

# Chesham Town Council



Bill Richards  
Town Clerk

Tel: 01494 774842

Fax: 01494 582908

[www.chesham.gov.uk](http://www.chesham.gov.uk)

Email: [admin@chesham.gov.uk](mailto:admin@chesham.gov.uk)

13<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Dear Councillor

I hereby give notice of a meeting of the **RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE** to be held in the Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Chesham, on

**MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> NOVEMBER 2015 AT APPROXIMATELY 8.00PM**

(i.e. immediately following the close of the Development Control Committee meeting which is due to commence at 7.30pm)

**A G E N D A**

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Declarations of Interest.
3. To receive and confirm the Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015.
4. To receive and consider the Minutes of:
  - a. *Chesham Environment Group meeting of the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015.*
  - b. *Allotment Group AGM of the 10<sup>th</sup> September and meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2015.*
  - c. *Elgiva Board of Management meetings of the 12<sup>th</sup> October and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015.*
  - d. *Friends of Chesham Cemetery meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015.*
5. Green Flag Award Entry for 2016.
6. Town Hall Civil Marriage Ceremonies and Civil Partnership Registrations.
7. Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum.
8. Revised Estimates 2015/16 and Estimates 2016/17 (*to follow following consideration by the Finance Working Group on the 16<sup>th</sup> November*).
9. Proposed Fees and Charges 2016/17 (*to follow following consideration by the Finance Working Group on the 16<sup>th</sup> November*).
10. Exclusion of the Public and the Press.
11. Elgiva Pantomime for 2016.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Richards'.

Bill Richards  
Town Clerk





## Circulation

### Councillor Circulation

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>N.L. Brown</b>	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Mrs. J. E. MacBean</b>
"	<b>A.W. Franks</b>	"	<b>M. W. Shaw</b>
"	<b>Q. Chaudhry</b>	"	<b>Mrs D.M. Varley</b>
"	<b>M. Fayyaz</b>	"	<b>B.R. Whitfield</b>
"	<b>P.J. Hudson</b>	"	<b>S. P. Willmoth</b>
"	<b>D. J. Lacey</b>		

## Minutes of the Chesham Environmental group meeting August 2015

### 1. Present

Georgina Lomnitz, Roger Main, Rosemary Main, Jean Queripel, James Neason, Jean Staveley, Trevor Brawn, Phil Folly, Michael Browne, Andrew Clark, Hannah Webley, Jenny Pearson, Richard Berry, Colette Littley

### 2. Apologies

Kate Folly, Alastair Holland Jane MacBean, Ken Austin, Louise Cook

### 3. Matters arising

Date on the Minutes was wrong should be June instead of August.

Trevor asked if we found Toads and Newts on Jacobs Ladder to which the answer is yes.

Bury Cottage in Pednor has Himalayan Balsam in the garden.

Berkhamstead field, Jenny noticed that there were not as many orchids as last year.

### 4. Finance.

Healthy balance at the moment so we could spend some money.

We need Waders, Brooms, 2 Signs for working parties that are waterproof.

Store room needs overhaul should get some shelving. (stuff from the Hearse house can now go back) Bob Ayres supposed to be removing the old electrical wiring.

### 5. Heritage trail plaques. Andrew and Phil to find out what ones are missing and what they should say and Colette will order new ones from Manor signs like the Chesham in Bloom ones.

### 6. Future Working Parties

Wed 2/9 Moor Road Vegetation and Trapps Lane

Sun 20/9 Amersham Road Allotments

Wed 7/10 Meades Water Gardens

Sun 18/10 Cannons Mill bypass Channel

Wed 4/11 Moor Road and Trapps Lane

Sun 15/11 Holloway Lane

Wed 2/12 Pednor Road

Sun 20/12 Meades Water Gardens and Social

Richard Berry wants the area by Town Bridge cleared up, too much for the group to tackle although we should keep clear a narrow path through the weeds. We don't have the expertise to know what needs doing so discussions need to be had with the environment agency and CDC / BCC

### 7. Berkhamstead Field Update

TB reported that the Orchid Count was down on previous year, only 16 found although there were more pyramidal (7) and no common spotted although this is fairly typical of orchids for them to come and go. Rest of the field is looking great, Scabious looks superb and quite a few butterflies although it has been a poor year generally for butterflies. Scheduled to be cut by town council after 8/9 and cuttings will be taken away. PF said we should take photos of

field as it is now as it looks so good. Mike Palmer of County Museum has asked TB to prepare a display for the Museum which he advises all to have a look at.  
Working party in the field Jan Feb next year.

8. Mayors Community Group Meeting.

Sat 12/9 10 until 2 in the town hall. Refreshments provided. We will have a display and will get handouts done and a poster (AC)

9. Fly Monitoring Update

AC reported that 2 of his 3 sites are currently dry. Doing next session Monday after meeting.

PF will do next fly monitoring training course.

10. Chesham Water Group.

RCA and Flood Group are involved in this, set up by BCC and they want a delegate from each group. Will meet Quarterly at the town hall. "To provide a strategic overview of all work in Chesham" if no delegate from our group then we could get email updates.

11. Captains wood update.

PF had not been there for a while, GL going to a working party with the Chiltern society.  
TB said there are Violet Heleborines in the cleared woodland area. JS said the Hazledene farm path was really pretty this year with lots of wild flowers.

12. Diary Dates

7/10 Green Drinks

25/11 Chiltern AONB 50 Years celebration at the Elgiva

8/9 Chiltern Rangers clearing Co-op field path

12/9 Volunteer Chesham

17/9 Chesham Society Question time

6/9 Lowndesbourne

13. AOB

JS reported the hole in the bridge over the bypass channel and although the bridge is only 4 or 5 years old some or all needs replacing.

There is some Himalayan Balsam in the fishing lake.

Peter Hawkes has reported Japanese Knotweed on the Moor Road allotments. If anyone sees any knotweed should report it to the town hall.

AC and KA to tackle the Balsam in the Duke of Bedford Allotment Lake.

HW had emailed Allen Beechey about the knotweed at Cannons mill and has not heard back from him yet although this area now has new landlord.

CL and KG didn't find any signs of Water Voles in the river by the moor but did find Field vole signs.

Next meeting 19<sup>th</sup> November 7.30 Town Hall

## CHESHAM ALLOTMENTS GROUP

### A.G.M of ALLOTMENT TENANTS

Held in the Council Chamber at Chesham Town Hall on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at 7.30pm

**Attendance:** 15 CAG members, 8 committee members and Chesham Town Clerk, Mr. Bill Richards, and 3 members of Chesham Horticultural Society (Judges).

#### **1. Introductory Welcome & Chairman's Remarks.**

The chairman, Allen Tilbury, welcomed Mike Allenby and his fellow allotment judges from Chesham Horticultural society, Brian Beningfield and Lesley Mountain, the Town Clerk, Bill Richards, and members of the Allotment Group.

#### **2. Apologies for absence.**

Yvonne Webster, Jim Abbott, James Bole, Andrew Sinclair

#### **3. Approval of Minutes of the A.G.M from the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014.**

Amendments to correct the spelling of the names of the mayor and Chris Hickling in the draft minutes were accepted. The minutes were than approved.

Proposed: Kate Hutchinson  
Seconded: Diane Brackley

At this point the chairman gave his report (attached).

#### **4. Election of officers to Chesham Allotments Group.**

Chairman: Allen Tilbury

Proposed: Chris Spruytenberg  
Seconded: Vince Crompton Approved

Vice-Chairman: Tim Andrew

Proposed: Vince Crompton  
Seconded: Chris Hickling Approved



## 5. Treasurer's Report.

The treasurer presented the accounts for the year, with printed copies made available to the meeting. The treasurer reported that:

- The Group is in a healthy financial state, with a balance of £2,266.42;
- We had a surplus of £740.72 for the year, compared to £289.83 the previous year;
- The cost of improvements to the access to the Focal Point – railings and steps - will feature in next year's accounts;
- The Allotments Group had made a donations to Chesham in Bloom of £50 from our funds and also the proceeds of a special coffee morning, which raised £71.40p; the Group was pleased to support such a worthy horticultural cause;
- Our main source of income continues to be the coffee mornings, with our other social events – fish and chip suppers, cheese and wine evening - and the open day making significant contributions to funds.

The accounts were adopted by the members present.

Proposed:	Tony Muir	
Seconded:	Dave Hall	Approved

## 6. Chesham Horticultural Society Presentation of Winners

Mike Allenby, the lead judge told the meeting that:

- The allotments were judged on 12 June and 5 August 2015;
- The allotments were thought to be of a generally high standard, especially at the August judging after the extreme heat of late June and early July and the extended dry weather;
- The judges were disappointed that only four of 25 new tenant plots were worthy of note in June and of those only three were worth judging fully in August.

Bill Richards, Town Clerk, then made the presentations to the winners

## 7. Presentation to winners of Best Kept Allotments and Best Small Plot.

### Cameron Road large plots

1 <sup>st</sup>	Mr J Abbott	Plots 31 and 32	176 points (out of 200)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mr J Pedder	Plot 221	159

### Bellingdon Road large plots

1 <sup>st</sup>	Mr D Muir	Plot 28	142 points (out of 200)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mr G Rogers	Plot 10	141

### Small plots

1 <sup>st</sup>	Mr T Andrew	Plot 48A, Cameron Road	154 points (out of 200)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mrs C M Walters	Plot 3A, Asheridge Road	151
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mr I Patterson	Plot 29B, Bellingdon Road	151

### **8. Presentation to winner for Best New Tenant.**

1 <sup>st</sup>	Mr K Wilson	Plot 5B, Bellingdon Road	71 points (out of 100)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mrs R Mullan	Plot 220A, Cameron Road	70
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mr T Piercy	Plot 59A, Cameron Road	67

### **9. Presentation by Bill Richards, Town Clerk.**

Mr Richards thanked the allotment holders for their efforts and support and the Group for representing and articulating the views and needs of tenants. He reflected on the changes he had seen since he had first attended an Allotment Group AGM, in particular the development from having plots uncultivated through a lack of interest to the current situation where plots are now sought after and there is a waiting list.

He also made the following points:

- A new boundary fence is soon to be put up alongside the Asheridge Road allotments, at a cost of approximately £10,000.
- He was actively working with Allen Tilbury, the chairman, and local police to mitigate the problems of theft and vandalism.
- Rents are to go up by 10p per pole from October 2015. The Town Council compares its charges with other local authorities to ensure they remain competitive.
- The regime of 4 inspections per year has helped move on tenants who do not maintain their plots. Together with the practice of splitting large plots into two when they become available it has reduced the waiting list significantly

## Questions and comments.

Chris Spruytenberg asked about work that had been carried out on Cameron Road. It apparently related to a water leak. Allen Tilbury (Chair) advised the meeting that the main water pipe has been replaced from the Water Meter, under the road surface of Cameron Road and reconnected to the water supply immediately outside of the vehicle entrance gate (recycle bins).

Dave Hall asked if running water could be restored to the tanks serving plots 1 to 12 on Cameron Road. They are currently being topped up by bowser, which is appreciated by plot holders. The Town Clerk promised to look into the matter, along with the damage to the concrete by the gate next to the recycling bins.

Dave Page asked what had happened to cause a break in the collection of paper from the recycling bins on Cameron Road. The Town Clerk said he would take the matter up with the District council, who are responsible.

## 10. Any Other Business.

Vince Crompton brought two matters from Chesham in Bloom to the attention of the meeting:

- The Chesham in Bloom Calendar for 2016 is in production and will shortly be on sale.
- The result of the Judging will be made known on 17 September. There will be an awards evening when presentations will be made on 24 September.

Dave Mason asked if the eviction of tenants who do not maintain their plots could be speeded up; he had a particular problem with a weed infested plot next to him that had been in that state for a long time. The Town Clerk explained that there was legislation that required a procedure to be followed, which took time. Tim Andrew commented that he had taken part in inspections this year for the first time; he appreciated that the length of time the process took was frustrating to existing tenants who keep their plots in good order and people on the waiting list, but he felt that there was a willingness on the part of the council to take firm action.

Chris Spruytenberg asked if there was a welcome pack that could be given to new tenants. Along with the comments from the Horticultural Society judges about the problem of finding newly-tenanted plots that were in a fit state to be judged, this led to an open discussion about the support of new tenants and making sure they understood the nature of the challenge they were taking on.

Allen Tilbury (Chairman), advised the meeting that Chesham Allotments Group together with Chesham Town Council put together a Welcome and Induction Pack for new Tenants, and the Town Council agreed that copies would be issued to potential and new tenants. The Chairman asked Bill Richards (Town Clerk) to remind

his staff of the arrangement. The Welcome and Induction Pack was introduced in March 2011, and the Chesham Allotments Group will objectively review as necessary.

Allen Tilbury reminded the Group that the next Fish and chip supper was to be held at the Baptist church in Red Lion Street on Saturday 21 November at 7pm. He and Vincent Lucas were the contact points to book places at £7.50 a head.

#### **11. Closing Remarks.**

The chairman thanked everyone for attending and contributing to the meeting.

The chairman then closed the meeting.

Date of the next AGM: **Thursday 6 September, 2016 at 7.30 p.m.** at the Town Hall.

Date of the next committee meeting: Tuesday 6 October, 2015 at 7.30 at the Town Hall.

# Chesham Allotments Group Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday 6th October, 2015 19:30

Venue: Chesham Town Hall

Attendees: Yvonne Webster (Minutes Secretary), Jim Abbott (Cameron Road North Rep), Beverly Mackay, Kate Hutchinson (Editor, The Grower), Andrew Sinclair (Correspondence Secretary), Tim Andrew (Vice Chair), Vincent Lucas (Cameron Road South Rep) David Hall, Ray Williams (Treasurer), Tony Muir

Apologies: Jim Bole (Ashridge Road), Jane MacBean (Councillor), Allen Tilbury (Chairman), Vince Crompton

## Actions

- Yvonne, Tony and Beverly to meet on November 2nd for web site training.
- Review publicity options in the New Year
- Check who has generator keys for the 17th October. KH
- Increase the list of retailers offering discounts to the CAG discount card holders. RW
- Please bring festive delights to the December meeting!

## Information

- The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as correct. Proposed AS. Seconded DH.
- The previous minutes had no reference to the purchase of a microphone. It was proposed that Allen should purchase a microphone: proposed by TA, seconded by JA, all agreed.

### Chairman's report:

The attendance sheet was not completed by all attendees at the AGM giving a poor view of the attendance, which was actually quite reasonable.

CCTV feasibility - TA has spoken to the Town Clerk and has offered to pay £10 per dummy cameras, the project is now in progress with the council.

Conflicting security advice has been given by the Police and by Forensics, the Town Clerk has been asked to seek clarification.

The Ashridge Road fence has been replaced as part of the Council maintenance. Noted with gratitude.

- Treasurers report: the bank balance is £2456. £383 has been paid to the Town Council as a donation towards the cost of the new rails etc. The coffee morning income is being reduced significantly by the additional costs of the generator. Andrew suggested turning the generator off once the urn water is hot. RW to monitor the situation.
- The Grower - congratulations and thanks to Kate for her interesting articles and excellent layout. Kate will produce a brief December online issue.
- Vincent reported that the hall, food, and quizmaster are booked for 21st November. Tim will organise on the day, starting at 6pm. Tim to collect the food. Vincent will collect the

keys in advance. Vince to get the chocolates for the winners and wine for Phil. Yvonne to bring her crafts. Yvonne and Beverly to run the raffle and bring the tickets.

- The Cheese and Wine was a lovely evening with very good feedback from attendees
- A replacement gazebo will be needed for the Open Day in 2016. Ray offered to loan his gazebo.
- It was proposed that the Open Day be limited to the hours of 10:00 to 14:00 with the raffle at 13:30. Proposed DH, seconded VL, the meeting agreed.
- BM is compiling a list of volunteers for coffee mornings and/or for providing cakes. There are more people on the list for next year.
- It was proposed that the winter toilet cleaning rota be limited to alternate weeks, proposed KH, seconded YW, all agreed.
- Allotment inspections are now complete, the last inspection resulted in 6 gentle reminders, 3 serious reminders and 5 notices to quit. There will be a supplementary visit on 29th October as there are 11 plots to be reviewed for progress. The meeting discussed thinking about the creation of stricter inspection criteria and encouraging the Council to do more.
- Congratulations to all concerned with Chesham in Bloom for the fantastic award of Gold. Allen is now chair of Chesham in Bloom.
- Bob Ayres has the paint ready to paint the lay-by car bays.
- Sleeper replacements are on the back burner
- The discount card - South Heath garden centre are still happy to be included, and JPS. However only 58 people took a card in 2015 with printing costs of £70, therefore we should only print 100 for 2016. More local shops should be included to make the card worthwhile, RW to approach retailers. Meeting agreed to defer decisions on printing the cards until the next meeting.

The meeting was closed at 20:50

Date of next committee meeting: Tuesday 8th December, 2015, 19:30 Town Hall - bring festive delights.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT  
AT 10.30AM ON MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2015 AT THE TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT**

Trevor Pilling (Chairman, presiding)  
Fiona Kear  
Stephen Cherry  
Lee Bright  
Mick Carling  
Yvonne Plester  
Cllr Jane MacBean  
Mimi Harker

Officers: Bill Richards – Town Clerk  
Mark Barnes – Manager, Elgiva  
Moira Little – Deputy Manager, Elgiva

Cllr Bernie Whitfield – Minutes 1- 4 only.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Anthony Ogden and Patricia Cherrill. An apology for lateness was received from Stephen Cherry.

2. **CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME**

Trevor formally welcomed Cllr Whitfield to the meeting to explain the new Council's thoughts and vision for the theatre.

3. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2015 were agreed as a true and correct record.

4. **NEW COUNCIL'S VISION AND FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR THE ELGIVA**

Cllr Whitfield explained he had been asked by the Council's reconstituted Finance Working Group to meet with Board to explain the vision of the new administration.

He advised that the Council was lucky to have new councillors with professional accounting skills and they intended to use their collective financial acumen to review costs all around the Council with a view to looking at, and presenting, budgets in a different, more easily understandable way and to make decision-making easier. Key to this, pertaining to the Elgiva, would be:

- A much less centralised Renewals and Repairs budget
- Clearer highlighting of the discount obtained by local theatre groups so the public could be made aware of the community financial support given by the Council.

Councillor Whitfield also stated that there was an aspirational aim for the Elgiva to break-even by the end of this Council in May 2019 but this objective was not intended to be achieved through draconian cost-cutting or 'penny-pinching'. Jane added that the new administration had

no thoughts of closing the theatre and, indeed, saw it an integral part as the community facilities required as part of the District Council's Local Plan. Mimi opined that the proposed 'zero based budgetary approach' had been successfully implemented at Chiltern District Council and had helped crystallise thoughts on how services were delivered.

The Board generally welcomed the commitment and support the new Council administration was proposing, though doubts were expressed as to whether a break-even point could be realistically reached since no other such comparable Council run facility in the country, to the Board's knowledge, achieved this. In respect to the community groups' subsidy, Mark highlighted that, in actual fact, the amount had little material effect on the overall budget (around £3k).

Fiona and Mick both stated that it was important the Council liaised with the Board on its medium to long term vision for the facility and not just on finances. Jane said she was confident that would happen after the financial review. Trevor added that, with the pressures the staff were under (particularly now the Administrator, Karen, had been signed off work with an injury for the foreseeable future), he would be grateful if the Finance Working Group came to him, rather than officers, for detailed financial figures and explanations.

Trevor thanked Cllr Whitfield for his attendance and he left the meeting.

## 5. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Trevor distributed the figures for June to September 2015. Trevor reported that there had been a slight dip in income but the monthly deficit was still £2k less than it was at the same time last year which was a superb achievement bearing in mind many professional and amateur theatre companies closing in what was still a tough time for the arts world.

Mark advised that October was very unlikely to be as successful as last October since, in 2014, the theatre hosted the two sell-out Michael McIntyre shows and had a week's hire from a Christian theatre group which sold very well. However November should be an improvement since he had reduced the Pantomime pre-run to allow 5 extra days of other shows to be slotted in.

*Note: Stephen arrived at 11.20am*

## 6. **MANAGER'S UPDATE**

Mark reported on the following -

- The Elgiva was required to spend some £4k on remedial measures, including Fire Warden training, and a professional fire risk assessment following a fire inspection from the Bucks Fire and Rescue Service and subsequent Fire Safety Deficiency Notice from its inspector.
- Other costs incurred/about to be incurred are a leaking roof over the foyer and the blowing of the bulb in the digital projector - though the latter's cost of over £2k will be recouped through the terms of the warranty.
- Karen, the Administrator, as previously mentioned, had seriously damaged her arm in an accident and, at the time of the meeting, it was unknown as to whether she intended to return to work at all. Denise, one of the relief Duty Managers, was currently filling in for her but she had other job interviews lined up so her availability could cease shortly.

- In respect to the 2015 pantomime, Mark advised that ticket sales were some £3k up as to where they were this time last year, but highlighted that weekly sales between now and the first performance were likely to fluctuate.
- Mark stated that he was minded to increase the deposit for amateur companies. A brief discussion ensued as to the desirability of this with some members suggesting that amateur groups they were associated with may, ultimately, decide the risk of booking the Elgiva would be too great if the deposit level was too high. Mick opined that amateur companies could surely insure themselves in this matter but Trevor suggested such insurance policies were conditional on a number of factors. In the end the Board agreed with Bill's suggestion that Mark see what deposits other comparable size local authority-run theatres charge in this respect and report back.

## 7. **BUDGETS AND FEES AND CHARGES**

Following Cllr Whitfield's presentation, Bill explained that next year's fees and charges and budgets were beginning to be formulated to be fed into the Finance Working Group and, as usual, it was agreed Trevor be authorised to develop these in liaison with officers.

## 8. **UPDATE ON SEA CADETS BUILDING AND PATIO PROJECTS**

Bill advised that Steve Pearson had been working hard to liaise with BCC officers over the potential future of the building. He had now received information that the Sea Cadets intend to vacate sometime before the middle of December. Until then, BCC is not allowing access but has noted this Council's initial interest. The next steps will be a tour around to see what works would be required to logistically transform it into a meaningful adjunct rehearsal area/small theatre. However, ultimately it was accepted that the Council would need to pay for a full structural survey after basic first visits.

In respect to the patio, Stephen reported that he was intending to meet CDC planners to discuss drawings in next 3 weeks to ascertain chances of planning approval in respect to car-park allocation and fire door regulations. Assuming response is positive, the Board will be asked to draw up a cost benefit analysis to be presented to the Finance Working Group.

It was suggested that a small Board working party of Jane, Stephen, Mick and Trevor be delegated to look at these capital projects and also the more ambitious project to build over the foyer and create a second floor as initially allowed for in the original construction plans.

*Note: Mimi left the meeting at 12.10pm*

## 9. **AOB**

Mark enquired whether CDC could be approached to see if one or two bays could be changed to 10p for 10 minutes (as at Catlings car-park) to allow customers to buy tickets at the theatre without incurring a minimum 60p charge. Jane advised that CDC had yet to feedback on the success or otherwise of the Catlings pilot but, once this had happened, there may be opportunities to extend to other car-parks.

Jane also reported that the Elgiva car-parking recycling bins were to be removed. Mark and Moira said this would be bad for them, particularly with the number of beer and wine bottles they recycled daily. Jane said, in her capacity of a CDC Member, she would lobby on this matter on behalf of the Elgiva.

10. **PANTOMIME 2016**

Mark advised that, since the last meeting, two offers to produce the pantomime from outside companies with a guarantee to the Council being more than currently being made as a profit with the successful 'in-house' production. Trevor therefore suggested that, in its recommendations to the Council, the Board had to decide a. whether it should change the status quo and b. if so, which company would it recommend.

Moira, on behalf of the Elgiva team, suggested that while staff satisfaction for the technicians may drop (due to less creative freedom with sound and special effects), overall, the view was that a change would be desirable and would certainly relieve pressures generally if produced externally. She accepted that a poorly received show may result in less sales in future years but that would also be the case if an 'in-house' show somehow misfired. Jane also added that an outside production would lessen the problems of 'succession planning' if the Manager left or went on long-term sick leave. Lee remarked that, while he had no objections in principle to 'out-sourcing', it was essential the Director was properly vetted by Mark and others as, in his professional opinion, a bad director could ruin a production and the theatre's reputation. Both Yvonne and Fiona opined that it was essential that local children had an opportunity to audition for the supporting roles to retain the local community feel of the show.

Mark said he agreed with all these points and clauses to that effect would be written into agreed contract but, he concluded, all things being equal, he too preferred the option of having an outside production in 2016.

Trevor then went around the table and all agreed on the option submitted by the company already known to the Board. Bill suggested that this, as a contractual matter, should be considered and ratified by the Recreation and Arts Committee scheduled on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November and agreed to write a report in conjunction with Mark to that effect.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Trevor suggested that the next meeting be earlier than the usual two month gap to fit into budget cycles. It was therefore agreed that the next meeting of the Board of Management will be on **MONDAY 9<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2015** at **10.30am** at the Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 1.35pm.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT  
AT 10.30AM ON MONDAY 9<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2015 AT THE TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT**

Trevor Pilling (Chairman, presiding)  
Anthony Ogden  
Patricia Cherrill  
Fiona Kear  
Lee Bright  
Mick Carling  
Yvonne Plester  
Cllr Jane MacBean

Officers: Bill Richards – Town Clerk  
Moira Little – Deputy Manager, Elgiva

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Stephen Cherry, Mimi Harker and Mark Barnes

2. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015 were agreed as a true and correct record.

Bill reminded the Board that he was still looking for someone to take the Minutes so would welcome any suggestions if members knew of anyone suitable.

3. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Trevor distributed the figures for October 2015 and was pleased to highlight that the monthly deficit was still £2k less than it was at the same time last year.

Anthony remarked that it appeared that the digital projector will have paid for itself by the end of the financial year and in less than half the time originally envisaged. All agreed this was hugely positive and it was also noted that the live streaming brought in a new, different, clientele to the theatre. Mick enquired as to whether the digital projector had meant that the Elgiva could secure film new releases quicker than previously. Moira advised that this was slightly better but there was still a lag behind the major multiplexes. However she opined that, generally, the local film goers were happy to wait until the Elgiva had secured a showing unless it was major 'blockbuster'.

4. **DEPUTY MANAGER'S UPDATE**

Moira reported on the following -

- Karen Wheeler, the Administrator, had handed in her notice after her unfortunate injury sustained in the High St. Moira said Denise Gardner, one of the Duty Managers, was currently filling in. The Board wished Karen all very best and asked that its thanks be conveyed to her for all her hard work and diligence over a number of years. Anthony enquired whether the Council had any insurance cover for long-term sickness. Bill

replied that he did not believe so but the Council had a sinking fund in its own budgets to cover this.

- In respect to parking, Jane advised that she had raised the matter with CDC and it would be considering the '10p for 10 minutes' option for the car-park there in January. It was agreed that Bill, Jane and Moira/Mark meet up well before then to prepare a briefing paper for CDC. A brief discussion ensued on potential use of the electric car-charging spaces to allow customers to visit briefly to purchase tickets.
- Moira advised the recycling bins had now been removed. She had received a quote from Veolia to take the glass and paper which seemed reasonable and affordable. Jane opined it may be prudent to fence the bins off to stop the public leaving their own recycling there.
- Trevor enquired as to whether Mark had progressed his idea to increase the deposit for amateur companies. Moira replied that she did not think that Mark had yet had the time to see what deposits other comparable size local authority-run theatres charge in this respect but he was increasing the deposit for new companies already, whose history he was unaware of.
- Lee asked if there was any further updates on next year's pantomime. Bill advised he was preparing to write a report to this effect to be considered at the Recreation and Arts Committee on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November.

## 5. **BUDGETS AND FEES AND CHARGES**

Bill explained that the Finance Working Group had requested that both the Elgiva and Gym and Swim management reconsider its initial proposals not to increase its fees. Bill had relayed this to Mark who had reported back the following: *'I feel that, having already lost 3 local amateur companies due to increased costs over the last couple of years, it would be foolhardy to increase hire costs, especially at currently the RPI is only around 0.8%. We get a huge amount of on-costs via our hirers and I am keen to support them and retain them as users/hirers etc., so I recommend we stay with the current rates for the financial year 2016/17'*. The Board agreed with Mark's position in this matter.

Anthony (while declaring an interest as a member of CMTC) suggested that, in order to encourage bookings, hire costs for amateur companies be actually reduced but the monies be recouped from commission on ticket sales. Other Board members believed this may have financial implications for the Council if a show dramatically 'flopped' and would put more emphasis on officers to market and promote these shows.

In respect to next year's budgets, Bill advised the Council continued to face financial pressures and it was unlikely therefore Members would wish to see an increase in the budget. However Jane remarked, as explained by Cllr Whitfield at the last meeting, the new administration is keen to look at targeted spending where investment would bring later, long-term, income as was the case with the digital projector. It was also noted that the new Council seemed keen on the appointment of a Marketing Officer which the Board felt would be most welcome in assisting the theatre – though Jane advised caution on expecting too time being allocated by such an officer to the Elgiva on a weekly basis.

## 6. **UPDATE ON PATIO PROJECT**

Trevor advised that he, Stephen, Jane and Mark had met last week to discuss the patio project. Stephen had explained at the meeting that he had recently met with the CDC planning officers who were broadly happy with the drawings but Stephen had been requested to supply further details on materials etc. before the planners could definitive view on planning success and exact square footage allowable.

7. **WORKING WITH THE FINANCE WORKING GROUP**

Trevor said he appreciated Cllr Whitfield's explanation of the new administration's vision last meeting which gave a clearer picture of its aspirations. He also re-enforced his hope that the Group members would approach him for information and figures rather than Mark who is under a lot of pressure. Jane suggested this be relayed to the Chairman of the Finance Working Group directly.

8. **AOB**

Mick advised that Bill had just informed him BCC had finally provided a price for the installation of the LED electronic screen and therefore Bill and he were going to meet to look at submitting a planning application.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was therefore agreed that the next meeting of the Board of Management will be on **MONDAY 18<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2016** at **10.30am** at the Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 11.35am.

# Friends of Chesham Cemetery

## Minutes of Meeting

On Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015 at 7.30pm  
Chesham Town Hall

**Present:** Roderick McCulloch - Chair  
Sharon McEwan – Secretary  
Phil Folly – Treasurer  
Ken Austin  
Michael Bannister  
Maria Pontin

**Apologies:** Kate Folly, Jean Queripel and Mora Walker

1. **Approve the Minutes of the Meetings held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015**  
Minutes held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015 were not approved and signed as a true copy, due to error 2, minutes of meeting not AGM. It was agreed the minutes with the correction will be dispatched with these minutes
2. **Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**
  - **Accident and Incident Book** – Both these are at the Hearse House
  - **Public Liability Insurance** – No feedback Roderick to speak to Town Clerk.  
**R.M**
  - **Demolition of Bungalow 40 Alma Road and Erection of other Dwellings** – No feedback on hedge – previous tenant use to maintain hedge. Roderick will speak to and Parks and Premises Manager Bob Ayres.  
**R.M**
  - **Byelaws**- Thames Valley Police are aware and the committee was informed to remain vigilant. Any incidents to be reported to the police using the 101 number.  
**ALL**
  - **First Aid Box** – Sharon to contact Kathryn Graves at Town Council for Risk Assessment. To include First Aid Box, Fire Extinguisher and Signage.  
**S.M**
3. **Grave Ornaments Painting**  
Due to other commitments this year the project was put on hold. It was agreed that the project will commence again in the spring of 2016
4. **Hearse House Update**  
Funding was secured by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Chiltern District Council to convert the Hearse House for an exhibition to begin commemorating the centenary of the start of the First World War. The committee would like to thank everyone involved throughout every stage of the project.  
Sharon will continue to research World War One memorials for this event. The committee looked at display boards and free standing boards with estimated prices and gave Ken Austin the go ahead to order these.  
A glass display cabinet, kettle and mugs were donated to the Friends for Hearse House. The committee sent their thanks.

Ken informed the committee that a plaque thanking the Heritage Lottery was needed and Sharon agreed to contact the council.

It was requested that the Town Council were contact for confirmation of receipt for grant money and outgoing payments made. Roderick agreed to contact the council.

The aim of the Friends is to open the Hearse House on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2-4pm to coincide with Remembrance Sunday and Sharon to write an article to be distributed on Your Chesham, Bucks Examiner and Chesham Town Council website advertising the event. **K.A. R.M & S.M**

## **5. Events – Fundraising**

It was discussed that more fundraising events would be required for the cemetery. Events that were agreed starting in 2016 where: Chesham Carnival, Local Produce Market, Christmas in Chesham and a stall on the Saturday Market. Included in these events would be the normal donation box at the opening of any event within the Hearse House.

## **6. Working Party Dates for Wildflower**

Next working party date for the wildflower project will be on **31<sup>st</sup> October 2015 at 9.30 – 11.30am** **ALL**

## **7. Any other Business**

- **Dusk Walks** – Sharon will contact Fi Bingham from Chesham Museum to organise and arrange Dusk walks late spring or early summer 2016. It was agreed that there would be a lot of research needed and a small fee would be charged for these walks and split between the Friends of Chesham cemetery and Chesham museum. Sharon to feed back at next meeting. **S.M**
- The committee thanked Jean Queripel for attending the Chesham Voluntary session to promote the Friends of Chesham Cemetery.
- **Grass Contractors** – This is very much a grey area and it was agreed that Sharon would contact the Parks and Premises Manager to get a spec of what is and isn't the contractors job within the cemetery. It was felt that in the last 3 – 4months things had improved. The issues raised were plastic flowers, fencing and ornaments of graves were being strimmed alongside the grass and dead flowers remaining on graves. It was also agreed that the friends would continue to monitor the cemetery and feedback to the council. **S.M**
- Judy Ottoway (previous member) moved away from Chesham, but on her returns continues to make contact with the Friends and enjoys feedback from what is going on. Judy sent her best wishes to all committee members.
- Phil informed the committee that he was contacted with regards to a memorial, Grave 674 A Consecrated about cleaning. Sharon agreed to look at the grave and do the necessary clean up. **S.M**
- **Chesham in Bloom** - it was suggested that the cemetery be put forward as part of the Chesham in Bloom 2016. Sharon to Google other cemeteries to gather information about what was required and if possible add the cemetery to the 2016 event

- 8. Agenda Items for next meeting.**  
**Hearse House Events, Memorial and Flower Project, Heritage Weekend,  
Treasurer's Report, Dusk Walks, Grass Cutting and meetings**

**Email address: [sharonmcewan@btinternet.com](mailto:sharonmcewan@btinternet.com)**

- 9. Dates of next meetings**  
**12<sup>th</sup> April 2016, this will include the AGM.**  
**Meeting will commence at 7.30pm**

**Meeting closed at 8.45 pm**

Report to **RECREATION & THE ARTS COMMITTEE**  
meeting to be held 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 5 - GREEN FLAG AWARD ENTRY FOR 2016**

**Reporting Officer: Kathryn Graves (01494 583798)**

### **Summary**

1. To decide whether Lowndes Park should be entered for the Green Flag award for 2016.

### **Background Information**

2. The Council applied for the Green Flag Award for Lowndes Park between 2007 and 2014. The park failed to achieve the award in 2007 and 2009, but obtained the award in 2008 and 2010-14.
3. Following dissatisfaction with several elements of the scheme, Council decided not to enter for the award in 2015 (Recreation and the Arts Committee meeting of the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2014, *Min no. 41*).

### **Financial Implications**

4. The Green Flag application cost for 2015 was £312 (excluding VAT).

### **Strategic Objectives**

5. Achieving Green Flag status is in accordance with Strategic Objective 1, '*To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.*'

### **Equality Act Implications**

6. The Green Flag judging scheme takes into account how accessible green spaces are.

### **Detailed Consideration**

7. Your officers started to experience significant problems with the Green Flag scheme in 2012 when officers discovered that the park had been awarded Green Flag status without having been judged. Due to the lack of a judging visit, there was no feedback to assist with park improvements.
8. The 2013 entry was fraught with difficulty, through no fault of officers, Members, or the Friends of Lowndes Park. Despite having submitted the electronic application well within the deadline, and paying Keep Britain Tidy's (the managing organisation) invoice for the entry fee, Lowndes Park was missed from the 2013 round of judging. Our entry appeared to have been lost on their

online system, although Keep Britain Tidy has never offered an explanation. Your officers were not aware of the problem until we discovered that Lowndes Park was missing from the Green Flag results announced in July 2013, as we had been told to expect 'mystery shopper' style judging for 2013.

9. After considerable protests from your officers to Keep Britain Tidy, Lowndes Park was finally judged in October 2013. Your officers were required to first spend time recreating the original online submission, as Keep Britain Tidy had lost the data. Having heard nothing further from Keep Britain Tidy for several weeks after judging, the Town Clerk contacted the administrator and the judge concerned. Lowndes Park was finally awarded Green Flag status on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013, meaning Lowndes Park missed out on the press coverage accorded to Green Flag winners when the results were revealed in July. Lowndes Park was also not included as a winner on the Green Flag web site and only after further requests was the web site updated in January 2014.
10. The judge's 2013 feedback included many positive comments, commending the park's safety, the large contribution made by the Friends of Lowndes Park and the clarity of the management plan. However, as the judge's feedback was not received until the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013, it provided very little time for your officers to attempt to consider and incorporate the substantial feedback provided into the Parks and Premises team's 2014 workload and to produce the 2014 park management plan in time for the January deadline to enter the 2014 Awards.
11. There was little improvement in the scheme administration in 2014. Whilst Lowndes Park was again awarded the Green Flag status, Keep Britain Tidy failed to deliver the 2014 Green Flag to Chesham on time, meaning that publicity opportunities for the park and town were missed at the time that the results were announced nationally. Your officers queried why we had not received scores or judges' feedback for 2014 and discovered that, as in 2012, we had not been judged at all.
12. In light of the cost of the application, the significant amount of time required from officers and volunteers to make the application and undergo judging, and the poor value that the Green Flag scheme has offered since 2012, it was resolved '*that Lowndes Park is not entered for the Green Flag Award for 2014 and officers be instructed to write to the administrators to explain the reason for this decision*' (Recreation and the Arts Committee meeting 17<sup>th</sup> November 2014, *Min no. 41*). The letter sent to the Green Flag Award Manager, Paul Todd, is **attached**.
13. Your officers did not receive a response until the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015, in which Mr Todd stated that, "*Over the past 12 months we have been investing in our IT system and staff training and are confident that a number of the issues you have experience have been addressed*". We declined the offer of a free application for 2015, as we had received the same offer and promises of an improved service in 2014.
14. Your officers contacted four other local authorities in southern England in September this year to discover their experiences of the Green Flag Award scheme. Three authorities reported not receiving feedback, despite pursuing Keep

Britain Tidy for their reports. In a number of cases, the councils were unsure as to whether their parks had actually received judging visits. Two of the authorities said that they had not received feedback for their 2015 entries, indicating that the administration does not appear to have improved over the last year. One authority did not receive their Green Flag or a listing on the web site this year until they had alerted the administrators to this oversight.

15. In 2015, RHS Thames & Chilterns in Bloom trialled a new Parks and Open Spaces category. Chesham in Bloom entered Lowndes Park at a cost of £50. For a first entry, the park was awarded a highly creditable Silver Gilt and the judging feedback, including areas of achievement and areas for development, is **attached**.
16. In addition to the lower entry fee and timely delivery of feedback, the Thames & Chilterns parks award scheme has the added advantage that judging takes place on the same day that the town is judged for Chesham in Bloom. As the park is normally prepared by the Parks and Premises Team and the Friends of Lowndes Park for the town's judging anyway, this helps to reduce their workloads by enabling them to focus on a single day. Green Flag judging normally takes place earlier in the year, requiring a separate period of preparation.
17. Having seen no evidence of improved administration in the Green Flag scheme and with the existence of an alternative award, your officers strongly recommend that Lowndes Park is not entered into the Green Flag Award scheme for 2016.
18. Your officers have spoken to the Friends of Lowndes Park. The Friends are in favour of entering for the Green Flag Award and are hoping that a representative can be present to attend the Recreation and the Arts Committee Meeting.

#### **Recommendations**

- (i) **That Lowndes Park is not entered into the Green Flag Award for 2016.**
- (ii) **That the Council supports Chesham in Bloom entering Lowndes Park into the RHS Thames & Chilterns in Bloom Parks and Open Spaces category for 2016.**

# Chesham Town Council



Bill Richards  
Town Clerk

Mr P. Todd  
Keep Britain Tidy  
Elizabeth House  
The Pier  
Wigan  
WN3 4EX

Tel: 01494 774842  
Fax: 01494 582908  
[www.chesham.gov.uk](http://www.chesham.gov.uk)  
Email: [admin@chesham.gov.uk](mailto:admin@chesham.gov.uk)

28 November 2014  
Our Ref: L.6

Dear Mr Todd,

Chesham Town Council has recently taken the decision not to enter Lowndes Park into the Green Flag Award scheme for 2015. This decision was not taken lightly, as Lowndes Park has participated in the scheme every year since 2007. We have experienced significant problems with the administration of the scheme since 2012 and have been communicating with Lynsey Atherton throughout this period in an attempt to resolve the problems. However, our emails are not always acknowledged and replies are often delayed.

Following the loss of our submission in the online system in 2013, the Council took the decision to enter in 2014 on the understanding that the administration would improve in response to our feedback. As this has not proved to be the case, the Council has instructed me to write to you to explain why we will not be participating in 2015.

These are the issues we have encountered:

## 2012

On the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2012, we were sent an email saying, "I am delighted to reveal that Lowndes Park **has been judged** to meet the standard required to receive the Green Flag Award 2012/2013". We emailed Lynsey on the 18<sup>th</sup> December to ask why we had not received a judging report, but received no reply. We emailed again on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2013 after receiving an email inviting submissions for 2013. On the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013, Lynsey replied to say that we had not yet had our mystery shopper visit due to delays caused by the Green Flag Award tender process. We were told a visit would happen and that we would get feedback. We never received feedback or a score.

## 2013

We submitted our application for 2013 within the deadline and were invoiced as normal by Keep Britain Tidy using the purchase order number we had submitted through the online system. We paid the fee and heard nothing further, which we expected as we were due a mystery shopper visit. When the results were released in July 2013, we were not contacted and we were not listed as a winner on the Green Flag web site. When we queried this, Lynsey insisted that we had not made an entry. Despite



## Chesham Town Council

continued . . .



providing evidence of our entry, we never received an apology and only after considerable protest were we judged in September 2013, after having to recreate our online submission. Only after following up with Lynsey and the judge in December 2013 did we receive the feedback report and formal notification that we had been awarded Green Flag status. We were only listed as a Green Flag winning park on your web site in January 2014 after making a request to be added. We didn't receive our score for 2013 until we chased up on this in August 2014.

### 2014

On the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2014 we received an email stating, "I am delighted to reveal that the following park or green space **has been judged** to meet the standard required to receive the Green Flag Award 2014/2015". Unfortunately, the physical Green Flag did not arrive in time for the nationwide results announcement during Love Parks Week, so for the second year running we missed out on opportunities to publicise our status. The email also said that "Judges' reports will be sent to the main contact between August and September 2014". We emailed Lynsey on the 12<sup>th</sup> November to request our judges' report. We received an email on the 27<sup>th</sup> November explaining that our site has not yet had a mystery shopper visit, with no indication of when this was likely to happen.

It is hard to have confidence in a scheme where awards are given out in the absence of judging (2012 and 2014). The value of the scheme for park managers is greatly diminished by the very late delivery of judges' feedback, making it challenging to incorporate this within park plans. For these reasons, the Council believes it would send entirely the wrong message to hand over a £312 fee when getting so little in return. If, however, you can provide evidence of improvements to the scheme's administration and value for money during 2015, the Council would be willing to enter the scheme again in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Richards.  
Town Clerk



<b>Name of entry: Lowndes Park Chesham Town Council</b>	<b>Judging Date: 21<sup>st</sup> July 2015</b>
<b>Category: Park</b>	<b>Judges: Kate Dagnell and Ben Stanesby</b>

<b>AREAS OF ACHIEVEMENT</b>
1. Attractive design and planting, traditional seasonal bedding.
2. "A something for everyone park". Evidence of use by all sections of the community.
3. Preservation of historic and natural features.
4. Very good interface between amenity and conservation.
5. Very strong community presence both in conservation and horticulture.

<b>AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT</b>
1. The fence around the pond/bating lake detracts from appearance of the feature. Maybe a less intrusive alternative could be assessed?
2. The public conveniences are looking tired.
3. Volunteers were observed having to carry water to community displays. Could the managing authority be encouraged to assist in this task?

<b>MARKS</b>	
Community	9
Maintenance	8
Environment	8
Total	25
<b>Award</b>	<b>Silver Gilt</b>

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 6 - TOWN HALL CIVIL MARRIAGE CEREMONIES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP REGISTRATIONS**

**Reporting Officer: Maria McGwynn (01494 774842)**

### **Summary**

1. To consider the continuation of licensing the Town Hall to hold civil marriage ceremonies and civil partnership registrations.

### **Background Information**

2. The Town Council originally licensed the Town Hall on the 1st January 2002 and became a County Council Sub-Register Office on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2002 receiving £50 (including VAT) per wedding for use of the Town Hall. The council agreed to renew the licence for a further three years commencing 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 at a cost of £1,800. The license was further agreed for renewal from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 at a cost of £2,000 in the hope that the bookings with an increased advertising budget of £1,000 for the Town Hall and help from the marketing committee bookings would increase.

### **Financial Implications**

3. Included within the report.

### **Strategic Objectives**

4. Accords with the Council's strategic aim 1 – *'To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.'*

### **Detailed Consideration**

5. The licence was renewed on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 at a cost of £2,000 in the hope that the bookings with advertising and marketing would increase. The licence is again due to expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016, so as from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 we would not be licensed. The renewal fee will be £2,000 if we apply in the early months of 2016 but may rise later in the year; at this point they are not aware of what the new rates will be. Officers have not received any enquiries or bookings for 2017 at present, but are sure that enquiries will soon start and ideally to avoid any future disappointment to couples, would like to be in a position to advise if we are continuing with this public service before committing to any bookings. Bucks County Council will accept application renewals from January 2016.

6. Since renewing the licence in January 2014 up until November 2015 we have currently hosted 8 ceremonies with 1 booked in for December 2015. Ceremonies are charged at a set rate of £103.20 (2 hours of Council Chamber room hire) totalling £928.80.
7. For 2016 we have 2 confirmed bookings and we have 1 provisional. Providing the provisional booking is confirmed, this means we would have total revenue of £1,238.40. We may of course pick up last minute weddings for 2016, but it is looking unlikely we will reach the revenue required to break even for the renewal fee which would be at least 8 more weddings.
8. We also need to take into consideration the running costs of the building and the wages for the caretaker as he has to be on site for the full two hours of the ceremony and the onerous task of setting up the room beforehand, possibly another hour's work.
9. Previously, at both the Policy & Resources Committee Meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and the Recreation & Arts Committee Meeting of the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2012, Members had been made aware of the continued fall in wedding and civil partnership bookings due, in part, (in officers' opinion) to the fact that registrar's fees for conducting the ceremony at Chesham Town Hall are much greater than the charge made for conducting a ceremony at the Wycombe Registration Office, please see below figures for 2015.

<b>Day of the week</b>	<b>Beaconsfield Registry Office</b>	<b>Chesham Town Hall</b>
Mon – Thurs	£170	£430
Fri & Sat	£250	£510
Sunday & Bank Holidays	£380	£550

10. With the current economic climate, it seems people are either putting off weddings, as there seems to be a general decline within the wedding industry, or looking for the best deal and “wedding packages” where the whole day, including the ceremony room, is included in the price.
11. The difference in the registrar's rates has been the main problem since day one at the Town Hall as people tend to book the cheapest option available due to their tight budgets, unless of course they really want to get married in their home town and are prepared to pay for that privilege.
12. The registration services are looking to possibly, in the future, streamlining the fees & charges to include one fee from Monday-Saturday but this is still very much in the provisional stages and may not be in place for our renewal. Officers cannot see this new pricing structure being beneficial to the Town Hall as it would jeopardise Bucks County Council bookings and revenue.

13. Officers have increased the marketing of the facility with a budget of £1,000 as a wedding venue over the last 2 years. We have in the last year advertised:

- Celebrate in Buckinghamshire - £375.00 – Bucks County Council glossy brochure given to all potential Bride & Grooms available in local libraries, registry offices, tourist offices and wedding fayres,
- Beautiful Brides - £75.00- Bucks Free Press publication distributed widely at wedding fayres.
- Guides for Brides - £195.00
- Bucks, Berks & Oxon magazine - £99.00
- Ultimate Wedding magazine – Online listing & brochure-£15.00

We have also utilised “free advertising” where possible

- For Better for Worse
- Buckinghamshire Wedding Fayres
- Chesham & Amersham Local
- Local Chesham.org
- Ultimate Wedding Planner
- Town Council Notice Board
- Town Hall Brochure
- Town Guide Editorial 2015 /2016
- Wedding Index
- Town Council Website – Banner
- Town Council Facebook page

14. The Administration Manager along with Ultimate Wedding Magazine organised a “Wedding Fayre” at the Town Hall in October 2014 to showcase the venue at no cost to this council. The Council Chamber was set up as a ceremony room to a very high standard (see below) by a local wedding organiser to encourage bookings. Local businesses from the wedding industry had stalls in the Community Hall promoting their services. The event on a whole was a great success but we unfortunately did not gain any bookings from the event.



15. Members may also like to take into consideration that the following local venues are also licensed for ceremonies:

- Amersham Community Centre
- Beaconsfield Chambers
- Chartridge Conference Centre
- The Crown Hotel Amersham
- Latimer Conference Centre
- Missenden Abbey Conference centre

16. The Committee is asked to consider if it wishes to continue being an 'Approved Venue' or cease offering this facility from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017.

**Recommendation**

**Officers recommend that the licence is not renewed from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017.**

Report to **RECREATION & THE ARTS COMMITTEE**  
meeting to be held 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 7 - REPRESENTATION ON BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

**Reporting Officer:** Bill Richards (01494 583824)

### **Summary**

1. To provide a representative to the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum

### **Background Information**

2. The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum is an independent, statutory advisory body on all matters relating to countryside access, with members representing a wide range of interests including farmers, landowners, walkers, cyclists, equestrians, parish councils, National Trust and those with disabilities.

### **Financial Implications**

3. None pertaining to this report.

### **Strategic Objectives**

4. Accords with the Council's strategic aim 1 – *'To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.'* and 3b – *'Access to the surrounding countryside needs improving sensitively, for walkers and cyclists, both local and visiting, so that Chesham can be seen as a tourist centre and a gateway to the Chilterns.'*

### **Equality Act Implications**

5. One of the Local Access Forum's aims is to take account of access for those with disabilities

### **Detailed Consideration**

6. Officers have been approached by members of Chesham 'Walkers are Welcome' Group to ascertain whether the Council could provide representation to the **attached** forum. Mr Ken Austin from Walkers are Welcome has stated he is prepared to be the Council's representative and obviously has a great deal of knowledge in this area. However the members of Walkers are Welcome do believe Chesham, due to its very size, would benefit from more than one representative so would appreciate any other nominees being put forward.

**Recommendation**

**That the Committee nominates Mr Ken Austin to represent the Council on the Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum and decides on any other possible nominee.**

# BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

*The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum is an independent, statutory advisory body on all matters relating to countryside access, with members representing a wide range of interests including farmers, landowners, walkers, cyclists, equestrians, parish councils, National Trust and those with disabilities.*

13<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum would like to invite a member of your parish council or organisation to join a working group of volunteers taking part in historical research towards achieving more joined-up public access on the rights of way network.

Section 53 of the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 outlined the government's intention to close the definitive map on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026 to certain claims for new footpaths, bridleways and restricted byways, so as each year passes, the urgency to start work becomes greater. The aim will be to review historical rights to see if these can be useful, or potentially useful, to today's walkers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers. It will also join missing links to the adopted highway network where recording these might have been omitted in the past. Routes could be recreational, in order for people to seek fresh air and exercise near to where they live, or as a means of sustainable transport, such as travelling to work or accessing local shops and services. Either way, the proposed new routes will help to complement existing access and try to fill gaps in the rights of way network before time runs out and potentially useful paths are lost.

If you would like to nominate a person from your parish or organisation they should ideally have some knowledge of historical map evidence for claiming new rights of way and a commitment to spending time on the project, in particular researching evidence in the county archives. If experience is limited then training can be provided.

Please register an interest at the reply address below and if possible provide contact details of the selected volunteer.

Yours sincerely,

John Elfes

Please reply by 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016 to: Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum, C/O Legal & Democratic Services, County Hall, AYLESBURY, HP20 1UY