

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES of the meeting of the CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

held on 17th July 2023

Councillors:

Councillor Alan Bacon	Councillor Justine Fulford
Councillor Joseph Baum	Councillor Francis Holly
Councillor Mohammad Fayyaz	Councillor Rachael Matthews

In attendance:

Louise Steele	Interim RFO
Nina Villa	Interim CEO/Town Clerk
Georgina Fernandez	Democratic Services Officer
Kathryn Graves	Community, Economy & Environment Manager

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Booth and Councillor Ditta. These were noted and accepted by members.

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

17. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the Corporate Services Committee on 12th June 2023 were noted and approved by members.

18. ACTION TRACKER

This was noted and approved by members.

19. INTERNAL AUDITOR REPORT

The Interim RFO presented the internal auditor report to members which were noted.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the Committee note the recommendations from the internal audit dated 27 June 2023 and officers' observations on those recommendations
- ii. That the Interim RFO provide an update report on progress on these and other audit recommendations at the next meeting of the Committee.

20. ISSUES ARISING FROM COMPLETION OF 2022/23 AGAR

RESOLVED:

- i) That the next meeting of this Committee considers a report from the Interim RFO setting out the independence and competence of the internal auditor and considers the internal audit programme of work and the letter of engagement
- ii) That the Committee considers a recommendation to Full Council concerning the appointment of the internal auditor.

21. BANK MANDATE

The Interim RFO confirmed that the banks require a copy of signed minutes detailing names of signatories to the bank accounts.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the bank mandates are updated as soon as possible with the following being the signatories (with two signatures being required for each transaction in accordance with Financial Regulations):
Town Mayor Wilford - Augustus
Deputy Town Mayor - Francis Holly
Chair of Corporate Services Committee - Joseph Baum
Vice Chair of the Corporate Services Committee - Simon Booth
Chief Executive Officer - vacant
Head of Corporate Services - Ashley Myers**
- ii) Democratic Services Officer to include the update of bank mandates as a recurring item at first Corporate Services Committee of each new calendar year**

22. ELGIVA

The Interim CEO/ Town Clerk updated the committee on the status of the Elgiva roof in the absence of the Head of Operational Services who wrote the report, outlining that the roof had reached end of life and needed replacing. A recent quote indicated that it would cost in the region of £150,000 to replace. The Interim RFO explained that there were currently no funds available to cover this potential expenditure.

RESOLVED:

- i) Interim CEO/Town Clerk and Head of Operational Services to update the committee at the next meeting with a report outlining draft specifications and further cost options for replacing the roof alongside potential funding opportunities**
- ii) That the tender process be suspended until an updated report has been presented and approved at the next committee**
- iii) Democratic Services Officer to invite the Manger of the Elgiva to the next meeting**

23. LOWNDES ROOM

The Interim CEO/ Town Clerk updated the committee on the status of Lowndes Room hires, in the absence of the Head of Operational Services who wrote the report. The report provided members with an update as to securing Chesham Museum as a long-term hirer of the Lowndes Room.

The Chair suspended the standing orders in order to allow Peter Squire, Chair of Trustees, for the Chesham Museum to speak.

Peter shared his view that the council can assist the museum in two ways:

1. Written confirmation that the Council will work with the museum to find a home as permanent residency is required for Arts Council Accreditation.
2. Space for exhibits to be on display, accessible by the general public, including weekends.

The Chair thanked Peter for attending the meeting and for his contribution, and resumed the standing orders. The Chair confirmed that the final decision on this will be taken at the next full council meeting and that as part of the Annual Strategic Plan the council voted to use the Lowndes Room for community groups and increase income for the council. It is important that we support the museum and retain the Community Hall as a community facility.

Councillor Matthews said she was keen to support the museum but asked if the £5,000 per annum fee was a good rate and equitable for all parties. The Chair confirmed that this was an estimate from the rental agency and in line with market rates.

Councillor Fulford was of the view that if the room is to be partitioned in two, that the museum should house the side without the en-suite kitchen (to use the kitchen situated next door), as a room with en-suite kitchen facilities would be more attractive/ an easier sell to future tenants.

RESOLVED:

- i) That members approve the decision to proceed with Chesham Museum renting the Lowndes Room on a long-term basis.**
- ii) That members approve the decision for Heads of Terms to be drafted alongside full recommendations to be presented at the next Council meeting.**
- iii) That the draft Heads of Terms be amended to say rental of 'part' of the Lowndes Room**
- iv) The Interim CEO/Town Clerk to forward a letter to the museum trustees outlining the Council's support of the museum (for the trustees to share with the Arts Council).**
- v) The Interim CEO/Town Clerk to confirm that the museum would be covered under the Council's current insurance**

24. ANNUAL DONATIONS SCHEME

The Community, Economy & Environment Manager presented members with a report to consider revisions to the Annual Donations Scheme as it has not been reviewed since 2018 and it was felt that changes were required.

RESOLVED:

- i. As of 2023-24, the Annual Donations budget is no longer split between Town Partners and other organisations, such that the whole budget is available to any organisations meeting the Town Council's strategic objectives**
- ii. As of 2024-25, all donations must be submitted by the end of April each year.**
- iii. From October 2023, officers are to make recommendations for all applications to the Donations Scheme, for consideration by a meeting of the Council.**
- iv. The criteria of the scheme are revised to require provision of feedback on donations received.**
- v. Democratic Services to communicate Town Partner feedback via external communication channels**
- vi. Democratic Services Officer to include on agenda of Annual Town Meeting a report of Town Partner donations and how they have been utilised**

25. CEO RECRUITMENT

The Interim CEO/Town Clerk confirmed that this committee needed to delegate tasks to the sub-group looking at CEO recruitment.

RESOLVED:

- i) Sub Group to agree the job description, method of advertisement and selection and to recommend appointment to Full Council**
- ii) That terms & conditions remain as per existing staff**
- iii) Salary range SCP 51-57 £59,995 - £71,637**

The meeting closed at 8.37pm.