

Heritage Sub-Committee – 16 March 2006

Minutes of the meeting of the **Heritage Sub-Committee** held on **16 March 2006** when there were present:-

Cllr Mrs M J Webster (Chairman)

Cllr C A Hungate
Cllr R A Oatham

Cllr D G Stansby
Cllr J Thomass

OFFICERS PRESENT

Z Neeld - Corporate Policy Manager
H Collins - Civic and Public Relations Officer
J Bostock - Principal Committee Administer

Apologies for absence were received from C Coates, Arts Development Officer.

12 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

13 EVENT PROGRAMME 2006

(Note: Councillor D G Stansby declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of being one of the Council's representatives on the London Southend Airport Consultative Committee.)

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) on the planned heritage events in 2006.

Members reviewed each activity set out in the report schedule in turn:-

St George's Day

Supply of Display Packs to Non-profit Making Organisations

Activity was endorsed. It was observed that this remained a particularly useful arrangement.

Arts Workshop in Selected Primary Schools

Activity was endorsed. Members were pleased to note the broad geographical spread of the schools involved.

Family Art Day

Activity was endorsed.

Rayleigh Brass Concert

Activity was endorsed. It was noted that accommodation would cost £150 and hospitality in the region of £200–£240. It was agreed that, notwithstanding that Rayleigh Brass had a mechanism for selling tickets, all Councillors should be asked to promote this event to family and friends. The Civic and Public Relations Officer would write to Members in this regard.

Rayleigh High Street

It was noted that the Town Council had been re-assured that District Council observations on the lack of activity in the High Street during the 2005 celebrations had related to the low response from some traders and was not a reflection on the Town Council.

The Sub-Committee concurred with the observation of the Chairman that, for this year, it would be appropriate to take no further action on utilising the High Street columns so as to free up additional funds for display packs. Early communication could be made with Rayleigh Town Council on the possibilities of contribution/use of the High Street columns for 2007 celebrations.

Salvation Army

It was noted that the Salvation Army held their own service on Sunday afternoons and so would be unable to assist the District this year.

Community Events

Members were pleased to note that the success of Hawkwell Hockley WI's 2005 activities had contributed to the decision by Rayleigh and Hockley WI's to be involved in 2006. It was noted that Rochford WI were likely to schedule an event for 2007 celebrations.

The Civic and Public Relations Officer advised that contact would be made with the new Vicar of Hockley Parish Church to check if a service relating to St George's Day was being held. Contact would also be made with the Rochford Congregational Church.

Opening of Local Churches

It was agreed that for this year, given that Canewdon Church would see major repair works in April, that and other churches should be approached on the possibility of being open on the Heritage Day in August.

Opening of Rayleigh Windmill

Activity was endorsed. Officers confirmed that the preparations for opening would include ensuring that appropriate insurance is in place to cover public access, including the use of the windmill stairs.

Page in Rochford District Matters

The proof copy was endorsed, subject to the picture at the top remaining free of lettering. Members would pass any additional comments to the Civic and Public Relations Officer by the end of the week. In terms of information for future articles, a Member referred to the potential value of contacting the Embassy of Georgia in London and the Maltese Embassy on their arrangements for celebrating St George's Day.

RDC Website

Activity was endorsed.

Other Heritage Activity

Heritage Day – Family Craft and Activity Day at Rayleigh Mount with Links to Local History

Activity was endorsed. The Civic and Public Relations Officer confirmed that the Arts Development Officer would be approached on the possibility of period music being played around the windmill on Heritage Day.

During general discussion of the Mount facility, reference was made to the possibility that local businesses associated with gardening could well be interested in some form of contribution/involvement with the sensory garden. It was noted that this might already have been considered as part of the development of sensory garden proposals. However, officers would raise the suggestion with the Council's Property Maintenance and Highways Manager.

Members were pleased to note that the Mount would see two performances by the Southend Shakespeare Group in July 2006.

Local History Days in Libraries

Activity was endorsed.

Having reviewed the schedule, the Sub-Committee held a general discussion with a view to identifying any further activity that could be appropriate. It was noted that County Councillor Roy Pearson would be making arrangements for a St George's Day themed tea party at Gt Wakering Village Hall on Saturday 22 April. It was agreed that it would be good if there could be some form of themed music at this event and that, in the first instance, officers should approach the Salvation Army on whether they could play for a period at this event and, in view of this year's additional WI input, move on to the WI coffee morning in Rayleigh.

It was agreed that it would be appropriate if the Hawkwell Hockley WI event could include some themed music. It was noted that the son of the President of this WI had some musical involvement. Councillor D G Stansby advised that he would approach the President on the possibilities. Officers would investigate whether a phonographic licence would be required.

The Civic and Public Relations Officer confirmed that, as additional monies had been freed up for the provision of St George display packs, the Chambers of Trade would be reminded of pack availability, and local businesses contacted to encourage them to support the day.

It was noted that arrangements were made for appropriate flags to be flown from Council accommodation on VE Day and VJ Day. It was also noted that the family sponsoring the 200th Trafalgar tree at Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park were descendants of someone who had served on HMS Victory. Members endorsed the observation of the Civic and Public Relations Officer that it could be appropriate for a service to be arranged around this particular sponsorship event.

Reference was made to the fact that London Southend Airport, the majority of which was within Rochford District, had historical connections with the Battle of Britain. There could be merit in linking this connection with Country Park promotional activity.

It was recognised that it was important for any events involving service veterans to be in the context of individual contribution and sacrifice, not glorification of conflict.

A Member referred to the possibility that Heritage Day activity could include schools and libraries facilitating research into the source of local place names.

At the close of the meeting the Civic and Public Relations Officer confirmed that Members of the Sub-Committee would be briefed on finalised event arrangements as necessary. As with last year, there would be a communication with all Councillors to engender support for activities.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am closed at 11.28am.

Chairman

Date