthorne, West Elmbridge, and a small part of Surrey Heath (Chobham area), borough councils are included as equal, and much valued partners within the Alliance.
- 1.4 The role of the Alliance is to bring together partners to use their collective resources, expertise, and staff assets to address the wider determinants of health for the ultimate benefit of local people.
- 1.5 The Council has been involved in the Alliance since its initial formation as an Integrated Care Partnership in 2019, with the Corporate Head of Community Services representing the four NW Surrey boroughs within this initial, informal, structure, working towards the Alliance now in place.

2. Report

- 2.1 One of the Alliance's key priorities is to shift a higher degree of focus and invention from treating illness to preventing ill health and a loss of independence in the first place. This is felt to be best achieved through creating healthier and more prosperous environments and proactively

supporting the most vulnerable in society across the NW Surrey area, working closely at a borough level.

- 2.2 The Alliance is committed to investing in the delivery of key services to promote health and wellbeing and to provide targeted, specialist support.
- 2.3 There are six agreed themes of service development, on which it is intended to work closely with borough councils. These are:
 - Discharge support and support for people after a period of ill health
 - Prevention and wellbeing
 - Supporting the most vulnerable in our communities
 - Utilising new technology
 - Service accessibility
 - Comprehensive evaluation
- 2.4 In January 2022 a tranche of non-recurrent funding was allocated for projects within the Alliance. The four borough councils were asked to consider projects and pilots to which funding could be awarded, to be delivered in full, or commence in 2022/2023.
- 2.5 The initial funding envelope identified was circa £1m. However, the Place Leader & Alliance Chief Officer was keen to increase this to £2m if there were appropriate and viable pilot projects forthcoming.
- 2.6 As a result, boroughs considered their local services, projects, and initiatives, as well as those that could either be delivered collectively, or be undertaken as pilots, with a view to being rolled out formally across the wider NW Surrey area.
- 2.7 All the project ideas, both individual borough focussed and NW Surrey wide, were discussed collectively by Borough representatives with the Place Leader & Alliance Chief Officer and financial allocations were agreed. Appendix 'A' details the projects that were approved in full.
- 2.8 There are several projects that are specific to Runnymede. These are listed in rows 5, 15, 17 and 22 of Appendix 'A'. These four items all support either the development of business as usual and/or the delivery of the forthcoming Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 2.9 Of note, a sum of £132k has been awarded to the Council (row 5), to be used to help deliver the first year of the action plan attached to the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This funding is a significant boost to mobilise some of the priorities identified. Officers together with the Alliance and other local partners will determine to which parts of the action plan the money will be allocated.
- 2.10 Rows 1, 2, 4, 9, 10,11,16 and 23 of Appendix 'A', are projects that will be delivered in one of the following ways:
 1. as a pilot within one borough area as a pilot/testbed for potential further roll out across North West Surrey
 2. Delivered/coordinated on behalf of the four NW Surrey boroughs by a lead borough
 3. Delivered consistently across NW Surrey with equal/appropriate distribution of monies to each borough

- 2.11 Pilot projects being led by a single borough include the introduction of Hoarding Officers within borough teams to create a multi-agency approach to supporting residents, having introduced a new Surrey protocol (row 9) and the trial of new technology within extra care Sheltered Housing facilities (row 11), both led by Woking Borough Council.
- 2.12 Projects that will be led by a single borough to support service delivery across NW Surrey include Woking Borough Council recruiting an additional two, Borough Discharge Support Officers for an initial period of two years, to work as part of the hospital discharge team, connecting patients with borough services (row 1).
- 2.13 Funding for a Homesafe Plus Co-ordinator as a two-year post, to be employed by the Council is included (row 2) to continue the growth and development of the hospital discharge services that is reported to committee via business unit Key Performance Indicators, as well as to develop better quality monitoring and outcome data of the value of the service.
- 2.14 Row 10 sees circa £80k allocated to a project looking at the value of Borough Council services to the health economy in NW Surrey. Officers hope this will generate evidence to allow for further discussions with Alliance partners on the potential shift of NHS funding to prevention services delivered by borough councils. This project is likely to be led by this Council.
- 2.15 Finally, there are two key posts of funding that allow for new projects/services to be developed across NW Surrey as pilots. Firstly, row 4 allocates a sum of £300k to the development of wrap around support for residents at home and to re-engage with their local community, post hospital discharge, elective surgery etc. This pilot will form an extension of the Homesafe Plus service and will be developed jointly by the four boroughs and wider Alliance partners.
- 2.16 Row 23 shows an allocation of £185k, to the provision of wrap around support for highly vulnerable people across NW Surrey. Potentially, this pilot could also provide support to displaced families/refugees residing in the area. Again, it is intended to develop this project collectively.
- 2.17 This report highlights the volume of work to come in partnership with the wider Alliance and demonstrates the value of borough councils being part of the integrated working approach (not all Alliances in other areas of Surrey engage with borough councils to the same extent). The commitment of funding also demonstrates the fact that borough councils in NW Surrey are seen as capable to deliver and are being actively encouraged and supported to do so.
- 2.18 Given that some of these projects will develop quickly and we may need to procure services or recruit staff, Members are asked to approve that the Chief Executive be granted delegated authority to approve such actions, providing there is no cost to the Council that would otherwise require a supplementary estimate, and following consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee. Approval of the Officer's recommendation would allow Officers more flexibility in responding to project developments.
- 2.19 Updates on progress in relation to the projects listed in Appendix 'A' will be provided to this Committee going forward, including details of decisions taken under delegated authority, if approved.

3. **Legal Considerations**

3.1 The development of individual projects, including those needing to be implemented quickly, will give rise to legal considerations, where this involves procuring services or recruiting staff, amongst other matters.

4. **Equality implications**

4.1 There are no equality implications resulting from this specific report. However, equalities implications will need to be considered within the development of individual projects which are all aimed at achieving a positive outcome for people with protected characteristics.

5. **Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

5.1 There are no environmental implications resulting from this specific report. However, such implications will need to be considered within the development of individual projects. Members are asked to note that in rows 18 and 19 of Appendix 'A', consideration of the net zero agenda has been included.

6. **Conclusions**

6.1 Officers have put a significant amount of work into the development of relationships with health and social care partners in the last three to four years. As a result, Runnymede, together with the other three NW Surrey boroughs, are recognised as key partners within the integrated health and care agenda.

6.2 Such significant funding has never previously been awarded to borough councils from NHS funding streams. Officers consider this demonstrates the trust placed in boroughs to deliver high quality services and of their understanding of the wider health and care agenda.

6.3 Officers hope that by demonstrating value for money and quality, this is just the start of an ongoing financial commitment to borough councils in the development and delivery of services that meet the needs of residents locally.

(To resolve)

Background Papers

None stated.

No	Theme	Lead Borough	Delivery Detail	Cost (£000's)
1	Discharge Support	Woking	2 additional Borough Discharge Officers to assist discharge and admittance avoidance and link homelessness complex cases	90
2	Discharge Support	Runnymede	Homesafe Plus Coordinator	90
3	New Technology	Elmbridge	Implementation of Elemental social prescribing system for effective tracking and development of social prescribing initiative	20
4	Discharge Support	Runnymede	Wrap around support at home (non health and care support) pilot - akin to Home from Hospital service integrated into Homesafe Plus. Based on proposed 1.5 fte per borough, including weekends	300
5	Prevention & Wellbeing	Runnymede	Preventative and wellbeing services delivered in line with population need analysis. Support to discretionary services and integrated delivery across health and local authorities	132
6	Prevention & Wellbeing	Woking	Preventative and wellbeing services delivered in line with population need analysis. Support to discretionary services and integrated delivery across health and local authorities	132
7	Prevention & Wellbeing	Elmbridge	Preventative and wellbeing services delivered in line with population need analysis. Support to discretionary services and integrated delivery across health and local authorities	132
8	Prevention & Wellbeing	Spelthorne	Preventative and wellbeing services delivered in line with population need analysis. Support to discretionary services and integrated delivery across health and local authorities	132
9	Supporting the most Vulnerable	Woking	Provision of 2 x Hoarding Officers who will lead a multi-agency approach, introducing new Hoarding protocol for Surrey.	100
10	Comprehensive Evaluation	Runnymede (Hosted on behalf of all Boroughs)	Partnership work with Royal Holloway University to provided dedicated evaluation support across these initiatives, building the evidence base for a greater shift to preventative service and assessing the benefits of integration across the Alliance	79

11	New Technology	Woking	Trial of WHIZAN as a pilot within extra care settings, to help with assessment of medical need in order to identify appropriate response (e.g. GP appointment, blue light (hospital admission) etc. Purpose is to aid detection and prevention in support of system and has been recently trialled in residential care home settings.	20
12	New Technology	Elmbridge	Modernisation of in home alarms and remote monitoring equipment, supporting wider virtual ward strategy	50
13	New Technology	Woking	Modernisation of in home alarms and remote monitoring equipment, supporting wider virtual ward strategy	50
14	New Technology	Spelthorne	Modernisation of in home alarms and remote monitoring equipment, supporting wider virtual ward strategy	50
15	New Technology	Runnymede	Modernisation of in home alarms and remote monitoring equipment, supporting wider virtual ward strategy	50
16	New Technology	Elmbridge (Hosted on behalf of all Boroughs)	Innovation Fund - trialling new equipment for remote monitoring and support	20
17	Accessibility	Runnymede	Feasibility work to develop a PCN hub at Egham Hythe	70
18	Accessibility	Spelthorne	Transport provision to isolated areas improving accessibility, appointment attendance, promoting independence and enabling people to use key services. Expended provision also supporting Net Zero agenda	90
19	Accessibility	Elmbridge	Transport provision to isolated areas improving accessibility, appointment attendance, promoting independence and enabling people to use key services. Expended provision also supporting Net Zero agenda	90
20	Supporting the most Vulnerable	Elmbridge	Dementia support provision	15
21	Supporting the most Vulnerable	Woking	Operation of a Women's Support Centre in Woking providing support for those suffering addiction, domestic violence or who are otherwise vulnerable. Provision of counselling, a place of safety and other support services	100

22	Accessibility	Runnymede	Bringing together a voluntary sector hub in Addlestone that brings together health, Borough and voluntary sector services as an integrated provision	50
23	Supporting the most Vulnerable	Spelthorne (Hosted on behalf of all Boroughs)	Wrap-around support to highly vulnerable people across our communities including, housing, employment, essential supplied etc. Targeted to support homeless population, displaced people following the Afghanistan withdrawal and any refugees coming into our Boroughs as a result of the war in Ukraine	185
			Total Cost:	2047

Disabled Facilities Grant Update - (Community Services, Darren Williams – Corporate Head of Community Services)

Synopsis of report:

- **To provide an update on progress with the Home Improvement Agency, following a report brought to Committee in November 2019 and post pandemic; and**
- **To outline the current activity of the team, ongoing recruitment requirements and challenges faced by the team in supporting residents**

Recommendation(s):

- i) to approve that in the event of recruitment for an HIA Surveyor post being unsuccessful, the Council procures and engages a specialist consultant, to support with the procurement of works, funded by the Disabled Facilities Grant; and**
- ii) to approve the increase of the non means-tested threshold for small grant applications, from £2,500 to £5,000, in response to increased costs experienced**

1. Context of report

- 1.1 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 gave Councils new powers to provide financial assistance for private sector housing improvements. In order to exercise these powers local authorities were required to formulate a Private Sector Renewal Strategy. In July 2003 the former Housing and Community Services Committee adopted such a strategy and the provisions thereunder were included in the Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegation to Officers.
- 1.2 In November 2019, a report was made to Community Services Committee providing background to the Disabled Facilities Grant received by the Council, via the Better Care Fund (BCF) annually. This is delivered internally via the Home Improvement Agency, within the Community Services Business Unit.
- 1.3 Members were advised of the challenges that had faced the Home Improvement Agency Team and the intended route to make necessary improvements, to provide a timely, supportive service to residents of the borough.
- 1.4 The pandemic has delayed the service moving forward since then, but this report sets out the progress made, details the current challenges faced and the next steps in the development of the Home Improvement Agency provision in Runnymede.

2. Report

- 2.1 The Home Improvement Agency (HIA) provides advice, support, and assistance to elderly, disabled and vulnerable people who are home-owners, who live in privately rented or housing association properties and who wish to adapt, repair, or improve the property to continue living independently there.

- 2.2 HIAs deliver a range of services to residents including handyperson services, information and advice, help to move home, make repairs and improvements, assistance in facilitating timely hospital discharge, adaptations outside and within the home, home safety advice and solutions and initiatives around warm homes for vulnerable residents.
- 2.3 Within the HIA is the Disabled Facilities Grant funding (DFG), which is received from Central Government via the Better Care Fund, to provide financial assistance where required in supporting eligible residents to make changes to their home to continue to live independently. The volume of grant funding received for 2022/2023 in Runnymede totals £874,000.
- 2.4 As a condition of receiving this grant funding, the Council has a Home Improvement Agency Assistance Policy which was reviewed and approved by this Committee in 2019. This is attached at Appendix 'A.'
- 2.5 To try and increase both flexibility and timely interventions, supported by the inclusion of the Regulatory Reform Order into the Home Assistance Policy, a table of different pots of funding, based around specific medical conditions (e.g. Dementia Assistance) or ways in which the DFG can be used to support the wider Health and Social Care agenda was produced.
- 2.6 In addition, the opportunity to look at providing a timely, accessible service by introducing access to non means-tested funding was included. Non means-tested grants are currently available up to a value of £3,000 for those with Dementia, £2,500 for minor works grants and up to £7,500 to support timely hospital discharge.
- 2.7 One of the key objectives following the report in 2019, was to be able to increase the size of the team to deliver both the level of service desired, and be able to facilitate all grant applications in a timely fashion. This was agreed in the Community Services restructure completed ready for 2021/2022.
- 2.8 However, with the pandemic taking priority, limited work in this area was possible and recruitment was not undertaken until the end of 2021.
- 2.9 Recruitment has now commenced, and the Home Improvement Agency Team has grown from a team of 20 hours of Administration resource and 9 hours of casual Caseworker resource to the following:
 - 83 hours per week of Caseworker resource
 - 30 hours per week of Administrator resource
- 2.10 We still have to recruit a Manager, who will provide the operational management support and direction to the team. This was expected to go to advert by the end of May 2022. There is also a full time Surveyor post, to lead on specifying works required, that is currently vacant, with the impact highlighted further on in this report.
- 2.11 Recruitment of the above resources, creating a team of five staff, has enabled considerable progress to be made in addressing the backlog of enquiries and applications that could not be progressed during the pandemic.
- 2.12 Since January 2022, the 54 applications from 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 that remained incomplete have been reviewed and progressed via the completion of updating applications, financial assessments, and assessments of

individual clinical need and all cases have either been completed or are drawing to a conclusion.

- 2.13 The team is now focused on addressing the 2021/2022 backlog of cases, in addition to supporting new incoming enquiries and applications. Currently there are 111 open cases from April 2021 onwards.
- 2.14 The dedication of the team in supporting residents since January 2022, has been very pleasing. The existing team members have supported the new members of staff through their experience and knowledge, embracing the new approach and ideas that the recruitment has successfully brought.
- 2.15 A major success has been the reduction in the length of time from initial enquiry to approval of grant application. This stood at between six and nine months prior to the pandemic but has reduced to four to six months. This is evidence of the commitment and can-do attitude the team are collectively applying to supporting residents.
- 2.16 However, the team still face challenges in relation to the processes they follow and being able to reach a point of works completed in residents' homes. These are:
- Access to Surveyor resources
 - Cost increases for materials and labour
 - Access to contractors to undertake works
 - Availability of equipment from suppliers
- 2.17 Regarding the Surveyor, together with the Housing Business Unit, specifically the Housing Maintenance team, a flexible approach to supporting DFG applications has been applied, and the team have benefited from the support they have received.
- 2.18 Despite efforts to recruit an interim surveyor initially, experienced in specifying adaptation works etc., Housing Maintenance have been unsuccessful in their attempts. The full time Surveyor post within the establishment is due to go out to advert, and it is hoped that a suitable candidate looking for a permanent position will be found. This post will work directly in support of the HIA, but will be based within the Housing Maintenance section, to benefit from the process etc., expertise and experience of colleagues around them.
- 2.19 However, based on previous experience of trying to fill vacancies in this area, Officers are concerned that recruitment will prove unsuccessful, leaving the continued gap within the service. As a result, Officers are proposing that in the event of a failure to recruit, a consultancy agency, specialising in this work, is engaged, that can be funded by the Disabled Facilities Grant provision. It is proposed that initially this arrangement would be for up to 12 months.
- 2.20 Increased costs for labour and materials have been experienced over the last six months. This has negatively impacted the ability to support applications for relatively small amounts of money, via the non means-tested small grants pot, due to £2,500 being insufficient to complete many of the "minor" works.
- 2.21 As a result, Members are asked to approve an increase in the non means-tested threshold for small grant applications from £2,500 to £5,000. In doing so, the Dementia funding pot will also increase to £5,000 but the funding pot to support timely hospital discharge will remain at £7,500.

- 2.22 Approval of the above will allow for a quicker response to applications, to avoid the potential for applications from residents who are not in immediate need of aids or adaptations, approval of applications will be subject to evidence of individual need.
- 2.23 Understanding that as the service is promoted (intended to start when a Manager is in post and the back log of applications is addressed), an increase in applications could potentially see the need to review the use of non-means-tested funding pots or a reduction in the maximum grant size. Officers will monitor this, and report back as required.
- 2.24 Members are advised of the challenges in accessing contractors to complete works specified and delays to the process as a result. Such delays are caused by two main reasons. Firstly, the backlog in such works across Surrey due to Covid impacts, has resulted in reduced availability of contractors. This is a particular problem given the specialist nature of the works required.
- 2.25 Secondly, the Council does not have enough contractors available due to a lack of procurement activity around suppliers that goes back as far as 2010. Officers recognise the need for renewed procurement activity, and it is intended that this will be a priority for the newly appointed Manager, supported by Housing colleagues and the corporate Procurement team.
- 2.26 A time limited waiver was granted in July 2021 by the Corporate Head of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Council's Procurement Board, to minimise the impact of a shortage of contractors. This avoided the need to procure each specified works. However, attempts to utilise existing Housing Maintenance contractors who have been through corporate procurement processes and join up on procurement with neighbouring Councils remains ongoing. Therefore the waiver is in the process of being re-applied for.

3. Legal Considerations

- 3.1 The Housing Renewal Grants (Services and Charges) Order 1996 specifies the services and charges which can be properly included within an application for a Disabled Facilities Grant. Included in this are the following areas that would be relevant to the role that a consultant would fulfil if required:
- Technical and structural surveys
 - Design and preparation of plans and drawings
 - Preparation of schedules of relevant works
- 3.2 Article 3 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 gives local authorities the wide discretionary powers, including to provide assistance subject to conditions or unconditionally.
- 3.3 The Authority is able to waive the means test altogether where the cost of the adaptations is below a certain amount. Means testing can be waived also for specific equipment types (e.g. stairlifts) or for timely interventions such as the prevention of falls. Means testing can also be waived where the applicant would face excessive financial hardship if required to pay for the entirety of the adaptations.

4. Equality implications

- 4.1 There are no equality implications resulting from this specific report. However, the DFG is aimed at helping residents who would most likely share the protected characteristics of age and disability.

5. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

- 5.1 There are no environmental implications resulting from this specific report, however it is intended that as part of the process to appoint new contractors in the future, quality questions and evidence of their environmental credentials will be sought as part of the process.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 Solid progress has been made in 2022 in improving the service available via the Home Improvement Agency and in addressing the backlog of cases created because of the pandemic.

- 6.2 Whilst progress has been made, there are still some challenges within the process undertaken to support some of the borough's most vulnerable residents, and having identified these, Members are asked to support the continued improvement and timeliness of the service provided to residents.

(To resolve)

Background Papers

None Stated.

Home Improvement Agency Assistance Policy

November 2019

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the financial assistance that will be provided to private homeowners and tenants in Runnymede and procedures introduced in response to the adoption of the Runnymede Private Sector Renewal Strategy 2019 to 2024.

The Council's obligations, powers and duties in relation to the provision of financial assistance for repair and adaptations are contained within the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002.

Central Government provision for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and the Handyperson Service (HPS) is allocated to the Council through the Better Care Fund (BCF) via Surrey County Council (SCC) and North West Surrey Clinical Commissioning Group (NWSCCG). This policy provides flexibility to deliver an adaptations programme, according to local priorities and available resources.

The overall aims and objectives of this financial assistance policy are:

- To assist low income elderly or disabled persons whose homes are in need of urgent repair to make their homes safe to live in
- To support the adaptation of disabled people's homes to enable them to live independently and ensure their homes are suitable for their needs or support disabled people to move to an alternative home that will better meet their needs
- To assist low income elderly, disabled, families with children who are homeowners and private tenants to tackle energy efficiency and fuel poverty
- To assist residents who have been discharged from hospital back to their homes to minimise bed blocking and support recovery from illness
- To provide a subsidised home repair service through a HPS to enable residents to maintain a safe and secure home environment

The underlying principles of the financial assistance policy are:

1. Homeowners should, in the first instance, be responsible for improving and maintaining their homes. Financial assistance from the Council is only appropriate where homeowners do not have the means to do so.
2. The Council's financial assistance scheme must provide best value. In other words, the Council must use its public funds prudently and effectively. Loans will be provided in preference to grant aid where this is considered appropriate and affordable for the homeowner. Because loans are ultimately repayable, the Council will be able to assist more people and improve more homes by this method. Grant aid will only be provided where loans are not appropriate.
3. Any financial assistance scheme cannot assist all homeowners in need, or even address all cases of unsatisfactory housing. The financial resources available to the Council are limited and grant assistance is only available in certain circumstances that have been designed to address the priorities set out below.
4. Repair or adaptation of a property for the existing occupier may not always be the most reasonable and practical solution. In handling applications for assistance the Council will have to assess the appropriateness of the case and give consideration to alternatives such as re-housing or re-location. It also has to be borne in mind that a homeowner's property equity can be a source of finance for home repairs and improvements even where the homeowner is on a low income.

2. Types of Financial Assistance

The types of assistance that can be offered are as follows and detailed in Table 1:

MANDATORY ASSISTANCE

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant

The Council has a statutory obligation under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 to administer mandatory DFGs to provide aids and adaptations to enable disabled residents to live independently in their own homes.

The eligibility criteria, scope of the works and general requirements governing DFGs are prescribed by the Government and the Council is unable to deviate from these requirements.

In order to be eligible for a grant:

- (a) The applicant must either be a home owner or tenant (excluding tenants of Local Authority owned housing) and
- (b) The applicant or beneficiary of the adaptation must be registered disabled or eligible to be registered and
- (c) a written recommendation from an Occupational Therapist that adaptation works are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the client for one or more of the following purposes:
 - Facilitating access to and from the dwelling or building by the disabled occupant;
 - Making the dwelling or building safe for the disabled occupant;
 - Access to the principal family room by the disabled occupant;
 - Access to or providing a bedroom for the disabled occupant;
 - Access to or providing a room containing a WC for the disabled occupant or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
 - Access to or providing a room containing a bath or shower for the disabled occupant or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
 - Access to or providing a room containing a wash hand basin for the disabled occupant or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
 - Facilitating the preparation and cooking of food by the disabled person;
 - Improving or providing a heating system for the disabled person;
 - Facilitating the use of or power, light or heat by the disabled person by altering same or by providing additional means of control;
 - Facilitating access and movement around the dwelling to enable the disabled person to provide care for someone;
 - Making the dwelling or building suitable for the accommodation, welfare or employment of the disabled person
 - Facilitating access to and from the garden by a disabled occupant, or making access to the garden safe for a disabled occupant

If an Occupational Therapist assessment is undertaken and recommendations made, the Council's Grant Officer may review the recommendation before a formal application is received.

Consideration will be given to whether the proposals are "reasonable and practical". If a private Occupational Therapist has provided the recommendation, the Grant Officer will consult with the Social Services Authority as required under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

Means Testing (also see appendix A)

The applicant and their spouse/civil partner/common law partner shall be means tested to determine what contribution (if any) they will be obliged to make towards the costs of works. Means testing shall not be applied where the beneficiary of the adaptation is under 19 years of age.

Grant financial limits

The maximum amount of grant is set by central government and is £30,000. Where a financial contribution is required, the level of grant will be reduced by the amount of any assessed contribution towards the cost of the works.

Grant conditions

It is a condition of the grant that the applicant or a member of the applicant's family will occupy the dwelling as an only or main residence throughout the grant condition period. The grant condition period lasts for five years from the date certified by the Council that works are satisfactorily completed.

A condition regarding repayment will be attached where the grant exceeds £5,000. The repayment condition will be applied where the property is disposed of (whether by sale, assignment, transfer or otherwise) within 10 years or if there is a change of ownership within 10 years of the completion of the works. Repayment will be limited to £10,000. If subsequent loans grants are made, the total of both will be taken into account.

Where a grant is subject to repayment conditions then the Council will take the following into account when asking for repayment:

- The extent to which you would suffer financial hardship;
- Whether the sale is to enable you to take up employment, or to change location of your employment;
- Whether the sale is being made for reasons connected with your physical or mental health or well-being;
- Whether the sale is being made to enable you to live with or near a person who is disabled or infirm and in need of care which you will provide;
- Whether the sale is made to enable someone to provide care for you.

Having considered all these factors the Council must be satisfied that repayment is reasonable in the circumstances.

Appeals against this decision will be referred to the Corporate Head of Community Services.

DISCRETIONARY ASSISTANCE

In addition to providing mandatory DFG's, the Council has the power to offer discretionary financial assistance by virtue of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002. Using these powers, the Authority has agreed to offer discretionary grants for private sector residential adaptations in certain specific circumstances and where funding permits.

The policy has been revised in response to increased funding, through the Better Care Fund, and in line with recommendations made to Surrey councils through Foundations (national Home Improvement Agency charity) Adaptation and Equipment Report 2017.

Any discretionary assistance will only be considered having regard to the financial resources available at the time.

Feasibility grant

A feasibility grant can be used:

- if an Occupational Therapist assessment is undertaken and recommendations made for a DFG, and
- you qualify financially for a mandatory DFG, and
- if you need to get a structural survey done for more complex disabled adaptations , or
- to investigate other options in line with the OT's recommendation so you get the most suitable adaptation

There is a limit of £5,000 for this grant and where proposed works are feasible it will be applied to the DFG. For example if a person has a £5,000 feasibility grant then the maximum mandatory DFG would be £25,000.

A DFG means test will be undertaken of the disabled person and any partner to determine eligibility for this grant. If the disabled person is a child, the parents or legal guardian are not means tested.

Relocation Grant

Where it is assessed that adaptation works required to a property relating to a disabled person are uneconomical or considered unreasonable and/or impracticable having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling or building, the Council has discretion to provide grant aid to assist in the reasonable costs associated in moving to a pre-adapted or more easily adaptable property.

These costs may include:

- Removal expenses
- Legal costs
- Valuation costs

These costs will not include those related to the purchase of a home, such as stamp duty or a deposit.

The applicant must be either an owner-occupier or tenant.

The relevant person must be a disabled person within the household, registered or eligible to be registered with Adult Social Care.

There is a limit of £10,000 for this grant per application. It will also be possible to apply for DFG for the new property, however to a maximum combined value of £30,000 if within Runnymede borough. For example if a person has a £10,000 relocation grant then the maximum DFG at that new property would be £20,000.

The Council reserves the right to place a legal charge on the property, for repayment of this grant, if the property is sold or ownership transferred within ten years of the award in line with the .

A DFG means test will be undertaken of the disabled person and any partner to determine eligibility for this grant. If the disabled person is a child, the parents or legal guardian are not means tested.

Discretionary Adaptation Assistance (DAA)

In some cases the extent of the aids and adaptation required for a disabled applicant is extensive and the total cost of the work may exceed the amount available under the DFG regime. Where the additional funding cannot be met by SCC, the housing association (where applicable) or the disabled occupant and all other sources have been exhausted, consideration will be given to providing the necessary top-up funds.

The Discretionary Adaptation Assistance (DAA) grant can be used for the following:

- where the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) isn't enough to pay for the works needed (?)
- where the works aren't covered under a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), such as adapting or making a home safe to allow a hospital discharge
- for getting adaptation works done quickly for a terminally ill patient
- for repairing adaptations that are already in the property

The maximum grant available is £15,000. Details of grant packages available under the DAA are in table 1.

To qualify for DAA the client must have:

- an occupational therapy assessment;
- or a referral from a health professional
- and savings of less than £23,250

Conditions of the grant

A repayment condition will be applied where the property is disposed of (whether by sale, assignment, transfer or otherwise) within 10 years or if there is a change of ownership within 10 years of the completion of the works. Repayment may be waived if there are exceptional circumstances requiring the sale or disposal and repayment would cause exceptional hardship.

Disabled Facilities Loan (for discussion – could be incorporated into Home Trust Loan)

You may be able get a Disabled Facilities Loan if you:

- own your home
- already have a Disabled Facilities grant (DFG) or a Discretionary Adaptation Assistance (DAA) grant but need extra money to do the works

Grant financial limits

The maximum loan available is £20,000. The interest rates are 0%.

Conditions of the loan

If you sell your property, you will have to pay back any outstanding balance on the loan. The term of the loan can be between 1 and 15 years, depending on how much you can afford to pay back each month.

Minor Works Assistance

Small grants are available on a discretionary basis, within an annual budget limit, to assist low income, vulnerable homeowners and tenants to carry out small scale works of repair or improvement which address their health, safety and security needs or otherwise essential minor repairs to improve the condition of the home.

These are small grants for urgent minor repairs and energy efficiency top up grants. These grants are only available for works administered by our HIA and only in circumstances where there is no other funding available to carry out the works.

- Maximum grant is £2,5plus any VAT chargeable and fees payable to the Home Improvement Agency.
- No more than £6,000 (plus VAT and/or Fees) can be payable in regard to the property within a 3 year period.
- Applicants must be over 60, disabled or otherwise vulnerable.
- Applicants must have lived in the property for a minimum of 2 years prior to the application.
- Applicants with savings of more than £23,250 will not be eligible.

Applicants must be in receipt of, or eligible for, a means tested benefit; or be proven not to be able to afford the works. If the applicant has sufficient capital, they will be expected to use their own resources and not apply for a grant. However, assistance can be provided with organising the works for a fee.

Minor Works – Clearance Grant

Small grants are available on a discretionary basis, within an annual budget limit, for complex social support for “extreme” cleans where there may be hoarding issues, but not filthy and verminous. The grant is aimed to support vulnerable clients in private dwellings with significant hoarding that impact on the client’s well-being and neighbouring properties.

- Maximum grant is £1,500 inclusive of any VAT chargeable
- Applicants must be disabled or otherwise vulnerable.
- Applicants must have lived in the property for a minimum of 2 years prior to the application.
- Referral from adult social care or Environmental Protection officers

Home Trust Loan Scheme/Major Works Loan

The Council offers a subsidised loan to homeowners to improve and renovate their homes. The loan sits alongside the existing discretionary grant policy and can help finance works where the applicant would be excluded by the stricter eligibility criteria for a grant.

Runnymede Borough Council is working in partnership with Parity Trust. Parity Trust is a socially responsible, not-for-profit lending organisation. By working with Parity Trust, a low cost lending scheme, subsidised by the Council is available for home repair or maintenance. These loans for up to £25,000 are available for elderly and disabled homeowners who would otherwise be unable to carry out the works.

- The homeowner must be in receipt of a means tested benefit or otherwise have insufficient capital or income to be able to finance the total cost of the essential works privately (this will be established by application of the means testing calculation currently used for Disabled Facilities Grants)
- The homeowner must either be disabled or be a person of 60 years or over, (if a couple, the older person being 60 years or older).
- The work needs to remedy repair or serious defects and will be inspected before approval is given.

The interest on the loan is fixed for the life of the loan at a low rate (typical APR of 5.63%). Parity Trust will do a full financial assessment and repayments will be set at an amount you can afford. If you do not qualify for a Home Trust Loan, Parity Trust may be able to offer advice on other options available to you including other low cost, non-subsidised, loans.

The loan will be secured against your property and applicants must be understanding that their home may be repossessed if they do not keep up repayments on a mortgage or other debts secured against it.

Runnymede Renewal Loan Scheme

Runnymede Borough Council will provide secured loans on a discretionary basis in accordance with legislative processes to elderly and disabled owner occupiers who do not qualify for a Home Trust Loan. The property must be classified as having a Category 1 or 2 hazard (as defined by the Housing Act 2004) and be subject to an improvement notice. The Council may undertake “works by agreement” after service of a statutory notice requiring those works to be carried out.

- The homeowner must either be disabled or be a person of 60 years or over, (if a couple, the older person being 60 years or older).
- The loan can only be for the cost of works together with ancillary costs that are needed to remedy the identified hazard(s), plus any VAT chargeable and fees.
- No interest will be applied to the first £6,000 of the loan. For amounts in excess of £6,000, interest on the amount over £6,000 at 5% per annum will be added to the repayable amount each 1st April following the first anniversary of the loan being made.
- Repayment of the loan may be deferred until such time as the person named on the loan and partner (if applicable cease living at the property).
- Any partial voluntary repayments that the client may wish to make will be deducted from the loan, reducing in the interest bearing element first. No charge or penalty will be applied to voluntary repayments.
- Clients will be sent an annual statement detailing the amount of the loan or loans, together with any interest accrued.

- The Notice will be recorded as a charge in the local land charges register. Repayment will be recovered when the property is disposed of.

3. Application process

General Conditions Attached to Grants or Loans

- A minimum of two estimates are required, or where appropriate the Council's schedule of rates with specialist contractors e.g. stair lifts.
- A formal decision will be provided within 3 months for applications to Minor Works Assistance and Discretionary Adaptation Assistance funding schemes .
- A formal decision on Mandatory DFG applications will be provided within no more than 6 months.
- Any grant approval will include fees and client contribution.
- The client contribution must be paid before work commences.
- The aggregate of interim or staged payments must not exceed nine-tenths of the amount of the grant.
- The assisted works must be completed within twelve months from the date of approval, or such further period as the Council may allow.
- The assisted works must be carried out in accordance with such specifications as the Council determine.
- The assisted works must be carried out by the contractors that submitted the estimates upon which the assistance was approved.
- The assisted works must be executed to the satisfaction of the Council.
- The Council must be provided with an acceptable invoice, demand or receipt for the works and any professional fees or charges.
- Advance payments will only be made with the prior approval of the Council before works commence e.g. if contractors request stage payments.
- Unforeseen works will be regarded as additional works which could not have been reasonably foreseen at the time of approval, but are necessary and can only be approved with the agreement of the Council.
- Works eligible for funding through an insurance claim will not receive assistance.
- The dwelling or home must be occupied as the applicant's main residence. The applicant must also certify that they intend to remain in the property for 5 years.
- Repayment of the grant is required should the home be sold or transferred within 10 years of the date that the works are certified as being complete.
- To assist with recovery in the event of a breach a grant condition, a charge will be registered on the local land charges on houses where the grant exceeds £2,000.

4. Home Improvement Agency

The Council provides a Home Improvement Agency (HIA) –to provide a dedicated service for elderly and disabled residents who need extra help to undertake repairs and/or adaptations to their homes.

The HIA will assist residents through the whole grant application process and provide advice on other assistance available. The HIA officers and surveyors visit the client in their own home to:

- assist with completing application forms
- undertake the financial check to establish the client's eligibility for grant
- meet with the Occupational Therapist (OT) to agree how the adaptation will be done in accordance with the OT assessment
- prepare schedules of work, detailed drawings and contract documents
- help in finding suitable and reliable builders/ contractors and in obtaining competitive quotes
- supervise the works and

- obtain the required Local Authority Planning and Building Regulations approvals where necessary for major schemes

The HIA service is non-profit-making. It is jointly funded by SCC, NWSCCG and the Council. It is also partly funded through the fees it charges for its services.

5. Handy Person Service

Runnymede Borough Council work in partnership with Spelthorne, Surrey Heath and Woking Borough Councils to provide a Handyperson service to residents of the borough. The service operates under the service title Homelink, with Woking Borough Council the lead partner borough, responsible for the coordination and delivery of the service.

The core objective of the service is to provide a low-cost Handyperson service. The service is for elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents to undertake minor works of home repair and home safety such as:

- minor aids and adaptations
- fitting of half steps and galvanised rails to access doors
- home security work, including key safes, door chains and spy holes
- installing smoke or carbon monoxide alarms
- electrical jobs such as changing light pendants, installing or replacing an extractor fan
- plumbing work such as replacing taps or washers
- small DIY jobs including changing light bulbs, hanging curtains or blinds, putting up shelves, changing toilet seats, assembling small items of furniture and draught proofing.

This service is open to homeowners or private tenants in Runnymede who meet any of the following criteria:

- are aged 60+
- have a disability
- are vulnerable in some other way, or

For tenants, we can only help if the work would normally be your responsibility, rather than your landlord's.

5. Appeals

Any applicant wishing to appeal against a decision on the provision or recovery of financial assistance may appeal in writing to the Corporate Head of Community Services

Any person wishing to complain about the level or standard of service provided should follow the Runnymede Borough Council complaints scheme.

Table 1

Insert Table of schemes once agreed

Appendix A - Test of resources guidance

Means test for disabled facilities grant

For Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) applications made on behalf of a child, or for adult applicants who are in receipt of a 'passporting benefit' *, the mandatory DFG grant will pay for the reasonable cost of works and fees up to a maximum of £30,000.

In all other cases, DFG applications are subject to a statutory financial means test. The assessment looks at the resources of the disabled person (the relevant person) and their spouse/ partner and their dependents. The test is used to determine how much, if anything, the relevant person is required to contribute towards the cost of the works. The applicant must pay their contribution (calculated by the means test) towards the cost of grant-eligible expenses.

Where the applicant (the owner or tenant of the property) is not the disabled person, it is the disabled person (together with their spouse/ dependents etc.) who will be means tested and who will be required to declare, and provide documentary evidence of, all income, savings and capital.

Passporting Benefits

Adult DFG applicants who are in receipt of one of the following benefits will be 'Passported' to receive the reasonable cost of the eligible works and fees, without undergoing a financial means test.

- Income Support
- Income based job seekers allowance
- Income related employment and support allowance
- Guarantee pension credit
- Working/Child tax credit – income (for tax credits) below £15,050
- Housing Benefit
- Universal Credit

Appendix B

Definition of vulnerable households

Vulnerable household groups targeted for assistance are those who may be particularly at risk of suffering health and safety problems as a result of poor housing conditions in situations where they do not have the resources or support to undertake remedial action themselves. Married couples and partners are treated as a single person when living at the same property and both sets of finances are taken into account.

Applicants must be:

- In receipt of a means tested benefit (as set out below) which will mean no contribution to make towards the cost of works, subject to the grant maximums. In addition to the income related benefits that are 'passporting benefits' for a DFG **or**;
- Have the state retirement pension as their main source of income with savings of less than £15,000, **or**;
- Be subject to a means test which closely follows the statutory test for DFG's.
The test looks at an applicant's income and capital and their ability to meet the cost of the works from their own resources.

Eligible benefits

- Income support
- Income-based employment & support allowance (not contribution based ESA)
- Income based jobseeker's allowance (not contribution based JSA)
- Working tax credit and/or child tax credit (where your annual income is below the income threshold to attract the maximum tax credit amount)
- Housing benefit
- Guaranteed pension credit (not savings pension credit alone)
- Universal credit

Package/Scheme Name	Policy Funding Scheme	Information Relating to the Scheme	Maximum Grant Available	Amount of Funding Required Per Annum	Means Testing?	Annual Budget or Non Ring Fenced Budget?	Referral Routes	Other Notes	Total Cost Annual Budget	Total Cost Non Ring Fenced Budget
Community Equipment Service Financial Contribution	N/A	Equipment installed via Milbrook for residents of Runnymede that are either not available through the Handyman service or required in an emergency in order to facilitate hospital discharge	N/A	£45,000	N/A	Non Ring Fenced Budget	N/A	SCC asked that this was increased in 2019/2020 to 65k to reflect 18/19 spend. However Handyman provision increased instead as pilot project		£45,000
Dementia Living Package	Discretionary Adaption Assistance (DAA)	Improvement of lighting and colour contrasts, signage, equipment (reminder devices etc.) improve internal and external access. Available to those with a diagnosis of Dementia	£3,000	£25,000	No	Annual Budget	Any	This package is largely the same as the Minor Works pot, however it allows for a greater maximum grant.	£25,000	
Relocation Package	Relocation Grant	To support a resident in moving from their home due to it no longer meeting their needs and it also not being cost effective or viable to carry out adaptations and other work required	10,000	£30,000	Yes	Annual Budget	Any		£30,000	
Take Up/Education Campagins	N/A	Cost of promotional materials for Social Media and paper based marketing campaigns	N/A	£3,000	N/A	Non Ring Fenced Budget	N/A	The offer of the HIA and Handyperson is significantly under promoted. In order to reach the right people and to ensure full spend on grant promotional campaigns will be required		£3,000
Handyperson Service - Service Costs	N/A	Cost of delivering the Handyperson service per year, without grant funding from SCC	N/A	£75,000	N/A	Non Ring Fenced Budget	N/A	If funding is not withdrawn, then a proportion of this pot would be required with the remainder carried forward to the following year. Funding four days per week of Handyman service		£75,000
Handyperson Service - Material Costs		Cost of materials for work completed by the Handyperson service	N/A	£50,000	n/A	Annual Budget	N/A		£60,000	

Home from Hospital Package	Discretionary Adaption Assistance (DAA)	Fast tracked repairs for people awaiting discharge from hospital or immediately after hospital discharge	£7,500	£65,000	No	Annual Budget	Referral by hospital staff or other health and social care professional. Referrals for assessment of need also able to be made by Social Prescribing Officer and Handyman service	Funding only available to residents awaiting discharge from Hospital or Hospice or who have been discharged no more than 14 days previous. Funding is available for adaptations to properties including the express installation of stair lifts and ramps (whenever possible)	£65,000	
Minor Works Package	Minor Works Assistance	Small grants of up to £3,000, available without means testing but subject to a maximum savings threshold and restricted to residents over 60, and those who are disabled (not required to be registered as disabled)	£2,500	£75,000	No	Annual Budget	Any	Funding for adaptations to support children are mandatory	£75,000	
Minor Works - Clearance Assistance	Minor Works Assistance	Small grants available on a discretionary basis for complex social support for extreme” cleans where there may be hoarding issues, but not filthy and verminous.	£1,500	£10,000	No	Annual Budget	Referral only by members of Environmental Health Business Unit and Adult Social Care		£10,000	
Major Works Package - Unforseen works and repairs)		For works that are not able to be funded under Disabled Facilities Grant scheme up to a maximum of £6,000.	£6,000	£30,000	Yes	Annual Budget	Any	Applicants will be signposted towards loan options in the first instance. If unable to secure or afford a loan, applicants can apply for a grant through the means tested process	£30,000	
Disabled Facilities Grant - Large Grants	Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant	Grants for adaptations for children are mandatory and therefore not subject to means testing. Means testing will be completed for all applicatons that are greater than the maximum grant through the Major Works package, up to a maximum of £30,000	£30,000	£325,000	Yes	Annual Budget	Any		£325,000	
Runnymede Renewal Loan		Funding available to officers within the council to undertake works in accordance with legislative processes. Only to be used for owner occupiers and a charge will be made against the property for all works. For grants of over £6,000 a 5% charge is added.	£25,000	£30,000	No	Annual Budget	Referral only by members of Environmental Health Business Unit		£30,000	

Sanctuary Scheme		Funding to support the council in fulfilling its statutory duty in providing secure accommodation for victims of abuse (in private sector housing) to enable them to live safely in their own properties	£321	£10,000	No	Non Ring Fenced Budget	Referral only by Police, Community Safety Officer or Community Safety Partnership			£10,000	
Boiler Scheme	Minor Works Assistance	Support for residents in replacing central heating boilers.	£2,000	£60,000	Yes	Annual Budget	Any		£60,000		
									Total:	£710,000	£133,000
									Reserve:	£70,000	

Community Services Committee Appointments 2022/2023 (Law and Governance, Clare Pinnock)

THE COMMITTEE IS ASKED to consider the following appointments to the Community Services Sub-Groups and other related bodies for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2022/2023:-

1. **Two Officers** to serve on the **Cabrera Trust Management Committee**. The Management Committee comprises the three Virginia Water Councillors ex officio, and two Officers acting as the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer for the Trust. The term of these appointments runs from the end of the Cabrera Trust's Annual General Meeting in 2022 to the end of the said same meeting in 2023. The Group meets twice a year (the next scheduled dates are on 14 July 2022 and 5 January 2023) and the retiring Officer appointees are the **Assistant Chief Executive** and the **Corporate Head of Community Services**. It is proposed that the current **Corporate Head of Financial Services** and the **Open Spaces and Community Development Manager** (once appointed) fill these roles for 2022/2023.
2. **Two Members** to serve on the **Chertsey Meads Management Liaison Group**. The Constitution of the Group provides that the meetings of the Liaison Group shall be chaired by a Member of the Council representing the Community Services Committee, and the other Member need not be a member of this Committee. In the past, Members have agreed that it is appropriate to appoint a Member representing one of the Chertsey or Addlestone Wards. The Group meets twice a year (scheduled dates are 6 September 2022 and 28 February 2023). It is hoped there will be a litter pick this Autumn and another next Spring and a site visit in the Summer. The retiring Members are **Councillors D Cotty and M Nuti** who have indicated their willingness to continue.
3. The appointment of an **Older Persons Champion**. Members are asked to note that when this was considered in November 2009 by the former Housing and Community Services Committee it was agreed that the duties associated with the post should be tailored, where possible, to accommodate the availability of the appointee. The retiring Member is the Mayor, **Councillor M Harnden**, who it is assumed is happy to continue.
4. **Three Members** to serve on the Community Services Partnership Board with Surrey Heath. The Board also consists of three elected Members from Surrey Heath Borough Council, the Corporate Head of Community Services and other relevant Officers. The retiring Members are the former Deputy Leader of the Council (now Leader, **Councillor T Gracey**), the former Leader of the Council, **Councillor N Prescott** and the Chairman of this Committee, **Councillor C Howorth**.

(To resolve)

Background Papers

None.

Agenda Item 10

Attached at Appendix 'A' are the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabrera Trust Management Committee held on 6 January 2022.

Attached at Appendix 'B' are the Minutes of the meeting of the Chertsey Meads Management Liaison Group held on 1 March 2022.

(For Information)

Appendix A

Runnymede Borough Council

CABRERA TRUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

6 January 2022 at 2.30pm via MS Teams

Members of the Committee present: Councillors C Howorth (Chairman), J Hulley (Vice-Chairman), and Mr D Williams (Honorary Secretary)

Mr P French (Corporate Head of Finance) attended on behalf of the Honorary Treasurer Ms A Fahey

The following attended in an advisory capacity;

Mr M Godfrey (Parks and Arboriculture Manager), Mr S Woods (Senior Green Space Officer), Mr B Miller (Green Spaces Officer)
Honorary Wardens: Mrs H Lane, Mr P Beesley and Mr P Grobien

ACTION

1. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 September 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

2. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor D Coen, Ms A Fahey and Mr T Ashby

3. **Honorary Wardens**

The Committee was advised that Mr Andrew Saunders had resigned from his role as Honorary Warden. The Committee wished to record their thanks to Andrew who had been involved in the Trust land for over 30 years and had provided valuable input. The Committee requested that the Head of Green Spaces write a thank you letter to Andrew to express the Committees thanks and appreciation for all Andrews work.

Chris
Dulley

The Committee discussed the need to find a replacement Honorary Warden. It was hoped that the volunteers group may have someone who would be interested in taking on the role. Mr Beesley would liaise with Chris Dulley in this regard.

Mr P
Beesley/
Chris
Dulley

4. **Actions taken since the last meeting**

The Committee was informed on various actions taken since the last meeting

Footbridge repair

One of the treads on the eastern footbridge had been replaced as it had been damaged beyond repair.

Treehouse and den removal

Officers had been alerted to the presence of an unauthorised treehouse and den structure by volunteer warden, Mr Grobien. The unauthorised structures were safely dismantled and removed from the site. As the location was fairly inaccessible and off the beaten track Officers were very grateful for the report as it may have been some time before it came to light otherwise.

Boardwalks

Boardwalks and bridges had been regularly swept during the leaf fall season to try and minimise slippage on the surfaces

Ditches

At the last meeting Officers were asked to confirm that ditch clearance works had taken place next to the town path leading down from the station towards the small bridge over the Bourne. The purpose of the work was to try and prevent overspilling from the ditch on to the town path during periods of heavy rain. The Committee was advised the work had been completed in August.

Forest School

Due to the pandemic activities had not re-started. The Forest School leader, believed families had used the woods more of their own accord during Covid. It had, however, been difficult to plan for official Forest School sessions due to fears of spreading the virus. She was hopeful that 2022 would see a return to the after-school clubs that had been running so successfully prior to 2020.

Tree Works

An order had recently been issued to fell two Alders to the rear of 28 Cabrera Avenue following an inspection showed them to have serious defects. This work had now been completed.

Litter

At the AGM in September, it was agreed that Officers would report back to the Committee on the levels of litter. Since that meeting it had not been necessary to submit any requests to the Council's Streetcare team for clearance of litter on site for either the Cabrera Trust Riverside Walk or Cabrera Avenue recreation ground. Monthly inspections had not flagged excessive litter on the site. Green Space Officers were expected, as part of the site inspection, to carry out a litter pick as necessary.

ACTION

Officers were asked if the issue of brambles and nettles going through the wire fencing into the Preschool had been resolved. Officers present did not have this information but would ascertain this from Chris Dulley (Assistant Head of Green Space) when he returned from leave. Officers would then advise the Committee via email.

Matthew
Godfrey/
Chris
Dulley

5. **Tree Management**

The Committee's view was sought on undertaking woodland management work on the site.

Officers advised the Committee that a management plan had been written for the Cabrera woodland in 2001. The purpose of the plan was to maintain the woodland as a marshland and to preserve the species found within in it. Wetlands such as this provided habitat for species that were unlikely to thrive elsewhere and were becoming increasingly rare.

Within the management plan six operation objectives were set:

- To maintain species variety
- To maintain woodland vegetation
- To maintain existing water table and raise it where feasible and desirable
- To keep some areas remote and wild
- To maintain safe access to some of the features of the site
- To open up glades along the riverbank

To date the works carried out within the woodland were predominantly undertaken by volunteer groups and contractors. Work undertaken included control of invasive species, maintaining and improving access, way marking, maps and information.

One outstanding objective of the management plan was the re-coppicing of Hazel, Alder, and other species along the riverbank, this would encourage the re-establishment of understorey species and improve the riverbank. It was understood that there was some re-coppicing work carried out in the early 2000's but none since. Mrs Lane reported that previous re-coppicing work had been very successful and was very beneficial to the flora on the site. The proposed work would also protect the habitat and biodiversity of the area. Officers reported that if the trees were left when the trees reached maturity some ongoing maintenance work would be required.

Whilst the Committee supported the proposed work, given the Trust's financial position at this time, they did not feel they could currently commit to a long-term program of re-coppicing. It was therefore suggested that a budget for a one-year block be agreed. This would enable a small amount of the work to be done and thereby give the Friends Group once established an indication of the benefits of re-coppicing.

The Honorary Secretary suggested that there may be other external funding sources to the Council, including potentially the Your Fund Surrey grant scheme. He would arrange to meet separately with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to discuss.

Darren
Williams

RESOLVED that –

- i) A one-year program of re-coppicing be re-established along the banks of the river in order to create a diverse habitat in that area and;**
- ii) A budget of no more than £4,000 be set for the re-coppicing of the trees along the riverbank and:**
- iii) The Committee review the re-coppicing works on an annual basis**

6. Draft Annual Estimates for 2022/23

The Committee was asked to approve the probable budget for 2021/22 and the draft estimates for 2022/23.

Mr French reported that the day to day running costs of the site remained relatively static year on year with the biggest cost relating to the supervision of the site by Council staff.

It was estimated that an additional £10,000 would be required to be drawn down from the Trusts investment holdings in 2022/23 to offset the net costs of running and managing the site. Assuming the net cost of £10,000 continued, the Charifund investments would only last another 8-10 years as each withdrawal reduced the investment income available thus increasing the net cost of the service. However, it was worth noting that values of investments would go up and down in response to market fluctuations. This could potentially extend the lifespan of the investments if markets increased but equally values and investment income could fall. It was therefore crucial that the Friends group was established to assist with income generation.

It was noted that the estimates for 2022/23 did not include any budget for the re-coppicing works agreed in the previous item. Now that the decision to proceed with a one-year budget of £4,000 had been agreed, the estimates would be amended accordingly.

ACTION

RESOLVED that –

The probable budget for 2021/22 and draft estimates for 2022/23 be approved

Paul
French

7. Any other business

The Committee discussed when the best time was to launch the Friends Group. It was felt that Spring/Summer was the most appropriate time of year but given the economic effects of the pandemic whether this year was viable or whether to wait another year. It was agreed that the most sensible approach would be to wait until March this year to decide. Officers would liaise with Phillip Beesley at that time to discuss.

Mr
Beesley/
Chris
Dulley

It was also suggested that if the Friends Group went ahead that the Launch Meeting was combined with the AGM. However, as the AGM was now held in the Civic Centre, it would be beneficial for any combined meeting to be held in the evening this year in Virginia Water in order to recruit local people. It was noted that the Virginia Water Community Hall had previously offered the Friends Group complimentary use of their hall.

Councillor Hulley suggested the Committee having a table/stall at the Jumble Trail being held in May. This event was being held in the Memorial Gardens and would be an opportunity to raise the profile of the trust land and possibly get people to sign up to the Friends Group. Councillor Hulley would raise this with the organiser and advise Officers accordingly.

Cllr J
Hulley

The Honorary Secretary suggested there may be grant funding opportunities available to the trust which should also be considered. He would include Cabrera Trust in future discussions with the Council's new bid writing Officer.

Darren
Williams

As the Honorary Secretary was new to the role and not familiar with the trust land he would arrange to visit along with Councillors and Honorary Wardens to familiarise himself with the area.

Darren
Williams

The Committee noted the importance of getting the Friends Group established along with any other grants/donations.

Mr Beesley reported that the Neighbourhood Planning Group Committee had been liaising with him regarding the trust land. The land was now 'flagged up' as part of the neighbourhood.

A wildflower expert had offered to do a walk on the trust land in the Spring. Mr Beesley would liaise with Chris Dulley when this had been arranged. Councillors would also be invited to attend.

Mr
Beesley

ACTION

Mr Beesley would liaise with Green Space Officers regarding the volunteer groups activities for the forthcoming year

Mr
Beesley

8. **Dates for meetings in 2022/2023**

The AGM and the July meeting of the Cabrera Trust Management Committee is scheduled to be held on **Thursday 14 July 2022 at 2.30pm.**
(Subject to change)

The January 2023 meeting is scheduled to be held on **Thursday 5 January 2023 at 2.30pm.**

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 3.27 pm)

Runnymede Borough CouncilChertsey Meads Management Liaison GroupTuesday, 1 March 2022 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillor D Cotty (Chairman), Councillor M Nuti, V Baldwin, R Deacock, G Drake, K Drury, N Johnson, H Lane, D Mead, M Nichols, B Phillips, M Ray and T A Stevens

Members of the Committee absent: J Denton, I Girvan, F Harmer, J Hearne, G James, C Noakes, J O'Gorman and D Turner

Advisors Present: Mr C Dulley and Ms J Harper

1 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Liaison Group held on 31 August 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Isobel Girvan, Fran Harmer, Jane Hearne, Cynthia Noakes and Jim O'Gorman.

3 **Membership of the Management Liaison Group**

The Group welcomed new member, Mrs Valerie Baldwin, who had been appointed as a residents' representative. At the last meeting it had been agreed to go out on a recruitment drive to attract new members. This was done via social media, posters on site and on display at the Council Offices, and a press release.

The response had been very good, resulting in 10 people coming forward for 5 vacancies. The Group considered all the nominations and it was agreed to make the following appointments:

Ms Sarah Hall – Local Horse Riders Representative
Mr Toby Athersuch – Local Dog Walkers Representative

There were other volunteers who the Group wanted to appoint which would necessitate amendments to the Group's Constitution which could be done under delegated authority. It was suggested that a member of the Conservation Volunteers be changed to a person with an active interest in conservation, and to amend a member of the Environment Agency to a person with an active interest in the Environment as neither organisation had appointed or attended any meetings for some years. This would accommodate two of the volunteers with relevant experience and expertise in these areas, Mr J Alexander and Mr P Bickford.

There was also a vacancy for a member of Surrey Bird Club. [After the meeting they were approached to see if they had a replacement for Hugh Evans, who had retired, and if not to suggest that the definition be widened to a person with a love of nature, as this would accommodate another of the potential members].

It was agreed to follow this up with an email to Group Members confirming the details and to contact the other people thanking them for their interest and to put them on a waiting list and invite them to events such as the litter picks.

4 **Update on Actions from the Last Meeting**

The Group was provided with updates on the following five topics since the last meeting:

Moorings – To date the overstaying moorer, despite indications that he would move on, had not. Officers would continue their efforts in this regard and an update would be provided in due course.

SANGs Leaflets – Officers confirmed that the vandalised dispenser would be replaced and replenished accordingly.

UK Power Networks (UKPN) Proposal – The Group was advised that colleagues in Legal Services were waiting for some technical information from the design engineer, so as to be able to conclude negotiations on the wayleave for a new power cable to be installed at Dumpsey Stump. It was understood that it might impact on the Esso Pipeline plans and UKPN had been advised to contact them to discuss further and prior to the engineer's next site visit to review all elements of the scheme before proceeding. The latest position would be taken forward to the next meeting.

Bridge Repairs – The Group was pleased to note that progress had been made with Surrey County Council's Rights of Way Officer. A meeting on-site had taken place and the County Council had made contact with the landowner. Replacement railings could be installed at no cost. It was advised that the original railings were to prevent aircraft rather than pedestrians from falling in the river.

Boardwalk Extension – Officers were thanked for the extension to the boardwalk. It was confirmed that it deliberately fell short of the road edge. It was agreed to look at installing some hard standing, and cutting the reeds to improve sightlines. Warning signage was already in place on the back of the existing sleepers.

5 **Management and Maintenance**

The Group reviewed the management and maintenance issues discussed at the meeting with reference to the latest copy of the Management Plan.

Height Barrier – The Group agreed that since the new barrier had been installed there had been no reported failures. However, Safer Runnymede did sometimes have difficulty when CCTV coverage was interrupted. For safety reasons, they were instructed to leave the barrier open at these times. It was reported that owing to perhaps not understanding how the barrier works that some users had difficulty with it.

SANG Projects – The Group was pleased with the progress made with a number of projects funded by SANG monies. These included new finger posts, various new signage, repainting of picnic benches, road markings and tarmacking of the unofficial unsurfaced passing place. Officers agreed to confirm whether the more robust signs about BBQs were fire proof. Officers confirmed they had also gained authority to address drainage problems in the second car park with a new surface, bee bumps and a shingle trench. A new lockable gate would be installed under the barrier to discourage anti-social behaviour caused by dangerous driving in the car park. It was asked whether CCTV could be installed as an extra measure to combat anti-social behaviour. The group agreed this would be welcomed, resources permitting.

Memorial Benches – The second of two new benches was due to be installed shortly near the beach area.

Tree Funding – The Group was pleased that the long awaited tree screen consisting of some 1,200 young trees had been planted. Mr Phillips was thanked for his contribution

and he confirmed that the trees seemed to be in good shape. The Council's Tree Officer in Green Space was thanked for his work to get funding for this from Surrey County Council's Treescapes Fund.

Esso Pipeline Proposal – The Group was advised that formal confirmation of entry on to the site had not yet been received. However, informal conversations with Esso's agents indicated that work was likely to be carried out later in 2022. Members were directed towards the official pipeline website for the current plan. [Southampton to London Pipeline Project \(slpproject.co.uk\)](http://slpproject.co.uk)

Neospora – The Group was very sorry to hear that a virus affecting cattle had been found by the farmer who took the hay cut from the Meads. The virus resulted in livestock being infected by neosporosis which could cause a pregnant cow to abort or produce unviable calves being born. This serious virus was caused by dogs who were a definitive host of the parasite. The high levels of dog excrement on the Meads was a real problem. Therefore, the Council and Natural England had given the farmer permission to chain-harrow the least botanically sensitive areas of the Meads (where the Chertsey Show was held) to try and disperse the excrement earlier in the season and reduce the risk of further infection. Members agreed that information posters alerting dog owners to the problem was necessary to try and change behaviours and stop people allowing their dogs to foul the Meads. In addition, it was confirmed that the known commercial dog walkers would be written to. The Group noted that if hay continued to be so contaminated that the farmer would need to be paid to dispose of hay that was unusable.

6 Annual Work Programme

The Group reviewed progress with the Annual Work Programme which had been updated to reflect work that had or had not been completed as well as future works.

Some of the high priority areas included the annual mowing regime on the grassland, monitoring and maintenance of the reed bed, removal of invasive species such as privet, clearing vegetation around the Bourne, managing public use of the Meads through litter clearance and regular bin emptying, and habitat monitoring in liaison with Surrey Wildlife Trust.

The maintenance of the reed beds was an outstanding issue which members sought to prioritise and which would be discussed with the farmer that took the annual hay cut. It was agreed that the expanse on the opposite side of the road to the boardwalk should be tackled, but that weather conditions had prevented a proper cut back and re-introducing cattle grazing was currently too problematic. Opening up the western pond was suggested as another area in need of attention.

7 Events

The Chertsey Show would be taking place, subject to the usual permissions being in place on 10 – 11 August 2022. Much also depended on when the Esso Pipeline work started and how it might affect the show. However, the Chertsey Show's Organisers had to date little success with obtaining a definite answer. It was understood that work had commenced in Spelthorne and Chobham. Officers confirmed that the overflow car park would not be possible this year.

A date for the summer site visit would be advised once Dr Denton was able to confirm a date to lead an invertebrates walk.

Dates of Sunday 10 April 2022 (to coincide with the Great British Tidy) and Sunday 16 October 2022 were agreed for the litter picks. Both would be between 10am and 12 noon meeting in the first and second car parks respectively and including the children's play area

which Officers had been assessing for repainting of some of the equipment.

8 **Any other Business**

The recent storms had caused damage and more debris in the Bourne but it was agreed that in recent months the amount of litter on site had reduced and there were more visitors since Covid 19. However, there was a worrying report of people on social media suggesting it might be an idea to scatter wild flower seeds at the Meads which the Group agreed was definitely not to be encouraged and could affect the site badly.

An issue regarding a failed conifer on the border between Hamm Court and the Meads was discussed. A temporary BT line being installed would be brought to the attention of the Tree Officer in Green Space. [After the meeting, Officers confirmed that the BT engineers had agreed to cut a hole through the foliage to enable easy installation of the new cable.]

It was asked whether any of the tree screen could be registered for the Jubilee. Officers confirmed that they had been with Surrey County Council.

It was confirmed that SANGs monies was held centrally but that Chertsey Meads had benefited the most so far. Cattle grazing could be looked at in this regard in the future.

Monitoring the site for Otters and bats was a project to be undertaken.

The Group was thanked for their tribute to Dennis Wheeler, a much loved and never forgotten individual, whose love of the Meads and local knowledge was highly valued.

9 **Dates of Future Meetings**

The dates of future meetings were noted: Tuesday 6 September 2022 and Tuesday 28 February 2023, to be held at the Civic Centre in Addlestone.

(The meeting ended at 8.32 pm.)

Chairman

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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