

BRIDGE END GARDENS WORKING PARTY held at 4.30pm at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 30 OCTOBER 2000

Present:- Councillor D J Morson – Chairman.
Councillors Mrs D Cornell and R C Dean

Officers in attendance:- J Bosworth, M R Dellow, D Demery and P J Snow

BEG30 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D M Miller and from B Smeedon (Landscape Officer) and M D White (Saffron Walden Town Clerk).

BEG31 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2000 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

BEG32 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Minute BEG21 – Rose Garden Design

The Head of Local Plan and Conservation reported that the rose garden had been largely dug out. Approaches had been made to a number of national rose growers to supply plants and two positive responses had been received.

The next step would be to determine the appropriate varieties for planting and approach the national growers referred to above. It was understood that the Friends of Bridge End Gardens would support this venture. A further report would be provided at the next meeting of the Working Party.

(ii) BEG22 – Update on Bylaws

It was reported that Home Office Officials had informally advised Officers that the draft Bylaws were considered to be satisfactory. It was hoped that a formal response would be received in the near future.

(iii) BEG25 – Evening Closure

Officers reported that the necessary locks were now in place and that the trial evening closure arrangements were operating satisfactorily.

(iv) BEG26 – Specification for Summer House

The Property Services Manager reported that work on obtaining a detailed specification for repairs to the summer house had been finalised and the Officers were now in a position to seek formal tenders. There was budgetary provision for the work of preparing the specification and the expectation was that much of the repair works would be financed by external grant. Officers confirmed that they had had discussions with Essex Environmental Trust to whom an application for financial assistance would be made.

Tenders for this project would be sought and a progress report submitted to the next meeting of the Working Party.

(v) BEG27 – External Funding Update

Councillor Mrs Cornell confirmed that she had had no response from Tesco following her approach concerning the possibility of a grant.

BEG33 TASKFORCE – UPDATE

Officers confirmed that the Employment Service had accepted the Council's tender to enable the New Deal scheme to continue. Details of the current numbers of people involved on the Taskforce were reported.

The Working Party reviewed the position of Paul Dawson who was employed in the position of gardener/supervisor and whose contract would end on 15 May 2001. The work carried out under Mr Dawson's supervision had been very beneficial and had generated income. Members considered it essential that his contract should be extended for a further year. It was noted that a recommendation to extend Mr Dawson's contract would need to be highlighted as a growth item in 2001/02.

The Working Party noted that officers were pursuing the purchase of a generator and polytunnel for use at the gardens. The equipment purchased would be utilised to undertake work in inclement weather and to propagate trees and plants, which was expected to pay back the initial cost outlay in future years. There was also a possibility that further income could be generated by the sale of plants.

RECOMMENDED that the contract for the position of Gardener/Supervisor be extended for a further year after 15 May 2001 and that the cost thereof be highlighted as a growth item in the draft Budget for the financial year 2001/02.

BEG34 EXTERNAL FUNDING INITIATIVES

Officers updated the Working Party on various initiatives being pursued for the provision of external funding. Confirmation had now been received from the Heritage Lottery Fund that Bridge End Gardens would be an eligible project for up to 75% funding. Emphasis would have to be made on the community benefit that would accrue as Uttlesford was not a deprived area to which Heritage Lottery urban parks funding was principally directed. Other sources of potential grant revenue were also being pursued.

It had previously been reported that a positive response had been received from the Linbury Trust. Lord Sainsbury, representing this organisation, had now visited the gardens and had stated that he was very impressed with the work in progress. As a result of these discussions Officers were hopeful of obtaining a grant from the Linbury Trust towards the cost of providing security measures. Members were also hopeful of obtaining a grant of £10,000 from BAA Stansted.

A generally positive response had also been received from English Heritage. The Head of Local Plan and Conservation would liaise with the Property

Services Manager to enable an early application to be submitted and report back to the next meeting.

BEG35 CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Officers suggested that consideration should be given to the possibility of offering a Certificate of Merit for which those on the Environmental Taskforce would be eligible. Members agreed that the introduction of a Certificate of Merit was worthwhile and should be pursued. Discussions would be held with the Gardener/Supervisor about the most suitable method of presentation of such an award.

BEG36 NEW DEAL CONTRACT

The Officers were congratulated for their success in achieving a continuation of the New Deal arrangements.

BEG37 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Monday 11 December at 4.30pm.

The meeting ended at 5.15pm.