

# Chesham Town Council



Bill Richards  
Town Clerk

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7<sup>th</sup> June 2016

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 13<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2016 AT APPROXIMATELY 8.00PM**

(i.e. immediately following the close of the Development Control Committee meeting which is due to commence at 7.30pm)

**A G E N D A**

1. Election of Chairman and Vice- Chairman for Administrative Year 2016/17.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Declarations of Interest.
4. To receive and confirm the Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016.
5. To receive and consider the Minutes of:
  - a. *Allotment Group meeting of the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016.*
  - b. *Friends of Chesham Cemetery meetings of 24<sup>th</sup> March and 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016 and AGM of 14<sup>th</sup> April.*
  - c. *Environmental Group Annual General Meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> April and meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> April 2016.*
  - d. *Impress the Chess meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> May 2016.*
6. Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre Update.
7. Devolved Services Update.
8. Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Structural Repairs.
9. Skottowes Pond, Lowndes Park.
10. Allotments Update.
11. Lowndesbourne Town Picnic- late report.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Richards'.

Bill Richards  
Town Clerk



continued . . .



## Councillor Circulation

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>N.L. Brown</b>	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Mrs. J. E. MacBean</b>
"	<b>A.W. Franks</b>	"	<b>M. W. Shaw</b>
"	<b>Q. Chaudhry</b>	"	<b>Mrs D.M. Varley</b>
"	<b>M. Fayyaz</b>	"	<b>Miss E. A. Culverhouse</b>
"	<b>P.J. Hudson</b>	"	<b>S. P. Willmoth</b>
"	<b>D. J. Lacey</b>		

# CHESHAM ALLOTMENTS GROUP

## MINUTES OF MEETING

CHESHAM TOWN HALL TUESDAY, 15<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2016 7.30PM

### 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Present: Allen Tilbury (AT), Jim Abbott (JA), Tim Andrew (TA), Vince Crompton (VC), David Hall (DH), Vincent Lucas (VL), Jane MacBean (JM), Beverley Mackay (BM), Tony Muir (TM), Ray Williams (RW).

Apologies: Kate Hutchinson, Andrew Sinclair, Yvonne Webster

### 2. Matters Arising

a) Approval of 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 15 January were **approved**. Proposed JA, seconded DH.

### 3. Chairman's Report

a) Discount Reward Card 2016-2017 – Update

The chairman reported that 58 members had signed for the new card to date.

b) Highway Verge Cutting - Update

VL reported from the meeting called by the town clerk which he attended on our behalf:

- The council proposes to cut the verges 8 to 10 times per year
- One council officer will be present at future allotment inspections. The **chairman** will seek clarification of what this means.
- Allotment tenants are to receive a letter reminding them of their responsibilities for keeping paths and areas adjacent to their plots cut and tidy.

The committee discussed the possibility of working parties to help members keep paths etc. clear. TA asked that members continue to think of ways we can help tenants who do not have easy access to petrol strimmers, etc. Later in the meeting JA reported that he been offered a strimmer and we were asked to consider where it might be kept and maintained.

The Town Council is to issue a new memorandum of understanding with each of its Town Partners. In respect of the Allotment Group only one minor change to the current arrangement is proposed: that we take over responsibility for the engraving of the trophies awarded each year for best plot. The meeting **agreed** to accept this change and the chairman signed the memorandum of understanding on our behalf.

### 4. Treasurer's Report

a) Current Account and Cash Status

It has been a quiet period in respect of finances, with few outgoings.

The current balance stands at £2,219.85

Our public liability insurance is due for renewal in April.

### 5. Correspondence Secretary's Report

Nothing reported.

6. **The Grower**

- a) March 2016 Edition – Review

The committee congratulated KH on the March edition. (“Very professional”.)

- b) June 2016 Edition – Update

The chairman reminded the meeting that the next edition will need to include notification of both the Cheese and Wine evening and the Open Day.

Articles for possible inclusion to be sent to KH

7. **Social Activities Report**

- a) Fish & Chip Evening – Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2016

Small numbers committed so far.

Town Hall mooted as a possible future venue since new memorandum of understanding appears to offer its free use as a venue on two occasions per year.

8. **Coffee Morning Co-ordinator**

- a) 20<sup>th</sup> Feb, 27<sup>th</sup> Feb and 5<sup>th</sup> Mar – Review

All felt the coffee mornings associated with Chesham Horticultural Society’s potato sale had gone well, in spite of the cold!

- b) Summer Programme April – October 2016

BM has canvassed helpers for the Saturday mornings from 16 April to 19 July and is compiling a list.

9. **Focal Point Hut**

- a) Refurbishment – Hut

Awaiting completion.

- b) Working Party – Levelling Grass Area

Larry and Lorraine Faulkner had done the work themselves, unasked. **VC** to organise a small gift and letter of thanks.

- c) Toilet Cleaning Rota – Review

The chairman reported that the toilet is to be pumped out in the next week if the ground is dry enough for access.

10. **Chesham in Bloom**

- a) Plant Sale Sat 28<sup>th</sup> May 2016 – Surplus Plants

- To take place between 10am and 2pm outside the United Reformed Church by the war memorial.
- VC requested as much support as possible.

- b) CAG Sponsored Coffee Morning Sat May 14<sup>th</sup>

It was noted that extra milk and cakes will be required

11. Any Other Business  
a) Parking Bays – Hard Standing – Cameron Road

Still on the schedule to be completed

- b) Sleeper Replacement – Plot 20-33 Incl.

**JM** is to check that this work is still in the allocation and to chase progress

Other items raised at the meeting:

- **TA** is to check the current balance of large and small plots let to tenants and the implications this has for awards following allotment inspections.
- **BM** reported that the gate giving access from Asheridge Road is often left open. **The chairman** agreed to ask for the notices on the gates to be changed to ask tenants to lock the gate behind them at all times. (Currently notices ask that gates be shut.)
- **TA, KH and AS** to complete the review of the terms and conditions of the lease signed by tenants.
- It was reported that the practice of splitting large plots into two when tenancies end had meant that there is currently no waiting list for Cameron Road plots, but there is still a waiting list at Asheridge Road. There is one plot held in reserve for disabled tenants at Asheridge Road; **JM** is to ask if the waiting list is checked to see if anyone on it would qualify for the plot, and what the status of the plot is policy-wise.

Date of Next Meeting – **Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

**Please note change of date** from that announced at the meeting, due to unavailability of a meeting room at the Town Hall.

## Friends of Chesham Cemetery

**Extraordinary Meeting  
Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016  
Chesham Town Hall  
7 -8pm**

**Present:** Roderick McCulloch - Chair  
Sharon McEwan – Secretary  
Phil Folly – Treasurer  
Ken Austin  
Michael Bannister

**Apologies:** Maria Pontin and Kate Folly

Roderick apologies to those members who did not know about this meeting as he only had emails to the above people.

### **1. Hearse House**

This meeting was called to discuss issues that were raised at the first exhibition event held in November 2015.

- The committee would like to thank the Parks & Premises Manager and his team for all the work that they have done on the Hearse House since November 2015

Tasks to still be completed are:

- Improved lightening in recesses at back of hearse house.  
Roderick will contact the Parks & Premises Manager Bob Ayres to see if a contractor could possibly install two sets of spot lights
- Wall Boards  
Wall boards to be erected on the walls. At present these are stored at the depot. – Roderick will contact Parks & Premises Manager Bob Ayres
- Dehumidifiers were a suggestion possibly over the winter months if damp is still causing an issue. Sharon and Phil will go to the Chapel on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March at 10am and bring back the outcome to the next meeting in April
- Display Units  
This was discussed Sharon and Phil will look at some websites and Ikea to see what units are available and discuss at the next meeting in April.

### **Fundraising**

It was agreed that Phil will issue a cheque of £25.00 for a stall at Chesham Carnival in June. Sharon and Michael have agreed to run a stall

### **Membership**

**This was raised and the committee felt that the Friends should go back to holding three meetings per a year April, July and November as the group are flouting. This was agreed**

**Another suggestion made was a social media page i.e Facebook. Sharon agreed to ask her children to help design and set up a facebook page.**

**It was also agreed that a leaflet could be designed to encouraging the public to attend activities that the group do and to encourage more interest in the Friends group.**

**This leaflet will be in the Hearse House and at any event that the Friends go to.**

#### **Battle of the Somme**

**The Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry are holding a national exhibition in July 2016. Sharon agreed to contact them for support for the exhibition event at the Hearse House in July.**

#### **Easter Openings**

**It was raised that the gates were not being opened over the Easter weekend. It was agreed that the committee had not been asked and it was felt that due to health and safety that the committee should not open the gates**

#### **Exhibition dates**

**Three dates were set to open the exhibition house during 2016**

**April 30<sup>th</sup> 2016. Ministers and Missionaries 10am – 4pm**

**July 9<sup>th</sup> 2016. Battle of the Somme and Chesham Soldiers 10am – 4pm**

**September 10<sup>th</sup> 2016. Trade 10am-4pm**

**Flower Project April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9.30 all welcome to join us.**

#### **AGM Meeting**

**Due to unforeseen circumstances the AGM meeting as changed from Tuesday April 12<sup>th</sup> to Thursday April 14<sup>th</sup> 2016 at Chesham Town Hall 7.30pm**

**Close of meeting 810pm**

# Friends of Chesham Cemetery

## Minutes of Meeting

On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 8.10pm  
Chesham Town Hall

**Present:** Mora Walker- Vice Chair  
Sharon McEwan – Secretary  
Phil Folly – Treasurer  
Kate Folly  
Jean Queripel  
Michael Bannister  
Maria Pontin  
PCSO S.J Cook – Thames Valley Police  
PCSO Andy Mayhew – Thames Valley Police

**Apologies:** Roderick McCulloch and Ken Austin

**1. Approve the Minutes of the Meetings held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2015, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and March 24<sup>th</sup> 2016**

Minutes held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2015 and 13<sup>th</sup> October 2013 were approved and signed as true copies.

Minutes of 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were not signed as a true copy, due to wording under membership. It was agreed that the wording would be amended and dispatched with these minutes.

**2. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes  
12<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

**3.4 Public Liability Insurance** –Councillor McCulloch to speak to and clarify with the Town Clerk Bill Richards. At present work and events in the cemetery are covered by Chesham Environmental Group's Insurance.

Chesham Town Council asked the group to look at having their own insurance. It was agreed that this needed to be confirmed before the second exhibition event on **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016.** **R.M**

**9.1 Rubbish Bins-** It was confirmed that a new rubbish bin has been replaced at the top of the cemetery

**9.2 Planting around Graves in K Section -** This matter has been dealt with and the shrubs removed

**13<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

**2. Public Liability Insurance** –Councillor McCulloch to speak to and clarify with the Town Clerk Bill Richards. At present work and events in the cemetery are covered by Chesham Environmental Group's Insurance.

Chesham Town Council asked the group to look at having their own insurance. It was agreed that this needed to be confirmed before the second exhibition event on **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016** **R.M**



**5. Fundraising Events** – Phil will speak to Kathryn Graves to arrange booking a table at the local produce market in September. Ideas were based on how many sweets in a jar; name the teddy, lucky dip. **P.F**

**Christmas in Chesham** – Ideas were again discussed, tombolas, child prizes stall. This matter to be discussed again at social events by committee members Sharon to look out for event dates etc **S.M**

### **24<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

These minutes were not signed and approved due to wording under ‘membership’. The committee asked for these changes:  
‘Struggling due to lack of volunteers’ in place of ‘Flouting’  
‘That the group organise’ in place of ‘that the group do’

**Hearse House** – Phil and Sharon met at the Hearse House on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March and Jean and Phil attended during last week’s heavy rain and all confirmed that no rain or damp moisture had entered the hearse house. It was agreed that the Town Council will be approached to store the display and wall boards during the winter months **R.M**

### **3. Grave Ornaments Painting**

The committee agreed that this was put on hold due to the inclement weather and most of the committee were involved in other projects last year. It was agreed to arrange a date with committee members at the next exhibition and than Sharon to email everyone. **S.M**

**4. Hearse House Exhibitions-** Three dates were set to open the exhibition house this year.

**April 30<sup>th</sup> - “Ministers and Missionaries ”.**

**July 9<sup>th</sup> – Battle of the Somme**

**Please see letter below received from the Museum Director Soldiers of Oxfordshire ”**

Thank you for your email regarding your planned exhibition in Chesham in July. I'm sure we will be able to help in some way with loaning exhibition items but I need to understand a little more about the event and in particular the following points need some clarification from you please.

Dates

Location

Cabinets, in particular security of these

Insurances

We also have loan boxes available covering both world wars which might be of interest?

Ursula Corcoran  
Museum Director  
Soldiers of Oxfordshire

**September 10<sup>th</sup> – Memorials of occupational interest.**

Sharon informed the committee that the minister and missionary exhibition was coming together. A debate took place about serving refreshments and cakes for a donation on the day. Sharon to speak to Kathryn Graves, about health and safety concerns.

5. **Fundraising** – It was confirmed that a cheque had been raised and sent to the committee of Schools of Chesham Carnival for our main fundraiser of the year.

6. **Working Party Dates for Wildflower / Litter picks**

Next working party date for the wildflower project will be on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016 at 9.30am. It was agreed to only do the morning due to St George's Day and local produce stall on the market for the local community.

7. **Any other Business**

- Grass cutting – the committee were informed that the grass cutting had improve and would still be monitored.
- Grave levelling – the committee was asked if a system was in place for levelling graves as in the booklet it states that graves would be levelled after six months and that families were paying for a service that was implemented. Sharon to find out if there is a system on the burial records that would show when graves needed levelling. **S.M**
- **New Wooden Compost Bin** – The committee would like to thank the Parks and Premises manager Bob Ayres for having the new compost bin sited at the side of H section. It was agreed that a sign may need to be put onto the front of the bin, Sharon to raise this. **S.M**
- **Chesham in Bloom** - The committee were informed that the cemetery is not included in this event, this year.
- **Extraordinary Meeting 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016** – apologies were given to all the committee members, as not all members were notified about this meeting. Apologies were accepted.
- **Litter picks in cemetery** – All the committee felt that three times a week and a big blitz every two/three months was more than sufficient to do litter picking. This followed comments on a social media web page. Sharon raised that she had responded to this site and offered the general public to attend a litter pick on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> alongside the Friends of Chesham cemetery.
- **Meetings** – a discussion took place regarding three meetings a year and everyone felt it was repetitive and did not feel it was beneficial to its members. It was agreed that any matters raised at open events could be discussed via email, telephone or written minutes, but equally felt if it was urgent an extraordinary could be called
- **Town Civic Service** – Mora read out a letter informing the committee that they had been invited to attend St Mary's Church on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May at 10.30.

- **Thames Valley Police** – Two members of Thames Valley Police attended the meeting after being contacted by the Mayor Peter Hudson, regarding anti-social behaviour in the cemetery. During the discussion it was agreed that now the warmer weather and light nights were coming issues were going to arise.

Once again the police reiterated that the public should ring 101, unless it was an emergency then ring 999, so any crime can be recorded. In the last few weeks the police received only one telephone call regarding an incident in the cemetery.

Thames Valley Police are still regularly doing foot patrols and gave some suggestions with working with the community

- Evening patrols with a written rota with members of the public
- Weekly/monthly coffee mornings in the newly refurbished hearse house
- Erecting more notices around the cemetery stating anti social behaviour would not be tolerated
- Community regular litter picks
- Involving local school/ community groups in litter picking and running competitions on respecting the cemetery, history of memorials, history of the cemetery in general.
- CCTV was raised again and TVP suggested that the group and council contact the community safety department at Chiltern District Council, but TVP felt that as crime is not being reported they could not write a report to help with funding.
- It was raised about closing the top gate permanently, but after a long discussion everyone felt that this would cause a bigger public outcry and TVP advised that although the cemetery was used as a rat run, it allowed them a quick response to get into the cemetery and up to Pond Park when crime was being committed

#### **8. Agenda Items for next meeting**

##### **Memorial surrounds for painting**

Email address: [sharonmcewan@btinternet.com](mailto:sharonmcewan@btinternet.com)

#### **9. Dates of next meetings**

**25<sup>th</sup> October 2016 meeting will commence at 7.30pm**

**Meeting closed at 9pm**

# **Friends of Chesham Cemetery**

## **Minutes of Meeting held on**

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

**7.30pm**

**Chesham Town Hall**

### **AGM**

**Present: Mora Walker – Vice - Chair**

**Sharon McEwan – Secretary**

**Phil Folly – Treasurer**

**Kate Folly**

**Jean Queripel**

**Maria Pontin**

**Michael Bannister**

**PCSO S.J.Cook – Thames Valley Police**

**PCSO Andy Mayhew – Thames Valley Police**

**Apologies: Ken Austin and Councillor Roderick McCulloch**

**1. Approve the minutes of the AGM held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015.**

The minutes of the AGM held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015 were approved and signed as a true copy

**2. Chairperson Report**

No chairperson report was given

**3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising

**4. Election of Officers**

The nominations for chair 2016 – 2017

**Councillor Roderick McCulloch**

**Mora Walker – Proposed**

**Phil Folly - Seconded**

The committee elected **Cllr Roderick McCulloch as Chair**

The nominations for Vice Chair 2016 - 2017

**Mora Walker**

**Michael Bannister– Proposed**

**Jean Queripel – Seconded**

The committee elected **Mora Walker as Vice -Chair**

The nominations for Secretary 2016 – 2017

**Sharon McEwan**

**Mora Walker– Proposed**

**Kate Folly– Seconded**

The committee elected **Sharon McEwan as Acting Secretary**

The nominations for Treasurer 2016– 2017

**Phil Folly**

**Mora Walker– Proposed**

**Michael Bannister – Seconded**

The committee elected **Phil Folly as Treasurer**

**5. Treasurers Report**

The treasurer's Report

In Nationwide: £1425.80

Cash                      66.00

Total                      **£1491.80**

**6. Any Other Business**

There was no other business raised at this meeting

**7. Date of next meeting**

11<sup>th</sup> April 2017

**Close of meeting 8.06 pm**

These minutes to be agreed and signed as a true record of the above meeting, held on April 2017

**Signed.....**

**Chair for the Friends of Chesham Cemetery**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Chesham Environmental Group**  
7:30 pm on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2016  
Chesham Town Hall

### **Attendees:**

Ken Austin, Richard Berry, Rosemary & Rodger Main, Trevor Brawn, Michael Browne, Andrew Clark, Louise Cook, Kate Folly, Phil Folly, Alastair Holland, Georgina Lomnitz, Jane MacBean, Jenny Pearson, Doug Silverstone, Jean Staveley, Hannah Webley  
James Deason

### **1. Welcome**

PF welcomed everybody to the CEG AGM.

### **2. Apologies**

Phyllis Chapman, Colette Littley, Victoria Munns, Jean Queripel

### **3. Minutes of previous AGM**

Minutes agreed as a true record.

### **4. Chair's Report (Appendix 1)**

#### **Any Questions:**

Ken asked for an explanation of CTC's 'siding out works'. PF explained that this is where pathways are checked for protruding roots and vegetation and trimmed back. PF feels the litter along Latimer Road has been getting worse over the last 8 months. A request was made to ask the BCC waste manager to clean up the excess litter outside the Chesham Recycling Centre.

The River Chess drying up has left hundreds of fish to die.

PF requested that the meeting minutes of Chesham Water Group be supplied for reference.

PF confirmed that the Impress the Chess group was being reconvened and would meet on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May.

PF thanked everyone for their efforts over the past year and in return the Group thanked PF.

## **5. Treasurer's Annual Report (Appendix 2)**

This year has seen a loss due to the timing of 2 annual insurance payments falling in a single financial year.

Funds were spent on equipment purchased including safety glasses and printing costs. There was an £83 shortfall and a balance of £1,816.31. However, after the payment of a couple of additional invoices totaling £192 for some signs and insurance the final balance stands at £1,422.06.

KA confirmed that the insurance covers public liability costs.

PF clarified that in the past the Group needed to be members of BTCV in order to qualify for cheaper insurance. However, this may no longer apply.

The admin fee detailed pertained to the insurance cost.

PF confirmed that we apply for the cost of our insurance through CTC annual charitable donations and we usually receive the cost of our insurance.

## **6. Election of Officers**

All Officers reelected to post:

Chair – Phil Folly

Treasurer – Ken Austin

Publicity – Georgina Lomnitz

Minutes – Colette Littley

Website – Andrew Clark

## **7. AOB**

Meeting ended at approximately 19:48

## Appendix 1

Yet again the River Chess that flows through our town dried up during the summer of last year, and it has only just recently returned. The low winter rain 2014/15 and very little rain during the early months of last spring and summer, growing vegetation taking up the water, and over abstraction have all been suggested as the reason for this situation. It was most upsetting trying to save the struggling fish (tiddlers) that were surviving in puddles of water. We netted them and took them to parts of the river which was still flowing but thousands died. Another rant I'm afraid, since last summer I have travelled to Chorleywood several times a week, and I usually take the scenic route along Latimer Road and through the village of Chenies. To a passenger in a car it is certainly very lovely countryside but for me as the driver who can't avert his eyes from the twisting road the litter along the side of the road and in the hedges is painful, and in my view it has got worse. On a more positive note at our Sunday working party in March, clearing the river and litter picking along the Latimer Road, we were joined by three new volunteers all wanted to clear up and litter pick their part of Town, and in a very short period of time we had 15 bags of litter and odds ends for the Chiltern District Council to pick up.

We are continuing to work with other likeminded groups and with the local authorities. A number of our volunteers have been trained as River-fly monitors' monitoring along the River Chess. They have regular sites along the Chess which they check monthly. Last September I went with the Chesham in Bloom Group to Oxford Town Hall where the ceremony was taking place for the Thames and Chiltern Region of the in Bloom awards and for the second year running Chesham was awarded gold. This year Chesham in Bloom has a new chairman Allen Tilbury and he is going for the hat-trick. Our Lowndes Park was also entered separately for an award and received a Silver Gilt award; it will be entered again this year. Many of our volunteers give their time to support and assist other groups. This April the town council has taken on the responsibility for the cutting of highway verges, hedges, siding out works and other small scale vegetation works previously undertaken by Buckinghamshire County Council. We will try to help where we can during this time of change. Another challenge for the town is upon us the government has directed all local authorities to list areas of land that could be potentially used for housing or for industrial sites this includes Green Belt land. The so called Local Plan 2036 has a 20 year span Chiltern District Council is expected to find sites for 7,500 more houses. The first consultation, has now past but there will be a further one by the end of the year. One of the sites picked out around Chesham to be looked at is to the North of Nashliegh Hill I which includes a site that is of interest to us Berkhamstead field.

Many thanks to Georgina, Colette, Ken and Andrew who help run the group, and keep our volunteers informed of events by email or our website. My thanks also goes to the volunteers who turn up at our work parties, and give their time and energy to help improve the environment of the town.. Thanks go to the Town Clerk and his officers for the help and advice we receive, and to the Town Councilors who are generous in their help, and Chiltern District Council, waste team who arrange for the pickup of our litter picking efforts



## Appendix 2

### Chesham Environmental Group

#### Income and Expenditure Account - Year Ending 31 March 2016

<b>Income</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>
CTC Grant	196.00	196.00
	<u>196.00</u>	<u>196.00</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Equipment	35.00	0.00
Insurance	119.26	0.00
BTCV Membership	38.00	0.00
Administration Fee	39.50	0.00
Printing	37.50	0.00
Postage	9.70	0.00
	<u>278.96</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Surplus (Shortfall)</b>	<b>(82.96)</b>	<b>196.00</b>
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	<b>1899.27</b>	<b>1703.27</b>
<b>Closing balance at 31.03.16</b>	<b>1816.31</b>	<b>1899.27</b>

I certify that the Income and Expenditure Account of the Chesham Environmental Group set out above has been examined and in my opinion is a true and proper reflection of the financial affairs of the organisation.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

Notes:

Two further invoices, which had been presented were paid after 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Signs - £192

Insurance (BTCV Membership £38 + Insurance £164.25 = Total 202.25)

Current Balance with above £1422.06

## **ORDINARY MEETING**

**Chesham Environmental Group**  
7:50 pm on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2016  
Chesham Town Hall

### **Attendees:**

Ken Austin, Richard Berry, Rosemary & Rodger Main, Trevor Brawn, Michael Browne, Andrew Clark, Louise Cook, Kate Folly, Phil Folly, Alastair Holland, Georgina Lomnitz, Jane MacBean, Jenny Pearson, Doug Silverstone, Jean Staveley, James Deason, Hannah Webley

### **1. Welcome & Apologies**

Group welcomed at beginning of the AGM prior to OM. Apologies include: Phyllis Chapman, Colette Littley, Victoria Munns, Jean Queripel

### **Presentation by Doug Silverstone from the Community Orchard Project**

Doug informed the Group that the first 12 trees were planted in February 2013. 24 subsequent trees including plum and cherry added to the Orchard and 7 trees by the Gym & Swim in 2014. No Apple Day last year due to other commitments but more scope this year. There has been interest from Chartridge School in planting their own orchard but plans have been put on hold. As a result they have 15 trees that need a home, which will be planted in the Orchard in the park. This will make a total of 51 trees in the park and 7 at the Moor site.

Residents can sponsor trees for £40 a year, which encompasses purchase, planting, compost, guards, potential replacement. Only 1 tree looks in need of nurture. The Orchard currently has 10 trees that need sponsorship, which will include a certificate and updates about the Orchard. The trees to the right of the top path through Lowndes park are apples and pears and there are cherry and plum trees on the left. The Moor trees are all dwarf apples. The Orchard in Lowndes Park is at capacity. No more planting so that it doesn't become overcrowded. The Moor site could hold a few more. This means that the future plan will focus on maintenance rather than establishment, incorporating weeding and caring, pruning and management. There are local experts in pruning and the mid shires orchard group and local landowners train / help with expertise.

The original plantings should bear fruit this summer. The number of volunteers to help with the project has dwindled and more volunteers are needed to water, prune and pick fruit. They need more watering volunteers - if it's hot for a week they email the volunteer group who water the orchard with the help of Paul Jennings and Evert Donkers who are helpful in transporting water. The project is hoping to involve a local Beaver group later in the year and would like to involve local schools. We need to think how this might be encouraged.

It has always been the plan to create a space the community can use and the

hope is that as this is a community asset it can be used to stage events, i.e. an apple day in October. Future years will give bigger yields and facilitate larger fruit harvests. The project would like to educate the local community about food origins and bring local food to local people. Andrew Howard, a heritage fruit expert, is available to help with sessions and gives an interesting session on apples. Supermarkets only have 4 varieties but orchard has numerous varieties with different histories to each variety. Some heritage fruits have lower yields so orchard includes local species and some more unusual ones - an Aylesbury prune plum tree and a Langley Apple. Waterside had a large orchard as well as several others in the local area, which brings an interesting historical element.

The project is trying to decide on uses for the fruit, i.e. samples at local produce market, the Tavern, Brazils and Little Orchard using produce to make pies, etc. They would also like to encourage local freedom to sample the fruit, a scrumping revival. For more information residents can email [Cheshamcop@gmail.com](mailto:Cheshamcop@gmail.com)

PF and the Group thanked DS for the update.

## **2 & 3. Minutes of Meeting 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

Minutes to be agreed at the next meeting.

### **4. Matters arising (not on Agenda)**

Discussed at AGM.

### **5. Financial Report**

Discussed at AGM.

### **6. Future Working Parties**

Wednesday May 4<sup>th</sup>:

Litter pick the Moor and Trapps Lane and spring clean the shelter.

Sunday May 15<sup>th</sup>:

Cut back Bellingdon spur (JMB to ask CDC to remove waste on the Monday).

Wednesday June 1<sup>st</sup>:

Pednor Road ditch clearance and ask Glen to rod the pipe.

Sunday June 19<sup>th</sup>:

River bypass by Canons Mill.

Wednesday July 6<sup>th</sup>:

Cut back Moor Road vegetation and litter pick at the Gym & Swim.

(JMB to check if Danny's team / contractors been clearing the site.)

Sunday July 17<sup>th</sup>:

Meades Water Gardens river edges and management of plants.

Wednesday August 3<sup>rd</sup>:

Check the Himalayan balsam at Millfields.

Sunday August 21<sup>st</sup>:  
River Chess bypass.

The Himalayan Balsam needs to be monitored in Millfields as it may flourish in the summer. Japanese knotweed is still prevalent at Canons Mill and needs attention. Can the landowner be issued with a notice to remove?

## **7. Berkhamstead Field**

TB very concerned about Berkhamstead Field and the local plan looking at it as a potential development site. JMB asked whether a Group and individual responses to the local plan consultation had been put in. It was confirmed that another consultation needed to take place. CDC has to be rigorous about showing they have looked at all potential areas and this location was currently marked as a potential testing site but not confirmed as an actual development area. JMB to check CTC's local plan response for any detail about this particular location.

TB confirmed that not much is happening as wild flowers are yet to begin growing. Wild butterflies are emerging, the trees are faring well - probably lost a few but looking positive. Last year's test patch not deemed a great success. Some plants but may be initial colonisers that may not appear this year. TB yet to decide whether to extend it, and will decide once it starts growing.

## **8. Working with other groups & Town Council**

TB briefly explained that CTC has taken over verges and green work. Some of the verges are wider than usual and provide the opportunity to be managed in a more environmentally sympathetic way. Some residents will however want them to be cut short and kept tidy. CTC has a map, which Trevor will circulate. JMB offered to obtain a list of streets so that members can check streets and make recommendations according to local knowledge. JMB offered to feed this back to the Parks & Premises team and Town Clerk. Advice should also be given to them about when and where to cut so plants aren't destroyed. Nashleigh Hill currently full of daffodils so shouldn't be cut for a while. It was suggested that in July there is an assessment of the work carried out to date. JMB suggested Bob Ayres of the P&P team could be invited along to discuss the issue. PF suggested CTC may provide other Wednesday morning projects.

The hedge along Bellingdon spur needs to be trimmed back and CTC have asked CEG whether they could help. PF suggested a working party similar to the other groups CEG work with.

PF updated the Group on a news item about a litter picker whose 51 bags of litter were rejected by his local recycling centre.

The Group was informed that the new Chesham Opportunities Centre in Cameron Road has a very overgrown garden and it was suggested that it might be a worthy project.

JMB to check whether the COC has a current contractor as it is a BCC facility.

AC advised that he submitted photos to the Chiltern Society after a recent project and as a result they are interested in discussing additional projects. PF, TB and AC to meet with the Chiltern Society to discuss further.

Meades Water Garden has always been kept very natural. Dismay was expressed at the pruning of 3 trees, which is considered to be excessive and unattractive. The Group asked who decides which trees are to be cut and what can be done about it? Believed that the P&P team chopped them to improve the canopy, but they look terrible. JMB to discuss a protocol with CTC's Policies Officer and ascertain the degree of involvement of the CTC Tree Officer.

20:25 - Louise left the meeting.

## **9. Fly Monitoring Update**

AC updated that a new area has been tested at Holloway Lane to determine suitability. Unfortunately it's not an easy access site so occasional checks will be made during the summer and a final decision will be made at the end of the summer.

JP has reported back to Kathryn Graves at CTC about the flow.

Monitoring tests will be done again at the end of the month. Now back to 3 sites as the river is flowing. Unfortunately they are having to be tested twice because they often fail the 1<sup>st</sup> test.

## **10. Diary Dates**

12<sup>th</sup> May – Annual Town Meeting where PF is due to give a CEG update.

22<sup>nd</sup> May – Mayor's Civic service at St Mary's.

17<sup>th</sup> / 18<sup>th</sup> June – Buryfields.

## **11. Any Other Business**

Impress The Chess has not been convened since April 2014 but is being reformed and will meet on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May. JMB explained this was done as a result of the Environment Agency making suggestions about improvements to the River Chess at the recent Chesham Water Group meeting and there was a strong feeling that ITC would be best placed to comment on them. It will be made up of former members.

JMB is writing an objection to the proposed felling of 4 trees in the High Street. She will circulate to members and urges everybody to write a letter of objection to the CDC planning team.

JMB to investigate the siting of the Cameron Road / Nadler's Road street signs as residents believe them to be in the wrong location.

The meeting ended at 21:10. The next meeting will take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> June at 7:30 pm.

## CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES of the 'Impress the Chess' meeting

held on Tuesday 17 May 2016 at 2.30 pm at the Town Hall

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Jane MacBean	Chesham Town Council (Chairing)
	Allen Beechey	Chilterns Chalk Streams Project
	Kathryn Graves	Chesham Town Council
	Ken Austin	Chesham Environmental Group
	Tony Molesworth	Chesham Society
	Rob Rees	Environment Agency
	Paul Jennings	River Chess Association
	Phil Folly	Chesham Environmental Group
	Michael Browne	Meades Lane Resident
	David Stowe	Chiltern District Council

#### 1. SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The group considered how Impress the Chess can make a meaningful contribution without duplicating the work of other groups. Whilst other groups are active on river issues in Chesham it was acknowledged that none of them were able to cover everything. Areas where it was felt that Impress the Chess had a role to play were as follows:

- (i) Making the community aware of river heritage
- (ii) Practical conservation/restoration projects
- (iii) Planning issues
- (iv) Eyes and ears for things affecting the river
- (v) A source of local knowledge about the river

Tony offered to act as the lead contact for flagging up development/planning matters.

It was also agreed that it would be useful to map the riparian land ownership along the river in Chesham. Allen will provide Jane with a contact at Wycombe District Council to provide information on how they used student placements to help map land ownership.

**Action: Allen and Jane**

#### 2. IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The group considered some of the potential projects listed in the Action Plan with a view to prioritising them for action. These included the project to remove the concrete banks from The Moor; a project to tackle the bank erosion in Canon's Wood; projects that would enable fish migration back into the town; and revamping the interpretation boards on the Chess Valley Walk.

Devising a programme of events was suggested as a helpful way of getting into the local schools.

Anyone with updated information for the Action Plan was asked to send it to Kathryn by the 27<sup>th</sup> May. She will incorporate the updates within the plan so that the plan can be discussed

at the next meeting, and priorities identified. It was noted that anything involving the Vale Brook should take into consideration the new proposals from the Environment Agency.

**Action: Kathryn**

3. **WFD Water Body Summary for the Chess**

This document provides a snapshot of the obstacles that are preventing the Chess getting 'Good' status. Rob explained that the Environment Agency are looking to prioritise their medium term budget where local people and agencies want to take action. There was a consensus that people in Chesham are keen to see trout return to the town, which would require the barriers to fish migration at Lords Mill and Weirhouse Mill to be dealt with.

4. **LOGO**

Both Tony and Jane have contacts who may be able to help produce a logo.

**Action: Tony and Jane**

5. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**(i) Water Lane**

Jane asked David to speak to Building Control about the state of the Lantern House wall that backs on to Water Lane.

**Action: David**

Allen queried whether the culvert under Wey Lane Garage has been looked at recently, as if it is blocked, it would contribute to the flooding of the Water Lane footpath.

**(ii) Queens Head**

Transport for Bucks (TfB) has removed damaged bollards outside the Queens Head. The bollards protected the culvert from heavy vehicles, so TfB is investigating temporary bollards. It has been identified that there is a mismatch in size between the entrance and exit of this culvert, which may be problematic in times of high flow. Jane will feedback any more information that she receives on this.

**(iii) Chesham Sewage Treatment Works**

It was noted that Bovingdon Sewage Treatment Works has failed and waste is currently being trucked in to Chesham Sewage Treatment Works.

6. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place at the Town Hall at 2.30pm on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June.

Report to **RECREATION & THE ARTS COMMITTEE**  
meeting to be held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 6 - CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE**

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

### **Summary**

1. To consider the financial report up to the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

### **Background Information**

2. At the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2007, it was resolved that: *'the Officers, in consultation with the Friends of Chesham Moor Swim & Gym, produce a five year business plan and that there be regular monitoring reports to each Recreation and the Arts Committee Meetings.'* (Minute No.38).

### **Financial Implications**

3. As outlined within the report.

### **Equality Act Implications**

4. Non applicable.

### **Strategic Objectives**

5. Accords with the Council's strategic aim 1b – *'The Moor Gym & Swim, with its outdoor pool, ball courts and gym, is a unique facility which provides family friendly leisure and fitness opportunities in a rural setting. It will be maintained and enhanced wherever possible in an environmentally friendly way.'*

### **Detailed Consideration**

6. **Income and Fees and Charges**

The monthly gym takings (excluding VAT) are detailed in the table below:

	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £
April	5,238	6,913	9,540	12,390	13,232
May	6,126	6,451	9,964	11,044	
June	4,802	7,178	11,300	13,502	
July	5,474	8,476	12,148	12,369	
August	4,554	7,166	8,620	11,166	
September	4,406	7,094	9,462	10,943	
October	4,297	7,012	9,754	9,429	



	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
November	5,452	6,646	9,366	10,350	
December	4,245	7,477	9,089	11,113	
January	6,922	9,888	12,509	12,106	
February	5,204	7,469	9,740	9,614	
March	6,685	8,272	11,574	12,054	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>63,405</u></b>	<b><u>90,042</u></b>	<b><u>122,866</u></b>	<b><u>136,080</u></b>	<b><u>13,232</u></b>

7. The above figures show an increase of just 10.75% when comparing the twelve months of 2015/16 against twelve months of 2014/15. However the last quarter showed no increase but April 2016 has shown 6.8% increase which may be due to the summer swimming season and the all inclusive ticket price being included in certain gym memberships following the radical review carried out by the 'Friends' in 2013 and this is undoubtedly at least part of the reason for the continued decline in swimming season ticket sales. Season tickets sales for 2015/16 were £15,694 compared to £18,689 for 2014/15, a 16% fall. Season tickets for April 2016 are nearly 24% down on the previous April -£8,124 as against £10,670.
8. The Moor Gym & Swim outturn (excluding Renewals & Repairs) for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 showed a figure of £104,659 as against a figure of £91,529 for the previous year. This increase was despite an increase in overall income of nearly £15k and resulted from increased wages of nearly £10k which was partly due to the salary review carried out during the year, £7k maintenance costs and water charges £5.5k. General swimming was down from £59,596 to £56,177 and, as previously reported, this is likely to have been as a result of the weather during the school summer holidays being disappointing.
9. The Finance Working Group (FWG) have set targets for 2016/17 which removes the central administration recharge but includes a proportion of the annual Renewal & Repairs contribution –see **attached** FWG minutes. This means it will be difficult to simply compare the current year's figures (2016/17) against last year's figures but income generation is to set to be the main focus this year so as to achieve an £80k deficit based on the previous format ( £80,710 provisional new format) and reports on this will be made throughout the year.

**Recommendation**

**That the financial position is noted.**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE WORKING GROUP**  
**HELD ON THURSDAY 21<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2016**

**PRESENT**

Councillors David MacBean (DM), Bernie Whitfield (BW) and Fred Wilson (FW) Chesham Town Council.  
Bill Richards (BR); Chesham Town Clerk.  
Steve Pearson (SP); Finance and Contracts Manager.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alan Bacon (AB) and Roderick McCulloch (RM).

**1. UPDATE ON POSSIBLE INVESTMENT PROJECTS**

The Working Group agreed that until further notice, the investment projects should focus on the Elgiva patio; possible 3G outdoor surface and the current structure of the Gym and Swim. In respect to the latter, BR circulated an indicative cost sheet prepared by the surveyor in respect to repairs and upgrades required by the facility at the present time (**attached**).

**2. PERFORMANCE – END OF YEAR OUT-TURN**

SP reported that it appeared the 2015/16 financial year would be £64k under-budget compared to the original budget when the final accounts were completed. While the Gym and Swim would be over-budget by £13k, the Elgiva was £36k under-budget and the Parks and Premises £9k under-budget. Added to this, was smaller savings in other areas, plus £27k set aside to cover salary increases from the pay review and increased pension costs arising from auto-enrolment, the costs of which have been included in the existing budgets.

SP was asked what monies were actually available to the Council in simple monetary terms in regard to banked monies and he confirmed it was a figure of around £985k at the current time. The Group was of the view that the Council was in a relatively robust state financially and brief discussion ensued on the desirability of paying off the Council's PWLB loans early, even though penalty clauses could be evoked reflecting the comparatively high interests when they were taken out.

**4. END OF YEAR OUTTURN – ELGIVA AND CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE**

SP advised that the Elgiva had another successful year and the final deficit was likely to be £91k (£62,600 excluding business rates and administration charges). He further explained that the apparent 'spike' in the end of year figures was that due predominantly to holiday pay being accrued to casual staff at the end of the year plus other accruals. He further advised that the former was likely to be less of an issue next year in respect to end of year accounting since their pay-rates would simply be increased to reflect holiday pay.

SP advised that the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre final deficit was likely to be £105k (£55,300 excluding business rates; administration charges and including the current outstanding PWLB loan).

**5. INCOME GENERATION 16/17 – ELGIVA AND CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE**

The Group welcomed the income generation report produced by the Clerk and officers at the Elgiva and Gym and Swim explaining how income was currently generated; how this equated to actual monies for the Council and suggestions for further income generation.

It was agreed that the targets set should factor in additional marketing support and its utilisation thereof or not. Moreover, in light of the list of repairs required for the Gym and Swim (above), it was agreed that these should be taken into consideration before the facility could be realistically expected to create significant additional monies. The view was expressed that many of these works could not be put off and should be paid for through grants or direct Council funding through other internal financial avenues. It was agreed these repairs should be prioritised by management.

**6. RENEWALS AND REPAIRS/INVESTMENT BUDGET**

SP presented figures which showed the use of the Repairs and Renewals budget over the last five years as previously requested by the group. For purposes of comparisons, he additionally provided a 10 year average. It was noted that the 10 year average spend (excluding grants) of £112k p.a. so officers opined that the £126k budget for this year did not seem unreasonable.

While the group accepted that over the years that the net expenditure may have exceeded the annual budget, it was questioned whether the monies had been spent simply to use up the budget or indeed regularly deferred for time reasons. It was stated that there was a will from the new ruling group to use the Renewals and Repairs budget with greater fluidity and there should be more clarity on what are defined as 'repairs' and what are defined as 'renewals' (or upgrades/investments). It was proposed that there be a basic £126k operational budget for bona fide repairs and then a general budget for other projects/renewals. It was agreed that, ideally, the basic operational budget should be analysed by officers and divided into the spends that were required to keep operating, against spends required to generate further revenue or significantly improve a service. After the £126k had been spent, it would be beholden to officers to return to the Council for permission to utilise the general budget.

**7. PROPOSED MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

BR referred to documents previously circulated to the group; namely the Model Financial Regulations pertaining to Local Transparency Code 2014 (including his answers to DM queries on compliance), and the West Bletchley Council's Regs which specified limits on individual spending before requiring Council approval. He highlighted that WBC's budget was similar in size to this Council's.

The group were of the view that it was important that monthly metrics for the 'businesses' of the Elgiva and Gym and Swim were continued to be fed through to this forum but accepted that this did not have to be necessarily specified in the Model Regs. Accordingly it was agreed that officers circulate a final draft based on the WBC model for approval to be recommended for adoption at the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting.

## **8. PRESENTING THE BUDGET IN A CHANGED FORMAT DISCUSSION**

The Group expressed its preference for the accounts now to be presented in a format where the central administration charges and other internal charges were not nominally re-allocated to particular services as had previously been the case before Best Value legislation (now repealed) insisted upon this in 1999. It was believed that by doing this, the Council would be able to better monitor the main service areas in terms of income and expenditure. SP also added that in terms of basic budget presentation to the public, a proportion of each services' Renewal and Repairs' allocation was added on to the breakdown of the service budget make-up. This was agreed to be a sensible approach and BW proposed that the monies spent on genuine operational repairs be added to each service budget to give the managers' more control in day to day operation.

In regard to the presentation of the budget itself, as it was noted there was nothing in the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations precluding them from being presented differently, it was agreed that the finance team start presenting them in this way from the 1<sup>st</sup> April and this be explained at the next Policy and Resources Committee.

## **9. REVIEW OF INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND USE OF RESERVES**

SP reminded the group that the Policy and Resources Committee had referred the investment strategy (required to be reviewed annually). He also explained that the Council had previously adopted the CDC Investment Policy as its own to strengthen its policy following the auditor's recommendations.

Having noted the continued low interest rates, the group was broadly happy to continue with the existing policy but with the caveat that SP look to diversify the Council's investments into different accounts where possible and ensure adherence to Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) limits.

A brief discussion then took place on the level of reserves and whether the Council ought to be using them more flexibly to improve services. SP stated that good practice advice from central government was that a figure of between 3-12 months' worth of annual precept be retained as a reserve. BW suggested that the Council's reserve be divided into a capital reserve and an emergency reserve – with the latter to remain largely untouched. It was agreed that this be given further thought by SP and considered at a future meeting when all the reserves would be considered.

## **10. REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRANSACTIONS IN THE MONTH**

SP advised no significant transactions had been undertaken since the last meeting.

## **11. THREE YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN TIMETABLE**

DM stated he had considered SP's circulated plan and had suggested the following:

- Needs to be more like a conventional income statement, (that is before allocations), with gross income and costs presented clearly and not just a single figure for Elgiva/Swim and Gym

- The forecast should be for the balance sheet also and not just income statement.
- Needs to state the assumptions made e.g. how factored in the patio/SG refurbishment projects, future devolved services, progressive sustainability targets for SG/Elgiva etc.

SP to consider and re-circulate.

## 12. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016. However it was agreed it would be advisable to see the final accounts before deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> June so BR to circulate dates before then for a special meeting to review these.

Bill Richards  
Town Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 7 - DEVOLVED SERVICES UPDATE**

**Reporting Officers:** Bill Richards (01494 583824) and Bob Ayres (01494 775593)

### **Summary**

1. To receive an update on Devolved Services since taken on from Buckinghamshire County Council since April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016.

### **Background Information**

2. At the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 it was resolved that: *'the Committee notes the Report and formally recommends to full Council to take on devolved services for grass cutting and highway verge maintenance from April 2016 based on the recommendations set out in the Briefing Paper and being cognisant of the financial implications involved.'* (Min No. 47). This was formally adopted by the Council at its meeting of the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

### **Financial Implications**

3. As outlined in the report.

### **Strategic Objectives**

4. Accords with the Council's strategic aim 4b – *'Consult with and respond to District Council, County Council and other Authorities on current services and planned changes, to ensure continuing improvement in services consistent with local needs'*

### **Equality Act Implications**

5. Non applicable.

### **Detailed Consideration**

6. At the time of writing the report the Parks and Premises team is into its eighth week of taking on the verge side grass-cutting, hedge-cutting, siding out and sign cleaning from Buckinghamshire County Council and it is therefore felt apposite to update Members on progress to date.
7. As recommended in your officers' report, previously considered and adopted, the team has been enlarged to take on a new post of Deputy Parks and Premises Manager. The post has been filled by Mr Shaun Grainger but he was unable to commence until the third week of April due to notice required by his previous

employer. Progress has also been somewhat hampered by one of the Parks and Premises Operatives recently having a wrist operation, was signed off for three weeks and now can only undertake light duties.

8. However the team have been working diligently and undertook and completed the first round of verge cutting in two weeks, between the 13<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> April (see **attached**). No real logistical concerns have been found (and indeed several verges are cut by residents where posts have been inserted to stop verge side parking) and the process itself has been relatively straightforward. However the verge cutting, together with a combination of the wet weather and staff sickness and holidays, has meant that other grass-cutting, planting etc. on our own sites has been somewhat delayed in what is a very busy time of year - with events such as the Donkey Derby at Botley Road Playing Fields and the Schools of Chesham Carnival in Lowndes Park requiring special attention. At the time of writing, the Parks and Premises team is well into its second round of verge cutting.
9. One matter that has become apparent has been that the lack of attention given by Buckinghamshire County Council over a number of years in respect to cutting back saplings and brambles etc. has meant that several verge/walkways are almost inaccessible and will require special attention from the team over the winter months. Areas already highlighted are Hivings Hill, Cameron Road and Bellingdon Road Spur (though the latter's problems have been eased by a sterling effort from the Chesham Environment Group on one of its clean-up days). In respect to volunteer support, both the Chesham Environment Group and the Chiltern Society have offered encouraging offers to support generally when able to do so with the Chesham Allotments Group; Friends of Chesham Society; Friends of Lowndes Park and the Friends of St Marys Churchyard all indicating support in their particular areas of interest. Moreover, a meeting has been scheduled with the Chesham and District Natural History Society to try and ascertain what verge side areas are of floral importance and therefore are worthy as being designated as wildflower areas, thus requiring no regular cutting. It is also gratifying that Mr Phil Folly has taken over the role of dealing with fly-posting in the town centre and his much appreciated efforts from May are duly **attached**.
10. In terms of budgetary provision, the Parks and Premises Manager has been given permission to utilise the sickness reserve budget to offer overtime to his team and bring in part-time staff to work more regularly during this particularly busy and demanding time. A better idea on whether the devolved services budget is likely to be exceeded will be apparent in the autumn, but your Clerk is conscious on the need to provide the team with increased support to reduce pressures where possible and not to insist upon unrealistic workloads from the current small team. The Parks and Premises Manager has reported that, while his team is coping, regular motivation is required as, inevitably, there is less sense of pride and job satisfaction in cutting verges than, for instance, planting and cutting Lowndes Park which is enjoyed and complimented upon by many members of the public.

Moreover the Parks and Premises Manager has expressed concerns that the additional pressures may mean that his team can spend less time than hoped for in assisting with the 'In Bloom' and Lowndes Park inspections than they usually would.

11. As always, the Parks and Premises team remain committed to providing the best service possible for Chesham and already the Town Hall has received compliments on the care the team is taking on the verges, compared with previous cutting. The complaints that have been received have been the Council have not taken away the arisings but, as explained previously, this is not possible without serious further investment both in equipment and manpower and this is no different to the County Council's policy. Obviously teething problems have occurred but generally there remains a confidence that the town verges will be in a better condition than in previous years.

**Recommendation**

**That the current position on Devolved Services be noted, subject to any observations Members may wish to make.**



## DEVOLVED SERVICES VERGES

	Date/ Complete
Park Rd & Hudsons Dell	29/04
Chartridge Lane & Faithorn Close	04/05
Berkeley Avenue	04/05
Aylward Gardens	29/04
Beechcroft Road	29/04
Lowndes Avenue	29/04
Chapmans Crescent	29/04
Poles Hill	29/04
Darvell Drive	29/04
Asheridge Road	29/04
Elmtree Hill	28/04
St Marys Way (by the subway)	29/04
Entrance to Star Yard car park	29/04
Bellingdon Road	29/04
Bellingdon (itself)	26/04
Missenden Road	27/04
Chessbury Road	27/04

	Date/ Complete
Ryecroft Road	28/04
Wey Lane	28/04
Amy Lane	28/04
Red Lion Street	28/04
Germain's Close	28/04
Fullers Close	21/04
Pond Park Road	28/04
Belmont Road	27/04
Ridgeway Road	27/04
Upper Belmont Road	26/04
Windsor Road	27/02
Hivings Hill	27/04
Great Hivings	26/04
Little Hivings	26/04
Shelley Road	28/04
Grays Walk	28/04
Copse Way	26/04
Little Greencroft	28/04

	Date/ Complete
Greeway (by Little Spring School)	27/04
Greenway (hill)	27/04
Long Meadow (entrance)	28/04
Vale Road	28/04
Abbotts Vale	28/04
Vale Rise	28/04
Glenister Road	28/04
Nashleigh Hill & Dell	28/04
Ashley Green Road (start only)	28/04
Lynton Road	28/04
Lyndhurst Road	28/04
Alma Road	28/04
Honeysuckle Field	28/04
White Hill	18/04
Victoria Road	19/04
Broadlands Avenue	19/04
Cheyne Walk	18/04
Eskdale Avenue	28/04
Clay Acre (entrance only)	28/04

	Date/ Complete
Codmore Cross	19/04
Codmore Crescent Inc: The Braid	13/04
Crossway	13/04
Lye Green Road	13/04
Manor Way	19/04
Chestnut Avenue	28/04
Brushwood Road	22/04
Ashfield Road	22/04
Millcroft Road	22/04
Nalders Road	22/04
West View	22/04
Cameron Road	22/04
Botley Road	13/04
Tylers Road	28/04
Broomstick Lane (entrance only)	28/04
Jasons Hill	28/04
Moor Road (near tennis courts)	20/04
Creswell Road (one area far end	20/04

	Date/ Complete
only)	
Bois Moor Road	20/04
Inkerman Terrace	20/04
Pheasant Rise (top of)	20/04
Chessmount Rise	20/04
Hill Farm Road	20/04
Black Horse Avenue	21/04
Latimer Road	21/04
Mill Close	21/04
Rose Drive	20/04
Eunice Grove	20/04
	Total hours Total men

**PHIL FOLLY**

**CHESHAM TOWN CLEAN-UP**

MAY 2016	DESCRIPTION	HOURS	ACTION
<p>WEDNESDAY 04</p>	<p>PM. Market Square, High Street , Broadway and Station Road</p> <p>The Backs Road Water leak Berkhampstead road and Alexander St Broad St water leak</p>		<p>Removed Gt Missenden fly posters</p> <p>Reporting Graffiti. On wall and pathway behind station. Plus an offensive statement on the back doors of the Scout and Girls Band Hall.</p> <p>Notified Affinity Water: told it would be investigated. problem on going</p>
<p>THURSDAY 05</p>	<p>Berkhampstead Road , Alexander St water leak</p>		<p>Road marked with blue line, told by Affinity that the blue line was a sign that it had been seen by an inspector. When fixed?</p>
<p>SATURDAY 07</p>	<p>Jacobs ladder end wall of Trinity court</p>		<p>Foul language, and graffiti on the wall reported this last year to Chiltern District Council but couldn't give them the Post Code of Jacobs Ladder so probably couldn't find it.</p>
<p>MONDAY 09</p>	<p>Berkhampstead Road.</p>		<p>Removed out of date fly poster s</p>
<p>TUESDAY 10</p>	<p>Broad street</p>		<p>Remove out of date fly posters</p>
<p>THURSDAY 12</p>	<p>Water leak. Berkhampstead Road / Alexander St</p>		<p>Informed by Phone. Traffic lights will have to be installed, waiting date from council for permission. Will be kept informed.</p>

MONDAY 16	Broad St Berkhampstead Road/Alex Road Bois Moor Road St Mary's Way subway	Removed out of Date posters Water leak being repaired Traffic lights in Situ 09.00 – 16.00 Fly tipping outside Shelter 3 black bags Graffiti on side wall of shelter Graffiti on the north side wall – <b><i>Death is easy, life takes more practice.</i></b>
WEDNESDAY 18	Bois Moor Road	Further fly tipping outside shelter another 3 bags
WEDNESDAY 25	Bois Moor Road  Town Centre High Street St Mary's Way	Had to go to recycling centre, checked Bois Moor Road. Black rubbish bags cleared away and graffiti cleaned off. Several notices gone up about town STOLEN DOG, £500 REWARD. Asked for clarification Water leak Post office into Broadway . Kathryn reported to water authority. Cycle ride boards and indication arrows still up from cycle race May 15 may still be of use to organisers. asked for clarification
THURSDAY 26	High street	Water leak being worked on.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 8 - CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE STRUCTURAL REPAIRS**

**Reporting Officers:** Bill Richards (01494 583824) and Danny Essex (01494 776975)

### **Summary**

1. To consider the financial and logistical implications of repairs and upgrades required at the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre.

### **Background Information**

2. At the meeting of the Recreation and Arts Committee of the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015, it was resolved: *‘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.’* (Min No. 45).

### **Financial Implications**

3. As outlined in the report.

### **Strategic Objectives**

4. Accords with the Council’s strategic aim 1b – *‘The Moor Gym & Swim, with its outdoor pool, ball courts and gym, is a unique facility which provides family friendly leisure and fitness opportunities in a rural setting. It will be maintained and enhanced wherever possible in an environmentally friendly way.’*

### **Equality Act Implications**

5. Non applicable.

### **Detailed Consideration**

6. As reported at previous meetings, the Finance Working Group has been examining the financial implications of investing in the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre. Initially thoughts were based around investing in a building extension to increase capacity particularly in the lucrative area of the gym. However following a number of well-documented maintenance issues, most notably the gas pipes and boilers, it was instead suggested that the actual current infrastructure be examined at the facility to bring it up to a required standard to retain and increase current usage.



7. Accordingly Evans and Crawley Surveyors have been commissioned to work with the Council to examine the state of the building. While the company is of the view that the building '*structure is reasonably sound for its age hence I do not think that a case can be made for condemning the premises because they will not last for another ten years or so*', it has been working with the Centre Manager and members of the Finance Working Party to provide a list of works required, with indicative costs, to materially repair and upgrade the building. Some are more pressing than others in terms of health and safety and some, such as the repair of the well, have been all but completed. In respect of the works, the Centre Manager was asked to categorise them in terms of importance and priority and his list will be duly circulated to Members.
8. A further meeting has been scheduled between members of the Finance Working Group, the surveyor, the Clerk and the Centre Manager on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June to discuss the matter in further detail with a view to reporting back to this Committee. The view has been expressed that the repairs should not be carried out piecemeal, and discussions need to take place about such topics as a closure period, effect on income, detailed timing of the various repairs, how to communicate with the public, etc. The expense is likely to be significant, and could require a drawdown against reserves, and so this Committee needs to consider how best to plan for the project, with the Council then ultimately approving a strong business case for implementation.
9. Minutes from the meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> June will be circulated to Members before the Recreation and Arts Committee to give a further steer as to needs and requirements of the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre with a view to the Finance Working Group giving further consideration to financing some or all of these recommendations at its next meeting.

**Recommendation**

**That the Committee consider the recommendations of the surveyor, officers and Members following the meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> June and decide how best to progress some or all of these recommendations.**

Number	Location	Defect	Remedy	Cost
1	Pool side	Concrete fascia spalling	Repair and clad with white plastic fascia	2,500
2		Paving defective to pool surround	Patch repair in short term	3,000
3		Paving defective to pool surround	Replace pavings (alternatively use rubber tiles)	18,000
4		Poor drainage to perimeter of paving	Repair and improve	6,000
5		Outside lockers rusting – two locations	Renew - 90 No required.	21,600
6		Some spalling bricks to boundary wall	Cut out and replace	600
7		Open mortar joints at low level	Repoint.	400
8		Disintegrating clinker bricks to base of same	Repair as best possible	600
9		Metal cover and open vertical movement joint to rear wall	Mastic seal. Repair cover.	300
10		Leak by steps to men's changing	Open up and remedy internal channel or waterproofing to steps	800
11		Pool liner getting old	Replace in next five? years	18,000
12	Ladies changing room	Poor suspended ceiling tiles	Replace with a more moisture resistant material	900
13		Wiring to hand dryer is questionable	Inspect/remedy asap	-
14		Disabled hoist appeared broken	Is in working order – serviced 14/12/15	-N/A
15	Men's changing room	Poor suspended ceiling tiles	Replace with a more moisture resistant material	500
16		Wiring to hand dryer is questionable.	Remedy asap.	-
17		Much condensation and ventilation inadequate	Install larger and additional fans	2,000
18		Decorations poor	Now redecorated	
19	Gymnasium	Ceiling tiles looking dated	Remove and change lighting	4,000
20		No mechanical ventilation	Fit simple air extraction system	2,000
21	Disabled toilet	Extract fan not working	Fit new fan	200
22		WC fittings poor	Renew	900
23		Shower seat rusting	Renew	200
24		Wiring hand dryer is	Inspect/remedy asap.	-

		questionable		
25	Circular staircase	Damaged nosings	Replace damaged nosings	300
26		Stored items at foot of stairs	Relocate/clear	-
27	Basement front room	Part of ceiling is missing	Repair	200
28	Electrical	Basement lights left on	Switch off when not in use if wiring allows	-
29	Toilet in basement	Part ceiling tiles & wall lining/panelling missing	Replace after fixing leak	400
30		Urinals filthy & stained	Renew	900
31		Sharp angled brackets dangerous	Remove	100
32		No handles to door	Fit handles	100
33		Install additional toilet.		2,000
34	Internal decorations	Deteriorating in various locations	A programme of redecoration is required to be actioned over the next couple of years.	18,000
35	Electrical	Periodic test due shortly	Test and remedy any issues.	4,000
36	External decorations	Poor in places, notably where stained	Redecorate	3,000
37	External walls	Ivy on some walls	Remove	500
38	General	Drains	Inspect, rod & flush	300
39	External	Unsatisfactory surface to concrete escape ramp	Repair	400
40	Well	Not in use	Reinstate	12,000
41	Roof	Rubbish & silt	Clean off	400
42		Railing supports adjacent to the solar panels have damaged the roof	Lift up, spread load and repair	2,000
43		Timber cladding is deteriorating	Reclad with Marley cement board or similar	3,500
44	General	Chemical store required	Provide secure steel chemical storage unit	3,000
45	Front elevation	Main entrance doors	Fit pneumatic closer asap for safety	400
46		Main entrance doors	Consider new screen, doors & electric operation	8,000
			<b>Total</b>	<b>142,000</b>

..... = HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERED TO BE NEEDING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION  
..... = GENERAL MAINTENANCE  
..... = REPAIRS AND RENEWALS MAINTENANCE  
..... = IMPROVEMENT/PROJECTS

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE WORKING GROUP SUB GROUP**  
**HELD ON MONDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2016**

**PRESENT**

Councillors Alan Bacon (AB) and Bernie Whitfield (BW); Chesham Town Council.

Bill Richards (BR); Chesham Town Clerk.

Danny Essex (DE); Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre Manager.

Stephen Crawley (SC); Evans and Crawley Architects.

**1. PURPOSE OF MEETING**

BW stated that he thought it was important that discussions took place sooner rather than later in respect to facilitating some, or all, of the repairs and investment projects listed by SC and, particularly, developing a timetable (with possible closure and consequential loss of income) to undertake the list (**attached**).

**2. REVIEW OF WORKS REQUIRED AND POSSIBLE TIME SCHEDULES**

BW stated that he believed there was a common consensus within the Ruling Group to fund the necessary repairs and upgrades at the Gym and Swim but he further stated that actual costs needed to be firmed up. Moreover, the potential loss of income needed to be factored in if it was decided to close the building for a defined period to undertake most, or all, of the works at the same time.

Both SC and DE were of the view that, logistically, nearly all the repairs/investments could be undertaken piecemeal without causing too much disturbance to the customers. The only project

that would need a closure of the pool would be the replacement of the pool liner (now some 6 years past its life expectancy and having recently developed a tear) and DE suggested this could take up to 12 days – proposed implementation Oct/Nov 16. He added that general feedback thus far on the health and safety repairs he had already initiated (e.g. external pool wall repairs) had suggested that customers were generally reassured to see works taking place and monies spent.

SC concurred with DE's opinion and opined that, in his experience, a proposed closure period was often extended by unforeseen problems particularly when clients were reliant on sub-contractors who were generally very busy with other works. AB stated that a protracted closure could see customers, particularly gym users, joining other facilities as had happened when Strides stopped operating the gym back in 2008. BR added that a month or more closure would also cause the administrative problems of refunding monthly standing orders or part of an annual membership. Accordingly all agreed that it would be sensible to try and undertake the works in some sort of priority order where possible.

It was noted that the replacement of the boilers was not on the list. However DE explained that many recent breakdowns in the current boilers had occurred and accessing spares for them was becoming extremely difficult. Moreover, as designated 'pool boilers', they could only be serviced by specialist companies and these engineers were hard to get hold of. DE advised that he had already received one quotation for a company to provide three mounted wall boilers that would be highly suitable for the centre; be much more energy efficient and could be

serviced by regular gas fitters/boiler engineers. It was agreed therefore that the cost of new boilers be added to the list.

### 3. **NEXT STEPS**

BR advised that the list of works would be considered at Recreation and Arts Committee with the view to asking the Finance Working Group to scrutinise how the works are to be funded. While SC highlighted that his figures were only indicative and really based on what needed to be done as a minimum, rather than a major upgrade that could be anything up to £500k, it was agreed they were a good base to work from. In addition, DE was also asked to provide spending to date on emergency health and safety works to complete the picture.

BW suggested after this, Cllr Willmoth (with his professional background in hotel and leisure facility management) be approached to comment on the actual works required, particularly pertaining to health and safety and risk assessments. BR explained that he had already approached Cllr Willmoth about this but he was quite rightly concerned about a possible conflict of interest as an elected Member, so had referred BR to a company who undertook independent inspections with a view to quoting on providing a fire and general safety inspection, both at the Gym and Swim and other Council facilities. Other companies had also been approached to quote on this and, with officers not having the necessary knowledge or background to ensure absolute legal safety compliance, BR explained that he would be recommending investment in outside professional support in this area to the Policy and Resources Committee.

BW concluded by saying he was happy with the suggestion to undertake repairs and upgrades on a piecemeal basis. It was suggested that, following the Recreation and Arts Committee meeting, posters be put up and the website and newsletters allude to the fact the Council would be investing in the facility to improve it and to apologise in advance therefore for any minor inconveniences through necessary building works.

Town Clerk

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 9 - SKOTTOWES POND**

**Reporting Officer: Kathryn Graves (01494 583798)**

### **Summary**

1. To consider the current condition of Skottowes Pond in Lowndes Park and various methods of restoration and management.

### **Background Information**

2. Skottowes Pond was dug out in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century and is approximately 120m long and 40m at its widest point, with concrete edging and a path (resurfaced in 2010) running around its entire edge. The pond has an island roughly in the centre of the park, measuring 20m long by 5m wide.
3. Until the 1970s, Skottowes Pond was fed by natural springs and the pond dried out sporadically, in line with water table levels. To provide a more stable water level, a licensed borehole was sunk in the park to top up water levels when required. Water is fed into the pond via the fountain. The pond water feeds into the Vale Brook Culvert, running underneath the High Street, which joins the River Chess.
4. The pond is an extremely popular feature of the park, attracting many visitors. The Chesham & District Model Boat Club sail model boats on the pond most Sundays.

### **Financial Implications**

5. Restoration of Skottowes Pond is a major project, the costs of which will vary significantly depending on how many measures are put in place. Using a 2013 quote, the very minimum work is likely to cost over £110,000.

### **Strategic Objectives**

6. Accords with Strategic Objective 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.”*, Strategic Objective 3 - *“To preserve the unique identity of Chesham and promote its heritage.”* and improvements to Skottowes Pond have the potential to be in line with the Council’s Environmental Policy.

### **Equality Act Implications**

7. None pertaining to this report.

## **Detailed Consideration**

8. The issues affecting the sustainability of Skottowes Pond are outlined below:

### **(i) Siltation**

Skottowes Pond suffers severely from siltation. A specialist contractor surveyed the pond in 2013 and identified that the silt has an average depth of 575mm, with depths of over 1000mm in some places. The silt is a mixture of mineral silt (delivered into the pond by run-off from the park and from inputs from road run-off) and organic matter (from leaf litter, dead algal cells, waterfowl faeces and uneaten food; largely bread). It is expected that unless action is taken, the pond will ultimately silt up entirely and develop into a marshy area.

### **(ii) Water Quality**

The water quality in the pond is largely poor as a result of the heavy silt deposition, organic enrichment and high phosphate levels.

### **(iii) Fish Deaths**

Back in 2008, the Tring Anglers ceased the management of the pond's fish stocks following a spate of fish deaths in the summer months. Most recently, during the hot spell in May 2016, members of the public reported that approximately 70 fish had been found floating dead on the surface of the pond. It is believed that the deaths are the result of algal blooms which cause a steep decline in the pond water's oxygen levels. The algal blooms are a consequence of the phosphate enrichment of the water from a variety of sources including processed foods such as bread, waterfowl faeces and other sources of organic waste.

### **(iv) Waterfowl Populations**

#### **Canada Geese**

Canada geese can visit the park in large numbers (over 300 birds have been recorded at a single time), however the number of geese present at any time fluctuates wildly and there are comparatively few resident geese. A native hedge has been planted around the edge of the pond. Once established, the hedge may help to deter the Canada geese, as they prefer open bodies of water without surrounding vegetation.

#### **Domestic Geese**

Previously, the numbers of domestic geese had built up in the park, as geese and ducks had been abandoned there and had subsequently bred. However, the Council has a Waterfowl Management Policy in place, and as part of this policy seeks to re-home domestic waterfowl to prevent numbers building up again.

#### **Waterfowl Faeces**

The slip hazard posed by the large amounts of waterfowl faeces on the path surrounding the pond has been addressed by the use of a mechanical sweeper. However, this does sweep the droppings into the pond, having a negative impact on the water quality.

#### **Feeding Waterfowl**

Many members of the public like to feed the waterfowl. Unfortunately many people choose to feed bread, which is bad for the birds and can lead to permanent disability and even early death for the birds. Bread that isn't eaten will sink to the bottom of the pond and rot, impacting on water quality. The contractor who surveyed the pond estimated that 1.7 tonnes of bread are deposited in the pond



each year. Bread and other foodstuffs that are thrown on to the surrounding paths and lawns will attract rats, which may result in the presence of *Leptospira* bacteria in the environment, presenting a risk of Weil's Disease to people who come into contact with contaminated soil or water.

**(v) Condition of the Island**

The island was last refurbished in 1996 by the Rotary Club of Chesham. The existing revetments that reinforce the island's banks are rotten and require replacement. The integrity of the banks is at risk from erosion, which will lead to further silt accumulation in the pond. One of the duck ramps which enables waterfowl to easily and safely access the water has fallen into disrepair. There is no point in repairing and refitting the ramp until the revetments to which it attaches have been replaced. Members of the public have complained to your officers about the loss of this facility.

**(vi) Pond Aesthetics**

The pond can accumulate large quantities of leaf litter, blossom and rubbish. Depending on the wind direction, the material tends to gather together at one or either end of the pond in a slick. This looks unsightly and we have received complaints from members of the public about the appearance of the pond and the risk that the accumulated material can pose to wildlife. As the plant material is not skimmed off the pond, it will eventually sink and contribute to the siltation and nutrient loading of the water.

9. With this many issues facing the pond, it is likely that a number of techniques will need to be employed. However, this does provide significant opportunities to improve the aesthetics and ecology of the pond. It should be noted that the pond receives groundwater and surface water run-off, and that its overflow feeds into the Vale Brook culvert. As a consequence of this, any work to the pond has the potential to impact upon the town's water network and flood risk. It will be necessary to liaise with the partners engaged in the Chesham Flood Alleviation Scheme (being led by the Environment Agency) to ensure that any work does not have a negative impact on the town's flood risk.
10. The following solutions can be considered. Indicative costs based on a 2013 'guidance' quote are included. It was explained at the time that the price of certain works would vary depending on the particular methods used. These approximate costs were based on the assumption that all the works would be carried out at the same time, providing cost savings on basic infrastructure such as safety fencing. If the work is staggered, the individual components are likely to be more expensive.

**(i) De-siltation**

The contractor recommended the removal of all silt to restore the pond to its original depth. De-siltation alone would seem to be the 'do minimum' option to improve the pond, but will not address all of the issues listed above. As de-siltation would require the lake to be drained, this would enable some of the other suggested solutions to be carried out simultaneously.

2013 quote: £162,932.36

The silt could be entirely removed from the site using tipper trucks. It has been estimated that this would require 15-20 heavy trucks per day for three to four weeks, so the impact on local traffic would need to be considered. Alternatively,

the silt could be retained within the footprint of the pond, either by increasing the width of the banks or by creating islands. This would be the significantly cheaper option, but based on the amount of silt measured in the pond in 2013 could cause the loss of 25-33% of the area of open water. As this would be a radical change to the appearance of the pond, public consultation would be advisable. A precautionary note should also be sounded for this approach. Whilst methods can be employed at this time to reduce some of the silt inputs into the pond, de-silting will again be necessary in the future. If the retainment method is used now, it is unlikely that we will be able to use it again, requiring any silt removed in the future to be taken to landfill. In the future, it is expected that landfill costs will continue to rise as less landfill space is available, which could make works prohibitively expensive at that time.

2013 quote: £108,805.46

Both options will require a fish survey and health testing. 2013 quote: £1180.38.

**(ii) Aeration**

Installing aerators into the pond will help with the breakdown of ammonia and nitrite, which are bad for water quality. The movement of the water created by aerators can also help to keep algal counts down. Other benefits may be achieved depending on the type of equipment used, such as creating flow around the pond and oxygenating the whole water column.

2013 quote: £8141.71

**(iii) Tree Management**

The trees on the island, particularly the willow trees, will be making a substantial contribution to the silt in the pond, as well as contributing to the unappealing slicks of material on the water surface. Work could be done to help manage the trees on the island, such as pollarding the willows, to reduce their silt contribution. There would be an additional benefit of opening the island up to more light and allowing a ground storey of plants to establish, which could look attractive. Willows are fast-growing trees and pollarding is likely to be needed every four to five years based on the management of willows elsewhere on Town Council land.

2013 quote: £2,250.00

**(iv) Island Restoration**

The rotting revetments could be replaced on a like for like basis, or a Nicospan membrane could be used instead; both would help prevent erosion. The island could be enlarged if it was decided to retain some of the silt on site.

2013 quote using Nicospan: Up to £9,170.41

2016 quote provided by an alternate contractor using redwood revetments: £11,450.00

**(v) Waterfowl Management**

**Education**

Restoration of the lake would create an opportunity for an education campaign about feeding waterfowl. This would be beneficial for the health of the birds and reducing the amount of organic matter entering the pond.

### **Dedicated Feeding Area**

Even with a targeted educational campaign, bird feeding in the park is inevitable. To minimise the impact on the pond, a dedicated bird-feeding area could be created on land near the lake. This would be a large, concrete bowl with a shallow body of water that can be easily emptied and regularly cleaned. Signage could be focused in this area about appropriate food for waterfowl. This was previously considered back in 2013, but initial consultation with the Friends of Lowndes Park did not provide a clear opinion on whether this idea should be progressed.

Cost: Not known

### **Goose Wire**

Wire could be mounted around the perimeters of the lake and island to stop simple access from water to land and vice versa, acting as a deterrent. This is mainly effective on geese, whilst allowing access for most other waterfowl. We would need to consider the impact on swans and herons that intermittently visit the pond and on those resident, domestic geese and larger varieties of duck who are likely to also be affected. Installation of the wire may require us to re-home all of the larger, resident birds. The presence of the wire and the existing hedge/fence along the lawns combined should greatly reduce the amount of fouling on the paths surrounding the pond.

The temporary fence that is protecting the establishing hedge has drawn some criticism from residents. The addition of the goose wire may therefore be unpopular. Consultation would need to be undertaken to understand the impact the wire would have on groups using the pond, such as the Model Boat Club.

2013 quote around pond perimeter only: £5,589.32.

### **Lethal Control**

Your officers do not recommend lethal control methods. Such methods are likely to be unhelpful in managing the transitory population of Canada Geese. The domestic waterfowl population has been successfully reduced in the past by carefully re-homing some of the birds and this practice can be continued. Culling the waterfowl is also likely to be extremely unpopular.

2013 quote: £12,000.

### **(vi) Vegetation**

There will be multiple benefits to creating areas of vegetation in the pond, including aesthetics, nutrient removal from the water and provision of habitat. Once tall vegetation is established it may provide a further deterrent to geese. Native, marginal habitat could be created using tall reeds and flowering plants, both around the existing island and in discrete areas around the pond edge. This could use some of the existing silt, reducing the amount (and therefore cost) going to landfill. Newly-planted areas would need to be covered in anti-grazing mesh to prevent damage by waterfowl until the plants are established. This may take around two years, so clear communication would have to be undertaken to explain the presence of the unsightly mesh to the public.

2013 quote: £7,649.02.

**(vii) Siltex Application**

Siltex is a form of calcium carbonate that helps with the breakdown of organic silt. It is harmless to aquatic and terrestrial organisms. Siltex application annually or biannually is particularly helpful to water bodies that receive a lot of organic inputs such as leaves, faeces and bread. After application the surface of the water will appear chalky, so signage would be necessary to explain to the public that there is no cause for alarm.

2013 quote: Supply £452.47 and application £557.21.

**(viii) Mineral Silt Inputs**

An approach could be made to Transport for Bucks to identify the road run-off pathways into the pond and to see whether any techniques could be employed to reduce the volume of sediment entering the pond.

Costs: unknown

11. Your officers are of the opinion that action needs to be taken to secure the future of the pond. If action is delayed, the amount of silt to be dealt with (the biggest single cost item) will increase, thus increasing the cost. If the committee decides it wishes to progress the renovation of the pond at this time, your officers recommend the formation of a working group to develop a proposal of works, establish costs and investigate potential sources of match-funding.

**Recommendation**

**That a working group is established to oversee the development of a plan to renovate Skottowes Pond.**



Bill Richards  
Town Clerk

Report to **RECREATION & THE ARTS COMMITTEE**  
meeting to be held 13 June 2016.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 10 - ALLOTMENT UPDATE AND CONSIDERATION OF NEW TENANTS**

**Reporting Officers:** Rachel Watts (01494 582907) and Bill Richards (01494 583824)

### **Summary**

1. To consider the possibility of renting vacant allotment plots to non- Chesham residents.

### **Background Information**

2. There is currently (as at 1 June) no waiting list for either Cameron Road site or the Bellingdon Road site other than existing tenants wanting extra plots near to their current plots.
3. The change to allow allotments to be hired to Chesham residents only was implemented in December 2011 at the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting of 12.12.2011.

### **Financial Implications**

4. The current charges for the hire of a 5 pole allotment plot are £16.75 on the Cameron Road site and £19.25 on the Bellingdon Road/ Amersham Road sites.

### **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'*.

### **Equality Act Implications**

6. One plot is reserved for those potential allotment holders with mobility issues.

### **Detailed Consideration**

7. Chesham Town Council owns **257** Allotment Plots which it makes available for renting by tenants. There are 49 plots on the Bellingdon Road site, 6 plots on the Amersham road site and 202 plots on the Cameron Road site. When a large 10 Pole plot has become available this has often been split in to two smaller plots

over recent years so that the waiting list for allotments has been rapidly decreased. Fifty seven tenants own plots ten poles or above. Currently there are three vacant plots on the Cameron Road site.

8. Since August 2015 to 1 June 2016, 50 allotment plots have changed tenants - 19% of the total of allotments. The previous year 10% of the plots changed tenants and for the year 13/14 it was 15%.
9. Much of the current reduction in the waiting list has been due to the diligence of the Allotment Group (with officers and Members) increasing the number of inspections and therefore being able to issue warning and, then, termination letters more swiftly. While obviously the financial implications of having a few untenanted plots are not significant, it is not desirable for either site to have uncultivated areas both for aesthetic reasons and the difficulties of re-letting plots that have become seriously overgrown.
9. The Chairman of the Allotments Group has been consulted and the view of the group is that it is better for the land to be cultivated than left fallow. However two of the committee feel that vacant plots should be offered firstly to current small plot holders who are wanting more space for growing, a practice which is currently taking place if the Allotments Officer is made aware of the need.
10. In light of the foregoing, it is recommended that the Committee reverses its decision on letting only to Chesham residents, at least on a temporary basis.

#### **Recommendation**

**That the update on the reduction on the waiting list be noted and the Committee agrees to the hiring of plots to those outside Chesham with the policy to be reviewed in 12 months' time.**

Report of the Officers to a meeting of the **Recreation and Arts Committee**  
on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016

## **AGENDA ITEM NO 11 : LOWNDESBOURNE TOWN PICNIC – LATE REPORT**

**Reporting Officer:** Bill Richards (01494 583824).

### **Summary**

1. To note proposals for the third 'Lowndesbourne' and second Town Picnic and to seek financial support to ensure that it is able to go ahead for Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

### **Background Information**

2. The Friends of Lowndes Park have previously produced Lowndesbourne, an event in Lowndes Park that brings together live opera and classical music encouraging attendees to bring a picnic to the park.
3. In response to a number of requests it was agreed at the Friends of Lowndes Park AGM to expand this into the Town Picnic for 2015. This took place last September and was a huge success with over 1500 people estimated to have attended.
4. In December 2015 the Friends agreed to stage another Town Picnic in conjunction with the Town Council and formed a Town Picnic Committee who set about raising sufficient funding to produce the event.
5. The Friends are in the process of producing a programme and have raised £500 towards the event. A number of grant applications have been submitted but there is no way of knowing how successful these will be or if we will be awarded the full amount that we have applied for.
6. The Friends have therefore got to raise sufficient money so that we are not over reliant on the grants and, to achieve this, the Friends of Lowndes Park are underwriting the costs from its reserves which themselves were a product of money coming in after the event.
7. The Friends will continue to raise money this way and should the event not be able to take place the Friend's constitution states that any residual money will be transferred to the park.

### **Financial Implications**

8. The Council sets aside a £1,000 for community events per annum as agreed after the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of 2012. Just under £500 this year has been committed to providing bunting in the Broadway to commemorate the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

9. The cost of the event is estimated to be £2,900 and to date the Friends have agreed to pay up to £1100 towards the 2016 event. This has only been possible because of monies obtained between the event held in 2015 and now. If the Friends raise more money than is required any residual funds will be put towards an event in 2017. A private sponsor has agreed to double any financial contribution made by the Council up to a maximum of £1,000, so if the committee is minded to award £500, the Friends will have raised £1,500.

### **Strategic Objectives**

10. Accords with the Council's strategic aims, namely; 1 *'To enable residents to enjoy high quality social, recreational and cultural facilities with the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.'*, 5a *'Encourage community associations and other voluntary organisations which actively engage in projects that contribute to social inclusiveness and community cohesion.'* And 5b *'Engage and work with COPAG, the CAB, youth groups and other voluntary organisations to provide for the needs of more vulnerable or isolated groups in Chesham.'*

### **Equality Act Implications**

11. The Friends are working closely with the Bucks Disability Service, a disability group who, amongst other things, will be bringing a quiet tent (closed Gazebo) for the use of people who suffer from sensory overload (e.g. Aspergers) which allows families and carers to attend the event.
12. The event is inter-generational and attracts a broad age range.
13. As the event is totally free and the Friends are not using it as a fund raising occasion, there are no financial barriers to people attending the event

### **Detailed Consideration**


14. Lowndesbourne Town Picnic will bring live opera and classical music in a park setting for free to those who attend. The cost of this art form is often prohibitive and therefore people are deprived of the experience. This event removes the cost element allowing people to dip in and dip out and will promote a programme of familiar music.
15. The picnic element will allow access at a number of levels. People are encouraged to bring their own picnic but there will be an opportunity to purchase some picnic items in the park, though this will be limited.
16. The Muslim community will be actively encouraged to come to the picnic by including a Muslim classical singer on the programme and having a juice bar in addition (but located separately) to a bar serving alcohol and a stall selling tea and cake.



17. At the last Lowndesbourne, the Friends were made aware of older people who could no longer travel into London, were fearful of travelling into London in the evening or were no longer able to afford live music concerts and who were thrilled to be able to come to the park to enjoy such an event.
18. The event will be marketed as a family event and the organisers will be encouraging participants to talk to people that they don't normally speak to and to share picnics and assist older people so that there is true social inclusion.
19. The event will include some children's activities situated away from the stage.
20. This event is very much a community event and already a growing number of people have volunteered their expertise to make it happen. The Friends estimate between 1,000 and 1,500 people will attend.
21. It is anticipated that if this event is successful it will become an annual event.
22. It is provisionally agreed that the Friends of Lowndes Park organise the event 'in association with Chesham Town Council'. As well as giving the Council some sort of important control on logistical matters, it may also help with insurance and licensing costs, which are difficult for a small organisation like the Friends to fund separately.
23. Initial conversations with the organisers of Lowndesbourne had suggested that the Council's contribution would be best served by ordering and paying for additional portable toilets to the amount of around £500. However the Lowndesbourne organisers now realise that only a grant contribution will unlock the private donation match-funding and therefore are requesting a £500 grant and, if possible, that the Council also finance the portable toilets.

**Recommendation**

**That the Committee agree to support the Lowndesbourne Town Picnic with a grant award of £500, and further consider to support the event by directly hiring portable toilets.**



Bill Richards  
Town Clerk