

Runnymede Community Planning Panel

TERMS OF REFERENCE-DECEMBER 2015

Background

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Local Plans are key to delivering sustainable development that reflects the vision and aspirations of local communities. It encourages Local Planning Authorities to carry out meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses as Local Plans are prepared. The NPPF is clear that a wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that Local Plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of the area, including those contained in any neighbourhood plans that have been made.

Runnymede has therefore established a Community Planning Panel (previously known as the Planning Liaison Group) with residents'/community groups across the Borough to act as a channel for the engagement and collaboration with the Borough's communities as sought by the NPPF¹.

This approach is also in line with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Engagement (December 2014) which notes in paragraph 46 that, *"Residents' Associations (RA's) are important groups for Local Authorities to consult with regard to formulating Plans and policies. They are formed of individuals from specific communities. The RA's meet regularly to discuss local issues, acting as a voice for their local community. There are a number of RA's within Runnymede that the Council has consulted – and will continue to do so – in formulating its Local Plan. Rather than meet with RA's individually, the Council has preferred to meet with them collectively through the Planning Liaison Group, which meets from time to time, normally at the Civic Centre. This approach is of particular benefit to the RA's themselves, as it facilitates contact between their various representatives and encourages experiences to be shared"*.

Primary purpose of the Community Planning Panel

To provide a panel made up of community representatives from across the Borough to comment on emerging evidence/draft policies and to engage with Council officers as the Runnymede 2035 Local Plan is prepared.

The nature of the group

The Community Planning Panel is not a decision-making body. Any agreement reached between Council officers and the Panel will be subject to the democratic processes of the Council and the statutory provisions of the Local Plan process.

Panel meeting outputs

- Discussion of emerging evidence and policies with Council officers;
- Identification of land and sites in different areas of the Borough with potential for various land uses and classifications;
- Dissemination of information by Council officers to the residents'/community groups; and,

¹ Whilst Council members are the democratically elected representatives for their communities, this Panel is aimed specifically at residents'/community groups in the Borough. Council members will be fully engaged in the Plan making process through other methods/events.

- To provide an opportunity for the residents'/community groups to ask questions of Council officers on behalf of their communities.

Membership

- The Community Planning Panel will comprise one representative from an established community/residents group from communities in the Borough, where an interest is expressed. Substitutes may attend if appropriate;
- The Community Planning Panel will include the relevant officers from the Runnymede Policy and Strategy team, to lead discussion on certain agenda items. A council officer will chair the meetings;
- A minute taker from the Policy and Strategy team will attend each meeting;
- The Panel will meet approximately 4 times a year, initially being governed by the key milestones in the Plan making process, and beyond this quarterly to allow for discussion of topical planning matters in the Borough;
- To avoid over-representation from any particular area, normally only one residents'/community group from each community in the Borough will be invited to sit on the Panel. If multiple requests are made from different groups operating within one community to sit on the Panel, it will usually be the group representing the largest number of people that will be asked to sit on the Panel. These larger groups will be encouraged to engage with the smaller residents'/community groups (which generally cover individual roads or very localised areas) where possible;
- Council officers will consider requests from residents'/community groups to sit on the Panel at any time. However, such requests will only be granted if all of the criteria in the Membership section of this ToR are met and if there is sufficient space remaining on the Panel.

Administrative arrangements

- The Council will aim to circulate meeting agendas and any information to be discussed at least 10 days before a meeting of the CPP is due to take place;
- The minutes of each meeting will normally be distributed to all attendees within a week of the meeting taking place;
- The meetings of the CPP may be held at various locations in the Borough including the Council offices in Addlestone, the Egham Hythe Centre and Chertsey Hall. Alternative venues can also be suggested by CPP members. The venue will be agreed in advance of each meeting ;
- Meetings would normally be expected to last for no more than 2 hours and will be evening meetings (starting at 18:00/18:30) unless otherwise agreed by the Panel.