
RAYLEIGH WINDMILL – LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report advises Members on the progress of the refurbishment project, development of the windmill usage, and consultation.
- 1.2 This report also looks at what outcomes the Council would expect from the potential formal partnership with the National Trust.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The refurbishment contract commenced in December 2004, with the main internal works commencing in January 2005. A detailed list of items progressed is included at Appendix A.
- 2.2 Initial meetings have been held with The National Trust and Soundtrack and outcomes are still being developed.

3 DEVELOPING FUTURE USE

- 3.1 The long term viability of this project is dependent on attracting community groups, other organisations, Chambers of Trade etc. into and using the facility. It is, therefore, proposed that targeted meetings be held with various interested groups at this stage, to identify their aspirations within the project beyond those already agreed.

National Trust

- 3.2 Discussions will be taking place with the National Trust about the benefits of the partnership and progress will be reported verbally.

Information Technology (IT)

- 3.3 The discussions are ongoing and will involve the Essex Museums Service and allied services, to ensure that appropriate systems are put in place.
- 3.4 Much work needs to be completed for the educational package, museum displays and other internal detailing before the Windmill is finally opened to the public. The Arts Development Officer (ADO) is working with the Museums Service, Libraries, Education and other bodies to facilitate these elements. The Interpretation for the displays will need to be developed, including a collections policy. This needs to be developed by the Rayleigh Historical Society, supported by the Museums Service, with assistance from the Council's ADO. This work will be ongoing after the opening of the Windmill as the archive is built up.
- 3.5 At this stage it has been identified that there are insufficient staff resources to carry out this development work in the shortened timescale for this project. It is, therefore, proposed to employ a Consultant to project manage museum

development work in order that the museum can re-open by April 2006. Essex Museums Service will advise on the availability of such consultants. A verbal update will be provided at this meeting, including an estimate of the costs for a consultant.

The Sensory Garden

- 3.6 A draft layout will be provided at the meeting. However, the timeframe for this element is to open in December 2005. In order to meet this a Planning application and Conservation application will need to be made following this meeting.

4 FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF THE WINDMILL

- 4.1 Action on this issue will be undertaken once the necessary information is to hand that will determine the type of management arrangement required in relation to this item

Ongoing Publicity

- 4.2 As part of the ongoing publicity for the project, it is planned to include regular features outlining progress on the project in Rochford District Matters and a regular photographic update on the website.
- 4.3 The removal of the sails received television coverage from Anglia TV, and good newspaper coverage from the Echo. An item on this was posted on the Council's website on 3 February and will remain until another item is prepared.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Risk

- 5.1 The project offers the ability to realise the tourism, cultural and historic potential of this site and upgrade the area generally.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Works to the Sensory garden are estimated at £50,000. I.T costs are estimated at £25,000, fees and other costs make up the balance to £400,000, met from the Thames Gateway Grant of £340,000 and the Rochford District Council Capital budget of £60,000.
- 6.2 Costs of the consultant can be met from savings in the Contracted Services salary budgets for 2004/05, currently estimated at £20,000.

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There is a legal obligation to maintain the Windmill as it is a Grade 2 listed building.

8 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RESOLVES** to note the progress of this project.

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Background Papers:

None.

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APPENDIX A

Progress report on Windmill Restoration

Full structural survey carried out

Hoarding erected around site and temporary footpath provided to London Hill

Full survey carried out by Millwright

Collapse and separation of main shaft from brake wheel rectified

Base of ground floor posts exposed and new foundations are being constructed

Joist and beam bearings exposed, padstones being provided where necessary and stainless steel hangers being built in

Stocks and sails removed for inspection and repair or replacement and to permit erection of scaffold (about to commence)

Additional timberwork carried out in cap to provide stability and safer access