

Runnymede Borough CouncilENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE29 June 2005 at 7.00 p.m.

Members of the Committee present      Councillors J.E. Haas, Miss M.N. Heath, Mrs C.Y. Jones, H.W.V. Meares and N. Thewlis

Residents' Representatives Mrs M.E.J. Bairstow and Mr A.E. Panter

Member of the Committee absent:      Councillor K.J.T. Walmsley

126. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

**RESOLVED that -**

**Councillor Miss M.N. Heath be elected Chairman for the Municipal Year 2005/2006.**

127. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

**RESOLVED that -**

**Mr A.E. Panter be elected Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2005/2006.**

128. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 February 2005 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

129. BYELAWS

(Ref: Minutes of Englefield Green Committee, February 2005, page 750, para. 541).

Following preliminary consideration at the previous meeting of the Committee, Members now received a draft of the new byelaws which it was proposed to introduce in respect of the Green. The proposals drew heavily on the model byelaws recently produced by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs but included modifications to take account of local circumstances.

In the course of approving the proposals the Committee agreed upon a number of amendments, principally for the purposes of clarification and emphasis. It was felt that there should be a strict prohibition on the flying of all powered model aircraft on the Green, consistent with Council practice at other parks and open spaces. There was no objection to kites provided that they did not present a danger or annoyance to other people. Members were of the opinion that only children under the age of 11, rather than 14 as originally proposed, should be able to use the play apparatus or cycle across the Green other than on permitted routes. For the avoidance of doubt, a reference which could have been wrongly interpreted to suggest that areas might be set apart on the Green for camping was removed.

Members noted that the next stage of the process was to submit the draft byelaws to the Crown Estate for approval under the terms of the Council's lease. The Crown's comments would be reported back to the Committee, following which the byelaws could be recommended to Council for approval and sent to the Secretary of State for confirmation.

**RESOLVED that -**

**the draft byelaws for Englefield Green set out at Appendix 'A' be submitted to the Crown Estate for approval.**

130. FOOTBALL GOALPOST  
(Ref: Minutes of Englefield Green Committee, December 2004, page 464, para. 372)

The Committee gave consideration to whether the junior sized football goalpost should be re-erected on the Green during the forthcoming school summer holiday period.

Members recognised that there were divergent and strongly held views amongst the local community regarding the goalpost. However, anecdotal evidence and the light wear of the grass in the goalmouth suggested that the goalpost had been used relatively infrequently during the previous school summer holidays. Children often appeared to prefer to improvise their own informal goalposts. The Committee was therefore of the view that the goalpost should not be erected on this occasion. The position could be reviewed for future years if there was widespread public support for the reinstatement of the facility.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) the junior sized goalpost not be erected on the Green during the 2005 school summer holidays; and**
- ii) consideration be given to the re-provision of the goal post for subsequent years if there is significant public support for its re-instatement.**

131. DRAINAGE TRIAL PITS

The Committee considered a proposal to dig trial pits in two locations on Englefield Green in order to assist with investigations into drainage difficulties.

Members noted that there was a history of localised flooding in the village, along Bond Street, Vegal Crescent, Blays Lane, Barley Mow Road, The Green and St. Jude's Road. The Council was currently undertaking a study to identify the source of the flooding and to establish ways in which the problem could be alleviated. The trial pit tests would enable assessment of the soil, its permeability and ground water levels in the area. It was not possible to test in the roadway owing to the presence of utility services, health and safety issues and the inevitable disruption to traffic. The pits would be 1m x 1m and up to 2m deep with the tests due to be carried out over a 2 day period. All materials excavated would be used to backfill the pits after the test and the areas would be reinstated to the satisfaction of the Parks and Amenities Manager. The Crown Estate had given its approval to the works.

**RESOLVED that -**

**permission be granted for trial pits to be dug in the two locations on the Green identified at Appendix 'B' in order to assist with investigations into drainage difficulties.**

132. ENGLEFIELD GREEN - MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF  
(Ref: Minutes of Englefield Green Committee, February 2004, page 1324, para. 723 and February 2005, Page 751, para. 543)

The Committee received a report outlining matters of current interest concerning the management and maintenance of the Green.

Members noted that the new interpretation board had yet to be erected at the southern end of the Green owing to the forthcoming changes in the byelaws, which were incorporated in the design, and objections from the residents around the Green to the inclusion of descriptions of their properties. The Committee therefore took the opportunity to approve a revised design in which the descriptions of the residential properties were replaced with historical information about the Green, the Barley Mow Pub, the last duel fought on British soil, the horse trough and the cricket club. It was also felt that the proximity of the Commonwealth Air Forces' Memorial should be indicated on the map of the Green. The board would be installed once the new byelaws were settled.

The Committee also noted that the Council's grounds maintenance contractor had now succeeded in slitting the surface of the Green in order to break through a layer of compacted soil which had adversely affected the condition of the grass. This had improved the grass but the position would now need to be monitored as the operation might need to be repeated, or other works undertaken, to fully achieve the desired improvements. On a less welcome note, Members were informed that despite representations from the Committee, Surrey County Council had not allocated funding to the Northcroft Road footway extension scheme in the current financial year. The works were now unlikely to be progressed until 2006/07 at the earliest.

**RESOLVED that -**

**the revised design of the interpretation board be approved.**

133. HONORARY WARDENS' REPORT

The Committee received details of a number of observations made by the Honorary Wardens in respect of the maintenance and usage of the Green. Members noted that there had been concern at the standard of grass cutting by the new grounds maintenance contractors but the position now appeared to be improving with the deployment of additional contractor resources. The Wardens had also drawn attention to the condition of the litter bins and the absence of signage for horse riders in the woodland area. Five new litter bins were on order and would be installed to replace those in the poorest condition. The remainder would be replaced as required and budgets permitted. Appropriate horse riding signage had now been installed.

The Committee also noted that the Wardens had expressed concern at the appearance of the cricket pavilion and questioned the playing of cricket on the Green away from the pitch area. The condition of the pavilion would be considered in relation to the grant of a new lease to the cricket club, a matter which could now be actively progressed as the last of the trustees had recently agreed to the surrender of the existing lease. Once the new arrangements were in place and the club had security of tenure it would be easier for it to access grant funds for the improvement of the premises. The Council had already agreed a grant of £10,000 to assist with improvement works subject to the award of the lease to the Club. A report would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee on progress with the new lease but it was noted that the implied permission under which the Club was currently using the pitch and pavilion was sufficient until the conclusion of a more formal agreement. There was no impediment to the playing of cricket on the Green away from the cricket pitch.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.25 pm)