

Economic Development Committee

Thursday 24 June 2010 7.30pm

**Council Chamber
Runnymede Civic Centre, Addlestone**

Members of the Committee

Councillors P I Roberts (Chairman), D A Cotty (Vice Chairman), A Alderson, H A Butterfield, D R Hamilton, R N Jones, Mrs Y P Lay, S M Mackay, L C Pouyanne, and N Stewert

AGENDA

Notes:

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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
**Mr M L White, Committee Section, Administration and Leisure Department,
Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel: Direct Line: 01932
425623). (Email: malcolm.white@runnymede.gov.uk).**
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LIST OF MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

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b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

1. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman will read the Fire Precautions which set out the procedures to be followed in the event of fire and other emergency.

2. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

3. MINUTES

To confirm and sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 26 May 2010. (Appendix 'A').

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5. 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.

6. HEATHROW AIRTRACK CONSULTATION (DTS)

(Ref: Minutes of Council, 17 December 2009, page 449, para 471)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **To seek the Committee's views on an amendment to the Environmental Statement in support of the Transport Works Act application for Heathrow Airtrack.**

2. Background information

2.1 This Committee received a report in September 2009 informing it of the formal submission of a Transport Works Act (TWA) application for the rail link to Heathrow Airport known as Airtrack.

2.2 Runnymede Borough Council and Surrey County Council have been founder members of the Airtrack Forum which seeks to promote this scheme. However, this support has been subject to mitigation of impacts on level-crossings in Runnymede.

2.3 To ensure that these concerns were adequately raised, they were put forward as formal objections to the TWA as confirmed by Council in December 2009. The full resolution is set out below:

"i) **Objections be raised to the Transport Works Act application for the following reasons:**

- a) **that impact on level crossings in Runnymede is identified to be severe, but that no alleviation measures are proposed (including funding of provision by others);**
- b) **alleviation should be provided in the form of an underpass at one level crossing in Egham and improved signalling at the other crossings in Egham and Addlestone;**
- c) **provision should be made for improvements at the Runnymede roundabout, the mini-roundabout at the junction of Vicarage Road and High Street, Egham, in Thorpe Road**

and other works as necessary to improve traffic flows away from level crossings;

- d) **in terms of air quality, the applicants have failed to indicate whether they have taken into account the cumulative impact of existing Air Quality Management Areas (M25 motorway and Addlestone) as well as traffic generated pollution from other major proposed developments in the area including the 2,500 dwellings proposed at the former DERA site, Longcross, potential mineral extraction at Milton Park Farm, Egham and a proposed incinerator on land adjoining Trumps Farm, Longcross and any large scale development proposed in adjoining Boroughs;**
 - e) **in terms of air quality, the applicants have failed to demonstrate the assumptions used to suggest that NO₂ concentrations close to level crossings in Egham will reduce in the period between 2009 and 2015;**
 - f) **the business case for the scheme assumes that the new rail services can be added without detriment to existing rail services. However, the applicants have yet to provide a draft rail timetable for the scheme. The Council needs assurance that the new airport services can be accommodated on the existing network without reducing existing services or the capacity of the rail network to allow for future growth in rail travel;**
 - g) **there are concerns that the Transport Assessment for Chertsey station may underestimate passenger numbers, as it appears to not include passengers using the Heathrow Express or services for other stations. If passenger numbers are greater than assessed, then no mitigation in terms of additional parking is allowed for this impact;**
 - ii) **the Secretary of State for Transport be urged to issue a Regulation 19 request under the Town and Country Planning (Environment Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulation 1999 (*it has now been confirmed that the relevant legislation is Section 17 of the Transport & Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006*) requiring that the information deficiencies identified in the objections above and elaborated in section 6 above and Appendix 'D' be addressed by the applicants;**
 - iii) **Officers continue to work with Network Rail, Surrey County Council and Heathrow Airtrack Consultants, to identify infrastructure improvements to relieve level crossing barrier down times, including funding arrangements; and**
 - iv) **Officers prepare a detailed case in respect of the future Public Inquiry to elaborate on these issues."**
- 2.4 These objections were formally lodged with the Department for Transport and it was confirmed that this authority wished to be represented at the public inquiry, the date for which has yet to be set.
3. Report
- 3.1 The amendment to the Environmental Statement accompanying the TWA was put out to consultation from mid May until the end of June. The timetable has been amended to suggest that a public inquiry will be late this year (or possibly next year) and if the TWA is successful, works would begin in early 2012 with services operating by early 2016.

- 3.2 In December 2009, Network Rail completed work on the Airtrack development timetable. This altered the timings of trains compared with the originally proposed timetable, with a consequential effect on the barrier down times at level crossings.
- 3.3 In order to derive a realistic assessment of the net effect of the additional Airtrack services, Network Rail has developed a barrier down time model that calculates barrier closures and openings based on the development timetabled train arrivals at the crossing with and without Airtrack and observed average advance closure times on the Airtrack routes for the different types of crossing.
- 3.4 It is important to note that a set of six train services currently identified by South West Trains for introduction into the current timetable have been included in the 'with' and 'without' Airtrack development timetable, as it is understood that these will be in operation before Airtrack. These additional services to the current timetable affect different Airtrack service corridors. Feltham will accommodate five extra trains per weekday (none of them pass through Chertsey and Addlestone). The remaining twelve level crossings on the routes will be affected by four additional trains per weekday.
- 3.5 In addition, the modelling includes a reduction in the minimum time for re-opening a level crossing between trains from 30 to 20 seconds in line with existing observed barrier operations.
- 3.6 The revisions now suggest that the average daytime level crossing closure time at each of the Thorpe Road, Vicarage Road and Station Road, Egham pre-Airtrack, is less than suggested in the original consultation. In respect of Thorpe Road and Station Road crossings, the post-Airtrack closure times are longer than before, but overall the average closure time is less than predicted in the original consultation. At Vicarage Road, the barrier down time is predicted to be less than the original consultation. The timings are set out in the table below (figures refer to minutes).

Thorpe Road

Original Consultation	Amended Consultation
Average daytime closure per hour: Pre-Airtrack 22.50 Post-Airtrack 37	Average daytime closure per hour: Pre-Airtrack 18.45 Post-Airtrack 34.30
(Increased down time of 14.10)	(Increased down time of 15.58)
Barrier open times reduce from 37.10 to 23	Barrier open times reduce from 41 to 25.30

Vicarage Road

Original Consultation	Amended Consultation
Average daytime closure per hour: Pre-Airtrack 26.55 Post-Airtrack 38.25	Average daytime closure per hour: Pre-Airtrack 23.07 Post-Airtrack 32.52
(Increased down time of 11.30)	(Increased down time of 9.45)
Barrier open times reduce from 33.05 to 21.35	Barrier open times reduce from 36.53 to 27.08

Station Road

Original Consultation	Amended Consultation
Average daytime closure per hour: Pre-Airtrack 20.45 Post-Airtrack 33.45	Average daytime closure per hour: Pre-Airtrack 15.24 Post-Airtrack 30.19
(Increased down time of 13)	(Increased down time of 14.55)
Barrier open times reduce from 39.15 to 26.15	Barrier open times reduce from 44.26 to 29.41

- 3.7 The predictions for Chertsey are that the average daytime closure will be worse than the original consultation, but that Addlestone will be much the same. Again, the figures are compared below.

Guildford Road, Chertsey

Original Consultation	Amended Consultation
Average daytime closure per hour: Pre-Airtrack 19.15 Post-Airtrack 18.05	Average daytime closure per hour: Pre-Airtrack 18.33 Post-Airtrack 24.15
(Decreased down time of 1.10)	(Increased down time of 5.52)
Barrier open times increase from 40.45 to 41.55	Barrier open times reduce from 41.27 to 35.45

Station Road, Addlestone

Original Consultation	Amended Consultation
Average daytime closure per hour: Pre-Airtrack 14.15 Post-Airtrack 21	Average daytime closure per hour: Pre-Airtrack 13.34 Post-Airtrack 21.36
(Increased down time of 6.45)	(Increased down time of 8.02)
Barrier open times reduce from 45.45 to 39	Barrier open times reduce from 46.26 to 38.24

- 3.8 Whilst the data suggests that the average daytime closure periods per hour are less than originally predicted, it still shows that the increased down time caused by Airtrack services is significant. The worst affected level crossing is Thorpe Road, where an additional down time of nearly 16 minutes per hour is shown.
- 3.9 The timetable data on which these estimates are based is not available and therefore has to be accepted at face value. Some of the reduction in impact is undoubtedly due to the additional services that South West Trains are apparently looking to introduce before Airtrack, so that will already have worsened barrier down time from that currently experienced. Clearly there is no control that this Council can exercise over these increased train movements from the current operator.
- 3.10 In any event, the revised timetable needs to be approved by the Office of Rail Regulation and could not come into effect until that has been given. They would need to be assured that the timetable was fit for purpose.
- 3.11 Given the additional level crossing down time, it is still considered that mitigation is required to offset these impacts and it is therefore recommended that the original objections still stand until such time as suitable mitigation is proposed.

4. Update on Objections

- 4.1 In terms of the Council's original objections (set out in paragraph 2.3 above) it would appear that improvements in signalling technology are not likely to be tested and approved until after the current timetable for implementation of Airtrack. Any such improvements could therefore not be installed before it becomes operational.
- 4.2 In terms of major developments, the cumulative effect of which might impact on air quality, the Trumps Farm incinerator proposal has now been withdrawn and the future of substantial residential development at the former DERA site in Longcross is unclear. The planning application for proposed mineral extraction at Milton Park Farm, Egham remains undetermined.
- 4.3 It is felt that given that the timetable needs to be approved by the Office of Rail Regulation then that would be the appropriate body for ensuring that the proposed timetable is both workable and capable of accommodating anticipated future growth. It is therefore recommended that this aspect not be pursued by this authority at the public inquiry.
- 4.4 The Department for Transport has already asked BAA Airtrack for their views on the Council's request to issue a formal direction requiring additional information under the provisions of Section 17 of the Transport & Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006). Following representations by them, the Department has confirmed that they are satisfied that the information already provided (which will be elaborated upon at the public inquiry) is sufficient and has declined to require further information at this stage.
- 4.5 In terms of mitigation, Surrey County Council, Network Rail and BAA Airtrack have been collaborating on examining the technical feasibility and cost benefit analysis of a possible underpass at Vicarage Road, in Egham. So far, no fundamental technical problems have been found which would preclude its construction. Results of the cost benefit modelling have yet to be seen, but clearly such very high expenditure (of the order of £20M) needs to be fully justified in terms of exactly what it will achieve in terms of mitigation. If this cannot be demonstrated to accepted Department for Transport standards, then it would not be possible to argue for its provision at the public inquiry, nor indeed support a Compulsory Purchase Order to acquire the land required to implement it.
- 4.6 Surrey County Council has also been modelling a package of wider highways improvements in Egham that could provide mitigation. They have also been negotiating with BAA for a financial package to implement this. A verbal update will be given at the meeting on these issues if more information is available.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Clearly some of the more peripheral issues that formed objections have been addressed as indicated in section 4 above and would not need to be pursued at the public inquiry.
- 5.2 As it becomes clearer what mitigation is possible, reasonable and capable of being financed to ensure implementation before Airtrack is operational, the Council will need to consider if the overall package meets its objections sufficiently for them to be withdrawn.
- 5.3 It is therefore considered that this current consultation does not change the position sufficiently for the previous made objections to be withdrawn or modified, however as further information about the results of modelling and potential mitigation packages becomes clearer, the Council will have to give further consideration to its position.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

the amended Environmental Statement in support of the Transport & Works Act application for Heathrow Airtrack be noted, but that the objections already lodged to the application in respect of the need for proposals to mitigate the impact on level crossing barrier down times in Runnymede remain.

(TO RECOMMEND)

Background Papers

Transport and Works Act 1992, The Heathrow Airtrack Order, Environmental Statement Addendum No.2, Volume 2 Effects at Level Crossings, 2010

7. THE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2009/10 (DAL)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **To propose and seek the approval of Members for the Asset Management Plan (AMP) 2009/10.**

2. Background Information

2.1 This Committee approved last November the commissioning of a detailed report upon the Asset Management Plan (AMP).

2.2 The Corporate Management Committee subsequently approved the broad objectives of the new AMP so as:

- i) To define the future shape of the Council's property resources by selling, buying, leasing, and managing the Council's estate and accurately planning costs.
- ii) To increase property and investment income and to lift current property income above 7%, and investment income above 4%.
- iii) To secure high value projects with the Council's partners where necessary and to compile a list of major projects across the public and probably private sector.
- iv) To gain public support for the Council's AMP by activating and building upon the current and new channels of communication and advocacy.

2.3 This Committee proposed and Corporate Management Committee approved a supplementary estimate of £20,000 in the current financial year in respect of consultancy advice for preparing the AMP.

3. Report

3.1 The Insight Consultancy were commissioned in 2010 to report on the current condition of asset management practice and propose the AMP for the Council's consideration. The Council has now received Insight's initial health check report and asset management proposals, which are summarised in this report.

3.2 Members are now invited to consider Officers' Recommendations arising from these proposals from Insight which, if accepted, will lead to a fully worked up AMP and have the effect of accelerating changes underway in the performance of service delivery across all Council areas.

3.3 The consultants propose an AMP in four sections with appendices containing supporting material.

- Section one provides the statement of strategic direction for property asset management through an analysis of the environment in which the Council is operating its own priorities in response to this.
- Section two describes the Council's current policy and practice with respect to asset management, and is designed to provide a commentary against current "Best Practice" in asset management. Asset management is a part of the Use of Resources component of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) and the AMP provides also an audit against the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) used through the CAA inspection process.

- Section three provides information on the size and nature of the property portfolio under thematic headings, and is designed to raise awareness of emerging issues in the estate.
- Section four provides a review of portfolio performance and a programme of action. This identifies key achievements looking backwards, and intended short and medium term action in looking forward under the broad strategic direction defined through Section one.

3.4 At both the national and local level there are a range of influences which are shaping local Government services and which will influence the Council's vision for the area. These are:

- A national policy drive to develop sustainable communities with the creation of self sustaining, vibrant communities, which are attractive places to live, work and play.
- Service improvement and accessibility with a national drive to focus service delivery and the needs of the recipient rather than provider, in line with "strategic service delivery partnerships"; modernising local Government and access to services to tackle social exclusion.
- Partnership working, with its emphasis of bringing together public sector agencies and in some cases the private sector to improve service delivery capacity and performance and to join up service delivery.
- A drive for efficiency savings, encouraging better use of constrained financial resources by doing things better and differently, with a key challenge to do more with less.
- E-Government promoting a strong drive to provide more services electronically so that citizens can access services at a time and place of their own choosing.

All these influences have an impact on the Council's aspirations for the communities it serves and for the pace and timing of change.

3.5 This property Asset Management Plan will not exist in isolation but is set within the context provided by other corporate and service plans of the Council. These themselves are a response to wider external drivers impacting on the Runnymede area and the Council and have been subject to consultation. The Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan "Making a Difference" sets the Council's overall priorities for the future which coalesce around two broad themes as follows:

- Healthier and Safer Communities – encouraging pleasant neighbourhoods, less fear of crime, a safe and healthy environment for young people, and better access to health and social care for vulnerable people.
- Prosperous Communities – fostering economic prosperity, strong local business, vibrant town centres, reduced traffic congestion, an adequate supply of affordable housing, access to parks and open spaces, and sustainable use of resources.

The Sustainable Community Strategy acknowledges that the timing and pace of meeting the targets underpinning these two themes may be influenced by the wider prevailing policy environment and the economic climate. The Strategy is itself due for review in the latter part of 2010.

3.6 The financial constraints faced by the Council have had a major bearing on the development of the Plan. Runnymede's portion of the Council Tax is the sixth lowest local tax in the country (£136.89 at Band D) and this is insufficient to pay for the present level of services. The Council has been drawing heavily on working balances to balance the budget and the current programme of savings targets are intended to bring income and expenditure into balance over the next three years. Increased revenue generated from property rentals, car parking, fees and charges and capital receipts will be vitally

important to achieving this objective. The aim is to make the Council more self sufficient than in the recent past and less reliant on external sources of income, particularly Government grants.

Commercial property income is currently around £1.13m, of which a significant proportion is generated from retail parades and investments in or around the town centres. Many of these retail units are secondary and characterised by small business tenancies rather than multiple retail chains. As a consequence of a secondary occupier profile the Council's rental income stream is less secure requiring more intensive management and with greater numbers of void units. These factors will be reflected in investment yields and lower capital values. It is therefore recognised that over the medium to longer term the Council needs to consider options for improving the performance of its commercial portfolio within Egham, Chertsey and Addlestone.

3.7 A number of key challenges have been identified for consideration over the medium term. These are:-

- The Scope and Positioning of Asset Management as a function. This area will be covered by a later report from the Chief Executive following the Workforce Review.
- Improving the Robustness of Portfolio Knowledge. The existing asset management data is fragmented across several systems and is not easy to manipulate or analyse. There are also some areas of deficiencies in data such as ready availability of running costs data, performance data and suitability assessments. The incomplete and fragmented nature of data acts as a constraint to effective asset management and as a barrier to effective communication with potential private and public sector partners. This represents a risk of sub-optimal decisions being made on property issues.
- Property Review and Asset Categorisation. The Council has a small but diverse portfolio which has generally been the subject of informal rather than systematic review and challenge. The future of new processes would benefit from an 'Asset Challenge Framework' which would be used to classify assets recording to required management action. This type of approach can help to identify a way of identifying where value can be released (from asset disposal); where costs can be saved; and what income can be generated (for example from intensifying use).
- Three Town Centres Revitalisation. It has been recognised that the principal towns in the Borough are relatively small and appear to be falling behind similar centres in terms of prosperity and vibrancy. The Council has significant land and property holdings within these towns which it will be able to use to revitalise the areas. Subject to viability and sound project management, appropriate mixed-use development should also greatly enhance the value of the Council's property and investment portfolio. Development can be undertaken on a piece meal basis or as part of a joint venture in conjunction with private sector skills and finance.
- Improving Utilisation of Civic Centre. The Council has invested in a modern technology-enabled Civic Centre which is shared with the Police and County Council Library. There is potential to improve utilisation of the office component with flexible work and desk sharing. Release of office space represents a potential source of income (from letting space) and also provides an opportunity for working more closely and effectively with partner organisations. In the Consultants' view utilisation of the public and Civic areas of the building (fronting Station Road) appears poor and lacking in vibrancy. This is the Council's 'shop window' and there is a challenge to optimise the use of this space; particularly over the longer term in conjunction with development of the adjoining vacant site.

- Development Opportunities from Open Space. The Council has significant landholdings of open space including Green Belt and it is recognised there may be some special circumstances that could justify release of some of this land for development. Facilitating the release of such sites would present a number of environmental impacts and constraints to be overcome. Entering into this process would be expensive and time consuming, but where demand for housing and employment cannot be met without changing existing allocations there may be scope to modify planning policies. However, current evidence suggests this is not required to meet the Council's previously adopted housing and employment policies at least for the next ten years. See also paragraph 3.11.3 below.
- 3.8 This strategic context identified above suggests the Council is facing a period of unprecedented change. These changes will occur in several areas. There is the long term revitalisation of the whole area through 'place shaping' which will provide an opportunity to articulate and deliver a new vision of the character of the area. There is a forthcoming period of 'public service delivery reform' with the need for the public sector to respond to an area of expenditure constraint but also rising service expectations from the public. Finally, there is the 'internal evolution of the Council' itself to respond to a period of constrained budgets and seeking to do more for less and differently. These all have an implication for asset management and the property portfolio of the Council; asset management as an activity can also play a significant part in facilitating the Council's response to these influences for change.
- 3.9 The wider policy and resource environment and the Asset Management challenges identified imply a strategic direction for asset management; one which will focus on 'facilitating service change and place shaping'; and given the financial constraints on the Council, they will be approached and geared to revenue generation rather than capital release. Over time this should support a change in the portfolio to one which has less idle property, more welcoming and flexible accommodation, blends public and commercial use and will increase options for revenue generation. This is summarised below under three main headings:-
- a) The context of change
 - vision for Runnymede (reshaping)
 - public service reform
 - Council change
 - b) Asset management challenges
 - scope and nature of asset management
 - portfolio knowledge
 - asset review and categorisation
 - long term development opportunities
 - town centre revitalisation
 - utilisation of Civic Centre
 - c) Future portfolio
 - more welcoming and flexible space
 - blending public and private property
 - income generating

- sharing assets with other agencies
- less idle property and different property
- promoting community engagement

The features above show how the AMP will perform its function as a facilitator for service change, community engagement and reshaping.

3.10 The broad framework for action that underpins this new strategic direction for asset management appears below. This also identifies immediate actions as well as longer term actions, but can be adapted in response to the six key asset management issues identified above at paragraph 3.7. The resource implications and timing of these actions are not identified but a brief narrative of the rationale and broad focus of each section is as follows:-

A) The Scope and Nature of Asset Management:

- Review the activity scope and organisational nature of the asset management functions to assess how best to position in organisational terms the activities which change the size and nature of the property portfolio; those that enhance or protect building condition and those concerned with the provision of services to and within buildings.
- Undertake an audit of skills and capacities of the asset management function against its defined scope and activities.
- Review scope for the Council to lead a collaborative approach for asset management in conjunction with Spelthorne Borough Council and/or Elmbridge Borough Council (with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council another possibility).

B) Improving the Robustness of Portfolio Knowledge:

- Undertaking an audit of existing data holdings against a 'road map' of data needs effective asset management to identify data deficiencies and data collection priorities.
- Review property information and management strategy to identify an approach to creating a more integrated property information system.
- Ensure adequate training on Estateman, other associated property information systems, and associated report writing tools to ensure adequate resilience.

C) Property Review and Asset Categorisation:

- Develop/adopt an asset challenge methodology which can be used to review assets and to categorise them according to 'required management action'.
- Undertake a review of existing operational assets to categorise these in terms of their use and investment value (it is recommended that this review process consider adjacent assets and other public sector bodies so that the potential development associated with the wider collective of public assets is reviewed).

D) Development Opportunities for Green Belt Land and Open Space

See comments under 3.7

E) Town Centre Revitalisation (Addlestone, Egham and Chertsey)

See comments under 3.7

F) Utilisation of the Civic Centre

See comments under 3.7.

- 3.11 The benefits from more effective asset management can be illustrated by reviewing portfolio performance and by action looking forward.
- 3.11.1 Over the last 12 months Runnymede Borough Council has demonstrated its commitment to asset management through a range of initiatives. Whilst not an exhaustive list some of the more significant achievements include:-
- Added further asset data into Estatemanager to improve the consolidation of property related data into the database as the core central repository for property data.
 - Undertaken condition surveys of the entire building stock to refresh the maintenance backlog figures.
 - Contributed to collaborative asset management initiative with the District Councils and the County Councils through sharing of asset related data.
 - Secured 100% affordable housing at Pinefields.
 - Retained high occupancy rates in the investment portfolio despite unfavourable market conditions and adopted a flexible approach to rent reviews and voids management to sustain yields from the investment portfolio.
- 3.11.2 As at 31 March 2009 the Council's investment portfolio was valued at £18.2m and was producing an income of £1.13m, which represents a yield of 6.2% against current valuation. The portfolio comprises retail, offices and a range of community property investments. All investment assets are held for purposes which are consistent with Council policies or are otherwise surplus to requirements. The Council seeks to ensure that the occupancy of investment premises is maximised – thereby minimising management costs associated with voids. Property which is held as an investment but is producing a poor return will be considered for disposal or community transfer, subject to consideration of alternative uses and availability of sufficient capacity and expertise with community groups taking over responsibility for management.
- 3.11.3 The Local Development Framework (LDF) core strategy and vision will consider housing demand and various sites, including Green Belt, are likely to be considered for inclusion within the SHLAA. This evidence based work has identified that there is enough urban land available for housing development for at least the next 10 years (meeting 161 new units per year as set out in the South East Plan). The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) sets out the need for affordable housing far outstrips this allocation. This may justify a phased release of Green Belt land over a period of time if the Council wants to deliver a higher level of housing. However, much of the existing Green Belt is situated within the flood plain or within the 5km zone of influence of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and is, therefore, less suitable for development.

The Council has 54 assets in the Green Belt, all of which have been subject to a preliminary property review. The initial conclusion is that the majority of these sites will require active management, although a change of use from the current Green Belt allocation is generally unlikely to be the recommended outcome.

The next step is to carefully consider whether there are special circumstances which may support a change from Green Belt allocation. In considering this the Council will be aware that it is essential to separate its statutory planning and its asset management functions. A change from Green Belt status to urban area is a decision that the Council would need to make through the Local Development Framework process, either through the Current Core Strategy, which will soon be submitted to Government or through a review of this in the medium term.

However, the Council has a fiduciary responsibility to maximise the use and value of its assets and to achieve 'best consideration' on disposal of assets. It is therefore incumbent upon the Council to adopt management policies which enable it to maximise Green Belt asset utilisation (and value) in a clear, accountable and cost effective way.

The Council should, therefore, adopt a cost benefit approach which may require taking independent planning advice and undertaking environmental impact assessments. In many cases, this will provide sufficient information to form a clear recommendation for future use and / or disposal of individual sites. However, in cases where feasibility is costly and difficult to establish, it may be justifiable to enter into joint venture arrangements with developers, subject to satisfying the Council's procurement rules and demonstrating 'best consideration' on disposal.

- 3.11.4 The revitalisation of Addlestone, Chertsey and Egham is at the heart of the Council's aspirations for regeneration and the future of these centres will be considered by the 'Place Shaping' service review programme. The objectives of the Council will be reflected in the LDF Core Strategy and Vision, which is expected to be examined in public in early 2011.

The Council's own investment portfolio includes a significant proportion of retail units within the three centres. These investments are generally 'tired' in appearance and clearly reflect the case for redevelopment and revitalisation. This view has been confirmed by a variety of approaches from potential development or investment partners. The Council's aspirations for regeneration and improving the performance of its own investments are therefore closely aligned.

When considering how to realise and procure its objectives the Council will weigh a range of options. These will have regard to the expediency and greater certainty of undertaking piecemeal negotiations on key sites against the longer term benefits and complexities of comprehensive mixed use development, with the inclusion of 3rd party land, through a variety of joint venture arrangements. In principle, the Council is prepared to fund investment opportunities which meet its investment and risk / reward criteria and are capable of delivering wider community benefits. Participation in complex mixed use schemes will only be undertaken in conjunction with appropriately experienced organisations which meet the Council's criteria in terms of experience and standing.

- **Addlestone** – This represents the most obvious and pressing comprehensive town centre redevelopment opportunity within Runnymede. The Council has ownership of a number of cleared and adjoining sites surrounding the Civic Centre, including the Old Civic Centre and the Civic Centre staff car park [0.62 ha], the old Police Station [0.42 ha], and the Garfield Road car park [0.24 ha]. In addition, the Council also owns a retail parade adjoining the Civic Centre at 40-58 Station Road, which currently produces a rental income of £140,000 pa. To the rear of Station Road, and in separate ownership, are Devonshire House [a low rise office] and Devonshire Mews [a terrace of 4 cottages] and a small Royal Mail Sorting / Delivery Office. Addlestone Community Centre [1600 M²], which is the subject of a long lease to Addlestone Community Association, also adjoins Garfield Road Car Park.

The Council should also be alert to opportunities that might arise in the vicinity should they or other landowners decide to dispose of existing holdings.

- **Chertsey** – Sainsbury is the single major food retailer represented in Chertsey and operates from a store which is now over 30 years old. The Council owns the freehold, comprising the store and a small mall, petrol filling station and car park, all serving the town centre. The Council recognises that it has significant influence through its freehold ownership and wishes to ensure that it engages with potential and existing stakeholders to improve the variety and vitality of 'retail offer' in the town. The Council also owns a number of retail units and sites in and around the town centre and is considering how the investment performance of these assets might be enhanced through more active asset management.

- **Egham** - The Council has freehold ownership of The Precinct [Nos 1 – 41 High Street], which is a 1960's shopping parade with student accommodation above. It also owns The Precinct Car Park to the rear of the shopping parade and a number of other retail investments, car parks, offices and a library site, all of which would benefit from increased activity / footfall within the town centre. The Council's ownership of The Precinct is subject to a head lease and there is now an opportunity to consider a comprehensive redevelopment of The Precinct and adjoining car park to include 3000 M² of food retailing, new shop units, 80 room hotel and modern student residences. Current projections assume that retail rental values will double in the 5 years following development.

Potential development sites within the three town centres and across the borough will be listed in the AMP. These in combination may have a potential value of over £30m.

- 3.11.5 The Civic Centre is a modern well designed building which provides the Council's main headquarters. It has potential for more intensive use.
- **General Offices** (excluding Safer Runnymede, Police, Library, Chamber, Public Reception and Support Areas). There may be potential to release space to let to other agencies for shared service provision or compatible uses. Running costs vary from building to building and precise costs for the Civic Centre are not available. However, released space could be let on a cost recovery basis or on a full rental basis at near market rents.
 - **The Council Chamber and Civic Reception** – These facilities are of good quality and although available for hire are seldom used by outside bodies. It may be appropriate to promote wider access to the Council Chamber and associated facilities to local businesses and other groups, though the first floor location presents evacuation issues that would require the presence on site of a trained member of staff. Good quality meeting facilities are also provided within Addlestone Community Centre in nearby Garfield Road and utilisation of this facility should be considered through dialogue with Addlestone Community Association.
 - **Addlestone Library and Public Reception / Interview Rooms** – These ground floor areas extend to 410 M² [net internal], with the library occupying 250 M². Together, these areas represent the main 'shop front' for public service delivery in Addlestone and across Runnymede. It is therefore important to optimise the use of this space for the benefit of local residents, having regard to the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre, as well as 'face to face' public service provision. It is recognised that realisation of aspirations to revitalise Addlestone place the library and Civic Reception area at the centre of the revitalised town centre. It is therefore important to keep the utilisation of this space under the review and to consider its optimal use in conjunction with other facilities such as Addlestone Community Centre in nearby Garfield Road.
- 3.12 As well as providing the accommodation from which to deliver services, property can also be considered as a 'productive asset' which is capable of releasing value (from property disposals) or generating income (from rental lettings). Although not its primary purpose, this can make a valuable offsetting contribution to capital projects or operating costs.
- 3.13 It is important to appreciate the condition of the building stock so as to be aware of immediate health and safety issues in the portfolio, incipient risks and liabilities to the Council and the investment needs associated with ensuring buildings are in a reasonable state of repair. This is required by the Authority to meet its service delivery obligations and statutory requirements. It is also an important element of 'Best Practice' within current Asset Management guidance.

The AMP will record aspects of suitability for purpose, capacity and utilisation, and statutory compliance features. Failure to arrange these details systematically may expose the Council staff and clients to health and safety risks or expose the Council to financial risks. The statutory obligations for the portfolio and related professional services are varied and subject to continued revision and therefore will need to be

monitored closely. Information when brought together provides a mechanism to assess the contribution individual buildings are making to Council objectives, for required management action or potential investment needs. A simple framework can be used to categorise the portfolio and to provide a broad summary of action at an individual property level.

It is recommended that this approach is adopted through successive Asset Management Plans to categorise the portfolio as a means of identifying action required for individual assets.

- 3.14 Once all data and information have been assembled in one place it will be possible to review portfolio performance and action. This review looks backwards as a means of looking forwards. Looking backwards will involve a review of key achievements which, over the last twelve months, shows the Council has demonstrated its commitment to asset management by a range of initiatives.

4. Council Policy

- 4.1 As earlier reports note, the Asset Management Plan is centrally relevant to existing policy. Its function is to fulfil policy initiatives by removing barriers to delivery. The Sustainable Community Strategy becomes its guiding light and each Committee's Service Plan becomes its delivery requirement. It will be necessary to consider any Green Belt revisions within the context of current or new initiatives inside the LDF.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 The impact of the AMP will bear significantly upon its resource plan. In organisational terms it is no longer considered practical for certain Council functions to remain separate. Officers agree with Insight as to the necessity of operating these functions within the same departmental structure. The future organisation will feature in the Chief Executive's report to Corporate Management Committee, based upon conclusions reached from the Workplace Review currently underway.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) the Director of Administration and Leisure be instructed to prepare a revised Asset Management Plan based on the above report, the Consultants' advice, and any observations by the Committee, and to report to the next meeting for final approval; and**
- ii) Corporate Management Committee be asked to receive a report from the Chief Executive as soon as practicable relating to the organisation and resource implications of the Asset Management Plan.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None

8. INTRODUCTION OF SEASON TICKETS - GOGMORE FARM CAR PARK (DTS)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **To seek approval to introduce the sale of season tickets for parking in Gogmore Farm Car Park.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 The Borough Council sells season tickets for the other two pay and display car parks in Chertsey, Beomonds (51 spaces) and the Library (159 spaces) car parks. This is mainly for the benefit of workers and commuters that park regularly all day. The season ticket

charges benefit the driver by being cheaper than paying the daily All Day parking charge and they benefit the Council as they provide a guaranteed income.

2.2 The current scale of charges in the Councils car parks is:-

Time Period	Current Charges (Town Centres)	Current Charges (Village/Out of town)
Up to 1 Hour	£0.50	£0.20
1 to 2 Hours	£1.00	£0.50
2 to 3 Hours	£1.50	£1.00
3 to 4 Hours	£2.00	£1.50
4 to 5 Hours	£2.50	£2.00
5 to 6 Hours	£3.50	-

Gogmore Farm Car Park is subject to the lower Village/Out of Town scale of charges. The charges in the Bemonds Row and the Library Car Parks are at the higher Town Centre ones.

2.3 The current charge for season tickets is £500 per year or £150 per quarter. The purchase of a season ticket does not reserve or guarantee the holder a space in the car park.

2.4 As the name suggests, Gogmore Farm Car Park is situated in the park and has 53 parking spaces. It is convenient for visitors to the park but is little used for this purpose on weekdays throughout the year except for the school Spring and Summer holidays.

2.5 The car park is also a convenient walk for employees of businesses in Chertsey Town Centre and the Eastworth Road area. It is often well used on Tuesdays by customers of the Auction in Guildford Street when the Library and Bemonds Car Parks in Heriot Road are full.

2.6 The other two car parks in Chertsey, at the Library and Bemonds, are quite heavily used. The Library Car Park, as well as allowing permits holders, also has a concession allowing free parking for River Bourne Health Club users. On Tuesdays in particular the Auction in Guildford Street attracts large numbers of cars and vans, often filling both of these car parks.

3. Report

3.1 The Parking Order that regulates parking in Gogmore Farm Car Park allows charges to be levied but does not currently allow the sale of season tickets.

3.2 The income from the pay and display machine in this car park was only £1260, excluding VAT in the 2009/10 financial year. It is uncertain how many season tickets will be sold but the facility to sell season tickets provides the potential to increase the annual income and the sale of three would exceed the income in 2009/10. The capacity of the car park is 53 vehicles so season ticket sales would be limited to thirty per year to ensure that spaces are available for Gogmore Farm Park users.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 The use of car parks in the Borough is regulated by the Borough of Runnymede (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2008. Schedule 8 relates to Gogmore Farm Car Park. This Order would need amending to allow the sale of season tickets.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 The income from the pay and display machine in this car park was only £1260, excluding VAT, in the 2009/10 financial year.

5.2 It is uncertain how many season tickets will be sold but the facility to sell season tickets provides the potential to increase the annual income. At £500 per year, the sale of 10 tickets would produce an income of £5,000 and 20 tickets, £10,000.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) the sale of the season tickets in Gogmore Farm Car Park up to a maximum of thirty per year be approved; and**
- ii) the Director of Technical Services be authorised to introduce similar arrangements in other Borough Council car parks where considered appropriate.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None

9. FREE PARKING PASSES FOR DELIVERING AND COLLECTING CHILDREN AT SCHOOLS IN ENGLEFIELD GREEN (DTS)

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 **The purpose of the report is to seek the Committee's approval to issue formal free parking passes in St Jude's Road Car Park, Englefield Green to parents delivering and collecting children at local primary schools.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 There is currently an informal arrangement allowing parents to use the Council car park in St Jude's Road, Englefield Green for a short period without payment, whilst delivering and collecting children at the St Jude's Church of England and St Cuthbert's Catholic primary schools in Bagshot Road, Englefield Green. On-street parking is very limited around the schools and the car park is within easy and safe walking distance.

- 2.2 The car park is well used throughout the day, particularly by local businesses, and the Council's Civil Enforcement Officers regularly patrol the car park to ensure that parked cars are displaying a valid parking ticket. Complaints have been received about school parents being allowed to park free whilst other car park users have to pay.

- 2.3 In similar circumstances this Committee has approved a formal parking permit system for parents delivering and collecting children at St Anne's Catholic Primary in Free Prae Road, Chertsey.

3. Report

- 3.1 Parents cars delivering and collecting children at schools is generally acknowledged as a congestion and a safety issue. In an effort to reduce these problems a number of measures have been introduced by County and Local authorities.

- 3.2 In order to discourage parents from parking in front of St Anne's School in Free Prae Road, Chertsey, parents are permitted to use the Council's Library Car Park free of charge between 8.30 and 9.15 am and 2.55 and 3.40 pm on weekdays. The children can then be delivered to the school on foot along the adjoining footpath. This has led to a significant reduction in the amount of traffic using Free Prae Road at school times.

- 3.3 As mentioned in paragraph 2.3, this is a formal arrangement that was agreed by this Committee and has been included in the Off Street Parking Order that regulates parking in all of the Council's car parks. Drivers using the concession are required to display a pass issued by the school in order to identify them as being exempt from the need to purchase a pay and display car park ticket.

- 3.4 The Council's Civil Enforcement Officers regularly patrol the car park around the end of those periods to ensure that parents do not abuse the concession by staying longer for other purposes. Such abuse can be dealt with by issuing a penalty charge notice.

- 3.5 It would be easier to explain a formal system to paying car park users than the informal arrangement that is currently in operation.
- 3.6 Two concerns about this arrangement are the potential loss of income for the Council and the possibility of other drivers not being able to park. Although the Council would undoubtedly receive more income if parents were required to pay to park this system has reduced the traffic congestion around the school entrances and it is in operation for a relatively short time so the effect on other car driver's use of the car park is not significant.

4. Environmental Implications

- 4.1 Although it could be said that allowing free parking in the car park encourages car use, public transport is not a viable alternative for most journeys to these schools. Both of the schools are primary and cycling to primary schools is not a widely used form of transport for travel to primary schools due to the safety issues for small children. Walking is a possible alternative but families living in walking distance probably walk already when convenient.
- 4.2 Allowing free parking in the car park encourages parents to 'park and walk' when delivering and collecting their children. This facility reduces the traffic congestion and safety issues around the school entrances that would occur if the system was not in place.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Charging parents to park could increase the car park income for the Council but parents would probably choose to park on-street near the school entrances if they had to pay.
- 5.2 The Council's Civil Enforcement Officers will regularly patrol the car park at the end of the concession periods to ensure that parents do not overstay without paying.
- 5.3 Advertising and making an amendment to the Order would cost in the region of £350.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Parking in the Council's car parks is regulated by the Borough of Runnymede (Off Street Parking) Order 2008 and this Order imposes the parking charges.
- 6.2 An Article in that Order allows the use of the Library car park in Chertsey free of charge between 8.30 to 9.15 am and 2.55 to 3.40 pm for the purpose of delivering or collecting children at nearby schools provided they display a pass issued by the school.
- 6.3 An amendment to the Off Street Parking Order would be required to allow a similar arrangement in St Jude's Road Car Park, Englefield Green.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) the introduction of a formal system of free parking passes in St Jude's Road Car Park, Englefield Green for parents delivering and collecting children at the local primary schools be approved; and**
- ii) the Director of Technical Services be authorised to introduce similar arrangements in other Borough Council car parks where considered appropriate.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None

10. SERVICE PLAN – OUTTURN PERFORMANCE 2008/10 AND REVISED SERVICE PLAN FOR 2010/2011 (DTS)

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee on the outturn performance of the 2008/10 Service Plan and to seek approval for a Service Plan for the period up to 31 March 2011.**

2. **Background Information**

2.1 In late 2008, a new strategy, planning and performance management framework of Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan was agreed for the Council and Committee-based Service Plans have continued to be produced since then.

2.2 The current Service Plans have been based on an eighteen month cycle rather than the previous yearly programme to give greater continuity and avoid the need to update what are often ongoing targets.

2.3 In the June 2009 cycle of meetings, reports were brought forward noting the outturn position for the period up to 31 March 2009 and the November 2009 cycle reported the position as at 31 October 2009. This report and Appendix 'B' now notes the outturn position as at 31 March 2010. The Equality Action Plans are attached at Appendix 'C (i)' and 'C (ii)'.

3. **Report**

3.1 Members are invited to note the outturn position on its Service Plan, attached at Appendix 'B'. The Service Plan provides a control document for senior managers and the responsible Committees to monitor and review, as well as highlighting where slippage or other difficulties are occurring, and appropriate recovery strategies need to be put in place.

3.2 Members will be aware of the Service Review programme that was commenced at the start of this year and which is due to be completed by the Autumn. It is anticipated that the collective outcome of these will lead to the creation of a new Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan in 2011.

3.3 The means by which targets in this new Corporate Plan will cascade to individual Committees will also be reviewed as part of this process and this may change the format of Service Plans, or indeed replace them altogether. It is therefore recommended that the Service Plan for this Committee continues until 31 March 2011. The targets are generally ongoing and it is not considered that they need to be revised at this time.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

the Service Plan outturn report for 2008/10 as attached at Appendix 'B' be noted and approved as the Service Plan for 2010/11.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None

11. REFERENCE FROM HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

PURCHASE OF 66 ROUNDWAY, EGHAM, FROM A2 DOMINION

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 **The Housing and Community Services Committee at its meeting on 9 June 2010 recommended the purchase of this ex-Council owned flat from A2Dominion.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 66 Roundway is a 2 bedroomed ground floor flat, situated at the end of a terrace of 3 bedroomed houses. There is another similar sized flat above it. It was originally sold under the provision of Right to Buy on 28 October 1991, and was subsequently purchased by A2Dominion. The Council have had nomination rights to the property since A2Dominion acquired it.

3. Report

- 3.1 Sound insulation between the properties is poor. The ground floor occupant repeatedly complained about noise from the flat above, and investigations by the Environmental Protection team revealed that the level of noise transference from the upstairs flat to the lower unit is severe, and, every day activities such as running water, WC flushing, talking, listening to the radio or television at reasonable volume were audible in the ground floor property. The Council owns a number of properties where sound insulation is not as good as it could be and the report from Environmental Protection indicates that this particular pair of properties is worse than usual.
- 3.2 Attempts to address issues of poor sound insulation at other locations have been undertaken, and experience has proved that it is very difficult to fully rectify the problems. At best, all that has been possible to achieve is a reduction in noise levels, seldom to the satisfaction of the residents in the ground floor properties.
- 3.3 The A2Dominion tenant has successfully bid for another property under the CBL process. With the flat empty, Officers took the opportunity to discuss with A2Dominion the possibility of undertaking works to improve the sound insulation between the flats. However, A2Dominion are unhappy at spending several thousands of pounds only to improve matters marginally, and have suggested that their preferred approach would be to dispose of the asset.
- 3.4 The flats in Roundway are not very big, the kitchens in particular being small, and despite the provision of a private garden, the flats remain relatively unpopular. The Council is aware that the upstairs tenant would not be averse to moving, and with both flats empty, an opportunity would present itself to consider converting the two properties into one, larger four bedroomed house. This would eliminate the sound problem once and for all.
- 3.5 A2Dominion has agreed, in principle, to sell 66 Roundway to the Council and is seeking confirmation from their Board. Officers are currently negotiating the sale price and this will be reported at the meeting. The price will be consistent with, in broad terms, to the amount of capital the Council might expect to inject into a new build project to obtain a unit of accommodation. Whilst the open market value of the property is significantly higher, the price ultimately paid will be lower to reflect the sound insulation problems.
- 3.6 The Housing and Community Services Committee recommends that the Council purchases 66 Roundway with the intention to convert the two relatively unpopular flats into a four bedroomed house. Demand for four bedroomed properties, whilst not huge, is frustrated by their infrequent availability. The addition of such a property to the Council's property portfolio can only be advantageous, particularly when it is achieved by the 'loss' of two relatively unpopular flats with such severe sound insulation problems.

4. Financial Considerations

- 4.1 The purchase of 66 Roundway would be met from the provision for affordable housing in the capital programme.
- 4.2 The cost of the conversion, (approximately £41,000), would be borne by HRA revenue budgets. Each year the maintenance budget has a provision for building one or two extensions, to provide additional bedrooms to suitable properties, as an alternative to transferring tenants. It is proposed to utilise this budget to pay for the conversion.

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION
that –**

**the purchase of 66 Roundway from A2Dominion be approved and
that an appropriate capital estimate be sought accordingly.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None

12. STANDING ORDER 42 – URGENT ACTION

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>	<u>Central Index No.</u>
Director of Administration and Leisure Services	Lease – Precinct Car Park Church Road Egham	722

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

SO 42 proforma No 722 on Committee Section SO42 file.

13. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

**the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of
the following report under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act
1972 on the grounds that the report in question would be likely to involve
disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph
3 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) | <u>Exempt Information</u> | <u>Para</u> |
| 14. | QUEEN ELIZABETH HOUSE, ENGLEFIELD GREEN | 3 |
| 15. | UPDATE – ADDLESTONE TOWN CENTRE | 3 |
| b) | <u>Confidential Information</u> | |

(No reports to be considered under this heading)