

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

held on Monday 19th September 2005

PRESENT Councillor V.M. Abraham, Vice-Chairman (presiding)

Councillor	A.K. Bacon	Councillor	Mrs P.R. Wilkinson MBE
"	N.L. Brown	"	P. Woodburn
"	D.A. Gomm	"	P.W. Yerrell
"	C.H. Spruytenburg		

In Attendance

Councillors: E.L. Bamford, M.Z. Bhatti, Mrs M. Molesworth and Mrs. A.M. Pirouet

Officers: W. Richards - Town Clerk
 S. Pearson - Finance and Contracts Manager

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms. J.E. Bramwell, M. Fayyaz and P.J. Murphy.

14. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor P.W. Yerrell declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 as a Trustee of the Little Theatre by the Park.

15. **MINUTES**

It was

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 20th June 2005 be confirmed and signed by the Vice-Chairman as a true record.

Cllr. P.W. Yerrell left the Chamber and took no part in the discussion pertaining to agenda item No. 4.

16. **LITTLE THEATRE BY THE PARK ₁ (TEMPERANCE HALL) LEASE**

The Committee considered the draft lease proposed to be granted to the Trustees of the Little Theatre by the Park.

A brief debate took place as to the benefits of seeking substantial legal advice and to the desirability of excluding the provisions of the Landlords and Tenants Act within the lease. There was unanimity among Members that the lease, as presented, should be agreed by the Council and sealed by the Mayor. It was further agreed that no outstanding nominal rental fees be pursued from the Trustees.

It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the Committee agree to the provisions of the draft lease for the Little Theatre by the Park and its sealing thereof.

17. **UPDATE ON POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS (PCSOs) IN CHESHAM**

Members received an update on the current operation of the 4 PCSOs located within the town.

The Committee expressed support for the works being undertaken but some Members were of the view that a neighbourhood-tasking panel should be set up as initially suggested by Thames Valley Police. There was agreement that there appeared to be a lack of clarity on how the PCSOs were tasked but it was accepted that there might be logistic difficulties in operating an effective town panel at the present time. However, the Committee was of the opinion that better communications needed to be developed between the Council and the PCSOs and it was

RESOLVED

that the Clerk be requested to write to Chiltern District Council's Community Safety Officer with a view to ascertaining the best method for improving communication with the PCSOs and how best the Council may be involved in influencing their schedule of patrols.

18. **CAMPAIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES BILL**

Details of the campaign by the cross-party group 'Local Works' to support the Sustainable Communities Bill was discussed by the Committee. While reservations were expressed as to whether the Bill, on becoming an Act, would have an adverse effect on market forces, it was agreed that the broad principles were ones the Council should be supporting. In noting that the Bill was unlikely to be on the statute books for several years, it was

RESOLVED

that the Council offers its support in principle to the Bill and the Clerk be requested to write to appropriate bodies reflecting this position.

19. **CLARIFICATION ON REFERRAL OF DECISIONS TO COUNCIL**

Members debated as to when a matter discussed by a Committee could be referred to full Council for determination.

It was considered that, as a Committee decision may not be representative of the Council's position as a corporate body, any Member should be able to request it be resolved at Council after a vote has been taken as well as before the motion is put.

It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that Standing Order No. 26 (c) be amended to reflect the views of the Committee in regard to referring matters for determination to full Council.

20. **TOWN CENTRE REVITALISATION – PYRAMID PLANTERS**

In considering a grant request from the Chesham Chamber of Trade and Commerce – Town Centre Consortium, Members expressed their appreciation of the pyramid planters within the town centre. It was noted that, within the request for a grant of £4,200, £3,900 was allocated for the pyramid planters and £300 for 'other projects'. The Committee agreed that the full monies should be released on the understanding that the extra £300 be used to help purchase winter hanging baskets.

It was

RESOLVED

the sum of £4,200 be paid to the Chesham Chamber of Trade and Commerce – Town Centre Consortium and that provision be made of £4,300 in the 2006/07 budgets.

21. **CATERING CONCESSION AT THE ELGIVA**

The Finance and Contracts Manager presented the three-year draft lease in respect of the catering concession at the Elgiva.

The Finance and Contracts Manager advised that the caterers were fully cognisant with this draft lease and had no objections to its contents. Members had no major reservations in regard to its terms and conditions but suggested that some schedules be amended to:

- allow for a procedure to affect an annual review
- clarify the position in respect of altering opening hours upon agreement

- confirm payment responsibility for the energy expended following installation of utility sub-meters.

It was noted that officers were proposing to seek legal advice at no cost through the Association of Larger Local Councils and, accordingly, it was

RESOLVED

that the draft lease be amended in light of the Committee's comments and that legal advice be sought on the agreement before signing.

22. **FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FOUR MONTHS**

The Financial Report for four months to 31st July 2005 was presented.

Following a query from a Member, the Finance and Contracts Manager advised that the Town Hall bookings were lower than anticipated predominately due to the loss of a regular block booking hirer and the ceasing of rock concerts in the Community Hall.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Report be noted.

23. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

Members duly noted the information items listed on Sheet No. 8.

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

It was moved by the Vice-Chairman and

RESOLVED

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

25. **TOWN COUNCIL PROPERTIES**

The Committee was advised that the Council now had an asbestos register as required by law and considered the survey in regard to asbestos within the Council's properties.

While it was noted that, currently, there was no danger to employees or the public, the Committee accepted it had a responsibility to remove the asbestos containing materials where practicable.

It was agreed that the financial responsibility for the costs of removing the asbestos containing materials from these facilities where there was a full repairing lease in operation, needed to be clarified and therefore, it was

RESOLVED

that, subject to clarification as to the Council's position on bearing the costs of works commissioned, the removal of the asbestos containing materials, as recommended in the survey, be actioned as soon as practicably possible.

26. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

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CHAIRMAN