

Report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting: 12 July 2011

SCRUTINY

 Epping Forest District Council

Portfolio: Leisure and Wellbeing

Subject: Legacy Benefits of the 2012 Olympics and Paralympic Games

Responsible Officer: Derek Macnab (01992-564051).

Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Hendry (01992-564246)

Recommendations:

To note the work undertaken with a range of partners, to include the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, to maximise the legacy benefits for the District, of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Executive Summary:

The East of England was one of the foremost supporters of the London 2012 Olympic Bid, with Essex being a strong contributor in helping the Region to register the highest level of public support across the whole of the United Kingdom. The Economic Impact Study prepared as part of the Olympic Bid submission, projected that the benefit to the County could be in the region of £139M.

In addition to the economic benefits, the experience of other host cities, indicate that there are equally significant social benefits to be realised. This is with respect to increased sports participation, volunteering, tourism and cultural opportunities and the inspirational effect of the games, in particular, for young people.

This report summarises the range of initiatives that Epping Forest District Council, along with partners, are engaged in, to ensure that the legacy benefits of the Games are maximised. The report has also recently been to Audit & Governance Committee, who were also seeking an assurance that Legacy benefits were being maximised.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their last meeting requested a report on what the District Council and partners, in particular, the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, were doing to maximise the benefit of the 2012 Olympic Games.

Other Options for Action:

None

Report:

1. Epping Forest is well placed geographically in terms of access to the main Olympic Park in Stratford and, in particular, the Lee Valley White Water Centre, located only some 150 metres across the County border between Waltham Abbey and Waltham Cross. Essex will also

host the Olympic Mountain Bike Event at Hadleigh Castle in Castle Point. Therefore, whilst there are a number of ongoing concerns around congestion, particularly in relation to the Central Line, (where officers are liaising with the London Underground), the District is well placed to take advantage of the 2012 Games.

2. Whilst Epping Forest from the outset, has been involved in a pan Essex approach to Olympic and Paralympics Legacy, through the work of the Essex Working Group and the Nation and Regions East Group, (the Acting Chief Executive is a Member of the Essex Legacy Board) inevitably due to its close proximity, much of the focus has been around the Lee Valley White Water Centre, which will be hosting the Canoe Slalom Events. The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority has played a lead role in the establishment of the venue and, in addition, to part funding the Centre, will undertake responsibility for its management and financial performance of the facility.

3. The following sections of the report, which have been broken down under a number of thematic headings are intended to give an insight into current Olympic related initiatives across the District.

Construction and Procurement Opportunities

4. The Olympic Delivery Agency (ODA) are responsible for the provision of all the Olympic Games Venues whereas the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) are responsible for the organisation and management of the event. The ODA therefore has let the majority of construction and infrastructure contracts, whilst the LOCOG are still focusing on procuring services for the needs of the event itself, from sports equipment to catering.

5. In January 2008, the District Council in conjunction with Business Link East, organised a well attended Business Breakfast to introduce local companies to the CompeteFor website. This key website is where games related contract opportunities are advertised, as well as the means of expressing interest in ongoing opportunities through the supply chain and registering as a sub-contractor. A number of West Essex Companies have been successful in winning Olympic construction contracts for example, Camfaud Concrete Pumps based in Thornwood, Blockwork Manufacturer Lignacite, in Roydon and Hoppings Softwood Products in Harlow. Other companies such as LCDR Ltd in Brentwood/Ongar have been successful in winning Management Consultancy Services.

6. In terms of capitalising on the remaining opportunities becoming available through LOCOG for games time related services, the Council's Town Centre Manager in liaison with officers from Herts, Essex and Broxbourne, recently organised a Business Seminar on the 16 March at the Waltham Abbey Marriott. At the event local businesses were able to participate in a range of seminars designed to assist them, not only in competing for Olympic related opportunities, but also on how to capitalise on any post games legacy opportunities.

7. A further event "London 2012 and Essex Procurement Business Breakfast" was held on 30th June. This event was run in partnership with Harlow and Uttlesford District Councils, Essex County Council, the Federation of Small Businesses and Essex Chamber of Commerce.

Employment and Training

8. The ODA has given a commitment to all the host Boroughs, that employment and training opportunities would be made available for local people. This has been true of the Lee Valley White Water Centre, where the main contractor, Morrisons Construction, has offered a number of apprenticeships to young people. The White Water Centre, uniquely amongst Olympic Venues, has been opened for use by the public pre-games, primarily for White Water Rafting, where currently approximately 500 people per week are participating. A range of full time and part-time workers are employed by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority at the Centre, ranging from rafting guides to administration and catering staff.

Volunteering

9. In addition to paid employment, the management of the 2012 Olympic Games will involve in the region of 70,000 volunteers. A number of these volunteers will need to have specific skills, such as medical staff etc, but the majority will be trained to undertake a wide range of roles from marshalling to general welcome guides. Many of the volunteering opportunities will not necessarily be in the Olympic Park but in Central London and at the major gateways to the Country. For example, Essex volunteers will meet and greet visitors to Stansted Airport and Harwich Port. It is the intention that a number of specific event volunteers will be recruited locally to support the actual operation of the Olympic Canoe Event at Waltham Abbey. This will provide an excellent experience for local people to become engaged. Further details are awaited from LOCOG.

Economic Development and Regeneration

10. The Lee Valley White Water Centre, constructed at a cost of some £33M represents a significant investment in the local economy, and should have ongoing economic benefits to the local area, given the anticipated 70,000 visitors per annum and the potential to act as a catalyst for further regeneration. In order to ensure that the potential of the Centre will be maximised, an Olympic Legacy Board has been established. This multi-agency partnership, Chaired by the Leader of Broxbourne Borough Council, has membership from Epping Forest District Council (Olympic Champion Councillor Elizabeth Webster and the Acting Chief Executive), Essex County Council and Hertfordshire County Council Members and Lead Officers, the Chairman and key Officers of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, East of England Development Association, Enfield Council and Waltham Abbey Town Council.

11. The main Board has a number of active sub-groups namely Community Engagement and Consultation, Environmental Regeneration, Economic Development, Tourism and Visitors and Sports Development. The Groups are responsible to the Board and report regularly on progress against their work programmes.

12. In order to provide focus and capacity, the Board created a temporary 2 year Olympic Officer post, to maximise the legacy potential and development opportunities created in the area by the hosting of the Olympics, and the building of the Lee Valley White Water Centre. Funding for the post was provided by Broxbourne Borough Council £20,000 p.a. Hertfordshire County Council £20,000 p.a. and Epping Forest District Council £10,000 p.a. The Olympic Officer, Max Houseago, took up the position on the 13 December 2010. The officer is based within Broxbourne Council, but works collaboratively across all funding partners and with other partner agencies, to ensure delivery of a number of key projects, as outlined below:

Lee Valley White Water Centre Economic Development Study:

13. An Economic Development Study has been commissioned to identify the regeneration and economic legacy benefits that could be provided by the Lee Valley White Water Centre. As owners of the facility, the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority were given the lead in procuring consultants, along with the Olympic Officer, representatives from Epping Forest District Council, Essex County Council, and Hertfordshire County Council, coming together as members of a steering group.

14. A brief with invitation to tender was sent out to 15 consultants in November 2010. The responses were evaluated by the steering group and four consultants were short listed. Following interviews on the 17 December 2010, Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners were appointed.

15. Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners have been looking explicitly at how the White Water Centre can be part of, and contribute to, a popular visitor destination. They will be providing advice on the opportunities of attracting further leisure attractions into the area. They also are looking at ways in which to maximise visitor numbers and spend in the area, and how local people can benefit from this through job and training opportunities. They have also been tasked to establish where the development opportunities are, both physically and sector wise, for business that will support the development of the area economically.

16. With regard to consultation the consultants have engaged with relevant local council economic development departments, commercial property agents, chambers of commerce that can provide avenues for inward investment, tourism, sports and business organisations (i.e. Gunpowder Mills) which could provide potential pointers to future potential. Contact has also been made with operators of similar sports/leisure venues/developments elsewhere to identify planned initiatives or experience of developments linked to the venues.

17. The Olympic Regeneration Officer has been providing updates to key parties such as Town Centre Partnerships and Town Councils on the progress of the Study.

18. The consultants Nathaniel Lichfield were also present at the business seminar event at Waltham Abbey on the 16 March, where local businesses and Members had the opportunity to put forward their ideas about how development and regeneration opportunities might be created for the wider area.

19. The consultants have produced some initial research findings. However, the draft final report will not be presented to the Legacy Board until the 30 May 2011.

20. It is not anticipated that the completed report will be published before late June, although a verbal update can be given, if required, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the latest position.

World Championships 2015

21. The Olympic Officer has been supporting the British Canoe Union in their successful bid to host the 2015 World Slalom Canoe Championships. The Centre is now recognised as the premier facility in the world and has the distinct advantage in that it can guarantee an event being run as it is not weather dependent. This international event, which has far greater multi-national participation than the Olympics, will be hosted in September 2015, with the ensuing international media coverage. A number of training camps will proceed the event with a number of teams re-locating to the area. The British Canoe Union estimate the value to the local economy of the event as some £1.7M.

Waltham Abbey Regeneration

22. The District Council has already agreed to grant Waltham Abbey Town Council £160K to undertake amenity improvements in the Town, largely geared towards making Waltham Abbey more attractive to visitors. This will build on the existing attractions such as the Royal Gunpowder Mills, Abbey Church and the Museum. Waltham Abbey is well placed to capitalise on the 70,000 visitors per annum anticipated at the White Water Centre. The District and Town Councils are keen to encourage these visitors to visit Waltham Abbey and other parts of the District, to benefit traders and businesses.

23. The Olympic Officer in liaison with other District Council staff is developing a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, Townscape Heritage Initiative, for Waltham Abbey. If successful, this could result in some £2M of funding to improve the environment and street scene in the Town. It is considered that the Olympic Venue will be a unique selling point for the bid.

Sports Participation

24. A number of Olympic and Paralympic athletes, hopeful of being selected for the Games, are based in the District. The Council has supported these young athletes through the Leisure Bursary and Grants Schemes. In addition, it is anticipated that there will be a general increase in participation throughout London who are hosting the Games. The Council's Sports and Health Development Team in conjunction with the Schools Sports Partnership have been engaged in a number of initiatives, utilising the Olympics to encourage people to be more active.

Cultural Olympiad

25. The Cultural Olympiad is a celebration of the games through arts and festival events that will be running up to the Games. The District Council's staff have been encouraging local groups to get involved and register their events on the Cultural Olympiad. In addition, the Council's staff are promoting a number of Cultural Olympiad Events. Details of some of these currently are listed below:

Open Weekend 2011

26. Epping Forest District Council's Community Services, in partnership with Waltham Abbey Town Council, will be organising a festival event for young people aged 11 to 19 years on Sunday 24 July 2011. The W Fest has been registered via the Open Weekend website and will be held at the Town Mead Recreation Ground in Waltham Abbey, close to the Olympic White Water Centre. W Fest will be widely publicised via social media sites, locally distributed flyers and through the Council's Summer Activities brochure. The free event will include a skate and BMX jam, sessions with Tottenham Hotspur Foundation football coaches and freestylers, screenings of the films "Street Dance" and "Lords of Dog Town", dance workshops, henna, hair braiding and DJs.

Limes Farm Hall Art Project 2011

27. Artists are working with local residents at Limes Farm in Chigwell to create artworks for their new community centre. The work, which is inspired by Chinese cultural artefacts, will also create pieces made by the community for inclusion in the China in the East travelling exhibition in 2012.

Cultural Olympiad 2012

28. Leap Festival is a 7 month celebration of the people and places, and events happening in West Essex and East Hertfordshire, and around the Lee Valley White Water Olympic Venue during 2012. The festival aims to highlight the diversity of cultural activities for Hertfordshire and Essex residents as well as visitors to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The programme, inspired by the London 2012 Festival, will include small scale community events, specially commissioned performance pieces, touring exhibitions and family days.

Make a Move! 2011-12

29. Epping Forest Arts (EFDC) will be working with a wide range of community and dance groups throughout 2011 and 2012 to create a mass community dance event which will take place at the Waltham Abbey Town Show in June 2012, linking into the Sparks will Fly event.

Sparks Will Fly 2012

30. Waltham Abbey Town Show in June 2012 was visited by one of the large creatures, created by Walk the Plank, and commissioned by Essex County Council. The two creatures will be travelling across Essex meeting local residents and communities in the summer of 2012

before meeting up for a large scale event in Chelmsford. EFDC and WATC are working in partnership in the Waltham Abbey event.

Conclusion

31. The Olympic and Paralympic Games have been called the greatest shown on earth. The financial and social benefits of other previous Games pay testimony to what can be achieved. A key selling point of the London Bid was Legacy. This report has sought to give an insight, not only into what work is being undertaken prior to the 2012 Games, but also some of the ongoing potential Legacy benefits for the District.

Resource Implications

The District Council has co-funded the appointment of the Olympic Officer post and the Regeneration Study is detailed within the report.

Although the LOCOG will not be paying a licence fee for the use of North Weald Airfield for park and ride for the White Water Canoe Event, the council will recover its costs.

There may be a need to seek additional funding “for Look and Feel” i.e. branding and dressing the Olympic route, although details are still awaited.

Legal and Governance Implications:

No specific implications identified, although there has been risks identified with respect to potential commuter congestion during the period of the Games.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

London 2012 has aimed to be the most sustainable Games ever held with a number of initiatives undertaken to reduce their Carbon Footprint.

Consultation Undertaken:

Corporate Governance Group

Background Papers:

Minutes of Legacy Board, Sub Groups and Internal Working Party

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

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

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?

All Olympic Games Venues are accessible. The Paralympics are the major event in the Disability Sports calendar and provide an international showcase for Disability Sport, which encourages increased participation.

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?