

Windmill Sub-Committee – 1 November 2004

Minutes of the meeting of the **Windmill Sub-Committee** held on **1 November 2004** when there were present:-

Cllr Mrs M J Webster (Chairman)

Cllr A J Humphries
Cllr Mrs J R Lumley

Cllr J M Pullen

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from K Turner, National Trust and M Symes, Historical Society of Rayleigh.

OFFICERS PRESENT

D Timson	- Property Maintenance & Highways Manager
B Broadbent	- Principal Officer (Architecture)
C Coates	- Arts Development Officer
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

ALSO PRESENT

N Grant, Historical Society of Rayleigh
M Hawkins, Historical Society of Rayleigh
K Mark, Conservation Architect
Cllr P Weaver, Rayleigh Town Council

26 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 August 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs M J Webster declared a personal interest in item 7 of the agenda by virtue of being Vice-Chairman of the National Trust Rayleigh Mount Local Committee.

Cllrs Mrs J R Lumley and J M Pullen each declared a personal interest in item 7 of the agenda by virtue of being members of the National Trust Rayleigh Mount Local Committee and of being Members of Rayleigh Town Council.

Cllr A J Humphries declared a personal interest in item 7 of the agenda by virtue of being a Member of Rayleigh Town Council.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

28 UPDATE ON THAMES GATEWAY SOUTH EAST BID

The Sub-Committee considered the exempt report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) advising Members on the outcome of the bid submitted in September 2004 to the Thames Gateway South East for funding to refurbish the Rayleigh Windmill and create a sensory garden on the adjacent land as part of the necessary landscaping of this area.

Confirmation had now been received that the Authority would be awarded a grant of £340,000 from the Thames Gateway South East, to include all works. This would be confirmed by a formal announcement in November 2004. This grant was subject to a condition that required all monies to be spent by 31 March 2005. In addition, £60,000 had been set aside in the Council's budget reserve for works to the Windmill.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to the payment of the Thames Gateway grant, officers advised that the Authority would receive 2 payments from the Gateway, one in February and the final payment in March 2005.

Tenders for the refurbishment work had been sought to prepare a funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. However, the tender had subsequently expired and the contractor had confirmed that there would be an uplift in costs of 3%. In order to comply with the time condition stipulated by Thames Gateway it would be necessary to shorten the original project timescale of 30 weeks, which could potentially lead to up to a further 10% increase in the original costs. The combined funding of £400,000 would, however, be sufficient to complete all refurbishment works to the Windmill and to build the sensory garden.

Officers confirmed that, if work were to commence on the Windmill on 1 December, it should be possible to complete the refurbishment by early April. This would, however, necessitate the Historical Society being able to vacate the Windmill within 2 to 3 weeks and to work with a professional moving/storage company to package up the artefacts in order for them to be stored off site during the refurbishment works. The grant included provision for this.

Members of the Historical Society for Rayleigh confirmed that it would be possible to vacate the windmill within this timescale.

The grant also included provision for the purchase of new display cabinets for displaying artefacts after the refurbishment had been completed and advice would be sought from the Museums in Essex Service in this respect. The Thames Gateway funding allowed the Authority more flexibility with respect to determining what each floor of the Windmill should contain; any final decisions would not be required before April 2005.

It was anticipated that the sensory garden could be achieved in-house. The intention was to create a garden that would use aroma, touch and art work to create an interesting area for people to visit. There would be merit in asking the schools already involved in the National Trust's Guardianship Scheme at Rayleigh Mount to contribute artwork for the garden. The same paving that was outside the Windmill could be used for the sensory garden, which would be fenced off with the same railings that enclosed the Mount, to enable the garden to be secured overnight. Work on the garden would not commence until after completion of the windmill refurbishment.

During debate, there was a general consensus that there would be merit in Holmes Place, the Council's leisure contractor, being responsible for the day to day management of the Windmill, particularly in view of its proximity to The Mill centre.

In concluding the debate Members concurred that membership of the Essex Museums Service should be retained. The advice of the Service would be invaluable in terms of equipping the Windmill appropriately to display local historical artefacts, and of exploring possibilities such as travelling exhibitions.

Recommended to the Community Services Committee

- (1) That the Thames Gateway grant be accepted by this Council and that work be completed on refurbishing the Rayleigh Windmill as quickly as possible after the confirmation of funding in November 2004.
- (2) That the additional project for a sensory garden proceed on land to the rear of the Windmill, and that any necessary consents be sought.
- (3) That negotiations be opened up with the leisure contractor on a possible management fee for running the Windmill and sensory garden as part of the Mill Arts and Crafts Centre and that the outcome be reported back.

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It was further:-

Resolved

- (4) That a further meeting of the Sub-Committee be arranged early in the New Year in order to provide Members with an update on works.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am.

Chairman

Date