



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(Runnymede)**

**Local Committee Public Engagement Protocol
& Task Group Representation**

18 June 2012

KEY ISSUE

The Committee is being asked to consider and approve the local protocol, task group terms of reference and task group membership for 2012/13.

SUMMARY

Local Committees are bound to comply with Standing Orders Sections 2 & 3 of the Council's Constitution, except where the Committee draws up local protocols setting out minor variations to working practices based on improving public engagement (SO 41.4). The Council has also put in place arrangements for public speaking in relation to Rights of Way (ROW) matters.

This report sets out the local protocol for dealing with public engagement at the local committee for the year 2012/2013, and seeks to confirm membership of the Committee's task groups.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Runnymede) is asked to confirm:

- (i) The provisions of the Local Protocol on Public Engagement, as set out in Annex 1;
- (ii) The terms of reference for the Youth Task Group (set out in Annex 2) and for the CPE task group (set out in Annex 3);
- (iii) The membership for the Task Groups, as set out in paragraph 1.7;
- (iv) To appoint members of the Local Committee to the outside bodies as listed at paragraph 1.8 of the report.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Local Protocol for Public Engagement

- 1.1 It is important that people who live and work in Runnymede are able to influence what happens in the borough. One of the aims of the Committee is to ensure that the aspirations and concerns of residents are taken into account when decisions are made about the local area.
- 1.2 The County Council's Constitution sets out how committees can engage with members of the public at formal meetings. At a meeting in 2004, the County Council agreed that Local Committees should have the ability to operate more flexibly in relation to public engagement at its meetings in public. Subsequently, on 28 April 2009, the County Council further agreed to extend public speaking to those occasions when Local Committees are considering Rights of Way matters.
- 1.3 To enable this flexibility, it was agreed that although Local Committees should comply fully with Standing Orders (Parts 2 and 3), they might develop local protocols setting out minor variations to working practices to enhance public engagement. These protocols would be subject to consultation with the Head of Democratic and Legal Services, and the Democratic Services Lead Manager.
- 1.4 The Local Committee has developed its Protocol (**Annex**) through formal decisions at previous committee meetings. The Committee is reminded of arrangements, which have been put in place to permit local businesses to present petitions and questions to all local committees.
- 1.5 The Local Committee will be asked to review the protocol following the completion of the Community Partnerships Team Public Value Review.

Task Groups

- 1.5 Each year the Committee is asked to consider the work that would be considered at formal meetings and the relevant task groups that should be established to support the Committee in its work.
- 1.6 In 2011-12, the Committee set up the following task groups: Youth Task Group, Joint Member Controlled Parking Enforcement (CPE) task group.
- 1.7 Due to the success of these task groups, the recommendation is to re-establish these task groups for 2012-13 with the terms of reference set out in **Annexes 2 & 3**. It is proposed that Mr Chris Norman, and Mr Mel Few be appointed as the Surrey County Council representatives for the Youth Task Group. It is proposed that the Surrey County Council representatives for the CPE task group should be the chairman and vice chairman of the Local Committee.

Membership of Outside Bodies

- 1.8 The Local Committee can make appointments to various outside bodies. The Committee is asked to appoint the following:

Mr Chris Norman to represent the Local Committee on the Safer Runnymede Partnership.

2 OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Committee can confirm the protocol as set out in **Annex 1**, amend the protocol or not confirm a protocol for public engagement.
- 2.2 The Committee can confirm the task groups (and corresponding terms of reference) set out within the report, consider new task groups, or not have any task groups. If a task group is established a provisional terms of reference should be agreed.
- 2.3 The Committee can either appoint the nominations onto the outside bodies as set out within the report or amend the appointments.

3 CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 The County Council has consulted on the Standing Orders set out within the Constitution. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Democratic Services Lead Manager have been consulted on the draft protocol.
- 3.2 Task Groups have been proposed in response to requests from Members in relation to the workload of the Committee for the 2012/13 year.

4 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications that arise from the recommendations in the report. Work to support the recommendations will be undertaken within current resources.

5 EQUALITIES AND DIVERISTY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The protocol seeks to extend the opportunities for all residents to engage with the work of the Local Committee.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications that arise from the recommendations in the report.

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 There are limited changes to the protocol being proposed to that agreed by the Committee in 2011. The protocol has been successful in attracting public interest and the Committee is invited to endorse the protocol set out in Annex 1.

- 7.2 There are no significant changes to the types of the task groups being proposed to that agreed by the Committee in 2011 as the task groups ran successfully last year to support the Committee.
- 7.3 Members have been consulted on who should be act to represent the Council on the outside bodies set out in Section 3 above.

8 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The local protocol enables the committee to engage residents in the decision-making process of the local committee.
- 8.2 The task groups enable the local committee to carry out the work of the local committee.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

9. The local protocol will be implemented for the year 2012/13. The Runnymede Parking Task Group will be convened by the Parking Team, and the Runnymede Youth Task Group will be convened by the Youth Commissioning Team.
- The Community Partnership & Committee Officer will advise the officer of the Safer Runnymede community safety partnership of the name of the Local Committee representative, and will request appointments for the two task groups from Runnymede Borough Council.

Lead Officer: Michelle Collins
Telephone Number: 01483 518093
E-mail: Michelle.collins@surreycc.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Sylvia Carter
Telephone Number: 01932 794081
E-mail: Sylvia.carter@surreycc.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

ANNEX 1: LOCAL PROTOCOL

Written public questions

1. Standing Orders 66.1 to 66.7 relate to public questions.
2. Standing Order 66.2 states that the notice for public questions is 7 days before the meeting but the local committee has varied this to admit questions submitted **three working days** before the meeting. It is recommended that this continue.
3. Standing Order 66.6 states that the number of written public questions may not exceed six with a limit of one question per resident. It is recommended that the committee agree that the number of public questions which may be asked at any one meeting will usually be **limited to six**.
4. Members of the public may ask one brief supplementary question provided it is relevant to the subject of the original. However, there is no obligation to reply at the meeting.
5. At present, an *informal* question time is held fifteen minutes before the start of the formal local committee meeting. This enables members of the public who wish to ask one or more questions on matters of local interest without prior notice to raise such matters with their local county councillors in public. It is recommended that this question time continue, and **be extended to thirty minutes**.

Petitions

6. Standing Orders 65.1 to 65.6 relate to petitions.
7. Standing Order 65.1 states that petitions presented require 100 signatures. The Local Committee has previously agreed to accept petitions with 50 or more signatures. In some circumstances it may be appropriate for the Chairman to exercise his discretion to accept a petition carrying fewer signatures, for example if the issue related to a scheme where fewer than 50 homes would be affected. It is recommended that these provisions continue.

Extracts from Standing Orders Part 4 :for reference**Public question time**

- 66.1 At the start of any ordinary meeting of the Cabinet or any committee, any member of the public who is an elector of the Surrey County Council area may ask one question relating to a matter within the Cabinet's or committee's terms of reference. In addition, a local business may ask one question at an ordinary meeting of a local committee. Questions will not be allowed on matters which are "confidential" or "exempt" under the Local Government Access to Information Act 1985 or on planning applications. Questions should relate to general policy and not to detail.
- 66.2 Notice must be given in writing or by e-mail to the Chief Executive at least 7 days before the meeting.
- 66.3 The Chief Executive may, having consulted the questioner, reword any question received to bring it into proper form and to secure reasonable brevity. Copies will be circulated to members of the Cabinet or the committee as appropriate.
- 66.4 Questions will be taken in the order in which they are received by the Chief Executive and directed to the Leader, Deputy Leader or appropriate Cabinet Member or committee chairman. Questions will be asked and answered without discussion. Any Member may decline to answer a question, provide a written reply or nominate another Member to answer it on his/her behalf.
- 66.5 Following the initial reply by the Leader, Deputy Leader or Cabinet Member or committee chairman, one supplementary question may be asked by the questioner. The Leader, Deputy Leader or Cabinet Member or committee chairman may decline to answer a supplementary question.
- 66.6 The number of questions which may be asked at any one meeting may not exceed six and the chairman may exercise his/her discretion to regard a single question which has been divided into a number of sub-questions as several different questions within the allowable total number which may be asked at the meeting. The chairman may also disallow questions which are repetitious.
- 66.7 Questions which are received after the first six to be received will be held over to the following meeting, or dealt with in writing at the chairman's discretion.

Petitions

- 65.1 At the start of any ordinary meeting of the Cabinet, a Cabinet Member or a committee any member of the public who is an elector of the Surrey County Council area may present a petition, containing 100 or more signatures, relating to a matter within the terms of reference of the Cabinet, the Cabinet Member or the committee as appropriate. In

addition, a local business may present a petition to an ordinary meeting of a local committee. The presentation of a petition on the following business will not be allowed:

- (a) matters which are “confidential” or “exempt” under the Local Government Access to Information Act 1985; and
- (b) planning applications.

65.2 A spokesman for the petitioners may address the Cabinet, Cabinet Member or the committee on the petition for no more than 3 minutes, but thereafter may not speak further. The petition may be referred without discussion to the next appropriate meeting of the Cabinet, Cabinet Member or committee at the discretion of the chairman.

65.3 Notice must be given in writing to the Chief Executive at least 14 days before the meeting.

65.4 No more than three petitions may be presented at any one meeting of the Cabinet, Cabinet Member or a committee.

65.5 The Chief Executive may amalgamate within the first received petition other petitions of like effect on the same subject.

65.6 The presentation of a petition on the same or similar topic as one presented in the last six months will not be allowed.

Public Speaking at Meetings of the Planning and Regulatory Committee (RIGHTS OF WAY)

67.1 Members of the public and their representatives may address the Planning and Regulatory Committee on any planning applications and all applications relating to public rights of way being considered by that committee. This Standing Order (67.1) also applies to applications relating to public rights of way being considered by local committees.

67.2 Speakers must first register their wish to speak by telephone or in writing to the committee manager by 12 noon one working day before a meeting stating on which item(s) they wish to speak.

67.3 Only those people who have previously made written representations in response to a planning application will be entitled to speak.

67.4 Speakers must declare any financial or personal interest they may have in the application.

67.5 Registration of speakers will be on a first come first served basis and speakers will be taken in the order in which they are registered, with the first five registered being entitled to speak. Where more than one person has registered an interest to speak, the subsequent speakers will be entitled to speak first if the first named speaker is not in attendance five minutes before the start of the meeting.

Representations can be combined if necessary. A reserve list will also be maintained if necessary.

- 67.6 The time allowed for public speaking will be limited to 15 minutes for objectors and 15 minutes for supporters per item, and to 3 minutes per speaker.
- 67.7 Only if a member of the public or their representative speaks objecting will the applicant/agent be allowed to speak and then only to respond to the points raised by the objectors, and will be limited to 3 minutes for each objector who has spoken.
- 67.8 No additional information may be circulated by speakers at the meeting and they will have no right to speak or question Members or officers once they have made their submission.
- 67.9 Speeches will precede the committee's formal discussion on each application requiring the committee's attention.
- 67.10 The right to speak will only be exercised at the first meeting at which the application is considered and will not normally be the subject of further presentations at any subsequent meeting unless significant changes have taken place after a deferral by the committee.

ANNEX 2

Terms of Reference for Youth Services Task Group

Objective:

The Local Committee has agreed that a Youth Services Task Group be established to assist and advise the local committee in relation to Youth Issues and the future delivery of youth provision locally.

Membership

The Task Group will include four appointees - two county and two borough councillors. In addition the Task Group could invite up to 2 members of the Local Strategic Partnership, and up to four young people from the borough, all with equal status. The Task Group may also consult with other relevant members of the Local Committee.

General

1. The Task Group shall exist to advise the Local Committee (Runnymede). It has no formal decision making powers. The Task Group will:
 - A. Unless otherwise agreed meeting in private
 - B. Develop a work programme
 - C. Record actions,
 - D. Report back to the Local Committee
2. The Task Group's function is to assist and advise the Local Committee in relation to Youth Issues and the future delivery of Youth Provision locally.
3. Officers supporting the Task Group will consult the Group and will give due consideration to the group's reasoning and recommendations prior to the officer writing their report to the parent local committee.
4. The Task Group can, should it so wish, respond to an officer report and submit its own report to the local committee.
5. The Task Group terms of reference and Membership is to be reviewed and agreed by the local committee annually.

ANNEX 3**Civil Parking Enforcement Joint Member Working Group:
Terms of Reference**

1. The Working Group will contain four appointees from the membership of the Local Committee: two County and two Borough Councillors.
2. The Working Group will advise and make recommendations to the Local Committee - it has no formal decision-making powers.
3. The Working Group will, unless otherwise agreed, meet in private.
4. The Working Group will keep a record of its actions.
5. The Working Group will make recommendations on any issues with regard to parking controls and civil parking enforcement.
6. Officers supporting a Working Group will give due consideration to the Group's reasoning and recommendations prior to the officer writing their report to the Local Committee.
7. The Working Group can, should they so wish, respond to an officer report and submit their own report to the Local Committee.