

Runnymede Borough Council

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

13 September 2001 at 7.30 p.m.

Members of the Committee present: Councillors R.K. Habgood (Chairman), J.R. Furey (Vice-Chairman) E.G. Barrett, B.A. Clarke, T. Dicks, T.T. McGrath, H.W.V. Meares, Ms C.M. Simmons and K.J.T. Walmsley

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor P.J. Poole

Councillor Mrs C.Y. Jones also attended

236. CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

In the temporary absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Councillor J.R. Furey took the Chair for the items on Notification of Changes to Committee Membership, Minutes, Apologies for Absence, Declarations of Interest and Egham Farmers Market - Evaluation of Pilot Scheme. The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor R.K. Habgood, took the Chair for the remainder of the items on the Agenda.

237. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Conservative Group had notified the Chief Executive Officer of its wish that Councillors J.M. Edwards and Mrs V.A. Smallman be removed from membership of the Committee and that Councillors T. Dicks and T.T. McGrath be appointed in their place.

The Chief Executive Officer had given effect to this request in accordance with Section 16 (2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

238. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 June 2001 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

239. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor P.J. Poole.

240. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor K.J.T. Walmsley declared a pecuniary interest in the item - Street Trading - Kingsley Avenue, Englefield Green and left the room for the consideration thereof.

241. EGHAM FARMERS MARKET - EVALUATION OF PILOT SCHEME

(Ref: Minutes of Executive Committee, 5 July 2000, page 264 para. 133)

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during some of the consideration of this report under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the report in question would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 9 of Schedule 12A of Part 1 of the Act.

The Committee's instructions were sought on whether to continue Egham Farmers' Market. In July 2000 the Executive Committee had approved in principle a six month trial of a Farmers' Market in Egham. In January 2001 the Committee authorised the engagement of Mrs J O'Neill to operate the pilot market. Markets had taken place on the fourth Saturday of each month in May, June, July and August. The trial would end with the October market and a decision was now necessary as to its continuation. The market had been warmly received by the public many of whom had made positive comments. Only one objection from a butcher in Englefield Green had been received which the Committee agreed did not provide sufficient grounds to discontinue it. It was clear that the Market

was offering something different to other Markets in Surrey and the South East. It had been run with considerable skill by the operator and had exceeded original expectations of its popularity. The Committee was pleased to note the Market's success and agreed that it should continue.

There were still administrative matters concerning the operation which needed to be resolved and, if necessary, a further report would be submitted if costs would need to be incurred in excess of those which had been allocated.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) taking into the account the experience of the pilot and feedback received, the Council continue to encourage the running of a Farmers' Market in Egham High Street;**
- ii) the Borough Secretary and Leisure Services Officer be authorised to establish ways of allowing the operation of the Market to continue and agree the basis on which this should be done with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee;**
- iii) subject to satisfactory agreement under ii), the Borough Secretary and Leisure Services Officer be authorised to settle all necessary arrangements for the continuation of Egham Farmers' Market;**
- iv) subject to consideration of a report on the detail, provision be made in the draft estimates for 2002/2003 and subsequent years of a sum not exceeding £5,000 per annum at today's prices to support the continuation of the Egham Farmers Market; and**
- v) if the arrangements above cannot be achieved within the existing budgetary framework a further report be submitted to the Committee.**

242. ACTION ADDLESTONE

(Ref: Minutes of Economic Development Committee, June 2001, page 72, para. 80)

Approval was sought for environmental improvements at the "Spittles forecourt" in Station Road, and the former Dukes Head junction and to terminate the grant aid scheme for High Street properties. Progress on the Station Road canopy proposal was also outlined.

At the last meeting of the Committee, in June, it had been reported that the Action Addlestone Steering Group had agreed a preferred sketch design for the enhancement of the "Spittles forecourt" area of Station Road. The former Executive Committee had given approval for the scheme, and for the appointment of a consultant to carry out the detailed design. As the next meeting of this Committee was not until November, rather than delay the award of the contract and the construction of the scheme, it was agreed that a budget now be approved from the Action Addlestone capital estimate. Given that the contract was still to be let, the likely amount was noted, as set out in Exempt Appendix "1" to the Agenda.

A pedestrian crossing phase at the High Street, Church Road, Brighton Road and Station Road junction had been considered. However, as the junction was already over capacity at its peak, there was concern that this additional delay would cause further traffic congestion. It was therefore agreed that an electronic control mechanism "Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation" (MOVA) which optimised traffic flow in relation to vehicle queue lengths be introduced. A traffic study considered that this would enable the introduction of a pedestrian phase with little additional congestion. This part of the scheme would be designed, funded and implemented by Surrey County Council. Any legal implications would be reported to the Planning Committee for consideration. As part of the implementation of this scheme it was agreed that the opportunity be taken to replace the block paving on both sides of Station Road/Church Road leading up to the junction. The total cost of such paving would be £18,000.

In the early stages of the Action Addlestone project, the condition of many of the properties in the High Street was identified as a matter of public concern. The Council therefore had agreed to set aside £95,000 from the Action Addlestone expenditure for a maximum grant of £5,000 for each of the 19 properties in the High Street area. Only five grants had been approved since April 1999 and two of these schemes had yet to start. This represented a total commitment of £13,000. The grant regime represented a unique contribution to private properties from the Council, and the lack of take-up was very disappointing. It was agreed that the offer of grant aid should now be time-limited, to be terminated from 1 October 2001. All properties affected had been informed in writing of this proposal. It was agreed that if in the future there was an approach from one of the occupiers for works which were particularly meritorious, the proposal might be given further consideration by the Committee and that £30,000 from the remaining £82,000 of this part of the budget be set aside for future paving and kerbing improvements along the High Street with the balance of £52,000 to be expended on other elements of the scheme.

The original consultant's report had suggested the use of canopies to visually enhance the southern part of Station Road. This had been investigated by the Steering Group whose initial preference was for a continuous run of canopies to improve the pedestrian/shopper environment, which would, however, have been prohibitively expensive, being in excess of £1 million. The Committee therefore agreed smaller canopy structures could be incorporated as discrete but practical townscape features where legal ownership or agreement so allowed. Works on the highway would require the consent of Surrey County Council after 1 April 2002, following the termination of the Agency agreement.

Part of the overall scheme included provision of raised speed tables across Station Road, with complementary features in Crockford Park Road to discourage traffic diversion. It was agreed that the location and design of the canopies be held in abeyance until survey work on the likely location of speed tables had been completed in order that the two features could be related to each other. In the interim, however, it was agreed that contact be maintained with the chosen manufacturer so that sketch designs could be prepared in the future.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) the sum as set out in Exempt Appendix "1" to the Agenda be allocated for implementation of the works on "Spittles forecourt";**
- ii) the improvements to the traffic signals at the Station Road, Church Road, Brighton Road, High Street junction, together with paving improvements, be undertaken at a cost not exceeding £18,000;**
- iii) the grant aid provision for properties in the High Street be terminated from 1 October 2001;**
- iv) a further report be presented to the Committee on proposals for paving and kerbing improvements in the High Street; and**
- v) the provision of a continuous canopy in Station Road be substituted with individual canopy features related to traffic calming and townscape features as part of a comprehensive scheme.**

**243. CHERTSEY REVITALISATION - SIGNAGE**

Proposals were outlined for improvements to be carried out to highway and pedestrian signage in Chertsey, in the context of the Chertsey Revitalisation initiative, in order to promote the town and its facilities.

The main areas of improvements were as follows :-

- Directional traffic signs to the town centre.
- Directional traffic signs to car parks, clearly indicating designation (e.g. short stay).
- Directional pedestrian signs (fingerposts) to places of interest.
- 'Welcome to Chertsey' signs at the main access points to the town.
- Text and graphic signage emphasising the existing 20 m.p.h. zone.

Funding was available from developer related contributions received for infrastructure works and environmental improvements in the town (for which provision within the capital programme had already been made) and it was agreed that the measures set out at Appendix 'A' should be commended to the Corporate Management Committee for funding.

**RESOLVED that –**

- i) the signage proposals set out above be approved subject to any minor variations deemed necessary by the Borough Technical Services Officer subject to Ward Member and other local consultation; and**
- ii) the Corporate Management Committee be requested to approve a capital estimate of up to £23,000 to be financed from relevant development related contributions.**

244. RUNNYMEDE (SCHOOL) TRAVEL INITIATIVE

The Committee was advised of progress on the Runnymede (School) Travel Initiative.

The first part of the Runnymede Travel Initiative (RTI) had examined the impact that the school journey had on peak hour flows. The key to tackling this issue was to find alternative means of travelling to school. Following discussions with Salesian, Magna Carta, Fullbrook, Sir William Perkins, Abbeylands and St. George's College schools, arrangements had been made to install new high quality and secure cycle shelters accommodating up to 500 cycles.

Part of Phase 2 of the RTI entailed promoting travel by school bus which could help reduce the number of car related journeys by about 183,000 per annum at the two pilot secondary schools, Fullbrook in New Haw and Magna Carta in Egham. Detailed routes were being developed using data supplied by the schools. The one year pilot project would be based upon the American style yellow bus concept and involved the provision of four new buses designed especially for the school market.

Following a tendering process amongst local bus operators, First Group plc had submitted the lowest tender to operate the new bus service from January 2002. This would be subject to the necessary contractual and logistical details being agreed. New buses would be introduced to run on routes to the school, picking pupils up from near their home and delivering them to school. During the initial period of the one year pilot project the existing arrangements for free school travel would remain unaltered. The buses would also be available for school use during the day at an agreed tariff. At present, expressions of interest were being invited from parents who wished their children to use the new service.

It was agreed that a flat rate charge of £1.00 per day return be made for students that used the service, to be collected by the school. Parents would sign up for the full school year and would pay the school on a monthly basis. The school would submit a return to the Council each month showing the use of the bus and pay over monies received. It would be the responsibility of the school to make arrangements to ensure that fares were paid. Schools would also be able to use the buses during the middle of the day (a maximum of 5 hours being available). It was agreed that schools be charged £80 for the full day, or £20 an hour, for this service. The Committee agreed that if following further detailed discussion, these costs were not deemed to be realistic, they should receive a further report, with any suggested amendments.

The Committee agreed to request that the Corporate Management Committee draw down from the Aviator Park developers contribution towards the RTI to meet the anticipated deficit in the pilot period having noted the financial projections set out in Exempt Appendix '2' to the Agenda.

The Committee noted that School Transport was a discretionary initiative for the Council but would be difficult to withdraw once established. Although the deficit on the pilot scheme would be met from Section 106 contributions, this source of funding was not certain in the medium term and funding from the General Fund might be very difficult given the long term budgetary constraints that the Council faced.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) negotiations be finalised with First Group plc. to implement the one year pilot school bus project at Magna Carta and Fullbrook Schools, commencing in January 2002;**
- ii) the Corporate Management Committee be requested to approve the underwriting of the net deficit on the one year pilot school bus project and finance it from the monies payable under the Section 106 agreement for the Aviator Park development;**
- iii) the charge for the school run service be set at £1.00 per day return, to be paid monthly in advance, and to be collected by each school and passed over to the Council; and**
- iv) the charge for the use of a bus during the school day be set at £20 an hour, or £80 for the full school day.**

245. STREET TRADING - KINGSLEY AVENUE, ENGLEFIELD GREEN

The Committee received a report of complaints concerning activities of customers of the street trader in Kingsley Avenue, Englefield Green. The Committee noted a brief history of trading at the site.

Mr. Almali, who currently traded at the site, had taken over the consent for Kingsley Avenue in December 2000, selling fast food and soft drinks. The Council's former Executive Committee considered applications for both renewals and new street trading consents at its meeting in March 2001, when this trader applied to operate until midnight for 2001/2002. Although no further complaints had been received at that time, the Borough Environmental Services Officer and the Police had wished to see the 11.30 p.m. closing time retained and the Executive Committee agreed that the finish time of 11.30 p.m. should remain up until 31 March 2002, having regard to the residential nature of the area.

Complaints had recently been received from residents of a property in the vicinity of the trader's location and from one of the local Councillors for the Ward, on behalf of a number of residents in the area, alleging that the trader at Kingsley Avenue, Englefield Green, had been trading outside his allocated hours by starting earlier and finishing later than he was allowed to and alleging intimidating behaviour and damage to property arising from the trader's customers. The trader had been monitored and was generally complying with his hours of trading. Mid-year action would be exceptional and Officers believed that more observation was needed before a decision was taken. The Committee agreed that the most reasonable course of action was for the trader's operation to be monitored over the course of the next few months and a further report be brought back to the Committee in March or earlier if necessary, summarising any further incidents or complaints and the results of the monitoring operation, to enable the Committee to reconsider the consent, its conditions including opening and closing times and any other representations received from the trader, the residents, Ward Members and the Police.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) the trader continues to be monitored; and**
- ii) a further report be submitted to the Committee's March meeting unless it is clear that the situation has deteriorated or there is further evidence to warrant trading at this location being considered at an earlier time.**

246. URGENT ACTION - STANDING ORDER 42

The following action taken since the Committee's last meeting after consultation with the Chairman under Standing Order 42 was noted:

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>	<u>Central Index No.</u>
Borough Secretary and Leisure Services Officer	Agreement to completion of a Deed of Postponement with the Bank of Wales and the re-capitalisation of Aymer House Limited in order to facilitate the construction works at Aymer House, which form Phase 8 of the Chertsey Revitalisation Scheme.	484

247. 1 - 23 STATION ROAD, EGHAM - LEASE RENEWALS/RENT REVIEWS

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this report under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the report in question would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraphs 3 and 7 of Schedule 12A of Part 1 of the Act.

Approval was sought to the terms agreed in respect of a new lease at 13 Station Road, Egham and authority was requested to conclude lease renewals and rent reviews in respect of the remainder of the block.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) subject to contract and the receipt of any necessary consents, the new leases in respect of 13, 17, 19/21, and 23 Station Road, Egham be approved as reported;**
- ii) the Borough Secretary and Leisure Services Officer be authorised to complete all other rent reviews and lease renewals in respect of the properties at 1 - 23 Station Road upon terms to be agreed by the Valuer to the Council; and**
- iii) the Valuer to the Council be requested to report back to the Committee on the outcome of all such negotiations together with a report on the assets' performance.**

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 9.03 p.m.)