

Runnymede Borough Council

RUNNYMEDE ARTS DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP

Tuesday 3 October 2006 at 7.30 p.m.

Members of the
Group present:

Mrs M. Roberts (Vice-Chairman)	Egham Rotary Club
Mrs D. Chadburn	Runnymede Association of Arts
Councillor A.J. Davis	Runnymede Borough Council
Councillor Miss M.N. Heath	Runnymede Borough Council
Mr V. Spink	Chertsey Chamber of Commerce

Members of the
Group absent:

Mr G. Leon-Smith (Chairman)	Addlestone and District Chamber of Commerce
Mr P.E. Anderson	Runnymede Association of Arts
Ms. M. Clark	Youth Development Officer, Runnymede
Mr R. Davies	Runnymede Association of Arts
Mrs A. Davis	Egham Chamber of Commerce
Miss H. Dix	Surrey County Arts
Mr D. Gould	Jubilee High School
Mr T. Pattinson	Surrey Herald Newspaper
Mrs K. Young	Strode's College

Those attending in an advisory/observers capacity:

Mr C. Hunt	Head of Leisure Services Runnymede Borough Council
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Ms C. Welsby of the Royal Holloway Musical Theatre and Mr J. Gomersall of the Thorpe Players Drama Group attended the meeting in order to present their respective funding applications but left the room prior to the discussion thereon.

In the absence of the Chairman Mrs M. Roberts took the chair.

ACTION

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2006 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Matters arising:

Councillor Davis reported that the Council had not in fact submitted representations to the Department for Media, Culture and Sport on the way in which the Licencing Act 2003 inhibited fund raising by charitable organisations, clubs and societies. Representations had, instead, previously been made on the general difficulties with the legislation. Nevertheless, the implications for fund raising continued to be a cause for concern. There were welcome indications that the Government was prepared to allow licences to be vested in management committees rather than an individual in respect of community managed facilities. However, the annual limit of 12 temporary event notices per venue was unlikely to be increased.

Mrs Chadburn announced that the Staines Players were giving consideration to a change of name in order to better reflect the Group's links with Chertsey.

ACTION**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from the Chairman, Mr G. Leon-Smith, Mr P.E. Anderson and Mr T. Pattinson.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mrs Chadburn declared a personal and prejudicial interest under the Runnymede Code of Conduct for Members in respect of the discussion under Any Other Business concerning the reimbursement of the recent grant to Staines Players. As Mrs Chadburn was a member of the Players she withdrew from the room while the matter was under consideration.

4. BUDGET SUMMARY

Members recalled that the base budget for 2006/07 was £7,300 and that grants totalling £1,500 had been recommended at the last meeting leaving an available balance of £3,980 (excluding the unspent portion of the grant to Staines Players subsequently raised under Any Other Business).

5. APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING**i) ROYAL HOLLOWAY MUSICAL THEATRE SOCIETY**

The Group gave consideration to a request from the Royal Holloway Musical Theatre Society for a grant of £875 in order to meet set and prop hire costs for its forthcoming production of 'Little Shop of Horrors'. The Society, which had not previously received grant funding from the Council, was one of the largest clubs in the University's Student Union and planned to stage four performances of the show in December, including a matinee for local children and their parents. Total expenditure on the production was estimated at £3,366. Ms Catherine Welsby, presenting the application on behalf of the Society, confirmed that ticket prices would be held to just £7 in order to maximise the size of the audiences. Members of the cast would be holding workshops for 10 and 11 year old pupils at St Jude's and Manorcroft Schools to complement the production.

Members noted that the audience for the Society's events tended to be comprised almost entirely of Royal Holloway Students. It was recognised, however, that the Society was seeking to improve its links with the wider community through the matinee performance and school workshops. The Group felt that there was still scope for more to be done in this regard and suggested both that the matinee should be opened up to other local schools and events promoted more vigorously across the Borough. Nevertheless, in view of the efforts made to date, Members were prepared to recommend that a grant of £500 should be awarded to the Society subject to its accounts, which had not yet been made available, proving to be satisfactory.

ii) THORPE PLAYERS

Members also considered an application from Thorpe Players for £1,000 towards the cost of a production of the musical comedy "A Slice of Saturday Night" due to be staged at Thorpe Village Hall later in the year. Mr J. Gomersall, presenting the application, reported that the funding was required to meet expenditure on technical items, hall hire and a 3-piece band.

Mr Hunt to provide school contact details.

Mr Hunt to determine the application and inform the applicant

ACTION

The Group noted that the costs of the production had been estimated at between £2,450 - £3,270 (although these costings over-estimated the hire charge of the hall). The show was, however, expected to generate income of at least £2,200, and possibly significantly more if the Players succeeded in their efforts to obtain sponsorship from various sources. Mr Gomersall undertook to ask the Society's Treasurer to clarify a discrepancy between the number of members and actual subscription income in 2005/06. He emphasised that the Group set only a modest subscription of £12 p.a. in order to attract new members but was rigorous in its arrangements for the collection of the monies.
(Note: The Treasurer subsequently confirmed that the discrepancy arose because of variations in the Players membership throughout the year and the levying of concessionary rates for senior citizens and children).

Members recalled that the Players had been regular recipients of funding in previous years, having been granted £1,000 in both 2003 and 2004. On this occasion, however, it was felt that it would be inappropriate to meet the request in full. The scale of the production did not warrant an award of £1,000 and the net cost was, in any case, likely only to be in the order of £250 even if no external sponsorship could be obtained. It was emphasised that the grant programme did not exist to effectively make indirect charitable donations through the subsidy of profit subsequently to be passed on to good causes. It was therefore agreed to recommend an award of £350, sufficient to meet the potential shortfall and allow for some margin of error. The hope was expressed that the Players would in future advertise productions more widely both in Thorpe and across the rest of the Borough.

Mr Hunt to determine the application and inform the applicant.

6. FEEDBACK ON COMPLETED ARTS PROJECTS

i) **Royal Holloway Symphony Orchestra**

Members were pleased to learn that the Royal Holloway Symphony Orchestra's trip to Germany, which had been assisted by a £500 grant, had been well received. A letter of thanks from the Orchestra, together with a resumé and photographs of the visit was noted.

ii) **Spelthorne and Runnymede Drama Festival**

A letter of thanks had also been received from the organisers of the Spelthorne and Runnymede Drama Festival for the second part of the Council's £500 grant. An invitation had been extended to the Mayor, Councillor Prof. Moreton Moore to attend the Festival.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Group was disappointed to learn that Staines Players had reluctantly decided to cancel its forthcoming production of "Babe the Sheep Pig" following the withdrawal of key cast members. The Players had previously received a grant of £1,000 from the Group for the performances, some £200 of which had already been spent on various associated costs. As the replacement production "We Happy Few" by Imogen Stubbs would not be on an equivalent scale, it was agreed that the unspent portion of the grant would need to be refunded to the Council. The £200 balance could be retained by the Players as a contribution to the new show subject to sight of the costings. Photographs and feedback of the performance would be provided for the Annual Report

Mr Hunt to action.

ACTION

Mr Hunt to action in conjunction with Communications Officer.

Group Members to contribute ideas.

Mr Hunt to progress.

It was noted that the reimbursement of the grant monies would increase the balance still available for allocation in the current financial year. Publicity would be given to the existence of the funding programme in order to attract new applicants.

Mr Hunt informed the Group that the Leisure and Environment Committee had now approved the development of a Play Strategy designed to form the basis of a bid for grant support to the Big Lottery Fund. Consideration would be given to the inclusion of suitable arts based projects and the local artistic community was to be invited to contribute ideas for discussion. Particular emphasis would be given to projects which benefited the areas of greatest need in the borough.

Officers were also in discussions with the Youth Service concerning a possible initiative which would bring bands together with young people in order to teach skills such as lyric writing and stage presence. Funding issues remained to be resolved, but it was felt that the scheme would be an exciting addition to the calendar in the New Year.

Finally, Mr Spink took the opportunity to remind Members of the Group of the current exhibition at Chertsey Museum marking the 200th anniversary of the death of Charles James Fox.

8. DATES OF MEETINGS FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2006/07

The following dates were noted for the meetings of the Steering Group in the Municipal Year 2006/07:-

Tuesday 6 February 2007

Tuesday 3 April 2007.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.)

Runnymede Arts Development Steering Group**Budget Summary 2006/07**

Base budget 2006/07	£7,300
Committed Projects	
Royal Holloway (University of London) Symphony Orchestra	-£500
Annual Report	-£320
Egham and District Choral Society	-£500
Spelthorne Drama Festival	-£500
Egham Youth Music	-£500
Staines Players	-£200
Royal Holloway Musical Theatre Society	-£500
Thorpe Players	-£350
Balance	£3,930

Jubilee High SchoolRunnymede Borough CouncilADDLESTONE LEISURE CENTRE
JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE17 October 2006 at 7.30 p.m.Members present:

Councillor Ms C M Simmons (Chairman), Runnymede Borough Council
 Councillor Mrs C E Gant, Runnymede Borough Council
 Councillor C J Norman, Runnymede Borough Council
 Councillor D W Parr (for part of meeting), Chairman of Governors

The following attended in an advisory/observers capacity:

Mr R Brent, Nord Anglia
 Mr B Brough, Addlestone Leisure Centre Manager
 Mr C Hunt, Head of Leisure Services, Runnymede Borough Council
 Miss C P Scott, Head of P E Department, Jubilee High School
 Councillor Miss R M Nixey (for part of meeting), Governor, Jubilee High School

1. TOUR OF NEW FACILITIES

Members were given a conducted tour of the new facilities by Mr Hunt and Mr Brough, and they expressed their satisfaction with what they saw noting though that a number of items still remained outstanding on the "snagging" list. Mr Brough confirmed that these matters were in hand and would be attended to before the public opening. Other issues arising and discussed were :

- i) the provision of adequate "stretching space" in the fitness suite;
- ii) the provision of mirrors, decorative images, uplighters and blinds in the bar area in order to present a softer and more relaxing image. The wall of the pool facing the bar area also needed painting.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2006 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr G Balch.

ACTION

Mr Brough

4. ADDLESTONE LEISURE CENTRE MANAGER'S REPORT

i) Income/Expenditure and Membership Performance

The actuals for the period ending 31 August 2006 were noted. These are attached as Annex 'A' to these Minutes.

During the Summer holidays, the Centre was fairly well supported by customers despite the disruptions due to the building work. Current membership was reported as being 160 reflecting the closure of some facilities during building. The existing membership system had ended at the end of August due to the anticipated completion date of mid-September 2006. Since completion proved to be later all existing memberships had been extended to 20 October thus effectively giving members an extra 1½-months free membership as a gesture of goodwill. Opening was due to take place on 28/29 October 2006.

As from the official opening weekend, the new direct debit membership would take effect although it was intended to be able to take pre-sales in advance of this date. For the pre-sold memberships fitness inductions would, hopefully, be conducted before the opening weekend in order to reduce the pressure on staff for inductions and tours. This would also allow the Centre to be used, fully, as from Saturday 28 October and it would also materially assist in "selling" the Centre.

Membership Costs

	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Annual</u>
Inclusive Fitness Membership	£35.00	£348.00
Concession Membership	£23.00	£230.00
Joint Membership	£64.00	£636.00
Corporate Membership	Available for companies with 5 or more employees	
RBC Employees and Members	£23.00	£230.00
/JHS Employees will be entitled to Concession price but full use		

Examples of the new Leisure Centre literature were tabled and approved. Councillors asked for an advertising "pack" to be sent to them. It was commented that the 5% discount for corporate membership (companies with 5-10 employees) was rather low and this might not be considered an attractive offer.

Mr Brough

Junior and Family memberships would be introduced in April 2007 when an improved junior activity programme together with a more substantial membership package would be provided. This was a key income stream for the future and which private fitness clubs were similarly evaluating.

The new booking conditions and access card system were discussed.

(ii) **Marketing**

Advertising and Promotion

Various press releases in the local press had continued throughout the building process. These had appeared in the *Surrey Herald*, *Addlestone and Byfleet Review*, and *The Informer*.

A detailed programme of advertising prior to opening had been arranged with the *Surrey Herald* and *The Informer* starting from mid-September and continuing until after the opening weekend. This consisted of varying sized adverts, full pages and a "wrap-around", to include recently taken photographs, in *The Informer*.

Adverts had also been placed in *The Addlestone & New Haw* and *Chertsey and West Byfleet Directories*. In addition, new placements in *Yellow Pages* had been arranged.

Banner sites had been booked in Addlestone, New Haw, Chertsey and Ottershaw. Existing road signs directing traffic to the Centre had been replaced.

External signs on site would be replaced, where possible, with the new brand prior to opening.

Members suggested further marketing initiatives :

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| (i) | Advertising the Centre at " <i>Weight Watchers</i> " slimming classes held at Sayes Court School site; | Mrs Gant |
| (i) | Libraries |) |
| (iii) | Doctors' surgeries |) |
| (iv) | Contacting companies listed in the Runnymede Business Directory(Runnymede Business Partnership) |) |
| (vi) | Use of RBC locally situated notice boards and those in Parks. |) |

A brand new website was currently under construction allowing the Centre staff to make daily updates after their training was completed. The new web address **addlestone-leisure-centre.co.uk** had been purchased for a licence period of 10 years and was registered on the World Wide Web.

A style guide had been created through the arrangement with *Life Fitness*, which would assist with future marketing.

Future marketing would continue through newspapers, in-house promotions and advertising, the Centre website and advertising campaigns through membership of the FIA. Membership promotions and retention would follow the Centre strategy.

(iii) **Customer Service**

Customer comments on the service provided would continue with the addition of e-mail enquiries **alcenquiries@runnymede.gov.uk**. A customer forum would also be established and would meet every 3 months and its membership would reflect a variety of different users groups. A customer service notice board was to be situated at the front of the Centre reporting back to customers on actions taken on their comments.

Parking

This was a serious and contentious issue occurring at the end of each School day. The existing barrier was now ineffective in view of the widened road. Clamping was viewed as a last resort option in view of the reactions likely to be caused. It was nevertheless felt that some action must be taken and it was agreed that a notice threatening clamping might prove a sufficient short-term deterrent. Alternatively, it meant that a member of staff would need to "police" the parking area to turn away non-customers but at the risk of abuse and non co-operation.

Mr Brough

(iv) **Programming and Activities**

Swimming Pool

The swimming pool had opened in June, 3 days later than originally hoped for but nearly 3 weeks earlier than in 2005. There were three closures of the pool during the Summer, two due to thunder storms and the other due to a problem with the boilers. Approximately, 100 fewer people had used the pool this Summer due to the poor weather during August.

However, there were four more swimming pool parties this Summer as compared with last year. Many customers were repeat visitors. "10 for 8" swims had seen a big increase in customers taking up this offer.

Swimming Pool Maintenance

The swimming pool continued to be a popular facility but was approaching the end of its life. It was understood that the School was investigating funding options in order to refurbish the swimming pool and also to allow it to operate all year round.

Fitness Facilities and Activities

Fitness Classes were keystone activities. A provisional fitness class timetable had been designed to open the Centre and to provide a core programme which could be developed as customers demand grew with increased membership. It was imperative that this facility remained flexible to allow the fitness class programme to develop. With this in mind the fitness suite would not be hired out for block bookings or external clubs or organisations during peak times.

The new fitness equipment supplied by *Life Fitness* had been installed and staff training for instructors had commenced. Staff would then induct those members who had already signed up for membership.

There were approximately 60 stations in the fitness suite, which would be staffed at all times during opening hours. Users would only be able to use the fitness suite after having undergone an induction with Centre staff.

It was noted that there would be a number of additional services and activities available to customers including *Teen fitness, GP referral scheme (TBC), NHS Weight Management Course, Personal Training, Internal Fitness Initiatives.*

Staffing

The Manager had appointed most of the new positions with the exception of one duty officer, a receptionist, a membership administrator and a part-time fitness instructor. It was expected to have these positions filled in the near future.

Children's Activities

Current activities included: *Badminton Course, Sports Acro Course, and Trampoline Course.* As from October extra activities would include: *Soccer Skills, Hockey, Yoga Bugs.* It was also hoped to be able to add an Archery course as from this November/ December.

Repairs, improvements and maintenance

Officers had arranged with RBC Building Services to redecorate the dual use corridors and match them to the new paint scheme of the new building. Mr Brent, on behalf of the School, thanked the Council for their work in this respect.

Cleaning

Cleaning remained a contentious issue as it was often unsatisfactory necessitating corrective action by Centre staff. This was unacceptable as cleaning was specifically being charged for and it was essential that the Centre was clean for customers at all times.

It was agreed that, in the first instance, Mr Brent would liaise with both the School and the Contractor in order to arrange a meeting with Mr Brough. If this matter could not be resolved within the next six weeks the JMC would have to recommend that the Council considered the cessation of this part of the apportioned costs.

Mr Brent

Project Development

Mr Hunt concluded the report with an overview of the building programme. The building had been handed over and a "snagging" report prepared and steps taken to get the contractor back on site to address the defects.

The official opening of the Centre would be in November, a date which will be finalised in the near future and was pending the availability of a celebrity. The name change to Addlestone Leisure Centre took effect from 1 October 2006.

The fitness suite would use the *Equinox* brand from Egham Leisure Centre, the aim being for the two Centres to work more closely in the future as this would enable there to be some consistency on what was on offer at both sites.

There had been a conscious decision not to try and put on too many fitness classes, initially, but to put on classes that were known to be popular. The possibility of extending the programme in 2007 would then be considered. A questionnaire to civic office staff had identified a demand for some lunchtime fitness classes and this would be looked at as part of the programme. Discussion with the Primary Care Trust on a weight management course had also taken place and this was provisionally due to start in January 2007.

The new bookings system Microcache had been ordered and training had been organised. This system was currently the one in use at Egham Leisure Centre

and with closer future working between sites there would be the opportunity to link them thus allowing bookings to be taken at either site. The software package would also provide the option to take bookings on line, although it was not expected that this facility would be made available until the next financial year.

The latest cost report for the building works showed an overspend on the building works of £9,067. The valuation on the building element did include some provisional sums still to be agreed with the contractor. The consultant had been tasked with looking at how this figure could be improved upon to meet the agreed budget. A significant issue for the main construction phase was the limited electrical supply. It was originally hoped that the electricity supply was going to be drawn from the School but their supply would not support the additional loading. Therefore, a generator had to be hired at a cost of over £7,000. This represented a significant proportion of the financial contingency available. There was, however, the possibility of an under-spend on the fixtures and fittings element of the project in which case this might cover some of the estimated difference in cost.

All that remained was the cost element relating to the installation of the gas and electricity meters.

5. REPORT OF THE PRINCIPAL OF JUBILEE HIGH SCHOOL

Mr Brent spoke on the Principal's behalf advising that the School was successful in its negotiations with the Open University and the School would be available for use in class assessments etc. This would bring more people to Addlestone during weekends. Residential accommodation in the locality was not, however, envisaged. The School was also making a bid for performing arts status.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mention was made of ballroom dancing and that the dance studio at the Centre would provide a suitable location subject to availability. It was also reported that 'Splash' might transfer from St George's to the Centre in 2007 because of access problems caused through building works. This was currently being evaluated.

7. VOTE OF THANKS

The Joint Management Committee asked that an appreciation of thanks to Mr Mark Brough and his team be recorded in these Minutes in respect of their hard work over the past few months.

8. DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2007
Tuesday 20 February

Tuesday 5 June

Tuesday 16 October

Chairman

(The meeting concluded at 9 - 10 p.m.)