

Runnymede Borough CouncilECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE13 November 2003 at 7.00 p.m.

Members of the Committee present: Councillors J.R. Furey (Chairman), A. Alderson, Mrs. F.J. Barden, M.J. Brown, A.J. Davis, D.P. Easton, J.M. Edwards, R.J. Ray, B.J. Relph and Ms. C.M. Simmons

Members of the Committee absent: None

Councillors Mrs. P.I. Broadhead, Mrs. C.E. Gant, C.J. Norman, Mrs. J. Norman, P.J. Poole, P.J. Waddell and J.R. Whiteley also attended for all or part of the meeting.

468. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Conservative Group had notified the Chief Executive Officer of its wish that the changes listed below be made to the membership of the Committee. The changes were for a fixed period ending on the day after the meeting and thereafter the Councillors removed would be re-appointed.

Remove from Membership	Appoint instead
Councillor J. E. Haas	Councillor J.M. Edwards
Councillor K.J.T. Walmsley	Councillor Mrs. F.J. Barden

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

469. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 September 2003 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

470. DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT PRESENTATION

Mr A. Harrison of Harrison Webb Consultants attended the meeting to give a presentation on the continuing preparations for the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) in the Borough and answer Members questions thereon.

The Committee recalled that the Road Traffic Act 1991 provided for the decriminalisation of most non endorseable on-street parking offences in London and permitted the introduction of similar arrangements elsewhere upon application to the Secretary of State. Enforcement would then be the responsibility of local traffic authorities which would be able to retain the proceeds from Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) to fund the enforcement and adjudication system. Any funding surplus was to be used for certain prescribed traffic management purposes. Surrey Police had given notice of its intention to cease enforcement of on-street parking controls with effect from 1 April 2004. Surrey County Council would then assume responsibility for the function with, for the most part, individual districts/boroughs undertaking the enforcement role on their behalf. Implementation of the new regime in Runnymede was scheduled for October/November 2004.

Members were informed that Surrey County Council was to meet all the agreed start up costs for on-street enforcement from local transportation plan funding, as well as revenue costs for the first two years of the operation. The County Council would, in turn, retain the income from on-street PCN's over this period. The initial financial consequences for Runnymede would therefore be neutral at worst. There was in fact likely to be a betterment in income arising from increased usage of the Council's off street car parks, assuming that motorists were successfully deterred from on street parking. This off street parking income, which was forecast to rise by between 2.5% - 7.5%, was not part of the DPE balance sheet, and would continue to be retained by the Borough Council.

The Committee noted that it was extremely difficult to predict the revenue consequences of DPE over time. Experience in Kent revealed large variations in the financial performance of neighbouring authorities. The paradox of DPE was that an intensive and successful enforcement regime with high costs would have a correspondingly low income and very substantial operating deficit. The preferred approach was, therefore, a policy of "controlled failure" to maximise income for a minimised cost. The financial performance depended critically on the productivity of the parking attendants. Accuracy in the issuing and processing of tickets was also important since errors would lead to appeals to the National Adjudication Service.

Two alternative financial scenarios were presented to the Committee in order to illustrate the uncertainties. The optimistic model assumed that income would be high initially before stabilising overtime and that increases in revenue costs would be restricted to 10% over 5 years. This provided a cumulative operating deficit of £72,200 over 2 years and £158,575 over 5 years. The pessimistic model assumed low levels of initial income, falling over time as compliance improved, and revenue costs increasing by 20% over the five year period. This would produce a deficit of £166,435 by the end of the second year and £438,320 by year five. In practice, however, ongoing deficits of this nature would require some form of early intervention. The County Council was committed to meeting deficits for the first two years of the scheme and it was noted that Runnymede would have to give its consent to any alterations in the financial arrangements thereafter.

Members took the opportunity to emphasise that the principle objective of implementing DPE in Runnymede was not to raise additional revenue but to improve the environment and enhance road safety by discouraging unauthorised parked cars from the streets. Any cost/benefit appraisal of the regime needed to take account of these quality of life and safety issues alongside the financial model.

The Committee noted that the additional enforcement resources required for the DPE regime could also be utilised for residents' parking zones and controlled parking zones. The Joint Member Working Group, comprising two representatives from both the Borough and County Councils, had taken the decision not to examine the possibility of introducing such initiatives at this stage. There would, however, be an opportunity to do so once a settled and stable parking regime had been established following the implementation of DPE. The Group was currently liaising with the Police regarding the arrangements for the interim period between the cessation of Police enforcement duties and the introduction of DPE. A publicity budget of £13,000 had been set aside in order to notify residents and motorists of the new regime. The revised Traffic Regulation Orders were now close to finalisation. The existing waiting restrictions had been varied in places and it was suggested that Members might wish to examine the draft proposals within their own Wards in order to ensure that there were no issues of concern.

471. CROWN LANE TO LYNE ROAD FOOTPATH (FERNIVALS CROSSING), VIRGINIA WATER  
(Ref: Minutes of Economic Development Committee, September 2003, page 638, para. 300)

The Committee gave consideration to proposals by Network Rail to close the level crossing and footpath between Crown Lane and Lyne Road, Virginia Water in the light of the results of a recent public consultation exercise.

Members noted that two petitions, containing 127 and 53 signatures respectively, had been submitted to the Council advocating the closure of the footpath across the railway line because of disturbance caused to neighbouring residents by the sounding of train horns. The footpath, which was designated as such by Network Rail rather than being a public right of way managed by the Highway Authority, incorporated an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing. Trains were obliged to sound their horns on the approach to such crossings for safety reasons but levels of noise nuisance had risen with the recent introduction of new models of trains with louder horns.

The Committee now noted the outcome of a public consultation exercise undertaken by Network Rail in order to gauge the level of support for the closure of the path. Residents of 132 properties favoured the closure, mostly for reasons of noise nuisance but some also cited concerns of children playing in the vicinity of the track. Five residents and a local Ward Councillor had objected to the closure on grounds of loss of amenity. Residents Associations and interest groups were split in their responses. The preference of the Ramblers Association was for the path to remain open, but it would accept a closure for reasons of safety. Network Rail was of the view that noise nuisance was not a proper consideration but was still minded to close the path permanently on safety grounds. Railway crossings, particularly uncontrolled crossings, had a poor safety record and there had been

a fatal accident at Moor Lane, Staines earlier in the year. The Council's views on the closure option were therefore requested.

In considering their response Members sought to balance the noise nuisance and safety concerns with the loss of amenity to the users of the path. It was noted that closure of the path would not completely remove the risk to pedestrians as the alternative would be to walk along Lyne Road, which had no footways. Nor would it completely remove the problem of train horn noise across the borough as horns would continue to be sounded at other locations. Nevertheless, the crossing appeared to be underused and there was considerable disturbance to the quality of life of local residents. Advances in technology which might mitigate the effects of train horn noise would be only of long term benefit and alternative solutions, such as a footbridge over the track, were unlikely to be pursued by the railway authorities. Given that the crossing was not a public right of way, and that Network Rail was entitled to fence the crossing off and remove all signage, including whistle boards, it was therefore felt that no objections to the closure should be raised by the Council. It was, however, emphasised that this was not to be regarded as a precedent. It was, in general, important to protect footpaths and the Council's response was specific to the particular problems identified at the Crown Lane site.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) no objections be raised to the Network Rail proposal to close the Crown Lane to Lyne Road footpath; and**
- ii) the petitioners be advised of the Council's response.**

472. HYTHE CENTRE AND TOWN PARK

(Ref: Minutes of Economic Development Committee, June 2002, page 148, para. 72)

The Committee received details of the final outturn of the Hythe Centre project and progress in respect of the associated Town Park proposals.

Members were pleased to note that the final account for the new Hythe Centre, subject to satisfactory completion of a few minor snagging items, had now been agreed at £1.283m, some £4,000 within the approved contract sum. The total cost, inclusive of items such as fittings, fees and public consultation, amounted to £1.49m. The new centre, opened in December 2002, had been well received by the public and user groups with satisfaction levels being higher than those recorded at the old Social Centre. Income levels had increased by 96%.

Members noted that the Hythe Centre project had highlighted a number of issues which would be relevant to future development proposals. Early and widespread consultation, and particularly the involvement of user groups, had proved to be extremely useful. It was, however, important this process did not raise unrealistic expectations. The procurement route was also vital and there should need to be good reason to depart from a design and build contract. Initial problems between the contractor and design team over responsibility for delays would not have arisen under such an arrangement. Strong and competent site management too, was critical. The works needed to be properly resourced and the project team should, wherever possible, include staff with detailed knowledge of how the finished product was to be utilised and who could deal with the detail. The Council should also always be clear about the outcome it expected and ensure that the consultants delivered according to this vision. Levels of retention should be increased in order to provide more of an incentive for a rapid conclusion to the post completion snagging.

The expenditure on the social centre element of the project had left a residual sum of £55,000 from the approved budgetary provision towards the estimated £500,000 costs for the development of a Town Park on the site of the Pooley Green allotments. A 'Friends of the Park' Group had been established with the intention of raising £150,000 towards this sum from sources of funding not available to the Council. It was also intended that the Group consider the detailed design of the park and other open spaces and, in the long term, become involved in maintaining these facilities in partnership with the Council. At a public meeting in September, 20 people had volunteered to serve on the Group and Officers were now working with them to establish a constitution and promote fund raising. Discussions were taking place with the Association for the Improvement of Runnymede regarding sources of possible funding. It was also hoped to include young people in the design process through the involvement of the Youth Service. Members welcomed the enthusiasm of

residents to participate in the process but emphasised that it was important this interest be sustained if progress was slower than desired.

Also critical to the development of the park would be capital receipts from the disposal of land to the rear of the Hythe Centre, for use as a Doctors Surgery, and land adjoining 97 Pooley Green Road, for an affordable housing scheme. It was noted that the original proposals for the relocation of the Thorpe Road surgery had been expanded and it was now intended to provide a health centre of approximately 10,000 square feet with associated car parking. The development was to be privately financed by Community Healthcare Investments Limited, to whom it was agreed that a 50 year lease should be granted at a premium. The development would result in the completion of the remaining 27 spaces in the Hythe Centre car park and provide an additional 28 spaces. Some open space used as a kick about area would be lost but consideration was to be given to appropriate play equipment on the remainder of the site.

Members noted that the sites of both the proposed health centre and the housing scheme were located within the flood plain and therefore contrary to local plan policies. Despite the community benefits, the Environment Agency was likely to raise objections. The applicants in respect of the health centre would seek to overcome these concerns by raising the building and the provision of a dry escape route. The housing development had also been designed to allow the free flow of water but it had not been possible to meet the requirement for a dry escape route.

The development of the park was also dependent upon the relocation of the Egham Swan Sanctuary. A full report on the subject would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee, but in the meantime it was noted that discussions had been held with the Tussauds Group regarding alternative locations at Thorpe Park and Chertsey Lane. There was, however, some concern that the Swan Sanctuary's needs and aspirations might not be readily compatible either with land use restrictions or sources of funding.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) the establishment of a "Friends of the Park" Group with a view to attracting funding not available to the Council be welcomed; and**
- ii) the Director of Administration and Leisure be authorised to grant a 50 years lease of the land shown at Appendix 'A' to Community Healthcare Investments Limited, subject to terms to be agreed in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman and also to due advertisement of the proposals and consideration of any objections in accordance with Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 prior to a final decision to proceed.**

473. RUNNYMEDE TRAVEL INITIATIVE – OPTIONS FOR LONG TERM FUNDING  
(Ref: Minutes of Economic Development Committee September 2003, page 637, para 299)

Members gave consideration to the opportunities for attracting long term funding of the Yellow School Bus service, which formed part of the Runnymede Travel Initiative.

The Committee noted that there were two main options, namely the establishment of an arms length charitable company limited by guarantee to operate the project independently, and the use of the emerging Business Improvement District (BID) route.

The principal advantage of charitable status was that companies would be entitled to claim tax relief on their contributions. Research by Officers suggested that this form of charitable donation was more likely to be attractive to leading local companies than any form of general sponsorship. Expert legal advice confirmed that the Yellow Bus project satisfied the criteria for the establishment of a charity. There was, however, some uncertainty surrounding the future fund raising activities of charities as the Government had announced proposals to reform the sector. In view of this, and the loss of policy and priority direction over the initiative that charitable status would entail, it was agreed that the option should not be pursued for the time being.

As had been previously reported, BID's presented an alternative funding stream. The concept had been developed by the Government in order to promote partnership working between local authorities and business. It was envisaged that BID's would undertake a wide variety of projects

including those relevant to the creation of a safe environment and the improvement of transport and accessibility. The Local Government Act 2003 contained provisions for a time limited levy to be added to the non domestic rate which could be retained for local initiatives based either on a specific geographical area or focused on the needs of a particular business sector. Projects were to be identified by the business community following a ballot amongst those companies likely to benefit from the project, but implemented in consultation with the Council. In an initial survey of 50 local companies, 14% indicated they would support the concept of a BID to assist the Yellow Bus project, sufficient according to draft guidance to proceed to more formal stages of consultation.

Members noted that BIDS were not yet a tried and tested means of securing funding and there was no guarantee that a ballot would secure the necessary support to proceed. It was, however, considered to be an innovative approach capable of capturing the imagination of the local business community. As the BID would be overseen by a Board comprising the main stakeholders, the Council and Runnymede Business Partnership would retain a crucial role in the operation of the service. It was therefore agreed that initial preparatory work on the establishment of a BID should be undertaken and a further report presented to Committee at the appropriate time in order to decide whenever to proceed.

In view of these developments and the satisfactory nature of the Yellow Bus Service, the Committee agreed to waive Contract Standing Orders relating to the requirement for competitive tendering and extend the existing contract for the service for a further year, to February 2005.

**RESOLVED that –**

- i) initial work be undertaken to secure long term funding for the Yellow Bus Project from the Business Improvement Districts Scheme;**
- ii) further work on the establishment of a charity to operate the Yellow Bus service be placed on hold pending legislative changes; and**
- iii) Standing Order C2.5 relating to tendering procedures be waived to enable the existing Yellow Bus contract to be extended for a further year, to February 2005.**

474. PRECINCT EXTENSION CAR PARK – PROPOSED EXTENSION OF PAY AND DISPLAY

The Committee approved a proposal that Pay and Display parking be introduced in part of the Precinct Extension car park on weekdays. The car park was already available to the general public on a Pay and Display basis on Saturdays but the 43 spaces were presently reserved for permit holders between Monday and Friday. Only 25 permits had been issued, generating income of £1,350 per annum and there were normally just 10 – 15 vehicles in the car park on a working day. The pressure on spaces in the other main Egham car parks suggested that the Precinct Extension would be better utilised if Pay and Display was introduced throughout the week. It would, however, be necessary to mark out 25 bays towards the rear of the car park for the exclusive use of permit holders. The respective Pay and Display and permit parking areas would be clearly distinguished to avoid confusion.

Members noted that the introduction of Pay and Display would generate an additional income of £8,000 - £10,000 per annum, which represented a useful contribution towards the Council's £1m revenue reduction target.

**RESOLVED that –**

**subject to the receipt and consideration of representations from the public, the Precinct Extension Car Park be made available for Pay and Display parking, in limited bays, from Monday to Saturday, with the retention of 25 bays for permit parking.**

475. SECURED CAR PARKS INITIATIVE

(Ref: Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee January 1996, page 745, para 561)

The Committee received details of the works necessary to achieve 'Secured Car Park' status for the four Pay and Display car parks currently without the accreditation.

Members recalled that 'Secured Car Park' status was awarded by the Police and the British Parking Association to those car parks where high standards of safety and security had been both achieved and maintained. Car parks which met the criteria tended to suffer less crime and vandalism and helped to attract vehicles away from on-street parking. Six of the Council's 10 car parks currently held secured status but the Chertsey Library, Gogmore Farm, Beomonds and Wapse Farm car parks required a variety of minor improvements, principally in respect of lighting, fencing, bay marking and signage in order to achieve the award. It was noted that the works, which were to cost £34,250, would assist the Council in the discharge of its statutory obligation to do all that it could to reduce crime and disorder.

**RESOLVED that –**

**the works set out in Appendix 'B' be undertaken at the Chertsey Library, Wapse Farm, Gogmore Farm and Beomonds car parks in order to seek 'Secured Car Park' status during 2004/05.**

476. M25 WIDENING – OFFSITE PLANTING

The Committee received details of negotiations with the Highways Agency regarding landscaping proposed as part of the M25 widening scheme.

Members noted that the Highways Agency had identified a number of sites outside the highway boundary where it was considered that new tree and shrub planting would be desirable to help mitigate the adverse visual effects of the widening of the M25 between junctions 12 and 15. Two of those sites were in the ownership of the Council, including Egham Sports Centre. It had been proposed that the Highways Agency bear the cost of planting, fencing and maintenance for three years, after which time the Council would be obliged to retain the planting for a period of 25 years. Following protracted negotiations, the Agency had now verbally accepted that a commuted sum would be appropriate in order to reflect the on-going maintenance liabilities which would be passed to the Council. No discussions had yet taken place in respect of the level of such a payment. Members felt that it would be appropriate to seek the views of those residents who would be most affected by the proposals before reaching final agreement with the Highways Agency.

**RESOLVED that –**

**subject to the views of the Leisure and Environment Committee, the Highways Agency landscaping proposals be accepted in principle subject to consultation with residents and the agreement of detailed terms, including the amount of any commuted sum.**

477. ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING - NATIONAL PROPERTY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Committee gave consideration to the 2003 edition of the Council's Asset Management Plan. Having previously been rated as 'Good' by the Government Office for the South East, the Council was not required to submit the plan to the Government for further assessment. The Council was, however, under an obligation to maintain and develop the Plan and it was noted in this respect that some of the content had been updated.

Members also received details of the Council's performance against national property performance indicators in accordance with the requirements of the Plan. It was noted that several of the indicators, although valuable management tools, were not necessarily useful for external comparative purposes, being vulnerable to a number of variables, including the size and nature of the portfolio. Nevertheless, Officers would investigate those areas where comparative performance with other authorities was meaningful to ensure consistency of approach and with a view to matching top quartile performance. Continuing efforts would also be made to develop local property performance indicators in order to achieve ongoing improvement both in property performance and the provision of services in general.

**RECOMMEND that -**

**the 2003 Asset Management Plan, set out at Appendix 'C' be approved.**

478. BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT

Members received and noted the Budget Monitoring Statement, incorporating the revenue forecast for Economic Development and Highway Services.

479. URGENT ACTION - STANDING ORDER 42

Members noted details of the following action which had been taken after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee under Standing Order 42:

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>	<u>Central Index No.</u>
Director of Administration and Leisure	Acceptance of a surrender of the existing lease in respect of 58 Station Road, Addlestone and the grant of a replacement lease to a new tenant occupying a property earmarked for redevelopment.	537

480. CEROTUS PLACE, CHERTSEY - DISPOSAL OF LAND

(Ref: Minutes of Housing and Community Services Committee March 2003, page 1120, para 683)

Members concurred with a recommendation of the Housing and Community Services Committee that a plot of waste ground adjacent to 11 Cerotus Place, Chertsey should be sold to the Rosemary Simmons Housing Association for a sum of £95,000. The Housing Association intended to construct two one-bedroom flats on the site in order to provide accommodation for some of the growing number of single people on the Housing Register.

**RESOLVED that –**

**the Director of Administration and Leisure be authorised to dispose of the land adjacent to 11 Cerotus Place, as indicated on the plan at Appendix 'D', to the Rosemary Simmons Housing Association in the sum of £95,000 and subject to such other terms and conditions as he sees fit.**

481. REFERRAL FROM HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – ROAKES AVENUE ESTATE

Members gave consideration to a recommendation from the Housing and Community Services Committee that an empty flat on the Roakes Avenue estate be leased to the Look Ahead Housing Association in order to provide temporary office accommodation.

The Roakes Avenue estate was due to be replaced by the new Painsfield housing scheme in the winter of 2005 and flats that became empty in the interim were not being re-let for short-term housing purposes because of the extent of work required to make them ready for occupation. It had therefore been proposed that one of the empty units should be leased to the Look Ahead Housing Association. The Association, which was based in South London, was seeking office accommodation in the area to enable it to improve the floating support service it provided to local residents. The occupation of the flat would help deter potential squatters and vandals as well as generating a small income. A planning application would be submitted for the temporary change of use.

**RESOLVED that –**

**subject to the grant of planning consent, a lease or licence for the use of an empty flat at the Roakes Avenue estate for office accommodation be granted to Look Ahead Housing Association on terms to be agreed by the Director of Administration and Leisure.**

482. VACANT AND UNFIT PROPERTIES

(Ref: Minutes of Economic Development Committee, November 2002, page 748, para 427)

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

Members welcomed the progress that had been made with the rolling programme to bring vacant and unfit properties back into habitable condition and residential use and gave consideration to extending the scheme to other premises.

At its meeting in November 2002 the Committee had authorised, subject to further negotiations with the owners, Compulsory Purchase Orders in respect of 24 properties which had been either long term vacant or neglected to such an extent that they had a detrimental effect on the local environment. A capital estimate of £1m had been established for the purpose, to be financed from sales and reinvested on a rolling basis to completion of the acquisition programme. Substantial and pleasing progress had subsequently been made in bringing the properties back into residential use, 13 having been refurbished, 7 sold for refurbishment or redevelopment and works being planned for the remainder. Although only one Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) had been required, the willingness of the Council to utilise the power as a last resort had significantly affected landowners property dealings.

The Committee now gave consideration to extending the programme to 9 further unfit properties. Members considered details of the current condition of each of these properties and the options available to the Council to deal with the disrepair. It was agreed that the use of CPO powers would be the only course of action likely to bring the properties back into beneficial occupancy. In reaching this conclusion Members had regard not only to the recommendations of the Housing and Community Services Committee, but also to the Human Rights Act 1998, in particular Articles 1 and 8. The Committee was satisfied that the proposed interference in these cases with human rights was justified and proportionate to the legitimate aims being pursued and that the reasons produced for the proposed Orders were relevant and sufficient. Members noted that Officers would continue to work with property owners to achieve improvements by agreement and that the compulsory purchase powers would only be exercised where they were the only means of bringing unfit properties back into residential use.

It was noted that Officers would endeavour to complete the acquisition and disposal on a break even basis but, in the interests of prudence, it was appropriate to assume that a 5% shortfall might need to be met by the Council. It was agreed that purchase and onward sale should continue to be undertaken on a phased basis, with the receipts being rolled over into the next phase of purchase.

**RESOLVED that -**

**subject to such further negotiations as the Borough Valuer considers reasonable, and a phased approach to acquisition, Compulsory Purchase Orders be made pursuant to Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 in respect of the properties listed in the agenda report for the purposes of repair, renovation or redevelopment, whether by the Council or third parties, so that the properties be brought back into beneficial residential use.**

483. CHERTSEY REVITALISATION AREA PHASES 12-14 (GUILDFORD STREET/FOX LANE NORTH)

(Ref: Minutes of Economic Development Committee, June 2002, page 141, para. 69, and February 2003, page 1083, para. 638)

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraphs 7 and 9 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

Members received details of an approach by Countryside Properties Limited, the Council's development partner, to revise proposals for the final phase of the Chertsey Revitalisation Scheme, at Fox Lane North.

The Committee recalled that the original concept of a predominantly office based development with supporting retail, 37 residential units and underground car parking had been replaced with a scheme involving 93 residential units, 24 of which would be affordable housing, 10,000 square feet of retail and more economic ground level car parking. Since that scheme was accepted by the Council earlier in the year it had been the subject of further assessment by Countryside.

The Committee welcomed the outcome of a meeting between Officers and Countryside Directors which had taken place the previous day. Countryside proposed to proceed with the more recently approved predominantly residential scheme. Members noted proposed adjustments to the phasing of payments and other matters. Minor changes to the scheme design had been proposed but these would not require a new planning consent. The formal proposals were expected from Countryside the following week and would be presented to Members for approval. In view of the need to progress matters prior to the January cycle of meetings, however, it was noted that the Chairman of the Committee intended to consent to the proposals being determined at the next appropriate meeting of the Corporate Management Committee.

484. STONEYLANDS CLUB, EGHAM

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

The Committee gave preliminary consideration to the disposal of the Stoneylands Club, Egham. The site was under utilised and an opportunity had arisen to dispose of it.

Members were informed that another local Social Club was currently looking to relocate, having received offers for its High Street premises from prospective developers, the terms of which included the rebuilding of the clubhouse elsewhere. There was the potential for the Stoneylands site to be used for this purpose since it enjoyed the appropriate planning use and was located adjacent to the Waspe Farm Car Park. (Efforts would be made to safeguard any future development potential of the former tennis court, which formed an extension to the car park). A merger of the two clubs would establish a more viable entity and improve the facilities for members. There would also be the possibility of a substantial capital receipt for the Council, the size being dependent upon the nature of the development proposed for the Social Club's current site.

The Committee therefore approved the disposal of the site in principle and asked that the Officers report back on the detailed terms. Members noted, however, that the Stoneylands Club had informally indicated its opposition to a merger and asked whether it could acquire the lease. At this stage it appeared that disposal to the existing Club would neither optimise the use of the land nor maximise the receipt. Nevertheless, the Club was to be given the opportunity to present its own proposals for the future of the site, the merits of which would be considered alongside those of the emerging social club scheme.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) the disposal of the Stoneylands Club site be approved in principle; and**
- ii) the Borough Valuer be instructed to report back on the detailed terms for disposal.**

485. EGHAM PRECINCT - LEASE RESTRUCTURING

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

The Committee gave consideration to a request from the Head Lessees for the restructuring of the lease of the Egham Precinct.

Members noted that the land upon which the Precinct was constructed had been let in 1967 for a term of 125 years, with the rent being assessed according to a formula which took account of the original costs of construction, together with management costs. The rent reviews were on a 25 year cycle which was much longer than would be negotiated today. The ground rent which the Council received was quite highly geared and represented a considerable disincentive to the Head Lessee when considering refurbishment and renewal.

The Head Lessees had therefore presented a number of options for restructuring the lease and reducing the gearing in return for more frequent rent reviews.

The Head Lessees had also put forward proposals for modest redevelopment of part of the Precinct.

The Committee was of the opinion that the proposals presented an opportunity for a long term betterment of the Council's position. The Authority would obtain a significant capital receipt while the reduction in revenue could be partly offset by the proposed development. The redevelopment proposals also had the advantage of enhancing the town centre shopping facilities and providing additional residential accommodation. Officers were therefore authorised to negotiate terms and prepare a further report to Committee, which was to include additional details on the Head Lessee's company structure.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) restructuring of the lease of Egham Precinct be approved in principle and the Borough Valuer be authorised to negotiate detailed terms on the basis of Option 3 as set out in the agenda report;**
- ii) subject to the granting of an appropriate planning consent, the Borough Valuer be authorised to enter into negotiations with the Head Lessees in respect of the proposed redevelopment of part of the Egham Precinct; and**
- iii) upon completion of negotiations a report be brought back to this Committee for approval of the negotiated terms and the proposed redevelopment.**

486. EGHAM SPORTS CENTRE - BEAUTY SALON LEASE RENEWAL

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraphs 7 and 9 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

The Committee approved the renewal of the lease in respect of the Beauty Salon located within Egham Sports Centre. The new four year arrangement would expire in 2007, at the same time as the current Sports Centre Management contract. Members noted that the income from lettings of this nature was an important part of the Sports Centre's Business Plan.

**RESOLVED that -**

**the Director of Administration and Leisure be authorised to enter into a lease in respect of that part of the Egham Sports Centre occupied as a**

**Beauty Salon on the terms reported and subject to such other terms and conditions as he sees fit.**

487. 46 STATION ROAD, ADDLESTONE - LEASE ARRANGEMENTS  
(Ref: Minutes of Executive Committee, December 2000, page 1037, para. 499)

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

The Committee agreed to revise the lease arrangements at 46 Station Road, Addlestone in order to reflect a change in the ownership of the business trading at the premises. A six month licence was to be granted to the new owner in the first instance while efforts were made to develop the business along different, more profitable, lines. A formal lease would be entered into upon the expiry of the licence provided that it could be demonstrated that the business was viable.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) the Director of Administration and Leisure be authorised to accept the Notice to Quit in respect of Mr P.'s occupation of 46 Station Road and to grant a 6 months licence of the premises to Mr K.; and**
- ii) the Director of Administration and Leisure be further authorised to negotiate and grant a formal lease upon expiry of the licence, provided the business is at that time considered to be viable.**

488. OTTERSHAW RECREATION GROUND - PLAYGROUP PREMISES

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

The Committee noted that Ottershaw Playgroup had surrendered its lease of premises at the Ottershaw Recreation Ground. An approach had been received from parents seeking to reconstitute the Group on the same site but it was unlikely that they would be able to meet the existing rental obligations. It was therefore agreed that the premises should be re-let on a five year term to Farthings Nursery School. This would both ensure continuity of provision at the Recreation Ground and safeguard the future of the Nursery, which was shortly to lose its current premises. Whereas the Council had previously paid a fee to the tenants for the use of the premises for the summer play schemes, the new lease would require the facilities to be made available free of charge during all school holidays.

**RESOLVED that -**

- the Director of Administration and Leisure be authorised to grant a new five year lease to Farthings Nursery School on the terms reported and subject to such other detailed terms and conditions as he sees fit.**

489. LAND ADJOINING 1 VERNON CLOSE, OTTERSHAW

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

At the request of a local Ward Member, the Committee gave consideration to an application for a garden licence in respect of an area of open space adjoining 1 Vernon Close, Ottershaw. Members noted that the owners of the property had been maintaining the land for some time and now wished to utilise approximately 150 square yards of it for garden purposes. A letter

had been received objecting to the proposal on the grounds that the land in question was used for dog walking. The Committee, mindful of the need to preserve green open space in a location under pressure from development, was of the opinion that the enclosure of the site would be inappropriate.

**RESOLVED that -**

**the request for a garden licence in respect of land adjacent to 1 Vernon Close, Ottershaw be refused.**

490. LAND TO THE REAR OF 12 MAGNA ROAD, ENGLEFIELD GREEN

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

The Committee approved the disposal of a plot of garden land at the rear of a former Council house in Magna Road, Englefield Green. The land had remained in the Council's ownership after the sale of the property under the Right to Buy Scheme. As the adjoining land was all in private ownership there was no realistic prospect of any future development potential, although a ransom strip was to be retained in order to safeguard the Council's long term position. A covenant would ensure that the land continued to be used as a garden. It was noted that the sale would result in a small capital receipt and save future expenditure on maintenance.

**RESOLVED that -**

**the Director of Administration and Leisure be authorised to dispose of the land to the rear of 12 Magna Road, shown on the plan at Exempt Appendix '5' to the agenda, on the terms reported and subject to such other terms and conditions as he sees fit.**

491. REFERRAL FROM HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE - 77 WOODHAM LANE, NEW HAW

By resolution of the Committee, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this matter under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraphs 7 and 9 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Act.

Members received and considered a recommendation from the Housing and Community Services Committee that a three year lease of the above property be granted to the Welmede Housing Association.

The Committee noted that the property was utilised to provide accommodation for people with learning disabilities. The lease with Surrey County Council had now expired and following the identification of various issues relating both to the support of the occupants and the management of the property, the relevant agencies had proposed that Welmede should assume both the landlord and support role for the tenants. However, as the future of the property was uncertain, owing to its proximity to the proposed route of the Central Railway, no long term solution could yet be established. The revised arrangements would therefore allow the property to be managed by a social landlord with expertise in the provision of supported housing, while retaining the flexibility to consider alternative options for the site once the Central Railway proposals were determined. The cost of repairs required by the Housing Association would be factored into the rent for the property.

**RESOLVED that -**

**a three year lease of 77 Woodham Lane, New Haw be granted to Welmede Housing Association.**

492. ADDLESTONE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION REPROVISION - RESULTS OF TENDERS

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

The Chairman agreed that this item should be considered as a matter of urgency by virtue of the need to settle the scheme details prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee received details of revised costings for the construction of the new Addlestone Community Centre on part of the Garfield Road car park. The re-provision of the Centre formed the first phase of the redevelopment of the Civic Offices site as a whole.

Members recalled that three of the four tenders invited for the project had appeared to be within, or very close to, the estimated construction costs of £2.316m (a sum which included £325,000 of additional facilities to be funded by the Addlestone Community Association). However, a significant item had been omitted from each of the returns and other significant elements within them had been identified as provisional sums which, once adjusted, were likely to increase the price.

Following the necessary clarification and adjustment, it was now noted that the lowest tender exceeded the budget available. After work with two of the three most favourable tenders, and constructive dialogue with the Community Association, Architects and Quantity Surveyors, savings had been identified which did not compromise the overall integrity of the project. The increase in the capital estimate provision would be restricted to £55,000, from £2.241m (£1.991m construction costs and £250,000 professional fees) to £2.296m. Bluestone Construction Limited, a well regarded company which had worked previously with the scheme architects, had emerged as the most competitive contractor.

Members noted the current position relating to additional items to be funded by the Community Association. Clarification was currently being sought on the potential VAT liability

Officers had sought assurances from the Quantity Surveyor and Architects that the amended drawings, specification and contract documentation were robust and minimised the opportunity for the contractor to claim additional expenditure during the construction period. All proper steps had been taken to minimise the type of additional claims that characterised a building contract.

The Committee noted the need to avoid any further delay in the letting of the construction contract so as not to go out of time in the acceptance of the Bluestone tender. Officers were therefore authorised to settle the outstanding matters in agreement with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman following consultation with the members of the Civic Offices Member Working Group. The Chairman of the Corporate Management Committee had indicated that he would consent to the consequential capital estimate and financing aspects of the additional costs by way of Standing Order 42 rather than waiting for the matter to be considered at the December meeting. There were suggestions that the contractors could be on site prior to Christmas, although it was more likely to be early in the New Year.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Director of Finance and with the agreement of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Economic Development Committee following consultation with the Members of the Civic Offices Member Working Group, be authorised to accept the revised tender sum of £2,217,190 from Bluestone Construction Limited and instruct the retained Architects, Feilden Clegg Bradley accordingly, and**

**RECOMMEND that -**

- ii) subject to i) above a revised capital estimate of £2.296m be approved.**

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 11.13 p.m.)