

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee 22 February 2024

### Advance Questions

#### Agenda Item 4 – Annual Community Safety Partnership

##### Question 1

Please could you provide a table of acronyms to aid the understanding of these as we read the presentations? Eg MO, CPW's, CPN's, VAWG, DHR.

##### Written Answer

<b>CPW</b>	<b>Community Protection Warning</b> Before the decision to issue a Community Protection notice (see below), persons, businesses or organisations, will be given a formal written warning.
<b>CPN</b>	<b>Community Protection Notice</b> The community protection notice is intended to deal with unreasonable, ongoing problems or nuisances which negatively affect the community's quality of life by targeting the person responsible. The notice can direct any individual over the age of 16, business or organisation responsible to stop causing the problem and it could also require the person responsible to take reasonable steps to ensure that it does not occur again.
<b>DHR</b>	<b>Domestic Homicide Review</b> To note – going forward they will be referred to as Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews following calls to better recognise deaths from domestic abuse related suicide.
<b>IDVA</b>	<b>Independent Domestic Violence Advocates</b>
<b>IRIS</b>	IRIS is a specialist domestic violence and abuse training, support and referral programme for General Practices.
<b>SOC</b>	<b>Serious and Organised Crime</b>
<b>VAWG</b>	<b>Violence Against Women and Girls</b>

##### Question 2

Page 37 Is there concern that the funding for the IRIS scheme for GPs and funding for IDVAs is not sustainable? Where are other funding routes being sought?

## **Written Answer**

The delivery of the IRIS programme involves ongoing training, education and consultancy for the clinical team within General Practice as well as an enhanced referral pathway to specialist domestic violence services for patients with experience of domestic violence.

Both Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and Tandridge Borough Council have been funding an IRIS programme in East Surrey and have committed to provide funding in 2024/25. In the long term the Council believes sustainable funding for the IRIS programme should be found through NHS funding as it is their practitioners who use the service. Conversations are therefore underway to agree a funding route.

Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) have been funded by Surrey County Council through the Home Office safe accommodation grant fund. Surrey County Council are working with health colleagues to identify sustainable and ongoing funding.

Comment: Although these statistics relate to my neighbourhood, the numbers are not out of line with other wards.

## **Agenda Item 5 – Review of the work of the Greenspaces Team**

### **Question 3**

Page 54 and Page 78 Please supply a list of the most recent habitat surveys mapped onto how they have helped to determine the management plans on each of the Greenspaces looked after.

### **Written Answer**

Reigate Heath Acid Grassland survey, which was carried out in 2023 has highlighted the decrease in Chamomile on Reigate heath since the last survey, the Greenspaces team are now working with the Reigate Heath steering group members to review the grass cutting regime by mirroring the Chamomile management at Earlswood Common.

A comprehensive survey at Dover's Green Road has shown that there is a varied sward present, therefore this area has been adjusted to a late annual cut.

A vegetation survey carried out at Earlswood Common shows a great mix of plants, including Harebell, Chamomile and Lesser Spearwort. A new mowing regime has been drawn up to promote these species.

#### **Question 4**

Page 59 a) What is the split, in terms of work proportion, between Greenspace Labour, contracted services, and local community groups to manage RBBC's countryside spaces?

b) Are the proportions broadly similar for each of the countryside spaces?

c) What if, for sake of argument, the number of Woodchips volunteers drops. Is there sufficient slack in budgets and employee time for the work programme relating to Banstead Woods and Chipstead Downs to be carried out satisfactorily?

#### **Written Answer**

a) We have one dedicated Greenspaces ranger who works on countryside sites, several volunteer groups and we rely on contractors to supplement grass cutting and any one-off projects, such as expanding the permissive rides at Reigate Heath and Haymaking.

b) Yes, the frequency of volunteer tasks can vary on RBBC sites, some volunteer groups undertake weekly, monthly, or bi-weekly tasks. There are some tasks that are carried out by the volunteer groups, where the Greenspaces team provide extra support by disposing of waste materials from the sites and coordinating the mowing of designated areas in preparation for the volunteer activities. All tasks are discussed with the volunteer coordinators and the Countryside officer and form part of the annual work programmes.

c) The contributions made by all volunteer groups on council owned land are invaluable, to which are greatly appreciated. If a volunteer group finds itself unable to proceed with its tasks, Greenspaces officers are committed to providing additional support. This may include adjusting tasks in line with the group's capacity and capabilities.

If a group decides to cease, and despite the challenges that this would have on current levels of resources, we are prepared to strategically redirect resources to ensure that the site's requirements and objectives are met.

#### **Question 5**

Page 61 Map. Please clarify the areas of countryside owned and managed by RBBC. On this map there are a number of areas (in pink) that aren't named. Please supply a list of all the spaces that are managed by RBBC eg a large area between Hooley and Merstham seems to be missing.

#### **Written Answer**

The pink area on the map identifies as council owned land. The large area on the map between Hooley and Merstham is land that is under an agriculture type tenancy agreement through RBBC Asset management team.

All land that is currently maintained by the Greenspaces team as countryside areas is displayed in the table under the title Table of Sites, size, and designations in the report.

### **Question 6**

Page 77 Please can a set of the Management plans, HLS agreement plans, and Maintenance plans as set out on p77 be shared before the meeting. In particular can you share the key targets (for habitat and wildlife improvements) for all of these sites and what the latest monitoring data shows against those targets?

(only the 2011 Reigate Heath Management plan is on the council website)

### **Written Answer**

The management plans are still currently in draft form, with the aim to be approved in the next few weeks. Once approved, they will be made available on the council's website for public access.

These plans outline our intentions for land management, which mainly involve woodland management techniques, rotational scrub clearance and reviewed grass cutting regimes. Our approach is informed by recent ecological surveys, and our objective is for future surveys to reflect positive management. It is important that the newly reviewed cutting regimes and work programmes are established and operational before monitoring data is available.

The Higher-Level Stewardship (HLS) agreements are regulated by Natural England, and applications need to be submitted, if activities deviate from the agreed maintenance. As mentioned in the report our HLS/ SSSI sites are all under positive management according to Natural England.

Furthermore, all Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) maintained by the Greenspaces team are also being managed positively. We are currently exploring options to extend current SNCI in the borough and include additional areas under the SNCI designation.

The requested plans have been sent to Committee Members via email.

### **Question 7**

Page 79 a) Does the Countryside Ranger work across all countryside sites in the Borough?

### **Written Answer**

Yes, the countryside Ranger undertakes task on all countryside areas in the Borough, that are maintained by The Greenspaces team.