

CABINET – 23 FEBRUARY 2016

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Public Questions

Question (1) from Cassie Chapple:

With regard to the proposed play trail through the woods behind Newlands Corner, I would like to ask the following:

- Will cyclists/motorbike riders be prevented from accessing the woods and how will health and safety be addressed on this issue?
- How will the council contain the site to prevent vandalism outside normal visiting hours
- How will council deal with drainage issues and the rivers of debris and mud which are already present.

I am part of the campaigners who is considerably concerned about the proposed development and any information would be appreciated.

Reply:

At this stage we have not completed the design for the trail, however motorcyclists and cyclists will not be allowed onto the trail.

The trail and the sites for each play piece will be constructed to minimise water pooling.

The site will not be contained and we will manage vandalism in the same way that it is managed all around the site currently.

Mr Mike Goodman
Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
23 February 2016

Question (2) from Julie Brown:

Newlands Corner Proposed Developments regarding the access agreement between Surrey County Council (SCC) and the Albury Estate at Newlands Corner

- What are the specific changes to be made to that agreement?
- Could the Council confirm that the split in revenue from future car parking charges and income from any future development will be 75% SCC and 25% the Albury Estate; previous answers from the 2 February 2016 meeting were that they were still being negotiated.
- If details of the split have not been finalised yet, how can the Council estimate future revenue from the proposals if they don't know the percentage split?
- If both phases of the proposals were to go ahead, who would become owners of the property - SCC or the Albury Estate?
- If it is the Albury Estate, why are SCC spending public money to provide an asset for a private company?

Reply:

The Changes to be made to the Access Agreement are confidential at his stage. The business plan for the site has taken into account a number of scenarios for the split of the car parking income.

The County Council has leases on the property it currently owns at Newlands Corner and is proposing to do the same with new property.

Mr Mike Goodman
Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
23 February 2016

Question (3) from Kathryn Killner :

At Newlands Corner, over what period and over how large an area will detailed environmental surveys be carried out to assess how the installation of 10 large play structures in the woodland in Phase 1, as well as the associated increased use of paths and the wider area surrounding the play trails, will affect the flora and fauna, in particular with respect to protected species and the ancient yews.

Given that Surrey Wildlife Trust is an interested party, what other organisations will be involved in carrying out the surveys?

Reply:

Some surveys have already been undertaken and work has been done to collate the information held at the Biodiversity Information Centre. Further surveys are planned to cover the area of the play trail and car park and existing buildings. These will include a survey of active dormouse sites, and bats.

Mr Mike Goodman
Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
23 February 2016

Question (4) from Susan Darling:

What is the current annual cost of maintaining the Newlands Corner site, in total and broken down; does SCC consider this fair value and what options other than parking charges has the Council considered to cover this cost in future?

Reply:

The cost for maintaining Newlands Corner is £157,000 which is broken down into staffing, vehicle costs, car park maintenance, equipment, keeping the vegetation clearance around the play area and picnic area, litter picking, site cleaning, maintaining the toilets and emptying the septic tank, utilities (Water and electricity) and building maintenance.

The Council, in conjunction with Surrey Wildlife Trust has considered a range of options for income generation and has already implemented others, such as Christmas tree sales at Newlands Corner. The Car Parking charges are set at a fair level compared to other countryside sites.

Mr Mike Goodman
Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
23 February 2016

Question (5) from Shirley Dawe:

Mr Goodman informed the Albury Drop-in event on 9 February 2016 that the Council would hold a public consultation on development plans for Newlands Corner.

What form will this consultation take and what will its terms of reference be?

Can Cabinet confirm that:

- (a) it will be arranged for a time when most people will be able to attend, at a place which is readily accessible by public transport
- (b) that adequate notice will be given, and
- (c) that it will be widely advertised to the general public.

Will SCC and SWT also arrange for a prominent display of the proposals at the Newlands Corner Visitor Centre, with facilities for public feedback.

Reply:

A meeting is will be held on 9 March 2016 at 7.30 pm in Guildford. An e-mail will go out to all stakeholders for whom we hold e-mail addresses, it will be advertised on site and on SCC's website as well as SWT's website. This will take the form of a short presentation on what is being proposed, followed by a question and answer session to members of the Project Board.

Mr Mike Goodman
Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
23 February 2016

Question (6) from Pamela Keale:

Until recently public awareness of planned developments at Newlands Corner has been very low. Information is sought on public consultations and engagement.

- How have Surrey County Council publicised the proposed developments?
- What public consultations have been held on whether or not the Council should impose parking charges and construct a Play Trail with 10 adventure play sites at Newlands Corner?
- What consultations have been held with groups and organisations representing present visitors and SCC's intended future users of the phase 1 facilities, and with what results?
- What representations from the public have been received on the proposed Phase 1 and Phase 2 developments, how are they being collated, and is the breakdown publicly accessible?
- How well do plans for parking charges, and play sites meet the identified needs of current regular users and SCC's stated targeted future users of Phase 1, including disabled people, the sensorily impaired, the elderly and anyone with dementia?

Reply:

The County Council started engaging stakeholders in August 2015 to discuss the proposed car parking charges, play trail and new visitor facilities at Newlands Corner. Subsequently two further meetings were held with Parish Councils and Borough Councillors.

All responses from the public are being collated and we are adjusting the implementation of Phase 1 accordingly.

The play trail designers are also running a number of meetings with the potential users of the play trail to ensure it meets their needs.

Work on Phase 2 will only involve concept designs for bringing the facilities together and will then be used in further public engagement sessions.

Mr Mike Goodman
Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
23 February 2016