

MINUTES:

**of the meeting of the Runnymede Local Committee held at
10.00 on Friday 10 December 2004 at the Runnymede Centre,
Chertsey**

Surrey County Council Members

*Mrs Moira James - Chairman
*Miss Susan Bruce – Vice Chairman
*Mr R A N Lowther
^Mrs Elise Whiteley

*= present
^= for part of the meeting

PART ONE - IN PUBLIC

[All references to Items refer to the Agenda for the meeting]

The meeting commenced at 10.10am.

75/04 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Terry Dicks.

76/04 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 22 OCTOBER 2004 [Item 2]

The Minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

77/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

Declarations of interest were received from Mrs Moira James and Mrs Elise Whiteley, for Item 16.

78/04 PETITIONS [Item 4]

No Petitions were received.

79/04 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 5]

No formal public questions were received.
An informal public question time had taken place prior to the formal meeting. The minutes of this session are available separately from Sylvia Carter, Surrey County Council Local Committee and Partnerships officer for Runnymede.

80/04 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 6]

Mr Ray Lowther and Mrs Moira James asked members' questions.

Question from Councillor Ray Lowther

Question regarding Green Lane, Chertsey

Have investigations begun as a result of my request that we revisit the imposition of a 30 mph speed limit in Green Lane, Chertsey, from the 30 mph sign in Addlestone to Guildford Road, Chertsey?

Answer from Local Transportation Service in Runnymede

Runnymede Borough Council acting under the former Highways Agency reviewed the speed limit in Green Lane in 2001. The outcome of the review was to keep the limit at 40 miles per hour.

During the Green Lane Cycleway public consultation, which was reported to Committee on 12 March 2004, 6 comments were received from local residents suggesting that the 40mph speed limit is inappropriate.

Surrey County Council's "Determining and Applying Appropriate Speed Limits" policy states that lowering a 40mph to 30mph is unlikely to be effective in reducing vehicle speeds if the existing 85th%ile speeds are above 38mph. The 85th%ile speeds recorded in Green Lane are 43mph westbound and 45mph eastbound. Therefore lowering the speed limit should only be considered if other supporting measures, such as traffic calming, were introduced.

However funding for traffic calming measures could only be justified if a significant reduction in accidents is achievable. In the three years up to October 2003 there were a total of six personal injury accidents within the 40mph section of Green Lane, two of which were attributable to excessive speed. Considering the volume of traffic in Green Lane this is not a significantly high accident rate.

Officers have examined the latest available accident records and in the three year period from November 2001 to October 2004 (inclusive) there were a total of seven slight personal injury accidents in Green Lane. Two of which could possibly be attributed to excessive speed, although in both of these accidents there were also several other contributing factors.

Therefore the 40mph speed limit should remain.

Mr Lowther asked a supplementary question

I would like to know why Addlestone has a 30mph speed limit but not Chertsey, and to ask for consultation with local residents about their views on the speed limit given that police have been monitoring speed in the area.

Response from Will Ward, Local Transport Director:

The roads to which you refer are not directly comparable. We are prepared to keep the situation under review, and to discuss with residents a new scheme which allows residents to monitor local traffic speeds directly, once the results of the Elmbridge pilot are known in early 2005.

Question from Councillor Moira James

What arrangements are in place for the inspection and where necessary repair of the pavements in the Runnymede area?

Answer from the Local Transportation Director:

All footways that are "Public Highway" are inspected on a set frequency and the defects identified and recorded in accordance with a national code of practice. The repairs are categorised to define a response time which varies from 2 hour to 24 hour to 7 days to 14 day to 28 days to the "next available programme of work". The inspections are carried out by Ringway employees, on behalf of Surrey County Council. The Local Transportation Team meet with the two inspectors periodically to ensure we are happy they are doing a proper job and to discuss priorities. A more detailed note of the response categories is available for any interested parties.

Councillor James asked a supplementary question:

How are members of the public made aware of the procedure for reporting pavement defects?

Answer from the Local Transportation Director:

There is a single reporting line for all County services, charged at the local rate: 08456 009009 which is advertised in all leaflets in 2004, and any defects reported are passed immediately to the relevant local staff for action. Members of the public can also use the internet by going to www.surreycc.gov.uk Report a Defect page, and completing an electronic form at their convenience.

Question from Councillor Mrs Moira James

Question regarding social care services for vulnerable adults:

Following the encouraging news that external inspectors have for the second year running awarded Surrey County Council two stars for its social care services for vulnerable adults and children, can I be given some details of the position here in Runnymede as regards areas of progress or concern in these services.

Answer from Carey Jamieson:

Thank you for the question about vulnerable adults and children in Runnymede, relating to the services being awarded two stars for the second year running. Adults and Community Care will be reporting to the Committee in January and would appreciate the opportunity to include areas of progress and concern in Runnymede within that report.

Question from Councillor Mrs Moira James

Question regarding youth disorder in New Haw and Woodham:

" Having attended the recent inaugural meeting of the Woodham and New Haw Neighbourhood Panel organised by the police, at which local residents highlighted the serious problems being caused by a gang of youths in our area, I would like to ask -

What contribution is the County Council, in cooperation with our partners, able to offer to discourage such anti-social behaviour in Woodham and New Haw in the future?"

Answers from Crime and Disorder Reduction Partners:

From Carolyn Rowe, Surrey County Council Local Director:

The County Council fills 2 of the 6 statutory seats locally on the Crime and Disorder Partnership (CDRP) – with the Fire and Rescue Service seat being in addition to that of the rest of the County Council. Both as part of the Crime and Disorder Partnership and its sub groups, and in their own service delivery, County Council services contribute. The benefit of the partnership approach is that, as shown by partner comments below, a range of measures can be brought together to improve community safety.

In Woodham and New Haw, different County Council services are able to contribute to the local community on measures to discourage anti social behaviour – for example to combat the risk of arson, and to address speeding, underage selling. The provision of street lighting and a range of work with young people in schools and more widely are also important contributions. There is further detail about the work of the Youth Development Service below. The Police and Borough have put in place a section 30 dispersal order in the area, this followed a section 30 being introduced in the adjacent area in Woking Borough.

From Paul Bowen, Surrey County Council Youth Development Service:

It would be useful to know more about the type of behaviour that was reported. Young people by their very nature and culture will hang around on the streets in groups to socialise, and for the most part will not be engaged in criminal or anti-social behaviour, although this can be perceived by the residents as being a nuisance. Local shopkeepers have indicated informally that the Section 30 dispersal order appears to be achieving its purpose.

Surrey Youth Development Service is currently offering, or will offer, the following provision:

1) a recently appointed Rapid Response Team of 2 detached youth workers who, once fully operational, will be assigned to 'hot-spot' areas through the Joint Action Group (JAG), in response to Police intelligence. Their role will be (a) to see what's actually going on, (b) to identify the needs and wants of the young people concerned, and (c) report this back to the JAG through the Borough Youth Development Officer, so that a coherent multi-agency package can be put in place (that is, a community response);

2) a schools youth worker (Sharon Harrison) who works for part of her time at Fullbrook School, tackling issues raised by young people, so she may well be working with some of those concerned already, albeit in a schools setting;

3) support and assistance to the voluntary sector youth worker (Chris Hickford) who operates from the New Haw Library.

It may also be appropriate that the newly appointed Youth Police Community Support Officer, an initiative to which Surrey County Council contributes 50% along side the Police, patrols the area once he is in post.

From Inspector Alison Barlow:

The current concerns about youth disorder in Woodham and New Haw are being closely monitored through the CDRP Joint Action Group (JAG) meeting, which meets on a fortnightly basis and is attended by Police, Borough and County depts. This group meets to discuss `problem locations' in Runnymede. County departments which contribute to the JAG process include Trading Standards, Surrey Fire and Rescue, Youth Development Service and Local Transportation Service. The Local Director for Runnymede, Carolyn Rowe, also attends JAG on a monthly basis.

As far as police actions are concerned, the area is regularly patrolled by the borough police team and youths found committing offences are dealt with i.e. they are arrested, warned etc. All those that are spoken to have their details taken and a letter is then sent to their parents either by my Youth Affairs Officer or me. The area has a section 30 dispersal order in place for 6 months which allows police to ask groups gathering in certain areas to leave and gives a power for police to take home persons aged 16 and under who are found out unsupervised after 9pm. A youth from Woking also has a condition attached to his Anti Social Behaviour Order that he is not to enter the area.

From Kathryn Jack, Runnymede Borough Council:

The Skate Zone and multi-use play area was installed by Runnymede Borough Council's Leisure Services at the Heathervale Recreation ground, together with CCTV cameras with the intention of diverting local youths from skateboarding around the Broadway. The borough has also contributed to funding for the New Haw Youth Project for diversionary activity, including a street art project.

Mrs James asked a supplementary question:

May we be assured that the public will be made aware of what is being done to keep them safe?

Response from Carolyn Rowe:

Yes. Community Safety matters are reported to the local committee on a regular basis, the next report is due in early March 2005.

81/04 CULTURAL SERVICES AND COMMUNITY ARTS [Item 7]

The Chairman welcomed Mr Keith Willis, Surrey County Council Head of Culture, who gave a presentation using Powerpoint slides about the cultural strategy for Surrey. He also circulated packs of relevant information including leaflets.

He outlined the main themes of the SCC five year Cultural Strategy, which was agreed in 2002 as part of the Community Strategy, and invited comments on whether at this mid-point, it's themes remained appropriate. The title "More to Life" was intended to convey that quality of life extended beyond working and paying the mortgage and the intention to make culture more central in Surrey peoples' lives. He noted that the service has an explicit aim of trying to alter negative media stereotypes which characterise the county as mostly comprising of wealthy but undiscerning stockbrokers, since this is not

only insulting to its residents but also damaging to inward cultural investment and tourism.

Local initiatives for Runnymede included the Arts Centre which serves Spelthorne and Runnymede and supports the compulsory curriculum to age 14, musical instrument teaching for 1000 children, several local performance ensembles in addition to Countywide ensembles, the Open Studio scheme for the visual arts, special Government funding for St Ann's school, and two schemes offering free art courses for up to 20 residents.

Members discussed the scope for including properties in Runnymede for Heritage Day, and for celebrating existing historic sites such as Chertsey Abbey and Runnymede Meadows by holding events there. It was noted that Chertsey is a Curfew Town, and also has a market granted by Elizabethan Charter. Mr Willis explained that Heritage Day is for highlighting historic or unusual buildings which would not normally open to the public. He agreed to take members' comments back to colleagues in Countryside and Heritage. He explained that St Ann's school was selected for the Government scheme because the head was ready to move forward on it, and that as there is a further two years' funding to run it may be possible to include other local schools in the initiative. Mr Willis also agreed to convey to the Surrey Museums Consultative Committee the idea of developing a touring exhibition, which might be invited to visit privately run museums such as Egham.

82/04 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE LIBRARY SERVICE [Item 8]

Rose Wilson, SCC Area manager for Libraries, outlined local achievements in Runnymede this year, explaining that all public libraries must produce an annual statement on their work within the government framework. A total of 569 children participated in the reading scheme over last summer, and 740 babies' packs were handed out to parents and carers. The SCC libraries website received 200,000 more hits in 2004 than it had in 2003, although nationally the Audit Commission reported a 17% fall in visits to libraries and 25% fewer book issues. This reflected the shift in public needs from printed materials to other information sources, which was being met by more online subscriptions for reference works. Libraries in Runnymede had found that Webwise and PC Taster sessions have been oversubscribed and had had to be expanded. The Online Direct enquiry service is accessible within libraries and it will soon be possible to look up Mobile Library stocks from the comfort of a home computer. The Mobile Library will be adding a new stop at Ottershaw in 2005. Miss Wilson thanked members for their financial support to libraries through local allocations for maintenance.

The changes to opening hours at Egham had been proposed to accommodate local users who were often to be found waiting outside at 10am, and represented a small increase in opening hours.

Members were appreciative of the service provided in local libraries and asked Rose Wilson to convey to staff that they were thought of highly. The scope for expanding reading groups, storytimes and author signing was discussed. The limitations of current funding were acknowledged, whilst recognising that no libraries had had to close and free access to the internet had been maintained. A new system which would involve the

public self-certificating book withdrawals was being tested in Godalming and Redhill – if successful, such a system could possibly enable increases in opening hours at other libraries.

RESOLVED

- That the Committee had noted the range of service developments in Runnymede in response to “Framework for the Future”, and that the overall direction of developments in libraries in Runnymede met their aims for libraries.
- that the committee agreed the proposed change in opening hours for Egham library.

83/04 FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE: INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2005-06 CONSULTATION [Item 9]

Alan Oakes, SCC Fire and Rescue Borough Manager introduced his colleague Viv Koulermou who was attending to collate comments on the Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2005-6. He noted that Steve Dean, from the Chertsey Fire & Rescue station, was also available to answer questions. He said that the Plan offered an opportunity to respond to the Government’s proposals for the service, acknowledging that some members had already been fully briefed during a visit to the County HQ in the preceding week.

Viv Koulermou outlined the extensive nature of the consultation being undertaken, including leaflets containing questionnaires sent to all libraries, council offices and local committee meetings, a stakeholder seminar attended by forty people in Reigate, and information on a dedicated website. It was suggested that the seminar may be difficult to get to for people in other parts of the County, and Viv agreed that in future the Service may hold one in each of three areas instead. Comments were also received about the withdrawal of one Chertsey fire appliance last year, the Arson Taskforce and the Firefighter for a Day initiative to be run at Egham Station in March, the use of defibrillators, and installation of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors in care homes or sheltered housing.

RESOLVED

Members noted the consultation process, and commented that they wished to note their concerns about Proposal 8 for a Regional Control Centre.

84/04 WASTE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK [Item 10]

Carolyn Rowe explained that the Waste Development Framework documents are available on the SCC website, as well as at local libraries and borough offices, and that members of the public who wished to comment on this consultation must do so by January 31st 2005. The item was for information only.

The Chairman suspended the meeting for a ten-minute comfort break following this item, and resumed at 12.15pm.

85/04 PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN FREE PRAE ROAD [Item 11]

Nick Healey outlined the proposals for footpath improvements and a new zebra crossing to provide a safer route to school for children attending Stepgates and St Ann's primary schools, as well as those attending the local health centre in Free Prae Road. The local member, Mr Ray Lowther, said that although a resident had raised the issue of parking with him, he was supportive of these improvements.

RESOLVED

- a) that the detailed design for the improvements detailed in Annex 1 of the report should be progressed in consultation with the local member and local residents for construction in 2005/06;
- b) that traffic order notices for the proposed new pedestrian crossing feasibility be advertised.

86/04 CHERTSEY TO THORPE CYCLEWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY (Item 12)

David Mitchell presented the proposals for the Chertsey to Thorpe Cycleway, which formed another link in the cycle network for the borough. He said that the proposed route was more direct than the alternatives by road, but would require a change of use for the Monks Walk to allow for cycles as well as pedestrians to use the existing path. He noted that consultation was underway with the TESIS school, and also that the Association for the Improvement of Runnymede had said it was prepared to allocate £20-30,000 towards the total cost of £100,000 subject to approval by committee. An old stile at one end of the walk would need to be moved to accommodate the route, and it was proposed to re-site this historic feature within the village of Thorpe.

The local member Mr Lowther commented that the Thorpe residents' association and the Chertsey Society should be consulted, and that he hoped the rural character of the footpath could be preserved by minimising lighting, but that he supported the improvement. Will Ward noted that a multi-granular surface could be used to accommodate all path users including horses, and that it would offer Thorpe Park employees resident in Thorpe the opportunity to cycle to work by a more direct route. Amend the final sentence at 2.5 of the report to: "The speeds in Mill House Lane and Thorpe Road are limited to the 60mph national speed limit".

RESOLVED

The Committee agreed:

That following outline design the scheme should be subject to public consultation;
That the form of public consultation is agreed with the two Local Members;
That the results of consultation are reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

87/04 NEW HAW TO BYFLEET AND NEW HAW STATION CYCLEWAY [Item 13]

Nick Healey presented the report, noting that Byfleet Road carries a high volume of traffic including HGVs and is the third most popular road for cyclists in the borough during peak hours. Because it has only one footpath for part of its length, this becomes congested with pedestrians and some cyclists approaching the station. The injury accident rate is very close to the threshold for consideration by the accident working group. The proposals allow for efficiency savings as the road is due for resurfacing at the same time.

Local member Mrs James said that she supported the proposed improvements to safety and was concerned that the road should be monitored for safety given the high speed of traffic using it.

RESOLVED

The Committee agreed:

That the New Haw to Byfleet and New Haw Station Cycleway scheme be progressed to detailed design and construction, in consultation with the Local Member, local residents, emergency services and the Runnymede Cycle Forum.

88/04 EVALUATION OF WOODHAM TRAFFIC CALMING [Item 14]

David Mitchell presented this report for information. He noted that the evaluation showed encouraging results, and confirmed that several speed bumps were being moved.

89/04 LOCAL TRANSPORTATION UPDATE [Item 15]

Will Ward presented the report. In Section One it was noted that on average twenty parking enforcement penalty notices are being issued per day in the borough. Some residents and businesses in Englefield Green have given negative feedback. The Task Group will meet in April 2005 to review the scheme.

A correction to the report was agreed at 1.5, to replace DPE with “on-street parking enforcement”.

At Section 2 – London Street Chertsey, the Local Member Mr Lowther was concerned that agreement to a new pedestrian refuge should not prevent later installation of a controlled crossing point and said that he wished to agree to the refuge as an interim step. Will Ward agreed someone would meet Mr Lowther and Mrs Harmer to discuss this further, and David Mitchell suggested that the optimum site for a future controlled crossing might be opposite the church at the junction with Windsor Street.

Section 3 – Mrs Whiteley added that the suggested response to the Highways Agency route management proposals for the M3 should emphasise that the Local Committee opposed any new junction on this motorway within Runnymede.

Section 4 - in response to a question about a recent accident on Callow Hill, it was confirmed that anti-skid surfacing was being applied to bends on this road, and vehicle activated speed signs were on order.

RESOLVED

The Committee agreed:

- (i) to the installation of a pedestrian refuge in London Street at the location of the existing crossing just east of the junction with Heriot Road, subject to consultation with adjacent property owners;
- (ii) that, in addition to the comments in the report to be conveyed to the Highways Agency as part of their consultation on the M3 Route Management Strategy, it should be conveyed that they would not wish to see any new junction on the M3 in Runnymede.
- (iii) to the updated programme of transportation schemes as highlighted in annex 1 of the report.

90/04 MEMBERS' INDIVIDUAL FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Mrs Whiteley declared her interest in the proposed allocation for the Hythe school, as a governor there. Mrs James declared her interest in the New Haw Youth Project's allocation, as a governor of Fullbrook school, and also declared an interest in the final proposed allocation at Annex 1 as the wife of New Haw and Woodham Community Centre's chairman – she withdrew from the room whilst this item was decided and Miss Bruce took the chair. The wording for the final item proposed at Annex 1 was amended to read: "to facilitate drama productions, demonstrations and talks".

RESOLVED

The Committee agreed the proposed expenditure from the Members' allocations budget at Annexe 1.

The Chairman returned to the room and thanked everyone for their attendance.

[Meeting ended 13.15 pm]

Chairman's signature