

BRIDGE END GARDENS WORKING PARTY – 5 NOVEMBER 2001

Agenda Item No: 4

Title: Extension of contract as Gardener/ Environmental Task Force Supervisor, Bridge End Gardens, Saffron Walden

**Author: John Bosworth (01799) 510453
Sara Chapman (01799) 510312**

Summary

- 1 This report considers the issue of extending the above post for an additional period and concludes the post should be extended for three years if Heritage Lottery (HL) funding is secured or alternatively for a further year if either HL funding is not secured or the outcome is unknown. It would be a growth item and would need to be considered as part of the normal budgetary process at the next meeting of the Environment and Transport Committee.

Background

- 2 The current postholder, Mr Paul Dawson, has been in the Council's employment since May 2000. The original appointment was on a fixed term contract of 12 months. Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 13 February 2001 extended it for a further year and the current contract runs out on 14 May 2002.
- 3 Mr Dawson has made a considerable contribution to the improvements that have been made to the Gardens. Of particular note is the efficient manner in which he administers the Environmental Task Force and those participants undertaking Community Service. Participants come from a wide geographical area within and beyond the District. Since the Council became Service Provider a total sum of £7,152 was paid to the Council by the Employment Service in 2000/01. The latest figures available estimate a further £8,865 will be received in 2001/02. These payments go towards the costs of training the participants and help to offset part of the costs of the postholder. Additionally, other close working relationships have developed with the community including the Youth Justice Board and Essex Police who have offered grants in excess of £5,000 for equipment for the Task Force.
- 4 The Council will shortly negotiate extending its contract with the Employment Service for another year, during which time it is hoped that further income of around £9,000 could be generated. However, without the continuation of the Task Force Supervisor, it will not be possible to extend this contract and any associated income will be lost. As Members will recall, application has been made for HL funding and a decision on 'stage 1 determination' is expected at the end of November. Members will recall that the bid was made on the basis that the restoration represented a considerable degree of social inclusion. If the bid is successful, full-scale restoration will likely commence in Autumn 2002 for an estimated two-year period, ending in Autumn 2004. If the Council's bid is unsuccessful, some restoration work will still be carried out but it is not

possible to assess the precise amount as some external funding already 'secured' may be reduced should the bid to HL fail. The Council has made provision of £25,000 from its own resources, together with £67,420 in its draft capital programme towards capital works. On completion of the project it is estimated that any ongoing maintenance costs would be met from the existing approved revenue budgets.

Members may consider it appropriate that we offer a future event contract as the post is only in existence as long as funding continues rather than fixed term

- 5 The postholder and the Task Force are essential to this restoration programme. They will undertake preparatory work once restoration commences and will reduce costs. It is considered that their involvement will greatly enhance success in the bid for Heritage Lottery funds.
- 6 The estimated costs associated with a one year extension

	2002/03 Jun-Mar	2003/04 Apr-May
Salary + Oncosts	18,390	3,780
Net Service Provider costs;		
Training	2,800	
Income	<u>(9,000)</u>	<u>(6,200)</u>
Total	12,190	3,780

The estimated costs associated with a three year extension;

	2002/03 Jun-Mar	2003/04 Apr-Mar	2004/05 Apr-Mar	2005/06 Apr-May
Salary + Oncosts	18,390	22,730	23,410	4,020
Net Service Provider Costs;				
Training	2,800			
Income	<u>(9,000)</u>	<u>(6,200)</u>	<u>(6,200)</u>	<u>(6,200)</u>
	12,190	16,530	17,210	4,020

RECOMMENDED that the post of Gardener/Environmental Task Force Supervisor be added to the draft estimates for 2002/03 as set out above for consideration by the Environment and

Transport Committee. Subject to the necessary budget provision and the securing of HL funding the contract be extended to May 2005. If HL funding is not secured or the outcome of such funding is unknown it be extended for a further year until May 2003

Background Papers: Letters and attachments relating to appointment and extension of contract dated 9 May 2000 and 23 April 2001, Service level agreement with Employment Agency dated and UDC bid to Heritage Lottery Fund dated 17 May 2001