

Chesham Town Council



Bill Richards
Town Clerk

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22nd August 2008

Dear Councillor

I hereby give notice of a meeting of the **RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE** to be held in the Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Chesham, on

MONDAY 1st SEPTEMBER 2008 AT APPROXIMATELY 8.00 PM

(following the close of the meeting of the Development Control Committee which commences at 7.30pm)

when the business set out below is proposed to be transacted:

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Declarations of Interest.
3. To receive and confirm the Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 2nd June 2008.
4. To receive and consider the Minutes of:
 - Friends of Moor Road Meeting of 10th June and 22nd July 2008 (enclosed).*
 - Allotment Group Meeting of 17th June and 12th August (enclosed).*
 - 'Impress the Chess' Steering Group of 6th June 2008 (enclosed).*
 - Elgiva Board of Management of 23rd June 2008 and 11th August 2008 (enclosed).*
5. Chesham Moor Swim and Gym Centre.
6. Play Area Strategy For Chesham.
7. Revised Terms and References for the Allotments Group.
8. Use of Codmore Playing and Pavilion for Annual Donkey Derby 2009.
9. Moor Football Pitches and Pavilion.
10. Dog Bins.
11. Information Items.
12. **Exclusion of Public and Press.**
13. Tenders for Multi-Sports/Tennis Courts Renovation, Moor Road, Gym and Swim Centre.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Richards
Town Clerk



Chesham Town Council

continued . . .



		Circulation	
Councillor	A.K. Bacon (Vice Chairman)	Councillor	Mrs. C. Littley
"	E.L. Bamford	"	Mrs. C.M. Michael
"	M.Z. Bhatti	"	Mrs. M. Molesworth
"	Ms. J.E. Bramwell	"	Mrs A.M. Pirouet
"	Mrs. J.C. Fulford (Chairman)	"	Mrs. G. Walker
"	D.J. Lacey		

CESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Report of the Officers to a meeting of the **RECREATION AND THE ARTS**

COMMITTEE on Monday 1st September 2008.

AGENDA ITEM NO: 5 CESHAM MOOR SWIM AND GYM CENTRE

Reporting Officers: Bill Richards (01494 583824), Stephen Pearson (01494 583825) and Danny Essex (01494 776975)

Summary

1. To consider an update on the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre and a financial report up to the 31st July 2008.

Background Information

2. At the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 17th December 2007 *Minute 38(1b)* 'it was resolved that the Officers, in consultation with the Friends of Moor Road, produce a five year business plan and that there be regular monitoring reports to each Recreation and the Arts Committee Meetings.'

Financial Implications

3. As outlined within the report.

Strategic Objectives

4. Accords with the Council's strategic aim 1 – *'To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.'*

Detailed Consideration

a. Financial Update

5. The **attached** financial report (excluding Renewals & Repairs) shows an operational deficit for the first quarter of £13,528 at the end of June 2008

against the annual estimate of £66,095. The alarm expenditure figure includes the installation of the new alarm system £2,384 which was approved at the Recreation & Arts Committee on the 17th March 2008.

6. An analysis of the gym income shows the last nine months figures (excluding VAT) as follows:

	£
November 2007	3,543
December	3,297
January 2008	4,640
February	5,515
March	5,034
April	5,897
May	4,753
June	3,806
July	5,239

7. If the average of the last four months is used as a basis for forecasting the income for 2008/09 this would equate to £59,085 against a budget figure of £70,000.

8. The swimming season opened on the 1st May and details of the income (excluding VAT) to the 31st July are as follows and are compared against the **full season's 2008 budget**:

	2007 Actual £	2008 Actual £	2008 Budget £
Adult	4,883	9,510	12,000
Junior	5,121	7,014	9,500
Senior	665	1,143	1,280
Spectators	285	557	555
Other Income-hire, lessons, etc.	<u>6,780</u>	<u>9,023</u>	<u>8,495</u>
Total	<u>17,734</u>	<u>27,247</u>	<u>31,830</u>

9. The season ticket numbers are slightly down on the same period as last year but the income is up (but down against budget) mainly due to the concession price increase. Details of the ticket sales (excluding VAT) are as follows:

	2007 Tickets	2007 £	2008 Tickets	2008 £	2008 Budget £
Adult	87	5,898	78	5,928	6,000
Concession	108	4,570	102	5,655	5,875
Junior	63	2,413	53	2,230	2,500
Junior Concession	28	596	22	546	600

TOTALS **286** **13,477** **255** **14,359** **14,975**

10. Income from the tennis/multi-court for April 08 to July 08 is £1,175 against £513 for the same period last year.
11. Despite the lack of sunshine, swimming income should come in around budget but the gym target may be harder to achieve in the current economic climate.

b. Operational Matters

12. While hot, dry days have again regrettably been at a premium, queries in respect of the operation of timed swims have again been raised on busy days.
13. The Manager and Town Clerk have discussed the matter and have agreed that communication with those waiting in lengthy queues could be improved upon. Accordingly it is proposed to develop a mobile stand to be placed outside the main doors to indicate the number of people who can be let in dependent on the number of lifeguards on duty.
14. Members will recall that the Committee has already agreed that timed swims sessions, while not perfect, are the most practical system when restricting entry is required.

c. Solar Powered Heating Update

15. A lot of hard work has been undertaken on this project by the Friends of Moor Road Chairman, Mr Mike Barden. He reports that the proposals have suffered some slippage due to the designated framework suppliers as appointed by BERR (i.e. the only companies who could install and allow for the Council to claim a 50% grant) have been slow to respond due to the sheer volume of enquiries. However Mr Barden still feels a winter installation is realistic. He intends to be at the meeting to update the Committee further if required.

d. Multi Court/Tennis Court Renovation.

16. Tenders have now been obtained and are presented as a 'private and confidential' report to be considered at the end of the evening.

e. Mini Golf Course

17. An initial enquiry has been received from a local Chesham company about the possibility of developing a mini ('crazy') golf course around the front

and side of the building. The company would pay for all the capital costs and the Council would look to enter into a leasing agreement or a split income deal. Obviously the proposal is very much in its infancy and the question as to whether it would be desirable and, indeed, even possible to build this on designated common land, has still to be determined. However neither the Friends' Chairman nor the Centre Manager has any objections in principle at this stage, so it is proposed more discussions are entered into with a further report to follow if officers feel such a facility would be an asset to the centre.

f. Increased lighting from car-park to complex

18. A representative of the Friends' group will be meeting officers of Buckinghamshire County Council and Jacobs Babbie on the 5th September to look at the possibility of installing an extra lamp-post between the Moor car-park and complex to increase lighting for security reasons, particularly for women leaving the gym in the evenings.
19. Indicative costs have been sought and the Council has been asked that, for budgetary purposes, to assume £900 for the supply and installation of any new street light assembly. This is based on the use of standard equipment and includes the electrical connection (excluding additional trenching) on to an adjacent LV main. In each instance it is also assumed that additional trenching, ducting and cabling will be required. Indicative costs at this stage are £60 per m in verge/footway and £160 per m in the carriageway. Electrical connections would not be sub fed from adjacent County Council equipment and the cost of the power would have to be funded separately.
20. Buckinghamshire County Council would not fund this directly, especially with its new policy to commit itself to turning off some existing street lights so the question of funding would need to be considered if the Council wish to support this Friends' led proposal.

g. Free Swimming for Over-60's and 16 years and under

21. Members will probably be aware of the proposal from central Government to encourage local authorities to allow over 60's and 16 years and under to swim free of charge. While an admirable concept, it is apparent that only District Councils' can apply for a grant, initially based on an authority's population of those aged 60 and over. For Chiltern District, the available grant is £29,908 (grants to recompense 16's and under free swimming have yet to be determined). Officers at Chiltern District Council have already indicated to the Clerk that there will be a high risk of the grant not covering the cost of free swimming in their facilities managed on its behalf by Nexus and it would be very unlikely that there would be any

monies to cover the cost of free swimming at the Open Air pool (and, at the time of writing, it is unknown whether this Council could insist on a share of the grant). The income for the two categories last summer was in the region of £7,500 for over 60's and £12,500 for 16's and under with the likelihood of it being higher this year. Obviously greater numbers attending for free swimming would also push overhead costs up as well.

22. The Council could simply not register an interest and continue with its current charging policy. However there is a danger, of course, that the numbers swimming at the Open Air pool would drop dramatically if free swimming is offered at competing pools. At this stage therefore, it is recommended that the Council register an interest through Chiltern District Council and discussions take place as further guidance is forthcoming from Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). DCMS has already informed the Clerk town and parish councils cannot register an interest separately.
23. If the Council does wish to pursue this interest, it should be noted that central government monies are only ring-fenced for 2009/10 and 2010/11. On the positive side, it should also be noted that a pot of £60m will be available for participating authorities for capital programmes.

h. Gym Equipment

24. Members are asked to note that the 18 month lease agreement on the gym equipment expires in December. The Council probably has the option to buy the equipment at the end of the lease. However Members are reminded that the equipment was 're-conditioned' (i.e. second-hand) when installed and starting to show signs of wear and tear. Accordingly the Centre Manager is looking at other leasing options and will be reporting these back to a future meeting.

Recommendation

- 1. That the financial position be noted.**
- 2. That the officers' proposals to improve communication with queuing customers be noted and approved**
- 3. That the current position in respect of solar powered heating be noted.**
- 4. That officers' be authorised to enter in to further negotiations with the contractors supplying mini-golf and a further report be submitted.**
- 5. That the Committee support the principle of increased lighting between complex and car-park and request that the Friends Group and officers bring a further detailed report to a future meeting**
- 6. That the Council register an interest in being part of the free swimming initiative through Chiltern District Council and officers enter into a dialogue with Chiltern District Council officers and the Friends' Group on the financial implications and that a further report on the matter be brought before the Committee.**
- 7. That the current position on the leased gym equipment be noted.**

AGENDA ITEM NO: 6 PLAY AREA STRATEGY FOR CHESHAM

Reporting Officer: Bill Richards (01494 583824)

Summary

1. To receive an update on the proposed play area strategy for Chesham.

Background Information

2. At the Council meeting of the 23rd June 2008, it was resolved that:
 - a. *officers and Members be requested to develop a play-area strategy, approach Chiltern District Council to help facilitate this and present this strategy to the next Recreation and the Arts Committee.*
 - b. *no upgrading of any play area be undertaken until after the consideration of the play strategy.*
 - c. *officers and Members proceed with a consultation exercise with a view to recommending a site for the Multi-Play Goal.*
 - d. *Councillors Bamford, Mrs Littley, Mrs Michael, Mrs Pirouet and Yerrell be the nominated Members to work with officers upon the play area strategy. (Minute: No.21)*

Financial Implications

3. Re-development of the town's play-areas will have a major impact on the Council's renewals and repairs budgets and potentially on the Council's reserves but officers are unable to quantify this at this stage.

Strategic Objectives

4. *Accords with the Council's strategic aim 1 – 'To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.'*

Detailed Consideration

5. The Play Area working party duly met on the 7th July to discuss the way forward in producing a strategy. It was generally agreed that the Council itself was not best resourced to undertake the designs and consultation required. The Clerk had already hosted a meeting with Chiltern District Council's Principal Leisure and Community Officer, who while supportive, did not feel too much 'hands-on' support could be offered.

However he did express the view that renovation of the play areas would accord with both the Chiltern Play Strategy and Open Space and Recreation Strategy (**attached**) which may help unlock external funding. In light of this, the Play Area working party accepted the Clerk's recommendation to select one play company to work as an exclusive partner with the Council over two years or longer to develop play-areas in town. The brief for the successful company would be to firstly to visit all our play-areas and make recommendations on whether some or all of the play-areas should be renovated or replaced, make indicative suggestions on investment required and explain how it would undertake consultation with local residents and young people to ensure the right equipment was installed. This is an approach taken by other councils and appeared to have worked well. The Clerk has also spoken to the Chairman of Lowndes Park who has suggested perhaps engaging an independent play expert to give a second opinion on any play company's submission. A letter sent to play companies is **attached**.

6. At the time of writing, 6 major play companies have expressed an interest in putting a proposal together. It is expected that these proposals will be varied and, hopefully, innovative and obviously will not be like for like tenders. It is proposed therefore that the working party meet between this Committee and full Council on the 22nd September to consider the proposals with a view to putting a recommendation of a preferred company to Council.
7. The amount of finances required at this juncture is unknown but there will be a clearer picture in respect of 'ball-park' figure when the proposals begin to arrive and these again will be reported to full Council.

Recommendation

That the current position be noted.

AGENDA ITEM NO: 7 REVISED TERMS AND REFERENCES FOR THE ALLOTMENTS GROUP

Reporting Officer: Bill Richards (01494 583824)

Summary

1. To approve revised terms and references for the operation of the Allotments Group.

Background Information

2. At the Recreation and the Arts Committee of the 7th July 2003, it was agreed '*that an Allotment Working Party should be set up to improve communication between the Council and allotment holders*' (Minute: No.13)
3. Revised terms and references were presented and duly approved with amendments at the Recreation and the Arts Committee on the 27th November 2006.

Financial Implications

4. None pertaining to this report.

Strategic Objectives

5. Accords with the Council's strategic aim 1 – '*To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.*'

Detailed Consideration

6. At the Allotment Group Open Forum Meeting held in April 2008, it was agreed that the Allotments Group committee be requested to update the the terms and references (**attached**).
7. This was duly carried out with the help of Vince Crompton (Chair) and Councillor Mrs Pirouet and changes and additions were discussed and formally agreed at the Allotments Group meeting held 12th August 2008. Paragraphs 2, 4, 6, and 8 have been rewritten, and Paragraphs 13 and 14 have been added.

8. Members may recall that when the Group was set up originally, it was intended that there would be an equal number of elected Members and allotment holders along the lines of the former Allotments Sub-Committee. However, as the Group has developed and its advisory, non-decision-making role has been clarified and re-enforced, officers see no reasons to object to the changes, particularly since the Elgiva Board of Management for instance, has only one Member representative on it.

Recommendation

That the revised terms and references for the Allotments Group be approved, subject to any amendments the Committee may wish to make.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 - USE OF CODMORE PLAYING FIELD AND PAVILION FOR ANNUAL DONKEY DERBY 2009.

Reporting Officer: Bill Richards (01494 583824)

Summary

1. To consider an application on behalf of the Amersham and Chesham Lions Club and Tylers Hill Scout Group for use of the Codmore Playing Field and Pavilion for their annual Donkey Derby (**copy letter attached**).

Background Information

2. Previous applications for the use of the Playing Field for this event have been allowed by the Council, notwithstanding numerous objections over the years raised by a local resident in Codmore Crescent, and despite these objections the Council was granted a Premises Licence in 2005 by the District Council which specifically permitted the use on a Sunday for this event.
3. At the Council meeting held on the 13th October 2003, it was agreed *“that officers be given delegated authority to approve the use of Codmore Field by the Amersham and Chesham Lions and Tylers Hill Scout Group for their annual Donkey Derby for the next five years”*. (Minute No. 61)

Detailed Consideration

4. An application on behalf of the Amersham and Chesham Lions and Tylers Hill Scout Group for use of the Codmore Playing Field and Pavilion, Botley Road, for a further five years has been received. The event is normally held in June and it is proposed that the next event will be held on Sunday 7th June 2009.
5. This annual event has been held since 1990. The event attracts many families from the Hilltop and Botley area. The Council is well within its powers to allow the field to be used for this purpose, including the use of part of the land for a car park. The District Council's Environmental Health Officer monitored the event in 2001 and could find no fault with it. The use of amplified music and a PA system to announce the races is part and parcel of the occasion, although the organisers have taken heed of this point and do everything possible for limit amplified music on the day. It should be noted no letters of objection have been received for the last two years.

Recommendation

That officers be given delegated authority to approve the use of Codmore Field by the Amersham and Chesham Lions and Tylers Hill Scout Group for their annual Donkey Derby for the next five years subject to payment of the appropriate annual charge and that the charge for 2009 be fixed at £100 for the use of the Field and the Pavilion.

AGENDA ITEM NO: 9 MOOR FOOTBALL PITCHES AND PAVILION

Reporting Officer: Steve Pearson (01494 583825)

Summary

1. To consider the application by Strides F.C. to place a storage container on the Moor and agree the rent of the Moor football pitches and Pavilion for the 2008/9 season.

Background Information

2. This Committee considered and gave approval to a request from Strides F.C. to buy and place a lock-up container upon the Moor at their own costs subject to planning consent (*Recreation & the Arts Committee - 2nd June Minute No 10*) but the Committee was under the impression that the old pavilion would be demolished. However, following clarification from Strides F.C. it was reported to the Council meeting of the 23rd June that the container would be an addition not a replacement and the matter was referred back to this meeting for further consideration (*Council Minute No.20.*)

Detailed Consideration

3. Copies of the letters from Strides of the 7th April and 16th June are **enclosed**. It should be noted that in addition to any planning consent any development on the Moor may require the Planning Inspectorate approval -see NALC advice letter **enclosed**. Members might also prefer for the local residents bordering the proposed site to be consulted.
4. The Moor pitches and pavilion with use of the changing rooms at the swimming pool have been let to Chesham Strides Football Club for a number of years and following the Council taking over the management of the pool and Moor facilities last year continued the arrangement on similar terms to that which the club had previously enjoyed with the Chess Valley Sports & Leisure Association Limited. The club wishes to continue using the facilities for the 2008/09 season and have provisionally agreed to an increase in the rent from £1,700 to £1,768. The club would also like to enter into a long term agreement to facilitate development and grant applications.
5. The Club is responsible for all pitch marking & maintenance and all costs relating to the Pavilion.

Recommendation

1. That the Committee consider the application of Strides Football Club to site a container on the Moor and the possible long term proposals put forward by the Club.

2. That a rent of £1,768 for the Moor Football Pitches and Pavilion for the 2008/09 season be agreed.

AGENDA ITEM NO 10: PROVISION OF DOG BINS

Reporting Officer: Bill Richards (01494 583824)

Summary

1. To consider the investment in additional dog bins.

Background Information

2. The Council's Sport and Leisure Committee on 12 November 2001 set out its position that this Council considers the collection of dog waste to be the responsibility of the principal Authority, a service which should be fully funded by Chiltern District Council.

Financial Implications

3. As outlined within this report.

Strategic Objectives

4. Accords with the Council's strategic aim 1 – *'To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.'*

Detailed Consideration

5. Officers have received a request for an additional dog-bin around the Vale Road/Greenway area. While the District Council is prepared to order this, it requests that this Council pay both for the purchase of bins and the emptying therefore on its land. Costs of purchase of a new bin are around £200 and the emptying amounts to £186 per year. The District Council used to be able contribute up to 25% for the purchase and emptying but now can only make a small contribution to the purchase of a new bin
6. The Finance and Contracts Manager was also preparing to replace some of the bins around town on Council sites and the budget is limited. Officers are aware that over the last few years there have been other requests for new bins to be supplied so would welcome recommendations from local Members as to the need for new dog bin sites on and off Council land before the setting of the budgets for 2009/10.

Recommendation

- 1. That the Committee clarify its position on paying for dog-bins not on Council owned land.**
- 2. That an extra dog-bin be provided around the Vale Road/Greenway area and the Committee agree to financing the emptying thereof.**
- 3. That Members consider where, if anyway, further dog bins are required on Council land.**

Bill Richards
Town Clerk

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

INFORMATION SHEET FOR COUNCILLORS TO THE RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE MEETING ON 1st SEPTEMBER 2008

List 8 of 2008/09

21. **Taking Over of Management of Market Contract.**

At the Council meeting of the 12th May 2008, it was resolved that the Council respond to Chiltern District Council stating its wish to take over the management of the contract pertaining to the existing market management company, up to May 2010. (*Minute No. 124*).

Attached is a letter from Chiltern District Council confirming this has now been agreed and accordingly the Council will be taking over the management of the contract from the 3rd May 2008.