

Waterways Working Group

Minutes

Monday, 02 November 2015 at 15:00

PRESENT;

Councillor Jeal (in the Chair); Councillors Bird and Stenhouse.

County Councillor Castle and Mrs J Langley (PoNY)

Mr D Barker (Conservation Manager), Mrs S Wintle (Member Services Officer) and Mrs C Webb (Senior Member Services Officer)

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest declared at the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that there were no apologies for absence given at the meeting.

3 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting and a round robin of introductions was undertaken.

4 UPDATE BY THE CONSERVATION MANAGER

Darren Barker, Conservation Manager, gave a verbal report regarding the progress of the bid for the Waterways.

The Conservation Manager reported that Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust were partnering Great Yarmouth Borough Council, and that involvement will be sourced from local schools and colleges.

It was reported that overwhelming numbers of volunteers had been received and that trainees and local volunteers were to be offered training in horticultural planting and gardening techniques.

The Conservation Manager reported that comprehensive business plans were to be seen prior to allocation of funding of £1.3 million by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Conservation Manager reported that the funding, if successful, would create 2 full time posts to manage and co-ordinate the gardening programmes.

The Conservation Manager suggested a "Friends" group should be created to encourage volunteers to continue working with the project using skills gained from training.

The Conservation Manager reported that suggestions had been made on ways to generate income from The Waterways. It was suggested that the Island Cafe could be re-developed, and that this could cost up to £200,000 to complete.

The Conservation Manager reported that the costs to develop the project were £55,000, and that with successful match funding £1.3 million would be used to transform the gardens and that plans had been prepared. It was reported that a full public consultation would take place to engage public reaction.

The Conservation Manager reported that the Architect for the development had yet to be filled.

It was reported that the deadline for the funding application to be submitted was either February 2016 or August 2016, the Conservation Manger stated that the August deadline was more achievable.

A Member asked who would run the project, it was reported that a Committee would be formed and be responsible for works at the development stage.

A Member expressed concern with regard to future self-financing, and was informed that the Board would have control of this.

The Chairman expressed concern regarding the area between Sandown Road and Salisbury Road and the possibility of this area being included in the project, it was reported that funding was only available for the development of the Waterways.

Jane Langley, a representative from PoNY expressed concern over the loss of flower beds in the Marine Crescent gardens. The Conservation Manager reported that the Green Gym volunteers had started work on some of the flower beds in the Waterways and Boating Lake, and that these would be maintained.

The Conservation Manager stated that the Preservation Trust had been offered a barn with an acre of land in Hemsby to use as propagation premises for plants for the project.

County Councillor Castle suggested that beach huts could be situated on the Promenade, to increase footfall all year round and generate income to sustain the Waterways. The Chairman expressed concern regarding the amount of income which could be generated from these Beach Huts.

County Councillor Castle suggested that the huts would be of high grade finish with a Heritage Theme, to encourage purchasers from all over the Country, and not just Great Yarmouth.

Councillor Bird suggested that the land opposite the Imperial Hotel could be utilised, it was suggested that the beach huts could be upgraded to brick built chalets and be

available 365 days a year. It was agreed that The Chairman and Councillor Bird would meet to have a look at the potential for this area of land.

The Chairman stated that the Borough Works department was needed to be reinstated to service this project.

The Conservation Manager reported that the Heritage Lottery fund were keen to support this project and had been for over a decade.

Jane Langley asked when the plans would be published to allow the community to be consulted. The Conservation Manager that a big sign would be placed near to the Waterways and information would be available for residents on the Council website.

It was agreed The Conservation Manager would circulate the Waterways bid report to the Yarmouth Area Committee once completed.

5 WATERWAYS QUESTIONNAIRE

Jane Langley reported that four representatives from PoNY had canvassed opinions from Local residents, shoppers at Sainsbury's, Green Gym volunteers members and visitors to the Charity Duck races, and that the majority had voted for the Waterways to return to it's original form when it was built in the 1920's. It was reported that a number of people had also voted for an Eden type project, and it was suggested this should be considered for the Winter Gardens.

Jane Langley reported that additional ideas had been received relating to the Boating Lake, it was pointed out that a Memory Rail, similar to the one on Southwold Pier, was an excellent idea. Jane Langley agreed to source the pricing for this.

Jane Langley reported that concern had been raised by local residents that previous efforts to restore the area had not come to fruition. Jane Langley stated the importance of keeping residents informed.

The Chairman expressed concern in regard to the idea of a Skate Park and Go-Karting in this area. The Chairman suggested that the introduction of Outdoor Theatre productions was an excellent initiative.

The Chairman suggested that a report be taken to the next Yarmouth Area Committee.

The Chairman thanked Jane Langley and the PoNY representatives for undertaking the survey.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that there was no other business as being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

7 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed the next meeting would be arranged once an Architect had been appointed.

The meeting ended at: 15:45