

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-012-2010/11.

Date of meeting: 19 July 2010.



**Epping Forest
District Council**

**Portfolio: Leisure and Wellbeing.
Finance and Economic Development.**

Subject: Shared Olympics Officer Post.

Responsible Officer: Derek Macnab 01992 554040.

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall 01992 564470.

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That Members note the progress being made in relation to the construction of the Lea Valley White Water Canoe Centre and the potential Legacy Benefits arising from the 2012 Olympic Games; and**
- (2) That Members agree to fund a contribution of £10,000 per annum from the District Development Fund over the next two years, subject to formal agreement of the post's work programme, to fund the appointment of a shared Olympics Officer.**

Executive Summary:

The Olympic White Water Canoe Centre, currently under construction on the border between Waltham Abbey and Waltham Cross, has the potential to leave significant legacy benefits for the local area. The Council is an active partner in the multi-agency Olympic Legacy Partnership Board, chaired by the Leader of Broxbourne Council. This report seeks a contribution from Epping Forest District Council to a shared Olympics Officer post. The role of the Officer will be to deliver projects and promote actions to ensure that the optimum positive outcomes are achieved by the canoe centre in terms of economic development and regeneration, environmental improvement and tourism.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To enable the Council to confirm to the Legacy Partnership Board whether they are prepared to contribute to the funding of a shared Olympics Officer post.

Other Options for Action:

Not to contribute to the cost of the shared post. This may result in the focus of the work programme shifting to Broxbourne and the Hertfordshire area.

Report:

1. The Lee Valley White Water Canoe Centre is being built by the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) on the border between Essex and Hertfordshire. Although the site itself is within the Borough of Broxbourne, the new facilities are in close proximity to Waltham Abbey.
2. The Centre will host the canoe slalom events over four days, Sunday 29 July to Wednesday 3 August, during the 2012 London Olympic Games. After 2012, the venue will be owned and funded by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority as a sporting and leisure facility, for public participation in canoeing and white water rafting, as well as hosting major competitions and elite training events.

3. The ODA started construction on the venue in July 2009. Works on the canoe courses are well underway with the 160m intermediate/training course nearing completion and the 300m Olympic Competition Course taking shape. The structure of the two storey facilities building is also now complete, with internal fit out work now started. The target completion day for the whole project is the 1 October 2010.

4. Uniquely amongst Olympic venues, the Canoe Centre will be made available for public use in advance of the games themselves. A “soft opening” is proposed for the facility in 2011, for Thursdays – Sundays of each week. Following the games time occupation in 2012, full scale operation by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority will start in 2013. A number of initiatives are already underway with local schools to enable local young people to have first use of the facilities. The ODA has a communication strategy in place to advise local people of progress. In addition, a number of tours of both the Canoe Venue and the main Olympic site in Stratford have been arranged.

5. Clearly the provision of an Olympic venue and the profile it will achieve during the games, coupled with the legacy of having a world class sports facility on the edge of the District, can have significant benefits. In order to maximise the potential, an Olympic Legacy Board has been established. Chaired by the Leader of Broxbourne Council, the Board has representation from the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, Hertfordshire County Council, the Olympic Delivery Agency, the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games, the East of England Development Agency, Nations and Regions East, Enfield Council, Essex County Council and Waltham Abbey Town Council. Epping Forest District Council is represented by the Council’s nominated Member Olympic Champion, Councillor Liz Webster and the Deputy Chief Executive.

6. The Board has identified a number of work streams namely Economic Development, Community Engagement, Tourism and Visitors, Communications, Regeneration or Environmental Improvement, and Sports Development. Each working group is led by one of the partners. Given that the venue’s post games business plan is predicted on attracting thousands of users a year, and that Waltham Abbey has a strong day visitor offer in terms of local attractions, the District Council has indicated that they wish to play a leading role in the area of tourism.

7. To date, whilst structures have been put in place, real practical progress has been hampered by a lack of dedicated capacity within the various interested parties. To this end Broxbourne and Hertfordshire County Council have each agreed to contribute £20,000 per annum over the next two years, up to the time of the Olympic Games themselves, to appoint a dedicated Olympics Officer. The focus of the role (Draft Job Description attached as Appendix 1) is to drive forward initiatives and co-ordinate actions to maximise the potential legacy benefits of the venue. Epping Forest District Council and the London Borough of Enfield have also been asked to contribute financially to the cost and practical work of the post.

8. An opportunity, therefore, presents itself to influence the role, thus ensuring that the District has a real say in the delivery of a programme of work around the venue. The work programme envisaged will focus on Economic Development, Tourism and Regeneration. It is understood between the partners that the work programme will need to be formally mutually agreed and focus on real quantifiable practical outcomes.

9. The Council has now received a sum of £72,000 DDF, as yet unallocated, in the form of Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Grant (LABGI). Given the potential benefit to local businesses, particularly with respect to day visitors and tourism, it is proposed that a contribution of £20,000, i.e. £10,000 per annum over two years is made to part fund the Olympic Officer Post. Not only could this greatly assist the local economy in Waltham Abbey, given the anticipated number of visitors to the Canoe Venue after the games (estimated up to 70,000 per annum), but also the District generally, in terms of increased tourism spend.

Resource Implications:

£72,000 LABGI remains unallocated. It is likely that this grant will be the last that the Council receives in the current economic climate. An allocation could be made totalling £20,000 (£10,000 per annum in 2010/11 and 2011/12) to ensure that the District has influence in this important role. If other partners contribute and the salary costs are fully met, then any residual funding could be used to fund jointly agreed initiatives. The post will be on a temporary fixed term basis.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Borough of Broxbourne will be the employing body for the post. The role falls within the powers invested in the Council by the Community Wellbeing Act 2000.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

Significant amenity improvements in relation to the local area could flow from the development of the White Water Canoe Centre. The venue itself has been designed to minimise its environmental impact. As a diversionary activity for local young people, the centre could play a role in reducing anti-social behaviour.

Consultation Undertaken:

With the Olympic Legacy Board.

Background Papers:

Minutes of Legacy Partnership Board and Job Description/Person Specification.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

There is a risk that the Council will not maximise the potential benefits of the Olympic White Water Canoe Venue unless additional capacity is provided.

Equality and Diversity

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

Whilst Canoe Slalom will not feature in the 2010 Paralympic Games, the Canoe Centre will be fully compliant with respect to the requirements of the DDA.

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
N/A.

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
N/A.

Olympics Officer

Draft Job Description

Purpose of Job

To pursue initiatives and to co-ordinate actions, in liaison with partner agencies, to ensure that the Borough of Broxbourne, Epping Forest District and North Enfield obtain the optimum potential benefits from the development of the Olympics White Water Canoe Course in Waltham Cross (Lee Valley White Water Centre).

Main tasks

1. To work with partner agencies to deliver projects and to promote actions which will ensure that the Borough of Broxbourne, Epping Forest District and North Enfield and the surrounding locality, achieve the optimum benefits from the development of the Lee Valley White Water Centre in Waltham Cross in terms of economic development and regeneration, environmental improvements, sports and leisure development and publicity and promotion.
2. Co-ordinate with partner agencies including Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils, the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, Epping Forest District Council, Waltham Abbey Town Council, EEDA, LOGOC, the ODA and the London Borough of Enfield to ensure the effective delivery of a range of inter-related projects which will establish the Lee Valley as a major leisure destination.
3. Support the work of the inter agency Legacy Board preparing agendas and papers for the meetings and work with lead officers on the preparation and implementation of action plans for the identified key themes of:
 - a. Economic Development
 - b. Tourism
 - c. Regeneration
 - d. Sports development
 - e. Community engagement
 - f. Communications
4. Identify and pursue funding opportunities to support the implementation of actions which will help to secure the Olympics legacy.
5. Work with developers and landowners to identify and deliver regeneration projects which will support the delivery of the Olympics legacy.
6. Work with partners to ensure ongoing liaison with the local community, including schools, to ensure that it is aware of, and benefits from, the opportunity presented through the development of the Lee Valley White Water Centre.
7. Input to the development of policy documents to ensure that they recognise and promote the opportunities presented in a consistent and co-ordinated manner and provide the strategic framework for ongoing actions.
8. Work with partner agencies to implement schemes to both improve the physical appearance of the locality and to promote the Olympic Games and the associated opportunities.

9. Generally ensure that the Legacy Board's actions are promoted and publicised through the implementation of an effective Communications Strategy which will include regular press releases, updates to the Council's website and the publication of promotional leaflets.
10. Work with colleagues on the co-ordination and implementation of the Waltham Cross Renaissance Strategy ensuring that projects and ongoing routine maintenance work are actioned in accordance with agreed timescales.

This is a fixed term 2 year contract working 37 hours per week. The post, which is jointly funded by the Borough of Broxbourne, Epping Forest District Council and Hertfordshire County Council will be hosted by the Borough of Broxbourne and the successful applicant will report directly to ?.

	Essential	Desirable
EXPERIENCE		
Experience of working at a senior level delivering complex inter agency projects	x	
Proven policy development skills	x	
Good project management skills	x	
Proven experience of delivering economic regeneration and/or environmental improvement projects		x
SKILLS / ABILITIES		
Good communication skills with a proven ability to engage effectively on complex issues to a range of stakeholders.	x	
Ability to organise and keep records effectively		x
Good interpersonal skills	x	
Able to work in a logical manner	x	
Good IT skills	x	
KNOWLEDGE		
Knowledge of the policy development process	x	
General knowledge of local authority functions		x
Commercial awareness of the private sector		x
QUALIFICATIONS		
Educated to degree or similar level with a high level of literacy skills	x	
PERSONAL QUALITIES		
Ability to work flexibly, alone, on own initiative and with minimal supervision	x	
Able to meet objectives and strict deadlines	x	
Enthusiastic and motivated	x	
Methodical and accurate	x	
SPECIAL CONDITIONS		
Willingness to work evenings when required	x	
Full driving licence and own vehicle		x