

VILLAGE GROUPS FORUM

3rd June 2015

Note of meeting

Richmond Council events policy

Following a presentation by Ishbel Murray, Assistant Director of Environment, Property, Parks and Sustainability, Richmond Council, a number of questions were asked:

Is there a possibility of a simplified procedure for repeat events? This was under consideration

It was noted that there had been very few refusals of consent for an event.

Village Planning update

A presentation was given by Councillor Pamela Fleming, Cabinet Member for Environment, Business and Community, and Jon Freer, Assistant Director for Environment, Richmond Council which updated the meeting on progress towards village planning across the Borough. Following this questions were asked:

A noticeboard was requested and it was confirmed that a noticeboard existed in every Village area. Information was also provided on the website.

800 people had been involved in responding to a consultation, but this was a small minority. In response it was noted that this was around 10% of those affected, a reasonable response. Everyone had been notified and had had the chance to participate.

The St Margarets Community website was not notified (subsequently it was confirmed that this Forum did receive and posted regular updates on Village Planning activity.

What is the scale of policy in Village Plans? It was confirmed that character areas would be defined which specified the distinctive character of small scale areas – as small as one or two streets.

Village Planning – how it felt for us.

Caroline Brock, Chair of the Kew Society, gave a presentation on the experiences she had had during the Village Planning exercise in Kew. A number of questions were asked:

What were the issues relating to Village Planning in preference to Neighbourhood Planning? Caroline stressed that the approach adopted by Richmond, in her view, encouraged more people to get involved, was less formal and enabled greater ownership by the community over the process.

What are the practical results? The Supplementary Planning Document was a significant benefit. There had been a number of projects implemented but there could be, perhaps, more feedback on implementation.

What happened about issues, such as strategic transport, where the Council could not respond? On this issue a response was provided by Councillor Stephen Speak, Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene, Richmond Council, who stressed the role that the Council played in determining budgets, such as the Roads and Pavements Fund which were allocated to Villages, and the relationships the Council had with TFL and other transport providers. Mr Freer confirmed that Village Plan priorities influenced service provision.

The concept of 'villages' was felt to be relevant to Kew and Mortlake etc, but had less relevance elsewhere; how could areas be made to 'feel' more as villages? The importance of community groups who cared for their area was stressed, and it was hoped that groups would feel more motivated to support Villages and Village Planning as a result of this event.

It was confirmed on behalf of the Ham and Petersham Neighbourhood Forum that the Forum felt there were positives and negatives to Neighbourhood Planning and that they were pleased to continue to be part of the Forum.

Rugby World Cup 2015

A presentation was made about plans for the Rugby World Cup

A number of detailed questions were asked about the operation of the event, and the forthcoming forums were publicised.

Community News

The Council's Community News pages were highlighted and a number of groups indicated that it was a useful means of communication.

The meeting closed with an informal networking session.