

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE

held on 7th March 2016

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

Councillor	N. L. Brown	Councillor	Mrs J.E. MacBean
"	Q. Chaudhry	"	M.W. Shaw
"	M. Fayyaz	"	B. R. Whitfield
"	P. J. Hudson	"	S. P. Willmoth

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillors A.K. Bacon and P.W. Yerrell.

Officer: Mr W. Richards - Town Clerk.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A. W. Franks.

41. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that, as agreed, all previously stated Declaration of Interests remained unchanged from the first meeting of the administrative year.

42. **MINUTES**

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 23rd November 2015, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

43. **ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Elgiva Board of Management held on the 18th January 2016.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

Arising out of Minute No. 6, Councillor Yerrell expressed his view again that he would rather see monies allocated for additional marketing support be used instead to assist with general running costs and a contribution to the Renewals and Repairs

budget. Other Members suggested however this support would hopefully increase income as there was no intention to make expenditure cuts.

44. **ALLOTMENTS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Group held on the 19th January 2016.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

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

The Committee firstly considered the officers' report on the current financial situation at the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre facility. It was agreed that the financial position be noted.

The Clerk then advised that the Finance Working Group had recommended that a local structural surveyor be engaged to look at the feasibility of extending the footprint of the building in some way with the view to increasing revenue. However, in light of the current on-going internal building issues that had been previously been reported to Council, the Finance Working Group was now recommending that the main focus of the survey look at the existing condition of the facility and utilising the existing space to its best effect. Councillor Whitfield concurred with this and said this needed to be undertaken shortly since internal upgrades in themselves could be of significant cost, even before any extension was considered. Councillor Willmoth added the main boilers were now of such an age that sourcing parts was proving difficult and this too needed to be taken into account. He also opined it would be advantageous to look at more efficient ways of heating this, and other Council buildings. Members agreed with this approach and it was therefore

RESOLVED

1. That the financial position be noted.
2. That the surveyor currently contracted to the Council be authorised to provide further structural drawings and feasibility reports in respect to improving the current state of the building and making best use of the existing space at a cost of up to £1,500 plus VAT.

46. **CHESHAM IN BLOOM SUPPORT**

To consider a request from Chesham in Bloom to provide the money to cover the cost of entry to the 2016 RHS Thames & Chilterns in Bloom competition.

The Committee was happy to accede to this request since the Chesham in Bloom team had done an exceptional job in helping the town achieve the Gold Award last year and it was agreed they should be supported in whatever way possible.

It was

RESOLVED

that the £200 entry fee for Chesham and Lowndes Park into the 2016 Thames & Chilterns regional competition be paid for by this Council.

47. **CHESHAM CEMETERY CAPACITY UPDATE**

Members considered the report from the Administration Manager updating the Committee on the current space available in Chesham Cemetery.

While it was made apparent that Consecrated space may disappear from the existing cemetery in the next few years, Councillor McCulloch, as Chairman of the Friends of Chesham Cemetery, opined that it was likely that the remaining Unconsecrated area could provide for interments for up to another 20 years. To this end, it was noted that those of certain faiths wanting a consecrated grave could simply engage an ordained religious figure to undertake this procedure on the burial plot.

A debate then took place as to the desirability of committing the same, or more, monies annually to a fund to purchase land for a new cemetery in the future. It was agreed that no new potential site was immediately apparent and land prices were such that the amount in the fund at the moment was wholly inadequate. However, having been apprised that the existing cemetery could continue for potentially another 20 years and there being no immediate concerns on expiry, it was agreed that £5,000 be continued to be recommended to be committed for a new cemetery fund and this be reviewed regularly. In the interim, it was agreed that the need for a new cemetery be included in the consultation to the Local Plan currently being undertaken.

It was

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee continues to recommend that the annual amount committed as a sinking fund to purchase land for a new cemetery remains unchanged and the need for a new site be highlighted within the Local Plan consultation.
2. That the Committee notes and accepts that the Cemetery will, towards the end of its period of operation, be offering interments only in Unconsecrated sections.

48. **ST GEORGES DAY AND QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

Councillor Fayyaz, on behalf of the Chesham Action Partnership, asked whether the Committee would be minded to make a contribution to the St Georges Day event

planned for the 23rd April. Specifically he reported that the Council was being asked to pay for the proposed bunting in Market Square at the cost of £318.55.

While happy to support in principle, some Members did raise queries on the level of support from the Chesham Action Partnership itself and it was noted that this should be clarified soon. Assuming that a significant match-funding contribution for the day's events was confirmed, it was agreed that the final Council contribution be delegated to the Town Clerk in liaison with the Town Mayor.

Members briefly discussed possible celebrations marking Her Majesty, the Queen's, 90th birthday celebrations in June. It was agreed that any suggestions should be forwarded to the Mayor, Councillor Hudson, for consideration. Councillor Shaw reported that Buckinghamshire County Council had agreed free road closures for the 9th June.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee agrees in principle to the purchase and erection of bunting for the Market Square to commemorate St Georges Day but the final decision on this matter be delegated to the Town Clerk in liaison with the Town Mayor.
2. That Members be encouraged to provide the Town Mayor with suggestions for events to commemorate the Queen's birthday celebrations in June 2016.

49. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

CHAIRMAN