

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL10 June 2003The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Mrs F.M. Angell) in the Chair

Members of the  
Council present:

Councillors A. Alderson, Mrs F.M. Angell, J.R. Ashmore, Mrs F.J. Barden, E.G. Barrett, J. Broadhead, Mrs P.I. Broadhead, Ms D.V. Clarke, A.G. Collins, A.J. Davis, J.B. Dean, J.M. Edwards, J.R. Furey, Mrs C.E. Gant, Mrs L.M. Gillham, P.A. Greenwood, J.E. Haas, R.K. Habgood, Mrs C.Y. Jones, C. Knight, H.W.V. Meares, A.M. Moore, C.J. Norman, Mrs J. Norman, D.W. Parr, P.J. Poole, Mrs E.E. Price, R.J. Ray, B.J. Relph, Ms C.M. Simmons, Mrs V.A. Smallman, N.Thewlis, A.P. Tollett, P.B. Tuley, P.J. Waddell, K.J.T. Walmsley, and G.B. Woodger

Members of the  
Council absent:

Councillors M.J. Brown, D.P. Easton, Mrs S.E Jacobs, R. Pate, and J.R. Whiteley

63. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Mrs Jacobs and her husband on the birth of their son, Fraser.

The Civic Service would be held on Sunday 22 June at Royal Holloway College Chapel with the reception being held afterwards in the Picture Gallery.

As mentioned at the last meeting, Councillor Adrian Tollett would be undertaking a 28 mile sponsored row in aid of the Mayor's charity. Members were urged to turn up on the day to encourage him (Saturday 28 June) and to sign sponsorship forms.

64. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors M.J. Brown, D.P. Easton, Mrs S.E. Jacobs, and R Pate.

65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J.M. Edwards declared a personal interest under the Runnymede Code of Conduct for Members in agenda item 9, Notice of Motion - Track Horns, on the grounds that he lived in reasonable proximity to a railroad level crossing. He remained in attendance during the consideration of this item.

66. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2003/2004

The Council considered the recommendations of the Corporate Management Committee which had discussed the draft Best Value Performance Plan for 2003/2004 at its meeting on 5 June 2003.

This Plan, produced in accordance with statutory requirements and the Council's Corporate Best Value Strategy, highlighted Runnymede's own set of corporate and service targets for the coming year. These were based on existing policies, the Leader's Position Statement, and the approved Aims and Targets. They formed a clear set of goals against which residents could measure the Council's performance. The Plan also included outturn figures for 2002/2003 together with details of Runnymede's approach to efficiency improvements and how the various services and initiatives would be paid for.

The Council noted that the Plan also would assist in meeting the Government's requirements for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment inspection which was scheduled for December 2003.

The Council noted that a revised page 13 (The Council's Budget) had been copied to all Members, and replaced that in the supplementary Agenda. It was also accepted that a few minor editorial and drafting changes were required in a few instances before the Plan was published.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) the Best Value Performance Plan 2003/2004 be approved; and**
- ii) the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to make any necessary editorial drafting changes in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee before final publication.**

67. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

**RESOLVED that -**

**the recommendation of the Planning Committee as set out in paragraph 799 on page 1270 (Minutes 7 May 2003) be approved.**

68. NOTICE OF MOTION - TRAIN HORNS

In accordance with Standing Order 15.6 (b) the Mayor had agreed with the mover of the Motion, Councillor P.J. Poole, that the Motion should be determined at the Council meeting as a matter of exceptional urgency.

Councillor P.J. Poole moved the Motion in the following terms and was seconded by Councillor J.M. Edwards -

"This Council deplores the noise and nuisance caused by the blowing of horns on the approach to crossings by South West Trains during their passage through the Borough of Runnymede.

Having regard for the requirement to maintain Health and Safety issues, the Council make strong representations to the Railway Authority in an effort to reduce or eliminate this noise and protect the peace and tranquillity of those residents living in close proximity to the railway".

Councillor Poole explained that there was genuine concern among residents of the Borough (particularly those living in Egham, Thorpe and Virginia Water) as to the substantial increase in the noise and nuisance caused by the new trains operated by South West Trains over the last four months. A particular cause of concern was the noise caused by train horns. Levels of noise had been recorded of up to 125DbIs and the horns could be heard up to 3 miles away.

Councillor Poole explained that the train horns could be heard as early as 6.00am each day and that they continued up to four times an hour until around midnight.

Councillor Poole asked that the Railway Authorities be asked to consider alternatives that would protect the public without causing excessive noise pollution. He felt that modern technology could provide mechanisms that could be fitted to the line to trigger a local signal at the site of the level crossing. This could involve both sound and light to convey a warning to both hearing and non-hearing people.

During debate Members agreed that this was a national problem, and not just local to Runnymede.

Councillor Moore agreed that it was a particular problem in Egham and Virginia Water, where there were footpath crossings. Commuters were also upset at railway stations because the trains were sounding their horns before moving off. This was a quality of life issue which needed to be addressed in accordance with Council policy.

Whilst recognising the need to maintain public safety and not put lives at risk, it was generally agreed that the Rail Authorities should consider methods that were more environmentally friendly. Members felt that representation should be made to both South West Trains and Network Rail, and that the issue should be referred to the Leisure and Environment Committee for further discussion.

Accordingly, the Council

**RESOLVED that -**

**This Council deplores the noise and nuisance caused by the blowing of horns on the approach to crossings by South West Trains during their passage through the Borough of Runnymede.**

**Having regard for the requirement to maintain Health and Safety issues, the Council make strong representations to the Railway Authority in an effort to reduce or eliminate this noise and protect the peace and tranquillity of those residents living in close proximity to the railway.**

69. NOTICE OF MOTION - CONSULTATION ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF AIR TRANSPORT IN THE UK

In accordance with Standing Order 15.6 (b) the Mayor had agreed with the mover of the Motion, Councillor Mrs. E.E. Price, that the Motion should be determined at the Council meeting as a matter of exceptional urgency.

Councillor Mrs. E.E. Price moved the Motion in the following terms, and was seconded by Councillor P.A. Greenwood -

"This Council requests that, in considering the responses to "The Second Edition of the Department for Transport Consultation on the Future Development of Air Transport in the United Kingdom: South East", the Secretary of State pays particular attention to the impact on the quality of life of the residents of Runnymede that further expansion at Heathrow would bring, given the significant pollution, transport and housing problems these residents already suffer".

An Amendment was then moved by Councillor J.R. Furey, seconded by Councillor J.E. Haas -

"This Council requests that in considering the responses to "The Second Edition of the Department for Transport Consultation on the Future Development of Air Transport in the United Kingdom: South East", the Secretary of State pays particular attention to the serious concerns of the residents of Runnymede.

Specifically:-

1. The increased pollution, indicated within the Consultative document, created by aircraft and increased road usage, affecting air quality, water contamination, noise levels, health and residential amenity.
2. The urgent need to provide effective transport links and infrastructure, prior to development.
3. Provision of enhanced public transport to the south and west of the airport, with the airtrack project forming the core of the improvements.
4. The consequential loss of greenbelt, social and public amenity, due to housing and employment demand".

Councillor Furey explained that he broadly supported the Motion, but wished the Council to resolve more points of specific detail. The Mayor then asked Councillor Mrs Price whether she wished to amend or withdraw her original Motion in view of the Amendment. Councillor Mrs Price asked for time to consider the issue and the Mayor adjourned the meeting for ten minutes to allow for consultation between the movers of the Motion and the Amendment.

(The Council meeting adjourned at 8.10pm and recommenced at 8.28pm).

Following the adjournment, Councillor Mrs Price with the consent of her seconder wished to alter the original Motion in accordance with Standing Order 17.9, a course to which the Mayor agreed. Councillor Furey and his seconder then withdrew their Amendment. The altered motion was then carried unanimously as set out below.

A named vote was required by a Member in accordance with Standing Order 25.2.

For the Motion: Councillors Alderson, Mrs Angell, Ashmore, Mrs Barden, Barrett, J. Broadhead, Mrs Broadhead, Ms Clarke, Collins, Davis, Dean, Edwards, Furey, Mrs Gant, Mrs Gillham, Greenwood, Haas, Habgood, Mrs Jones, Knight, Meares, Moore, C.J. Norman, Mrs Norman, Parr, Poole, Mrs Price, Ray, Relph, Ms Simmons, Mrs Smallman, Thewlis, Tollett, Tuley, Waddell, Walmsley, and Woodger (37).

Against the Motion: None.

**RESOLVED that -**

**This Council requests that, in considering the responses to "The Second Edition of the Department for Transport Consultation on the Future Development of Air Transport in the United Kingdom: South East", the Secretary of State pays particular attention to the serious impact on the quality of life of the residents of Runnymede that further expansion at Heathrow would bring, given the significant pollution, transport and housing problems these residents already suffer.**

**Specifically -**

- 1. The increased pollution, indicated within the consultative document, created by aircraft and increased road usage, affecting air quality, water contamination, noise levels, health and residential amenity.**
- 2. There already exists an urgent need to improve and provide effective transport links and infrastructure in the area and for the provision of enhanced public transport to the south and west of the airport. The Airtrack project linked with T5 has still not materialised and is needed now.**
- 3. The consequential loss of Green Belt and social and public amenity, due to housing and employment demand should be resisted.**

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 9.10pm)