

Runnymede Borough Council

ENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE

25 February 2009 at 7.00 pm

Members of the Committee Present: Councillors H W V Meares (Chairman), D R Hamilton, Miss M N Heath, M T Kusneraitis and P I Roberts

Residents' Representatives: Mrs L Lawson and Mr A E Panter

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor J W C Perschke (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor C J Norman also attended.

500. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 November 2008 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

501. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received from Councillor Perschke.

502. ENGLEFIELD GREEN PLAY AREA - EXTENSION

The Committee was updated on the current position regarding the proposed Play Area extension.

A revised application had been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in January. Officers were aware that over 200 letters of support and one letter of objection from the Open Spaces Society had been received by the Planning Inspectorate regarding the application. Two documents were included in support of the application. The first was a 'Design and Access Statement' which described the process of design of the play area extension. The second document was the 'Sequential Test' which looked at why Englefield Green was chosen as the location for the play area by looking at each open space in the vicinity in turn.

So far, the receipt of the application had been acknowledged by the Planning Inspectorate and correspondence had taken place to clarify one legal point. The Council was still awaiting a decision on how the application would proceed and it was suggested that Mr Winfield email the Members when details were received from the Planning Inspectorate regarding a timescale for processing the application.

In the event of the application being considered at a Public Inquiry, Members were keen for it to be held in Englefield Green and not at the Civic Centre.

503. ENGLEFIELD GREEN CRICKET CLUB – LICENCE

The Committee was updated on the current position regarding the grant of the licence to the Cricket Club. The legal documentation was now in place, subject to resolution of the issues regarding the fun fairs and CCTV.

The Committee was informed that the Cricket Club Chairman, Mr de Ville had been sent a quote by the Council for two types of CCTV system to be used at the cricket pavilion that could be incorporated with the Safer Runnymede system.

The quotes were as follows:

- i) £4,800 – One, 3 metre, wall mounted pole with two CCTV cameras.
- ii) £6,300 – As above, but with infra-red technology so that it can be used at night.

The Council had asked the Cricket Club to pay for the CCTV. The Cricket Club would meet on 19 March to formally consider their position and Members would be informed of the outcome after the meeting.

Members requested that Mr Winfield find out what the ongoing costs might be incurred by the Cricket Club if their system was to be compatible with the Safer Runnymede system and monitored by them.

It was suggested that there could be the possibility of the Cricket Club buying their own small cameras and it was pointed out to Members that if they did this the cameras were unlikely to be compatible with the Safer Runnymede System.

Suggestions were given for grants for the CCTV to be looked into from AIR or the Schroeder Trust.

Councillor Miss Heath, who was also a Member of the County Council, suggested that she may be able to help the Cricket Club financially through her County Council Portfolio allocation and would make Mr de Ville aware of the details of this before the Cricket Club meeting on March 19.

It was suggested that the old cricket wicket could be used by the Cricket Club's junior team. A risk assessment would have to be carried out into the use of the old wicket before any decisions could be made. Mr Winfield was asked to look into this.

504. ENGLEFIELD GREEN FUN FAIRS

The Committee considered the arrangements for this year's fun fairs.

Members were told that at the time of the meeting Beach's had still not paid their debt to the Council and that the normal debt recovery procedures were still under way.

It was also reported that the repairs to the Green after the damage caused last October by Carter's Steam Fair had now been completed, bar a few additional minor works. It was considered that it had been beneficial to wait until recently to repair the ground due to the bad weather over the winter. Even though the repairs could not be done during the winter there was still plenty of time in the New Year to repair the outfield before the start of the cricket season.

The Chairman asked for a comparison of Englefield Green with other open spaces within the Borough with regards to the cost of maintenance. It was then reported that there was not a lot of difference between any of the open spaces within the Borough.

Members were made aware that any loss of income from the removal of Beach's Fair could be made up from the Parks and Amenities budget and that the impact would be minimal. It was suggested that Englefield Green Village Fair was a growing fair and would be a suitable alternative for the usual visitors of Beach's fair.

RESOLVED that –

- i) Carters Steam Fair be permitted to use the northern end of the Green in late Summer/Autumn 2009; and**

ii) Beach's Fair be denied access to the Green this year.

505. BYELAWS

A report was given outlining the progress of the application to amend the Byelaws since the draft amendment to the Byelaws agreed by this Committee in 2005. DEFRA had commented that the Minister was only willing to confirm additional Byelaws covering activities causing actual problems. The Council would need to provide evidence that the activities listed in the Byelaws submitted were a current problem on the Green.

DEFRA had since reviewed their guidance and the draft Byelaws had been amended in line with their current requirements.

A comparison was drawn between the 1979, 2005 and 2009 draft Byelaws. Members considered that the 1979 Byelaws were more comprehensive than the 2009 draft Byelaws and that any issues were covered by the general byelaw concerning nuisance to other users of the Green or by statute.

Members were made aware that there had been no recent prosecution for a breach of the Byelaws on the Green.

The Honorary Wardens had three concerns: firstly the control of fires on the Green, especially from the use of disposable barbeques which had caused burn damage to the Green. Secondly, the wardens felt that the Cricket Club's practice of "Knocking up" outside the designated area of the cricket pitch presented a possible danger to the general public. Finally, the Wardens wished to clarify their powers with regard to the enforcement of the Byelaws. It was reported that the Wardens, although the eyes and ears of the Council, did not have any legal right to enforce the Byelaws and were not insured by the Council. They had the same rights as a general member of the public. If they became aware of a breach of the Byelaws they should report it to Leisure Services Division who would take the appropriate action.

RESOLVED that –

the current 1979 Byelaws continue to be applied and no further action be taken on the current draft revision.

506. ENGLEFIELD GREEN - UPDATED LIST OF QUALIFYING PROPERTIES

The Schedule to the Lease contained a list of properties ("the qualifying properties") whose occupiers were eligible to serve on the Committee and who were entitled to contribute to the expression of wishes to which the Council must have regard when making such appointments.

The previous list of qualifying properties around the Green dated back to 1979 and had not been formally updated until recently. A new list, now agreed by the Crown Estate, included many of the new properties around the Green as well as the properties which were on the original list attached to the lease.

At the time of the meeting Officers had received a request from the owners of The Old Cowsheds requesting their inclusion in the current list of qualifying properties. It was for the Crown Estate to approve the list and Officers would contact them over this and any subsequent requests.

Annual canvass letters requesting the views of occupiers about the two residents to be appointed to the Committee for the next municipal year had now been sent to all qualifying properties. The deadline for the expression of wishes was March 23 and the final decision would be made at the Annual Council meeting on May 20.

507. CRICKET CLUB EVENTS

Members considered approval of the three Cricket Club events scheduled for the summer as set out below:

- i) Sunday 12 July – A 'Jamaica Style' cricket match.
- ii) Sunday 2 August – A sports fun day for club members and their families.
- iii) Sunday 30 August – Annual Club Day.

The Committee wished the events to finish no later than 11pm.

RESOLVED that –

the above-mentioned Cricket Club events be approved.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.27 pm)