

## CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES of the ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

**HELD ON THURSDAY 13 MAY 2010**

**PRESENT** Councillor, Mrs J.C. Fulford, Town Mayor (presiding)  
Councillor Ms J.E. Bramwell, Deputy Town Mayor

Councillor	A.K. Bacon	Councillor	Mrs C. Littley
"	E.L. Bamford	"	Mrs C.M. Michael
"	M.Z. Bhatti	"	Mrs A.M. Pirouet
"	M.E. Brand	"	M.W. Shaw
"	M. Fayyaz	"	C.H. Spruytenburg
"	F.G. Holly	"	Mrs G. Walker

Officer: W. Richards - Town Clerk

#### In Attendance:

Police Sergeant R. Timms and 68 members of the public, including representatives from outside organisations.

### **1. TOWN MAYOR'S WELCOME**

The Town Mayor, Councillor Mrs Justine Fulford, welcomed everyone present to the Annual Town Meeting.

The Town Mayor gave a brief outline of Town Council's policies and actions during the council year 2009/10. These included:

- Renovation of the Play Area in Lowndes Park.
- Obtaining of the 'Power of Well-Being' for the Council.
- Hosting of the successful community archaeology days in Lowndes Park.
- Continued high attendances for the Elgiva and the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre.
- Erection of streetlights outside Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre.
- Resurfacing of car-parking in Codmore Field.
- Led successful public campaign to re-open the town centre's post office.

Councillor Mrs Fulford then thanked the many 'Friends' groups who had worked tirelessly over the last year to enhance both the Council's facilities and the town itself. She also drew attention to the Youth Council's written report circulated in the Chamber and paid tribute to its efforts. She also advised that her Mayoral Allowance expenditure for 2009/10 had been printed off for tonight's meeting and encouraged anyone interested to take a copy for examination.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Town Councillors V.M. Abraham, N.L. Brown, D. J. Lacey, Mrs M. Molesworth and P.W. Yerrell.

### **3. MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 14 May 2009 were agreed and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ON THE AGENDA**

There were no matters arising.

### **5. MAYORAL AWARD SCHEME**

The Mayor gave details on the sixth Mayoral Award scheme. She offered her thanks to the Council's Policy and Projects Officer and the judging committee for their hard work and thanked the sponsors, the Buckinghamshire Examiner, the Chesham Chamber of Trade and Commerce and the family of the late Rafe Chiles. She then read out the achievements of the nominees.

After announcing and introducing the short-listed nominees, Councillor Mrs Fulford revealed the winners as follows:

- *The People's Award* - **Mr Phil Folly** for his ceaseless community and environmental work which covers a broad range of interests and involvement with local groups ranging from Chesham Over Fifties Positive Action Group to the Friends of Lowndes Park and Chesham in Transition.
- *Rafe Chiles Young Person's Award* – **Rosa Gilbert, Sam Tippett, Juliet Morgan, Hannah Tricks, Chloe Goulding, Mairi Lubelska, Becki Tricks, Abi Rawlins & Nicola Hobbs** for their joint involvement, both with their own schools and within the wider community, to raise awareness about Fairtrade within Chesham and beyond.
- *Business Award* – **Orbitpress** for its on-going promotion of Chesham as a town and, in particular, the amount of work, free printing and time and effort it has put into raising money for the successful opening of Chesham Museum in 2009.

The Mayor presented both the winners and the short listed nominees with certificates.

### **6. POLICING IN CHESHAM 2009/2010 REPORT**

Police Sergeant Richard Timms offered apologies on behalf of his Inspector, Chris Oliver, who was unable to attend, and then gave a brief overview of policing in Chesham for the last administrative year.

Sgt Timms was pleased to advise that the town's police station had been totally renovated and had re-opened on the 1<sup>st</sup> February. He also advised that Chesham now had a staffing structure of one sergeant; four officers and six police community support officers (PCSOs) though he explained that the town was two officers short at the present time. These were divided into three Neighbourhood policing areas. In addition, closer collaborative working with the Great Missenden and Prestwood policing area has meant greater resources can be pulled into Chesham from this area if so required.

Sgt Timms was pleased to report that the levels of crime in town had not significantly increased over the last year. There were some 2,500 crimes over the last 12 months. Burglaries of dwellings were down by 11%. However both burglaries of non-dwellings and violent crimes were up, though he opined that the latter increase may be due to the police's campaign to encourage people to report acts of domestic violence. Sgt Timms also reported that anti social behaviour was down, due in part to the work of the recently formed dedicated Anti Social Behaviour team based in Amersham and the use of the 'mosquito' equipment that was used to deter youths gathering in inappropriate areas. He also congratulated one of his PCSOs, Sarah-Jane Cook and the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre Manager, Danny Essex, on their joint initiative in running the 'Moor Stars' project, designed to give disaffected youth across the town an opportunity to participate in sports and activities at the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre.

Looking to the future, Sgt Timms informed the meeting that there was likely to be further switches in personnel but he hoped that this would not negatively affect the level of policing. He also advised that the Inspector was keen to have much more visible policing and officers and PCSOs would be out on bikes much more regularly. He opined that drugs remained a problem in Chesham but he was hopeful that the work of the Area Intelligence Team would start to tackle this and pointed to the fact that there had already been significant raids in Chesham recently to combat this. He was also hopeful that the number of dwelling burglaries would fall following the arrest of three serial offenders from the Hillingdon area recently who were known to operate within the area.

The Mayor thanked Sgt Timms for his encouraging presentation and invited him to stay for Public Question Time later on the agenda.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP**

Mr Phil Folly, Chairman of the Environmental Group, gave a verbal report on the Group's activities for 2009/10. Among the projects this year was:

- Major re-planting of shrubs in Water Lane.
- Lead partner in obtaining 'Walkers are Welcome' status for the town.
- Involvement in the new and active River Chess Association.
- Regular clear-ups on the Moor and Captain's Wood
- Continued and regular maintenance of the River Chess.
- Active involvement in 'Chesham in Bloom'.

He also advised that for the forthcoming year, the Group was liaising with Chiltern District Council about the possibility of directly managing the maintenance on Canon's Mill Meadow.

Mr Folly paid particular tribute to his colleagues in the group. He also thanked Mr Allen Beechey the AONB's Chalkstreams Project Officer and officers at the Town Council.

The Mayor offered her congratulations and appreciation for all the works the Environmental Group had done during the administrative year.

## **8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Mayor invited questions and comment from the public on matters in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affect the Town and on any issue raised during the police report.

Mr Ken Austin asked when a 'Police Operation' sign was displayed, what sort of 'operation' was taking place. Sgt Timms replied by saying that this covered a whole multiple of police work ranging from CCTV surveillance to plain clothes officers' investigations and often involved Chiltern District Council's Anti Social Behaviour and Community Safety teams as well.

Mr Vince Compton asked whether, when the police were preparing the roster, the allotments could be covered in the officers' daily visits. Sgt Timms replied he would be happy to do this.

Mr Vince Compton queried how well the 'Mayor Making' event on the following Monday had been advertised and whether it was an event for the whole town. The Town Clerk responded by saying that the Annual Meeting of the Council was indeed an open meeting but only a limited numbers of people could attend due to the pressures of limited space within the Council Chamber, usually exacerbated by the new Mayor often inviting friends and family to the event. The Mayor, Councillor Mrs Fulford, also responded by saying that it was not actually a major ceremonial event and contrasted it to Aylesbury Town Council's designated 'Mayor Making' event that she, along with about 250 people, had recently attended and which, she opined, was likely to be funded by the tax-payer.

Mr Henricus Peters asked whether Chesham police liaise with the Transport Police in respect of crime in and around the Metropolitan Line. Sgt Timms replied by saying that after the 7/7 London bombings, the Transport Police were withdrawn to central London for a considerable time but recently communication between the two parties was better and a new Transport Police station built at Rickmansworth should improve communication further.

## **9. TOWN MAYOR'S CLOSING REMARKS**

Councillor Mrs Fulford thanked all those present for their attendance and lively contributions throughout the meeting. She again congratulated all the nominees of the awards present at the meeting and stated how well it reflected on the town and the community spirit therein. She urged people present to nominate worthy candidates for next year's awards. She offered her thanks to her Deputy, Councillor Ms Bramwell, and passed on good wishes to her for 2010/11. She also stated her appreciation of the Town Clerk and the Council's officers for their support and, very particularly, to her family during a very busy year.

## **10. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Town Mayor