

Runnymede Borough CouncilMEETING OF THE COUNCIL25 October 2001

The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor J.R. Ashmore) in the Chair

Members of the
Council present:

Councillors J.R. Ashmore, Mrs. F.J. Barden, E.G. Barrett, Mrs. J.R. Barrett, Mrs. P.I. Broadhead, K.J. Clark, Ms. D.V. Clarke, A.G. Collins, D.P. Easton, J.M. Edwards, J.R. Furey, Mrs. L.M. Gillham, R.K. Habgood, Mrs. S.E. Jacobs, Mrs. C.Y. Jones, A.M. Moore, C.J. Norman, Mrs. J. Norman, D.W. Parr, R. Pate, P.J. Poole, Mrs. E.E. Price, Ms. C.M. Simmons, Mrs. V.A. Smallman, A.P. Tollett, F.J. Tourlmain, P.B. Tuley, P.J. Waddell, J.R. Whiteley and G.B. Woodger

Members of the
Council absent:

Councillors Mrs. F.M. Angell, V.E. Barker, B.A. Clarke, T. Dicks, P.C. Elding, J.E. Haas, Mrs. V.R.T. Lenton-Smith, T.T. McGrath, H.W.V. Meares, E.C. Pattington, G.J. Thomas, and K.J.T. Walmsley

315. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 19 July 2001 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

316. RUNNYMEDE DESIGN AWARDS

The Mayor informed the Council that the Runnymede Design Awards were now in their twelfth year, and continued to be successful in encouraging high standards of architectural design.

The Mayor then presented awards in respect of the following schemes:-

	<u>Category</u>	<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Architect</u>
(1)	Commercial	Siebel – The Glanty, Egham	John Siefert
(2)	Environmental and Community Schemes	Enhancements to Guildford Street, Chertsey	Runnymede Borough Council
(3)	Refurbishment/ Conversion	Hythe Old School, Thorpe Road, Hythe	Rusham Homes
(4)	Residential	185 Almnors Road, Lyne	Mr. J. Ryan

317. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor thanked all those who had supported his Charity Concert on Saturday, 6 October at the Church of Christ the Prince of Peace in Weybridge. It had been a wonderful evening and had raised almost £3,000 for his charity fund.

The Mayor reminded Members that the Charity Ball would be held at Wentworth on Friday, 8 March 2002.

318. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs. F.M. Angell, V.E. Barker, B.A. Clarke, T. Dicks, P.C. Elding, J.E. Haas, H.W.V. Meares, E.C. Pattington, G.J. Thomas and K.J.T. Walmsley.

319. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

- i) In order to avoid any risk of conflict with paragraphs 2.5 to 2.7 of the Council's Code of Conduct for Planning Matters, the following eleven Members declared clear and substantial interests under the National Code of Local Government Conduct in the Motion submitted by Councillor G.B. Woodger and withdrew from the room when the item was considered; Councillors Mrs. Broadhead, K. Clark, Collins, Edwards, Mrs. Jones, Moore, Mrs. Norman, Pate, Tollett, Tourlmain, and Whiteley.
- ii) Councillor Mrs. E.E. Price declared a clear and substantial interest under the National Code of Local Government Conduct in the Motion submitted by Councillor G.B. Woodger but remained in attendance and voted as her interest fell within paragraph 12(c) of the Code.
- iii) Councillor J.M. Edwards reiterated his clear and substantial interest in planning application RU.01/0862 (page 313) but remained in attendance under Standing Order 26.3(b) as the matter was a resolved item and not subject to debate.

320. NOTICE OF MOTION

In accordance with Standing Order 11.3 the Mayor had agreed that a Notice of Motion which was not on the Summons could be taken as a matter of urgency. Under Standing Order 11.1 he ruled that it would be taken after item 7 on the agenda.

Councillor G.B. Woodger had given Notice of a Motion in accordance with Standing Order 15. As the Notice had been submitted after 9.30 a.m. on the sixth working day before the meeting, the Mayor had agreed to accept it as a matter of urgency in accordance with Standing Order 15.3.

Accordingly, Councillor G.B. Woodger moved the motion in the following terms, and was seconded by Councillor D.P. Easton:

“This Council expresses its deep concern at the way the Home Office has progressed the proposed move of the Wolvercote Clinic for sex offenders from Epsom to Silverlands, Chertsey without local consultation and makes representation to the Home Secretary to withdraw the proposal having regard to the location in close proximity of various schools and children’s units and the problems of staff recruitment and retention in this area.”

Councillor Woodger explained that members of the Planning Committee had withdrawn from the meeting in order to ensure that they could deal impartially with any planning application that might be submitted in regard to the Silverlands site.

Councillor Woodger then explained that he and a few other Councillors had only been informed officially by the Home Office at a briefing held on Friday, 19 October of their proposal, now under further review, to locate a Therapy Unit for sex offenders at Silverlands in Lyne. This was after the matter had been carried in the local press. The Home Office had apparently searched for a suitable building to relocate the Wolvercote Clinic, run by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, from Epsom and had identified Silverlands (owned by the Department of Health) as a suitable vacant property. However, it was the opinion of local people that as the site was close to schools, nurseries, playgroups and recreation areas the paedophiles who would be treated at Silverlands could pose a real threat to the community.

Councillor Woodger argued that Silverlands could best be used to house nursing staff or other key workers who found it difficult to find accommodation in such a high-cost area. For this very reason he feared that the Wolvercote Clinic would find itself under-staffed and therefore unable to provide proper treatment or, more importantly perhaps, adequate security. In conclusion, he stated that Silverlands was about the worst location the Home Office could have chosen. Moreover, a delicate situation had been compounded because the Home Office had tried to maintain an unacceptable level of secrecy and had totally failed in its duty of consultation and communication. For these reasons he would wish the the Council to consider seeking a Judicial Review of the process and procedures used by the Home Office in reaching their inept decision, if confirmed.

Other Members spoke in support of the Motion, emphasising that Silverlands was the wrong location for a facility of this nature. It was stressed that such a facility could have a drastic effect on the future viability of Lyne and Longcross School, since parents could prove unwilling to send their children

there. It could also impinge on the viability of Lyne village itself. Criticism was also levelled at the Home Office for its insistence on confidentiality during early discussions weeks before which had meant that certain Members and Officers could not discuss the issue openly, despite asking the Home Office to make the issue public. A briefing had originally been scheduled for 9 October but it had then been postponed by the Home Office until 19 October. Members agreed that this was unfitting for a government which prided itself on open Government and imposed rigorous consultative obligations on local authorities.

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

For the Motion: Councillors Ashmore, Mrs. Barden, Barrett, Mrs. Barrett, Ms. Clarke, Easton, Furey, Mrs. Gillham, Habgood, Mrs. Jacobs, Norman, Parr, Poole, Mrs. Price, Ms. Simmons, Mrs. Smallman, Tuley, Waddell and Woodger (19).

Against the Motion: None.

Accordingly, the Council

RESOLVED that -

this Council expresses its deep concern at the way the Home Office has progressed the proposed move of the Wolvercote Clinic for sex offenders from Epsom to Silverlands, Chertsey without local consultation and makes representation to the Home Secretary to withdraw the proposal having regard to the location in close proximity of various schools and children's units and the problems of staff recruitment and retention in this area.

321. CENTRAL RAILWAY PROPOSAL

RESOLVED that -

the recommendation of the Corporate Management Committee as set out in paragraph 213, page 266 (Minutes of 6 September 2001), be approved.

322. STANDARDS COMMITTEE – MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED that -

the recommendation of the Corporate Management Committee as set out in paragraph 216, page 268 (Minutes of 6 September 2001), be approved.

323. PROPOSED MOTORWAY SERVICE AREA – REFERENCE FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that -

the recommendation of the Corporate Management Committee as set out in paragraph 222, page 270 (Minutes of 6 September 2001), be approved.

324. FORWARD PLANNING – BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

RESOLVED that -

the recommendation of the Planning Committee as set out in paragraph 254, page 314 (Minutes of 19 September 2001), be approved.

325. PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES – CARRIAGE OF ASSISTANCE DOGS

RESOLVED that -

the recommendation of the Leisure and Environment Committee as set out in paragraph 271, page 327 (Minutes of 20 September 2001), be approved.

326. HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION BILL 2001

RESOLVED that -

the recommendation of the Leisure and Environment Committee as set out in paragraph 272, page 328 (Minutes of 20 September 2001), be approved.

327. CAR PARKING STANDARDS – RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

RESOLVED that -

the recommendation of the Planning Committee as set out in paragraph 283, page 420 (Minutes of 3 October 2001), be approved.

328. LEADER'S POSITION STATEMENT

In moving acceptance of this recommendation Councillor G.B. Woodger pointed out that the first ten words of recommendation (i) should be deleted. This was because both Review Boards had commented upon the Statement but had agreed it as submitted. He also indicated that words should be inserted to reflect the Council's position regarding the proposed use of Silverlands, Lyne, as resolved earlier in the meeting.

Accordingly, the Council

RESOLVED that -

- i) the Position Paper for 2001/2002 be approved as Council policy;**
- ii) the Chief Executive Officer be instructed to insert a section to be agreed by the Leader of the Council, to outline the Council's position regarding the potential development of Silverlands;**
- iii) the contents of the paper be reflected in the Best Value Performance Plan for 2002/03; and**
- iv) Officers be instructed to take the Position Paper into account in developing service targets.**

(Councillor A.M. Moore asked that his abstention be recorded in accordance with Standing Order 25.3).

329. REVENUE FORECAST AND TARGET BUDGET

RESOLVED that -

the recommendation of the Corporate Management Committee as set out in paragraph 289, page 448 (Minutes of 4 October 2001), be approved.

330. SERVICE REVIEW BOARD MEETING ON TRAVELLER INCURSIONS

RESOLVED that -

the recommendation of the Corporate Management Committee as set out in paragraph 290, page 449 (Minutes of 4 October 2001), be approved.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 9.25 p.m.)