

**CESHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

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

held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2009

**PRESENT** Councillor Mrs A.M. Pirouet – Chairman (presiding)

Councillor	A.K. Bacon	Councillor	D.J. Lacey
"	E.L. Bamford	"	Mrs C. Littley
"	M.Z. Bhatti	"	Mrs M. Molesworth
"	Mrs J.C. Fulford	"	Mrs G. Walker

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Officer: Mr. W. Richards, Town Clerk.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms. J.E. Bramwell and Mrs C.M. Michael. An apology for lateness was received from Mrs G. Walker.

38. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs Pirouet declared a personal interest in agenda items 4 and 11 as an allotment holder.

Councillor Bacon declared a personal interest in agenda item 4, 7 and 8 as a member of the Moor Fitness Gym. Councillor Mrs Fulford declared a personal interest in agenda items 4, 7 and 8 as a swimming season ticket holder.

39. **MINUTES**

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2009, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

40. **ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Elgiva Board of Management held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2009. It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

41. **CONTINGENCY FOR SWINE FLU**

Arising out of Minute no 6, Councillor Mrs Fulford enquired as to whether any other departments had a contingency plan in place in case of wide-scale sickness. The Clerk

advised that precautions were being taken to try and prevent an outbreak in the Town Hall by regular wiping of door-handles. He further reported that he was confident that all other departments could cope with a major flu outbreak, albeit offering a reduced service and by using temporary staff and outside contractors.

42. **ALLOTMENTS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Group held on 11<sup>th</sup> August and the AGM held on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2009. It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

43. **ALLOTMENT GROUP MONIES**

Arising out of Minute no 6 of the meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> August, Councillor Bamford, while expressing her admiration for the group's fund-raising activities, questioned whether the group was fully autonomous and whether the Council should be overseeing the finances. The Committee then discussed the desirability of the group being entirely separate from the Council. There was a general acceptance that such status should be the subject of a future discussion, but it would be appropriate at the present time that the minutes of the group's meetings continue to be presented to the Committee and that the financial statement presented at the group's AGM be also presented to the Committee.

In respect to Councillor Bamford's initial query, the Clerk stated that he would check the terms and references of the Allotments Group and report the matter back to full Council once he had determined what was laid down in the document.

44. **CAMERON ROAD TOILET**

Arising out of Minute no 4d of the meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> August, Councillor Mrs Pirouet pointed out that the group had been asked to look into 'green' toilet alternatives within a year rather than waiting for a year to expire before considering this. It was agreed that the Clerk be instructed to write back to the group reminding it of this.

45. **FRIENDS OF CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE**

Members received the Minutes of the meetings of the Friends of Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009. It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

*Councillor Mrs Walker arrived at the meeting at 7.45pm*

46. **RENOVATION OF PERFORMANCE AREA**

Members were reminded that The Friends of Lowndes Park have been awarded a Stage I award of £50,000 from the Lottery to renovate the park's performance area and to erect a seasonal canopy for bands to perform under. The Clerk advised that two companies actively expressed an interest in quoting for the works to renovate the performance area and both companies have now submitted plans and designs which were viewed by the Committee.

Members, while accepting the need to keep costs down, did not feel either design was entirely appropriate and certainly did not feel it would be desirable to have a mixture of paving slabs and grass. Councillor Bacon opined that this renovation should be done properly and argued that, if necessary, monies should be used for other allocated path works if the lottery grant monies were exceeded. He stated that personally he would like to see a labyrinth type design that may offer some play value for the children who visited the park. The Committee agreed with Councillor Bacon's suggestion and requested that this be fed back to the Friends of Lowndes Park. Councillor Mrs Fulford reported that she has visited a very innovative outdoor play design at Heritage House that may be worth visiting for ideas.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Committee's views on the renovation of the Lowndes Park performance area be fed back to the Friends of Lowndes Park.

47. **CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM UPDATE**

The Committee considered the officers' financial report on the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim facility.

Members noted the continued upturn on the income at the Centre particularly for the gym which was on course to reach an end of year figure of close to £80,000 – an increase of nearly £10,000 on the budgeted estimate. The Committee duly requested that its appreciation of this be re-laid to the officers at the Centre and to the Friends' group.

Members then discussed the maintenance issues as outlined by the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre Manager. Councillor Bacon opined that the flat roof should not necessarily be repaired unless it was actually leaking and this was supported by the Committee. The Clerk responded by saying was that he was not sure of the actual condition in respect of leaks but would relay the Committee's view to the Manager.

In response to a query on the plant room renovation, the Clerk advised that if the costs were over £5,000, the quotations would be brought back to the Committee for determination in line with the Council's Financial Regulations.

It was

**RESOLVED**

1. That the financial position be noted and welcomed.
2. That the Centre Manager be authorised to effect the necessary repairs as outlined in the report and in accordance with views expressed by the Committee.

48. **ENERGY SAVING ISSUES, CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE**

The Committee considered the report compiled by one of the Friends' members who is a civil engineer on possible energy saving measures.

Members welcomed Mr Dunn's excellent and comprehensive report. There was unanimity that he and the Friends' be asked to compile a report to progress the recommendations, particularly to tackle the probable leak from the hot water feed pipe. Councillor Bamford opined that any works emanating from the report needed to be undertaken by professional contractors so there could be some sort of redress if problems continued. The Clerk advised that this certainly would be the case but Mr Dunn's research and advice would be invaluable in devising a specification for repairs.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the report from Mr Dunn be noted and welcomed and the Friends be requested, in liaison with Centre Manager, to develop a plan to tackle current energy loss while progressing the principle of installing the most suitable renewable energy system.

49. **CHRISTMAS LIGHTING AND TOWN CENTRE TREES**

The Committee considered a number of options pertaining to Christmas lighting following a report submitted by the Finance and Contracts Manager.

In respect of the timing of the lights, it was agreed to alter the timer so lights will be on from 3.30-11.30pm as opposed to the current time of 4.00pm – Midnight.

In noting the suggestion that the lights within the town centre's trees need replacing, Members discussed both the desirability of both purchasing new sets and cutting back the tree branches to increase their visibility. The Committee agreed to the purchase of a new set of LED lights for three trees as this cost had already been earmarked within the Renewals and Repairs budget. A debate then took place on the necessity to cut back the trees by the Parks and Premises team. While it was accepted that such trimming should take place periodically, it was not considered desirable to do this simply to accommodate the Christmas lights and the works should be done separately.

Members then debated whether the False Acacia tree in the Market Square should be replaced and maintained by the Council since Buckinghamshire County Council officers

had indicated that it would not be replacing it. There was general agreement that the Council should undertake it and the Mayor offered up some of the Mayoral allowance to finance this project. Moreover, both Councillor Bamford and Councillor Mrs Molesworth indicated that some sponsorship may be forthcoming from retailers. However various suggestions were forwarded as to the most suitable sort of tree with no real consensus forthcoming. It was also accepted that the type of tree might be determined by the location of services beneath the ground such as cables and sewers as well as the culvert so further information would be required. In light of this, the Chairman recommended that the type of tree planted, and monies allocated towards it, be resolved at full Council.

It was therefore

**RESOLVED**

1. That the lights' timings be altered to 3.30pm to 11.30pm
2. That new lights for three trees in the High Street be approved.
3. That the Committee agree to finance and maintain a replacement tree in the Market Square but the type, and amount to be spent, be determined at full Council.

50. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

It was moved by the Chairman and

**RESOLVED**

that the public and the Press be excluded from the following item in accordance with the Public Bodies (Access to Meetings) Act 1960, as matters which are considered to be confidential are about to be discussed.

51. **SECURITY AT ALLOTMENTS**

Members discussed the recent break-ins at Cameron Road allotments.

The Committee commended the proactive stance being taken by the Police Community Support Officers and it was recommended that the allotment holders be encouraged to remove items of value from their sheds.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the report be noted.

52. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

*Publication date 9.10.09*

CHAIRMAN