

## **Windmill Sub-Committee – 31 March 2006**

---

Minutes of the meeting of the **Windmill Sub-Committee** held on **31 March 2006** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr Mrs M J Webster

Cllr C J Lumley

Cllr J M Pullen

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr N Grant, Mr S Lowy and Mr M Stone.

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

D Timson	- Property Maintenance and Highways Manager
B Broadbent	- Principal Officer (Architecture)
L Jefferys	- Leisure Client Officer
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

### **ALSO PRESENT**

M Atkinson	- National Trust
J Churchill	- Historical Society of Rayleigh
M Hawkins	- Historical Society of Rayleigh
S Skinner	- National Trust
Cllr Mrs P Weaver	- Rayleigh Town Council

## **44 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs C J Lumley and J M Pullen each declared a personal interest in Rayleigh Windmill by virtue of membership of the National Trust Rayleigh Mount Local Committee and of Rayleigh Town Council.

Cllr Mrs M J Webster declared a personal interest in Rayleigh Windmill by virtue of being Vice-Chairman of the National Trust Rayleigh Mount Local Committee and a Member of Essex County Council and a member of the Museums in Essex Committee.

## **46 RAYLEIGH WINDMILL**

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) on the development of the sensory garden, implementation of management arrangements for the windmill, setting the official opening date and on the issue of applying for a wedding licence for the

windmill.

It was noted that management arrangements for the windmill were almost in place. The Management Group would be chaired by the Council's Leisure Client Officer. There were some minor details to resolve following a risk assessment conducted by the Council's Health & Safety Manager. This had resulted in a delay in finalising the stewards' packs. These issues should be resolved soon and the packs would be issued to stewards at stewards training sessions.

The official opening of the windmill would take place on Thursday, 1 June. This had been planned with a view to not coinciding too closely with District Elections and with the opening of Rayleigh Leisure Centre.

Officers confirmed that construction work on the sensory garden should be substantially completed by the end of the day. Planting would then begin. It was anticipated that by the official opening on 1 June the garden should already start to look fairly established. Members were advised that Rayleigh Town Council had not yet agreed to any sponsorship, but were giving the matter consideration.

It was further noted that, although a competition would take place for fine art students at South East Essex College to design a tactile piece of sculpture in wood for the garden, this would not be ready in time for the official opening.

A room had been temporarily acquired on the Brook Road Industrial Estate for the Historical Society to sort through all their documents. The Society was aiming to compile sufficient material from this exercise to include in an exhibition at the official opening of the windmill.

It was noted that the Historical Society would liaise directly with the Council's legal services department with respect to minor issues relating to the new licence agreement. In addition, the draft partnership agreement would be converted into a formal document which would be cleared by the National Trust's legal department and the Local Committee with a view to the agreement being signed as part of the formal opening ceremony on 1 June.

Further investigation would need to be undertaken into the possibility of licensing the windmill for weddings. The main obstacle currently was that the ground floor room to be used for wedding ceremonies must be able to accommodate at least 25 people. The risk assessment had, however, resulted in setting a limit of 18 people for the ground floor. The Management Group would need to look into this issue in more detail.

Officers also advised that the outcome of the grant bid made to Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE) was still unknown, although officers were actively pursuing this. This was causing difficulties, as funding was needed for the purchase of display cabinets for the mounting of displays and exhibitions in the windmill.

Temporary displays would therefore be co-ordinated, as a contingency measure, to coincide with the official opening of the windmill. The Historical Society and the National Trust would mount such exhibitions on existing display boards.

Suitable cabinets had been identified which would cost approximately £20,000 to purchase. Two alternative sources of grants for purchasing these had been found as a result of the delay with respect to the TGSE bid. Bids were therefore currently being formulated to the Local Heritage Initiative and the Foundation for Sports and the Arts.

It was noted that the Council had acquired Grantfinder software which collates information about all available grants nationally. It was anticipated that Grant Net, a free online funding search tool, would soon be available to voluntary organisations via the Council's website.

Members were advised that the Historical Society had been awarded a grant of £3,209 to buy software enabling them to tour around the district recording residents' verbal histories. This would prove invaluable in compiling future exhibitions and would add further variety to the Society's archives.

In addition to the events planned for the windmill and sensory garden included in the officer's report, the following was noted:-

- It was hoped that the Street Diversion event on 20 May would be broadcast live on the Council's website.
- The windmill would participate in National Windmills Day on 13 May, organised by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). The windmill would be open to the public that day and the windmill would be linked, courtesy of the Amateur Radio Association, via radio broadcast to other windmills around the country.
- The windmill would be awarded a heritage award in this year's Green Apple Awards on 15 May. It was hoped that the award could be on display at the official opening.

During Member debate, there was a consensus that officers should write to the Southend Museum requesting an inventory of Rayleigh artefacts on loan to the museum. Members felt that there would be merit in some of these items being used in future exhibitions at the windmill.

The Chairman thanked Members, advisers and officers for all their hard work in achieving the restoration of the windmill and developing a future strategy for its use.

### **Resolved**

That a verbal update be made to the Community Services Committee on grant funding for the museum.

It was further:-

### **Recommended to the Community Services Committee**

That progress be noted on the development of this project and that the strategy for opening the windmill and sensory garden be agreed. (CD(F&ES))

The meeting closed at 11.40 am.

Chairman .....

Date .....