

Runnymede Borough Council
LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 20 March 2003 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), A.G. Collins, A.J. Davis, P.C. Elding, Mrs. S.E. Jacobs, A.M. Moore, R.J. Ray, B.J. Relph and Ms. C.M. Simmons.

Co-opted Members for matters affecting Thorpe Green
Mrs. B. Miller and Mr. T. Watson

and all other Members for information

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).**
- 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.

COMMITTEE SECTION



LIST OF MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

PART I

Matters in respect of which reports have been made available for public inspection

	<u>Page</u>
1. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP	3
2. MINUTES	3
3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	3
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	3
5. ASSOCIATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF RUNNYMEDE (AIR) FUNDING	3
6. FRANK MUIR MEMORIAL FIELD, ROSEMARY LANE, THORPE - CAPITAL SCHEME FOR VEHICULAR/PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND CAR PARK	4
7. CO-OPTED MEMBERS FOR MATTERS AFFECTING THORPE GREEN	6
8. ALLOTMENT RATIONALISATION – CHERTSEY ALLOTMENT SITES – PROGRESS REPORT	7
9. CABRERA TRUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - MINUTES	8
10. RUNNYMEDE ARTS DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP - MINUTES	8
11. ABBEY FIT JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	8
12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	8

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)

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 23 January 2003.

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. ASSOCIATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF RUNNYMEDE (AIR) FUNDING (DF)

(Ref: Minutes of the Former Executive Committee, 2 August 2000, page 361, para. 209; Minutes of Housing and Community Services Committee, 12 September 2001, page 290, para. 225)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend the funding of the Association for the Improvement of Runnymede (AIR) in 2003/04.

2. Background Information

2.1 The Association for the Improvement of Runnymede (AIR) was established in 2000 as an Independent Environmental Body for Runnymede, to utilise the Landfill Tax Credits scheme for the benefit of local community projects. The body was given grant aid of £13,000 in 2000/01 and £7,500 in 2001/02 to support the cost of administration.

2.2 At its meeting on 12 September 2001, the Housing and Community Services Committee agreed to provide funding of a further £10,000 to AIR in 2002/03, to be paid in two instalments, in April and September. The second payment was to be subject to a satisfactory appraisal of the progress with AIR projects. Over time AIR was expected to become self-financing through the generation of membership and fee income.

2.3 A payment of £5,000 was made to AIR in April 2002. The Association subsequently informed the Council that they had sufficient funds to support their activities until at least July 2003 and therefore they would not require the second instalment of £5,000 in 2002/03.

2.4 AIR have been very successful in attracting financial support for community schemes within the Borough. In their Chairman's report for 2001/02, the Association were able to report contributions from landfill operators in excess of £39,000 for the period up to September 2002. Since then, Members will recall that AIR has secured funding of £100,000 for the Council's kerbside recycling scheme from the Sita Environmental Trust for which the Council paid them an administration fee of £2,500.

3. Report

3.1 In recent months, landfill operators have been more reluctant to commit funds because there was some uncertainty about Government intentions towards the Tax Credits scheme. Whilst the Government position has now been clarified, the uncertainty has in the meantime reduced the fee income that AIR could have expected to generate. As a result, the Association has informed the Council that it may need to request the second instalment of £5,000 later in 2003/04 in order to ensure that the organisation remains fully funded up to 31 March 2004.

- 3.2 Unfortunately, the provision for the second payment of £5,000 was removed from the budget recently approved by this Committee. It therefore needs to be reinstated and a request submitted to the Corporate Management Committee to approve a supplementary estimate for this purpose in the 2003/04 financial year.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) £5,000 be awarded to AIR in 2003/04, in accordance with the original decision of the Housing and Community Services Committee in September 2001; and**
- ii) the Corporate Management Committee be requested to approve a supplementary revenue estimate for this purpose in the 2003/04 financial year.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None stated

6. FRANK MUIR MEMORIAL FIELD, ROSEMARY LANE, THORPE – CAPITAL SCHEME FOR VEHICULAR/PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND CAR PARK (DAL)
(Ref: Minutes of the Former Leisure Services Committee, 20 September 1995, page 312, para. 309)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for a capital scheme to create a new vehicular and pedestrian access to Frank Muir Memorial Field in Thorpe and approval of a capital sum of £25,000 for the scheme.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 The Frank Muir Memorial Field, a 10 acre open space, is situated between the Thorpe bypass and Rosemary Lane in Thorpe. It was donated to the Thorpe Field Charity by Redland Cement in the 1980's, and was once known as Thorpe Field and managed by the Thorpe Field Charity Management Committee. However, in April 1994 at the request of the Committee, the Council took over the management of the field and in subsequent years created a pedestrian only access from Green Lane, installed a children's play area, basketball net, football pitch and benches and bins. This provision was assisted by funding from the British Basketball Association and the Association for the Improvement of Runnymede (AIR). In April 2000 the site was renamed Frank Muir Memorial Field in memory of the comedian and television personality who lived in the village. Despite the change in management arrangements, the field is still subject to the charitable trust. The Charity Management Committee continues as an advisory and fund raising body. A location plan will be on display at the meeting.
- 2.2 There is currently no public vehicular access or parking on site for visitors and the site is well used by local people, especially for dog walking, although facilities such as the football pitch are under utilised.
- 2.3 The existing access for maintenance vehicles is via a gate directly from the Thorpe Bypass. This is susceptible to unauthorised access and has been used by travellers in the past. To protect it, a large block of concrete is placed in front of the gate, but this is problematic, as it has to be moved and replaced every time contractors need access for grass cutting machinery etc.
- 2.4 With this lack of vehicular access in mind the Council acquired an additional piece of land in August 2001 which provides the opportunity to create a new access from Rosemary Lane together with limited car parking. This land was also identified as a potential site for a community hall or community initiative for possible youth projects. The proposed scheme would not preclude such activities or works taking place in the future. Since its acquisition this piece of land has been cleared of a number of farm outbuildings and other structures and is now ready for the proposed scheme.

3. Report

3.1 The proposed scheme would provide a new vehicular and pedestrian access to Frank Muir Memorial Field from Rosemary Lane. It would consist of parking for ten cars, including one space for use by the disabled, plus a height barrier to offer protection against unauthorised intruders and fly tipping. It will also provide the access for maintenance vehicles allowing the existing access from the Thorpe Bypass to be permanently closed off. Subject to the approval of the Highways Authority, it is also proposed to erect a finger post direction sign located in Green Lane at the junction with Rosemary Lane. A plan of the scheme will be on display at the meeting.

3.2 The expected benefits of the scheme are;

- increased use of facilities at Frank Muir Memorial Field,
- a safer and more convenient access point for visitors and contractors; and
- increased protection from traveller incursions by permanent closure of existing vulnerable access points.

4. Council Policy

4.1 It has been a long term, if informal, aim of both the Council and the Management Committee to achieve vehicular access to the field. This has been referred to on many occasions in past Committee meetings.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 There is currently a £10,000 provision in the Capital Programme for this scheme, however to complete the works set out above will cost £25,000 for which a Capital Estimate will be required.

5.2 The additional ongoing maintenance costs and associated Capital Charges are set out in the Capital Project Appraisal Form attached at Appendix 'A' and will be met from within existing revenue budgets.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Council holds Frank Muir Memorial Field not in its own right but as Trustee. Its duty is to manage the Field in the best interests of the Charity. The additional land is not held under Charitable Trust but the proposal is consistent both with the Council's powers and duties as local authority and its duties as trustee.

7. Planning and Technical Implications

7.1 The change of use of this land to form a car park will require planning permission.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) the Corporate Management Committee be recommended to approve Capital Programme Provision and a Capital Estimate in the sum of £25,000 for the provision of a vehicular access point together with car parking and associated works as set out in this report; and**
- ii) subject to the approval of a Capital Estimate by the Corporate Management Committee and the granting of relevant planning permission, Officers implement the scheme.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None stated

7. CO-OPTED MEMBERS FOR MATTERS AFFECTING THORPE GREEN
(Ref: Minutes of the former Leisure and Public Services Committee, 11 June 1974, page 51, para. 132)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **To recommend that the practice of appointing two Thorpe Green residents to serve as co-opted Members of this Committee be discontinued from the Municipal Year 2003/2004.**

2. Background Information

2.1 At Annual Council each year two residents living adjacent to Thorpe Green are appointed as co-opted Members of the Leisure and Environment Committee. In this capacity they are invited to attend meetings of the Leisure and Environment Committee when there are reports on the Agenda which affect Thorpe Green, and they are entitled to speak on these matters only.

2.2 This practice can be traced back as far as the Egham Urban District Council (Egham UDC). In September 1973 the Estates Committee of the Egham UDC considered the possibility of forming an Advisory Committee for Thorpe Green following the advice and co-operation received from Thorpe residents in connection with the control of horse riding. This Committee agreed that the most satisfactory means of benefiting from residents' offers of voluntary assistance, was to co-opt three Thorpe residents to take part in the proceedings of the Estates Committee for matters relating to Thorpe Green only.

2.3 When Runnymede District Council came into being in 1974, the Leisure and Public Services Committee agreed that the new Council should continue this valuable practice and three Thorpe Green residents were co-opted on to the Leisure and Public Services Committee for matters affecting the Green.

2.4 Over the first 12 years of this arrangement reports concerning Thorpe Green frequently appeared on the Agenda of the Committee with responsibility for Leisure Services. These items covered matters such as tree planting and unauthorised caravans. However, the majority of these reports considered applications received by the Council for licences granting new vehicular accesses across Thorpe Green. At this time the Council's Scheme of Delegation required that all such applications be determined by Committee. During this period the co-opted Thorpe Green residents attended Committee on a regular basis to speak on these items.

2.5 Thorpe Green is the only area in the Borough with such an arrangement other than Englefield Green, where resident representation on the Englefield Green Committee is required by The Crown Lease.

3. Report

3.1 In January 1987 the then Leisure and Amenities Committee considered a comprehensive report on vehicular accesses over Thorpe Green. At that meeting Members adopted a clear policy statement in relation to the grant of such vehicular accesses. As a result the authority to grant new vehicular accesses across the Green was delegated to Officers, except where the application did not meet the Council's agreed policy, in which case it would need to be considered by the Leisure and Amenities Committee. The last report considering access rights across Thorpe Green was brought to the Leisure Services Committee in June 1999.

3.2 Since 1987 the number of reports relating to Thorpe Green appearing on Leisure Committee Agendas has continued to dwindle. In the year 2001/2002 the only Agenda reports which may have been of relevance to the Thorpe Green co-opted Members were the two Best Value Reports for the Parks and Open Spaces Service. So far in this Municipal Year only one report has been brought to Committee with implications for Thorpe Green, this being the "Parks and Open Spaces Incursion Protection Measures – Capital Scheme" which was considered by this Committee in January 2003. Consequently, the co-opted Members for matters affecting Thorpe Green have very seldom needed to attend Leisure Committee meetings, in fact the last recorded attendance was in March 2000.

- 3.3 In view of this, Officers recommend that the practice of co-opting two Thorpe Green residents to the Leisure and Environment Committee be discontinued in 2003/2004. In order that Thorpe Green residents can continue to feed their views into the Council decision making process, Officers propose that more informal mechanisms be employed for consulting residents adjoining Thorpe Green. Thorpe Ward Members and the two existing co-opted residents' representatives have been consulted and they agree with the Officers. The favoured system for obtaining local views is set out in paragraph 3.4 below.
- 3.4 Officers would consult with Ward Members on relevant matters on the Leisure and Environment Committee Agenda and could carry out a wider-ranging consultation of residents where appropriate. For example, this method was employed by Leisure staff to consult Thorpe Green residents on the proposed anti-incursion protection measures, as reported in January 2003. Over 60 letters were sent out to properties adjoining Thorpe Green and 30 replies (around 50%) were received. This high rate of return indicates that this is a very effective means of consulting these residents.
- 3.5 In addition Thorpe Green residents can always approach their Ward Members or Officers directly if they have particular matters that they wish to raise. For example, the existing co-opted Members for Thorpe Green are already in the habit of telephoning Committee Section Officers if they have any concerns regarding the condition of the Green, which are then forwarded to the Leisure Services Division.

4. Council Policy

4.1 Core Values

"Engaging with and being responsive to public opinion through consultation on important issues, ensuring clear communication of our policies."
(Leader's Position Statement 2003/04, page 4)

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 At present the two co-opted Members for Thorpe Green receive the five Agendas for the Leisure and Environment Committee each year and all copies of the Council Minute book. The estimated cost of printing and posting out these documents to the two co-opted Members in 2002/2003 was £70.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The byelaws that govern the management of Thorpe Green do not contain any requirement for resident representation on the Runnymede Council Committee with responsibility for Leisure Services.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

the practice of co-opting two Thorpe Green residents to the Leisure and Environment Committee be discontinued as from the Municipal Year 2003/2004 and the Council uses the methods set out in paragraph 3.4 above, together with any others which may be appropriate, in order to consult Thorpe Green residents in the future.

(TO RECOMMEND)

Background papers

Email to Thorpe Ward Members dated 18/2/03, Letter to Co-opted Members for Thorpe Green dated 18/2/03, Email received from Thorpe Ward Members and Mrs Miller dated 19/2/03 and Letter from Mr Watson dated 22/2/03 on Director of Administration and Leisure's file no 48.24.

8. ALLOTMENT RATIONALISATION – CHERTSEY ALLOTMENT SITES – PROGRESS REPORT (CEO/DAL)

Attached at Appendices 'B' and 'C' respectively are two recent reports to the Corporate Management Committee which apprise Members of the position regarding the relocation of the Beomonds allotment site and the identification of a possible new site in Chertsey. Officers will report on any more recent developments at the meeting.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

None

9. CABRERA TRUST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - MINUTES (DAL)

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 6 January 2003 are attached at Appendix 'D'.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

None.

10. RUNNYMEDE ARTS DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP - MINUTES (DAL)

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Group held on 4 February 2003 are attached at Appendix 'E'.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

None.

11. ABBAY FIT JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Committee is asked to note that following the departure of Councillor G.J. Thomas, a vacancy arose on the Abbey Fit Joint Management Committee which had to be filled in time for the next meeting on 4 March 2003.

In consultation with the Leaders of all political groups, and the Chairman of this Committee, the Chairman of the External Appointments Sub-Committee agreed to the appointment of Councillor Mrs C.E. Gant as a voting Runnymede Borough Council representative on the Abbey Fit Joint Management Committee under Standing Order 42.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

Proforma on the Head of Corporate Administration's Standing Order 42 file.

12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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 paragraphs 1 and 7 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).