

**Minute Extracts from the Countryside Consultative Group meeting
held on 17 March 2016 and Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting
held on 16 June 2016**

Minute Extracts from the Countryside Consultative Group Meeting held on 17 March 2016

1. ESHER COMMON FORESTRY WORKS UPDATE

The Countryside Officer advised the group about the Forestry Works on Esher Common and reminded Members of the ongoing Woodland Management programme across the Countryside Estate which were approved by the Forestry Commission in March 2012. Thinning works have taken place across Esher Common adjacent to the A3 and a 30m safety zone has been created on the southern edge of Esher Common next to the A3.

The creation of the safety zone has resulted in two issues being raised by local residents: Increase in noise experienced by local residents and a request for a Shelter belt development plan. Leisure and Cultural Services have received a request from 2 local residents to consider an acoustic sound barrier to be erected along the edge of the A3. Following a discussion members rejected the request for an acoustic barrier but agreed that a simple document to highlight the expected regrowth through a shelter belt plan should be produced.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT

1. THE REQUEST FOR AN ACOUSTIC SOUND BARRIER IS REJECTED.
2. A SHELTER BELT DEVELOPMENT PLAN IS PRODUCED BY LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES.

2. WEYBRIDGE HEATH CYCLE ROUTE

The Countryside Officer updated members of discussions from the Elmbridge Cycling task group which was established by Surrey County Council and comprises of 3 Borough members and 3 County members. The task group have considered a plan to create a surfaced pedestrian and cyclist path from Churchfields Recreation ground to Weybridge station. After a discussion members agreed in principle to support this proposal providing the correct materials, best route and safety aspect were given full consideration.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT MEMBERS AGREE IN PRINCIPLE FOR OFFICERS TO UNDERTAKE DETAILED INVESTIGATION INTO THE FEASIBILITY OF CREATING A SURFACED PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST PATH FROM CHURCHFIELDS RECREATION GROUND TO WEYBRIDGE STATION.

3. SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE NATURAL GREEN SPACE – ESHER COMMON SOUTH

The Countryside Officer provided members of the group with an update on the current development of a Suitable Alternative Green Spaces (SANGS) site on

Esher Common South. The group were advised that it had been previously agreed to create a large pond and wetland area, carry out improvements to Oxshott Heath Conservators Sandy Lane Car Park, erect appropriate signage and improve footpaths and install benches where necessary. However, works were delayed at the time due to the Esher Commons SSSI but the intention is to carry out the agreed works in the autumn of 2016 and spend the capital receipts collected for the SANGS programme. Members of the group were in agreement and asked that this area be included in the summer tour. The Countryside Officer agreed to arrange this for the summer.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT MEMBERS AGREE THE INCLUSION OF THE PROPOSED CAPITAL EXPENDITURE IMPROVEMENTS TO ESHER COMMON, WITHIN THE 2016/17 CAPITAL PROGRAMME TO BE FULLY FUNDED FROM THE DEVELOPERS SANG CONTRIBUTIONS.

Minute Extract from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 June 2016

7/16 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING HELD ON 17 MARCH 2016**

(Link to Council Priorities: A5, A6, P4, P5)

The Committee considered a report with regard to the recommendations of the Countryside Consultative Group (CCG) in respect of the Esher Common Forestry Works Update; Weybridge Heath Cycle Route; and Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space - Esher Common.

In relation to the Esher Common Forestry Works Update, Members had been informed about the ongoing Woodland Management programme across the Countryside Estate which had been approved by the Forestry Commission in March 2012. Thinning works had been undertaken across Esher Common and adjacent to the A3 with a 30m safety zone having been created on the southern edge of Esher Common next to the A3. Two issues had been raised by local residents as a result of the safety zone creation in respect of increased noise that was being experienced by local residents and a request for a Shelter belt development plan. Leisure and Cultural Services had received a request from two local residents to consider the erection of an acoustic sound barrier along the edge of the A3. The CCG considered this request but considered that a simple document to highlight the expected regrowth through a shelter belt plan should be produced instead.

In relation to the Weybridge Heath Cycle Route, the CCG considered the Elmbridge Cycling Task Group's proposals for the creation of a surfaced pedestrian and cyclist path from Churchfields Recreation Ground to Weybridge Station. The CCG agreed in principle to support the proposal providing that correct materials, the best route and safety aspects had been given full consideration.

With regard to Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space - Esher Common, the CCG had been provided with an update on the current development of a Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) site located on Esher Common. The Group had been advised that the creation of a large pond and wetland area; improvements to the Oxshott Heath Conservators car park in Sandy Lane; the erection of appropriate signage; improved footpaths; and the installation of benches where necessary had previously been agreed. However there had been a delay in this work being carried out due to the Esher Commons SSSI and therefore the works would be carried out in the Autumn 2016 and with the capital receipts collected for the SANGS programme being utilised. The CCG supported this recommendation and requested that this be included in the Summer tour which would be arranged by the Countryside Officer.

Accordingly, the Committee supported the recommendations of the Countryside Consultative Group as follows:

Esher Common Forestry Works Update:

RECOMMENDED: THAT

- (A) THE REQUEST FOR AN ACOUSTIC SOUND BARRIER BE REJECTED; AND**
- (B) A SHELTER BELT DEVELOPMENT PLAN BE PRODUCED BY LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES.**

Weybridge Heath Cycle Route:

RECOMMENDED: THAT IN PRINCIPLE, OFFICERS UNDERTAKE A DETAILED INVESTIGATION INTO THE FEASIBILITY OF CREATING A SURFACED PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST PATH FROM CHURCHFIELDS RECREATION GROUND TO WEYBRIDGE STATION.

Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space - Esher Common:

RECOMMENDED: THAT THE PROPOSED CAPITAL EXPENDITURE IMPROVEMENTS TO ESHER COMMON THAT HAD BEEN INCLUDED IN THE 2016/17 CAPITAL PROGRAMME BE FULLY FUNDED FROM THE DEVELOPERS SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE NATURAL GREEN SPACE CONTRIBUTIONS.