

## Runnymede Pleasure Grounds Draft Estimates 2022/2023 (Financial Services, Jill Stockdale)

### Synopsis of report:

To recommend the draft annual estimates under this Committees remit for the next financial year.

### Recommendation(s):

the proposed financial projection set out in Appendix 'A' be approved

## 1. Context of report

- 1.1 Runnymede Pleasure Grounds (RPG) is a public open space on the banks of the River Thames, mid-way between Egham and Old Windsor. It is held by the Council as Trustee and the Trustee function is delegated to this Committee. It therefore falls upon Members of this Committee to exercise that function in accordance with the terms of the Trust and in the best interests of the Trust.
- 1.2 The Council manages the Trust land using the same staff and resources as the Council's own parks and open spaces.
- 1.3 Members are asked to consider the probable budget for 2021/2022 and the proposed budget for 2022/2023.

## 2. Report

### Budget Setting

- 2.1 The budget is the expression in financial terms of the Trust's policies over the next year and is a statement of intention against which achievement can be compared.
- 2.2 In preparing the budget for the Trust, the same assumptions have been made as those used to prepare the Council's own budgets.
- 2.3 The 2021/2022 budget was agreed by the Community Services Committee in January 2021. The revised 2021/2022 and proposed 2022/2023 budget for the Trust is set out in Appendix 'A'.
- 2.4 Year on year, budgets change very little at the site with the exception of parking income, which is highly dependent on a hot summer.
- 2.5 In order to maximise the income received from car parking at the pleasure ground, a new Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system was installed in March 2021, this was to ensure that all users of the car park were charged appropriately for their stay. An update on this is included in the next report on this agenda.
- 2.6 The original budget for 2021/2022 was based on the high level of income generated in 2020/2021, during the first year of the pandemic when staycation and a hot summer meant that numbers of visitors to the site

increased significantly. This was further increased in the expectation that the new ANPR system would generate additional income for the site.

- 2.7 The ANPR system went live at the beginning of this financial year and we expect income to be on a par with the original budget. This is good news as mentioned in point 2.6 above the weather last summer was particularly good, compared to the adverse weather conditions experienced this summer and the fact that lockdown restrictions are no longer in place. It is also pleasing to note that this is a vast improvement when compared to pre-COVID figures of £103,000 in 2018/2019 and £92,000 in 2019/2020.

### Reserves

- 2.8 The Trust currently runs at a surplus as a result of the car parking and other income producing activities located on the land. All surpluses are held in reserves to cover for any unexpected expenditure requirements.
- 2.9 At its meeting in January 2011, the former Leisure and Environment Committee was informed that it was unlikely to be necessary to carry a reserve in excess of £20,000, but there was some flexibility provided the Council did not allow reserves to simply accrue, whilst legitimate needs of the charity went unmet.
- 2.10 Following a major flooding incident in 2014, the Trustees agreed that £40,000 of the existing reserve be set aside in a restricted reserve in case of future flooding.
- 2.11 During November of 2017 it was agreed that Runnymede Magna Carta Legacy would pay £25,000 to Runnymede pleasure ground to cover the cost of maintaining and insuring the statute of HM Queen Elizabeth II for a period of five years. £12,500 was received on the 7 December 2017 which has been included within the restricted funds. The remaining £12,500 is still outstanding. Discussions regarding the legal agreement associated with the loan of the statute to the Trust remain ongoing.

### Fees and Charges

- 2.12 The Trust generates most of its income from Car Parking. Car parking charges were frozen in 2021/2022 and are in line with other local charges. It is proposed to freeze the charges again in 2022/2023.

<b>FEES AND CHARGES</b>					
<b>PARKS AND OPEN SPACES</b>					
			2021/22	2022/23	Yield
			£	£	£
<b>Car Parking at Runnymede Pleasure Grounds (Includes VAT)</b>					
Per Hour			1.50	1.50	
Coaches			2.00	2.00	
Per Day					138,777
Motor Cars			6.00	6.00	
Per Season (Residents Only)					
Monday to Friday Only, excl. Bank Holidays			50.00	50.00	

**3. Legal Considerations**

- 3.1 The Council must clearly differentiate between its role as a local authority and its role as charitable Trustee. In managing a charitable Trust, it must act in the best interests of the charity and must not allow its aspirations as local authority to result in decisions which are not in the best interests of the charity.

**4. Equality implications**

- 4.1 There are no Equality implications resulting from this report.

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

- 5.1 There are no Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications resulting from this report

**(To resolve)**

**Background Papers**

None stated.