

**BRIDGE END GARDENS TASK GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 4.30 pm on TUESDAY
30 AUGUST 2005**

Present:- Councillor D J Morson – Chairman
Councillor A J Ketteridge

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

BEG102 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R P Chambers, R F Freeman and B M Hughes and Mr C Goldie.

BEG103 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

BEG104 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Minute BEG96 (iii) – Marriage Celebration

It was noted that the arrangements for the marriage celebration on 26 August 2005 had been very successful.

(ii) Minute BEG100 – Feedback from the Friends

It was noted that arrangements were in hand for The Friends to hold a further open day on Sunday 4 September where Members of The Friends would be able to provide advice and information on aspects on the Restoration Project.

(iii) Minute BEG101 – Future Role of the Task Group

It was noted that it was the view of the Constitution Task Group that once a Task Group had achieved its purpose it should be wound up. Councillor Ketteridge said that, whilst he supported this view, he considered that the staffing issues at the Garden needed to be resolved before the Task Group was wound up. Councillor Morson added that it was important to continue the liaison with the Friends and it had previously been suggested that Mr Goldie could be invited to appropriate meetings of the Community and Leisure Committee.

He also suggested that greater liaison could be achieved if the Council were able to appoint a representative to attend meetings of The Friends.

RECOMMENDED that an approach be made to The Friends of Bridge End Gardens for a representative of the Council to be appointed to attend their meetings.

CONSULTANT'S REPORT INTO STAFFING AND EQUIPMENT NEEDS

The Task Group received the interim report of Richard Ayres, the Consultant, who had been looking at the staffing and equipment needs for the Garden.

In the report the consultant had said that Bridge End Garden was a superb asset and he had been very impressed by the skill and enthusiasm of all those involved in taking the Garden forward. He said that in relation to staffing it was advisable that one gardener should be in overall charge and should take responsibility for the day to day running of the Garden. He added that the current staffing level was sufficient to implement the 10 year management plan but that it would be good for the Garden and the gardeners for an external consultant to visit the Garden on a regular basis (say quarterly) to assess the general progress and make recommendations to improve the Garden and working practices.

He felt that the budget of £3,500 for equipment and materials was adequate. However, he suggested that the following items should be purchased:

- A cyclone spreader so that lawn fertilizer could be applied evenly and on a regular basis to the lawns.
- An Allen Walkover pedestrian sprayer to apply selective weed killer to the lawn areas.

The Project Manager reported that these items would be purchased from existing resources. He added that reference had also been made to the use of chain saws and he was satisfied that the use of chain saws by the gardeners should only be from ground level. The Project Manager also reported that he would discuss the issue of the proposed Victorian fruit garden further with the consultant.

It was noted that provision had been made in the budget for the appointment of two gardeners.

RECOMMENDED that the Council appoint two gardeners to maintain Bridge End Garden and that one of these be appointed as head gardener.

PROJECT PLANNING GRANT

The Project Manager reported that he had met with the Heritage Lottery Fund to explore the potential of a second phase of restoration whereby the kitchen garden could be returned to a Victorian fruit garden. The Heritage Lottery Fund had suggested that, in the first instance, a consultant should be appointed to investigate the viability of a second phase of restoration. It was suggested that the cost of a consultant would be between £5-10,000 of which 10% would have to be met from the Council's existing budget. The Project Manager reported that the cost of restoration would be in the order of £200,000 and it might be possible that the Heritage Lottery Fund would provide a grant of between 75-90% of this. He said that he was confident that

the suggested restoration would not increase revenue expenditure on the Garden.

The Executive Programme Manager (Quality of Life) reported that if the Council decided to proceed with the appointment of a consultant this would not commit the Council to proceed with the second phase of the restoration. She added that the Project Manager's appointment expired at the end of December 2005 and if it was decided to proceed he would investigate sources of funding and undertake preparatory work on the proposals.

It was also reported that if it was decided to proceed it would take the Heritage Lottery Fund up to three months to determine any application for grant, the consultancy work would take between 6-8 weeks and the completion of the project would be in the order of 12 months.

RECOMMENDED that the Council make an application for a project planning grant, the cost of which to the Council will not exceed £1,000 and which can be funded from existing Council resources.

BEG107 **PROPOSED CONDITIONS OF HIRE**

The Garden had been used on a number of occasions for private functions eg wedding celebrations, and performances of plays and concerts. The Task Group had asked officers to formalise the hiring arrangements for appropriate events and a detailed proposal was circulated for approval. The Task Group considered that conditions of hire were appropriate and, in particular, noted that the hirer would be responsible for the hire of any equipment required for an event and a deposit would be required against any damage/clear up costs that might be incurred as a result of a hiring. The following suggested rates of hire were put forward for approval:

	<u>Up to 6 hours</u>	<u>Per Day</u>
Local non commercial Uttlesford based organisations and individuals	£40 per hour	£300

The rates in respect of all other applicants will be subject to negotiation but will not normally be less than the above rates except where the Council decides to reduce or waive the rates as may be the case in relation to a charity or cultural or other event of the Council's choosing.

RECOMMENDED that the above fees for the hire of Bridge End Garden be approved.

BEG108 **INSURANCE**

The Project Manager reported that following the reinstatement of all the statuary in the Garden, the insurers had notified the Council that the cost of insurance cover would increase by approximately £1,000.

BEG109

NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at 4.00 pm on 17 October 2005.

The meeting ended at 5.45 pm.