

**AMENITIES SUB-COMMITTEE held at 7.30 pm at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 27 JANUARY 2000**

Present:- Councillor Mrs J E Menell - Chairman.  
Councillors Mrs C M Dean, Mrs C D Down, D W Gregory, D M Jones, D J Morson, R J O'Neill, G W Powers, R C Smith and A C Streeter.

Also present:- Councillors R P Chambers and Mr J Hurwitz (Uttlesford Sports Association).

Officers in attendance:- M R Dellow, Mrs S McLagan, M T Purkiss and Mrs C Roberts.

**I. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor E M Hill and Mr A Watson (Museum Society).

Councillor Mrs C M Dean declared an interest in item 5 on the agenda (Draft Revenue Estimates) insofar as it related to the Youth Centre and Skateboard/Rollerblade Ramp at Stansted.

**I. ORDER OF ITEMS ON AGENDA**

The Chairman asked the Sub-Committee to consider revising the order of the items on the agenda so that Item 5 (Re-examination of draft Revenue Estimates) might be considered next, since two Members would have to leave the meeting early. Councillor G W Powers expressed his dissent at the proposed course of action and upon a vote being taken it was

RESOLVED that the order of items on the agenda be altered to enable the re-examination of Draft Revenue Estimates 2000/01 to be considered at this stage.

**I. RE-EXAMINATION OF DRAFT REVENUE ESTIMATES 2000/01**

The Chief Accountant presented a report explaining the request of the Policy and Resources Committee to rank growth items and to re-examine the estimates to identify efficiency savings. The report highlighted the practical difficulties of identifying efficiency savings quickly. The programme of Best Value service reviews, starting in April 2000, was designed for this purpose.

Councillor R P Chambers suggested that before ranking Growth Items to be submitted to the Community Services and the Policy and Resources Committees items number 1, 3, 6 and 9 in paragraph 6 should be deleted from the list and number 2 be added to the Capital Programme. Councillor G W Powers expressed his disagreement with the suggested method of dealing with this agenda item.

Members discussed those items which Councillor Chambers had suggested should be removed from the ranking list.

Councillor Mrs C M Dean emphasized that the Youth Centre Project at Stansted was to be a community project not one owned by Essex County Council.

Councillors Morson and O'Neill stressed the importance of retaining both items of expenditure for Bridge End Gardens in order to provide physical security and to increase the likelihood of lottery grants. (*Councillor R J O'Neill declared an interest in the item relating to Bridge End Gardens insofar as he was the Chairman of the Friends of Bridge End Gardens*). In answer to a question, the Chief Accountant explained that there was no advantage to be gained from treating the Gardener for Bridge End Gardens under the heading "Maintenance" rather than "Employees". In answer to a question from Councillor D M Jones, the Committee and PR Manager explained that whilst there was an obligation to maintain the Gardens this did not extend to improving them.

Councillor G W Powers reminded the Sub-Committee of information about the work to be undertaken by a Village Appraisals Fieldworker which had been circulated at the previous meeting of the Community Services Committee.

Members suggested and discussed which Growth Items should be deleted in order to reduce the budget impact of various listed schemes. They then considered the priority ranking which should be applied to the remaining schemes. Members considered that the Council's legal obligations under the new lease of the Bridge End Gardens should be examined and if these included provision of a gardener, that should become the first priority in the list.

They considered a supplementary report from Officers identifying possible budget reductions totalling £6,000. The Chief Accountant answered questions about the highway signage estimate, the car parking estimate and the need to replace staff where posts fell vacant. In the ensuing discussion on efficiency savings, it was generally agreed that it was very difficult for Members and Officers to identify savings in isolation; there was a need to work together.

#### RESOLVED

- 1 that the draft revenue estimates be submitted to the Community Services and Policy and Resources Sub-Committees for approval subject to the following amendments:-
  - a the items for Tourism Modelling Packages and Village Appraisals Field Worker be deleted from the draft estimates.
  - b the item for Skateboard/Rollerblade Ramps at Stansted be transferred to the capital estimates.
  - c the item for Youth Centre, Stansted be deferred from the estimates pending clarification of the possibility of the Essex County Council transferring the Youth Centre to the Peter Kirk School.
  - d a Gardener for Bridge End Gardens be appointed in or after October 2000 and the costs reduced by 50% for 2000/2001.
  - e the remaining six projects be ranked in the following order:-
    - (i) Thaxted TIC
    - (ii) Arts Development Officer
    - (iii) Bridge End Gardens Partnership Funding
    - (iv) Museum Education Officer
    - (v) Tourism Assistant
    - (vi) \*Bridge End Gardens - Gardener  
(\*Subject to clarification of the Council's obligations under the lease)

(Councillor G W Powers did not take part in the consideration of the ranking of the schemes).
- 2 that the draft 2000/01 estimates for Leisure (Clientside) and Car Parking each be reduced by £3,000 as outlined in the supplementary report.

#### I. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 1999 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### I. BUSINESS ARISING

##### (i) Minute AM46 - Museum Management Joint Working Party

The Head of Community and Leisure Services informed the meeting that the Museum Curator was leaving in February.

##### (ii) Minute AM48 - Community Achievement Award Scheme Working Party

It was noted that the Working Party would reconvene to discuss a request from the Volunteers Bureau to join with the Council Scheme.

## I. REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Sub-Committee received the report of Mr J Hurwitz, the Council's representative on the Uttlesford Sports Association. He described the Association's Sports Personality of the Year Millennium Award ceremony which had been attended by Councillor D Miller on behalf of the Chairman of the Council. Awards had been made in seven categories and an extra category had been created for a meritorious applicant who did not fit any of the other categories.

## I. BRIDGE END GARDENS WORKING PARTY

The Minutes of the meeting of the Bridge End Gardens Working Party held on 10 January 2000 were received.

### (i) Minute BEG12 - Heritage Lottery Fund Bid

Councillor D J Morson complimented the Head of Local Plan and Conservation and the Landscape Officer on the work they had undertaken in support of the proposed lottery fund bid.

### (ii) Minute BEG13 - Potential Grant Sources

Councillor R J O'Neill informed the meeting that the Friends of Bridge End Gardens did not have the resources or status to apply for funds. He suggested that if the owner of the gardens vested the property in trustees who could apply to become a charity, they could then apply for grants. The trustees would then become the superior landlords.

### (iii) Minute BEG15 - Maze Security Fencing

In answer to a question, Councillor D J Morson confirmed that the fencing at The Maze was being pursued in the current financial year.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Bridge End Gardens Working Party held on 10 January 2000 be approved and adopted including the recommendation contained in Minute BEG12.

## I. PARKING STRATEGY WORKING PARTY

The Sub-Committee received the Minutes of the meeting of the Parking Strategy Working Party held on 10 January 2000.

### (i) Minute PS30 - Feedback from Car Park Tour

In answer to a question from Councillor G W Powers, the Head of Community and Leisure Services explained that the White Street Car Park, Great Dunmow was free of charge from 8.00 am to 9.00 am for the use of parents dropping children at Great Dunmow Junior School. She agreed to draw this to the attention of the school.

### (ii) Minute PS32 - Decriminalisation

The Head of Community and Leisure Services informed the meeting that a letter would be sent to Essex County Council advising them of the Uttlesford views, presently. In the meantime, the District Council was in discussion with the County Council. Mr Hurwitz informed the meeting that he had heard that District Councils would be able to retain fine money following decriminalisation and felt that they should be prepared for the eventuality of decriminalisation at any time.

## I. AD HOC GRANT REQUEST FROM TAKELEY CRICKET CLUB

The Sub-Committee considered a request from Takeley Cricket Club for an ad hoc grant towards the cost of purchasing a new cooker and microwave for its new pavilion. Mr J Hurwitz informed the meeting that the Club had worked hard to provide its own new pavilion and that the equipment was needed for preparing visiting team teas.

RESOLVED that a grant in the sum of £430 be awarded to Takeley Cricket Club for the purchase of a new cooker and microwave.

**I. MILLENNIUM AD HOC GRANT REQUEST - PLANTING FOR THE MILLENNIUM GROUP (HEMPSTEAD)**

The Sub-Committee considered a request for a grant from the Planting for the Millennium Group (Hempstead). The requested grant was to cover the cost of five fully planted tubs which would be placed outside the newly renovated Village Hall. The Group had obtained the agreement of the local Gardeners' Club to maintain the tubs.

RESOLVED that the application for a Millennium ad hoc grant in the sum of £225 for the provision of five fully planted tubs to be placed outside the Village Hall be granted.

The meeting ended at 10.00 pm.

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