

**Agenda Item: 7**

**CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES of the meeting of the Community, Assets, Recreation and Environment (CARE) Committee**

held on Monday 3 April 2023

**Councillors:**

|                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Councillor Wilford Augustus  | Councillor Majid Ditta     |
| Councillor Alan Bacon        | Councillor Justine Fulford |
| Councillor Simon Booth       | Councillor Rachael Mathews |
| Councillor Emily Culverhouse | Councillor Nick Southworth |

**In attendance:**

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Councillor Francis Holly |  |
| Sarah McDermott          | Waterside Residents Association            |
| Mr Tony Marmo            | Chief Executive Officer                    |
| Ms Kathryn Graves        | Community, Economy and Environment Manager |

**48. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Aslam and MacBean who had other commitments which were noted and accepted by the committee.

Councillor Emily Culverhouse assumed the role of Chair in Councillor MacBeans' absence

**49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations.

**50. MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Assets, Recreation and Environment Committee held on 13 February 2023 were received by members.

**51. TO RECEIVE THE ACTION TRACKER OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF CARE**

The Committee received the action tracker noting progress made against each action.

**52. PLAY AREA WORKING GROUP MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting of the Play Area Working Group held on 6 March 2023 were received by members.

**53. NASHLEIGH HILL RECREATION GROUND PLAY AREA TENDER**

A report was produced by the CEO to inform members of the Committee on the outcome of the Nashleigh Hill Recreation Ground play area tender. The CEO apologised that the report had not come sooner. The CEO confirmed that the award had taken place and that the new playground was near completion, containing a substantial amount of equipment. Councillor Southworth confirmed this noting that the original survey was carried out by the Nashleigh Hill working group and not the Town Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) **That members of the CARE Committee approve the results of the tender meets the budget set by the committee on the 10 October 2022.**

#### **54. BOIS MOOR PLAY AREA**

The CEO gave a report informing members of the committee on the work being undertaken by the Waterside Residents Association in partnership with the Play Area working group. The CEO welcomed Sarah McDermott from the Waterside Residents Association.

The Waterside Residents Association aim to take forward the fundraising of £75,000, with a request that the remaining £15,000 be funded by the Council (see CIL report on this committee's agenda). The group aim to fundraise through a series of avenues that include community events, business sponsorship, local donations and applications for grants.

Councillor Fulford offered Sarah McDermott support with a massive thank you and a good luck in raising the funds. Sarah McDermott confirmed that the first application for funding was being submitted this week. The CEO confirmed that a signed letter from the Council will be written giving permission as a land owner for The Waterside Residents Association to make these applications.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- i) **That the Council supports the fundraising efforts of the Waterside Residents Association in relation to the Bois Moor Road Play Area project.**

#### **55. LOWNDES PARK MASTER PLAN**

The Community, Economy and Environment Manager gave a report updating the committee on activities relating to plans for Lowndes Park and on grant funding, confirming that an application had been submitted to Smart Water Catchment. If this was unsuccessful, The Friends of Lowndes Park had offered to donate £1,000 of this application, looking to the council to make up the shortfall from reserves.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- i) **That in the event that no further grants are awarded to the Master Plan the Council:**
  - a) **accept the generous offer by Friends of Lowndes Park of £1,000.**
  - b) **£2,325 be allocated from reserves to the Lowndes Park Masterplan project.**
- ii) **Councillor Matthews be appointed to attend the inception meeting.**
- iii) **That the Council supports the fundraising efforts of the Friends of Lowndes Park in relation to the Lowndes Park Play Area project.**

#### **56. CIL EXPENDITURE**

The Community, Economy and Environment Manager gave a report for the committee to consider the proposed expenditure of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money on projects.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- i) **That £35,000 of CIL money is allocated to the Lowndes Park Play Area project.**
- ii) **That £4,150 of CIL money is allocated to the Woodland View Play Area fence replacement.**
- iii) **That £1,605 of CIL money is allocated to the Bois Moor Road Play Area project.**

## **57. CHESHAM TAPESTRY**

The Community, Economy and Environment Manager gave a report to consider the conservation of the Chesham Tapestry which is 50 years old this year. The Tapestry is in good structural condition, but requires cleaning and has some areas of moth damage and it is proposed to frame the tapestry to further protect it. The total cost of this work is in the region of £6,000 which is not currently allocated for in the annual budget. The Community, Economy and Environment Manager is looking at potential funding.

The Chair was of the view that the tapestry needs to be cleaned and protected and asked what the timeframe is for this work. The Community, Economy and Environment Manager confirmed that the company is pretty booked up so we would need to plan.

Councillor Booth confirmed that confirmation of total costs would be required before approval at the finance committee. We need an understanding of how critical this is. Councillor Southworth asked if this could be delayed by a year or so as we cannot exhaust reserves as something unexpected might come up. The Community, Economy and Environment Manager confirmed that currently it has no UV protection and has some moth damage, plus is vulnerable to vandalism from room hires. Councillor Fulford asked the committee to note the value of this piece of work and the implications of deferring, and that permission to seek funding is being asked for currently.

### **RESOLVED:**

- i) That the committee approves the cleaning and framing of the Chesham Tapestry, subject to external funding being achieved or the Finance committee agreeing to use reserves.**
- ii) That a community activity or event is organised by the CEEM team to document and celebrate the social history of the Chesham Tapestry.**

## **58. CHESHAM MOOR GYM & SWIM DEVELOPMENT**

The CEO presented a report outlining the latest position on the Gym & Swim Development and the minutes of the meeting of the last Gym and Swim Development working group.

Councillor Booth was of the view that the outline costs of £3,000,000 represent a ceiling of affordability and that there was work to be done to bring back into an acceptable design and financial threshold. He said he was optimistic that we could close the gap and retain what is proposed so far, saying that the attached scheme looked great bringing it into the next generation. He also confirmed there was a working party looking at property and assets and that it may be possible to raise finances from this avenue.

Councillor Southworth asked about the business case, if it was based on best or worst trading scenario. The CEO confirmed that is was based on a target number of 1,400 members, confirming that current membership was 395.

Councillor Bacon was hopeful that we could deliver this project, saying that the facility has become more significant over a period of time. It used to be low key with the pool only open in the Summer. This is a logical step. He questioned if there was money allocated in the budget for gym equipment. The CEO confirmed £250,000. He also questioned the proposed increase in membership fees and hoped the public will be happy with these. The CEO confirmed that a price of £30/month was about right for what is classified as a budget gym, saying the majority of gyms are £45/month. Thus in 3 years a target of £33/month might be the right figure for a new facility.

Councillor Bacon asked what the cost would be of working up the proposal to planning stage, the CEO confirming this would cost £100,000.

Councillor Southworth asked how much down time there would be on this project, the CEO replying that the design is based on limited down time.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) Minutes of the Gym and Swim Working Group were noted and received.**
- ii) The Gym and Swim Working Group to continue to progress the design, cost plan and business plan using value engineering to ensure the project stays below £3m**
- iii) That the Gym and Swim Working Group continue to work up a planning application that can be submitted to the LPA.**

The meeting closed at 8.05pm.