

**CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES of the meeting of the RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE**

held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019

**PRESENT** Councillor Mrs J.E. MacBean – Chairman (Presiding)

Councillor	Q. Chaudhry	Councillor	A.W. Franks
"	Miss E.A. Culverhouse	"	R.C. McCulloch
"	M. Fayyaz	"	N. T. Southworth

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillor A.K. Bacon.

Ms V. Mistry – Sustainable Chesham

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

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P.J. Hudson.

32. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that, as agreed, all previously stated Declaration of Interests remained unchanged from the first meeting of the administrative year or reported subsequently.

33. **MINUTES**

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

34. **IMPRESS THE CHESS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Impress the Chess Group held on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

It was noted that Chiltern District Council had agreed to contribute monies towards the upgrade of Lords Mill upon receipt of the Council agreeing to ringfence the monies for that purpose.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

35. **ALLOTMENTS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the Allotments Group AGM held on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

36. **ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Elgiva Board of Management held on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

37. **CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE**

The Chairman welcomed Ms Vicki Mistry from Sustainable Chesham to the meeting and it was noted that Mr Alan Booth had tendered his apologies. Councillor Mrs MacBean reminded Members that tackling climate change was now a regular agenda item for this Committee to consider.

Ms Mistry advised that she and other members of Sustainable Chesham, along with Council officers, had received several tenders to undertake a carbon audit of the Council's facilities. She offered to make recommendations on these submissions with a view to the Council commissioning one such consultancy subject to finance. The Committee welcomed this initiative and it was agreed that the Clerk, in liaison with the Chairman, be delegated to make the final decision on this following receipt of Ms Mistry's assessment of the tenders.

In terms of other initiatives, the idea of the installation of an air quality monitor at the Town Hall was welcomed as was the news that recycled cups would be implemented in the building as soon as the current cup stock had run out. It was further agreed that the Clerk be delegated to make the final decision on complimentary use of the Town Hall for events and meetings initiated by Sustainable Chesham on this important subject. It was also confirmed that, as proposed by Sustainable Chesham, the Local Produce Market ringfences its money for carbon neutral activities.

Members also briefly discussed the chipping of Christmas Trees' service offered by the Parks and Premises team and they requested that this be advertised as widely as possible.

Finally, Ms Mistry advised that Sustainable Chesham representatives were keen to assist in any way they could to help the Council to become carbon neutral and its offers to help with ad hoc initiatives was welcomed by the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Ms Mistry for her attendance and it was

### **RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee agrees to ring-fence its proceeds from the Local Produce Market for carbon reduction activities.
2. That the Clerk, in liaison with the Chairman, consider and select a consultant for a Carbon Audit of the Council's facilities following recommendations from Sustainable Chesham and subject to budget.
3. That requests for complimentary room use for Sustainable Chesham for its Climate Emergency-related meetings be delegated to the Clerk for determination.
4. That the installation of an Air Quality Monitor at the Town Hall be confirmed.

### 38. **REVISED FORECASTS 2019/20 AND DRAFT BUDGET 2020/21**

The Finance and Contracts Manager's report on the revised forecasts for 2019/20 and draft budgets for 2020/21 was considered by the Committee.

In respect of the 2019/20 forecast, Members were advised that currently the overall projected forecast would be some £100,000 better off than the original budget mainly due to the £60k backdated VAT sporting exemption claim and the provision for the church wall repairs of £23k which were not progressed.

In regard to the 2020/21 draft budget, the Finance and Contracts Manager's report showed a 7% increase for an average Band 'D' property tax payer. He emphasised this was a 'bottom-up' budget put together by officers as requested by Council previously and he was aware that the Finance Committee may wish to request a revised budget with a much lower precept increase.

Members noted the Finance and Contracts Manager's comments and then reviewed proposed revisions to the 2019/20 capital investment fund and items proposed for 2020/21.

In respect to the 2019/20 budget, it was accepted that there was an imminent need to replace the sound and microphone system in the Council Chamber and that this should be agreed. While noting the advice that the monies allocated for a new Elgiva boiler would now not be required in this financial year, Members were reluctant to approve the proposed resurfacing of the Gym and Swim Centre's tennis courts and multi-court to replace this without an up-to-date business plan and the Manager was

asked to submit same as soon as possible.

While noting it had already been completed, it was agreed that, as a general principle, resurfacing such as that undertaken at the Depot, should in future, be of semi permeable material.

In respect to the 2020/21 proposed projects, the following was agreed:

- Further information required from Elgiva team on the need for additional significant spend on the website.
- The need for re-fixing existing pool lining at the Open-Air pool to be explained as to why the Council, and not the original supplier/installer, should finance this.
- The access control system at the Gym and Swim Centre be not progressed until the question of the possible extension of the building had been determined.
- The Parks and Premises Manager be requested to find cheaper alternatives than that proposed to resurface Moor Road play-area.
- That the Marston Field play-area youth shelter be not replaced.

The Committee then considered the additional projects suggested by officers that had no monies allocated to them but which had been tentatively or firmly suggested in the last 12 months. Following discussions, the following was proposed to be put forward to the Finance Committee for consideration.

- Neighbourhood Plan consultancy - £35k
- Gym and Swim and Elgiva Extension consultancy - £30k
- Carbon Audit -£5k
- Operation of Hopper Bus or similar carbon neutral transport scheme - £20k
- Community Events - £3k
- Purchase of second MVAS - £3k
- Possible Repairs/upgrade to Chapel – amount to be confirmed after surveyor's report

It was also provisionally agreed that the repairs to the Lowndes Park Multi-Games Area and Nashleigh Hill Recreation Ground play-area, both of which had received 25% funding from Chiltern District Council, should be considered to be undertaken in 2021/22. In regards to possibly upgrading the electrics and lighting at the War Memorial, it was suggested that Chiltern District Council be approached to undertake this.

Following these lengthy discussions, it was

### **RESOLVED**

1. That the purchase of a new Sound and Microphone System for the Council Chamber be agreed for 2019/20
2. That the Capital and Investment Budgets for 2019/20 and

2020/21 be revised in light of the Committee's recommendations and be presented for consideration at the Finance Committee of the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

39. **PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2020/21**

The Committee considered the proposals detailed in the report for fees and charges for 2020/21.

The following was agreed:

(a) **Allotments**

It was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that no increase on all sites be applied from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

(b) **Cemetery**

It was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that no increase on existing fees be applied from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

(c) **Housing**

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the current rents be noted.

(d) **The Elgiva**

It was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

1. That the hire and service charges be increased from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 as per the attached schedule except if bookings have previously been confirmed.
2. That the Manager continues to be allowed flexibility and discretion in determining any charge where he believes it to be in the interest of the Theatre.
3. That the current caterer's one agreement be extended for a further twelve months on similar terms & conditions at the fee proposed in the Report on similar terms and conditions as agreed by the Manager and caterer.

(e) **Town Hall**

It was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the proposed scale of charges, reflecting no increase in room hire fees or other hire charges, be approved and that the Town Clerk continues to be delegated the determination of any ad hoc charges.

(f) **Sports Pitches and Pavilions, Film Fees, Wayleaves, Fairs and Circuses, Lowndes Park Catering**

It was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

1. That no increases in Sports Pitches charges effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 be agreed.
2. That the increase in rent to £360 per month for the Codmore Pavilion martial arts trainer from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 be agreed.
3. That the range of fees for fun fairs and circuses remain unchanged for 2020/21 and that the Town Clerk be allowed to negotiate the charge within the range set.
4. That the Shelter on the Moor continues to be let at no charge to the Environmental Group.
5. That the Clerk continues to be empowered to negotiate charges for the use of Lowndes Park and other Council facilities by film companies.
6. That the fee of £100 for each use of the Council's Open Spaces be continued.
7. That the current concessionaire be offered a one-year agreement for the Lowndes Park Ice Cream Concession and the officers be delegated to seek and arrange a separate concessionaire to provide the teas and refreshments.
8. That a wayleave charge of £5 per annum for pedestrian access only and £50 per annum for vehicular/pedestrian access remain unchanged for 2020/21.
9. That the Clerk be empowered to negotiate charges for the use of the Moor Hardstanding for car-parking and the use of Skottowes Pond by the Model Boat Club.

(g) **Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre**

It was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the following be agreed:

1. That the gym, swimming, general room hire charges and pool hire as per the circulated schedule be agreed.
2. That the Manager be allowed flexibility and discretion in determining any charge where he believes it to be in the interest of the Centre.
3. That the Chiltern Natural Therapies Ltd rent be increased to £380 per month from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.
4. That the Moor Football Pitch charges not be increased from the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020.

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

It was moved by the Chairman and

**RESOLVED**

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

41. **ELGIVA THEATRE AND CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE CAPITAL WORKS UPDATE**

The Committee received a comprehensive report on progress on both the Elgiva's and Gym and Swim Centre's potential major extension plans and it was noted both Working Parties would be convened early in the New Year to determine future development.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Report be noted.

42. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 10.05pm.

CHAIRMAN