

Runnymede Borough CouncilLEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE21 November 2002 at 7.30 p.m.

Members of the
Committee present: Councillors C.J. Norman (Chairman), Mrs. C.Y. Jones (Vice-Chairman),
A.G. Collins, A.J. Davis, P.C. Elding, Mrs. S.E. Jacobs, A.M. Moore, R.J. Ray,
B.J. Relph and Ms. C.M. Simmons.

Members of the
Committee absent: None

Co-opted Members
of the Committee absent: Mrs. B. Miller and Mr. T. Watson

Councillors J.M. Edwards, J.R. Furey, Mrs C.E. Gant, Mrs L.M. Gillham, R. Pate and G.B. Woodger
also attended.

437. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 September 2002 were confirmed and
signed as a correct record.

438. KERBSIDE RECYCLING UPDATE AND PROPOSED MEMBER TRIAL

(Ref: Minutes of the Leisure and Environment Committee, September 2002, page 546, para. 321)

Officers reported that the Council had entered into a seven year contract with Cheshire Recycling
Limited, following Full Council's acceptance of the introduction of edge of curtilage collection of
wheeled refuse bins and the clarification of various contractual issues with Cheshire.

A full time Recycling Officer had been appointed and it was anticipated that the kerbside recycling
scheme would be introduced in February 2003, when the collection vehicles would be available.
The only exception to this would be collections from "high rise" type properties, for which a more
suitable scheme would be developed later next year.

The contract with Cheshire provided for a weekly collection of recyclables. Households in the
Borough would be issued with a blue box, in which they could deposit glass, cans and textiles, and a
blue bag for newspapers and magazines. Explanatory leaflets would be issued to residents at the
same time.

In order to launch kerbside collection in the Borough, Officers were running a competition with all
primary schools in Runnymede inviting pupils to devise a new recycling slogan. It was also
proposed to replicate Waverley Borough Council's successful 'Member Trial' of the kerbside
recycling scheme. Jane Gunn, Waste Promotions Co-ordinator for Surrey Waste Management,
attended the meeting to explain how the trial would operate. Councillors would be issued with a blue
box and blue bag so that their recyclables could be collected and weighed over a six week period,
prior to the Borough-wide introduction of the scheme. Members were also encouraged to take part in
a more scientific assessment of their total household waste production whereby they would weigh
and record all of their household waste prior to disposal/recycling. This would enable Officers to
calculate a more accurate recycling rate for these Members. The information provided by the trial
would help Officers to estimate the average amount of waste that would be recycled by households
in the Borough. It was agreed that the results of the Trial could be reported in the "Members'
Bulletin", with Councillors' permission.

The Committee welcomed the proposed "Member Trial" which would give Councillors first hand
experience of the kerbside recycling process, enabling them to field residents queries once the
scheme was introduced throughout Runnymede.

RESOLVED that -

all Members be invited to take part in a six week trial of household collections of recyclable materials, early in the New Year.

439. LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE - MINUTES**RESOLVED that -**

the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on 26 September 2002, attached at Appendix 'A', be received and adopted.

440. ABBEY FIT (FORMERLY ABBEYLANDS SPORTS CENTRE)

(Ref: Minutes of Leisure and Environment Committee, March 2002, page 957, para. 656 and Council Minutes, April 2002, page 1092, para. 713)

Since the March meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee, Officers had been in discussion with the Shadow Governing Body for Jubilee High School, Nord Anglia and Surrey County Council on the way forward for Abbey Fit Sports Centre. Members noted that the Shadow Governing body for the School had not had authority to agree terms with the Borough Council which would be binding on the new School Foundation. Consequently, although the various parties had reached a broad consensus prior to 1 September 2002, it had not been possible to consider a formal agreement until the new School Foundation was in place.

It had originally been envisaged that Surrey County Council would draft Heads of Agreement for consideration by the respective parties. However, the County's workload had precluded this and the document had been drafted by Officers at Runnymede. Members considered the proposed draft Heads of Agreement and an associated plan of the Sports Centre site.

Under the draft Heads of Agreement the Council would be granted a full repairing lease for land containing the following facilities (shown in pink on the plan); a new fitness suite, high quality changing rooms, a reception/bar/social area and associated parking. The existing Sports Centre hall, gym, tennis courts and all weather pitches (shown in blue on the plan) and the School's swimming pool (shown in orange on the plan) would continue to operate on a Dual Use basis. The Committee agreed that the Council should seek to achieve a more equitable division of costs with the School for these Dual Use facilities. It was noted that the School's Pool had reached the end of its design life and it was not proposed to make any Council commitment to the replacement of this facility.

Members agreed the key elements of the proposed draft Heads of Agreement which were as follows;

- i) Runnymede shall prepare a proposal and business plan for sports facilities to be provided at the Jubilee High School Addlestone.
- ii) In the event that an independent evaluation of the proposal and business plan indicates viability then Runnymede shall apply for planning permission to construct a sports facility on the land (the facility).
- iii) Runnymede shall construct a facility within 18 months of the grant of planning permission.
- iv) Runnymede shall be granted a full repairing lease of the land at Jubilee High School edged pink on the plan (the land).
- v) The land shall be used as a sports and community facility and associated parking.
- vi) Runnymede shall be granted the same rights in respect of the land edged blue and the land edged orange on the plan as are currently contained in the dual use agreement dated 1998 and subject to which the Jubilee High School was transferred to the Foundation.
- vii) The Foundation shall be given access to the facility by arrangement.

- viii) Runnymede shall apply for planning permission for up lighted signs to promote the facility on 2 walls of the boiler house indicated on the plan.
- ix) The Foundation shall carry out improvements to the sports storage areas and refurbish the existing changing accommodation.
- x) The Foundation shall pursue investment possibilities for further enhancement of the School's sports facilities possibly including an artificial turf pitch.
- xi) The parties shall endeavour to allocate shared costs by the use of check meters wherever possible and by percentage usage where this is not feasible.
- xii) Cleaning to be agreed between the parties.

Although a formal response was awaited, Surrey County Council had already indicated its approval to the draft Heads of Agreement, as set out above. Members were pleased to learn that the County had also confirmed that the Council Sports facilities could continue trading on the site in the unlikely event that the School were to close. Since most of the School Foundation members were new to the Sports Centre discussions, the Foundation had requested more time to consider the draft Heads of Agreement and their response was anticipated in December.

At the March meeting of this Committee, Members had also requested that further research be conducted into the business plan for the Sports Centre extension proposals, before any capital expenditure was committed to the scheme. Officers had selected a suitable consultancy firm through the tendering process, who would require 10 weeks to complete their brief. In order that these consultants could be engaged and start work at the earliest opportunity, Members agreed to recommend that a supplementary estimate of £17,000 be approved for this purpose. However, the consultants would not be appointed until the School Foundation and Surrey County Council had settled, in writing, the Heads of Agreement as a basis for a formal relationship with Runnymede Council. The Chairman reported that a working group would be established to examine the consultants' report which would include Addlestone Ward Members.

In April 2002 the Council had agreed that Officers should explore the potential for involving a private contractor in the running of an upgraded Sports Facility. The Committee was of the view that this option should not be pursued as private companies had shown little interest in dual use facilities and the tendering process would entail a further delay.

RESOLVED that -

- i) the above-mentioned draft Heads of Agreement be approved as a basis on which to construct detailed documentation between the parties should the Council agree to proceed with the project;**
- ii) the Corporate Management Committee be requested to approve a supplementary estimate in the sum of £17,000 in order to fund the independent evaluation of the proposal and business plan, only to be expended when Heads of Agreement have been settled with the School Foundation and Surrey County Council to the satisfaction of the Chairman;**
- iii) Officers report again to this Committee at the earliest opportunity following the receipt and evaluation of the consultant's report; and**
- iv) subject to the independent evaluation confirming the view that the proposed scale and nature of investment is likely to result in the elimination of the current levels of deficit, and may produce a surplus, then the possibility of involving a private contractor should not be pursued.**

441. SUMMER PLAYSCHEMES - 2002 AND 2003

(Ref: Minutes of Leisure and Environment Committee, November 2001, page 625, para. 395)

The Committee considered a comprehensive report covering the performance of the 2002 Summer Playschemes and setting out Officers' proposals for the schemes in 2003.

Members were advised that the Playschemes were held at six sites across the Borough each Summer. This year a total of 1,824 child places had been available on the schemes, of which 96% had been booked. The Chertsey, Addlestone and Ottershaw Playschemes had proved particularly popular in 2002. At the remaining sites, Officers had adjusted the number of child spaces available according to booking trends, and in doing so had generated savings by reducing the number of staff required.

In 2002 the Council had continued to provide free places for children at risk through the referral scheme. A total of 20 children had benefited from referral places, and Members agreed that this worthwhile scheme should be continued in 2003 at an approximate cost of £2,250. The White Lodge Centre had also run a scheme for children with special needs on the Council's behalf again this year, funded by the Early Years and Childcare Partnership. Of the 24 spaces available on this scheme at Chertsey Recreation Ground, 20 weekly spaces had been booked. Officers' proposed to extend this special needs scheme to all Playscheme sites in 2003.

With regard to the Playscheme charges, in 2002 the Council had introduced a discounted rate for families with more than one child on the schemes. This reduced rate had been well received by parents and Officers recommended this policy should be continued in 2003. Members noted that a concessionary charge was also offered to parents on low incomes. A full list of the proposed charges for 2003 is attached at Appendix 'B'.

A total of 71 staff had been employed to run the Playschemes in 2002 the majority of whom were returning employees and persons recommended by them. Since staff wages for the Playschemes had been significantly increased in 2001, Officers considered that a pay rise of 3%, in line with inflation would be sufficient for 2003. Members noted that the appointment of an additional member of staff, the new Assistant Leisure Development Officer, had improved the operation and administration of the both the Council's 'Play' and 'Splash' schemes.

Feedback questionnaires had been distributed to parents following the Summer Playschemes. In response to parent's suggestions, Officers proposed two additions to the schemes in 2003. Firstly, Officers recommended introducing extended operating hours of 8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at up to three of the sites where there was greatest demand. The Committee agreed that this would benefit working parents, and that the charge made for these additional hours should be sufficient to cover the extra staffing and hire costs incurred. Secondly, Officers proposed the introduction of half-term and Easter holiday schemes for School aged children (4 to 16 year olds) from February 2003. These schemes would be run at various locations across the Borough and would include activities such as crafts, dance, music and sport. No additional budgetary provision would be required for these holiday schemes as they would be self-funding.

The Committee supported Officers' proposals for 2003 which would further enhance the Council's popular holiday activity schemes. Members also expressed their thanks to Procter and Gamble Community Matters who had agreed to sponsor the Playschemes once again next year.

RESOLVED that -

- i) provision be made in the draft estimates for 2003/04 in the net sum of £56,200 in respect of the Summer Playschemes;**
- ii) the draft budget provide for the charges set out in Appendix 'B', including a reduced rate for families with three or more children attending the schemes;**
- iii) Officers prepare and operate pilot schemes to provide half-term and Easter activities for school aged children, that will be self-funding;**

- iv) **some of the sites operate extended hours (8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.) to meet the needs of working parents, at extra charge, with 16 spaces available per site; and**
- v) **Officers report options for a new bookings system and procedures for receiving bookings to the Corporate Management Committee.**

442. SUMMER 'SPLASH' SCHEME - 2002 AND 2003

(Ref: Minutes of Leisure and Environment Committee, November 2001, page 626, para. 396).

Members received a report detailing the performance of the 'Splash' Scheme in 2002 and Officers' proposals for 2003.

This year 249 young people had taken part in the Council's 'Splash' scheme for 11 to 16 year olds. Officers reported that the main 'Splash' scheme had been moved to Strode's College, Egham in 2002 owing to building works being undertaken at Jubilee High School, the site of the Abbey Fit Sports Centre. This new venue had proved popular with parents, with 65% of respondents to the 'Splash' questionnaire requesting a return to Strode's next year. This would be taken into account when Officers considered possible sites for the 2003 scheme. A 'Splash' drama week had also been held prior to the main scheme and it was proposed to continue this popular activity next year.

This year 11 young people had benefited from the 'Splash' referral scheme for young people at risk. Two young people with special needs had also been supported by staff from the White Lodge Centre. Members noted that the Surrey Youth Service had contributed funding of £5,000 in 2002 for the appointment of staff to assist with disadvantaged or disabled young people on the scheme. The Committee regretted that the County Council would be unable to continue this funding for 2003 due to budget cut backs, and Members requested that Officers investigate potential sources of external funding for this specialist support next year.

In 2002 the standard weekly 'Splash' charge had been increased from £38 to £40. Although some parents had felt that 'Splash' was becoming more expensive, the Committee noted that all on-site facilities had been improved this year and had been provided free of charge. In 2003 it was recommended that all weekly charges for the scheme be increased by 5%. A total of 20 staff were appointed to run the 'Splash' scheme in 2002 comprising 1 Co-ordinator, 2 Senior Instructors and 17 Instructors. It was proposed to retain this staff structure in 2003 with staff wages being increased by 3%, at a total cost of £22,900.

The Committee congratulated Leisure Services Staff on the successful operation of 'Splash' 2002 and expressed their thanks to the companies and organisations that had supported the scheme.

RESOLVED that -

- i) **subject to budgetary approval, the 2003 'Splash' scheme be operated at a net cost to the Council of £34,300 and appropriate provision be included in the 2003/2004 estimates; and**
- ii) **the draft budget provide for the following 'Splash' charges of**
 - **£42 a week full charge, per participant;**
 - **£16.50 a week concessionary charge, per participant for families receiving benefits;**
 - **£10 per day, per participant.**

443. "PRIVATE ACTION, PUBLIC BENEFIT" - A REVIEW OF CHARITIES AND THE WIDER NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR – HOME OFFICE CONSULTATION PAPER

(Ref: Minutes of the former Environmental Services Committee, September 1998, page 402, para. 314 and June 1999, page 164, para. 149)

In September 2002 the Home Office had published a Consultation Paper dealing with the future regulation of public charitable collections. Of the 61 recommendations contained in this Paper, 6

related to the licensing and administration of public charitable collections, as exercised by this Council.

Members learned that, under the proposed legislation, Local Authorities would no longer have powers to regulate charitable collections. Instead the Government wished to introduce self-regulation through the creation of an independent fundraising body. This body would become self-financing and would draw up a Voluntary Code of Practice to which charities could subscribe. Charities wishing to sign up to the Voluntary Code would be admitted without any prior checks being made, and would be able to use a good practice kite mark. The only sanction for non-adherence to the Code would be the removal of the kite mark, unless a criminal offence had been committed. Local Authorities would still be required to issue licences for charitable collections taking place in their area. However, the proposed unified local authority licensing scheme would focus on "basic minimum requirements" and would not apply to 'Ad hoc' collections or collections in shopping centres, railway stations and private businesses. Officers had considered the implications of these proposals and had drawn up a detailed draft response to the Home Office which is attached at Appendix 'C'.

Members concurred with Officers' view that the self-regulation of charitable collections would encourage bogus fundraising and bad practice. It would also make the general public more vulnerable to assertive professional fundraisers. Since larger fundraising bodies would be represented by the new self-regulating body, there were also concerns that small locally based charities would suffer as a result of this move towards an openly competitive charity market. The Committee accordingly endorsed the Officers' comments attached at Appendix 'C' which would form this Council's response to the Consultation Paper.

RESOLVED that -

the Officer comments attached at Appendix 'C' be forwarded to the Home Office as this Council's formal response to the Consultation Paper.

444. RUNNYMEDE ARTS DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP - NOMINATION FOR EXISTING VACANCY

(Ref: Minutes of Leisure and Environment Committee, September 2002, page 543, para. 311)

Salesian School in Chertsey had nominated Miss Sophie Hunter, the Head of Art, to sit on the Runnymede Arts Development Steering Group as a local Secondary Schools' Representative. Since the Steering Group was not due to meet until February 2003, this nomination had been considered by the Group's Chairman and Vice-Chairman who had recommended that Miss Hunter be appointed.

The Committee accordingly considered and approved this nomination.

RESOLVED that -

Miss Sophie Hunter, Head of Art at Salesian School, be appointed to serve on the Runnymede Arts Development Steering Group as one of the representatives from Runnymede Secondary Schools.

445. ABBEY FIT JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - MINUTES

Members received and noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Management Committee held on 8 October 2002 which are attached at Appendix 'D'.

446. RUNNYMEDE ARTS DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP - MINUTES

The Committee received and noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Group held on 24 September 2002 which are attached at Appendix 'E'.

447. URGENT ACTION - STANDING ORDER NO. 42

Members noted that the following actions had been taken since the Committee's last meeting after consultation with the Chairman under Standing Order 42:

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>	<u>Central Index No.</u>
Borough Secretary and Leisure Services Officer	Use of Home Office funding and the balance of money available from the capital multi-use games area budget for the construction of the skate facility at Heathervale Recreation Ground, New Haw.	505
Borough Secretary and Leisure Services Officer	Settlement of the Council's claim for Tipping Away Payments from Surrey County Council. (See Minute below)	509

448. TIPPING AWAY PAYMENTS - ARBITRATION

(Ref: Minutes of Executive Committee, 13 December 2000, page 1038, para. 497, Leisure and Environment Committee, June 2001, page 121, para. 97 and Leisure and Environment Committee, September 2002, page 545, para. 320).

The Committee was pleased to learn that the Council's claim for tipping away payments had been settled without the need to go to formal arbitration.

In the light of information obtained during the arbitration process, Runnymede Officers had canvassed for a settlement on the basis of an hourly rate of £38, which would equate to a tipping away payment of £66,101 for 2001/02. This annual payment would be subject to annual variation to reflect inflation. The County Council had agreed to settle on this basis.

Officers had followed the recommendations of Counsel throughout the arbitration process, and his advice had been to accept the settlement on the above-mentioned basis as offered by the County Council. In order to comply with arbitration rules and to avoid costs, it had been necessary to terminate the arbitration process as soon as possible. Consequently, authority for the settlement of this claim had been obtained under Standing Order 42 (see above Minute).

Members congratulated Officers on the successful outcome of these negotiations which had secured a significantly greater annual tipping away payment for the Council than had originally been offered.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 9.28 p.m)