

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE

held on 12th February 2018

PRESENT Councillor Mrs J.E. MacBean – Chairman (presiding)

Councillor	M.Z. Bhatti MBE	Councillor	A.W. Franks
"	Q. Chaudhry	"	Mrs D. M. Varley
"	Miss E.A. Culverhouse	"	P.W. Yerrell
"	M. Fayyaz		

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor A.K. Bacon.

Officers: Mr W. Richards, Town Clerk.
Mr M. Barnes, Elgiva Manager.

Mr A. Burton and Mr D. Marriott – Rare Productions

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

53. **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.

54. **MINUTES**

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 18th December 2017, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

55. **ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Elgiva Board of Management held on the 4th December 2017.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

It was noted that the Clerk, on behalf of the Council, had previously thanked Mr Trevor Pilling for his long service as Chairman of the Elgiva Board.

56. **CHESHAM ALLOTMENTS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Chesham Allotments Group held on the 23rd January 2018.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

57. **IMPRESS THE CHESS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meetings of the Impress the Chess Group held on the 11th January 2018.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes be noted.

58. **CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE UPDATE**

The Committee considered the officers' report on the current financial situation at the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre facility.

It was suggested that the gym figures were not quite as healthy as the swimming figures so therefore it might be advantageous for the Marketing Officer to focus her excellent initiatives a little more on that side of the business in the short-term.

It was

RESOLVED

that the financial position and officers' update be noted.

59. **UPDATE ON WINTER MAINTENANCE AND CONTRACTS WITH BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Committee was advised that the Parks and Premises team was now in a position to grit and snow clear the High St and Market Square if necessary and look to recharge the costs to Buckinghamshire County Council. In respect to filling the salt bins across town, Councillor Mrs MacBean reported that, while it was still an aspiration for this Council to take over this task, the County Council had re-stocked the bins effectively in Chesham recently.

In regards to general contracts potentially taken on by the Parks and Premises team from the County Council, the Clerk advised discussions were still on-going with County Council officers about the level of external training required.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Report be noted.

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

It was moved by the Chairman and

RESOLVED

that the public and the Press, save for Mr Burton and Mr Marriott, 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.

61. **PANTOMIME CONTRACT**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Andrew Burton and Mr David Marriott from Rare Productions, along with the Elgiva Manager, to the meeting.

The Elgiva Manager firstly addressed the meeting and explained that he believed the Council had negotiated an exceptional deal originally with Rare to run the pantomime for three years. He stated that he was not aware of any other theatre that received an income guarantee from a theatre company to provide a pantomime and certainly nothing to the level paid by Rare. He added also that the quality of the performance was particularly high and opined that it would be a mistake for the Council to lose the working relationship it had with the company.

Mr Burton and Mr Marriott then addressed the Members. They explained that, firstly, the company had very much appreciated the opportunity to provide the pantomime at the Elgiva but, even though they were very well established as the UK's largest youth theatre company, it was something of a gamble for them as they had not tried this anywhere before and certainly never offered such a guarantee. They explained that, in hindsight, they were over-optimistic in projected ticket sales and split in income and had made a loss on the two pantomimes to date. Mr Burton and Mr Marriott concluded by saying they would, of course, honour their final year of their contract but, as a business, they could not afford to suffer another loss. Accordingly they requested that the Committee consider changing the financial terms of the final year as outlined within their proposal to ensure that there was not a significant drop in production values.

The Committee agreed with the principle of the proposal but thought it prudent to have this ratified by the Finance Committee since the 2018/19 budgets had been set.

It was

RESOLVED

that the request for a revised pantomime contract for 2018 on the terms proposed by Rare Productions be agreed, subject to ratification by the Finance Committee.

Note: The Elgiva Manager and Messrs Burton and Marriott left the meeting.

62. **BOX OFFICE TICKETING SYSTEM, ELGIVA THEATRE**

The Chairman and the Clerk briefly updated the Committee on the expiration of the current box office ticketing system and the unexpected decision from the current providers not to offer a short-term extension to the existing agreement as originally requested by officers.

The Committee, having been made aware of the necessity to award an alternative contract as quickly as possible to ensure that a new system was in place before the expiry of the current contract and having been assured due diligence had taken place in respect to selecting an alternative supplier, duly

RESOLVED

that the proposal from Spektrix Ltd to provide the Elgiva box-office ticketing system at the price quoted within the report be accepted and a one-year contract agreed.

63. **CODMORE PAVILION UPGRADE**

Members considered the three quotations obtained to upgrade Codmore Pavilion as previously agreed by the Council.

It was

RESOLVED

that the quotation from Docwra Property Management for the upgrade of Codmore Pavilion at the cost reported to the Committee be agreed.

64. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.17pm.

CHAIRMAN