

EPPING FOREST CENTRE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 9 October 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest Centre Joint Consultative Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 11.30am

Present

Members:

Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)	Geoff Brown, FSC Honorary Treasurer
Deputy Stanley Ginsburg (Deputy Chairman)	Roger Chapman, FSC Honorary Vice President
Verderer Peter Adams	Deputy Catherine McGuinness

Officers:

Rakesh Hira	- Town Clerk's Department
Alison Elam	- Group Accountant, Chamberlain's Department
Paul Thomson	- Superintendent, Epping Forest
Steve Bunce	- Head of Centre, Epping Forest
Antony Fenwick	- Visitor Services Manager, Epping Forest
Mark Bolland	- FSC Director of Operations

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Verderer Richard Morris, Anthony Thomas, Sue Ireland and Robert Lucas.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

FSC Central Costs

The Chamberlain explained that a discussion between the FSC's Director of Finance and the Chamberlain's Department in relation to the FSC central costs was still due to take place and a meeting was in the process of being arranged.

Epping Forest Visitor Services

A report would be submitted to the Epping Forest & Commons Committee in November in relation to the tender process for the existing visitor centre building.

Fund Raising Pack

It was noted that the Fundraising Strategy would consider the production of the fund raising pack for individual schools.

Education Strategy

It was noted that a report was due to be considered by the Policy & Resources Committee on the Education Strategy which would take the education services provided by Epping Forest.

4. HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON PROGRESS IN 2013

A report of the Head of Centre informed the Committee on the progress at the Epping Forest Field Centre in 2013, in advance of the more detailed report on 2013, which will come to the Committee in the spring of 2014.

The Head of Centre reported that the services at the Centre had been operating well and were on target to meet the Key Performance Indicators. The deficit which had been predicted had been turned around and the Centre was working in partnership with individual Schools for delivering education services.

The Head of Centre drew attention to the significant improvements that had been made to the toilets and bathrooms at the Centre. He indicated that this had been, and would be, greatly appreciated by him and by staff and visitors. He also welcomed the installation of solar light tubes, light sensors and press taps that will make energy savings and reduce CO2 outputs.

In response to a question by the Chairman on the 22,000 learner experiences taking place at the Centre, the Head of Centre explained that a 'learner experience' was defined as an individual coming to the Centre for more than two hours for a taught course.

A discussion took place on the 'Lessons from Nature Project' and it was noted that a report would be submitted to the next meeting on the evaluation of the project and whether the Centre matched the EU's aspirations. It was noted that the project had been externally recognised by the Chief Executive of the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom and by AQA.

In response to a question by the Deputy Chairman, it was noted that individual Schools could visit the Forest without having an education service, if the School wished to do so, however the learning experience for students would not be as effective as that provided by the learning facilitators at the Centre.

5. HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON THE CENTRE'S 2014 PLAN AND FINANCIAL ESTIMATES

A report of the Head of Centre sought the Committee's approval of the draft 2014 Action Plan with 2014 financial estimates. The Plan was intended to support the visions of the Field Studies Centre (FSC), the City of London and to deliver the City's environmental education service in Epping Forest.

The aims for 2014 include the following:

- Responding imaginatively to the City of London's aspirations arising from consultation on education in Epping Forest.
- Building on recent achievements and innovations, especially in relation to 'Learning for Biodiversity' and 'Lessons from Nature'; and
- To deliver the final phase of the 2011-14 Plan including exploration of the feasibility of developing the proposed 'Inspired by Epping Forest' brand (with an increased focus on experience and inspiring creative expression) building from current arts based learning provision.

The Head of Centre explained that the aspiration for 2014 included delivering 22,000 learner experiences. The last phase of the funding for the 'Learning for Biodiversity' project from the City Bridge Trust was expected and further fundraising opportunities which would add to the sustainability of the services provided would be explored.

A discussion took place on the proposed income estimates for 2014. It was noted that, in comparison with 2013, cut backs had been made in recognition of reduced external funding and the difficult current economic climate.

In relation to the HO costs set at 14% the Chamberlain undertook to clarify how this figure had been arrived at in conjunction with the Field Studies Council, by March 2014.

It was agreed that the presentation of future reports would include a comparison table of the financial estimates from the previous year along with the percentage change to easily identify the changes which were being made.

RESOLVED – That the Committee approve the 2014 Action Plan and the 2014 financial estimates.

6. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the Town Clerk would arrange the date of the next meeting for April 2014.

The meeting closed at 12.46pm

Chairman

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