

**BRIDGE END GARDENS WORKING PARTY held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 4.30 pm on 20 MAY 2002**

Present:- Councillor D J Morson – Chairman
Councillor R C Dean.

Officers in attendance:- J Bosworth, Miss S Chapman and M T Purkiss.

BEG147 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs D Cornell, M A Hibbs and D M Miller and from the Clerk to Saffron Walden Town Council.

BEG148 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2002 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

BEG149 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Stone Bench

In answer to a question it was confirmed that the company was in direct contact with Councillor Miller concerning the provision of the stone bench.

In answer to a question, the Local Plan and Conservation Manager said that the Bridge End Gardens project bid provided £80,000 towards the replacement/repair of statues within the gardens and it was intended that replacements would be purchased towards the end of the project. In answer to a question from Councillor Dean the Chairman said that the possibility of providing a memorial area would be looked at in the future.

(ii) Writtle College

At the last meeting it was reported that the Friends had suggested that the Council should consider sponsoring one of the taskforce participants as a student. The Local Plan and Conservation Manager reported that at current prices, the course fee for a one-day per week day release scheme was £289 plus £89 registration fee. One practical problem, however, was the difficulties of obtaining suitable transport to and from the college. He would pursue the matter further.

(iii) Taskforce Update

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager reported that the Council had been unsuccessful in its bid to participate in the Innovation Scheme. Thus, in future, the Council would no longer receive income from this source. Payment by the Council to Writtle College for future training for the participants could no longer be afforded. Three participants were still working within the gardens

and were about to complete their NVQ level I. The Local Plan and Conservation Manager would discuss the whole issue further with Writtle College and report back.

People serving community orders were still working within the garden and it was hoped to increase numbers. In addition, Officers were discussing with Writtle College the possibility of the gardens being made an outpost for the college.

(iv) Carver Barracks

A letter had been received from the 33rd Regiment from Carver Barracks confirming their willingness to be involved in the gardens. Labour would be provided free of charge but the Council would need to provide suitable equipment where necessary.

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager said that it was likely that there would be an under spend on last year's Special Projects budget and he asked Members to recommend that this be rolled forward to the current financial year.

RECOMMENDED that the residual amount in the 2001/02 Special Projects Budget be rolled forward to the 2002/03 Budget.

(v) Photo Call

The visit by Lord Sainsbury to the gardens would be arranged after 24 July 2002.

(vi) By-laws

In answer to a question from the Chairman, Officers confirmed that the signs would be erected later this week.

(vii) Constitution Task Group

The Chairman confirmed that the Council had agreed that the Working Party would report to the Community & Leisure Committee when required.

BEG150 TASKFORCE UPDATE

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager reported that discussions had been held with RPS Rayner Charity to provide an outreach worker to give support to the three Taskforce participants.

BEG151 EXTERNAL FUNDING UPDATE

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager reported that he would, in the first instance, be working extensively on the Bridge End Gardens Project until the details needed for the Stage II bid had been submitted.

BEG152 PROGRESS WITH HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND BID

It was reported that invitation to tender had been sent to six consultants for the provision of a historic planting plan and management plan. Tenders had to be returned by noon on 7 June and it was agreed that the Chairman of the Working Party would open the tenders immediately prior to the next meeting of the Working Party.

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager had also prepared documentation required by HLF showing proposals for developing new audiences and bringing more people into the gardens. He asked Members to consider this document and let him know if they had any comments by the end of the week. He was also drawing up a detailed schedule of “hard” works for which budget prices would be sought. Arrangements were also in hand for the design work for the “eagle” gates and the upgraded public conveniences. The Local Plan and Conservation Manager informed Members that he hoped much of the work relating to Stage II would have been completed by the next meeting of the Working Party.

BEG153 FEEDBACK FROM MEETING WITH FRIENDS

Councillor Morson said that he and the Local Plan and Conservation Manager had met with the Friends on 7 May to discuss progress and to advise the Friends of the need to await the authority of the Heritage Lottery Fund before proceeding with many of the projects. He said that the Friends wanted to be involved when the next tranche of roses were planted.

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager reported that the maze and kitchen garden had been kept open for a month during weekdays when the gardener/supervisor was on site. The trial period had proved to be successful and these arrangements would continue in place.

BEG154 EQUIPMENT

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager said that there was a need to upgrade some of the equipment being used in the gardens and sought Members’ support for moving towards having a stock of mechanised equipment to help improve the maintenance of the gardens. In particular, he was looking at the provision of a tiller and a replacement lawn mower. The Working Party supported the move towards greater mechanisation.

BEG155 NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at 4.30 pm on 17 June 2002.

The meeting ended at 5.15 pm. Page 3