

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE

held on 9th March 2015

PRESENT Councillor D. J. Lacey - Chairman (presiding)

Councillor	M. Fayyaz	Councillor	Mrs C.M. Michael
"	T. Franks	"	Mrs A. M. Pirouet
"	P. J. Hudson	"	M.W. Shaw
"	Mrs C. Littley	"	C.H. Spruytenburg
"	R.C. McCulloch		

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor A.K. Bacon.

Officer: Mr W. Richards, Town Clerk

Mr T. Pilling - Chairman, Elgiva Board of Management (agenda item 5 only)

Mr. P. Wright - Buryfields Festival Organiser (agenda item 12 only).

57. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Bacon and Spruytenburg declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items 4 and 6 as members of the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre.

Councillor Mrs Littley declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 12 as an organiser of the Buryfields Festival.

Councillor McCulloch declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 13 as a member of the Friends of Chesham Cemetery.

58. **MINUTES**

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 26th January 2015, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

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

It was moved by the Chairman and

RESOLVED

that the public and the Press, save for Mr Peter Wright, 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.

60. **BURYFIELDS FESTIVAL 2016**

It was

RESOLVED

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

Note: The Chairman then re-opened the meeting to the Public and the Press.

61. **PRESENTATION FROM CHAIRMAN OF THE ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AND ELGIVA FINANCIAL UPDATE**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Trevor Pilling from the Elgiva Board of Management to give a brief update to Members on the current financial situation pertaining to the Elgiva Theatre and other initiatives being considered by the Board.

Mr Pilling referred Members to the monthly budgets for December, January and February, circulated, to show that the theatre was continuing to perform strongly. Income was some 10% up from this time last year and attendances were climbing from 40,000 last year to 42,000 this year. Expenditure was also up but he was projecting a final end-of-financial year deficit of around £122,000 set against the initial budget of £140,000, and this deficit figure may be even lower as March's income figures were looking very strong. He added that the digital projector had proved that it was wise investment, not only through the very popular live streaming of theatre, opera and ballet performances, but also allowing the theatre to show films more quickly after their general release. Finally he again highlighted that the increased income was down to the exceptional efforts of the staff and, with so few days now with no events on, he opined that the Elgiva team was under an inordinate amount of pressure in respect to working hours.

The Chairman then asked for comments and questions from Members in response to Mr Pilling's update. Councillor Bacon asked about progress in respect to the project to cover the patio, which had been first mooted several years ago. Mr Pilling explained that this project was being led by a Board Member with planning and architectural experience and he was often out of the country. However on-going discussions with the District Council's Planning Officers had suggested that permission may well be conditionally granted. Obviously this facility would be very desirable to increase income through extra rehearsal space and accommodating of conferences, but a large capital outlay was required. He added that obtaining grants would be a challenge as the Elgiva was a local authority facility and, unlike the digital projector, it would not be easy to put together a comprehensive business plan as actual usage was less easy to predict.

There being no more questions for Mr Pilling, he was thanked for his update and left the meeting.

It was

RESOLVED

That the update from the Chairman of the Elgiva Board of Management be noted.

Note: Councillor Spruytenburg left the meeting at 9.05pm

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

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Friends of Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre held on 18th February 2015.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

63. **ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Elgiva Board of Management held on 19th January 2015.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

64. **ALLOTMENTS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Group held on 20th January 2015.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

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

The Committee considered the Finance and Contracts Manager's report on the current financial situation at the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre facility.

Members expressed satisfaction with the continuing excellent figures and stated that they wished that their continued support for the facility be passed onto the staff.

It was

RESOLVED

that the financial position be noted.

66. **FOOTBALL CHARGES 2015/16**

The Committee received an update on proposals from Dr Mark Pegg to upgrade the football pitches and Codmore Pavilion. It was noted that developing the proposals were on-going and unlikely to be implemented before the next football season commencing in late August.

It light of this, it was

RESOLVED

that no increase to the charges for the hire of football pitches be agreed for the 2015/16 season.

67. **UPPER BELMONT ROAD BUS SHELTER**

The Committee was asked to consider whether it wished to agree to the installation and future maintenance of a new bus shelter in Upper Belmont Road.

Members were informed that the current shelter was currently located outside Hivings Free Church, and while, fundamentally sound in structure, its usefulness has been called into question due to a change in service by the bus company which has resulted in buses only going from the other side of the road. Residents had asked whether it could be relocated to the stop on the opposite side of the road in light of this but the Parks and Premises Manager had opined that digging it up and moving it would probably fundamentally damage the structure irreparably.

In light of this, Councillor Lacey indicated that he had raised enough monies privately for the Council to purchase a new shelter and asked whether the Committee would agree to the Council adopting it following installation thereafter and be responsible for any future maintenance, subject to any necessary permissions being granted by the principal authorities.

Members were agreed this would be a welcome additional amenity and congratulated Councillor Lacey on obtaining funding. However it was agreed that it should be referred to full Council for determination after the costs of possible repairs had been clarified and matters such as whether planning permission is required had been resolved.

It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the Council take ownership of a new bus shelter in Upper Belmont Road funded by private donations, subject to the necessary permissions being gained and potential maintenance costs clarified.

68. **CONSTITUTION OF FRIENDS OF CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE**

A draft constitution for the Friends of Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre was put before the Committee for comments and consideration.

Members were pleased to see that the Friends were finally trying to confirm a constitution but a number of concerns were raised on the draft which were requested to be fed back to the Friends for their scheduled meeting on the 18th March. Specifically these were:

- Confusion in wording between ‘the Committee’ and ‘Friends’
- No mention of Council Members (and officers) being ex-officio members of the Committee
- No reference to any alterations to the Constitution being agreed by the Recreation and Arts Committee
- Clarity on length of time a Chairman should be in post
- Reference to compliance with Council’s policy and procedures
- ‘Reasonable out of pocket expenses’ to be confirmed by the Council’s Finance and Contracts Manager
- Any assets after dissolution to be put to designated projects at the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre rather than ‘charitable bodies with the same aims’.

The Committee again expressed its thanks to the Friends and it was

RESOLVED

that the draft constitution for the Friends of Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre be noted and the Committee’s comments be passed on to the Friends for consideration for the next draft.

69. **REPLACEMENT OF BOILER AT THE TOWN HALL**

The Committee noted that the Town Hall boiler which has operated since the building opened in 1998 had developed a major fault and needed replacing. To finance this replacement, officers were recommending that some of the Town Hall renovation works programmed for 2015/16 be deferred to pay for the new boiler from the Renewals and Repairs budget.

It was

RESOLVED

that Hellabys Ltd be instructed to install a new boiler at the Town Hall at a cost of £5,850 plus VAT to be funded through the 2015/156 Renewals and Repairs budget.

70. **EXCLUSION OF 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.

71. **CEMETERY AND HANGING BASKET GRASS CUTTING CONTRACTS**

The quotations obtained by the Parks and Premises Manager in respect of grass-cutting in the cemetery and provision of the town centre hanging baskets were considered by the Committee.

While it was noted that neither current provider had provided the cheapest quotation, both were deemed to be doing an excellent job and received much public praise. Accordingly it was agreed to continue with both existing contractors for 2015/16 while monitoring the quality of the work of the companies who had submitted lower estimates as they provide services for other local authorities during the next financial year.

It was

RESOLVED

1. That the contract for the Cemetery grass-cutting for 2015/16 be offered to Buckland Landscapes at a price reported at the meeting.
2. That the contract for the town hanging baskets for 2015/16 be offered to Simon Collins at a price reported at the meeting.

72. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 9.33pm.

CHAIRMAN