

St George's Day Sub-Committee - 22 December 2004

Minutes of the meeting of the **St George's Day Sub-Committee** held on **22 December 2004** when there were present:-

Cllr C A Hungate
Cllr D G Stansby

Cllr Mrs M S Vince
Cllr Mrs M J Webster

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R A Oatham.

VISITING

Councillor T G Cutmore.

OFFICERS PRESENT

Helen Collins - Civic and Public Relations Officer
Yvonne Woodward - Accountancy Manager
John Bostock - Principal Committee Administrator

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Mrs M J Webster was appointed Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

2 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Sub-Committee noted its terms of reference.

3 ST GEORGE'S DAY 2005

The Sub-Committee gave initial consideration to the type of celebrations that could be appropriate for St George's Day 2005 and the involvement of other organisations. In terms of activity by neighbouring authorities, it was noted that Castle Point was theming its civic dinner (which fell on 23 April) and had offered the local St George's Committee use of one of its parks for an event. Southend was holding a civic service in St Mary's Church and making arrangements for a luncheon/dinner with the Mayor, possibly with charity benefits.

It was recognised that, at this stage, there was no specific budget available for any Council led celebration arrangements. In this regard, a realistic approach would need to be taken to the possible scale of events and it would be appropriate for the Council to act as an enabler wherever possible. The time available for preparations was also a significant factor. It was observed that, for future years, there could be benefit in linking St George's Day celebrations with heritage events. It was also observed that the 23 April was a Saturday in 2005, which could help engender community involvement.

Accepting that further consideration would need to be given to specific costs, Members proceeded to identify the types of event and activity that could be introduced.

The Sub-Committee endorsed a suggestion by the Council's Arts Development Officer that there could be merit in facilitating an arts workshop in selected primary schools with a St George's Day theme. Other suggestions raised by Members included:-

- Engendering the full support of local newspapers and radio stations.
- Asking churches and Parish/Town Councils to fly a St. George's flag.
- Some involvement by local musical organisations.
- The introduction of a mascot.
- Encouraging shopkeepers to celebrate. Shops may be prepared to combine to run some type of treasure hunt, with monies donated towards the Chairman's Charity.
- Asking the Women's Institute if they could organise tea/coffee events.
- Contacting local farmers markets on the possibility that they would identify English products as a connection with the day.
- Highlighting the connections of Canewdon Church with the Battle of Agincourt and the significance of Ashingdon Church and the Battle of Ashingdon.
- Perhaps identifying a hall or other venue that could be available for a themed event for Councillors.
- Contact with Golf Clubs on the possibility of flags being flown at Club premises and by golfers (smaller flags).
- Inviting Morris Dancers to be involved.
- Inviting the Chambers of Trade to be involved.
- The identification of sites that could be appropriate for celebration, including areas away from the main towns.
- Being mindful of where costs could perhaps be covered through sponsorship.

It was recognised that, should the Council be expected to consider the identification of an element of funding towards St George's Day, this would need to be raised at the forthcoming Member Budget Awayday on

15 January, following which any proposal could be included in submissions to the Council's Budget Setting meeting on 27 January. Raising the Sub-Committee's ideas during budget setting would facilitate the endorsement of final arrangements when the Sub-Committee finally reports into the next scheduled meeting of Full Council on 22 February 2005.

It was agreed that it would be appropriate for officers to give consideration to likely costs that could be associated with ideas to facilitate a process of prioritisation. If, for example, a figure of £5,000 could be identified for St George's Day, this would need to be applied in the most effective way. It was observed that the suggestion of school workshops, which would cost approximately £1,000, should be given a high priority.

Members recognised that with limited resources the introduction of events across the District would require commitment/involvement from individual Councillors and that it could be appropriate to ask all Members if they have any suggestions for events which they would be willing to take responsibility for and promote (either on their own or with groups of Councillors). In this context, and bearing in mind there would be elections in May, it was recognised that the subject should be viewed as non-political.

Responding to questions, officers advised that:-

- They would investigate whether any monies were available from the funding associated with heritage work at the windmill for the purpose of St. George theming.
- Consideration would be given to dedicating a page of the next edition of Rochford District Matters to St George's Day.
- Contact would be made with Holmes Place to ascertain whether they are able to offer any form of assistance.
- Where there is historical information that could be of interest in connection with St George's Day, this should be known by the Parish/Town Council's within the District.
- In writing out to various organisations to engender support/gauge interest, it could be of value to indicate that the Authority would have a limited amount of bunting/flags available for their use.

In terms of an initial way forward, it was agreed that letters should be prepared for submission to the various organisations/bodies across the District that may be willing to be involved. It was also agreed that a letter should be sent to all Members of the Council in advance of the Awayday indicating that the Sub-Committee was considering various ideas and would be asking for consideration to be given to the provision of an element of funding within the budget setting process.

4 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Sub-Committee was scheduled for Monday 24 January 2005, commencing at 10.30am in Committee Room 4 at the Civic Suite. Consideration could be given to the outcome of budget considerations and associated project prioritisation, together with any initial indications from external bodies.

The Chairman extended best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all present.

The meeting commenced at 2.00pm and closed at 3.19pm.

Chairman

Date