

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

held on Monday 10 October 2022

**Councillors:**

Councillor Wilford Augustus	Councillor Paul Harding
Councillor Alan Bacon	Councillor Chasey Hood
Councillor Simon Booth	Councillor Jane MacBean (Chairman)
Councillor Emily Culverhouse	Councillor Rachael Matthews
Councillor Majid Ditta	Councillor Nick Southworth
Councillor Justine Fulford	

**In attendance:**

Mr Tony Marmo	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Ade Fashade	Interim Democratic Services Officer
Mr Paul Isom	Parks and Premises Manager
Ms Kathryn Graves	Community, Economy and Environment Manager

**17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Parveiz Aslam.

**18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**19. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Assets, Recreation and Environment Committee held on 4 July 2022 were agreed as correctly recorded.

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

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

- a. The chair requested a title is added to each action to ensure it is clear what the action relates too.
- b. Min. No. 58 (11 April): Portas Funding – the chair requested that an update on the Portas funding is brought to the next CARE committee meeting.
- c. Min. No. 61 (11 April 2022): Volunteer Day – the Community, Economy and Environment Manager confirmed the event is scheduled for April 2023.
- d. Min. No. 11 (5 September 2022): Overtime payments for Parks and Premises staff – the Parks & Premises Manager confirmed that whilst the team have made progress catching up on their work, they were still behind. However, overtime payments had stopped as this was not required any further to catch up.
- e. Min. No. 12 (15 September 2022): Pedestrianisation of High Street - members of the working group agreed the working group would be convened once it was clearer what the Chesham Regeneration Strategy, the LCWIP and the Chesham Neighborhood Plan had concluded in relation to the high street.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That the action tracker be noted.

## **21. CHESHAM MOORBANK SOFTENING PROJECT**

Adrian Porter and Mike Comlay delivered a presentation to the Committee on the works to be carried out to re-naturalise the banks at the north-western end of The Moor. Main funding is from DEFRA via the Green Recovery Challenge fund. There are no material costs to the council. Liability will return to the council when project is completed. Chiltern Society volunteers will continue to be involved in the project. Works to be carried out will take 2 to 3 months once consent is granted by Environment Agency. This could take 4 to 6 weeks.

### **RESOLVED:**

- i) That the Council give permission for the project to be carried out on The Moor.
- ii) That the Chair and the Democratic Services Officer prepare a press release to confirm the project is going ahead.

## **22. ECO AUDIT UPDATE**

The Committee received a report on the Council's progress towards achieving net carbon zero. Officers presented a consultant's report containing recommendations for decarbonising the council's buildings (Appendix 1). Officers also presented a consultant's eco-update audit report commending the council for its work to reduce the council's energy usage.

Officers are obtaining quotes for the recommendations within the Energy Audit report as part of the budget setting process for 2023-24. An update report from contractor will be presented at the CARE Committee meeting in November.

Officers have received confirmation from its insurers that providing it has authority over the organisation and situation, the use of a scythe is covered by our public liability insurance. This was based on the risk assessment produced by Mr Baum and submitted to the insurance company.

### **RESOLVED:**

- i) That the Council approve purchase of a scything kit.
- ii) That the Chair and the Democratic Services Officer prepare a press release to put Council's eco-audit work out in the public domain.

## **23. GYM AND SWIM DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Minutes of the last meeting of the Working Party held on 26 September 2022 and subsequent report was presented to the Committee. The Committee noted the Working Group's consideration of findings of the latent demand report which suggests that the Gym and Swim can increase its membership, but this will mean a need to increase space in the gym and studio. A planning pre-application letter was received by the Council which was supportive of the concept of an extension on both sides of the existing building. The report also contains the financial costs to the council to get the project to its current position.

The Chief Executive Officer confirmed the next stage in the process, RIBA stage 3 detailed design and planning application will cost in the region of £120,000 and for this reason the Council should be clear that if we progress to the next stage then the project shall need to be completed, as aborting after stage 3 would be expensive. Costs associated with the next stage of work shall be reported at the CARE Committee on the 21 November 2022 as part of the budget setting process for 2022-23.

The Council also discussed the need to consider the closure of the outdoor swimming pool during the coming winter, due to the substantial increase in utilities and other costs. Members felt this should be considered and requested a report be submitted to the next CARE committee meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That the minutes of the working party be agreed.
- ii) That members approve the Gym and Swim Development project progresses to stage 3 subject to approval of funding at the CARE committee on the 21 November 2022 and Finance Committee on the 5 December 2022.
- iii) That the implications of closing the outdoor swimming pool during the winter months be presented at the next CARE committee meeting.

**24. NASHLEIGH HILL RECREATION GROUND CENTRE**

The Committee received a report on the progress of the refurbishment of Nashleigh Hill Recreation Ground Play Area. The community survey undertaken on the Play Area provision at Nashleigh Hill had over 200 responses. The current budget is £37,500 for the Play Area. This is made up of £25,000 from the Community Board and an ear marked reserve from the Town Council accounts of £12,500.

The Committee noted the cost is £45,000 to get the Play Area to a good standard, a budget short fall of £7,500. It will also cost up to £150,000 for a more extensive play area to be produced. The chair felt that at this stage the focus should be on completing the initial project only.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That members agree to increase the budget for the play area from £37,500 to £45,000 using the unallocated funds from the small capital projects budget.

**25. PLAY AREA UPDATES**

The Committee received a report which included an action tracker on latest updates on repairs completed and those that are outstanding. All major works have been completed and signed off. There have been ongoing issues with supplies which is impacting on outstanding repairs. The Parks and Premises team will continue to utilise the £20,000 budget allocated for works to be completed.

The committee commended the Parks and Premises Manager on the progress made since the last report to the CARE Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

- i. That the Committee notes the attached action tracker and the progress on repairs within the current budget spend

**26. PLAY AREA WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

The committee received a report on outcomes of the Lowndes Park Play Area survey and the minutes of the meeting of the Play Area Working Group held on 5 September 2022. The survey generated 392 responses. 25 responded that they would be happy to sponsor equipment and 44 indicated interest in being contacted about joining the play area working group as a volunteer. The Working Group will review the data to help inform their decision on the next steps before reporting back to the CARE Committee at a later date.

The Chief Executive Officer informed the Committee that the Friends of Lowndes Park Group have expressed interest in being a stakeholder in the play area project, but that the group would like the project to include a master planning process for the whole of Lowndes Park.

Councilor Matthews, the chair of the Play Areas Working Group, confirmed the Lowndes Park Play Area is a top priority for the Working Group because of the state of the existing play area and that any delay to installing a new play area would not be welcomed by those who completed the survey. The next steps for the Working Group is to write to the potential volunteers and sponsors to engage them in the project. The Working Group will come back to the Committee with proposals for potential costs.

The chair confirmed that if the Play Area Working Group wish to undertake a master plan of Lowndes Park this will involve consultancy fees which will need to be approved by the CARE Committee. There was a general discussion on improvements of play areas in the Town. It was felt that work might be needed to consider the feasibility in the reduction in the number of play areas, so the Town Council had fewer, but the remaining ones were larger and better than they are now.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That the report be noted.
- ii) That the Working Group decide the next steps.

The meeting closed at 10.06pm.