

Notes of a Meeting of the Surrey Heath Villages Working Group - 23 September 2020

Members Present:

Cllr Rebecca Jennings-Evans
(Chairman)
Cllr Graham Alleway
Cllr Paul Deach
Cllr Tim FitzGerald
Cllr Sharon Galliford

Cllr Victoria Wheeler
Cllr Valerie White

Substitutes: Cllr Sarah Jane Croke (in place of Cllr David Mansfield)

In Attendance: Cllr Emma-Jane McGrath and Cllr Pat Tedder

Officers: Daniel Harrison and Eddie Scott

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Mansfield.

2 Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Rebecca Jennings-Evans be elected Chairman for the 2020/21 municipal year.

3 Notes of the Previous Meeting

The notes of the previous meeting were agreed by the Working Group.

4 Review of the Working Group's Terms of Reference

The 2020/21 version of the Working Group's Terms of Reference were reviewed and noted by the Group.

5 63A High Street, Bagshot - Update

Members were reminded that on conclusion of the last meeting of the Working Group that the Council was ready to go out to consultation on the 63A High Street, Bagshot proposal. However, this consultation process had been halted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, it was acknowledged that although it was previously planned to have a number of in person consultation events, it was likely that the consultation on the plans would now have to be conducted online. The Working Group were still overwhelmingly in support of the project.

The Working Group were informed that bulk of the consultation and public engagement on the project was ready for release and just needed Members' final approval and comments on the precise wording. As a result it was agreed that just the wording of the consultation would need to be circulated to Working Group Members via email, before it was progressed and formally started.

RESOLVED that Members of the Working Group be sent the wording of the public consultation on 63A The High Street, Bagshot, before formal initiation.

6 Community Transport Pilot - Update

The Working Group were reminded of the proposed Community Transport Pilot which would entail broader use of the Council's Community Transport fleet in the rural areas of the Borough. It was envisaged that the pilot would explore the longer-term viability of the Council's fleet being used to facilitate trips to train stations, Camberley Town Centre and doctors surgeries to and from the Surrey Heath Villages. Members were informed that the feasibility of the pilot relied on the securing of a Community Services Partnership with Runnymede Borough Council, which would entail a larger pool of vehicles available for use.

Members highlighted the exciting potential of the pilot and its possible longer term purposes for community transport in the rural areas. It was noted that there were several potential uses which had come to prominence during the COVID-19 Pandemic including the need for a service to transport Chobham residents to the local doctors surgery, and a service to the Flu-Jab drive through clinic which had been set up at Blackbushe Airport. Longer term it was noted that the initiative could be a boost to Camberley Town Centre; providing an evening shuttle service to and from the Town Centre as well an initiative where tickets to shows at Camberley Theatre would be combined with a transport to and from the villages.

It was acknowledged and agreed that the initial pilot would best be started with a focus on serving one village. In addition it was noted there were potential funding opportunities around Community Transport from Surrey County Council and that the issue should be formally raised at Surrey Heath Local Area Committee.

RESOLVED that the potential Community Transport Pilot be reconsidered at a future meeting post-approval of the Surrey Heath-Runnymede Community Services Partnership.

7 Date of next meeting and any other business

With another potential COVID-19 related lockdown looming, the Working Group recognised the potential for the Council and Members to step up in response to new measures and to initiate schemes to help boost morale in the villages. It was suggested that Heathscene had a role to publicise community events in the villages; and what help could be received during a lockdown.

Members were also informed in respect of various updates which affected the Surrey Heath Villages which could be discussed further at future Working Group Meetings. These topics included a potential marketing campaign focussed on the villages and work with the Council's Economic Development Team specifically on the promotion of the Surrey Heath Villages.

The Working Group noted that its next scheduled meeting was on 2 December 2020.

