

RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL

REVIEW BOARD

14 APRIL 2005

SUUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM 6

APPENDIX 'D'

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY FUNCTION 2004/05**

DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY FUNCTION – 2004/05

1. The Overview and Scrutiny function in Runnymede is undertaken by the Review Board. The Board's Terms of Reference are set out in Article 6 of the Council's Constitution, which is attached at Appendix '1'.
2. The remainder of this report summarises the areas of the Council's activity looked at by the Board from 1 April 2004 to 1 April 2005.

A. WORK PROGRAMME

1. At its July 2004 meeting the Board considered its Work Programme, with the aim of identifying a smaller revised work programme consistent with best practice for Overview and Scrutiny. The Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Inspectors had mentioned during their inspection of the Council in December 2003, that it was not clear to them why the Board had decided to look at particular items. One of the issues which had emerged from the Overview and Scrutiny briefing evening for Members held on 15 March 2004, was that the Board should strive to "add value" through themes which cut across a number of services, or exhibited "cross cutting", and which had an outward looking focus. The Board agreed that they should seek to become more externally focussed and if possible should aim to identify areas to examine which were not being covered by Service Committees.
2. In looking at their future Work Programme, the Board noted that Rail Transport in the Borough was an item which was currently being pursued and had the outward looking focus favoured by external inspection teams. Resident satisfaction surveys showed that transportation was an issue which figured highly in the public's concerns. The Board agreed that they wished to retain anti-social behaviour as an item as this "cut across" so many activities impacting upon Housing, Leisure, Safer Runnymede, and other Council services. Progress on the Council's net revenue reduction targets was an issue they wished to continue to monitor. Board Members also suggested two other issues which were agreed by the Board - options for a cross cutting review of discretionary spending and consideration of liaison arrangements with Surrey County Council.
3. The Board's revised work programme was therefore agreed as follows:-
 - Progress on Net Revenue Reduction Targets
 - Rail Transport in the Borough
 - Anti-Social Behaviour – effectiveness of multi-agency working
 - Options for cross cutting review of discretionary spending
 - Consideration of liaison arrangements with Surrey County Council.

B. CALL-IN-PROPOSED POND BOURNE MEADOW

1. The Board considered a request from some Members under Standing Order 27.7 to "call-in" the Leisure and Environment Committee's decision that no further action be taken in respect of the proposal to create a pond at Bourne Meadow in Chertsey. The call-in procedure gives the Board the opportunity to consider and make recommendations upon a Committee decision.
2. The Board noted the Officer report to the Council's Leisure and Environment Committee on 16 September 2004, which sought the Committee's endorsement of proposals to create a pond at Bourne Meadow, Chertsey. The Officers' Recommendation was that the proposal to create a pond at Bourne Meadow be approved, subject to the results of consultation with Ward Members and planning permissions being granted and external funding remaining available. Having considered the Officer report, the Committee had decided, however, that no further action be taken.
3. The Members had decided to call this decision in as they did not believe that it had been taken after considering the full ramifications, and they could not see that the financial implications for the Council would have been significant in agreeing the scheme. They were aware that Council Officers and the Association For the Improvement of Runnymede (AIR) had put a great deal of effort into taking the scheme forward to its present stage, that a grant had been made available from SITA Environmental Trust and the Environment Agency were prepared to provide their services. They recognised that it would not have a major effect on flood relief but considered that a small amount of assistance would be beneficial, particularly taking into account the level of

cost involved. They also suggested that the Council could make a saving by transferring soil to the Beomonds Allotment site. The view of these Members was supported by the Vice-Chairman of the Chertsey Society.

4. The Leisure and Environment Committee at its meeting had noted that the pond had two purposes – to visually enhance the area around the River Bourne, and to have a limited effect on flooding in the area. Pipes would link the pond to the River Bourne, so that in the event of the field becoming flooded in the Winter months and remaining so for extended periods owing to the topography of the site, flood water would more speedily return to the river through the aforementioned pipes. When the site was excavated to create the pond, unwanted soil could be used to replace contaminated soil which was due to be removed from the Beomonds site in the near future. This proposal would save the cost of purchasing soil to be imported into Beomonds. It would also save the cost of disposal of arisings from the pond at landfill.
5. Funding for the proposed scheme had, in part, been secured from the Environment Agency and SITA Environmental Trust, through an application made by the Association for the Improvement of Runnymede (AIR). A shortfall of £22,000 to be met by the Council remained.
6. The Committee had noted that the Environment Agency had originally offered cash funding. The Environment Agency had since reduced the cash offer to "in-kind" funding. This would take the form of the Environment Agency providing the equipment and labour required to manage and execute the scheme in accordance with the Council's drawings and specification. The Committee had been informed that there was a time limit on funding from SITA Environmental Trust. Given the delay necessitated by consultation and applying for planning permission if the scheme was approved, it was possible that the SITA grant would in any case be lost. It was confirmed that there was no other scheme which could utilise the grant at this time.
7. Although some Members of the Committee had considered that any scheme which would help to alleviate flooding would be worthwhile, the Committee had agreed that the proposal would not sufficiently address the problem of flooding to justify expenditure of £22,000 and on going maintenance costs. In addition, the Committee concluded that the value of the pond was not outweighed by the potential saving of £17,000, in landfill costs, achieved by re-using the soil from the pond at the Beomonds site. The Committee had therefore resolved that no further action be taken in respect of the proposal to create a pond at Bourne Meadow.
8. In discussing the call-in the Board took into account the reasons for calling-in the matter, the answers to questions and evidence given relating to the decision of the Leisure and Environment Committee from the Chairman of that Committee, submissions from the Chairman of AIR and from the Vice-Chairman of the Chertsey Society and advice given by Officers present at the Board meeting in response to questions.
9. The Chairman of Leisure and Environment Committee considered that the pond did not offer any significant benefits, did not represent value for money and would result in increased expense for Runnymede residents. This particular area, in his view, did not flood very often. He had been in favour of the pond when the Environment Agency were promising "real money". At the point where the Environment Agency had decided that they could only offer funding "in kind", he was no longer prepared to support the project. He did not believe that savings could be made by transferring soil from the Bourne Meadow site to the Beomonds Allotment site, and stated that he had taken into account that the scheme would cost £22,000 at a time when the Council was being required to make net revenue savings.
10. The Board received a detailed submission from the Chairman of AIR. AIR was a registered distributive environmental body, set up by Runnymede to secure maximum grants from the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme (LTCS) for the benefit of Runnymede. The AIR Chairman stated that AIR's success depended upon being seen as a reliable environmental body. Landfill operators would not want to see grants refused. The maximum costs of this project to the Council were £22,000. If the Council did not proceed with the pond project it was likely to cost the Council several times that amount over the next few years. It was important in his view that SITA should not be upset, through their offer of support not being taken up. The AIR Chairman presented a history of the project as recorded by AIR and a costing of the scheme produced by AIR. He contended that the Chairman of the Leisure and Environment Committee had committed the Council to the project and was advised that only the Committee could take such a decision. The AIR Chairman claimed that not pursuing the pond project would be damaging for the future of AIR. It would, in his view, have serious implications for AIR's finances. The Board of AIR was

entirely voluntary and it was, in his view, also possible that resignations might ensue, unless the Council changed its decision on the Bourne Meadow pond.

11. AIR asked the Review Board to report to Council that at the Leisure and Environment Committee the effect on AIR and its potential fund raising capability had not been considered, that there was strong local support for the pond as an amenity, that the extent of any local opposition would best be determined by proceeding with a planning application, that the Committee formed its opinion without full information, that the funding position should be clarified, that AIR should be requested to take up the SITA grant offer immediately, that the Council should write to the Environment Agency to seek confirmation that they were still prepared to carry out the work, and that the Council should check whether the soil in the area was contaminated.
12. Officers at the meeting confirmed that the pond project would offer limited flood protection. The Environment Agency were examining schemes for flood relief in the borough which involved large volumes of water making a significant difference. The Bourne Meadow project was too small in its impact to be relevant to that kind of flood relief measure. Officers confirmed that the pond would help in reclaiming the damaged area after flooding. At present the land was left to dry out naturally and left to recover. The pond would, however, provide an environmental gain by increasing biodiversity and introducing an interesting and attractive feature to the area. The pond would not be connected by pipes to the Council's main flood alleviation work. An assessment of the risks presented by the pond had been prepared to establish whether the banks were shallow enough and it had been concluded that the pond was safe.
13. Amongst the arguments put forward by Members in favour of the pond were that it would provide some flooding and environmental benefit and may encourage more people to use the park, the Environment Agency had always been willing to fund the scheme whether in cash or in kind, if the project was not pursued quickly the SITA grant would probably be lost, not proceeding would cost the Council money in the longer run and would have an adverse effect on AIR and on Runnymede's relationship with landfill operators and now that the Board had discussed the matter in more detail the benefits of the pond were clearer.
14. Amongst the arguments put forward by Members against the pond were that the pond would only have limited effects in alleviating flooding, they had doubts about whether the pond was safe, the pond had never formed part of the Environment Agency's main plans for flood alleviation in the area and the Council needed to reduce expenditure wherever possible.
15. The Board concluded that the Leisure and Environment Committee had made the correct decision and recommended to the Council that no further action be taken. The Council received updated costs of the project and asked the Leisure and Environment Committee to re-examine the Bourne Meadow pond proposal in the light of further information now available and make a final decision. The Leisure and Environment Committee subsequently decided not to proceed with the pond.

C. RAIL TRANSPORT PROVISION IN THE BOROUGH - PROGRESS REPORT

1. The Board has continued to be advised of initiatives to enhance the existing rail service in the Borough - one of the items on the Board work programme agreed in July 2004. The Board noted that although some progress had been made there had been some delay in the service operator South West Trains (SWT) acting on suggestions from Council Officers on how the service which SWT provided could be further promoted.
2. As part of the initial work, discussions had taken place with SWT to identify areas where joint progress could be made on enhancing and promoting the local services that served the stations in Egham, Virginia Water, Addlestone, Chertsey and Byfleet and New Haw.
3. As part of the initiative to improve passenger safety, progress had been made on establishing a closed circuit television (CCTV) link between the SWT Control Centre at Wimbledon with the Safer Runnymede Centre. This link would provide major advantages in that the cameras on the stations effectively would become integrated as a part of the town centre systems and the pictures could be relayed on to the Surrey Police Incident Handling Centre. At the same time improvements would be made to the camera installations to provide evidential quality pictures (including at times when it was dark).

4. Security on the trains had also improved with highly visible travelling personnel now patrolling stations and trains. These "Travel Safe" Officers operated throughout the network to provide assistance to passengers. British Transport Police, Surrey Police, and SWT had also delivered some joint operations where there had been a significant police presence ensuring good and lawful behaviour. SWT was gradually replacing the old slam door trains with new Desiro trains.
5. As part of the same discussions with SWT, arrangements had been made to install cycle shelters at Egham, Chertsey and Addlestone, in association with more general station improvements (improved signage, disabled access and some refurbishment works at Addlestone Station). This had improved the station environment and encouraged people to cycle to local stations.
6. Following lengthy discussions with SWT on the timetabling of the services that operated on the Weybridge to Waterloo line (via Addlestone, Chertsey, Virginia Water, Egham and Staines) significant changes had taken place. Until September 2003 the service from Addlestone and Chertsey to Waterloo required a change to be made at either Staines or Weybridge. This was a service that only operated hourly. However, as from September 2003, a half hour interval service had been introduced to run direct from Addlestone and Chertsey (via Staines) to Waterloo without the need to change.
7. There had been some successes with promoting the local service to the local business community via the Runnymede Business Partnership. However, discussions with SWT had progressed extremely slowly. Officers were still awaiting feedback on the development of a locally branded ticket for the Weybridge-Staines line offering reduced peak hour rates. The discussions with SWT would continue, particularly to identify the opportunities for promoting the service locally. From 12 December 2004 SWT were introducing a new timetable which was the most comprehensive rescheduling of rail services since 1967. The aims of the new timetable included responding to the 30% increase in passenger demand since 1967, having uniform departure times where possible and allowing sufficient time for stopping, alighting and boarding at stations.
8. Consideration was also being given by Surrey County Council to improving the signage at local stations, providing information about the local towns and linked bus services. Some of the next stage of work (better signage and integrating train and bus services) was being undertaken in consultation with Surrey County Council and drawing upon Local Transport Plan monies. Funding for the work undertaken to date had been received from a variety of sources, with some pump priming monies provided by the Council in the form of Section 106 allocations.
9. Over the long term, the proposed £425 million Airtrack Scheme provided a significant opportunity to enhance the rail service. In the local area the Reading - Heathrow and Guildford - Heathrow (stopping at Chertsey) proposed service would provide a quality rail link into the airport and beyond. Chertsey was now the proposed only stop within the borough because of the level of M25 use in the area which justified siting the Airtrack Station in that area. The Council supported the scheme and was part of the Airtrack Forum promoting the service. However, there were a number of issues to resolve and it was unlikely that the service would be operational before 2011.
10. The Board noted that progress had been made across a range of issues. However, some work would need to be undertaken on a wider community survey. In the longer term, significant capital investment would need to be made to secure improvement related to signalling, on-station facilities and station lengths (to accommodate eight carriage trains). Longer term projects (on-station facilities, station lengths, signalling arrangements and passenger user surveys) would require the resource implications to be assessed and be subject to a subsequent report to the Board.
11. The Board agreed that, when negotiating with South West Trains, Officers should ask SWT to aim to provide more publicity of engineering works, trains on the timetable with a later start and finish time, in conjunction with bus operators bus services that stopped closer to stations, and a toilet with security presence at Egham Station to stop vandalism. The Board also agreed that further discussion with stakeholders (South West Trains, Surrey County Council and Runnymede Business Partnership) and the local community be pursued to encourage greater use of the local rail service, and the Council continue to give its support to the Airtrack Scheme.

D. UPDATE ON MEASURES TO COMBAT ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

1. The Board has considered the effectiveness of multi-agency working on anti-social behaviour which had consistently been one of the more significant themes identified in local crime and disorder public attitude surveys, general residents' surveys and in consultation associated with the development of the Community Strategy. The Board noted the various initiatives being undertaken by the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (consisting of Borough, Police & County Council representatives) to deal with crime and disorder generally and anti-social behaviour in particular.
2. CCTV coverage has been extended through sponsorship (e.g. Thorpe Park) and via Home Office money through the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (e.g. Ottershaw) and with development related opportunities (e.g. Chertsey town centre).
3. The Community Incidents Action Group (CIAG) was a multi-agency forum which discussed those people responsible for anti-social behaviour and determined what interventions should be considered. Often these were young people lacking parental support and guidance. Remedies could range from diversion strategies and placements, warnings and, as a last resort, the securing of formal Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) which curtailed an individual's activities and often barred them from certain locations. To date 9 ASBOs had been issued and had successfully been enforced. A great deal of pre-ASBO activity had also taken place and the collective interventions by a range of agencies had, for the most part, also proved effective.
4. The Joint Action Group (JAG) was also a multi-agency group, but rather than being focussed on individuals, it had particular regard to the built environment and any physical features that contributed to anti-social behaviour or criminal incidents. Enhanced lighting, targeted patrols, consideration for the provision of youth shelters and multi-play areas were all matters recently pursued by the Group. Funding was available, both from the individual agencies and via the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership.
5. Section 30 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 provided for the Police, with the agreement of the Borough Council, to designate a specific geographical area where they could exercise additional powers to disperse people congregating and, if under sixteen years of age, return them to their home. Two Section 30 Designations had so far been put in place (in the Hythe and New Haw) and the Police reported that these had been very effective and had received support from local residents and amenity groups. However, they were an interim measure in order that long term policies could be put in place to address some of the root causes. The Orders lasted for a period of six months and whilst they could be renewed, they were not to be considered as permanent features in dealing with particular locations. A report on the effectiveness of the Section 30 Orders would be submitted to the Council's Leisure and Environment Committee and the Board agreed to also receive a copy of that report. While Members noted that the police local community support officers regularly informed local Members of policing issues in their locality, the police were unwilling to share information with the public relating to issues which the police considered to be of an operational nature.
6. Through Runnymede Youth Are Talking (RYAT) and the Youth Forum, the Council and other agencies were seeking to engage young people, both in terms of their aspirations, as well as their fears. An effective dialogue had been established and a range of initiatives, especially with Surrey County Council, were being pursued.
7. The general picture in relation to crime and disorder had been the subject of a briefing for Councillors on the evening of 23 November 2004. A presentation had been received from a specialist consultant on the findings of the detailed Public Attitude and Crime Survey, together with an update on operational issues and crime trends by the Borough Inspector.
8. The crime trends report showed a considerable improvement in crime statistics over the first six months of 2004, which was to the credit of the local police and the joint working in place. New technology was being used and car crime was being effectively targeted. The specialist consultants presentation and detailed findings provided direction for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership over the next three years. The survey was of sufficient size to provide statistically significant findings. Residents' greatest concerns continued to relate to quality of life issues, such as litter, and anti-social behaviour. There had been considerable reductions in residents' fear of crime and their concerns about particular crimes. There had been a reduction in the number of victims of crime since 1997, but over the last two years the level of victimisation

had remained stable. There had been a reduction in the number of victims of anti-social behaviour, which was against the national trend. Whereas awareness of and the belief in the CCTV system had fallen in line with national trends, it was still high. The older people interviewed were less concerned about crime and more concerned about quality of life. The young were more concerned about crime and quality of life issues. A survey of business had been disappointing in that fewer businesses were putting money into crime prevention.

9. As a result of the consultant's findings, it had been suggested that the future focus of the strategy should be on crime, (especially damage and theft from vehicles), on traffic related and road safety issues, on continued community reassurance, on anti-social behaviour, (especially in town centres), on young people as victims, on marketing/publicity of crime reduction and on encouraging businesses to become more proactive in crime reduction.
10. The Board also noted a summary of the audit work completed as part of the statutory duty on the Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to produce a Crime and Disorder Strategy for the Borough for the next three year period, 2005-08. The Queen's Speech included additional measures proposed by Government to strengthen still further the powers available to deal with anti-social behaviour. These would be the subject of further reports as the detail of the legislation and its likely timetable for implementation became clear.

E. LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS WITH SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

1. The Board considered existing arrangements for liaison at a political level between Borough and County Members further to a suggestion by one of the Board Members. The Runnymede Leader's Position Statement for 2004/05 stated that the Council would work with Surrey County Council and its Local Committee to develop partnership working where mutual benefit could be demonstrated. Runnymede had formally determined not to participate in the County Council's Local Committee covering the Runnymede area. The County Council's own Review Board had also reported on the effectiveness of Local Committees and their recommendations had been considered by the County's Executive in Spring 2004. In addition, the Leader and Chief Executive of Runnymede had met the County Council Leader and the County Council Chief Executive to explore the issues fully and see what benefits, if any, could be identified, bearing in mind the limited discretion available to the County Council's Local Committees.
2. A number of Runnymede Councillors had attended the meetings of the County Council's Local Committee and the Local Committee agendas were widely available. Other formal and informal discussions had taken place amongst Chairmen and Senior Members of both authorities on various topics. Runnymede Members had considered that such topic based discussions had been the most beneficial way of making progress. There had been no impediments to Partnership working between Borough and County Officers, and a range of initiatives continued to be pursued, particularly in the Crime & Disorder and Youth and Tourism areas. A Member Partnership Advisory Group had previously existed which was a Committee consisting of Borough and County Members which had been an effective way in which Members could raise items and had discussed matters of mutual concern and explored ways of moving issues forward.
3. The County Council was presently undergoing a radical policy and productivity review with target revenue savings of £42m needing to be secured in the relative short term. As part of this review, the County Council was looking at the operation of the Local Committees, their administrative arrangements and particularly the options for sustaining or varying the existing highway related teams which were currently based upon the eleven Boroughs/Districts. It appeared that these teams might be reduced to four or five. It was uncertain when this review would be completed and what the implications would be for the administrative and highway groupings within the County Council or whether the roles and responsibilities (including matters for local discretion) would be varied. It was unlikely that final policy decisions would be made on this before the Spring of 2005. As had been the case previously, participation in any bodies which emerged would be a matter for political judgement.
4. Members of Runnymede had already been advised that as a result of the population growth in Runnymede and a review by the Electoral Commission, there would be six County Electoral Divisions, (an increase of one from the present arrangements) in the next County Council Elections in May 2005. In addition, it was understood that some of the existing County Members would not be seeking re-election in May next year.

5. In the light of the various arrangements that already existed, the potential implications of the County's Policy & Productivity Review and the changes of personalities and number of County Members from May next year, the Board agreed that it was not appropriate at the moment to evaluate the various options available to the Council until the issues outlined above had been resolved. However, guidance would be sought by Officers from senior Members following the County Council's Policy & Productivity Review and the Elections in May 2005, and a report would be submitted to the cross party Local Government Act Member Working Group. The Group's findings would then be considered by the Corporate Management Committee.

F. OPTIONS FOR CROSS CUTTING REVIEW OF DISCRETIONARY SPENDING

1. The Board has considered options for cross cutting review of discretionary spending at the suggestion of one of the Board Members. The Best Value regime introduced by Government in 2000 required local authorities to examine all their services in depth (through a Challenge/Compare/Consult/Compete process). The most significant of the Best Value reviews in the current year's programme was the review of Community Services For Older People. The Board noted the contents of this detailed review which had been considered by the Housing & Community Services Committee at its meeting on 21 July 2004. The review of Community Services For Older People had sought to adopt a "cross cutting" approach which looked at the effects of a number of services, rather than concentrating on a discrete service, as the earlier Best Value reviews had done.
2. The Council had already decided that it should review all services under the Best Value regime in four years rather than the maximum five year period. As a result, the first four year programme of reviews would be completed by March 2005. Officers would be submitting a new programme of Best Value Service Reviews. In accordance with best practice and the advice of the Audit Commission, future reviews would be substantially smaller in number (perhaps no more than eight or ten over the next four year period), would be considerably greater in depth and would have "cross cutting" themes.
3. The Board considered whether they wished to have specific Review Board focussed scrutiny exercises on the major areas of discretionary spending or whether they would wish to look at the large "cross cutting" Best Value Service Reviews scheduled to commence in 2005.
4. The Board considered that it did not wish to duplicate the work of the Policy Committees in undertaking the new tranche of Best Value reviews. Nor did it wish to have specific Review Board focussed scrutiny exercises on the major areas of discretionary spending. It did, however, wish to see the timetable for the forthcoming Best Value reviews so that it could recommend whether any of them should be re-ordered or reworked.

G. ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH WITHIN RUNNYMEDE

1. At a meeting of the Housing and Community Services Committee the view had been expressed by a Member that vulnerable tenants with additional support needs did not always receive the care packages that had been prepared for them. That Committee had agreed that the situation in relation to provision of care and support to people with mental health problems should be reviewed by the Review Board and that a member of the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) be requested to attend the meeting to outline the current arrangements. The Board accordingly welcomed two Surrey County Council Officers, a Senior Officer from the CMHT and an Officer from the Mental Health Accommodation Team (MHAT) who informed Board Members of the arrangements made to support people with mental health problems within the community.
2. The Board noted that the concept of the care package arose out of the health and social care plan, which resulted in the Care Programme Approach or care package delivered by the CMHT under which each client had a systematic assessment, a care plan, a care co-ordinator and a regular review. All clients had to have a care plan, with an identified carer. The care plan would have to be signed by the client and would be monitored and reviewed. If a client did not receive a care package that would be a cause for complaint. This was not a common occurrence. The CMHT were delivering 100% on allocated case work and Surrey County Council had been given a 2 star grading arising out of inspection.
3. The reasons that a care package might not always be delivered were mainly twofold. The first reason was that every effort was made to ensure that those people who were in need of support and assistance received it. However, it was only possible to insist on support being taken by

people in very limited circumstances. There were occasions when individuals rejected the support that was offered and this had caused difficulties, (e.g. they might disagree about the level of medication that they should receive). The various agencies worked together to try and resolve those problems but that could be a lengthy process. The other main reason that a care package might not always be delivered were that the reviewing and monitoring might not always take place because of difficulties associated with the recruitment and retention of staff.

4. Runnymede's Housing Strategy identified a need to provide more units of supported housing for people with mental health problems. The provision of this type of accommodation had been delayed because of difficulties in obtaining capital and particularly revenue funding towards such schemes. In the meantime, arrangements had been made to provide floating support services using Look Ahead Housing, but they were not specialist mental health service providers. The major problem was the difficulty in obtaining resources for more units of supported housing for people with mental health problems, in particular the right kind of accommodation with the right level of support.
5. The Board agreed that representations should be made on their behalf to the Local Government Association on the difficulty in providing more units of supported housing for people with mental health problems, with the Housing and Community Services Committee endorsing those representations. The combination of the new Supporting People regime and the new regional housing capital allocation system was resulting in extra complications in providing these services.
6. At its meeting on 8 September 2004 the Housing and Community Services Committee endorsed the Review Board's recommendation that representations be made to the Local Government Association regarding the current difficulties in providing supported housing under the new Supporting People regime.
7. An item has also been prepared at the Board's request for the Members' Bulletin on what Members should do in the event that they learned that vulnerable tenants with additional support needs were not receiving the care packages that had been prepared for them.

H. ENFORCEMENT OF PLANNING CONTROL – PROGRESS REPORT

1. Throughout the year, the Board has continued to be advised and updated on the latest circumstances on sites where Committee authorisation to take planning enforcement action has been obtained and where there are matters still outstanding.
2. Delays in the Planning Inspectorate's scheduling of Public Inquiries are increasing and therefore breaches of planning control in these cases are continuing for longer while Inquiries are awaited. As a result, Officers are seeking to achieve remedies of breaches through negotiation wherever possible.

I. FINANCIAL FORECAST, BUDGETARY OUTFURN AND PROGRESS ON NET REVENUE REDUCTION TARGETS

1. The Board considered a copy of the report to the Corporate Management Committee meeting of 3 June 2004 on the Final Accounts 2003/04 and a minute of their discussion. The Board reviewed the table of Revenue Grants and Contributions Received in 2003/04 which totalled £812,482. It was noted that there could be no guarantee that this level of income could be achieved for 2004/05 and future years, although some of the items had a greater degree of certainty than others. If any grants were at risk, a report on those would be submitted to Members. Sponsorship "in kind" represented an estimate of the value of work undertaken on behalf of the Council. The Board also noted the summary of activity on Section 106 Planning Contributions for 2003/04.
2. The Board noted that at its meeting on 30 September 2004, the Council's Corporate Management Committee had considered the updated financial forecast covering the period up to the 2009/10 financial year and had recommended a target budget for 2005/06 to the full Council meeting. The Forecast contained details of target savings approved in October 2003, and of further target savings proposed since October 2003. It was noted that the Committee had recommended to the Council that relevant Committees identify the service areas that should be examined in more detail, with a view to achieving the "savings which had been identified" target and Officers be instructed to bring forward reports as appropriate.

J. PRIORITY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE – 2003/04 OUTTURN REPORT

1. The Board received and considered a copy of the report to the Corporate Management Committee on 29 June 2004 on the outturn on the Council's ten priority indicators of service delivery performance. The Board noted that, with one or two exceptions, the results were very good.

K. SURREY PENSION FUND

1. The Board has noted that the Council's Corporate Management Committee had been informed that the Surrey Pension Fund Actuary's latest calculations had resulted in unforeseen detrimental financial implications for Runnymede. A full analysis of the reasons for this has been considered at Corporate Management Committee. The Board agreed that it should also consider the implications of this report at a future meeting.

ARTICLE 6 - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REVIEW BOARD)

APPENDIX '1'

6.01 Terms of Reference

The Council will appoint an overview and scrutiny Committee to discharge the functions conferred by regulations under Section 32 of the Local Government Act 2000. In Runnymede, the overview and scrutiny committee is titled the Review Board.

The Review Board will have nine Members, or as the Council may decide.

6.02 General Role

Within this Constitution, the Review Board may:

- (i) review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- (ii) make reports and/or recommendations to the Full Council and/or any Committee in connection with the discharge of any functions;
- (iii) consider any matters affecting the area or its inhabitants; and
- (iv) exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by any Committee.

6.03 Specific Functions

(a) **Policy development and review.** The Review Board may:

- (i) assist the Council in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues;
- (ii) conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
- (iii) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
- (iv) question Members of policy Committees and Chief Officers about their views (in the case of Officers, professional views) on issues and proposals affecting the area; and
- (v) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.

(b) **Scrutiny.** The Review Board may:

- (i) review and scrutinise decisions made by, and performance of, policy Committees and Council Officers, both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
- (ii) review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
- (iii) question Members of policy Committees and Chief Officers about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- (iv) make recommendations to the appropriate policy Committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- (v) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the overview and scrutiny Committee and local people about their activities and performance; and
- (vi) question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent).

(c) **Finance.** The Review Board may be allocated funding for its role by the Council, and will exercise overall responsibility for the finances made available to it.

(d) **Annual Report.** The Review Board must report annually to full Council on its workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.

6.04 The Review Board may form sub-committees from amongst its membership, or advisory panels from any suitable persons whether its Members or not.

6.05 **Proceedings of Review Board**

The Review Board will conduct its proceedings in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.