

Runnymede Borough CouncilENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE23 February 2005 at 7.00 p.m.

Members of the Committee present Councillors H.W.V. Meares (Chairman), Mrs. C.Y. Jones and K.J.T. Walmsley

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors J.E. Haas, Miss M.N. Heath and N Thewlis

539. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 December 2004 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

540. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor N. Thewlis, and from the Resident's Representatives, Mr A.E. Panter (Vice-Chairman) and Mrs. M.E. J. Bairstow.

541. BYELAWS

(Ref: Minutes of Englefield Green Committee December 2004, page 463, para. 369)

The Committee compared the existing byelaws applicable to Englefield Green with the new model byelaws produced by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). At its last meeting in December 2004, the Committee had received details of the model byelaws available for adoption in respect of common land and town or village greens (known as "Commons model byelaws") and had requested that a report be presented setting out details of those model byelaws applicable to the Green and the way in which they compared with the existing byelaws. For the purposes of the model byelaws, the Green was classed as a "Common". Any proposed amendments to the current Englefield Green byelaws would also need to be submitted to the Crown for approval under the terms of the Council's Lease and would need to be approved and confirmed by the Secretary of State for DEFRA.

The Vice-Chairman, Mr Panter, had submitted some comments on the new DEFRA model byelaws. He did not believe that it was necessary to incorporate all of them and did not think that number 39 was restrictive enough. He had also suggested that number 44 should include fairs and that restrictions on horse riding on the Green should be maintained.

The Committee did not wish to be unduly prescriptive in recommending byelaws but did want to provide an appropriate level of control over the Green. The Committee decided to recommend most of the DEFRA model byelaws as set out, to recommend some of them with variations to be drafted by Officers, to delete some of them and to recommend retaining some of the existing byelaws rather than agreeing the DEFRA model byelaw alternatives. It was agreed that Officers would produce a report and set of byelaws for the Committee's next meeting, incorporating the Committee's changes.

A full Schedule of the Committee's recommendations is set out at Appendix 'A'.

RESOLVED that -

Officers submit a report to the Committee's next meeting with a revised set of new byelaws reflecting the Committee's recommendations as set out at Appendix 'A'.

542. ENGLEFIELD GREEN CRICKET PAVILION

(Ref: Minutes of Englefield Green Committee, December 2002, page 855, para. 475)

The Committee was updated on the present position regarding the Englefield Green Cricket Pavilion. In December 2002, the Committee had resolved to terminate the lease to the Pavilion Trustees and had authorised the Director of Administration and Leisure to take legal action to achieve this if necessary. Upon termination of the lease a new lease was to be offered to the Trustees of the Cricket Club. One Trustee had initially refused to surrender the lease but following further discussions with the Legal Section had now reluctantly agreed to surrender. The necessary paperwork had been forwarded to the Trustee and completion was awaited. In the meantime, discussions were being held with the Cricket Club regarding a new lease and a detailed report would be brought back to the Committee on conclusion of the negotiations. The Committee agreed that they should receive a copy of the draft lease to the Trustees of the Cricket Club. The Committee discussed whether the lease should itemise a specific level of community use, rather than commercial use of the Club's facilities. It was agreed that Officers should request details from the Club of their management plan for the future, including the types of hiring which the club envisaged for the facility, so that the Committee could decide whether or not to recommend that a clause requiring exclusive community use be included in the lease to the Club. The Club's response on this issue would be included in the forthcoming report to the Committee.

543. MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF THE GREEN

(Ref: Minutes of Englefield Green Committee, July 2004, page 184, para. 130 and December 2004, page 463, para. 372)

The Committee was updated with regard to matters raised at previous meetings, concerning the management and maintenance of the Green, some of which had been raised by the Honorary Wardens. The Committee had previously approved the replacement of the litter bin close to the junction of Barley Mow Road and St Jude's Road with a 90 litre capacity rustic style bin. Several of the other litter bins on the Green required replacement as soon as possible and the Committee agreed that the rustic style of bin enhanced the appearance of the Green and should be adopted as the standard. The Crown Estate had confirmed that it did not use a specific style of bin on its land, preferring as a matter of policy not to provide bins in the hope that visitors took their litter home.

Wooden posts had now been installed to prevent parking along the edge of the grass verge in Bishopsgate Road, at its junction with St Jude's Road. The issue of commercial vehicles parking in the lay-by behind the Green had been discussed with the Council's parking enforcement team who had agreed to start placing warning notices on such vehicles seen using the lay-by. It was hoped that this would be sufficient to deal with the problem. If not it might be necessary to seek a Traffic Regulation Order.

Officers had consulted the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in respect of children's goalposts. Having discussed the matter with the HSE, Officers were satisfied that the current safety concerns related only to freestanding football goalposts and not fixed goalposts of the type used on the Green. A report was due to be presented to the Committee in June on whether the goalpost should be re-erected for the school summer holiday period.

The Committee also noted that works to realign Footpath 19, which ran through the woodland parallel to Coopers Hill Lane, had now been completed by Surrey County Council, that the tubular steel barrier between the footway and the road at the junction of St Jude's Road was in the process of being repaired by Surrey County Council and that daffodils had been planted on the verge behind the barrier in Autumn 2004. The Committee also agreed that Runnymede Property Services be asked to request the Electricity Board to satisfactorily reinstate the area opposite the Pavilion.

At its meeting in July 2004 the Committee had received details of a proposal by Surrey County Council to link the footway between Barley Mow Road and the Coach House in the interests of road safety. The scheme entailed the construction of a 1.8m wide footway on the southern section of Northcroft Road, widening the carriageway slightly onto the traffic island which formed part of the Crown land. Approval had been given in principle to the loss of the small strip of grass verge on the traffic island to facilitate the scheme. It was understood that Surrey County Council had not yet progressed the scheme further and was still to approach the Crown Estate for its consent. The Committee considered that there was insufficient room at this location and therefore this was a

project which ought to come into effect soon. The Committee also noted that the traffic calming introduced by the County Council at the Tite Hill/Middle Hill junction appeared to be working well. It was therefore agreed that the County Council be asked to progress the Northcroft Road footway extension as speedily as possible and also be complimented on the effectiveness of their traffic calming measures at the Tite Hill/Middle Hill junction.

At its last meeting, the Committee had approved details of a horse route through the woodland area of the Green, parallel with Bishopsgate Road. Starting 5 - 10 metres into the woods from Bishopsgate Road, it linked the existing horse route before following the line of least resistance through the woods, emerging into St. Jude's Road at a natural break in the trees, almost opposite Coopers Hill Lane. The horse route had now been finished. Surrey County Council had completed risk assessments and were satisfied that the route was safe, including at the point where the path exited onto St. Jude's Road. Warning signs for motorists would be affixed by Surrey County Council. Horse route signs had been ordered, to assist users of the route.

The Committee had also noted at its last meeting that the Council's grounds maintenance contractor had made an attempt to slit the surface of the Green in order to break through a layer of compacted soil which was adversely affecting the condition of the grass. Further attempts would continue to be made by the grounds maintenance contractor to alleviate the problem, using a tractor and a piece of equipment known as a vertidrainer.

RESOLVED that -

rustic style litter bins of the type newly installed close to the junction of Barley Mow Road and St Jude's Road be adopted as the standard and used to replace bins as it becomes necessary to do so.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.20 p.m.)