

**CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

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

held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015

**PRESENT** Councillor Mrs C. Littley – Vice Chairman (presiding)

Councillor	M. Fayyaz	Councillor	Mrs C.M. Michael
"	T. Franks	"	C.H. Spruytenburg
"	R.C. McCulloch		

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillors V.M. Abraham, A.K. Bacon, N.L. Brown, Mrs P.R. Cherrill and P.W. Yerrell.

Officers: Mr W. Richards, Town Clerk  
Mr S. Pearson, Finance and Contracts Manager

Ms Jacqui Rice; Ms Sharon Dodd and Ms Charlotte Boyd – Botley Playing Fields Association.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Hudson, D.J. Lacey, Mrs A.M. Pirouet and M.W. Shaw.

47. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Bacon and Spruytenburg declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 6 as members of the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre.

Councillors Abraham and Mrs Cherrill declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items 4 and 6 as members of the Elgiva Board of Management.

48. **MINUTES**

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

49. **PLAY AREA REDEVELOPMENT**

The Vice-Chairman welcomed Mesdames Rice, Dodd and Boyd from the Botley

Playing Fields Association (BPFA) and, with the Committee's approval, asked them to address Members on progress in respect to possibly redeveloping Codmore Field Play-Area.

Ms Rice, co-Chair of the BPFA explained that the Association had been formed almost a year ago in response to the Council seeking community involvement in renovating local play-areas. She advised that the Association was now fully constituted with its own bank account. BPFA had undertaken a great deal of consultation with potential users and local residents about the sort of play equipment they would like to see. From this consultation, three play companies were approached to provide designs and, following these submissions, Playdale was selected as the preferred contractor. The overall scheme would cost in the region of some £60,000 but BPFA was proposing to undertake this in stages, with stage I costing around £26,000. Ms Rice advised that the Association had begun fund-raising in earnest but obviously would welcome the Council's financial support in making stage I achievable in the next twelve months. She also suggested that the BPFA would appreciate any help with fund-raising bids and other money-raising ventures. The Clerk offered his professional support with any external funding bid while the Mayor suggested he would also be happy to help with any fund-raising event.

Councillor Mrs Littley thanked Ms Rice for her update and asked if Members had any questions for the BPFA Committee representatives in attendance.

Councillor Spruytenburg enquired whether the play-area would be on the same footprint as the existing one and whether the fence would be replaced. Ms Rice advised that it would be in the same location and it was hoped a fence would be installed after stage I, dependent on fund-raising.

There being no more questions, Councillor Mrs Littley thanked the BPFA representatives for their attendance and the Committee confirmed that the £20,000 set aside for play-area renovation in 2015/16 should be earmarked for Codmore Field.

*Note: Councillor Brown left the meeting at 8.37pm*

Members then considered the new play-area equipment at Batchelors Way. The Committee was reminded that Paradigm Housing had agreed to take back Batchelors Way play-area but, rather than drawing up an expensive legal agreement regarding land transfer, asked whether the Council would agree to retaining ownership, with Paradigm Housing being responsible for financing any new equipment and subsequent maintenance costs and this request had been agreed. Members were informed that Pond Park Community Association (PPCA) had led on the development of a new play-area at Batchelors Way and had done an excellent job in raising funds to facilitate new play-equipment which was installed in December of last year. It was noted that, while almost all of this new equipment and safety

surfacing was actually on the main section of Batchelors Way, owned by Paradigm, one piece of new equipment was located on a small section of the play-area site and, thus, on land owned by the Council. As planning permission had to be sought retrospectively for this new play-area, Paradigm had requested that the Council agrees to enter into a tripartite licence agreement with Paradigm and PPCA for the use of the land on which the play equipment has been installed, with the intention of the licence being to ensure all liability responsibility for the area and play equipment is transferred from the land owners to PPCA. The Committee was also informed that Paradigm would also be arranging an indemnity agreement as suggested by its solicitors and that it would be covering the full cost of this agreement.

Members had no objection to this in principle but agreed that no agreement be entered into until planning permission had been obtained to avoid any possible chance of incurring removal or re-siting costs if permission was not granted retrospectively.

It was therefore

**RESOLVED**

1. That Codmore Field be confirmed as the next play-area to be redeveloped in 2015/16 and up to £20,000 be earmarked for this scheme.
2. That in-principle agreement be given to the proposal for the Council to enter into a tripartite licence agreement for Batchelors Way as outlined within the report, subject to retrospective planning permission being granted for the new play equipment.

50. **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 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014 and 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

Councillor Mrs Littley questioned whether the Friends' membership was in decline. The Town Clerk advised that the new Friends' Committee was still clarifying its role as an advisory group but it was hoped that it would become stronger after its constitution was finally written and adopted.

51. **ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Elgiva Board of Management held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

52. **ALLOTMENTS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Group held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

53. **CHESHAM ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the Chesham Environmental Group meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

Members also received the Chesham in Bloom Minutes of the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2014 for information.

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

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

Members noted that the Centre still appeared to be performing strongly and it was

**RESOLVED**

that the financial position be noted.

55. **ELGIVA PANTOMIME**

Members considered the figures from this year's recently finished pantomime season at the Elgiva. The Committee paid tribute to the excellence of the production of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and the fact there had been the highest ever net profit (projected £43,689) for the seasonal production, even though ticket sales had been slightly down on the record breaking figures of last year's 'Wizard of Oz' pantomime. This increase in profits was due to costs being kept lower than 2013/14, together with a big increase in 'secondary spend' through bar and ice-cream sales.

In respect to 2015/16, Members were happy to endorse another 'in-house' pantomime that had proved to be so profitable but did note the Manager's concern about a potential reduction in sponsorship monies and expressed a hope that this would be addressed. It was also reported that the costs of 'Cinderella' may be higher due to the need for two 'Dames' but, again, it was noted these costs would hopefully be offset by greater ticket sales, since 'Cinderella' was historically a very popular show.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the 2014/15 Pantomime figures be noted and welcomed and that the Committee support the principle of offering an 'in-house' pantomime again next season.

56. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

CHAIRMAN