

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the RECREATION AND ARTS COMMITTEE

held on 27 November 2006

PRESENT

Councillor	A.K. Bacon	Councillor	D.J. Lacey
"	E.L. Bamford	"	Mrs M. Molesworth
"	M.Z. Bhatti	"	C.H. Spruytenburg
"	Mrs J. C Fulford	"	P.W. Yerrell

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillors M. Bignell, Mrs J.E. Franks, Mrs S. M. McEwan, Mrs P.R. Wilkinson MBE and P. Woodburn

Officers: Mr. W. Richards, Town Clerk
Mr A. Bignell, Accounts Assistant
Mrs A. Brazier, Administration Manager

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Fayyaz, Mrs P.L. Lindsley and Mrs A.M. Pirouet

39. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor C.H. Spruytenburg be appointed as Chairman for the meeting.

40. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Members declared personal interests in light of their representation on outside bodies.

Councillor Mrs J.C. Fulford – Chesham Environmental Group, Chess Valley Sports and Leisure Association (CVSLA).

Councillor Mrs S.M. McEwan – Friends of Chesham Cemetery. She further declared that her daughter worked as an employee of CVSLA.

Councillor Mrs M. Molesworth - Friends of Chesham Cemetery.

Councillor C.H. Spruytenburg – The Allotments Group, Chesham Environmental Group.

Councillor P.W. Yerrell declared a prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 10 – Replacement of carpets and blinds in Town Hall – in view of his son’s business. He also declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 – Marston Pavilion - as the current Chairman of Pond Park Community Association.

41. **MINUTES**

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 9 October 2006, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

42. **WOODLAND VIEW PLAY AREA**

The problems that had arisen at Woodland View play-area since the installation of the rounded closed goal module was discussed by the Committee.

The Clerk advised that, since the last meeting, he and the Parks and Premises Manager had visited the Moor and could confirm that it would be possible to re-site the goal on there without interfering with the football pitches and referred to the quotation from Wicksteeds Leisure to re-site the equipment. However he expressed caution on this option in light of the anti-social behaviour problems experienced on The Moor and the police’s concerns on such a location being selected. He further reported that consultation with young people undertaken by Buckinghamshire County Council’s Youth outreach workers had indicated that those young people who usually congregated on The Moor did not use the Woodland View facility.

Members had a lengthy debate on the matter and received comments from both representatives of FoPRRA and a resident near The Moor. Various options were put forward including having a goal at both Woodland View and The Moor. This suggestion was discounted as not being conducive to improving current anti-social behaviour activities. However Members did not feel that it would be advantageous to remove the Woodland View goal since the area was previously subjected to acts of bad behaviour before its installation and control of this should be a matter for the police. To ameliorate problems residents were experiencing in Whichcote Gardens, it was suggested that estimates be sought to have the goal moved sideways though it was accepted this might not be practicable. Moreover it was agreed that it would be desirable for the Council to host a meeting for all interested local residents; the young people using the facility; representative of Paradigm Housing and the Police to discuss all issues including drainage and flooding.

It was

RESOLVED

that estimates be sought to level the ground and to place the goal alongside the western fence, if practicable, and that a meeting be arranged for all interested parties at the Town Hall.

Councillors Bignell and Mrs Wilkinson left the meeting at 8.50pm

43. **FRIENDS OF CHESHAM CEMETERY**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Friends of Chesham Cemetery held on 17 October 2006. It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

In respect of Minute No. 10, Councillor Mrs McEwan advised that consultation work was being undertaken by the Friends before a wildflower project scheme was brought before this Committee for consideration.

Councillor Mrs McEwan left the meeting at 8.55pm

44. **ALLOTMENTS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Group held on 23 October 2006. It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

In respect of Minute No. 6, the Clerk advised that it was not the intention to disbar disabled persons from using hosepipes if they were unable to water their allotments by other means.

45. **REVISED TERMS AND REFERENCES FOR THE ALLOTMENTS GROUP**

The Committee considered the revised Allotments Group terms and references as submitted in agenda item 12.

It was agreed that the terms and references be adopted but be amended to reflect the view that only three Councillors are required to be on the Group of eight members and that the quorate for each meeting shall be four, one of whom shall be a Councillor.

It was

RESOLVED

that the revised terms and references, as amended, for the Allotments Group be approved.

46. **IMPRESS THE CHESS CAMPAIGN**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Impress the Chess Open Forum held on 2 October 2006 and the Steering Group held on the 14 November 2006. It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

In respect of Minute No. 3 of the Steering Group meeting, Members welcomed the news on the external funding obtained to regenerate the Meades Water Gardens and the Committee congratulated the Clerk on his efforts in this matter.

Councillor Mrs Franks left the meeting at 9.10pm

47. **CVSLA COMMITTEE**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of CVSLA held on 28 September 2006. It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

The Committee was advised that the Association's AGM had been rescheduled for the 12th December 2006.

48. **REVISED ESTIMATES 2006/07 AND DRAFT ESTIMATES 2007/08**

The Finance and Contract Manager's report on the revised estimates for 2006/07 and draft estimates for 2007/08 was considered by the Committee.

In respect of the 2006/07 estimates, the Accounts Assistant advised that the summary showed a net underspend of just over £60,000 when comparing the original budget (2006/07) against the annual projected (revised 2006/07) budget.

In respect of the 2007/08 estimates, the Accounts Assistant advised that officers were presenting a draft precept budget totalling £717,520 without recourse to use of the balances, which approximated to a 3% increase on the 2006/07 figure.

Members broadly welcomed the budget though Councillor Bamford suggested that perhaps some of the revised prioritised schemes should be included in the budgets.

The Accounts Assistant opined that officers believed the £295,000 in the fund balances allowed enough latitude for some of the priorities to be undertaken if so desired by Council.

Councillor Bacon raised the matter of the 'Getting Closer to Communities' budget showing a projected deficit for 2007/08 when it should be at least 'cash neutral'. This was accepted by officers who agreed to amend the budgets accordingly.

It was

RESOLVED

that a budget based upon a 4% inflation rise and the prioritised list of schemes be presented for consideration at the Policy and Resources Committee of the 8 January 2007 in light of the recommendations made at this Committee.

49. **PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2007/08**

The Committee noted and agreed that, in the absence of the Finance and Contracts Manager, the fees and charges as presented, along with the estimates, be considered at the Policy and Resources Committee of the 8 January 2007 in light of the recommendations made at this Committee, ready for adoption at the precept setting Council meeting of the 15th January 2007.

The Committee considered the proposals detailed in the report for fees and charges for 2007/08 as follows:

(a) **Allotments**

It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that no increase on the rental charges, as currently being levied for Amersham Road and Asheridge Road sites, be made from 1 October 2007 and a 50p per pole rise be levied on the Cameron Road site from 1 October 2007.

(b) **Cemetery**

The report was noted and it was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the proposed scale of charges be amended to reflect a 4% rise from the 1st April 2007.

(c) **Housing**

The report was noted and it was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the two properties continue to be let through Chiltern Hundreds Housing Association and the rent determined by the Association in line with their other properties.

(d) **Office Services**

It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that no increase be applied to these charges.

(e) **Temperance Hall**

It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the report be noted.

(f) **The Elgiva**

The Committee considered the proposed charges for The Elgiva. The Clerk advised that the Elgiva Board of Management had endorsed the proposed fees and charges.

It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the proposed scale of charges reflecting a 4% rise for new hirings be agreed from the 1st April 2007 and that the Manager continues to be allowed flexibility and discretion in determining any charge where he believes it to be in the interest of the Theatre.

(g) **Town Hall**

Following consideration of the report, it was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the proposed scale of charges be amended to reflect a 4% rise from the 1st April 2007 and the Town Clerk be delegated to determine any ad hoc charges.

(h) **Chesham Park Community College**

Following consideration of the report, it was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that Officers agree the charges for use of the facilities if such opportunities arise until the lease expires in July 2007.

(i) **Swimming Pool**

Following consideration of the report, it was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

- (i) that the CVSLA continue to be permitted to determine the pool charges;
- (ii) that the CVSLA Management fee payable from 1 April 2007 be agreed at £35,655, subject to agreement, and production of an operational budget, by the CVSLA.

(j) **Sports Pitches, Charter Fairs and Circuses, Film Fees, Donkey Derby/Schools of Chesham Carnival, Wayleaves**

Following consideration of the report, it was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

- (i) that the proposed fees and charges for sports pitches, fun fairs and circuses for 2007/08 be approved;
- (ii) that the Clerk continue to be empowered to negotiate charges for the use of Lowndes Park by film companies;
- (iii) that a fee of £100 be charged for each use of the Council's Open Spaces by the Schools of Chesham Carnival and Donkey Derby;
- (iv) that a further report be submitted on the Council's Wayleaves.

(k) **Skottowes Pond Fish Management, Chesham District Model Boat Club and Sponsorship of Roundabout**

It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the Skottowes Pond fish management licence, Model Boat Club Licence and sponsorship of roundabouts be noted.

50. **MARSTON PAVILION**

The Committee was reminded that previous discussions had taken place with Pond Park Community Association in respect of the Association taking over the operation

of a new building at Marston Field and leasing it off the Council for a peppercorn rent.

Councillor Yerrell advised the Committee that the Association has subsequently expressed its grave concerns to officers that it did not feel it has the capacity to manage a community centre nor did it believe that there would be enough bookings to ensure that the facility could be funded successfully. In light of this, the Committee was advised that a meeting between the Association members leading on the project; the District Council's Principal Community Activities Officer and the Town Clerk has been held at the Town Hall. The Principal Community Activities Officer had suggested that Marston Pavilion, if re-designated as a sports pavilion would have an excellent chance of being supported by the Sports England Lottery Fund as it is listed as a priority in the District Council's PPG 17 Open Spaces strategy.

Members agreed that it would be prudent to follow the advice of the District Council's officer on this matter and it was

RESOLVED

that the proposal that Marston Pavilion remains a sports pavilion, with limited community hire space, and continues to be administered by the Council be supported.

51. **VEHICULAR ACCESS RESTRICTIONS – MOOR ROAD**

The Committee considered the proposals the Engineering Project Manager at Wycombe District Council has put forward both for installation of bunding or installation of bollards around Moor Marsh and the open space around the play-area in Moor Road.

While it was agreed it would be desirable to have some measures to deter travellers and unauthorised fairs from occupying the land, Members did not feel the limited number of illegal excursions justified the cost of either scheme. Moreover, some concern was expressed at the concept of enclosing an 'open space'.

It was therefore

RESOLVED

that the matter of illegal excursions on Council land be monitored for the next twelve months and a report be brought back to a future Committee.

Councillor Yerrell left the meeting before discussion of the next agenda item

52. **REPLACEMENT OF CARPETS AND BLINDS – TOWN HALL**

The Administration Manager reported on the need to replace the carpets in the Lowndes Room, the ground floor area, the first floor area and stairwell. She

recommended that the estimate received to re-carpet the first three areas of £3336.90 be accepted. She further advised that a subsequent quotation from the same company for the re-carpeting of the stairwell of £525 had been received and she recommended that this too be accepted. This was agreed by the Committee.

The Committee then discussed the replacement of the blinds in the Community Hall. A brief debate ensued but it was agreed that curtains were considerably less susceptible to damage than blinds.

It was

RESOLVED

1. that the second lowest quotation of £3,336.90 for replacement of the carpets in the Lowndes Room, the ground floor area, the first floor area and the quotation of £525 for the stairwell carpet be accepted.
2. that the Venetian blinds in the Community Hall be replaced with curtains and the other curtains be replaced to adhere to fire regulations.

53. **PURCHASE OF DATA PROJECTOR**

It was agreed that the purchase of a data projector for the Town Hall might encourage more corporate bookings and

RESOLVED

that the purchasing of a data projector available for hire at the Town Hall be agreed.

54. **STORAGE IN CODMORE PAVILION**

In noting that the community room in Codmore Pavilion had not been hired for a number of years, it was

RESOLVED

that Codmore Pavilion be rented out to Chesham Theatre Company for storage purposes at a charge of £52 per annum.

55. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 10.20 pm.

CHAIRMAN