

## **CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES of the meeting of the RECREATION AND ARTS COMMITTEE**

held on 6 March 2006

**PRESENT** Councillor Mrs. P.R. Lindsley, Chairman (presiding)

Councillor	A.K. Bacon	Councillor	C.H. Spruytenburg
"	E.L. Bamford	"	P. Woodburn
"	D.J. Lacey		

#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillors M. Bignell and Mrs. P.R. Wilkinson M.B.E.

Officer: Mr. W. Richards, Town Clerk

Mr R. Greenwood, Lanarca Consultants  
Mr K. Austin, Environmental Group

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M.Z. Bhatti, M. Fayyaz, Mrs. J.C. Fulford, Mrs. M. Molesworth and Mrs. A.M. Pirouet

#### 55. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest that were brought to the Chairman's notice.

#### 56. **MINUTES**

It was

#### **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 12 December 2005, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

#### 57. **ALLOTMENT GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meetings of the Allotment Group held on 16 November 2005 and 13 February 2006. It was

#### **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

58. **ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Environmental Group held on 16 February 2006. It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

In respect of Minute No. 6, Councillor Lacey requested that, in future, the Environmental Group inform local Members of any proposed clean-ups in specific wards to co-ordinate efforts. It was also noted that 'Pond Park Clean Up' weekend was not a 'Chiltern District Council project' as indicated in the Minutes.

59. **ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Elgiva Board of Management held on 16 January 2006. It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

60. **LOWNDES PARK LOTTERY BID**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Roger Greenwood from Lanarca Consultants and Mr Ken Austin from the Environmental Group who were integral members of the Lowndes Park Lottery Bid Steering Group. Mr Greenwood explained that his company had been funded through an initial Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant to produce a Conservation and Development Plan for the park. This document is due for publication by the end of March and is required to be submitted to the HLF for assessment. Following the plan being accepted by the HLF, the Council had an opportunity to bid for further monies for capital and maintenance projects in the park if desired and Members were presented with a range of possible projects and associated costings.

The Committee considered the proposals and, in principle, had no objections to a major bid being progressed though it was accepted that the financial contributions, both from the Council and other partners needed to be carefully considered before submission and the implications for the workload on officers also needed to be taken into account.

In regard to the specific potential projects, the following comments were made:

- Proposals to erect an acoustic willow bund had been left off the list for consideration and needed to be included in a bid.
- Consideration to include the Depot in the bid should be investigated.
- A 'water-play' area should be encouraged so long as it was low maintenance and safe.

- Enhancement of flower-beds should be progressed in the expectation that general improved facilities would reduce anti-social behaviour.
- A labyrinth design should be considered for the performance area as an additional attraction for families.

Mr Greenwood concluded that the extensive consultation undertaken by his company had shown that the people of Chesham wanted a cleaner and safer park and this should be prominent in any bid to the HLF. He also opined that it would be impossible to avoid some controversy with a funding application and highlighted the level of wildfowl at Skottowes Pond; the avenue of trees proposed for Rue de Houilles and general tree planting and removal as obvious examples.

The Chairman thanked Mr Greenwood for his attendance and Members for their questions in a highly constructive debate.

It was agreed that the matter be given further consideration at the next Council meeting and

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Council support a possible capital and maintenance bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, subject to level of match-funding, maintenance costs and staffing issues being addressed.

61. **ALLOTMENT GROUP PROPOSALS**

Members considered the request from the Allotment Group both to alter the tenancy agreement and to re-instate plots 101A –106 in Cameron Road for letting to satisfy the current demand for allotments.

The Committee agreed to the proposed amendments put forward by the Allotment Group to the tenancy agreement. Moreover, in noting that the remedial works required to bring the Cameron Road plots back into use could be achieved utilising existing budgets, Members welcomed this particular initiative.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the amendments to the tenancy agreement as proposed by the Allotment Group be adopted and approved and that Plots 101A – 106 Cameron Road be allowed to be let again, following the necessary remedial works being undertaken.

62. **MEADES WATER GARDENS REGENERATION**

The Committee considered the proposals from the ‘Impress the Chess’ Forum following extensive consultation.

Members welcomed the improvement proposals that included the removing of the weir and letting the river regain its natural alignment within the Water Gardens; extensive tree pollarding; the erection of a strong and aesthetically pleasing fence to deter people using the Water Gardens as a walkway from Meades Lane; replacement of the gravel bed since the silt has removed all the previous existing gravel and repair to the recently damaged Gazebo.

In respect of a request from the nearby veterinary surgeons to purchase a small corner of the area for increased car parking, Members were of the view that it would be beneficial to at least negotiate further on this matter while being mindful of likely planning restraints.

It was therefore

**RESOLVED**

to proceed with Meades Water Gardens regeneration as outlined in the proposals, subject to the scheme being funded externally and to negotiate further on the selling of part of the area to provide car parking.

63. **MARSTON FIELD PAVILION**

The Committee received an update from Buckinghamshire Community Action (BCA) and Pond Park Community Association on proposals to renovate Marston Pavilion. Members were advised that BCA and the Association were now in a position to develop the project further and had drawn up plans to seek estimates from architects before seeking further external funding. Members considered a proposed layout for a new or fully renovated building. It was noted that the Association was proposing internal changes that would enhance the pavilion as a multi purpose, community facility. However it was also noted this would result in a loss of a changing room, meaning that two matches could no longer be played at the same time.

Cognisant that two football pitches had not been required for over two seasons, it was

**RESOLVED**

that the Committee note and approve the changes put forward by Pond Park Community Association and Buckinghamshire Community Action for Marston Field Pavilion.

64. **CHILTERN OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION STRATEGY –  
CONSIDERING LOCAL PRIORITIES**

The Town Clerk reported that Chiltern District Council was actively seeking views from Town and Parish Councils as to their perceived priorities for their areas. While it was accepted that Members had previously been critical of the initial open spaces audit undertaken on behalf of Chiltern District Council, it was agreed it would be

important to respond so as to be potentially eligible for any future monies distributed by the District Council for recreation.

It was therefore

**RESOLVED**

that Members consider the recreational priorities for their wards and for the town as a whole and that these be considered at the Council meeting scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

65. **REPAIRS TO SKATEBOARD EQUIPMENT, LOWNDES PARK**

Members considered the proposals to repair the equipment at the skatepark in Lowndes Park.

After noting that officers had sought appropriate estimates for the works in accordance with the Council's financial regulations and that the repairs could be financed through existing budgets, it was

**RESOLVED**

that the skins on all the equipment in the skatepark be replaced and the quotation of £11,853 be accepted.

66. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

The items presented on Information Sheet No. 25 were received and noted.

67. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN

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