

**AMENITIES SUB-COMMITTEE held at 7.30 pm at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 16 NOVEMBER 2000**

Present:- Councillor Mrs J E Menell – Chairman.
Councillors Mrs C M Dean, Mrs C D Down, D W Gregory,
Mrs J I Loughlin, D J Morson, R J O'Neill, Mrs S V Schneider, and
R C Smith.

Also present:- Councillor R P Chambers and N B Newman (Museum Society).

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

AM21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G W Powers and
A C Streeter and from Mr J Hurwitz.

Councillor R P Chambers declared an interest in so far as he is a member of
Turpin's Bowls Club.

AM22 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2000 were received,
confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

AM23 MATTERS ARISING

Minute AM20 – Turpin's Bowls Club

In answer to a question from the Chairman, Councillor R P Chambers explained
that, due to a misunderstanding, attendance at the Bowls Club social evening
had been very low, but that a further evening was planned.

AM24 BRIDGE END GARDENS WORKING PARTY

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

(i) Minute 32(iii) – Evening Closure of the Gardens

Councillor D J Morson reported that this had not provoked any complaints from
the general public.

(ii) Renewal of Contract of Gardener/Supervisor

Councillor Morson reported that the employment of the gardener/supervisor was essential for a further year, both because of the excellent work done by him and for the purposes of lottery grant applications.

(iii) Student Placement

Councillor Morson informed the meeting that, following the suggestion of the Working Party, the possibility of a student placement was being taken up for the future.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Bridge End Gardens Working Party held on 30 October 2000 be approved and adopted including the recommendation contained in Minute BEG33.

AM25 PARKING STRATEGY WORKING PARTY

The Sub-Committee received the Minutes of the meetings of the Parking Strategy Working Party held on 19 October and 13 November 2000.

(i) Minute PS20 – White Lining

Councillor R J O'Neill complained that the white lining had not been carried out. Councillor R C Smith agreed to contact the District Transport Manager about this.

(ii) Minute PS22 – Decriminalisation

The Head of Leisure and Community Services informed the meeting that she was trying to arrange a meeting between Members and the Essex County Council portfolio holder to discuss the implications of decriminalisation.

Councillor O'Neill expressed the hope that the Saffron Walden Town Centre Management Committee and the Parking Strategy Working Party could work together to achieve the best parking solutions. The Head of Leisure and Community Services agreed to inform the District Transportation Manager of the views of the Parking Strategy Working Party.

(iii) Minute PS30 – Short Term Visitor Parking

In answer to a question from Councillor O'Neill, the Head of Leisure and Community Services explained that the reasons for the postponement of a discussion on this matter related to the Council taking a decision on decriminalisation. If the Council pursued decriminalisation it would be necessary to review traffic regulation orders and short term visitor parking could be included in a new order.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meetings of the Parking Strategy Working Party held on 19 October and 13 November 2000 be approved and adopted including the recommendations contained in Minutes PS22 and PS 29.

AM26

MUSEUM MANAGEMENT JOINT WORKING PARTY

The Sub-Committee received the Minutes of the meeting of the Museum Management Joint Working Party held on 7 November 2000.

(i) Minute MM15 – Displays

In answer to a question from Councillor Mrs C M Dean, Ms C Wingfield informed the meeting that the original medieval hat from Little Sampford Church was on display in the Museum.

(ii) Minute MM15 – Education

Councillor Smith asked whether the British Airports Authority would help with the storage of artefacts and Ms Wingfield explained that discussions were taking place with the British Airports Authority about future storage and display of artefacts. As the artefacts were sent to the Oxford Archaeological Unit for classification and examination which could take up to three years they would not be available for display for some time. Mr N B Newman suggested that Members should visit the Unit at Oxford to see at first hand the work of the specialists dealing with the artefacts.

(iii) Minute MM17 – Implications of 10% Cut in the Museum Service Budget

Mr Newman expressed thanks and congratulations to officers on the quality of the report about this matter. He noted that the 10% cut had been required without preliminary itemising or consultation and that it was clear from the officers' report that they felt there was no scope for cuts in the service. The Chairman of the Sub-Committee read a letter of praise for the Museum received from the Essex Museums Officer and Mr Newman commented that the Saffron Walden Museum was one of the oldest in the country. It was also noted that up until the current year much of the work done there had been voluntary. The Head of Leisure and Community Services was thanked for her very comprehensive report and her work on this matter.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Museum Management Joint Working Party held on 7 November 2000 be approved and adopted including the recommendation contained in Minute MM17.

AM27 AD-HOC GRANT REQUESTS

The Sub-Committee considered a report on requests received for grant aid with the officers' initial assessment of the eligibility of those requests.

In answer to a question, the Head of Leisure and Community Services agreed to provide in future reports a further column in the assessment table to show the costs of each project.

RESOLVED that

- 1 a grant of £250 be awarded to the Saffron Walden Arts Trust
- 2 a grant of £250 be awarded to the Little Hallingbury Happy Circle
- 3 a grant of £200 be awarded to the Saffron Walden Rugby Club.

AM28 IMPLICATIONS OF A 10% CUT IN THE MUSEUM SERVICE BUDGET

The Head of Leisure and Community Services explained the report which had been circulated previously and considered at the meeting of the Museum Management Joint Working Party held on 7 November.

Councillor R P Chambers congratulated the Head of Leisure and Community Services and the Curator on the excellence of the report and proposed that the suggested 10% cut should not be implemented but that the Museum service be subject to Best Value review in two years' time.

The Chairman of the Sub-Committee acknowledged the distress this proposal had caused to Museum staff and was pleased at the result of the current decision.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the proposed 10% reduction in the Museum budget be not implemented in 2001/02
- 2 The Museum service be reviewed in the course of Best Value in 2002/03.

AM29 JUBILEE GARDENS SAFFRON WALDEN

The Sub-Committee received a report on a request from the Saffron Walden Town Council for permission to build a chair store in the southeast corner of the Jubilee Gardens for a period equivalent to the existing lease of the bandstand.

RECOMMENDED that the District Council grant a lease of the land as requested for a term of fifty years from 25 January 1993 at a peppercorn rent and on terms to be approved by the Chief Executive.

AM30

**DRAFT SERVICE PLAN SUMMARY AND REVENUE ESTIMATES REPORTS
2001 – 2002**

The Chief Accountant presented the initial draft of the revised estimates 2000/01 and the estimates for 2001/02 and explained that this was a first opportunity to see the Sub-Committee's figures. The budget was a no growth one and a 5% budget exercise had been carried out with BCMs to identify savings. The overall position would not be available until the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 19 December. For practical reasons the report did not include internal charges. The revised estimate for 2000/01 showed reductions in the base budget of approximately £15,000.

The Head of Leisure and Community Services outlined the service plan for the various services and confirmed in answer to a question from the Chairman that the Council did work with the Saffron Walden County High School in provision of services. The Chief Accountant continued by explaining the £226,000 reduction against the base position in the estimate for 2001/02. £188,000 arose from adjustments to the base estimate for one-off items and planned maintenance. Over and above that there was a further net reduction of £38,000 essentially consisting of the costs of inflation, offset by £71,000 identified during the 5% budget reduction exercise. An additional budget reduction of £5,280 was reported in Tourism due to over-estimating the costs of revised staffing arrangements. The proposed growth items for consideration were as follows:-

Bridge End Gardens	£	£
Extension of the contract for the Gardener/Supervisor for a further year. (Bridge End Gardens Working Party 30 October)	18,830	
Income generated, assuming current level of attendance	<u>(15,000)</u>	3,830
Concessionary Fares		
Countywide Concessionary Fare Scheme (Community Services 9 September Min 100)		27,770
		<u>31,600</u>

Councillor Chambers explained further the exercise carried out by the Budget Strategy Group. The impact of the loss of the transfer from the Housing Revenue Account would increase over the next 5 years. The first year must be seen as the easy year.

Councillor Mrs Dean expressed concern that the budget allocation for the Concessionary Fare Scheme should ensure that there was no detrimental effect upon the Addenbrookes bus service.

RESOLVED that the draft revenue estimates be forwarded to the Community Services Committee for comment, subject to the reductions identified at the meeting.

AM31 **NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the meeting of the Sub-Committee on 18 January be held at the Saffron Walden Museum.

The meeting ended at 9.24 pm.