

Scrutiny Task and Finish Panel Agenda



Leisure Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel Tuesday, 12th September, 2006

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 6.30 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Hendry, Research and Democratic Services
Tel. 01992 564246, email: ahendry@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors Mrs H Harding (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks (Vice-Chairman), M Colling, Mrs A Grigg, Mrs J Lea, J Markham, S Murray, Mrs P K Rush, Mrs P Smith, P Turpin and J M Whitehouse

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

(Head of Research and Democratic Services) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Head of Research and Democratic Services). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

4. NOTES FROM LAST MEETING - 31 JULY 2006 (Pages 5 - 10)

To note and agree the attached minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2006.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 11 - 14)

Chairman/Lead Officer) To note the attached updated Terms of Reference and associated Work Programme. The Panel are asked at each meeting to review both documents.

6. FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF RODING VALLEY MEADOWS LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (Pages 15 - 16)

BACKGROUND

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee have established a Task & Finish Panel, to review options for the Future Management of the Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve, once the current Agreement with Essex Wildlife Trust expires in April 2007. The Panel will have had the opportunity to visit the Reserve on the 8th August, to see the site first hand.

CONSULTATION MEETING

It is proposed that the Essex Wildlife Trust will be given an opportunity to formally present the case for an Extension/Renewal of their Management Agreement. The Trust will be asked to detail what added value and expertise they can bring to the management of the Reserve. The Panel will be able to ask questions of the Trust and seek further details.

After the Trust presentation the Panel have requested that the Council's own In-House Countryside Management Service, 'Countrycare' present the implications of the alternative option of bringing the Reserve back into direct Council control. Again, the Panel will have the opportunity to question them.

The Panel would also like to seek the views of both the Reserve Management Committee and the Liaison Committee, on the current arrangements and what they feel could be in the future best interests of the Reserve.

Finally, the Panel would like to speak with any local people who use the Reserve to establish their feelings. Note that it is not the intention to have this initial part of the evening as an open 'Public Meeting', rather it is to invite those individuals who have expressed a desire to voice an opinion to attend. This will have to be by invitation due to constraints of time. However, the Panel shall also welcome written submissions.

A proposed Timetable for the meeting is as attached.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Panel to note:

- The visit to Copped Hall Charity Fun Run on Sunday 17 September 2006; and
- To hold a meeting at the Civic Offices on 28 September 2006 with the Head teacher of King Harold School about the future management of the Waltham Abbey Sports Centre.

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**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF LEISURE TASK AND FINISH SCRUTINY PANEL
HELD ON MONDAY, 31 JULY 2006
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.00 - 9.20 PM**

Members Present:	Mrs H Harding (Chairman), M Colling, Mrs A Grigg (Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder), Mrs J Lea, J Markham, S Murray, Mrs P K Rush, Mrs P Smith and J M Whitehouse
Other members present:	Mrs D Collins, Mrs A Cooper, Mrs A Haigh, Mrs M Sartin, C Whitbread and Mrs J H Whitehouse
Apologies for Absence:	Mrs P Brooks
Officers Present	J Chandler (Sports Development Officer), D Macnab (Head of Leisure Services), Mrs L MacNeill (Assistant Head of Leisure Services) and A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer)
Also in attendance:	(none)

8. SUBSITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

None reported.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor S Murray declared a general personal but non-prejudicial interest by virtue of being the Council's representative on the Roding valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve Management Board and the nature reserve having a partnership with Roding Valley High School.

Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor Mrs Grigg declared a general personal but non-prejudicial interest by virtue of being the Council's representative on the Roding valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve Management Board.

10. NOTES FROM LAST MEETING - 13 JULY 2006

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July was agreed as a correct record, subject to the addition of Councillor Mrs J Lea's apologies for absence.

11. TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel noted the Terms of Reference and Work Programme. The Head of Leisure Services, in answer to a question, confirmed that the agreed timetable was still viable.

12. FUTURE MEETINGS AND PLANNED VISITS

VISIT TO RODING VALLEY MEADOWS LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

TUESDAY 8th AUGUST – 7P.M.

This visit, which will be conducted by Essex Wildlife Trust, will enable Members of the Panel to view the Reserve and discuss the numerous practical issues in terms of Conservation and management. Members are asked to rendezvous at the Reserve's Car Park, adjacent to the David Lloyd Centre, off Roding Lane, Chigwell, at 7p.m. Appropriate walking shoes should be worn. It is anticipated that the visit will take approximately 1½ hours.

VISIT TO DONNY SOUTH EVENT, NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD

SUNDAY 13th AUGUST – 1.45P.M.

This visit is designed to give Members an insight into the key considerations in hosting Major Outdoor Events at North Weald Airfield. The Donny South Event, is a "Custom Car" Event aimed principally at a young male audience. Aspects of the Event itself are of an adult nature and therefore unsuitable for young children. Tickets are pre-sold up to a year in advance, but the Event also attracts visitors, who pay on the day, from across the region.

Members are invited to report to the Airfield Gatehouse, in Merlin Way at 1.45p.m. where parking will be provided. Gerry Kehoe, the Council's Marketing and Events Manager, and Laura MacNeill, Assistant Head of Leisure Services, will welcome Members and provide an initial Briefing, prior to visiting the main Show Area.

Members will be given an escorted Tour of the Event where issues in relation to hosting events at the Airfield with its diversity of uses, often with conflicting demands can be explored. An opportunity will also be provided to meet Representatives of the Event Organisers towards the end of the visit, to hear from a Hirer's perspective. It is anticipated that the visit will conclude by 3.30p.m.

A full Briefing Pack and Itinerary will be despatched to Members in the week before the Event. Please could you confirm attendance with Gerry Kehoe on **Tel: 01992 534231**

VISIT TO COPPED HALL CHARITY FUN RUN

SUNDAY 17th SEPTEMBER - TIME TO BE CONFIRMED

Building on the success of their initial Event last year, the Rotary Club of Epping are organising another Charity Fun Run on the 17th September 2006. Leisure Services have a history of co-operative working with the Rotary Club through support in the past to the Epping Carnival and Fireworks.

Leisure Services involvement this year is to provide technical advice, to lend some limited site equipment to enhance the Event, and some staff resource to help with the practical management. It was felt that this Community Event would provide Members with an opportunity to view some of the equipment Leisure Services previously has used to assist Community Events. In addition it will also give an opportunity to hear

from the Organisers of such Events as to the type of support and role they would possibly like, from the Council in the future. A full Briefing Pack and Itinerary will be forwarded to Members in advance of the day. Again, confirmation of Numbers would be appreciated.

TASK AND FINISH PANEL MEETING

CIVIC OFFICES TUESDAY 12th SEPTEMBER 2006 – 7P.M.

The Panel will have had the opportunity to visit the Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve to see the site at first hand. It is proposed that the Essex Wildlife Trust are invited to this meeting to formally present the case for an extension/renewal of their Management Agreement. The Trust will be asked to detail what added value and expertise they can bring to the management of the Reserve.

It is also proposed that the Council's Countrycare Service and Grange Farm Trust are also invited to separately present the option of bringing the Reserve back into direct Council control.

It may be useful to invite the Management and Liaison Committees, as well as the Grange Farm Trust to be present and share their views.

In addition, as previously agreed, if there were any local people who feel strongly about future management options, they could also be invited to attend. The EFDC's Public Relations section is to be asked to publicise this to ensure that the public are aware of the meeting.

TASK AND FINISH PANEL MEETING

THURSDAY – 28th SEPTEMBER – CIVIC OFFICES 7P.M.

The Head teacher at King Harold School, Mr Feehan has indicated that he and the school Bursar would like to undertake the initial consultation with the Panel on the future management of the Sports Centre, post the Dual Use Agreement Termination in September 2007. This meeting would also offer the Leisure Management Contractor SLM, the opportunity to talk informally with the Panel as to what opportunities an External Management Contractor may present. The panel should be aware that if SLM are minded to bid for the management of the Sport Centre then the Panel may be legally constrained in discussing the future plans for the Sports Centre with them.

In addition, post the visits to the Major and Community Events, a presentation on options for the Council's future role in managing and/or supporting Events, will be given.

13. PRESENTATION ON ARTS IN EPPING FOREST

The Epping Forest Arts gave a presentation on the current state of the arts and art development in EFDC to the Panel. Debra Coates-Reynolds the Acting Arts Officer, Joanne Thompson the Dance Development Artist, and two Community Artists, Sofie

Layton and Sonja Zelic, presented the audio, visual presentation. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes. At the end of the presentation the Panel was supplied with a pack of facts and figures. Also in attendance were three visitors who are intimately involved with the arts in the district. They were: Linda Tona, Arts/Activities Co-Ordinator at Sherrell House; Chris Burns, Head of Ongar Music School and composer/musician; and Katherine Jackson, manager of IC Youth Dance Group at Ivy Chimneys School. They were available to talk privately to the members of the panel during the interval of the presentation.

Following the presentation the panel asked the following questions:

Councillor Murray asked how the Epping Forest Arts specifically engaged with the “culturally impoverished” children of the district. He was told that they worked with pupils from the Pupils Referral Unit and Youth Services and not just work with ‘A’ level students. However it was accepted that there is a need to readdress the work that the Arts Team do with young people. Next year Epping Arts will be starting a new project called ‘Homeline’, which they hope will involve a lot of young people and their parents.

Councillor Mrs Smith asked if the West Essex Dance Partnership was a new thing. She was told that it has been established for some time and works in conjunction with Epping Forest Arts, The Playhouse Theatre and Essexdance.

Councillor Haigh asked about the demographic changes occurring and now that more and more elderly people live on their own – how do Epping Forest Arts plan to reach them. The section was looking to develop this area of work, they had identified that a big issue was transport and were looking to work with Community Transport to progress this area of work.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse asked about the costs involved and how were they prioritised. He was told that their aims and objectives in the BVPP set priorities. Some of the funding was match funded at Government and County level. The Gross Expenditure was just over £320,000 with a net expenditure of between £270,000 and £275,000.

The Arts team wanted to point out that they were not running with a full team currently and arts projects were labour intensive; whenever they start one project there is always another one on the go, and so it snowballs. Their projects, by necessity, have an intensive staff to client ratio.

Councillor Harding thanked the group for their interesting and informative presentation.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The panel noted that they were next scheduled to:

- Visit the Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve on Tuesday 8 August 2006 at 7pm;
- Visit the Donny South Event at North Weald Airfield on Sunday 13 August at 1.45 pm.

- Have a meeting at the Civic Offices on 12 September 2006 about the Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve and to talk to relevant concerned parties;
- Visit the Copped Hall Charity Fun run on Sunday 17 September 2006; and
- Hold a meeting at the Civic Officer on 28 September 2006 with the Head teacher of King Harold School about the future management of the Waltham Abbey Sports Centre.

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Term of Reference:

1. To consider the four topics for Review as identified by Overview and Scrutiny Committee i.e.
 - i) Future Management of Waltham Abbey Sports Centre
 - ii) Review of the future Management of the Roding Valley Meadows local Nature Reserve
 - iii) Review of Arts Development in the District and
 - iv) The District Council's Role and involvement in Outdoor and Community Events.
2. To gather evidence and information in relation to the four topics through the receipt of data, presentations and by participation in fact finding visits.
3. To consult with Partners, Agencies, Stakeholders and Users of the services under review, to establish key issues and future need.
4. To evaluate all relevant facts in relation to the topics under review in an objective way and to produce recommendations for future action accordingly.
5. To establish whether there are any resource implications arising out of the topics under review and advise Cabinet for inclusion in the Budget Process 2007/08
6. To report back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee at appropriate intervals and to submit any final reports in the proposed Corporate Format for consideration by O & S, the Cabinet and Council.

Aims and Objectives of Review:

LEISURE TASK AND FINISH PANEL: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Key Issues:		
TIMESCALE	ESTIMATED	ACTUAL
Commencement		13 July 2006
<u>Finish</u> 1. Interim report to include any budgetary items for the next budget round. 2. Review of the Future management of the Roding Valley Meadows local Nature Reserve. 3. Future Management of Waltham Abbey Sports Centre. 4. Review of the Arts Development in the District. 5. District Council's role and involvement in Outdoor and Community Events.	By 5 October 2006 January 2007 January 2007 Feb-March 2007 Feb-March 2007	
Reports.	As above	

LEISURE TASK AND FINISH PANEL: WORK PROGRAMME

Proposed Date	Item	Current Position
Thursday 13 July 2006	Initial Meeting of the Panel. Scope and Terms of Reference	Scope and Terms of Reference agreed. To be put up to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Tuesday 18 July 2006	Visit to Waltham Abbey Sports Centre and Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool	Fact finding visit carried out by four members of the panel.
Monday 31 July 2006	Presentation on the Arts. Follow up discussion from visits to WASC & WASP	Presentation received by Panel and other councillors.
Tuesday 8 August 2006	Visit to Roding Valley Meadows LNR	Visit took place.
Sunday 13 August 2006	Visit to Donney South Event, North weald Airfield.	Visit took place.
Tuesday 12 September 2006	Meeting of the Panel and Essex Wildlife Trust, EFDC's Countryside Service, Management and Liaison Committee, the Grange Farm Trust and Local People	
Sunday 17 September 2006	Visit to Copped Hall Charity Fun Run	
Thursday 28 September 2006	Meeting of the Panel and the Headteacher of King Harold School and the school Bursar and Leisure Management Contractors SLM	

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**TIMETABLE FOR CONSULTATION MEETING
FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF RODING VALLEY MEADOWS
LOCAL NATURE RESERVE – TASK AND FINISH PANEL**

6.30p.m.	Task and Finish Panel Convenes in Council Chamber
6.35p.m. to 7.10p.m.	Consultation with Local Users and Liaison Committee
7.15pm. to 7.45p.m.	Consultation with LNR Management Committee
7.50p.m. to 8.45p.m.	Presentation by Essex Wildlife Trust and Discussion Session with Essex Wildlife Trust
8.50p.m. to 9.30p.m.	Presentation by Countrycare and Discussion Session with Countrycare
9.35p.m.to 10.00p.m.	Panel Discussion and Consideration of Information and Views Presented.

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