

Runnymede Borough Council
LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 20 May 2004 at 7.30 p.m.

in the Council Chamber

at the Civic Offices, Addlestone



Members of the Committee

Councillors C.J. Norman (Chairman), Mrs. C.Y. Jones (Vice-Chairman), Mrs P.I. Broadhead, A.J. Davis, Mrs C. E. Gant, Miss M.N. Heath, Mrs. S.E. Jacobs, A.M. Moore, R.J. Ray, and B.J. Relph.

A G E N D A

Notes:

- i) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.
- ii) The relevant 'background papers' are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Miss C. Pinnock, Committee Section, Department of Administration and Leisure, Civic Offices, Station Road, Addlestone. (Tel. 01932 425627) email address:clare.pinnock@runnymede.gov.uk.**
- iii) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please ring Mr. B.A. Fleckney on 01932 425620.
- iv) In the unlikely event of an alarm sounding, members of the public should leave the building immediately, either using the staircase leading from the public gallery or following other instructions as appropriate.

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PART I

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- a) Exempt Information
(No reports to be considered under this heading)
- b) Confidential Information
(No reports to be considered under this heading)

1. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

2. MINUTES

To confirm and sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 March 2004.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

If Members have an interest in an item please record the interest on the form circulated with this Agenda and hand it to the Legal Representative or Committee Administrator at the start of the meeting. A supply of the form will also be available from the Committee Administrator at meetings.

Members who have previously declared interests which are recorded in the Minutes to be considered at this meeting need not repeat the declaration when attending the meeting. Members need take no further action unless the item in which they have an interest becomes the subject of debate, in which event the Member must leave the room if the interest is personal and prejudicial.

5. SAFER RUNNYMEDE ANNUAL REPORT 2003/04 (DTS)

Attached at Appendix 'A' is the sixth Annual Report prepared by the Community Safety Manager on the operations and activities of the Safer Runnymede Centre, in particular CCTV, as required by the relevant Code of Practice.

The Community Safety Manager compiles a wealth of statistical management information throughout the year and this can be made available to Members as and when required.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

None.

6. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY (DTS)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. **The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the actions being taken with partners to address issues of anti-social behaviour in the Borough, and to invite comments on and seek approval of the proposed anti-social behaviour strategy.**

2. Background Information

2.1 The statutory 'Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership' known in Runnymede as 'The Safer Runnymede Partnership' has a responsibility for addressing anti-social behaviour issues. The Partnership receives direct Government grant for projects to meet the Crime and Disorder reduction objectives. In addition, in the current financial year it will receive £25,000 specifically for measures to address anti-social behaviour.

2.2 As part of the conditions of receiving funding a member of staff must have specific responsibility for anti-social behaviour and that is the Community Safety Officer. The Partnership is also required to adopt an anti-social behaviour strategy.

2.3 Anti-social behaviour is a Government priority with recent legislation to provide additional powers to address the issue. The Head of Law provided the Review Board Meeting of 10 December with a report outlining the new provisions.

3. Anti-Social Behaviour - Police & Procedure

3.1 Attached at Appendix 'B' is the proposed strategy for adoption by the Safer Runnymede Partnership following consultation with partners. The strategy reflects systems already well

established in Runnymede which have evolved from the Safer Runnymede Project which started in 1997.

- 3.2 Each partner will require procedures in place to implement the strategy and this will require that as far as is possible a standardised approach is adopted. One of the greatest difficulties is establishing the actual nature and scale of the problems which undoubtedly exist. In some cases there is much under-reporting and in others there is exaggeration.
- 3.3 To address this issue a standard reporting system has been devised and is being installed on the Website. Initially for internal use only it will also be made available for public use later. The front pages of the form are attached at Appendix 'C'. A number of categories are listed, which also comply with Home Office categories and will enable standardised reporting.
- 3.4 When the form is completed it will automatically be forwarded to the relevant Officer. Copies of all forms will also go to Safer Runnymede. The data is automatically entered onto a database and Safer Runnymede has responsibility for monitoring forms which are submitted and identifying patterns and hotspots. Members and Officers will be encouraged to use the form and there will also be a publicity drive to encourage the public to use the form.
- 3.5 The proposed reporting procedure will have an impact across Departments and whilst Safer Runnymede has the support and co-ordination responsibility, individual Sections within Departments would retain their responsibility for actions.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 Although this initiative is producing additional workload within Safer Runnymede, to date all additional costs involved have been met by Government funding. Two part-time posts support the processes and these are currently funded by the Government. Whilst there must be doubts over long term funding it is believed the immediate future to 2006 is secure.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Partnership has been comparatively very active and successful at making use of the powers provided with a number of 'Acceptable Behaviour Contracts' and six 'Anti-Social Behaviour Orders'. The Police Legal Department has dealt with these but there are powers where there may be a need for Council Legal staff to take action.

6. Community Safety and The Environment

- 6.1 This strategy and procedures if effectively implemented could have a substantial beneficial effect on the fear of crime which is out of proportion with the risk of crime, and, the quality of the environment in the Borough.

7. Human Rights

- 7.1 All the partners to the 'Safer Runnymede Partnership' are aware of and trained by staff in the implications of their actions on the human rights of the individual concerned.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) the proposed anti-social behaviour strategy attached at Appendix 'B' be approved subject to consideration by the Safer Runnymede Partnership and comments received from this Committee; and**
- ii) the proposed reporting procedure as attached at Appendix 'C' be approved and people be encouraged to make use of the system.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None.

7. GOGMORE FARM PARK – FOOTPATH TO GOGMORE LANE (DAL)
(Ref: Minutes of Review Board, February 2004, page 1251, para. 697, Leisure and Environment Committee, March 2004, page 1443, para. 798 and Council, April 2004)

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to consider the construction of a footpath to link Gogmore Farm Park to Gogmore Lane.**

2. Report

2.1 The Review Board, at its meeting on 11 February 2004, reviewed this Committee's decision to erect a section of fence between Gogmore Farm Park and Riversdell Close.

2.2 The Review Board made a number of recommendations which were commented upon by this Committee at its meeting on 18 March 2004. In relation to the footpath the recommendation was as follows:-

"The Leisure and Environment Committee consider constructing a path along the alternative route identified by the Board which, dependent on the location of existing trees and other vegetation, will be a fully accessible footpath between the footbridge over the drain on the north bank of the River Bourne to the corner of Riversdell Close and Gogmore Lane, and if this route is approved it should be opened before the new youth facility is opened at Gogmore Farm Park."

2.2.1 This Committee's comment was as follows:-

The Committee considers that the recommendation from the Review Board regarding the construction of a path should be deferred pending the outcome of a decision being made on the Riversdell Close alleyway.

2.2.2 The Council considered and endorsed the recommendations of the Review Board on 22 April 2004 and requested this Committee to consider the provision of a footpath as a matter of urgency.

2.2.3 The Review Board suggested that the location of the footpath should be in the area shown on the plan at Appendix 'D', circulated separately with this Agenda.

2.3 The Youth Development Team's Youth Outreach Project will be based in the Pavilion in Gogmore Farm Park and is due to commence at the beginning of the school summer holidays.

2.4 The order of cost for a tarmac footpath leading to Gogmore Lane will be in the region of £5,000. This can be met from the Parks revenue budget by the displacement and rescheduling of other projects.

2.5 Surrey County Council's local area committee will be considering a detailed report into the closure of the alleyway at Riversdell Close at its July meeting. If they agree, then an application will be made by the County to seek designation by the Secretary of State with a view to closing the alleyway. The whole process could take at least six months and probably a lot longer.

2.6 If the Council proceeds with the construction of the footpath now the alleyway will be open and there will be nothing to stop people proceeding to the town-centre through Riversdell Close rather than Gogmore Lane. However this would not be the most direct route, which would be down Gogmore Lane, a non residential area. A number of people are using this route at present crossing through the undergrowth and stepping over a low fence. A recent press article containing comments from Riversdell Close residents suggests that no anti-social behaviour has been witnessed since the fence has gone up even though some people are using this unofficial exit to the park opposite Gogmore Lane.

2.7 Representations have continued to be received from residents who object to the loss of a route they have habitually taken to the town centre.

2.8 Since the last meeting of this Committee, new paths have been completed in Gogmore Farm Park which have formalised existing tracks across the park.

- 2.9 Since the introduction of the fence there has been a marked reduction in anti-social behaviour and it is considered that the Council should not do anything to reverse this trend.
- 2.10 Officers do not consider that the proposed path would have such an effect.
3. Council Policy
- 3.1 Council policy is to ensure that we play an effective role in enhancing the quality of life for all our residents.
4. Legal Implications
- 4.1 The Council has a duty to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on crime and disorder in its area and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent such crime and disorder from occurring.
- 4.2 The Council must not act in a way which is incompatible with a person's human rights such as the right to peaceful enjoyment of their property and the right to respect for private and family life and the home. Such rights can be interfered with provided that such interference is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society.
- 4.3 The Committee therefore needs to consider:-
- 4.3.1 The likelihood of the anti-social behaviour re-emerging in Riversdell Close if a new footpath is constructed in the suggested location and the effect of that behaviour on the local residents.
- 4.3.2 The level of inconvenience which would be caused to some residents in the vicinity of the park if the footpath is not provided.

THE COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:-

- i) Does the Committee wish to reaffirm its comments of 18 March 2004 as set out in paragraph 2.2 above and await a decision on the closure of the Riversdell Close alleyway before determining whether to construct a new footpath.
- ii) Does the Committee wish to construct a new footpath in the suggested location; and
- iii) If so when should the footpath be constructed.

Background Papers

None.

8. POOLEY GREEN YOUTH SHELTER (DAL)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to request Members' approval for the principle of installing a youth shelter on Pooley Green recreation ground, subject to further consultation with neighbouring residents.**

2. Background information

- 2.1 Young people in Pooley Green have been asking the local police constable for a youth shelter for some months.
- 2.2 Pooley Green is highlighted as a priority by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the installation of a youth shelter was one of the items prioritised by young people. Another was the erection of a single football goal on the Green, which was completed in summer 2003.
- 2.3 The terms of reference of the Pooley Green land review, for which the Borough Valuer is the project manager are:

- i) identify and review all landholdings in Egham Hythe area with particular reference to Pooley Green Allotments
 - ii) to consider the possible construction of a public park and re-provision of the Hythe Social Centre
 - iii) to identify potential social housing opportunities, youth provision and opportunity to involve adjoining owners
- 2.4 As Members will be aware, a Friends of Hythe Park group has been formed to develop designs and source some of the funding for the new Hythe Park (proposed for the Pooley Green allotment site) in conjunction with Borough Council Officers. Priorities for the new park and other open spaces have been identified by the Friends Group, based on the original consultation exercise and on recent discussions with groups of young people (who were severely under-represented in the response to the original exercise). Proposals for the whole area will be displayed locally for local comment once designs are developed.
- 2.5 An estimate of £34,000 for the refurbishment of the play area at Pooley Green Recreation Ground was included in the play area refurbishment report in June 2003. This playground has the first priority in terms of refurbishment. The cost included an estimate for replacing the roundabout, swings, slide and existing furniture (bins and benches). The work will begin once the local community has been consulted on plans for the areas of open space in Pooley Green and the Hythe. The cost of a youth shelter was not provided for in these estimates.
3. Report
- 3.1 The request for the Youth Shelter is being dealt with separately because the shelter has been specifically identified by local young people and the police. Young people currently meet in the recreation ground, congregating in the play area, bus shelter or by local shops. These places are not entirely appropriate for them or for other members of the community. Those young people have been consulted by Officers and by the local police support officer about the type of shelter they would prefer.
- 3.2 Youth shelters are designed as places for young people to meet and chat. They are roofed, giving some shelter from the elements, but without walls, making users visible, but providing some privacy.
- 3.3 Residents and businesses surrounding Pooley Green Recreation Ground have been consulted specifically about this proposal.
- 3.3.1 157 letters were sent out and 62 responses have been received. Of the responses, 13 support the installation of the shelter and 47 oppose it. Two respondents could see both disadvantages and benefits in providing a youth shelter and requested further information on the proposals and the reasons for it. The consultation has generated some strong feelings, particularly about the threat some residents feel from local young people.
- 3.3.2 Specific issues raised are: vandalism, litter and broken glass, drug and alcohol abuse, concerns relating to "turf wars" between different groups of young people and concerns about encouraging young people to congregate in the area and to stay out later.
- 3.3.3 Some positive suggestions have also been made, as well as comments about existing difficulties that residents and businesses are experiencing. Officers, the local police inspectors and Ward Councillors are therefore calling a public meeting to listen to the concerns and try to allay resident's fears by letting them know what work is being done to reduce crime and the fear of crime locally.
- 3.3.4 Therefore it is proposed that this Committee makes a recommendation to the Corporate Management Committee about the installation of the shelter and any necessary supplementary estimate.
- 3.4 The Friends of Hythe Park supported the shelter's installation prior to the development of plans for the new park in principle, subject to local residents being happy with the proposal.

4. Council Policy

Leader's Position Statement 2004/05

- 4.1 "With our partners we will fully participate in the Runnymede Crime and Disorder Partnership to implement the local Community Safety Strategy and seek to maximise opportunities for external funding of projects."
- 4.1.1 Develop a new public park at Pooley Green, including an improved allotment site in consultation with local residents.
- 4.2 Work with all agencies concerned to identify areas of greatest need, target resources to make the best use of facilities and develop diversionary activities for young people (Cultural Strategy).
- 4.3 Enhance consultation with young people when planning new facilities (Cultural Strategy).
- 4.4 Work with local young people to develop positive use of leisure time and employment opportunities, focussed on areas of identified need (Community Strategy).
- 4.5 Ensure that newly developed facilities (whether built or in parks/open spaces) are allocated budgets which enable maintenance of standards and investment for the future (Community Strategy).
- 4.6 Review the provision of parks and open spaces, sports facilities and children's play facilities throughout the Borough to establish the extent of any shortfalls and/or oversupply and to seek ways to address these (Parks & Open Spaces Best Value Continuous Improvement Plan)

5. Resource implications

- 5.1 Youth Shelters vary in cost depending on the manufacturer and design.
- 5.2 The cost for purchasing and installing a shelter to accommodate up to 10 people is approximately £9,000.
- 5.3 There would be no on-going maintenance costs for the foreseeable future.
- 5.4 It is hoped that the shelter will be funded, or part-funded, from the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) budget. The proposal is being taken back to the CDRP for a decision on 25th May. If that is not possible, the facility will be funded from the existing provision for the Hythe Park/Pooley Green project.

6. Community Safety

- 6.1 Runnymede is one of three pilot areas in Surrey in which the Borough Council, Surrey Police and Surrey County Council have agreed to work together to target particular areas of anti-social behaviour and make a positive difference to local communities.
- 6.2 Two multi-agency groups meet to try and resolve crime and disorder problems that come to notice. The Joint Action Group (JAG) discusses problem locations and the Community Incident Action Group discusses individuals who have come to notice. Both groups try to identify actions or projects that will reduce crime and disorder. Information is shared between agencies under an agreed 'Information Sharing Protocol' under s.115 of The Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 6.3 Both groups tend to have a heavy emphasis in dealing with youth matters although they can address any issue that comes to notice. Any of the local agencies including the Police and the Borough Council can refer matters to the groups. Both groups support the provision of this youth shelter.
- 6.4 Other projects involving the use of leisure facilities include local consultation about the removal of a bench being used by young people in Addlestone, in a way that was causing

disruption to local residents and the installation of the goal post on Pooley Green recreation ground.

6.5 Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, in discharging its functions the Council has a duty to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. In addition, the Council has very broad powers to promote and improve the social and environmental well-being of the area for the benefit of the whole or part of the area or all or any persons in the area.

7. Planning and Technical implications

7.1 The Youth shelter falls under the criteria for permitted development within a Council park. Planning permission is not therefore required. Nevertheless, neighbouring residents have been consulted individually about the proposal, as reported in paragraph 3.3.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) the Committee support in principle the installation of a youth shelter in an appropriate location at Pooley Green, on the basis of established demand, the potential benefit to young people, and advantages for the community in general;**
- ii) the Committee notes the current feedback from the public consultation;**
- iii) Officers be instructed to engage in further explanation and dialogue with the local community and Ward Members, and to report on the results to the Corporate Management Committee for their instructions; and**
- iv) the Committee and Chairman agree to a further report being made to Corporate Management Committee in order to allow a decision on whether to proceed to be made before this Committee's next meeting on 16 September.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None stated.

9. REFUSE COLLECTION & STREET CLEANSING CONTRACTS (DTS)
Ref. Minutes of Leisure & Environment Committee, November 2003, page 1057, para 511.)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:-

- i) seek Members' views on the future service levels required in refuse collection and street cleansing;**
- ii) consider consultant's advice on the likely costs of contract renewal;**
- iii) seek Members' views on the procurement of future service arrangements.**

2. Background Information

2.1 A report was considered by this Committee at its meeting in November 2003, concerning the refuse collection and street cleansing arrangements. Members noted that both services were currently discharged by the in-house Direct Services Organisation (DSO), based at the Chertsey Depot.

2.2 The street cleansing contract is due for renewal on 1 November 2004, and the refuse collection contract on 1 August 2005. At the November meeting, authority was given to appoint consultants to advise on the likely costs of renewal of these contracts. It was noted

that there was a perception that contracts renewed recently in other similarly sized and located authorities had shown large increases, and it was considered that this might be confirmed by informed consultancy advice. The advantages of having a current DSO as a comparator of costs was also noted.

2.3 The consultant's report has now been received and is summarised later within this report. It is however considered pertinent for the Committee to determine the future level and quality of service that it wishes to provide, for both refuse collection and street cleansing, as this will have an impact on the cost implications and potentially, the means by which the service is delivered.

2.4 Therefore, the report details existing and potential levels of service, costed where possible, with operational impacts highlighted. The report then considers advantages and disadvantages of a full tendering exercise and externalisation, compared with continued in-house service delivery. This is complemented by the conclusions and recommendations from the consultant.

3. Report

Current Costs and Public Satisfaction

3.1 In terms of costs, accurate, up to date comparative data is difficult to quantify due to differences in standards of service and what is included within indicators. Nevertheless, the following data gives reasonable comparisons across Surrey.

3.2 The first table is derived from the latest available CIPFA data, based on 2001-02 actuals. The figures represent the costs per household, per year, of the services.

	Refuse Collection	Street Cleansing
Runnymede	£29.66	£15.76
Surrey Average	£34.79	£17.66

3.3 The following table is data from Best Value Performance Indicator BV 86: Cost of Waste Collection (£ per household) for 2002-03: (Note there was at that time, no Performance indicator (either cost or quality) for street cleansing.

	Refuse Collection
Runnymede	£29.29
Surrey Average	£36.60
District Councils Average	£34.02
National Top Quartile	£29.64

3.4 It should be noted that at both dates, Runnymede was operating a back door collection service, which was more expensive than the present edge of curtilage collection.

3.5 This clearly indicates that costs are very competitive when compared to neighbours, and very favourable compared nationally, where local problems of recruitment, traffic congestion and general cost would normally force costs above the national norm.

3.6 Public satisfaction level is derived from Best Value General Satisfaction Surveys, carried out in 2000 and 2003, and set out below:

Land Clear of Litter and Refuse

	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Does not apply
2000	24%	64%	7%	4%	1%	0%
2003	12%	57%	12%	12%	5%	2%

Satisfaction with Waste Collection

	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
2000	53%	41%	4%	1%	1%
2003	43%	47%	7%	2%	1%

- 3.7 The percentages show high levels of public satisfaction for refuse collection, with very little change over the period, despite a change from backdoor to edge of curtilage collections. The street cleansing satisfaction level however has dropped from 88% to 69% of the public being either very or fairly satisfied. Part of this decline is due to staff turnover. In addition, the vehicles are at the end of their working life and subject to breakdowns. Officers consider that a change in working practices would help to improve the service.
- 3.8 A new Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI 199) covering "cleanliness" has recently been introduced which requires a substantial number of site inspections - around 900 - based seasonally across all areas and land uses. It is considered that in future this will give greater ability to recognise and prioritise problem areas to improve public perception.

Service Levels

- 3.9 In broad terms there are four options for the delivery of any Council service. It can be stopped altogether, remain the same (hopefully with ongoing operational and managerial continuous improvements), increased, or reduced, in scale or quality.
- 3.10 In terms of both statutory responsibility and public service, ceasing these services is not an option. In addition, given the present and future financial position of the Council, Officers do not consider that an enhanced service at greater cost should be pursued.
- 3.11 However, this has to be balanced in the context of current performance and public perception of the service. If the Committee considers that the current service is acceptable in quality and within reasonable cost, then it is the Officers' recommendation that further expenditure to increase service standards would not be appropriate. However, if the Committee considers that standards are below expectation, then a greater level of expenditure might be considered.
- 3.12 The table at Appendix 'E' set outs current standards of service for refuse collection and street cleansing. Options are given for potential reductions in service, but not for enhancement that would have direct additional costs. Members' views on the future levels of service are invited.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Externalisation

- 3.13 This section examines the advantages and disadvantages of both a tendering process and a tendered contract. Officers consider that this is the best way by which value for money can be demonstrated in an open and transparent way. External contractors, many of whom are now large operators with wide experience serving many authorities, can bring economies of scale to bear, taking advantage of greater vehicle and staff bases.
- 3.14 External contractors may have the ability to introduce innovative practice to the service, which would lead to a thorough review of current DSO arrangements to ensure that they are competitive rather than complacent.
- 3.15 While support staff throughout the Council might be reduced if the service was externalised, this would be countered to some extent by the need to employ specific client staff to monitor both refuse collection and street cleansing elements of the contract.
- 3.16 Inevitably a tendering process is unsettling for staff and they have already expressed some concern. Although jobs would be safeguarded to the extent that TUPE provisions apply, Officers consider that external contractors do not have an enviable reputation for employment standards, and staff uncertainty would translate into a drift away from the

Council's employment, making recruitment hard in an already difficult and competitive market.

- 3.17 The above situation would have considerable implications for continuity of service. Although Agency staff are available, they are costly and of variable quality and the immediacy of service demands mean that there is usually little choice. At a time of falling public satisfaction, it is considered of prime importance that service delivery is not only maintained, but improved. Formalising a tender process and internal bid is also resource hungry in terms of actual and opportunity costs for both DSO and client side staff, and is usually augmented by an external consultancy resource. This inevitably diverts resources away from service delivery.
- 3.18 In the immediate future, there is considerable uncertainty over waste collection and disposal and recycling targets. It is clear through the Landfill Directive, that the amount of biodegradable municipal waste that will be allowed to go to landfill will substantially reduce, and the County Council, as waste disposal authority has to consider greater recycling, composting and other means of treatment and disposal, as well as the fundamental aims of waste reduction and minimisation.
- 3.19 These factors will inevitably lead to changes in waste collection - its method, frequency and volumes collected, as well as combining waste collection resources with improved recycling for example, of green waste. These changes will be implemented by authorities to meet a range of targets, but may also be imposed by waste collection authorities and statute.
- 3.20 There is no doubt that recycling targets will increase in the immediate future. The current recycling arrangements (with external contractors) have a net annual cost to the Council of around £300,000. Increased recycling will inevitably increase this, but savings could be made by greater utilisation of in-house staff and vehicles rather than changing or extending external contracts. The value of this flexibility should not be underestimated.
- 3.21 There is concern that a contract with an external provider cannot contain sufficient flexibility to cover all the potential future operational requirements. Changes to the contract will therefore have to be negotiated at increased cost, and if agreement cannot be reached, the possibility of a contractor walking away from the service.
- 3.22 The DSO has the advantage of being an integral part of the Council, and therefore any changes in operational methods would be at the Council's discretion, with total flexibility of implementation, without fear of financial penalty in terms of contract variation. The demise of the CCT legislation enhances this flexibility, subject to the demonstration of best value.
- 3.23 The Best Value review of the depot and stores recognised their value as part of an emergency resource, and this is doubly true of the staff. The recent flooding events demonstrated the value of using depot based staff to help with a wide range of activities - filling and distributing sandbags, assisting the emergency services and other Council staff, and clearing of flood damaged goods and rubbish. These services would only be available from a contractor at additional cost.
- 3.24 Many of the advantages of in-house DSOs are recognised by external contractors, and it is known that there are some who are less inclined to either submit a bid at all, or at least a competitive one, where DSOs are also involved in the process.
- 3.25 The issues described above relate to service resilience and flexibility together with current performance. However, a key factor is potential future cost, and this is examined in the following section.

Future Contract Costs

- 3.26 Officers' contact with colleagues from other authorities gave a strong impression that recent contract renewal in this area of service had led to substantial increases in expenditure. It was for that reason that it was recommended and agreed to appoint a consultant who had some knowledge of the market, to offer specific advice on this issue.

3.27 The consultant's headline conclusions are as follows:

- i) The Council's current refuse collection service is competitive and is achieving a high level of public satisfaction.
- ii) The Council's street cleansing service is achieving a high standard at an acceptable cost.
- iii) The street cleansing service could improve by replacing the frequency based service with a more balanced input/output working practice.
- iv) Over recent years there has been substantial increases in the tendered prices from the private sector for refuse and street cleansing contracts. Based on projected costs for in-house provision, the consultant estimates that, if the services were outsourced there would be a net increase in the cost to the Council of between £225k and £250k per annum.
- v) The recommended procurement option for the future provision of the Council's Refuse and Street Cleansing Services is a continuation of the in-house service
- vi) It is recommended that the Refuse and Street Cleansing Services should be combined for tendering purposes.

3.28 The consultant also suggested that the DSO could potentially save between £30 - £40,000 per annum on efficiency improvements relating to reduced transport costs and reduced sickness levels. If the service remained in-house then these improvements and savings would be actively pursued.

4. Council Policy

4.1 The two key policies within the Leader's Position Statement relate to enhancing the quality of life and maintaining rigorous financial control of the Council's affairs.

4.2 The Council's Commissioning and Procurement Strategy draws attention to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, which prescribe procedures to be adopted for procuring goods and services. Refuse collection and street cleansing can be seen as strategic procurement, both in terms of length and value of the service contract period.

4.3 The Council's preferred method of procurement is in open competition by tender. A feasibility report is required to the relevant committee focusing on service specification, research and understanding of the appropriate market, consultation with users and discussion with staff and potential providers. Officers consider that this report fulfils this requirement.

4.4 The Council's approach to competition is set out in the Service Review Guide, prepared to guide Best Value Reviews. It indicates that where a service can be demonstrated to be competitive as compared to the top 25% nationally on quality, top 25% of south east on cost, and where there is an organisational/policy reason for not considering externalising the service, then it can remain in-house with a service plan setting rigorous targets to achieve continuous improvement. Officers consider that these criteria can be met, as demonstrated within this report.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 The current budget for refuse collection for this financial year is £1,313,900, of which £956,900 is directly allocated to the DSO as contract sum. Similarly, the current budget for street cleansing for this financial year totals £629,300, of which £441,200 is the main contract charge paid to the DSO.

5.2 The cost of future arrangements will depend on service levels required by Members and cost savings/efficiencies that may be identified. The consultant estimates that based on the current levels of service provision, externalisation of these services will increase costs by approximately £225,000 to £250,000 per annum.

5.3 The DSO currently earns approximately £70,000 per annum from trade refuse. There is some potential for legislative changes that would increase charges for local government delivery of this service, which would effectively make it uncompetitive compared to the private sector. This has yet to be clarified, but if enacted, then the financial attractiveness of in-house service delivery would be reduced by this amount.

5.4 Costs for refuse collection are lower than the Surrey average, and within the national top quartile. Relative costs for street cleansing are not available as it is dependant on the level of service provided.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 Although the Council is not under any legal obligation to tender this service, it does have a legal obligation to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised. The Council must have regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness, and conduct best value reviews of its functions. Clearly the Council must have regard to its policies relating to procurement and be satisfied as to the fact that any service provider, whether in-house, external, or combination of the two, provides Best Value, in terms of both cost and quality of service.

7. Conclusions

7.1 Whether or not these services continue to be delivered by the DSO or externalised, the opportunity can be taken to review Members' aspirations for the service in terms of quality and cost. In this regard, comments on the service standards set out in Appendix 'E' are invited.

7.2 In terms of service continuity and resilience over the next twelve to eighteen months, there are considerable concerns that a tendering process will lead to a haemorrhaging of staff away from the Council, giving great difficulty for delivery.

7.3 Retention of an in-house resource gives maximum flexibility to deal with future uncertainties relating to what is a changing service and also in relation to an emergency resource.

7.4 It is appreciated that cost is a key factor and that this can only truly be examined by a market testing exercise. However, the market intelligence provided by the consultant would appear to indicate that not only is the current DSO competitive in practice, but that an externalisation would lead to considerable cost increases.

7.5 If the service remains in-house, then there would be no logic to retaining the present DSO arrangements in terms of accounting practice and client/contractor split. The budget would be set and reported as for any other Council service.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) the Committee indicates what changes in service standards it requires in the future for refuse collection and street cleansing;**
- ii) the refuse collection and street cleansing functions remain as an in-house service rather than being externally tendered, with the present trading account and client/contractor split being abandoned; and**
- iii) in the light of the Committee's views on service levels, further options for service improvements be evaluated and reported back to this Committee for consideration.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Runnymede Borough Council Refuse Collection & Street Cleansing Review, C.Frake, Techman Consultancy Services, February 2004.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ENFORCEMENT POLICY (DTS)
(Ref: Minutes of the Leisure and Environment Committee, September 2001, page 326, para. 269)

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to seek Members' endorsement of an updated enforcement policy relevant to all aspects of Environmental Protection.**
- 1.2 **The Committee is also requested to authorise the Director of Technical Services and the Head of Environmental Protection to make any necessary amendments to the administrative arrangements of the enforcement policy to ensure that it is kept up to date in the future.**

2. **Background Information**

- 2.1 The current Environmental Health Enforcement Policy was approved by this Committee in September 2001. The policy enables Runnymede Borough Council to comply with Best Value Performance Indicator 166, which measures the Council's score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health and trading standards.

3. **Report**

- 3.1 The Environmental Protection Enforcement Policy attached at Appendix 'F' covering all aspects of Environmental Protection has been updated to reflect changes in legislation in respect of the Cautioning of Offenders and the Council's departmental re-organisation which took place in 2002. Members are requested to approve the revised Environmental Protection Enforcement Policy.
- 3.2 To avoid the necessity of submitting the policy to Committee when only minor administrative amendments need to be made, the Committee is asked to give authorisation to the Director of Technical Services and the Head of Environmental Protection to make such changes in the future.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) **the Environmental Protection Enforcement Policy as attached at Appendix 'F' covering all aspects of work of the Commercial, Licensing and Health and Pollution Sections of the Environmental Protection Division of the Technical Services Department be approved; and**
- ii) **the Director of Technical Services and the Head of Environmental Protection be authorised to review and amend the administrative arrangements of the enforcement policy as necessary for the purposes of keeping the policy current.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None.

11. FOOD AND HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE PLANS 2004/05 (DTS)
(Ref: Minutes of the Leisure and Environment Committee, June 2003, page 191, para. 127)

1. **Purpose of report**

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the proposed Food Service Plan and Health and Safety Service Plan for 2004/05.**

2. **Background Information**

- 2.1 The Food Standards Agency has produced a framework agreement on local authority food law enforcement. One part of the framework agreement contains service planning guidance. This is to ensure that key areas of enforcement covered by the Food Law Enforcement

standard are covered in local Food Service Plans, whilst allowing appropriate scope for flexibility and inclusion of any locally defined objectives. The requirement to produce a local Food Service Plan first came into effect on 1 April 2001.

- 2.2 Similarly, the Health and Safety Commission has issued guidance under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to local authorities in their capacity as enforcing authorities. This guidance includes a requirement to produce a service plan, incorporating the investigation of accidents and complaints. It is the duty of local authorities to act in accordance with this guidance. The requirement to produce a Health and Safety Service Plan first came into effect on 1 April 2002.
- 2.3 Both the Food Standards Agency and the Health and Safety Commission require that the proposed service plans be submitted to the relevant Member forum, in this case, the Leisure and Environment Committee, for approval to ensure local transparency and accountability.

3. Report

- 3.1 The proposed Food Service and Health and Safety Service Plans for 2004/05 are attached at Appendices 'G' and 'H' respectively. Members are asked to approve the proposals contained within these plans.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) the Food Service Plan for 2004/05 as attached at Appendix 'G' be approved;**

(TO RECOMMEND)

- ii) the Health and Safety Service Plan for 2004/05 as attached at Appendix 'H' be approved.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None.

12. RECYCLING SERVICE PLAN 2004/05 (DTS)
(Ref: Minutes of the Leisure and Environment Committee, January 2004, page 1205, para.665).

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the proposed Recycling Service Plan for 2004/05.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 The Environmental Protection Division of the Technical Services Department already has four service plans in operation covering Food and Health & Safety services and Pollution and Public Health services. The requirement for two of these service plans (Food and Health & Safety) is driven by specific legislation. However, all four service plans are required to enable the Council to achieve a top quartile score for the Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI 166) for Environmental Protection.
- 2.2 The Recycling Service Plan was first introduced for 2003/04. It replaced the Recycling Plan which dated back to 1990 as updating had been deferred while the Council implemented kerbside recycling, and Government initiatives on Joint Municipal Waste Strategies were awaited. The Recycling Service Plan feeds into the Surrey wide Integrated Waste Management Strategy.

3. Report

- 3.1 The proposed Recycling Service Plan for 2004/05 is attached at Appendix 'I' and Members are asked to approve the proposals contained therein.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

the Recycling Service Plan for 2004/05, as attached at Appendix 'I' be approved.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None.

13. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT (DTS)
Ref: Minutes of the Leisure and Environment Committee, June 2003, page 194, para. 130)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Committee on the mechanism for satisfying the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and to seek approval of the proposed Environmental Policy statement.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 Member States of the European Union are required to implement European Directive 2001/42/EC by 21 July 2004. The introduction of Strategic Environmental Assessment, known as the SEA Directive has been overseen by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. It has been introduced to provide a high level of protection to the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations in the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. The SEA applies to 'plans and programmes whose formal preparation will begin after 21 July 2004 and also to those which are already in preparation by that date but that will not be adopted or submitted to a legislative procedure by 21 July 2006'.

- 2.2 The procedures associated with the SEA comprise :-

- preparing an Environmental Report on the likely significant effects of the draft plan or programme;
- carrying out consultation on the draft plan or programme and the accompanying Environmental Report;
- taking into account the Environmental Report and the results of consultation in decision making; and
- providing information when the plan or programme is adopted and showing how the results of the environmental assessment have been taken into account.

- 2.3 The plans and programmes which fall within the scope of the Directive are those :-

- a) which are subject to preparation and/or adoption by an Authority at national, regional or local level, or are prepared by an Authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government; and
- b) which are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions.

3. Report

- 3.1 The scope of the SEA is set out at Appendix 'J' to this report. For the Council, in essence, an assessment is required when a development scheme or initiative are proposed or modified that is likely to have a significant environmental effect. The remainder of this report sets out the mechanism for the Council to satisfy the requirements of the SEA Directive.

- 3.2 Where an SEA is required, an Environmental Report must be prepared in which the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated. The Environmental Report will consider amongst other things:

- the environmental protection objectives relevant to the plan or programme;
 - the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment without implementation of the plan or programme;
 - the likely significant effects on the environment, including issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between these factors;
 - the mitigation measures envisaged;
 - an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and monitoring measures envisaged.
- 3.3 The process of preparing the Environmental Report should commence as early as possible and, ideally, at the same time as the preparation of the plan or programme. The preparation of the Environmental Report and the integration of the environmental considerations into the preparation of plans and programmes form an iterative process that contributes to more sustainable solutions in decision making.
- 3.4 The Environmental Report should be made available at the same time as any draft plan or programme, as an integral part of the consultation process and the relationship between the two documents should be clearly indicated.
4. Council Policy
- 4.1 In anticipation of the introduction of the SEA Directive, this Committee, at its meeting in June 2003, agreed to revise the Environmental Policy Statement (EPS) to accommodate the emerging advice. The EPS is being developed into a mechanism for undertaking an ongoing audit of Council activity. This requires a number of issues to be examined in a manner that would enable the requirements of the SEA Directive to become an integral part of service delivery.
- 4.2 A key feature of the revised approach has been to establish a baseline of information on the delivery of services. Once the baseline is in place it would enable a (gap) analysis to be undertaken. This would enable the Council to consider whether the impact on the social, economic and physical environment of the services delivered would need to be reviewed to reflect statutory and/or advisory guidelines.
- 4.3 Work has already been progressed in some service areas that are required by statute to undergo 'sustainability audits'. For example, the Local Development Framework (LDF) also known as the Borough Local Plan, provides guidance on a number of land use proposals and as such will impact on other service areas such as waste recycling, air quality, transport, recreation and tourism. The LDF is viewed as 'the spatial expression' of the Community Strategy for Runnymede and may be subject to the requirements of the SEA Directive. Any plan or programme that may be within the remit of the Directive will be subject to a 'scoping option' to clarify this issue.
- 4.4 The EPS is being developed into a State of the Environment Report which will provide an annual monitor of Council activity as an integral part of service delivery. Different elements of service delivery will be added to the monitor as resources permit.
5. Resource Implications
- 5.1 The Environmental Policy Officer will co-ordinate the review of the Environmental Policy Statement and the State of the Environment Report. This post has recently been made full-time until March 2006 on the basis of Government funding through the Planning Delivery Grant mechanism. A vital function of the post will be to focus on the Local Development Framework (Local Plan Review). However, contact and input to and from other service areas will take place as the 'Statement' is developed.
- 5.2 Initial work on the SEA implications for the LDF has been overseen by a group of Officers from each Council Department. The Group is currently looking at options to enable statutory external consultees to be involved in technical discussions to satisfy the requirements of the

relevant Regulations. The various recommendations of the Group will be considered by the Committee responsible for the delivery of the service subject to the assessment. For example, the Planning Committee will consider the LDF, but comments may be invited from other Service Committees on particular issues. This Committee will need to recognise the potential implications of the SEA for a number of policy areas including waste recycling, leisure provision and energy conservation.

- 5.3 As this is a new area of activity the full cost of an SEA is not known. However, when the implications are more clear a further report will be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Council is required to satisfy the requirements of the strategic Environmental Assessment Directive for plans and programmes that commence after 21 July 2004.

7. Environmental and Other Implications

- 7.1 The SEA Directive is a formal mechanism for assessing the impact of plans and programmes and as such will underpin and become an integral part of service delivery and strategy development across the spectrum of Council activity.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The SEA Directive requires the Council to undertake an environmental assessment of plans and programmes that may have significant environmental implications. To accommodate the requirements the Council has revised the Environmental Policy Statement. The aim of this revised approach is to facilitate the capture, assembly, storage, distribution and analysis of robust data relating to the Borough that will adequately describe, set, monitor and manage its baseline condition. This will enable the SEA requirements to become an integral part of service delivery.

- 8.2 In so doing it will also help the Council establish realistic benchmarks and priorities and set achievable targets and indicators that will further the aims of Leader's Position Statement and assist in informing the development of Council initiatives. In addition, it will assist the Council to meet the ever-increasing demand for decisions to be transparent and based on robust data rather than the more frequently used assumption based approach.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

the revised approach for developing the Council's Environmental Policy Statement as attached at Appendix 'J' to accommodate the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive be approved.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Draft Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 - ODPM.

14. CEMETERY SERVICE – REVIEW OF MINORITY FAITHS AND OTHER BELIEFS (DAL)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to review the needs of minority faiths and other beliefs with regard to the interment of the deceased and to seek approval to make appropriate adjustments to the Cemetery Service.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 Target 6.5 of the Cemeteries Best Value Continuous Improvement Plan states:

"Investigate the burial needs of minority faiths for residents of the Borough and make any necessary adjustments to the service."

3. Report

- 3.1 The Cemeteries Registrar meets annually with local Clergy and Funeral Directors to review the Council's Cemeteries service. At their meeting in October 2002 the needs of minority faiths were discussed. Following this meeting further research was conducted as set out below.

Jewish faith

- 3.2 Contact was made with the Staines and District Synagogue. The advice received suggests that Jewish people are normally members of the Burial Society at the Synagogue and follow the traditional ways of the religion. Most burials take place in one of the London/Home Counties Jewish Cemeteries - Bushey, Hertford; Waltham Abbey, Essex; Willesden NW10, being the most popular. It would appear that following the tradition of their faith and being in a Jewish cemetery was more important than being buried locally to their home. More liberal Jews may also choose cremation, but this is done privately and not via the Burial Society at the Synagogue. It is also a requirement that burial takes place as soon as possible, within 24 hours of the death.

- 3.2.1 **Proposal:** No special needs identified. Maintain awareness, but no action at this time.

Muslim faith

- 3.3 The Islamic Welfare Association of West Surrey has provided advice on Muslim burial traditions. A Muslim burial must take place the same day, or at the latest the following day (within 24 hours of death). It is normal practice for the body to be buried in a shroud only, with the face uncovered. The body can be taken to the grave site in a box or coffin and is removed for burial. A single depth (5') grave is dug and after the body has been lowered a wooden board is placed diagonally over it. Alternatively the side of the grave is excavated, to form a 'chamber' into which the body is placed. Officers have been in contact with staff at the London Borough of Hounslow, where many Muslim burials take place. Hounslow has developed a technique whereby the grave is 'lined' with a specially constructed wooden coffin, prior to the burial taking place. This satisfies the needs of the Muslim faith and meets health and safety requirements in the cemetery.

- 3.3.1 Amongst Muslims it is expected that members of the bereaved family would be directly involved in the burial process. It is considered to be best practice, and for health and safety reasons, that the cemetery staff dig the grave and be responsible for the back-fill. It is understood that if a 'token' amount of earth could be returned by family members, this would suffice.

- 3.3.2 **Proposal:** The lower (NW) part of Plot 15 in Englefield Green Cemetery has never been used for burials. It is proposed that this be reserved for Muslim burials.

- 3.3.3 It is anticipated that demand would be quite low and therefore it would be possible to accommodate the 24 hours deadline. If a burial was to take place out of normal hours, overtime rates would apply and would be reflected in an increased Interment Fee.

Other Groups

- 3.4 There is a growing demand from traveller families for example to follow traditional methods of burial. This includes the construction of brick-lined graves and the erection of more elaborate memorials. One family has also enquired about constructing an above ground mausoleum as a family grave. The Runnymede Regulations for the Management of Cemeteries allow for the construction of sub-terrain brick-lined graves and an additional fee is paid (in 2004/05; £635 in addition to the £390 for the Burial Rights), however there are limitations on the size of memorials that can be constructed.

- 3.4.1 Experience shows that these families make a considerable effort to maintain graves and memorials in very good order and it is expected that this will continue in the long term. This is contrary to the general situation, where many graves become neglected after the passage of time.

- 3.4.2 **Proposal:** A part of Plot 23 in Englefield Green Cemetery be designated as a 'Classic Traditional' grave section. The area (representing 50% of the Section) be re-divided into

larger grave spaces of 10' x 5', with a grass walkway 4' wide through the centre. These spaces would attract higher charges for the Exclusive Right of Burial for 50 years.

- 3.4.3 Officers propose to increase permitted memorial dimensions in these graves as indicated in the table below:

Grave type	Maximum length	Maximum width	Maximum Height
Current regulations applied To all graves	1.95m (6' 6")	0.75m (2' 6")	1.00m (3' 3")
Classic Traditional Earthen Graves	2.13m (7' 0")	0.91m (3' 0")	1.00m (3' 3")
Classic Traditional Brick-lined Graves / Vaults	2.13m (7' 0")	0.91m (3' 0")	1.95m (6' 6")

- 3.4.4 Designs of the more elaborate memorials will be displayed at the meeting.

Stillborn Babies and Foetal Remains

- 3.5 During the period 1940 to 1972 an area in the lower part of Addlestone Cemetery was used for the burial of stillborn babies from local hospitals. A total of 71 babies have been identified from cemetery records. In January 2003 a geophysical survey was carried out to help confirm the actual ground used. It is intended that a small garden be created in memory of these children.

- 3.5.1 A plan of the proposed memorial garden will be displayed at the meeting.

- 3.5.2 In November 2002 the Head of Pastoral Care at St Peter's Hospital made contact with the Cemeteries Registrar and was made aware of the planned survey. At the time (and still the case to date) she advised that parents who suffer a stillbirth or loss during pregnancy at St Peter's Hospital had two options. They could take advantage of the free hospital service of cremation or pay for other private burial arrangements. She believed that for a few families burial would be the preferred option, if it could be made available without charge.

- 3.5.3 The cremation service is offered free of charge by Woking Crematorium and Funeralcare are contracted by the hospital to provide funeral services; also without charge. A service is held on the first Wednesday of each month and families have the option to attend or not and most do. This is a joint service, but the deceased are cremated separately. The cremated remains are then interred in the Children's Memorial Garden at Woking Crematorium. There is also a book of remembrance.

- 3.5.4 In Runnymede burial can either be arranged in a public grave (interment fee £85) or the Burial Rights to a child grave can be purchased (currently £200 + £85 interment fee).

- 3.6 A review of records between 1991 and 2002 showed that on average two foetal remains and two stillborn interments took place each year in the Borough cemeteries. Since March 2002 the needs of three families from outside the Borough wanting the burial of foetal remains have also been accommodated in public graves. Current regulations dictate that fees are trebled for non-resident families (interment in public grave £255).

- 3.6.1 **Proposal:** Runnymede Borough Council to provide a free burial service for stillborn babies and foetal remains of bereaved families from the Ashford & St Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust. Burials would take place in Addlestone Cemetery in a memorial garden, to be created there. It is intended that the area that was used for the 'disposal' of stillborn babies between 1940 and 1972 be included in the memorial garden. For those families that choose cremation, there would also be an opportunity for cremated remains to be scattered there. It would be a non-denominational section and there would be no individual memorials. However, a Book of Remembrance would be kept for viewing in the Cemetery Chapel.

- 3.6.2 Families would still have the option to purchase a private grave and erect an individual memorial. Normal fees would continue to be applied in such cases.

4. Council Policy

4.1 These proposals will increase options available from the Borough Cemetery Services. The proposals also support the Council's race Equality Scheme.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 The proposals set out in paragraph 3.3 would bring additional costs which will be recovered through increased fees as set out below:-

	Normal hours for interments 10.00am – 3.00pm	Other times Weekdays	Weekends
Interment Fee (Resident)	£350	£525	£700

5.2 It is estimated that the proposals set out in paragraph 3.4 in respect of the 'Classic Traditional' grave section, in plot 23 of Englefield Green Cemetery result in a reduction of grave spaces in the section. However, the total income would be compensated by higher charges for the larger spaces:

Existing 8' x 4' Grave space	Double 8' x 4' + vault fee	Classic Traditional 10' x 5' Earthen grave	Classic Traditional 10' x 5' vault
£390	£1415*	£610	£1245

* Currently two 8' x 4' grave spaces are required to accommodate a brick-lined grave/vault

5.3 The proposals set out in paragraph 3.6 in respect of Stillborn Babies and Foetal Remains could result in a small loss of income through parents choosing to use this service, rather than purchasing the rights to a private grave. However, it is estimated that the loss would be less than £850 per year (based on historic data). Creation of the Memorial Garden can be financed from the existing Cemeteries revenue budget. Opportunities to obtain charitable support to help finance the Memorial Garden can also be explored.

6. Environmental Implications

6.1 There may be an increased safety risk from larger memorials in the Classic Traditional section. However, they will be contained within one area and the families wanting this type of memorial have a proven record of care. In addition, all memorials will be inspected for stability every three years.

7. Human Rights and Race Relations Considerations

7.1 The proposals outlined in the report will increase options available to all members of the public and raise the esteem of the Runnymede Cemetery Services in this regard.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) the lower (NW) part of Plot 15 in Englefield Green Cemetery be reserved for Muslim burials;**
- ii) a part of Plot 23 in Englefield Green Cemetery be designated as a 'Classic Traditional' grave section;**
- iii) a Memorial Garden be created in Addlestone Cemetery and the Ashford & St Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust, be offered a free burial service for stillborn babies and foetal remains;**
- iv) Runnymede Borough Council Regulations for the Management of Cemeteries be amended to take account of these proposals as set out in Appendix 'K'; and**

- v) **revised fees for 'out of hours' interments and the purchase of burial rights to Classic Traditional grave spaces be adopted into the schedule of Cemetery Fees & Charges. All such fees to be trebled for non-residents of Runnymede Borough.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None

15. CEMETERY SERVICE - TRANSFER OF TWO CLOSED CHURCHYARDS (DAL)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the transfer to the Council of two Closed Churchyards.**

2. Background Information

2.1 Section 1 of the Burial Act 1853 provides for a Parochial Church Council (PCC) to make an application for an Order by Her Majesty in Council to discontinue burials in a churchyard and declare it closed.

2.2 Under Section 215 of the Local Government Act 1972 a PCC is liable to maintain a closed churchyard by keeping it in decent order and its walls and fences in good repair. A PCC may serve written request on the parish or community council, or if there is not one, the district council, to take over the maintenance of the churchyard.

2.3 The PCC must give three months notice to the district council. At the expiration of the three months the district council must take over maintenance.

2.4 In 1981 the General Synod asked Diocesan synods to advise PCCs with closed churchyards that local authorities should be given 12 months notice of any intention to serve statutory notice as laid down in Section 215.

3. Report

3.1 Currently Runnymede Borough Council is responsible for the maintenance of four closed churchyards:

St John the Baptist Church, Egham
St Mary's Parish Church, Thorpe
St Peter's Shared Church, Chertsey
St Paul's Parish Church, Addlestone – Coronation Gardens

3.2 Two additional churchyards are in the process of being closed:

Christ Church Virginia Water

3.3 In a Home Office letter dated 12 November 2002, the Council received notification that the PCC had made an application for closure of the churchyard. An Order in Council was made on the 8 October 2003 declaring the churchyard closed. On the 14 January 2004 the PCC gave written notice that the maintenance of the churchyard would be transferred to Runnymede Borough Council as of the 14 April 2004. All notice requirements have been satisfied and the maintenance of the Churchyard is now the responsibility of the Council.

Christ Church Longcross

3.4 In a letter dated 3 June 2003 from the Vicar of Botleys & Lyne and Longcross to the Chief Executive Officer of the Council advised that Christ Church Longcross would cease to be used for worship from the end of July 2003. Notice was also given that an application would be made for an Order by Her Majesty in Council to discontinue burials in the churchyard and declare it closed. This was issued as an informal notice and the letter stated that a formal

notice would be received in due course. No further notice has been received, but it is still expected that maintenance will be transferred to the Council in September 2004.

4. Council Policy

- 4.1 Section 215 of the Local Government Act 1972 describes the basic duty to maintain a closed churchyard "by keeping it in decent order and its walls and fences in good repair". It is current practice in Runnymede to include cutting the grass and any necessary horticultural maintenance, and dealing sensibly with broken or displaced gravestones.
- 4.2 Grass is cut on contract every three weeks during the growing season from March to October. Trees and gravestones are subject to risk assessment inspections every three years and any found to be unsafe are dealt with to remove the risk.
- 4.3 The churchyards at Christ Church Virginia Water and Christ Church Longcross will be treated in the same way.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 The 2004/05 Closed Churchyard budget includes £9000 to cover additional charges relating to the take on and subsequent maintenance of Christ Church Virginia Water and Christ Church Longcross.
- 5.2 The ongoing maintenance costs for future years is estimated to be £4,000 and has been incorporated into the Council's Financial Forecast.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

Home Office letter dated 12/11/2002 and attached notes on "Closure of Church of England Churchyards to Further Burials"

08/10/2003 Order of The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council, declaring Christ Church churchyard closed.

Letter from Church Administrator Christ Church Virginia Water 14/01/2004

Letter from Reverend Barry Olsen, Vicar of Botleys & Lyne and Longcross 03/06/2003

16. BURIAL LAW AND POLICY IN THE 21ST CENTURY – CONSULTATION PAPER (DAL)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Home Office Consultation Paper on 'Burial Law and Policy in the 21st Century' and to seek approval of the proposed response from this Council.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 The consultation paper "Burial Law and Policy in the 21st Century" is designed to address some of the issues which have arisen from the report of March 2001, on cemeteries by the Environment Sub-committee of the House of Commons Select Committee on the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs. One of the recommendations of that report was that there should be a review of the legislation surrounding burial and cemeteries. In its response to that report the Government agreed that there was a need for all aspects of burial law to be reviewed, and proposed that the issues to be considered included rationalisation of regulation across the public and private sectors, the management of cemeteries, enforcement of the legislation, and exhumation or disturbance after burial.

3. Report

- 3.1 Existing legislation relating to burial and exhumation does not apply evenly to all providers of burial grounds, and there are inconsistencies in the way the exhumation of buried remains is regulated. The Government believes that there is scope for applying burial law more

consistently across the various public and private sector providers and that this would result in a better understanding of the law, improved compliance with the regulations, and a better service, and wider choice, for the public seeking to use burial facilities.

- 3.2 Provision of burial grounds is at present a matter for discretion by relevant local authorities, private companies, or various religious organisations, in the light of demand or tradition. Although the absence of an obligation to provide burial facilities does not appear to have disadvantaged the public over the years, the Government believes there are indications that relying on demand alone may not be the most efficient way to provide the level and choice of service which the public needs. This may be particularly so when there are no special provisions or dispensations for the establishment of new burial grounds, and applications therefore have to be considered against competing demands for use of limited land space.
- 3.3 The Government believes that there may be a case for placing an obligation on local authorities to assess their communities' needs for burial facilities regularly, and to plan to address any under provision, whether simply in volume, or whether also in diversity of facilities available.
- 3.4 The burial process including depth of burial, record keeping, burial rights, and maintenance arrangements is already subject to regulation, even if such regulation is inconsistent across all types of burial grounds. Equally, the management of burial grounds is regulated, to a lesser degree, at least in respect of local authority cemeteries. The Consultation paper identifies what is currently subject to regulation and invites views on whether the balance is right, or whether more, or less, regulation is required. The Government would particularly welcome views on the need for mechanisms to challenge local decisions.
- 3.5 The consultation paper also addresses the regulation of the exhumation of buried human remains, whether undertaken for personal reasons or in order to clear the burial ground for other purposes. The existing provisions are set out and views invited on the need or desirability for more consistency in approach. A crucial issue in this context is the question of whether existing burials should be disturbed to enable old graves to accommodate new burials for re-use. Views are invited on both the principle and practice of re-using old burial grounds, together with the implications and economics if these proposals were pursued. The Government is very conscious of the sensitivities surrounding the re-use of old graves and would need to be persuaded of the public acceptability of such a change.
- 3.6 The consultation process has involved the widest possible participation from faith groups, other interest groups, professionals in the field, as well as members of the public. A list of Consultees is attached at Appendix 'L'.
- 3.7 The consultation is broken down into 37 specific questions. These are attached at Appendix 'M', together with Officers' comments relating to Runnymede and the proposed response to each question.
- 3.8 The closing date for this consultation is 13 July 2004.

4. Council Policy

- 4.1 The Best Value review of cemeteries and closed churchyards undertaken in March 2002 included a target to ensure that there is sufficient land available at each of the Council's four cemeteries, to satisfy the likely demand for burials for 10 years.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 The provision of burial facilities is currently discretionary and thus resources can be controlled locally. If following this consultation process The Government does place an obligation on local authorities to provide such facilities, operational costs may increase. It is considered however that existing policies in Runnymede would meet demands in terms of volume. In addition, the diversity of facilities is the subject of a report entitled 'Cemetery Service – Review of Minority Faiths and Other Beliefs', elsewhere on this Agenda.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Government recognises that burial law is out of date and in need of reform. The outcome of this process will impact on the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, under which the Runnymede Cemeteries Service operates.

7. Human Rights Considerations/Crime and Disorder Considerations/Race Relations/UNISON views

7.1 Current policy and proposals to enhance the Runnymede Cemetery Service cover such considerations.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

the proposed responses attached at Appendix 'M' form the Council's official response to the Home Office Consultation Paper on Burial Law and Practice in the 21st Century.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Home Office Consultation Paper Burial Law and Policy in the 21st Century.

17. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT (DAL)

(Ref: Minutes of the Leisure and Environment Committee, March 2004, page 1442, para. 797).

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress towards the re-letting of the Grounds Maintenance Contract and to seek approval for the purchase of a computer based system for the management of the new contract.**

2. Background Information

2.1 At its last meeting in March 2004, the Committee was informed of the need to re-let the Grounds Maintenance Contract and it was agreed that a further report would be brought to this meeting.

3. Report

3.1 Partnership working is the Council's preferred way forward where practical difficulties can be overcome and where improvements to the service and other benefits can be achieved.

3.2 One of the issues discussed at the last meeting was the possibility of working with Elmbridge Borough Council on a joint grounds maintenance contract. Officers from both authorities have explored this further and it has become clear that there are some major differences in the way each authority manages the service. For example, this Council is to include hanging baskets in its new grounds maintenance contract, Elmbridge is not doing so. The maintenance of fine turf areas (bowling greens, cricket squares etc.) are to be included in Elmbridge's contract, in Runnymede this work is carried out by the Park Supervisors. Elmbridge is including litter picking, here this is done by the Council's litter squad.

3.3 It is therefore clear that there is limited synergy in the needs of the respective services and to construct a joint contract would not be a straightforward option. However Officers are recommending that this option be pursued further with Elmbridge, to see if it can be made to work effectively. If not, it is recommended that Officers be given authority to conclude these discussions and proceed with the tendering of the contract for works within Runnymede only.

3.4 In the light of the Council's savings target, the Committee also agreed that Officers should investigate the desirability of handing the maintenance of Highway shrub beds back to Surrey County Council, noting however that a decision on this matter would be made by the Economic Development Committee. The response from the County Council has been that they would be willing to take the shrub beds back if Runnymede wished them to. However,

as the County Council does not have the necessary funds to maintain all of them to the standard that the Borough Council achieves, some beds would probably be removed and grassed over or paved. Officers consider that the County Council views its function as one of maintaining the Highway but not necessarily making it look attractive.

- 3.5 If the Economic Development Committee considers that the County Council should be asked to take the shrub beds back, Surrey has indicated a wish to take back responsibility for sponsored roundabouts which are currently managed by the Council's Technical Services Department.
- 3.6 Officers are therefore of the view that Highway shrub bed maintenance should continue to be managed by the Borough Council and retained in the new Grounds Maintenance Contract, and a report is due to be considered by the Economic Development Committee on 13 May 2004.
- 3.7 At the last meeting of this Committee it was agreed to bring a list of contractors to this meeting who had expressed an interest in the new contract, and whom Officers have vetted, for Members to select those to be invited to tender for the contract. However, time constraints have not allowed such a list to be produced yet.
- 3.8 The contract has been advertised in the Official Journal and a trade journal, in order to generate expressions of interest, the first part of this process. However, as this Committee is not meeting again until September, it will be necessary for Officers to select contractors from the list in consultation with the Chairman under a Standing Order 42, when the list is complete.

4. Council Policy

- 4.1 The Leader's Position Paper includes a corporate standard of being "Committed to sound financial management, maximising flexibility and achieving value for money".
- 4.2 The Position Paper also states that the Council will "continue to work with adjacent boroughs to achieve better service delivery targets and to share best practice for the benefit of residents".

5. Contract Administration

- 5.1 To date the Grounds Maintenance Contract has been managed using a traditional paper based system. This is unsatisfactory as it is both time consuming to administer and difficult to obtain useful management information.
- 5.2 The Parks Best Value Continuous Improvement Plan, approved by this Committee in March 2002, included a commitment to the investigation of suitable computer based systems for the control of grounds maintenance operations.
- 5.3 Officers have assessed six potential software packages to date. One has since been withdrawn, one is not suitable to the requirements of the service and four are considered suitable in terms of what they can do.
- 5.4 The comparative estimated costs and evaluation scores are shown at Exempt Appendix 'A', circulated separately with this Agenda to Members and Officers only.
- 5.5 There is still some further evaluation needed, to establish clearly the differences in the day to day use of each system and references will need to be taken up with existing users. However subject to these being resolved satisfactorily it is recommended that the most suitable and cost effective system be purchased. A report will be submitted to the Member I.T. Working Group for a full assessment and comparison of quotations, and recommendations will then be considered by the Corporate Management Committee.

6. Resource Implications

- 6.1 There is currently no budgetary provision in either the Capital Programme or Parks revenue account for the purchase of a computer based system. As a final decision has yet to be taken as to which of the systems is to be purchased, a Capital Estimate of up to £25,000 will

need to be approved along with a supplementary revenue estimate up to a maximum of £8,500 to cover the on-going maintenance costs and Capital Charges.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) further work be undertaken to assess the viability of a joint grounds maintenance contract with Elmbridge Borough Council, but that authority be given to Officers to conclude this work if it is found to be appropriate to do so;**
- ii) further assessment of available computer based packages be undertaken, as set out in this report, and the most suitable and cost effective package be recommended for purchase to the Member IT Working Group; and**
- iii) the Corporate Management Committee be requested to approve a Capital sum of up to £25,000 for the purchase of a computer based system and a supplementary revenue estimate up to a maximum of £8,500 for the ongoing maintenance costs and Capital Charges.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Leisure and Environment Committee 18 March 2004
Leisure file 7.19
Grounds Maintenance Contract

18. EGHAM LEISURE CENTRE TRADING ACCOUNT (DF)

(Ref: Minutes of the Leisure and Environment Committee, January 2004, page 1210, para. 672 and March 2004, page 1445, para. 799)

At the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee in January 2004, Members requested that they be kept informed of the progress of Egham Leisure Centre's trading position.

Members will recall that following the appointment of a new General Manager, a review of the staffing structure was proposed and this is currently being implemented.

Appendix 'N' shows the draft outturn for the 2003/04 financial year.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

None.

19. REVISIONS TO GRANT AID CRITERIA (DAL)

(Ref: Minutes of Housing and Community Services Committee, June 2003, page 72, para. 75 and Leisure and Environment Committee, June 2003, page 184, para. 119)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek authority for revisions to the criteria for the award of grant aid to voluntary and community groups.

1.2 The revised criteria are being submitted for the approval of both the Housing and Community Services and the Leisure and Environment Committees in view of their respective responsibilities for grants to the voluntary sector.

2. Background Information

2.1 The Council has made provision in the current financial year for grant aid of £409,000 to local voluntary and community groups, together with individuals involved in sporting, artistic, charitable and educational activities. The forms of funding include occasional grants, annual

core revenue funding, bottle bank donations, rent grant aid and support for local community events. Discretionary rate relief, which is not part of the grant programme but included here for a complete picture in budgetary terms, accounts for a further £20,600.

- 2.2 The current criteria for the distribution of the funding was adopted by the Council in July 2003.
3. Report
- 3.1 Following discussions with the Chairman of Housing and Community Services Committee, it is now suggested that Members may like to revisit the role of the Community Strategy in the grant aid criteria.
- 3.2 At the time of the last review of the criteria, during the first half of 2003, it was decided to adopt a general statement of the types of scheme that the Council might be prepared to support, rather than explicitly link the grant regime with approved Council strategies. The prioritisation of funding applications which support the targets contained in the Community Strategy does, however, have the advantage of sharpening the focus of the Council's financial support so that grant aid can be directly targeted towards the achievement of specific policy objectives.
- 3.3 Section 2(i) of Part 1 of the criteria (attached at Appendix 'O' with the proposed changes italicised) has therefore been re-drafted to include projects consistent with the Community Strategy amongst the list of initiatives that are given precedence. This would not prevent support from being given to other applications which meet the needs of the priority groups previously identified, namely people with disabilities, the vulnerable and disadvantaged, young people and older persons. The criteria continues to emphasise that the grants programme is intended to complement, and not replace, existing sources of public funding. Assistance will therefore not be given to services and projects which are customarily the responsibility of other statutory agencies. Support is restricted to those initiatives which are both beyond the normal scope of the principal funding agency and meet the Council's policy priorities.
- 3.4 The opportunity has also been taken to propose a number of other minor updates and revisions to the criteria, principally in order to emphasise the Council's commitment to partnership working. The previously approved compact with the voluntary and community sector is now therefore highlighted (Part 1, Section 10), as is the Council's participation in the development of a multi-agency approach to the revenue funding of social care and welfare type organisations, in the form of the North Surrey Joint Funding Protocol (Part 1, Section 7). For the first time, reference is also made to the need for organisations in receipt of ongoing core revenue funding to be able to demonstrate that mechanisms are in place to secure the continuous improvement of their services (Part 2, Annual Core Revenue Funding).
- 3.5 The revised criteria also incorporate amendments to the discretionary rate relief guidelines in respect of community amateur sports clubs, approved by the Corporate Management Committee in March 2004, and the clarification of the policy towards non-sporting social clubs, as agreed by the Leisure and Environment Committee in the same month (Part 1, Section 1).
- 3.6 The Bottle Bank Donations Scheme commenced in 1986. At that time the Council received a net income from the sale of glass cullet. To encourage the use of Bottle Banks the net income was applied to the donations scheme to act as a community incentive to recycle glass. However, within a short period the sale price of glass cullet fell sharply (the Council had to pay to take it away) and therefore the net income disappeared. Nonetheless, it was agreed to keep the scheme running to retain the community focus. Having to continually explain this history to applicants is a time consuming and rather confusing matter. Officers have therefore suggested rebadging the scheme as the "Community Recycling Donation Scheme" so that it more accurately reflects the scheme purpose. Minor changes to the criteria have been made to make clear the type of organisation eligible for donations and to give the Director of Finance the authority to approve new entrants to the established list.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 The proposed revisions to the grant aid criteria do not require any increase in budgetary provision, although it is hoped that they will assist voluntary organisations to more easily access funds available to them.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) Members indicate whether the grant criteria should be amended as set out in Section 2(i) of Part 1 of Appendix 'O', in order to prioritise funding applications consistent with the community strategy; and**
- ii) the other revisions to the criteria attached at Appendix 'O' be adopted.**

(TO RECOMMEND)

Background Papers

E-mails dated 31 October and 5 November 2003 on DAL's file 69.25.17(99)

20. STRODE'S COLLEGE TRICENTENARY – PUBLIC WORK OF ART (DAL)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to consider a donation to Strode's College for the purpose of creating a public Work of Art in Egham to mark the College's tricentenary.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 The College was established in 1704 as the result of a bequest from Henry Strode to set up a free school in Egham. Strode's subsequently became a boys grammar school before being designated a sixth form college in 1975.
- 2.2 In addition to providing higher education for over 1,000 sixth formers, the College is the largest provider of adult and evening courses in the area.
- 2.3 The College has planned a series of events throughout the tricentenary year, including a visit by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, a broadcast of "Any Questions?" by BBC Radio 4, and participation in the events arranged by the Evacuees Reunion Association on 6 May, also attended by the Mayor, to dedicate a memorial to one of two evacuee pupils studying at Strode's, who were killed with an Egham school girl by a German bomb in 1940.

3. Report

- 3.1 The College is hoping to provide a public Work of Art in Egham as a permanent mark of its tricentenary year.
- 3.2 The form of the Work of Art has not yet been decided. The college has indicated that it would be sited in the front grounds of the college near the High Street, or in another publicly visible location agreed with the Council. In discussions with senior Members there is evidently support for a donation to the project of the order of £5,000.
- 3.3 The Council's normal grant aid mechanisms, either through the standard criteria or via the small budget available on the recommendation of the Arts Development Steering Group, are not appropriate both in view of the size of the proposed donation and the fact that it has yet to be worked up into a proposal which would suit the criteria for community projects.
- 3.4 Nevertheless, in the wholly exceptional circumstances of the tricentenary of one the Borough's valued institutions, Members may consider this gesture very fitting. Such a donation could be made on the basis of an agreement which would provide for the settling of the form and location of the Work of Art. The Leader of the Council has indicated his willingness for the donation to be funded from the monies set aside to further the aims of the Leader's Position Statement.

4. Council Policy

- 4.1 A key priority of the Community Strategy is to support and encourage individuals, voluntary groups and clubs, other statutory organisations and the private sector to provide and promote a comprehensive range of leisure and recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities.
- 4.2 A policy objective in the Council's Cultural Strategy, which is to be merged into the Community Strategy, is to encourage projects that broaden the appreciation of the areas natural environment and heritage. Schools are named as a specific partner.
- 4.3 The Leader's Position Statement has for some years had as one of its two fundamental aims the objective of ensuring that the Council plays an effective role in enhancing the quality of life for all its residents and visitors, and providing an attractive environment for those who conduct their business in the Borough. Improvement of the quality of life is also a strategic objective, within the context of financial control, value for money, and the other strategic objective.

5. Legal Considerations

- 5.1 The Council has power to make such a donation under Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000.

6. Resource Implications

- 6.1 The current year's budget makes revenue provision of £80,000 for initiatives to advance the aims of the Leader's Position Statement none of which has so far been committed.

7. Planning Technical and Other Considerations

- 7.1 Depending on its scale, the proposed Work of Art may require planning permission, consent by the Highway Authority, or other approvals.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) the Council formally congratulate Stode's College on achieving its tercentenary and mark the occasion by providing a donation of £5,000 to be used towards the provision of a public Work of Art;**
- ii) the Director of Administration and Leisure be instructed to enter into an appropriate agreement with the College for the payment and use of the money; and**
- iii) the sum be funded from the revenue provision for Leader's Position Statement initiatives.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers:

Letter from Strode's College to Chief Executive proposing a public Work of Art.

21. ENGLEFIELD GREEN CRICKET CLUB – CAPITAL GRANT AID (DAL)
(Ref: Minutes of Englefield Green Committee, December 2002, Page 855, Para 475).

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **This report presents for consideration an application from the Englefield Green Cricket Club for capital grant aid of £10,000 in respect of the refurbishment of the Englefield Green Pavilion.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 The Cricket Club has played its home fixtures on Englefield Green since 1879. Following the relocation of the Englefield Green Football Club some years ago it is now the sole user of the Sports Pavilion which was erected on the Green in the 1950's. The Council owns the freehold of the Pavilion and the lease is held, for the moment, by Trustees appointed to represent both the Cricket and Football Clubs. Following concerns expressed at the management arrangements, however, the Englefield Green Committee has directed Officers to seek the surrender of the lease by the Pavilion Trustees and the grant of a new lease directly to the Cricket Club, initially for a three year term. The Pavilion, which was already showing signs of disrepair, suffered internal fire damage in August 2003.
- 2.2 The Club is shortly due to relieve the Council of its maintenance obligations for the cricket square on the Green under the terms of a separate licence which is to run parallel with the new Pavilion lease. The Square was moved to a more northerly location on the Green in 2001 in order to address safety concerns raised by an independent risk assessment. The cost of the works to the Council amounted to £30,000.

3. Report

- 3.1 The Cricket Club has now prepared an extensive programme of works to refurbish the building. The first phase, completed in April in readiness for the new playing season, consisted of internal works to repair the fire damage, including the stripping out and refitting of the kitchen and bar area, replacement of flooring and redecoration. This has been costed at £24,160. The second phase comprises external works identified in the course of an independent survey. These essentially amount to roof, brickwork and drainage repairs, the restoration of the Pavilion clock, redecoration and the provision of wheelchair access. Quotations have not yet been sought but costs are estimated at £10,000. The Club also intends to provide an external equipment store at a cost of £2,500.
- 3.2 The application before the Committee is retrospective because it specifically relates to assistance with the first phase works, which have already been completed. This is contrary to the Council's approved grant criteria. Organisations are normally required to gain written confirmation of funding prior to commencement of the project. The Club first raised the possibility of a grant application in February, at which point it would have been aware of this limitation on retrospective assistance. No formal application, however, was submitted until April, by which time the works were already in progress. Officers are particularly concerned that the Club appears to have committed itself to the expenditure without having firm arrangements in place for payment. The Club's accounts have not yet been made available to Officers, many of the records having apparently been lost in the fire. However, it appears that the only funds available to meet the cost of the first phase works is £16,500 recovered from the Insurers, leaving a shortfall of £7,660. If the Council was minded to refuse the grant application the Club would presumably have to resort to borrowing to close the funding gap. Until the new lease is in place and the Club has some security of tenure it is not likely to be able to access funds from other grant providers.
- 3.3 There are, however, grounds to view the request sympathetically. Some delay in the submission of an application was perhaps inevitable given the need to settle the insurance claim, draw up a specification and obtain quotations. There was also a genuine need to complete the internal repairs prior to the start of the new season. Moreover the application is otherwise entirely consistent with the grant criteria and the Council's policy objectives. Not only will the works improve local sports facilities but the external repairs will also enhance the appearance of a particularly sensitive and historically important part of the Green Belt. There is also likely to be a wider community benefit because the Club will, under the proposed terms of the new lease, be obliged to make the Pavilion available for use by other – possibly non sporting – community organisations. The application supports the commitment of the Council to maintain cricket on the Green, demonstrated by the expenditure on the relocation of the playing square referred to in paragraph 2.2. It also complements the Leader's Position Statement and Community Strategy targets to promote sports activities and facilities and healthy lifestyles.
- 3.4 It is established practice to use grant aid as a mechanism to assist in the improvement of Council owned facilities managed by independent community groups. The award of a grant would be consistent with the approach taken in other circumstances where a local voluntary

community group is about to take over the lease of Council premises (for example, the St. Jude's Players at Englefield Green Social Hall). If the Council was to continue to maintain the cricket square and assume responsibility for the management of the Pavilion at its own expense, as it does elsewhere, the cost to the taxpayer would be likely to exceed £10,000 per annum.

- 3.5 On balance, Officers therefore take the view that the special circumstances, namely the urgency of the works and the considerable service benefits, are sufficient to warrant a departure from normal grant policy. It is recommended that the Club be awarded an exceptional grant of £7,660, representing the shortfall on the cost of the first phase works. The balance of £2,340 could be provided to assist with the second phase of the project, thereby bringing the Council's total support to £10,000, the maximum sum normally made available under the grant aid criteria.
- 3.6 The release of these funds should, however, be subject to verification of the Club's financial position following receipt of the audited accounts and the grant of a satisfactory lease. It is also suggested that the opportunity be taken to further enhance the sports provision for young people by requiring the Club to work with the Council's Sports Development Officer on the establishment of a colts section and to make its facilities available for the Sports Council's 'Have a Go Day' Event.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 Total budgetary provision of £50,000 has been made for capital grants to voluntary organisations in 2004/05. No funds have yet been committed although applications for a sum totalling £28,360 are presently under consideration. There is, therefore, adequate provision to award a grant of up to £10,000 to the Englefield Green Cricket Club.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) the Englefield Green Cricket Club be awarded an exceptional grant of £7,660 in respect of internal repairs to the Englefield Green Sports Pavilion, subject to compliance with the conditions referred to in paragraph 3.6 above; and**
- ii) a further sum of £2,340 be made available to the Club in respect of the proposed external repair works on the same terms and conditions.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Application form and internal memoranda on DAL's file 69.25.17 (178).

22. NORTH SURREY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2004-06 (DHCS)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to seek Members' views on the North Surrey Health and Social Care Improvement Plan, and to seek endorsement of the list of priorities which Officers have drawn up in response to the plan.**

2 Background Information

- 2.1 Over the past five years there have been significant changes in health and social care planning. For example; Surrey County Council no longer has a duty to produce a Community Care Plan. In addition, the Health Improvement and Modernisation Plan has been superseded by the North Surrey Primary Care Trust Local Development Plan. The Local Government Act 2000 also gave local authorities additional powers, which included promoting the well being of the community. These additional powers are reflected in community strategies at both borough and district level.
- 2.2 The Primary Care Trust's Local Development Plan focused on national targets and it was considered that another plan was required to address local social care and health issues. The proposed North Surrey Health and Social Care Improvement Plan brings together all

these elements to provide a locally focused plan. A copy of the complete plan is available for inspection in the Members' Room.

- 2.3 This matter is also being considered by the Housing and Community Services Committee on 19 May 2004 to consider those areas which fall within the remit of that Committee and to seek endorsement of the relevant list of priorities arising.

3. Report

- 3.1 The plan is a multi-agency document covering Local Strategic Partnerships and local Community Safety Partnerships, housing, transport as well as health and social care issues. The plan has been developed with boroughs, voluntary organisations and other stakeholders such as the Runnymede Forums for Older People, People with Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment, People with Learning Disability, Children with Disabilities and Carers.
- 3.2 The plan includes targets for the groups of people who would have been included in the former Community Care Plan and Health Improvement and Modernisation Plan, but are not included in the Local Delivery Plan.
- 3.3 The Health and Social Care Improvement Plan will inform the North Surrey Primary Care Trust partnership funding, and influence areas of service development in line with existing priorities. The Health Improvement Sub-Committee (which includes Borough representation) will be responsible for developing an action plan and monitoring the performance of the Health and Social Care Improvement Plan.
- 3.4 The plan has now been published. However, Members' views are sought on what priority should be given to the elements within the action plan. The achievement of some of the proposals in the plan are dependent upon resources (eg Extra Care Housing Schemes require Government funding) and the capacity of partner organisations (eg current workloads and demands on resources).
- 3.5 The Health and Social Care Improvement Plan proposals which link in with existing Council policies and strategies, are highlighted at Appendix 'P'. Set out below is a suggested list of priorities relating to Housing and Community Services and Leisure and Environment areas, which might assist the Committee in its deliberations:

Housing and Community Services

- To increase different types of accommodation eg schemes for people with learning disability to move towards independent living
- More extra care housing.
- Additional housing for those employed in core support services e.g. care assistants and occupational therapists.
- Enable access to social and recreational facilities for disabled older people and increase awareness of services at day centres. Provide personal care at day centres. Provide personal care at day centres rather than at multiple homes to enable the frail elderly to attend

Leisure and Environment

- Increase youth counseling hours
- Substance Misuse Outreach Worker for young people
- Improve the choice of varied breaks for children with a disability - to map provision of after school clubs, specialist play schemes and assess the need for further provision.
- Support New Opportunities Fund Physical Education and Sports Programme to bring about a step change in the provision and use of Physical Exercise and sports for young people and the community

- Work with local projects to access hard to reach groups and increase the use of existing schemes away from the gym into the community

- Work with local schools to promote physical activities for young people

4. Council Policy

4.1 The Health and Social Care Improvement Plan meets the following 2004/05 Leader's Position Statement priorities:

- Providing community leadership
- Working with other agencies to achieve community benefits while ensuring no dilution of accountability where there is clear responsibility
- Valuing, supporting, encouraging, and acknowledging the many organizations, groups and individuals who voluntarily provide a wide range of services to benefit our community

4.2 In addition, the following strategic objectives are relevant:

- Achieve quality services
- Achieve value for money (by working in partnership)
- Improve the quality of life
- Achieve continuous improvement

4.3 There are also clear links to the Housing, Homelessness, Community Safety, Runnymede Community strategies and the Borough Tasking and Co-ordinating Group Youth Project.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 Several of the initiatives within the plan would require a commitment from other agencies. Where there are likely to be resource implications for the Council, separate reports will be made to the relevant Committees before any such commitments are made.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

the list of priorities falling under the remit of Leisure and Environment Committee as set out at paragraph 3.5 be approved.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None stated.

23. APPOINTMENTS TO LEISURE SUB-GROUP (DAL)

THE COMMITTEE IS ASKED to consider the following appointments to the Cabrera Trust Management Committee for the Municipal Year 2004/05:

Two Officers to serve on the **Cabrera Trust Management Committee**. The Management Committee comprises the three Virginia Water Councillors ex officio, and two Officers acting as the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer for the Trust. The term of these appointments runs from the end of the Cabrera Trust's Annual General Meeting on 30 June 2004 to the end of the said same meeting in 2005. The retiring Officer appointees are the **Director of Administration and Leisure** and the **Director of Finance** both of whom have indicated that they are willing to undertake another term.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None.

24. CHERTSEY MEADS MANAGEMENT LIAISON GROUP – MINUTES (DAL)

The Minutes of the meeting of the Liaison Group held on 16 March 2004 are attached at Appendix 'Q'.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

None.

25. RUNNYMEDE ARTS DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP – MINUTES (DAL)

The Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Group held on 30 March 2004 are attached at Appendix 'R'.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

None.

26. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

If the Committee is minded to consider any of the foregoing items in private session, it is the

OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION that -

where appropriate the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of reports under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the reports in question would be likely to involve disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in appropriate paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(TO RESOLVE)

PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection

a) Exempt Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading).

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading).