

Runnymede Borough Council

Community Services Committee

Thursday, 10 November 2022 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors C Howorth (Chairman), A Balkan, T Burton, D Clarke, S Dennett, S Jenkins, A King, C Mann, S Saise-Marshall (In place of S Walsh) and J Wilson (In place of V Cunningham).

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors S Walsh (Vice-Chairman) and V Cunningham.

324 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 September 2022, were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

325 Apologies for Absence

No Apologies for absence were received. Those Members absent were substituted at the meeting.

326 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to record, as Cllr Jenkins' non-registerable interest as a Trustee of Egham Museum was already on the main register of interests.

327 Community Safety Annual Report 2021-2022

The Committee received for information the annual report on all aspects of Community Safety. This was primarily produced for the Community Safety Partnership, a statutory function under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Crime and Disorder Committee.

The report described the various Community Safety bodies and their relationship with each other, reporting lines, activities and responsibilities to fulfil Surrey's vision to protect and empower communities and residents.

Officers gave a summary of each activity area; including Funding, the Community Safety Partnership, Prevent, Domestic Abuse, Child Exploitation, Serious Organised Crime, Domestic Burglary, Anti-Social Behaviour, Community Harm and Risk Management Meeting (CHARMM), the Joint Action Group (JAG), Fly-tipping, Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs), the Community Trigger, Junior Citizen and Respect the Water – Water Safety.

Officers focussed on anti-social behaviour; the three most prevalent in the borough being fly-tipping, noise complaints and litter/rubbish. Members asked whether it was possible to have a breakdown by ward of noise complaints, further to show the types of noise complaint. It was reported that the recording system showed towns rather than wards and not necessarily by type of noise without further interrogation of the records.

Members were pleased that the Council actively participated in Junior Citizen; it was considered invaluable to promote engagement with young people. The Community Trigger was explained in more detail including the process to be followed to have anti-social behaviour cases reviewed. The free mediation service was promoted and Officers agreed to provide a link to the Committee. The Community Trigger was not the route for requesting new PSPOs which had to go through a specific referral and evidence based

process, determined by several organisations working together with the community. Officers agreed to supply the Committee with a copy of the PSPO Enforcement statistics produced by the police.

Members discussed the merits of the two types of deployable CCTV/camera; those from Safer Runnymede represented a significant outlay to supply as well as suitable infrastructure and a recommendation for use by the JAG. It was asked whether the Environmental Health deployable camera could be used at a specific location in the borough that experienced fly-tipping. [Environmental Health Officers since confirmed that it was used at this location.] Anti-social behaviour would continue to be monitored, noting the peak during Covid and subsequent fluctuations in incidents.

In the context of community engagement, Members requested that Councillors be invited to the next Surrey Towers Day of Action which had proved a success and an example of positive partnership working.

Officers were thanked for an informative and detailed report.

328 **Chertsey Museum, the Runnymede Borough Museum and Accreditation Renewal**

The Committee's approval was sought of Chertsey Museum's renewal of its Accreditation with the Arts Council England. This was undertaken every three years and involved a significant amount of preparatory work on a number of key policy documents including; the Forward Plan 2022-2025, Collections Development Plan, Access Policy, Documentation Plan and the Conservation and Collection Care Policy and Plan. These were appended to the report and reviewed by the Committee.

Officers provided Members with a brief history of Chertsey Museum, the Borough Museum, which opened to the public in 1965. In 1969 the Olive Matthews Trust was founded to care for a nationally significant (as described also by the V&A Museum), collection of costumes created by the late Olive Matthews who lived in Virginia Water. A partnership was established with the Council (the then Runnymede District Council) to run the museum in 1970 and the Trust bought 'The Cedars' in London Street, Chertsey, where the museum was currently housed.

The relationship with the Olive Matthews Trust was noted, including the vital annual grant of £80,000 towards the museum's running costs and the Costume Assistant's salary and additional hours for the Keeper of Costumes, annual exhibition, costume related events and other items relating to the fashion collection. The Trust's agreement with the Council also set out how the museum ran, its staffing requirements, opening hours, and rent on the main museum building and one of the collection stores.

The Curator described some of the artefacts in the collection; including the high profile enjoyed by the Costume Collection, items from which had been loaned to places such as the Historic Royal Palaces. The collection was also a valuable resource for researchers and costumiers from film and television.

The Borough's local history collection and the Museum's Education Service were also described in detail, all contributing to how important accreditation status was, being the UK industry standard for museums and galleries. The five key policy documents were all approved by the Committee.

The Curator described how the museum had operated pre, during, and post-pandemic and outlined the continuing recovery on visitor numbers as people were starting to become happier to go out into public spaces again. The Service had adapted to more on-line provision, created apps and audio guides and planned to expand on these in the future, as well as maintaining the high standard of the physical items at the museum, which prided itself on being accessible and devising new ways to engage with all service users and visitors. Funding for exhibitions and new projects was important and some recent successes were reported such as the Heritage Lottery Funding which had been used for the local literary figures exhibition and comic drawing workshops with schools. The positive equalities implications in the report were also noted.

Future plans regarding the education service, creating a Heritage Strategy and establishing links which supported the health and wellbeing agenda were welcomed by the Committee, whose appreciation of the museum and its staff was expressed at the meeting. It was suggested that the Curator make an annual report on Chertsey Museum so that people could keep up to date with all their activities and achievements. For example, joint working on becoming a Chertsey 'community hub' was an exciting development which Members looked forward to being updated on at a future meeting.

The Committee discussed how marketing could assist the museum further and it was agreed that Officers would pursue this in due course as well as how to use this to promote forthcoming outreach work in the community and events to celebrate King Charles III Coronation in 2023.

Members were reminded that they were always welcome to visit the museum for a tour.

RESOLVED that –

The Chertsey Museum Arts Council England Accreditation be approved, including the following key documents:

Forward Plan 2022-2025

Collections Development Plan

Access Policy

Documentation Plan

Conservation and Collection Care Policy and Plan

329 **Safeguarding Policy Review**

The Committee was asked to approve an updated Safeguarding Policy, and consider the appointment of a Member of the Committee as a Safeguarding Champion. In addition, Members were provided with a summary of work within Safeguarding since the amalgamation of Community Development with Community Services.

Officers advised that at the centre of the policy was the Council's moral and legal obligation to ensure a duty of care for children and vulnerable adults and promote the basic human right of a life free from harm, abuse and neglect, and that it was everyone's business.

The Committee was informed that in September 2021, acting on the recommendations of an earlier external audit of Safeguarding became a priority and a small project group was formed to take forward their implementation, including the updated policy. Key elements of the policy were to have:

- a robust safeguarding structure
- comprehensive training

- a clear and consistent safeguarding process
- centralised record keeping for staff (within HR) and elected Members (Corporate Head of Law and Governance)
- Representation at external safeguarding meetings regarding policy and participation in investigations and promotion of Safeguarding with partner organisations

Members agreed that putting these in place could create a best practice model that others could follow.

The Committee discussed the role of Safeguarding Champion. It was agreed that Members would be in a better position to appoint one or more Members (if allowed) with some additional information on the training needed, time commitment and more understanding of the role in practical terms such as timing of meetings etc. The role of supporting and encouraging Members to participate in training, understand the corporate approach and to work with Officers when identifying concerns within the community was supported. It was agreed that a period of 3 years would be appropriate. The Committee agreed to defer the appointment of a Safeguarding Champion to the next scheduled meeting in January 2023 to allow Officers to prepare a briefing note on all aspects of the role.

The Committee was fully supportive of the policy and commended Officers on their work to bring it forward. Officers were asked to circulate the policy to all Councillors and for it to be included in the induction packs for new Councillors.

RESOLVED that –

The New Safeguarding Policy November 2022, be approved and adopted as proposed.

330 Social Prescribing Update

The Committee received for information, an update on the delivery of Social Prescribing in Runnymede.

As a concept, the Committee noted that Social Prescribing worked to support residents/patients with non-medical needs that affected a person's health and wellbeing, connecting them to statutory services and local community assets to receive support and connect with their community. Members recalled that the Council had become involved with Social Prescribing in April 2018. It was initially launched with each of the four north west Surrey boroughs with funding from the Better Care Fund which enabled the recruitment of one part time employee.

Over the years, the importance of Social Prescribing had become more apparent, and the Council had been able, with partners, to draw down more funding to expand the service and employ more staff to deliver it; the key objective being to empower residents and increase their confidence to make positive decisions about their lives.

Officers provided a detailed summary of the process of Social Prescribing, how and why referrals were made and what assistance individuals were given. For example practical help with budgeting, housing options advice and signposting to activities and services to improve their lives.

Members noted that the service now employed three full time Social Prescribing Officers, and that Corporate Management Committee had recently approved an additional role for matters relating to the Cost of Living.

The Committee was advised that the number of referrals continued to rise. The total

number from October 2021 to September 2022 being 702. The complexity of cases was illustrated by two case studies.

Officers outlined the next steps for the service in liaison with the North West Surrey Alliance and voluntary, community and faith sector partners who provided the necessary Community Assets. These included the procurement of case management software and a submission to the Local Joint Commissioning Group regarding the remuneration of Social Prescribers along with plans for future training and career development opportunities and the ability to increase job security through permanent contracts being offered.

The Committee was very supportive of the service and looked forward to future updates on its success in working with the community and individuals to achieve positive outcomes in health and wellbeing.

331 Fees and Charges Community Services

The Committee's approval was sought for the proposed fees and charges under the remit of Community Services for 2023/2024.

With regard to Community Services, Officers had only increased charges where it was considered reasonable to reflect the fact that many of the services provided were to vulnerable residents, who in the current climate, often had to make difficult budgetary choices. With regard to Meals at Home, the charges had been held at current rates for some time and a modest increase was recommended to reflect rising fuel and food costs. Officers were asked to provide the Committee with the cost to the authority of not putting up fees for Meals at Home, including the level of subsidy in 2023/2024.

Officers advised that fee structures relating to Community Halls and Community Transport would be part of a wider comprehensive review. Officers sought to match fees to the various user groups and were working with the North West Surrey Alliance on support to residents under the 'Winter Pressures' umbrella. An example of the review with regard to Community Halls was consideration of a three tier structure which would benefit hirers providing services of community benefit but which were currently classed as commercial. This was welcomed by the Committee.

The Committee was advised that fees and charges relating to operational parks and open spaces were now under the remit of the Corporate Head of Environmental Services following a restructure and would be transferring to the Environment and Sustainability Committee. This required a re-alignment of budgets and an amendment to the Council's Constitution, the latter Officers would be addressing as part of its annual review.

Officers advised that some benchmarking had taken place with other local authorities, resulting in the recommended increases. For example the introduction of an annual fee for teams using the parks instead of an hourly rate. Some Members were concerned by the new fees regarding community events and how they would affect several local and long established organisations such as Black Cherry Fair, Chertsey Agricultural Association and Egham Show. There was also a new schedule of rates for the DSO for their services in supporting local events due to be considered by the Environment and Sustainability Committee. However, Members were informed that community grants may be available to help offset the new fees and that a new scheme to support community events was being considered. These would be administered by the Corporate Head of Community Services. The increase in cemeteries related fees of 8% was noted.

RESOLVED that –

The proposed fees and charges as set out in Appendix A of the agenda, be approved, to be effective from the dates within the appendix, or as soon as practical thereafter.

332 **Chertsey Meads Management Liaison Group Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Chertsey Meads Management Committee held on 6 September 2022 were received and noted (Appendix 'A').

333 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the remainder of the meeting during the consideration of the remaining matters under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act

334 **CCTV Opportunity**

The Committee received a follow up report to one considered at a previous meeting regarding an opportunity for Safer Runnymede to provide CCTV monitoring and maintenance to another local authority in Surrey. Officers were seeking approval to continue engagement with that local authority and when negotiations had progressed further, to sign Heads of Terms to secure the contract.

Members were aware that Safer Runnymede was one of only two CCTV monitoring centres in Surrey and was well placed to expand as a result of a direct approach by the local authority in question in March 2022.

Officers had been working through the summer to assess the feasibility of taking on this contract. This included involvement with the current equipment supplier and maintenance contractor, site visits and various meetings with Officers at the other local authority. These had all been very positive so far and also justified the increase in staffing resource that had been previously approved by Corporate Management Committee in June 2022 which could now accommodate additional cameras.

Members noted the legal and financial implications as set out in report. The potential to generate additional income to offset and ultimately reduce the overall subsidy of the service were welcomed.

The Committee was very pleased to support the recommendation, noting the important role Safer Runnymede had with partners for the benefit of the community and commending the staff accordingly.

RESOLVED that –

Officers continue to engage with the Borough Council named in the report on a potential CCTV monitoring and maintenance service contract and once received, signing Heads of Terms.

Appendix A Chertsey Meads Management Liaison Group - Minutes 6 September 2022

(The meeting ended at 9.43 pm.)

Chairman

Runnymede Borough Council

Chertsey Meads Management Liaison Group

Tuesday, 6 September 2022 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors D Cotty (Chairman), M Nuti, J Alexander, P Bickford, G Drake, A Goddard, S Hall, J Hearne, N Johnson, C Longman, M Nichols, C Noakes, J O'Gorman, M Ray, T A Stevens and D Turner.

Members of the Committee absent: T Athersuch, V Baldwin, R Deacock, J Denton, K Drury, I Girvan, F Harmer, G James, H Lane, D Mead and B Phillips.

In attendance: Councillor S Saise-Marshall.

1 Election of Chairman

Councillor D Cotty was re-elected as Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2022/2023.

2 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3 Membership of the Management Liaison Group

Following a successful recruitment drive earlier in the year, new members of the Group were welcomed to the meeting and an updated copy of the Group's Constitution was noted to reflect this accordingly. There were now 15 categories of voting members and 26 people filling those roles, supported by 2 advisory members representing the Council's Green Space team. There was also a waiting list and people the secretary kept in touch with to notify them of events such as the site visit and litter pick.

Since the last meeting, Chris Dulley, Assistant Head of Green Space, had sadly left the Council and Peter Joyce, Interim Head of Green Space, was introduced to the meeting.

4 Update on Actions from the Last Meeting

Mr Joyce provided members with an update on some of the actions since the last meeting.

Moorings – Officers were having on-going discussions with regard to how to address the long standing problem with over stay moorers. It was thought that one of the vessels was being occupied from time to time. When challenged by a member of the Group they had refused to comply with the byelaws which only permitted short stay moorings. In addition, a danger of oil spillage into The Thames was observed. Members considered more robust signage was required.

Mr Joyce confirmed that a site visit would take place in the near future with the new Corporate Head of Environmental Services and the Council's newly appointed Property Lawyer under whom the operational elements of Green Space were likely to sit following a departmental restructure.

SANGs leaflet dispenser – The dispenser had been replaced and replenished. Mr Joyce

asked for a volunteer who could keep it stocked up as it appeared that 2,000 had been distributed.

UK Power Networks (UKPN) – Members noted that progress had been made, a route identified, the necessary wayleave applied for by UKPN and approved by Fields in Trust, and plans in hand for completion of the new cable so that a new and more robust power supply to Dumsey Stump could be achieved which could also facilitate further improvements to car park 2. It had been advised by the Council's Property Lawyer that a botanical survey should be commissioned prior to works commencing.

Bridge Repairs – The metal railings had been removed from the concrete bridge through to the fields leading to Hamm Court and Meadowlands but no further works had taken place.

5 **Security and Anti-Social Behaviour**

The Group discussed recent anti-social behaviour which intensified in the summer months. Examples included BBQs, bonfires, gatherings and overnight camping, as well as fly tipping, vandalism of signage and using car park 2 as a meeting place for people having impromptu raves. All of these contravened the byelaws.

Incidents had been reported to the Police, but their limited resources meant that residents were often in the position of having to challenge these visitors on The Meads which resulted on some occasions in aggressive behaviour towards the residents

The lack of a toilet on site and problems with accessing the one at a nearby local public house which was in theory meant to be available to the public under an historic section 106 agreement did not help matters.

The improvements to car park 2 (resurfacing and a new manual lockable gate) were welcomed and it was suggested that the use of deployable CCTV cameras rather than expensive permanent fixtures linked to Safer Runnymede might assist in identifying the persistent offenders. It was agreed that additional bee bumps along the approach road might deter speeding vehicles, subject to funding being available.

Generally speaking, the Group did not favour additional gates at either location suggested by the Council's Community Safety Officer owing to concerns about displacement and access for emergency vehicles. If the main entrance to The Meads could be maintained in working order members considered this should be sufficient.

Mr Joyce agreed to investigate the installation of a temporary toilet on site as well as more robust signage in the two main beach areas and car parks to cover the forms of anti-social behaviour discussed at the meeting and the dangers of causing fires in the area. He offered to have a site visit with interested members of the Group to see where concerns lay and discuss possible solutions.

6 **Management and Maintenance**

Mr Joyce updated members on various management and maintenance issues:

Height Barrier – the height barrier at the main entrance of The Meads which was thought to be functioning was in fact permanently open. It was thought that this was owing to the heavy traffic flow associated with the Esso pipeline replacement works. [It has since been confirmed that there was an issue with the position of the crane in the boatyard and sightlines for the Safer Runnymede camera which Officers are pursuing.] Ideally, the Group preferred that the barrier was closed, especially overnight, and people wanting access would need to press the button for it to be opened.

SANG projects – the picnic benches had been repainted and tarmacking of unsurfaced

passing places had been completed; with a further area which needed to be done as identified by the Chairman. As agreed in the item on security and anti-social behaviour more robust, permanent signage would be investigated to replace those vandalised during the summer. New finger posts were yet to be installed as was agreement with the County Council regarding the positioning of a new brown attraction sign to The Meads.

Tree Funding – Members reported that approximately half of the newly planted tree screen had been adversely affected by the recent heatwave, being swamped by grass and other damage caused by vandalism. A Group member had sent photos to the Council's DSO Manager. These issues would be followed up with the Council's Tree Officer in Green Space.

Esso Pipeline – Members noted that owing to a number of factors work on replacing the Esso pipeline was behind schedule and the position had not changed since the Group had been sent an email in early August. Reinstatement of the area when the works were complete was unlikely to take place before November 2022. An archaeological report from Esso on some artifacts found during the excavation works was awaited and a site inspection would be required before reinstatement could take place. It was suggested that consideration be given to replacing the sleeper posts with something more reliable and cost efficient. Mr Joyce agreed to look into this and ascertain whether SANGs monies might be available, or from Esso.

Members had positive feedback about the seven different contractors on site who had proactively assisted with some deer which had got trapped in the site enclosure and were also providing a security presence at the weekend.

Neospora – signage to deter dog walkers from allowing the spread of this disease was noted, but no visible improvement was reported.

Retirement of tenant farmer – The Group was sorry to learn of the imminent retirement of the tenant farmer. An alternative contractor had been used to do the annual hay cut.

Issues had arisen with regard to the recent wild fires elsewhere in the South East. Smoke had covered parts of the Meads when the fire at Hankley Common in July had occurred causing concern and distress for residents at The Meads. It was confirmed by the Group that consideration had not been given to natural fire breaks, corridors of wider strips of mown paths to reduce the risk of fire spreading across large areas. Mr Joyce suggested he investigate this further in consultation with local and statutory stakeholders, as any measures would need the necessary approvals.

Other maintenance issues were raised including:

- A request for the Horse margin signs to be more visible to deter riders from straying into the field around Hamm Court
- A request for an inspection and audit of the tree screen
- Inspection of a low hanging willow tree on the cycle path at Brackendene and a fallen tree in Fox Copse near Meadow View
- Trimming of the hedgerow beyond the Boardwalk to the end of Mead Lane and into Dockett Eddy
- A request for signage on the opposite side of the boardwalk was made to alert both pedestrians and traffic to its access point

7

Annual Management Plan

The group discussed aspects of the Annual Management Plan. It was noted that the Reed beds had not been cut in accordance with the plan and paths that were usually cut through the grass had not happened this year.

Mr Joyce advised the group that grounds maintenance was being brought back in house in 2023, and that these issues would be addressed through a work programme. This would have to comply with the Management Plan, in consultation with the Group.

With regard to the reed beds it was suggested by Mr Turner that the services of a reed bed cutter with a horse might be a good way of achieving the agreed every other year cut on either side of Mead Lane, and could also be a tourist attraction. Procurement of work of this nature would need to comply with the Council's relevant Standing Orders.

8 **Events**

Chertsey Show

Another successful Chertsey Show was recorded, despite the challenges of the location and the heatwave. Being further down Mead Lane had meant a longer walk to the show but most people had managed to cope.

Mr Turner raised the issue of being charged £3,000 for refuse clearance which hitherto had not been the Council's practice. It was hoped this would be resolved for the 2023 show.

In terms of activities associated with the Show it was suggested that some or all of the wooden sleeper posts could be replaced by a new hedgerow along Mead Lane and an attraction for visitors if hedge laying and maintenance was part of the Show. Such activity would have to be consulted on with stakeholders such as Surrey Wildlife Trust and Surrey Botanical Society whose representatives were unable to attend the meeting.

Annual Site Visit

Owing to resource issues the site visit in 2022 had been cancelled. It was hoped that a visit could take place in 2023 and ideas included a walk led by Pete Bickford before mid-April or one later in June/July being the deferred visit to be led by Dr Denton. The Group's secretary would send an email to gauge views.

Litter Pick

The next litter picks would take place on Sunday 16 October 2022, meeting at 10am in the second car park and Sunday 16 April 2023, also at 10am but meeting in the first car park.

9 **Any other Business**

The Group wished to formally recognise Benedict Miller, one of the Council's Green Space Officers, for his quick and effective response to incidents on Chertsey Meads including putting signs up in his own time to advise visitors and help protect the Meads from the dangers of bonfires and other anti-social behaviour.

Members were also keen to emphasise the positive aspects of Chertsey Meads which was after all a very special place to live and visit. People could participate in a variety of leisure pursuits such as paddle boarding, boating and similar, in addition to the land based activities.

10 **Dates of Future meetings**

The following dates were noted for the next scheduled meetings of the Liaison Group to take place at the Civic Centre in Addlestone:

Tuesday 28 February at 7.30pm

Tuesday 5 September 2023 at 7.30pm

(The meeting ended at 8.41 pm.)

Chairman