

Village Groups Forum 16 February 2016

41 persons present.

Councillor Fleming, Strategic Cabinet Member for Environment, Business and Community welcomed people to the event. She commented on the difficult financial settlement for the Council but that the Council was committed to continue the good work around Village Planning.

Village Planning

A short update on Village Planning was given. The powerpoint slides are attached.

Councillor Fleming was pleased at the range of consultation techniques being used and the innovative approaches. John Sturt-Addicott spoke about the Village Facebook Groups and Bill Reed explained the #wheresbill twitter feed.

Richmond in Bloom.

Cllr Fleming was pleased at the continuing success of Richmond in Bloom and introduced Hugo Ross-Tatum from the Council's Parks Service to explain more about the process for 2016.

Hugo introduced the arrangements which had been made and circulated to many groups throughout the Borough. For the second year, there would be an element of competition between Villages. The theme this year would be of colours and styles of hanging baskets to reflect the Royal birthday celebrations.

In response to questions Hugo provided costs and clarification and it was agreed that the details would be provided with the note of the meeting.

Clean for the Queen

Jon Freer, Assistant Director (Environment) spoke about this national initiative, to tidy up Britain ahead of the Queen's 90th birthday in April. The main focus was to encourage communities to tidy up during March and, in Richmond, especially during the weekend, 4 to 6 March. Materials and assistance would be given by the Council. Groups were invited to contact SW London Environment Network (SWLEN) or Bill Reed at the Council.

Street parties celebrating 90th birthday

Street parties are being encouraged to celebrate the Queen's birthday. The Council will receive applications six weeks in advance and will waive the fee for parties during weekends of 11/12 and 18/19 June.

Local Plan Review

Jon Freer explained the reason for and the process involved in the review of the Council's Local Plan. National and London wide planning policy had changed since the Local Plan was adopted in 2011 and a scoping exercise had considered which parts of policy to update. Public consultation on a draft was likely in Spring with formal consultation in the Autumn.

Just to clarify on the question of Richmond's Shared Staffing Arrangement with Wandsworth that was mentioned by the Assistant Director during his presentation on the Local Plan Review, both Councils will retain their sovereignty and their own planning policies

Jon confirmed that the Plan would not affect the issue of Change of Use from offices to residential. This use change had become permitted development as a result of a Government Order, but the Council had sought an Article 4 declaration to bring this change again under planning control.

In response to a question about public houses, Jon confirmed that some Councils had sought an Article 4 declaration to control change of use. Public houses where listed, could also be controlled through the Planning system. Declaration of pubs as an Asset of Community Value was a separate piece of legislation which was not easy for either the Council or local groups to use, but would be applied where appropriate.

In response to a question, Jon confirmed that the Council were not looking to revise the Green Belt boundaries, or those of Metropolitan Open Land. Other Boroughs, under more pressure to meet housing targets, had chosen otherwise.

Councillor Fleming concluded the discussion by stating that there had been many 'planning' points raised in Village Plans and these would now be considered in the context of the Local Plan review.

Quietways

Councillor Stephen Speak, Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene introduced a discussion on this issue. His powerpoint slides are attached. This is a London wide initiative to encourage more people to cycle by identifying and consistently signing 'quiet' routes across the city. 4 routes are being identified in Richmond.

Questions focussed on the approach, the cost and the necessity for these routes and comments on the routes were invited. Locations where participants had difficulty cycling included Twickenham Town Centre and Teddington bridge; it was pointed out that Quietway routes would seek to avoid or manage such locations.

Voluntary Sector Commissioning

Councillor Susan Chappell, Cabinet Member for Community, Planning and the Voluntary Sector, introduced this discussion. Her powerpoint slides are attached. The Council had recently appointed a group involving Richmond CVS and Richmond Adult Community College (RACC) to provide support to the Voluntary Sector in

Richmond. The presentation explained what the Voluntary Sector could expect from this group.
There were no questions.

Councillor Fleming noted that RACC would also be the location for office space for small business and voluntary sector use.

Music and Drama Festival.

Booklets for the festival, running from 1 – 20 March were distributed.

Any other business

Colin Cooper from SWLEN publicised a workshop taking place on 17 February.

Meeting close 8.25 pm