

**OYMPICS 2012 WORKING GROUP held at THE SCHOOL ROOM,
SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM on 7 JULY 2011 at 2pm**

Present: Councillors S Favell, A Ketteridge, M Lemon, E Oliver and J Rich.

Also present: Councillor J Ketteridge (Leader).
Catherine Mummery, Creative Co-ordinator.

Officers attending: J Mitchell (Chief Executive), G Bradley (Community and Partnerships Manager), R Procter (Democratic Services Officer), C Wingfield (Museum Curator).

OWG1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

Councillor Lemon was elected as Chairman, and Councillor Favell was elected as Vice Chairman.

OWG2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors P Davies and D Morson.

OWG3 ESSEX 2012: 'THE BIG EVENT' AND 'SPARKS WILL FLY IN UTTLESFORD'

Catherine Mummery and the Community Partnerships Manager gave a presentation on the events being planned for Essex and Uttlesford in connection with the 2012 Olympics. A tour of two Olympics-inspired giant characters would take place throughout the county, one character to arrive by sea and the other by air, with subsequent visits to various districts, culminating in an event at Hylands Park on 21 July 2012. It was intended that the journey of each character would be an opportunity for children and communities to participate in a range of events, to encourage mounting engagement and enthusiasm for the Olympics, which would commence on 24 July. The character due to visit Uttlesford would arrive at Stansted Airport at the start of the tour, on 16 May 2012, and its first stop would be Saffron Walden on 19 May. This date would effectively be the only date when the character stopped in Uttlesford.

The event on 19 May would involve a procession through The Common in Saffron Walden, along East Street, up Margaret Hill to the Museum.

The Community and Partnerships Manager said officers had already given consideration to how best to construct an event around the visit of the Olympics character to Saffron Walden. She suggested an event

involving art, poetry and music, to take place at the Museum. There were two themes connected with the tour, 'Treasure' and 'Tribes', which could be developed in such a way as to be relevant to Uttlesford and would link very well with possible activities and displays at the Museum.

The Community and Partnerships Manager said much of the detail of the County's plans had not yet been made available, but that at a forthcoming meeting on 14 July she expected further information for districts about a fund of £2.5m for events connected to Essex 2012, for which councils could apply, to be match funded locally.

The Curator said she would like to engage with the events by celebrating the district's sporting aspects, and through a 'welcoming the world' theme, inspired by the Museum's world culture collections. Regarding the sporting theme, she had secured a Sporting Heroes exhibition for April until July produced by the Epping District Museum Service, which would be complemented from Saffron Walden Museum's own collection. She also wished to put on a community sporting heroes exhibition of pictures lent by the community, which would then be turned into a digital archive as an Olympics legacy. She said she would be grateful for any further leads to be followed up. She intended to write to all local sports clubs in January and wished to seek volunteers to help compile a mailing list. She would involve libraries, and intended to devise a simple form inviting people to nominate local sporting heroes, which would also enable careful attention to be paid to copyright.

Regarding the theme of 'welcoming the world', the Curator said she intended to appoint an artist to provide a package for schools. In the spring term the Museum would host a display of embroideries from the East, which would be used to inspire banners to decorate the site.

The Curator said a further element of the world culture theme was music, and she hoped to involve the Grand Union Orchestra musicians from different cultures at the event on 19 May and during the February half term. Regarding the event on 19 May, the Curator said she had provisionally booked St Mary's Church as some musical instruments from around the world needed the protection and acoustics of an inside environment.

Catherine Mummery said it was important to involve the district as a whole, and accordingly the concept had been suggested of having a number of banners, which would represent the areas of Dunmow, Felsted, Thaxted, Stansted and Saffron Walden. This would contribute to building up interest, whilst giving focus to the Museum. Regarding the journeying theme, she said most stops would be fitted around other community events. However Saffron Walden was the first journey point, which therefore set a challenge in that it was not tied to an existing event. The building of excitement was very important, and she hoped this would be a unique and special event.

Councillor Favell asked about the detail of the giant characters. Officers replied that a company called 'Walk the Plank' was devising the characters, and there was an element of secrecy about them at present. Apparently a casket would be arriving in the district two weeks before the start of the tour, which would be displayed in the Tourist Information Centre.

Members asked further questions about the location of the other Olympics character and the route of its journey. Officers explained the other character would arrive by sea in Harwich, with each character building allegiance as it made its journey, to foster a competitive spirit at the Hylands Park event when they would finally meet.

Members felt it was important that schools as well as town and parish councils should be notified as soon as practicable. The Chairman suggested it would be appropriate to publicise the above events at the Community Forums.

Councillor Favell said whilst she was not convinced about the tour of the characters, she felt the events at the Museum sounded exciting.

Councillor Rich said it was evident that the district would not have much control over the events involving the characters, and that it would be necessary to work within the strictures of the suggested tours. He expressed concern at the fact these events would happen relatively soon, and that many local events particularly for schools required planning well in advance. He asked whether contact would also be made with independent schools.

The Chairman said independent schools should be included.

The Community and Partnerships Manager agreed it was important to publicise the events to schools and parish councils, and to local sports clubs.

OWG4

PROGRESS TO DATE/NEXT STEPS

The Community and Partnerships Manager gave a summary of actions already taken in preparation for the above events. Officers had arranged for work to be carried out to some trees at the entrance to the Museum; and had commenced obtaining quotations for hire of a marquee and portaloos.

Members wished to know more about the route of the Olympics character from Stansted to Saffron Walden. Officers said no details were yet forthcoming, but it seemed likely that there would be no procession for the public to follow, as the character would be appearing only when it reached each destination and would then be dismantled in order to journey to the next stop.

Members discussed the route of the Olympic torch throughout the country. Councillor J Ketteridge said the route would not be officially made public until October at the earliest.

The Chairman said the local activities being planned at the Museum seemed good, and that whilst members were unsure of the role and value of the Olympics characters, there was no choice but to fall in with the County's plans.

OWG5

DIAMOND JUBILEE

The Community and Partnerships Manager asked the Chairman if the Olympics Working Group would be prepared to devote some of its work to arrangements for the Queen's diamond jubilee. Members acknowledged that it was sensible to try to tie in the two celebrations, since they occurred within two weeks of each other.

The Community and Partnerships Manager said there were two elements to the celebrations to be considered: first, districts across the County were being invited to participate in lighting beacons, and that the Council had until 30 May 2012 to submit any plans to do so. Members noted that whilst the date of the jubilee itself was in February, a special bank holiday had been created on Monday 4 June 2012.

The Community and Partnerships Manager said suitable sites for beacons would need to be identified and that officers would co-ordinate requests for location of beacons. A guidance pack was available which would be circulated to parish and town councils, as well as to members of the Olympics Working Group. There were issues such as insurance and licensing to be considered, as well as road closures and costs of all such measures. Councillor J Ketteridge asked officers to obtain quotations on bunting at this early stage in order that parishes could benefit from a bulk purchase on their behalf.

The Community and Partnerships Manager said the second aspect of the diamond jubilee celebrations would be the creation of a lasting legacy through the planting of trees, which was being co-ordinated by the Woodland Trust. Information about this initiative would be circulated to town and parish councils and to schools.

Members discussed the possibility of organising an event aimed at young people, which would require good communication with schools if it were to be arranged.

The Chief Executive said the role of the District Council was to enable the main celebrations, that is, the lighting of beacons and promotion of tree planting, as suggested, but not to be involved in arranging individual events.

The Chairman said he anticipated that town and parish councils would hold events to mark the diamond jubilee. He said the diamond jubilee and the Olympics were two separate celebrations, and it was right that the diamond jubilee celebration should not be subsumed by events connected with the Olympics.

OWG6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members referred to the importance of obtaining road closures for both events; and discussed the funding of events.

The Community and Partnerships Manager said in the past it had been possible to raise external funding for events. However it was now not so easy to secure the level of external funding and it might be more appropriate in the current climate for the district council to take on a role in encouraging other bodies to put on events locally. Members agreed with this assessment.

OWG7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed to hold a further meeting during the first week of August. The date was subsequently confirmed as Tuesday 2 August 2011 at 7pm in the Chief Executive's Office.

The meeting ended at 3.20pm.