

Uttlesford District Council Scrutiny Committee Review

Title of Review

Terms of reference for Saffron Walden Town Council annual report on Bridge End Gardens

Rationale

Under terms of the transfer of assets resolved by Uttlesford District Council Environment Committee 10 November 2009 minute E27 (3) it was resolved that 'for the duration of the tapered funding an Annual report be made to the Scrutiny Committee'. These terms of reference are prepared as guidance for the Saffron Walden town Council in making their report.

Terms of Reference

What are we looking at?

- How are the gardens managed and supported
- Funding and expenditure/value for money
- Usage and customer base/business development
- Community interaction/focus
- Service standards and comparison with others
- Future options/10 year maintenance plan operation

What are we not looking at?

- Provisions made for any other assets transferred to the Town Council
- Saffron Walden Town Council's wider policy on landscape and property management

Why are we looking at this?

- It is considered reasonable for the District Council to ask for some feedback during the five year period over which tapering funding is provided to the Town Council
- To look at the extent to which consideration has been given to the recommendations made in the Appraisal Report produced by the Restoration Manager
- To ensure that service standards are being maintained
- To ensure that sustainable funding and value for money are being maintained
- To establish that the terms of the lease negotiated between Saffron Walden Town Council and the trustees of Bridge End Gardens maintains the status quo with regard to such issues as assets, opening hours and operational baselines
- To ensure the gardens remain a valued community asset
- To overcome any concerns about current arrangements

What do we hope to achieve?

- Overview of the current and on-going management of Bridge End Gardens

- Assurance that service standards are maintained
- Assurance that value for money is maintained
- To identify successes and increased efficiencies
- To ensure sustainable funding and support
- To outline future developments and improvements

What information do we need?

- Lease details/agreement with trustees
- Staffing levels and operations
- Stakeholder views including Friends of Bridge End Gardens
- Budgetary position
- Management/maintenance plan details, agreements in place
- Service standards data
- Extent and range of usage/customer volumetric/business development
- Details of equivalent listed garden provision within Uttlesford and in other districts
- Recent successes/developments
- Extent of the enactment of recommendations made in the Appraisal Report produced by the Restoration Manager

How will the evidence be gathered?

- Recommendations made in the Appraisal Report produced by the Restoration Manager 2009
- Consideration of past and current practice/management plans
- Analysis of 10 year forward management plan
- Mimetic context/ comparative benchmarking & service standards data
- Consultation with stakeholders and service partners including Friends of Bridge End Gardens and Trustees of Bridge End Gardens
- Discussions with Saffron Walden Town Council members and officers
- Consultation with interested bodies such as Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage
- Desk based investigation and analysis of core documentation
- Site visits
- Contact with Uttlesford District Council

Timescale

- Commence December 2010 finish April 2011