

DRAFT

CPA SELF ASSESSMENT FOR

Public Spaces Diagnostic

16 October 2003
FULL COUNCIL VERSION

APPENDIX '9'

District Council CPA Self-assessment Pro-forma for Public Space

1. How well does the council contribute to the management of the physical environment?

INSPECTION FOCUS

Does the Council secure a high quality environment through new build and maintenance work?

COUNCIL STATEMENT

Securing a High Quality Environment

1. Enhancing quality of life is a fundamental principle of the Leader's Position Statement¹. The Community Strategy² has one main purpose, which is to promote the economic, social and environmental well being of Runnymede. It sets out a series of action plans to address the priorities.
2. As part of the Community Strategy, and review of the Environmental Policy Statement, the Council is preparing a sustainability audit³. The audit will be focused initially on the review of the Local Plan⁴, but will be extended to all relevant service areas providing a baseline of data, over which the Council or its partners have some influence. This data will be used in a 'gap analysis' to identify the action needed, through the Community Strategy and specifically in the Local Development Documents (LDD), the Economic Strategy⁵ and the development of the Runnymede Travel Initiative.
3. The attractive nature of area (68% of the Borough is designated as Green Belt) leads to pressure for commercial and residential development as well as pressure on transportation with associated pollution. Maintaining economic buoyancy needs to be balanced against environmental quality. However, development pressure does give opportunity to exact quality and public benefits from schemes. There have been many examples where benefits have been derived via s.106 agreements⁶ in terms of land acquisition and financial contributions to projects.
4. The present Local Plan was adopted in April 2001. As part of the development of the LDD the Council has agreed a Draft Local Development Scheme and resolved to prepare an open space, sport and recreation strategy to recognise local needs in accordance with PPG 17. The Council has also commissioned a survey of wildlife habitats in the Borough in partnership with the Surrey Wildlife Trust.
5. The Council uses the Surrey Design Guide, detailed development briefs and a range of other Supplementary Planning Guidance⁷ notes in determining planning applications. Performance in determining planning applications has improved over the last year to upper quartile of national performance⁸. Considerable progress on planning Continuous Improvement Plan and Inspector's recommendations following 'Fair' Best Value evaluation in May 2002. Building Control rated 'Good' in same inspection⁹.
6. Encouraging use of public transport. Working with the Runnymede Business Partnership, through the Runnymede Travel Initiative, the Council promotes Safer Routes to Schools, a Yellow School bus scheme, and provision of cycle shelters. The Yellow bus project has been running for a year and is being studied by consultants working on behalf of Department for Transport. Over £300, 000 has been generated from development related funding for this (s. 106 agreements). Over the last year and currently programmed, shelters for over 1,000 bicycles are being provided at schools and colleges. This project won the 2003 National award from the Cycle Touring Club. Successful bids to Department for Transport have secured nearly £100, 000 funding to support this. A contract for over 90 new bus shelters is imminent with the potential for realtime information. The Council works with schools and businesses to develop Green travel plans, and has adopted its own Travel Plan¹⁰.
7. Corporate disability awareness training has been held for all staff, and specialist training for Development Control, building control and engineering staff. Planning guidance notes have been prepared, and policies will be included within revised Local Plan. Following access audits of all RBC property in 2000, there is a programme for Council property to be improved to meet Disability Discrimination Act requirements by 2004.
8. Council schemes, street enhancements and car parks are designed with consideration for disabled users, with close consultation with the Runnymede Access Liaison Group, which is sponsored and serviced by the Borough Council. This group also undertakes audits of existing public buildings and comments on planning applications.
9. The Runnymede Energy Efficiency Partnership (formed in 2000) included energy efficiency suppliers, Energy Action Grants Agency, RBC, Housing Associations, Private Landlords and front line organisations in the health and the voluntary sectors. The Council partnership was formed to provide beneficial packages of measures to residents at competitive prices for those that could afford to pay and provided free for those on certain benefits. The Council has adopted a policy approach with regard to CO₂ reduction in the context of its energy saving initiative. The Council undertook a survey of 29,000 households completed in March 2000 in order to ascertain, where possible, the energy efficiency of the Borough's housing stock and identify areas where Fuel Poverty may exist. Post codes were used to target areas where fuel poverty was identified.

10. The Council has a track record of improving town centres: Chertsey Revitalisation Area - £1.3M investment over 12 years; pedestrianisation of Egham High Street, environmental improvements recently completed in central Chertsey to enhance pedestrian usage, and £1M has been allocated for similar works in Addlestone, some of which has been completed and some is imminent. Explicit revenue provision is made to maintain standards through ongoing maintenance budgets for town centres and car parks¹¹.
11. The Council has also built a high quality infrastructure in the past five years: Manor Farm Day Centre, the Hythe Centre (developed after a community 'Planning For Real' exercise) and invested over £6M in sports centre facilities. These projects have all been undertaken following consultation with local residents and stakeholders and monitored through established project planning processes. Proposed projects include a new park in the Hythe, £1M + investment in the 'Abbeyfit' leisure facility in Addlestone, and re-provision of (£2M) Addlestone Community Association facility¹² as first phase of new Civic Offices.
12. Council sits on the 'Airtrack' Steering Group (provision of rail access to Heathrow); is a member of the Local Authorities' Central Railway Consortium (LACRC); services the South West Quadrant Group of the Local Authorities M25 Consortium; member of local Flood Risk Action Groups (FRAG's); Heathrow and Fair Oaks Airport Consultative Groups.
13. Approach to Maintenance
The Council's Asset Management Plan was judged 'Good' by GOSE and there is a five-year strategic maintenance plan in place for all corporate property, with a budget of £3.5M (including DDA enhancements), which is being delivered with external partners.
14. The Council advocates a sustainable and environmentally friendly drainage policy. Areas of the Borough likely to flood are being identified. Working with various agencies on Flood Risk Action Groups (FRAG's) - set up by the Environment Agency. Substantial investment¹³ in drainage maintenance programme for minor watercourses and ditches and improvements are being made, with three person dedicated drainage team.
15. The Council has worked with the Environment Agency to pilot Flood Risk Standing Advice in processing minor planning applications. This is now being promulgated throughout the Agency as an example of best practice.
16. Daily play area inspections are undertaken in staffed parks and a monthly inspection/maintenance undertaken by an external contractor on all play areas. Town centre hanging baskets and flower troughs are provided and maintained. Although not the highway authority, there is substantial revenue spending to enhance planting in highway areas¹⁴.
17. The Council manages 330 hectares of open space, including five staffed parks, one Local Nature Reserve and an ancient monument. Some 105 hectares of land has been purchased or acquired through planning agreements, for both public use and to safeguard the Green Belt.
18. Dealing with nuisance
All complaints to Environmental Protection are recorded along with follow up action. Safer Runnymede offer a 24 hour response and an out of hours service is available all year round. The Council provides a mediation service to deal with intractable noise problems. The Enforcement Concordat has been formally adopted - regularly monitored and reviewed. Recently completed residents survey on noise nuisance from Fair Oaks Airport.
19. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Stage Air Quality Reviews and Assessments as required by DEFRA (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs) have been carried out. The only area of concern is along the M25 where an Air Quality Management Area has been declared. Stage 4, Air Quality Monitoring Study of the AQMA, is now being carried out by consultants. Air Quality in the rest of the Borough is kept under review by Air Quality monitoring.

2. Does the council help keep the locality clean?

INSPECTION FOCUS

COUNCIL STATEMENT

Does the council deal effectively with household and other waste?

Household and Other Waste

1. Street cleansing operates (with a dedicated monitoring officer) on a planned cyclical basis as well as responding to particular litter problems. Direct Service Organisation (DSO) litter squad reacts to litter hotspots and to removal of flytipping. CCTV monitoring includes reporting of flytipping, graffiti and other damage and general litter. Mobile CCTV being evaluated to counter these problems.

2. Refuse collection via wheel bins is undertaken by the Council's DSO following competitive tendering. Complaints of missed bins this year are around 21 per week (from the 32,000 households in the Borough) well within targets. Satisfaction levels with the service remain very high¹⁷. Collection costs per household is close to the lowest quartile nationally¹⁸.

3. Best Value Inspection of refuse collection in September 2001 gave 'Fair' assessment¹⁹. Whilst refuse collection itself was described as good, the then low recycling collection rate lowered the overall score. There has been good progress on implementing the Inspector's recommendations and Continuous Improvement Plan.

4. A Joint Municipal Waste Strategy²⁰ is being developed across the County, and this will be used to inform the Council's strategic approach.

5. Waste minimisation is being promoted to reduce the rate of growth of waste. The council is committed to meeting its statutory recycling targets. Recycling rate is currently 13% up from 6% in 2002. Working with Surrey County Council to develop a Public Service Agreement for commercial waste recycling. Worked with SCC and others to produce the 'Surrey Waste Wise Business Manual'. Working with schools to recycle their waste. 4,000 home composters distributed to local residents at discounted rate. Work with Imperial College, London²¹ on research into composting and waste reduction.

6. Hazardous waste (asbestos, tyres, refrigerators, abandoned vehicles) are quickly dealt with. Liaison with Environment Agency dealing with dumping. Special collections are arranged for households and clinical waste is also disposed of.

Keeping the Area Clean

7. Dedicated six person team provides prompt graffiti removal with a freesphone number for reporting. No distinction between public and private areas and no charge for service on private land. Liaison is taking place with other organisations (Highway Authority, BT, Network Rail, Highways Agency, NTL etc.) for financial contributions.

8. Planning powers under s.215 ('Wasteand Notices')²² are used to remedy poor quality land. Strategic property purchases have been made to facilitate urban renaissance,²³ and consideration given to use of Compulsory Purchase Orders to remedy problems.

9. Abandoned vehicles promptly removed including data protocol with Police and now subject to probable joint PSA bid with County Council.

10. Parks and open spaces are inspected routinely for litter and maintained on a planned basis. Daily play area inspections are undertaken in staffed parks and a monthly inspection/maintenance undertaken by an external contractor on all play areas.

11. Despite having in excess of 50 gypsy pitches in the Borough, the area still suffers from unauthorised encampments, which can cause environmental harm. A Protocol²⁴ has been agreed with the Police to deal effectively and proportionately with these. The Council has an ongoing programme of traveller protection measures, including reducing the risk of incursion onto open space through the installation of physical barriers.

3. Does the council work with partners to improve community safety?

INSPECTION FOCUS

COUNCIL STATEMENT

Does the council provide an effective contribution to the local crime and disorder reduction partnership?

1. **Crime & Disorder Partnership Working**
Runnymede has taken a leading role in Community Safety, with the establishment of the Safer Runnymede initiative in 1997. In liaison with Police & County Council partners, Runnymede Community Safety Strategy 2002-2005²⁶ adopted. Clear strategies and targets in place. A specific section in the Community Strategy addresses community safety and reflects the same priorities, with nine specific targets. Quality of life is a primary aim of Leader's Position Statement. All targets have been measured and objectives achieved. Fear of crime has been halved²³ and within 6 months of introduction, crime fell in the areas concerned by almost 20% (see para 5.4 below). All have a named individual from one of the partners as the person responsible. There is a system of matched funding from the partners, which the CDRP Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership can spend to deliver initiatives.

Has the council (in partnership) been able to secure impact on outcomes as a result of the local community safety work?

2. The Council introduced its Safer Runnymede initiative in 1997 and now has a network of CCTV cameras across the Borough. Provision of CCTV and 24 hour monitoring (including Staines town centre for Spelthorne BC and St. Peter's Hospital for the Hospital Trust). The capital cost of the CCTV schemes in Runnymede total £1,519,987 of which £427,730 has been achieved in three separate rounds of competitive bidding for Home Office funds. An additional £70,650 was raised locally. The Safer Runnymede budget for 2003/04 is £1,128,900 gross, £722,000 net. The difference is accounted for by income achieved and savings made.

3. The Safer Runnymede initiative has four elements: CCTV, speed reduction, neighbourhood constables, environmental improvements, and (e.g. local lighting projects). These continue and have been integrated with the work of the Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, and the local Crime & Disorder Partnership. Both Safer Runnymede and CDRP involve many other agencies as a routine. They are signatories to an agreed County-wide Information Sharing Protocol which is used regularly to discuss problem individuals or locations.

Does the council (in partnership) have been able to secure impact on outcomes as a result of the local community safety work?

4. **Making an impact**
Reductions in perceptions of problems over the last three years from 2000 to 2003 have been achieved²⁴.
Parking 28.5% to 18.0%
Litter 23.8% to 20.7%
Dog fouling 35.7% to 28.8%
Fear of crime is addressed under 1 above.
Crime rates are shown below, but:
Violent crime fell from 490 to 415
Vehicle crime fell from 916 to 871
Burglary dwelling was almost unchanged at the historically low rates of 279 up to 285 over the three years ended 31st March 2003.

Does the council (in partnership) have been able to secure impact on outcomes as a result of the local community safety work?

5. Total recorded crime in year ended 31st March 2003 shows an increase of 5.5% compared to a Surrey average increase of 10.5%²⁵. An increase is expected with the change in recording practices and the encouragement for victims of domestic violence to report the offence.
Vehicle crime which has been a local problem for many years has fallen by 6.9% against a Surrey average rise of 5.9%
Specific crimes:
Robbery – very low rate of 28 in a year
Violence – An increase resulting from change in recording practice and work to encourage reporting of domestic violence offences.
Criminal Damage – No change in rate of offences
Burglary dwelling – an increase but substantial reductions achieved in previous years.

Does the council (in partnership) have been able to secure impact on outcomes as a result of the local community safety work?

6. Runnymede is in CDRP family 8 which totals 64 partnerships. Performance in the year 2002-2003, is as follows²⁵:
Burglary dwelling – 10.7 per 1000 households which ranks Runnymede as 28th safest out of 62.
Theft from vehicles – 8.0 per 1000 population which ranks Runnymede 27th safest out of 62.
Theft of vehicles – 2.4 per 1000 population which ranks Runnymede 13th safest out of 62.
Violence – 7.1 per 1000 population which ranks Runnymede as 10th safest out of 62.

7. Reduction in fear of crime and reduced levels of victimisation²⁴. Fear of crime affecting lifestyle down from 41% in 1997 to 22% in 2001. Victims of crime down from 16.4% in 1997 to 10.1% in 2001. Reductions in excess speed and road casualty victims
8. Provision of a mobile speed camera for Police, which has been developed into a speed reduction project using inter-active signage, which has been identified by the Transport Research Laboratory as one of the best managed in the country and of particular interest to Department for Transport. This has delivered appreciable reductions in speeding and virtual elimination of speed related collisions with no vulnerable road users killed or seriously injured.²⁶
9. Community Cohesion
The Borough's Community Safety Officer organises the 'Junior Citizen' scheme, sponsored by a major local company, which is offered to all year 6 (aged 10-11) children. The scheme has a 100% take up and includes 8 different activities to encourage responsible citizenship. Evaluations completed by teachers evidences the very high value they place on the scheme.
10. Obligations under s.17 of Crime & Disorder Act 1998 referred to in Committee reports, especially in relation to planning applications. All planning applications considered by the Community Safety Officer who is qualified in designing out crime, and advice given and conditions imposed where necessary. Consultation with Surrey Police Architectural Liaison Officer. A workshop to further understanding is planned for December 2003.
11. Borough Intelligence Model being developed with the Police for crime and disorder reporting both by staff on the Intranet and the public over the Internet. This is linked to the National Police Reassurance project and the Home Office Anti-social behaviour unit is interested in the system. The Council submitted an application for Beacon Status in Round One (unsuccessful) and have re-applied under Round Five. £1,000 grant to Surrey 'Crimestoppers' in 2002.
12. Use of parks in the Borough is being developed as a diversionary policy for young people most recently with a new skate boarding facility together with CCTV cameras to protect the users. Anti-social behaviour in parks is confronted by close liaison between parks staff and Safer Runnymede, Police and local wardens, using radios and CCTV cameras where available.

4. Does the council contribute to activities to positively engage children and young people?

INSPECTION FOCUS

Does the council have a clear idea about the needs of local children and young people?

What is the council doing to secure a range of activities for young people and encourage their positive engagement?

COUNCIL STATEMENT

The Council identified the needs of young people as a policy priority in the 1991 Leader's Position Statement and continues to see them as important. This is also now one of the nine key themes in the Community Strategy 24 and the Cultural Strategy 25.

The Council engages with and seeks the views of children and young people in order to identify their needs through:

1. Consultation via focus groups and questionnaires for the Parks & Open Spaces best value review 26. Community and Cultural strategies in 2002/03 (outcomes reflected in strategy goals). Young people were invited to the Community Strategy Visioning Event (February 2003), made an active contribution to the development of the Strategy's five priorities and are represented on the "Health & Social care", "Leisure & Culture" and "Exciting futures" Community Strategy task groups. Young people will be involved in Community Strategy "re-visioning" event in December 2003. Some of the consultation involved meetings in schools and youth centres. 24
2. Partnership with Surrey County Council's youth service: as a result of the Chertsey detached youth work project run by the Youth Service in 2000, the Borough has developed a multi-use games area, renewed the pathway lighting scheme and let the pavilion in Gogmore Farm Park to the project. 24, 25, 27 & 35
3. Runnymede Youth Forum (RYAF): Facilitating and hosting the 'Chertsey Youth speaks out' meeting (October 2000). Subsequent meetings with the school council at Jubilee High School (then Abbeylands) and with individual groups of young people: Consultation about the type of new play equipment at many locations, e.g. skate facilities, multi use games areas and park facilities. 24, 25 & 35
4. Working with Schools to promote leisure and sports development activities and augment curriculum activities 28 e.g. work by Chertsey Museum's Education Officer (history), the Borough's Community Safety and anti-social behaviour Officer (citizenship and safety), Leisure & Sport Development Officers (Active Sport, positive holiday activity). 24, 25 & 35
5. Feedback from the holiday play and 'splash' schemes, resulting in improvements and extension of provision to the management and range of activities offered. 29
6. "Friends of Englefield Green Youth". The vice-Chairman of Leisure & Environment Committee actively promotes work with young people involved in anti-social behaviour. New youth facilities have been provided by the Borough & County Council as a result, and the reported incidence of anti-social behaviour has declined. 24, 25, 30 & 35
7. Holiday activities (Runnymede Active Zones - RAZ) 31
 Splash : an annual multi activity summer holiday scheme for 11-16 year olds. Playschemes and Play Plus Summer Schemes : for 5-7 year olds and 8-11 year olds, including children with special needs in partnership with the White Lodge Centre. Playschemes and Splash also operate a referral scheme for children/young people at risk or at risk of offending 29. Easter and half term activities: smaller scale activities, including sports specific training, focused workshops and Arts and Sports Zones 31. Sports-centre based schemes : ESC Leisure 32 (by Kids4life) and Abbey Fit in each school holiday. Museum-based activity workshops: run in partnership with Chertsey Artists 36. 24, 25, 33 & 35
8. Facilities at Parks and Sports Centres: Capital investment in new parks facilities for young people of almost £500,000 between 1998/99 and 2002/03. £329,000 programme approved 062/03 for 5-year play equipment refurbishment programme 34. In addition to normal facilities, there are Multi use ball play courts in 6 locations throughout the Borough, Skate Zone (Heathervale) and skate ramps (Englefield Green and Addlestone), Coaching - tennis, football, informal "kick about" areas. At the sports centres there are Coaching and courses, Clubs, ESCape - soft play activities (at ESC Egham Sports Centre); outdoor swimming pool (at Abbey Fit), offering summer swimming lessons, children's parties. 24, 25 & 35
9. Sports Development: Borough participation in Surrey Youth Games sports, partnership with Runnymede Sports Council in Annual "Have a go" day, Active Sport (foundation level activity as part of Surrey Partnership), Support for local clubs/organisations setting up young people's sections/facilities. 24, 25 & 35
10. Chertsey Museum - in Partnership with Olive Matthews Trust (which funds the Education Officer) - School Visits, history packs, newsletters, lessons in schools and loan boxes (18). 24, 25 & 33

11. **Community Safety:**
 Junior Citizen: held each November for children in year 6 throughout the Borough. School,youth group/voluntary group visits to Safer Runnymede and the Community Safety Officer works with the Police on the community awareness element of the Duke of Edinburgh Award's Police course.
 CIAG (Community Incident Action Group) – multi agency group reviewing individuals who are causing the community difficulty. Approx 80% of the 33 CIAG reviews last year involved young people. Of these, 1 ASBO and 5 contracts were issued.
12. **Grants for junior sports persons and youth groups for equipment, training and competition. Capital grants for Scout and Guide groups. 24, 25 & 34**
13. **Work with Clubs/organisations**
 Provision of information/advice - grant aid, support for Lottery and other bids. Promoting youth policies for Sports Clubs (via Runnymede Sports Council and SDO). Duke of Edinburgh Award: Membership of Forum and provision and management of expedition equipment store, loan, maintenance and replacement of equipment undertaken as a result of need identified by the Forum. 24, 25 & 35
14. **Lease of land and buildings for:**
 Scouts, Football Clubs, Cricket Clubs, Tennis Club, Rugby, Sports Facilities, Addlestone (Canoe Club), Addlestone Community Association, Englefield Green social hall, play Groups/childcare, River Bourne Health Club, Youth Development Service. 24, 25 & 35
15. **Work with Surrey Youth Support Service, Surrey Children's Services, Connexions, neighbouring local authorities and health agencies re. Care leavers and single parents**
 Development of Housing and Homelessness Strategies which encompass housing and support needs of young people. 24, 25 & 35
16. **Success Measures**
The take up and effectiveness of the Council's services for young people is monitored and where necessary reported to Members for information or action.
17. **Child Protection Policy**
The Council has a child protection policy drafted according to Government guidelines and in liaison with the Social Services authority. Originally introduced primarily introduced with Playschemes and leisure facilities in mind, it has been redrafted this year to ensure it is suitable to the Council's full range of functions.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Leader's Position Statement, page 4
- 2 A Community Strategy for Runnymede, 2002
- 3 Report to Leisure & Environment Committee, June 2003
- 4 Runnymede Borough Local Plan, Second Alteration, adopted April 2001
- 5 Runnymede Economic Strategy 2003
- 6 e.g. public park at Homewood, Chertsey; leisure land and financial contribution at Aviator Park, Addlestone; financial contributions to travel initiative at Chertsey Bridge Wharf
- 7 Surrey Design Guide, published by Surrey County Council 2002; examples of development brief where development completed - Tesco site, Addlestone, Aviator Park, Addlestone; SPG for householder development and trees.
- 8 See Statistical Release dated 26.9.03 from ODPM
- 9 See inspection report, Development Control and Building Control, Audit Commission, May 2002
- 10 Executive 7th February 2001
- 11 See Budget book pages 152-154
- 12 See planning application RU.03/0452
- 13 See Budget Book pages 156-157
- 14 £55,000 in current budget (Budget Book page 152)
- 15 See Budget book pages 152-154
- 16 See planning application RU.03/0452
- 17 Refuse Collection Quarterly Quality Monitoring Surveys and General Satisfaction Survey June 2003
- 18 2001/02 BV86 return: £28.64 per household (national average £32.60; 25% percentile £28.10)
- 19 See inspection report, Refuse Collection, Audit Commission, September 2001
- 20 An Integrated Waste Management Strategy for Surrey, Consultation Draft, September 2003, Surrey Local Government Association
- 21 The Practicability of Home Composting for The Management of Biodegradable Domestic Solid Waste Imperial College 2002
- 22 See for example report to Planning Committee, 2 July 2003 on 52 Abbey Road, Chertsey
- 23 See for example report to Economic Development Committee, 12 June 2003 on properties in Station Road, Addlestone
- 24 £55,000 in current budget (Budget Book page 152)
- 25 Gypsies & Travellers. A Procedural Guide for dealing with Unauthorised Encampments, May 1997
- 26 Runnymede Community Safety Strategy 2002-2005
- 24 Geoff berry Associates independent survey report 'Community Safety Survey Report 2003'
- 25 Home Office Recorded Crime Statistics
- 26 Unpublished report by Transport Research Limited 2003
- 27 Unpublished report by Transport Research Limited 2003
- 27 Leisure and Environment Committee minute No. 129 20/06/03 p.235
- 28 Leisure and Environment Committee minute No. 126 20/06/02 p.233
- 29 Scheme brochure 2003
- 30 Leisure and Environment Committee minute No. 580 23/01/03 p.985
- 31 Runnymede Active Zones brochure 2003
- 32 Kids for Life brochure 2003
- 33 Chertsey Museum brochure 2003
- 34 Budget Book 2003-04, p. 80
- 35 Runnymede Community Safety Strategy 2002 - 2005 p. iii, iv & v
- 36 Museum Leaflet