

Runnymede Borough CouncilRUNNYMEDE ARTS DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUPTuesday 30 March at 7.30 p.m.

Members of the

Group present: Mr G. Leon -Smith (Chairman) Addlestone and District Chamber of Commerce
 Mr V. Spink (Vice -Chairman) Chertsey Chamber of Commerce
 Councillor A.J. Davis Runnymede Borough Council
 Mrs A. Davis Egham Chamber of Commerce
 Mr R. Davies Runnymede Association of Arts
 Councillor R.J. Ray Runnymede Borough Council
 Mrs M. Roberts Egham Rotary Club

Members of the

Group absent: Mr P.E. Anderson Runnymede Association of Arts
 Mr J. Davies Youth Development Officer, Runnymede
 Miss E. Eyres Jubilee High School
 Dr V.J. Gordon Royal Holloway, University of London
 Miss S. Hunter Salesian School, Chertsey
 Mr T. Pattinson Surrey Herald Newspaper
 Mrs A. Pope Adult Education Service
 Mr P. Suchley Jubilee High School, Addlestone
 Mrs R. Wilson Surrey Libraries Service

Those attending in an advisory/observers capacity:

Mr R. Fleming Head of Leisure Services, Runnymede Borough Council

Mr R. Wells, Assistant Principal of Strodes College and Mr B. Agar, Treasurer of Egham and District Choral Society also attended for part of the meeting.

ACTION1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2004 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr P. Anderson, Mr J. Davies, Dr V.J. Gordon, and Mr T. Pattinson

3. BUDGET SUMMARY

The base budget for Arts Development in 2003/04 was £8,200. The Steering Group had a balance of £498 available for consideration at the meeting.

As the new financial year commenced on 1 April 2004, the Group noted that the base budget for 2004/2005 was £8,500 and that there were six applications to be considered at the meeting.

The Group noted that under the Council's Financial Regulations a minimum of £1,000 could be carried forward to the new financial year where there was a planned underspend.

The Group was concerned that this policy might encourage a concentrated period of spending at the end of each financial year. To avoid not being able to allocate the remaining balance in the Steering Group's budget, the Group requested that the remaining balance for 2003/04 be utilised for any applications which might be supported at the meeting.

The budget summaries attached at Annexes '1' and '2' take into account the recommendations made at the meeting.

ACTION

4. **APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING**

i) **Runnymede Active Zones (RAZ)**

The Group recalled that at their meeting in October 2003 they had recommended the applicant be awarded £498 for a multi-cultural arts event for young people to be held during a half-term week. Unfortunately the event had not been viable in terms of numbers and had not taken place. The Group recommended at its last meeting that the money could be used instead for 'Drums on the Road' activity in February 2004.

Unfortunately, owing to personal circumstances the full activity was reduced to four workshops. As a result the grant was unspent but the Group had been asked whether it would be willing to make a contribution of £250 towards the workshops instead. However it was decided that retrospective applications could not be supported and the Group recommended that the application be refused.

Mr Fleming to determine the application taking into account the Steering Group's recommendation and inform the applicant.

ii) **Staines Players**

The Steering Group considered an application from Staines Players for funding in the sum of £1,500 for their children's Christmas show to be staged at Chertsey Hall.

The Group noted that Staines Players was a well established, viable company which performed to a high standard. The greatest costs were the hire of the hall and extra stage lighting which was not part of the standard rig at Chertsey Hall.

In respect of the hall hire charges, members noted that the Group received a 20% discount on the Community rate. This was the lowest rate chargeable.

The Group discussed the hall fees. Members were informed that the cost being quoted appeared to be high because Staines Players hired all the rooms during the production week to accommodate the additional requirements of pantomimes and to avoid clashing with other users of the facility or running the risk of them interfering with the performance inadvertently.

The Group was pleased to support Staines Players and recommended that on this occasion they should be awarded £750.

Mr Fleming to determine the application and advise the applicant.

iii) **Kevan Graham Theatre Productions**

The Steering Group considered an application for funding of £2,500 from Kevan Graham for a revival of 'Follow the Piper', to be staged at the Magna Carta Arts Centre in April 2005.

Members noted that in 1999 a grant of £1,000 had been awarded for a similar production.

The Group decided to invite Mr Graham to their next meeting so that he could explain how the project had developed since 1999 and provide the group with a more detailed budget.

It was agreed that in future applicants would be asked to give a fuller breakdown of costs on the application form so that the Group could see how a budget had been arrived at.

Mr Fleming to invite applicant to next meeting of the Steering Group.

iv) **Open Studios 2004**

The Steering Group received an application for funding in the sum of £250 from Surrey County Council's Visual Arts Officer, Alison Clarke, for the 2004 'Open Studios'. It was noted that among the participating galleries was the one used by Chertsey Artists in Windsor Street, Chertsey.

ACTION

Members were pleased to note that the Gallery which was the Borough's only one was gaining in reputation as an impressive venue housing high quality work and that events like 'Open Studios' were beneficial to all concerned.

The Group recommended that the full requested sum of £250 be awarded which would help with publicity costs associated with the event.

Mr Fleming to determine the application and advise the applicant.

v) Strodes College Tercentenary Celebrations

The Group considered an application for funding in the sum of £5,000 from Strodes College for a sculpture to help mark the college's tercentenary year.

Mr Wells, the Assistant Principal, presented the application and answered questions thereon. The Group learned that the sculpture project was at an early stage. The college hoped to commission a sculpture from a local artist or old Strodian which would reflect both the history of the college and its links to the local community.

The College stated that the sculpture could be placed on the front lawn of the college where the Group noted it would be visible to passers by on the High Street in Egham, thus qualifying as a piece of 'public art' complementing the 'town scene'.

The College had not decided in what medium the sculpture would be created but considered it was likely to be wood or stone and would cost in the region of £10,000.

Mr Wells reported that the College had put some funding aside for the project and was also undertaking fund raising projects including a family fun day and fashion show and had applied for sponsorship from local companies.

The Group supported the project in principle but was concerned that the amount being requested would be a substantial part of the Steering Group's annual budget. It was agreed that the applicant should be referred to other sources of funding and possible sculptors. If an application for funding from another body proved unsuccessful the project could be re-considered at the next meeting of the Steering Group.

The Group agreed that if this was necessary and in order to determine the application fully the college would be invited to the next meeting of the Group accompanied by the chosen sculptor to present drawings or a mockette of the sculpture together with a detailed budget and timeplan.

Mr Fleming to advise the applicant of the Steering Group's recommendations

vi) Egham and District Choral Society

Mr B. Agar, Treasurer of Egham and District Choral Society presented an application for funding in the sum of £500 for their 50th Anniversary Concert in June 2004 to be held at the Fleming Theatre at TASIS school, Thorpe.

The Society aimed to widen their audience by starting the evening with a variety of pieces of light music from 'Bizet to the Beatles', followed by a picnic on the lawn to a Brass Band and finishing with a 'Proms' in which the audience could participate.

The Society sought funding primarily to produce an anniversary brochure for the concert and for future publicity expenses, acknowledging that the concert would be a break even event which would go ahead even if a grant was not awarded.

The Steering Group considered that the Egham and District Choral Society was worthy of support and discussed the level of funding which could be awarded.

It was recommended that the Society be awarded the full requested sum of £500 to be split £400 for publicity and £100 towards the cost of music for the concert. In addition, the Group recommended that the remaining balance of £498 from the 2003/2004 budget be utilised for this project.

Mr Fleming to determine the application and advise the applicant.

5. FEEDBACK ON COMPLETED ARTS PROJECTS

ACTION

Gilbert and Sullivan Choral Society

The Steering Group was disappointed that the Society's production of 'Iolanthe' performed at the Magna Carta Arts Centre had made a loss. The Society had been awarded a grant of £250 towards the costs of the production at the Group's meeting in April 2003.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman revived proposals for a 'Runnymede Millennium Open Air Theatre'. Details of the proposal were circulated to members of the Steering Group. It was noted that although the Steering Group had supported the project in 2001 it had made no progress.

Since the project had been put forward originally the Chairman had developed it to incorporate the use of recycled materials such as Ecodek. Ecodek had been promoted at a recent conference the Chairman had attended, augmenting the work of groups such as London Remade who promoted recycling and aimed to create a market for recycled products.

The Chairman circulated some samples of Ecodek, which was a compound created by bonding together reclaimed wood flour from saw mills with polyethylene. The material was impervious to all weather conditions and very low maintenance which made it ideal for decking and if easily carvable for sculptures as well.

The group discussed suitable venues for the project and members recalled that St Ann's Hill Dingle in Chertsey had been popular in the past and was still used occasionally. It was agreed that for open air concerts the musicians required some form of cover and that an amphitheatre was also necessary to project whatever was being performed. The Chairman suggested that the Runnymede Pleasure Ground adjacent to the River Thames would make an interesting venue for such a project. The Group noted it was likely that planning permission would be needed, particularly if the plans involved making an amphitheatre using Coopers Hill as a backdrop.

The Group considered that creating an open air eco friendly venue in the Borough would be a positive way of promoting recycling as well as encouraging local community arts groups by providing them with a much needed facility.

It was agreed that the Head of Leisure Services should investigate the feasibility of such a project with the Arts Council, potential users including Local Schools and the National Trust and report any progress to the next meeting of the Steering Group.

Mr Fleming to action

Mr Spink reported that the Town Twinning Association was considering an exchange of art works and other arts projects through the respective websites of the participating towns. The Steering Group noted that Herndon was keen to promote works by local artists and this arrangement could be reciprocated to give Herndon artists a digital debut in England. It was suggested that to strengthen the links between the towns, Runnymede's website could have a link to the Town Twinning Association and the other twinned towns. He also suggested that a physical exchange of arts groups puppet could be viable. For example, if the Puppet Theatre from Bergisch Gladbach was visiting the Borough, but not actually in performance, the puppets could be displayed at Chertsey Museum. Similarly local drama groups and artists could participate in exchange visits.

Mr R. Davies offered his apologies for the next meeting of the Steering Group but expressed a wish to represent the Runnymede Association of Arts in future albeit on a less frequent basis owing to his move to France.

7. DATES OF MEETINGS FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2004/2005.

ACTION

The Group noted that the following dates for meetings of the Steering group in 2004/05 were:

Tuesday 6 July 2004

Tuesday 5 October 2004

Tuesday 8 February 2005

Wednesday 6 April 2005.

Chairman

(The meeting finished at 9.16 p.m.)

Runnymede Arts Development Steering Group	
Budget Summary 03/04	
Base budget 03/04	£8,200
Planned underspends from 02/03	£1,130
Total funds available for distribution 03/04	£9,330
Committed Projects	
Sorted 2nd and final year payment	-£250
Surrey Artists open studios	-£250
Chertsey St Ann's Attainment Project	-£750
Thorpe Players	-£1,000
Gilbert & Sullivan Choral Society	-£250
Chertsey Museum	-£425
Staines Players	-£500
StopGAP	-£1,000
Egham and District Music Club	-£2,060
Friends of Chertsey Museum	-£250
Chertsey Film Society	-£600
Boys are back in Town	-£250
Runnymede Active Zones	£0
The People's Theatre	-£512
Annual Report	-£306
Notice Boards	-£229
Egham & District Choral Society	-£500
Balance	£198

Budget Summary 2004/05

Runnymede Arts Development Steering Group				
Budget Summary 04/05				
Base budget 03/04				£8,500
Total funds available for distribution 04/05				£8,500
Committed Projects				
Staines Players - Christmas production				-£750
SCC - Open Studios 2004				-£250
Balance				£7,500