

## **CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES of the meeting of the POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2005

**PRESENT** Councillor Ms. J.E. Bramwell, Chairman (presiding)

Councillor	V.M. Abraham	Councillor	Mrs P.R. Wilkinson MBE
"	A.K. Bacon	"	P. Woodburn
"	N.L. Brown	"	P.W. Yerrell
"	M. Fayyaz		

#### **In Attendance**

Councillors: M.Z. Bhatti, Mrs P.R. Lindsley and Mrs M. Molesworth

Officer: W. Richards - Town Clerk

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C.H. Spruytenburg and P.J. Murphy.

#### 1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs M. Molesworth declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 in consideration of attending a training course and Councillor P.W Yerrell declared a possible interest in agenda item 11 as a Trustee of the Little Theatre by the Park.

#### 2. **MINUTES**

It was

#### **RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2005 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

#### 3. **LOWNDES PARK PROJECT PLAN**

The Committee welcomed the news that the Council had been awarded a grant of up to £41,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to undertake a Project Plan in Lowndes Park. It was noted that the Plan could now be fully funded and it was

#### **RESOLVED**

that the Committee note the contribution of the Heritage Lottery Fund grant offer and agree to the commencement of the Project Plan.

4. **NEW PHOTOCOPIER FOR TOWN HALL**

Members received the report from the Finance and Contracts Officer requesting a new black and white photocopier for the Town Hall. It was noted that the five-year agreement on the current black/white copier/fax machine was due to end on the 25<sup>th</sup> June and quotations have been sought for a replacement.

While the Committee had no objections to the recommended photocopier being leased, a query was raised as to whether the cost included the price of the cartridges, which could be considerable. As the Town Clerk was unsure of the exact answer to this, it was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the recommended photocopier be leased, subject to confirmation as to whether the maintenance costs includes the price of replacement cartridges and toner.

*Note: the estimates submitted all included the costs for replacement cartridges and toner as part of the five-year lease agreement.*

5. **ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

The Committee was advised that The Local Authorities (Capital Finance & Accounting) England Regulations 2003 which came into force on 1 April 2004, requires the Council to review and adopt its investment strategy each year. Members noted the recommendations of the Finance and Contracts Manager and it was

**RESOLVED**

that the annual investment strategy for 2004/2005 be adopted for 2005/2006.

6. **QUALITY STATUS, LOCAL CHARTERS AND 'IMPROVING LOCAL COMMUNITIES'**

The Town Clerk's report updated Members as to progress on negotiations with the principal authorities on the possible setting up of a local Charter and devolvement of services.

It was noted that progress on a local charter was slow especially since a model charter had yet to be published by the Commission for Rural Communities. However, Members had no objections to discussions continuing between the three tiers of government and it was agreed that the Town Clerk should bring a further report to the Committee in the New Year when further progress had been made.

In respect to Buckinghamshire County Council's 'Improving Local Communities' draft proposals, it was agreed that the Council should state the view that it believes that Chesham should be considered in its own right and not part of a larger designated area when the borders for 'Local Communities' are formalised.

It was therefore

**RESOLVED**

that negotiations with the principal authorities on joint working and devolvement of services be continued and a further report be brought before the Committee in early 2006.

*Councillor V.M. Abraham entered the meeting at 7.42pm*

7. **TRAINING AND CONFERENCES 2005**

The Committee considered requests for Member and officer training and attendance at annual conferences.

A query was raised as to whether it was worthwhile for Members to attend either the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) or the Association of Larger Local Councils (ALLC). However, there was general consensus that Members should be cognisant of the organisations the Council was subscribed to and that they could gain useful information from the conferences.

It was

**RESOLVED**

1. that one officer be authorised to attend the three autumn conferences as requested;
2. that Councillor Mrs. Lindsley be authorised to attend the Autumn ALLC Conference;
3. that Councillor Mrs. Molesworth be authorised to attend an 'Impact Skills' training course on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2005.

and

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that no Member attend the NALC conference unless there be nominations to attend submitted at the Council meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2005.

8. **CHRISTMAS DAY PARTY FOR THE ELDERLY**

Members discussed the proposed 2005 Christmas Day party in light of the fact that Councillor Mrs Pirouet was unable to assist this year and Councillor Mrs McEwan, while undertaking the pre-party administration, would not be available on Christmas Day.

The Committee was advised that, historically, the Christmas Day party was always a town event and it had only recently been administered predominantly by Members of the Council. The Committee agreed that it need not be a purely Council led event, and indeed, it was noted that many persons who were not Members had assisted on the day for the last few years.

The major problem facing the Christmas Day party this year was the lack of a properly qualified cook. It was agreed that health and safety requirements meant that this was a prerequisite for the event to go ahead. As it was noted that Councillor Mrs McEwan had already begun the administration for the 2005 party, it was agreed that the matter should be considered again at the next meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the officers liaise with the local media, emphasising the community benefits of the event and through the press and radio, appeal for a properly qualified cook to assist the Christmas Day party.

9. **DESIGNATED AREA FOR ALCOHOL RESTRICTION IN THE TOWN CENTRE**

The Committee considered the options for imposing an alcohol restricted area within the town centre under the provisions of The Local Authorities (Alcohol Consumption in a Designated Public Place) Regulations 2001, similar to the one agreed for Chesham Cemetery. Members were advised that the police were fully supportive of the concept, as they believed it would help tackle anti-social behaviour. It was noted that such restrictions would not mean a ban on alcohol being consumed but rather that the police officers and the police community support officers had the powers to confiscate alcohol and take further action if appropriate after issuing a warning.

The Committee unanimously agreed that such an area should be set up in the town centre and it was proposed that it should commence from the bottom of White Hill and terminate at the end of Market Square to cover the whole of the pedestrianised area. The Committee also agreed that, in light of officers' recommendations, Meades Water Gardens be included on the designated area since it was deemed a highly unsuitable area for the consumption of alcohol.

A brief discussion took place on whether the area should cover Lowndes Park but it was decided this was not appropriate at the present time.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Clerk be instructed to write to Chiltern District Council requesting that the pedestrianised area in the town centre and Meades Water Gardens be a designated area under the provisions of The Local Authorities (Alcohol Consumption in a Designated Public Place)

Regulations 2001.

10. **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Members noted the net improvement in the revised budget for 2004/05 of £41,324. It was accepted that any decisions on re-allocating these savings should be determined when the budgets for 2006/07 were being considered. However it was agreed that an unspecified figure should be added to the list of prioritised schemes to develop youth provision in Waterside in light of possible match funding from the District Council in this area.

It was

**RESOLVED**

1. that the financial report for the year ended 31 March 2005 be noted;
2. that the Renewal and Repairs and Capital Programmes schemes not completed in 2004/2005 be carried over into 2005/2006;
3. that the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2005 as presented, be adopted, subject to audit;
4. that possible development of youth facilities in Waterside be added to the list of prioritised schemes.

11. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the public and the Press be excluded in accordance with the Public Bodies (Access to Meetings) Act 1960, as matters which are confidential are about to be discussed.

12. **MAYORAL ESCORT'S CHAIN**

The Committee was advised that the Mayoral Escort's badge had been reported missing. Members debated the circumstances of it being no longer in the Council's possession and considered whether, in the case of it not being found, whether it should be replaced.

After some discussion, it was

**RESOLVED**

that the matter be further considered at the Council meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2005.

*Note: Councillor M.Z. Bhatti returned the Escort's Chain to the Town Hall on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2005.*

13. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.52 pm.

CHAIRMAN

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