

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE

held on 2nd March 2009

PRESENT Councillor Mrs J.C. Fulford – Chairman (presiding)

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

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillors V.M. Abraham, F.G. Holly and Mrs P.R. Wilkinson M.B.E.

Officer: Mr. W. Richards, Town Clerk.

Mrs R. Watts and Mr L. Vockins – Chesham in Bloom Committee

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M.Z. Bhatti, Ms. J.E. Bramwell and Mrs A.M. Pirouet.

76. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs Littley declared a personal interest in agenda item 3 as a member of the ‘Chesham in Bloom’ Group and agenda item 5 as a member of the ‘Impress the Chess’ Group.

Councillor Holly declared a personal interest in agenda items 5 and 6 as a member of the Friends of Moor Road Gym and Swim and agenda item 5 as a member of the Allotments Group.

Councillor Mrs Fulford declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 as a member of the ‘Impress the Chess’ Group and agenda item 6 as a regular purchaser of a swimming season ticket for the open air pool.

Councillors Mrs Molesworth and Councillor Mrs Wilkinson declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 as members of the Chesham 2012 Group.

77. **MINUTES**

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 19th January 2009, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

78. **PRESENTATION BY CHESHAM IN BLOOM COMMITTEE**

Mrs Rachel Watts of the Chesham in Bloom Committee undertook a presentation on the benefits to the town of entering the 'Britain in Bloom' competition held annually.

Mrs Watts informed the Committee that the 'Britain in Bloom' competition had been in existence since 1963 and the town had entered for the last four years. During this period Chesham had obtained three silvers and one silver gilt award for which the town could be justly proud. However she opined that the town had the potential to obtain gold status and to win the regional title. She highlighted the fact that displays of flora only accounted for 30% of the marks and that much emphasis was given to community involvement and waste recycling. Mrs Watts suggested that the town would greatly benefit if it obtained gold status since it had been well-documented that such status greatly enhanced tourism and therefore increased footfall within the town retail outlets.

Mrs Watts then highlighted the current status of the Chesham in Bloom Committee. She informed Members that it was working towards being fully independent with its own constitution and bank account. At the present time it works closely with a number of partners including the Allotments Group, the Environmental Group, the Chesham Society and the Chesham Chamber of Trade and Commerce. She advised that the latter group was working closely to try and secure local sponsorship for the planters in town.

In respect of the Council's involvement, Mrs Watts opined it would be very useful if individual Members could assist with nominating horticulturally impressive front gardens and help with the litter pick the night before inspection. Moreover she enquired as to whether the Council could continue to assist with publicity and consider paying for the annual entrance fee.

Mr Len Vockins, a local gardener and landscape contractor who is also on the Committee, circulated drawings of a proposed raised planter floral design and requested that the Council give consideration to contributing to the maintenance of these proposed planters for an annual amount of approximately £250.

The Chairman thanked the Chesham in Bloom members for their attendance and interesting presentation. The Committee expressed its continued support for Chesham's entry and participation in the 'Britain in Bloom' contest and it was

RESOLVED

that the presentation be noted and any financial contribution from the Council be considered at a future meeting.

79. **FRIENDS OF MOOR ROAD GYM AND SWIM CENTRE**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Friends of Moor Road Gym and Swim Centre held on 20th January 2009. It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

80. **IMPRESS THE CHESS**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Impress the Chess Group meeting held on 27th January 2009. It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

Arising out of Minute no 1 (iv), Councillor Bamford enquired as to progress in respect of the leak on Moor Road. The Clerk advised that Buckinghamshire County Council officers have suggested that it would be fixed so long as budgets would allow but not timetable had been stated.

Arising out Minute No 6, Councillor Lacey noted that one of the action plan recommendations was to potentially re-site the gazebo in Meades Water Gardens which he felt was neither necessary nor desirable. The Clerk responded by suggesting that it may be less vulnerable to on-going vandalism if it was in a more visible position.

Arising out of Minute No. 3, Councillor Mrs Walker queried as to whether stem injection with glyphosate to combat Japanese Knotweed was the most environmentally friendly way of tackling the problem. Councillor Mrs Fulford informed the Committee that there were very strict restrictions laid down by the Environment Agency for removing Japanese Knotweed near a water course and this method would allow it for its removal to be licensed.

81. **ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Elgiva Board of Management held on 9th February 2009. It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

82. **ALLOTMENTS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Group held on 17th February 2009. It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

Arising out of Minute No. 4g, Councillor Bamford asked whether the Allotments Group had progressed with its suggestion to approach the Council in respect of using land behind Nashleigh Hill Recreation Ground for a new allotment site. The Clerk advised that no formal approach had been made to him but as and when it was, a report on its feasibility and desirability would be brought to this Committee.

83. **CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE UPDATE**

The officers' report on the current financial situation at the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim facility and other matters pertaining to the leasing of gym equipment; re-surfacing of outdoor sports facilities; condition of boiler; lifeguard training and solar power installation was put before Members.

In respect of the financial figures, Councillor Mrs Michael noted the greatly improved income for the gym in January and offered her congratulations to the staff.

Following a query from Councillor Holly on the re-surfacing of the outdoor sports area, the Town Clerk advised that the tennis courts and multi-sports area was now open and being utilised but an official opening would not take place until the permanent painting of the courts had been undertaken.

Members considered whether the current boiler should be repaired or replaced. It was noted that the current boiler was coming to the end of its natural life and it would be more economic and environmentally sustainable to replace it, subject to three quotations being obtained. It was agreed that officers should liaise with the Chairman of the Friends of Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre to ensure the boiler would not negate the possibility of solar panels being installed.

In respect of solar panel heating, the Committee noted and considered the report from the Chairman of the Friends of Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre on the frustrations he had faced trying to progress the project and agreed to write to the Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR) expressing its dissatisfaction with the process and its chosen companies authorised to undertake the work.

It was

RESOLVED

1. that the financial position and other matters pertaining to the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre be noted.
2. that the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre boiler be replaced, subject to three estimates being obtained and there being confirmation that it would not conflict with any proposed solar panel installation.
3. that the position in respect of solar heating be noted and the Clerk be authorised to write to BERR expressing its dissatisfaction with the current lack of support offered by the accredited companies.

84. **LOWNDES PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Committee considered an update on the Lowndes Park Management Plan and Green Flag Award.

It was

RESOLVED

that the report be noted.

85. **CHESHAM 2012 UPDATE**

Members received an update on the Chesham 2012 Working Party activities to date and considered the request for usage of the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre free of charge on the official Chesham 2012 launch day on 11th July 2009.

The Committee commended the works of the group to date and it was

RESOLVED

that the Committee welcome the work of the Chesham 2012 Working Party to date and agree to the use of the open air pool for the Chesham 2012 Launch Day on the 11th July 2009.

86. **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 two items in accordance with the Public Bodies (Access to Meetings) Act 1960, as matters which are considered to be confidential are about to be discussed.

87. **SECURITY IN COUNCIL FACILITIES**

It was

RESOLVED

that the Clerk be authorised to proceed in connection with this matter in the terms expressed at the meeting.

88. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.58pm.

CHAIRMAN

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