

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

SERVICE REVIEW



2007/08

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	2
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Current Service.....	4
3. Challenge.....	6
4. Consult.....	10
5. Compare.....	15
6. Compete.....	29
7. Improvement Measures.....	30
8. Appendices	
1. Best Value Service Review Baseline Document: Elgiva.....	31
Updated income and expenditure account for 2007/08.....	41
2. Best Value Service Review Baseline Document: Town Hall.....	42
Updated income and expenditure account for 2007/08.....	49
3. Elgiva and Town Hall Questions in the 2005 Residents’ Survey.....	50
4. Elgiva Audience Survey 2007/2008.....	51
5. Elgiva Audience Survey Results.....	55
6. Elgiva Hirer Survey 2007/2008.....	61
7. Elgiva Hirer Survey Results.....	63
8. Town Hall User Survey 2007/2008.....	68
9. Town Hall User Survey Results.....	70
10. Town Hall Hirer Survey 2007/2008.....	72
11. Town Hall Hirer Survey Results	74
12. Elgiva Performance Indicators.....	78
13. Town Hall Performance Indicators.....	79

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An external Challenge Panel was established to review the services of The Elgiva and Chesham Town Hall. The best value review was conducted using the principles of the 4 Cs of Best Value: Challenge, Consult, Compare and Compete.

Consultation with service users demonstrated a high level of satisfaction from both users and hirers of The Elgiva and the Town Hall, although some hirers of The Elgiva expressed the view that box office opening hours should be longer.

Comparison with other venues highlighted the favourable artistic and financial performance of The Elgiva. Analysis of theatre charges identified substantial differences between the charges levelled for technical equipment hire between the venues, leading the Panel to recommend that The Elgiva's technical equipment hire charges be reviewed. A comparison between Chesham and Thame town halls found that Chesham is well-positioned with modern facilities, a variety of rooms, a broad range of hirers and active marketing. The Panel have recommended that the size of the discount for block-bookers is reduced following a comparison of hire charges.

The Panel felt that it was not worthwhile pursuing management of either The Elgiva or the Town Hall by private management companies. However, a key recommendation of the review is that the council should investigate operating The Elgiva as a sole custodian trust.

The review led the Panel to conclude that it was satisfied overall with the need for both services and the manner in which they are currently run by the town council. However, the Panel suggested a number of improvement measures for both services. In addition to those already referred to, the Panel suggested enhancing The Elgiva's town centre poster sites and supported the proposed installation of an online booking system, plus minor alterations at the Town Hall to improve the ease with which users find rooms. Investigations into the following areas were suggested: extending The Elgiva box office opening hours and increasing the number of phone lines; improvements to the heating/cooling system in The Elgiva auditorium; and taking payment by debit and credit card at the Town Hall.

1. INTRODUCTION

For the Best Value service review of Community Buildings, comprising the Elgiva and the Town Hall, Members endorsed the decision to use an external 'Challenge' Panel to work alongside the Council's officers and Members at the commencement of the review. It was considered that such an approach would result in a more rigorous examination of the Council's service.

The Review Panel has met on several occasions between September 2007 and April 2008 and has consisted of the following personnel:

- ◆ Mohammad Fayyaz - Councillor, Chesham Town Council
- ◆ Bill Richards – Town Clerk, Chesham Town Council
- ◆ Kathryn Graves – Policy & Projects Officer, Chesham Town Council
- ◆ Mark Barnes – Elgiva Manager, Chesham Town Council
- ◆ Donna Hughes – Leighton Linlade Town Council
- ◆ Trevor Pilling – Chairman, Elgiva Board of Management
- ◆ Jeff Eales – New Penny Theatre Company
- ◆ Jean Pritchard – Chesham Chamber of Trade and Commerce

The mixture of service providers and users has played an important role in drawing together a coherent plan to develop 'continuous improvement' for the Elgiva and the Town Hall.

2. THE CURRENT SERVICE

i. Definition of Service

(i) The Elgiva

Opened in November 1998, The Elgiva is a multi-purpose community theatre owned, managed and funded by Chesham Town Council and is based in the heart of Chesham.

(ii) Town Hall

The Town Hall, which opened in September 1998, is a building combining an office suite for the Town Clerk and the administration staff, a chamber for council meetings and four rooms for community use. The following rooms are available for hire:

- The Council Chamber
- Community Hall
- Lowndes Room
- Small Meeting Room

ii. What is the Service?

(i) The Elgiva

The service is a venue that provides the following: an artistic programme of live and cinematic events available on an almost daily basis to the community; the ability to hire the venue for private, business and artistic purposes; a foyer café and bar; provision of work experience for local students; a focal and meeting point for local groups (mother & toddler groups and theatre groups)

(ii) Town Hall

The service is a two-storey venue overlooking Lowndes Park that provides a range of rooms for community use with lift to the first floor. It is accessible on foot from the High Street through Baines Walk, a five-minute walk from the London Underground Station, and by car through Star Yard Car Park, off Blucher Street.

iii. What are the Specific Aims of the Service?

(i) The Elgiva

The specific aims of the service are:

- (1) to attempt to build and strengthen the venue's accessibility and reputation within the local community
- (2) to offer a first class, wide range and well-respected programme of entertainment, which is seen by members of the community in preference to going outside the area
- (3) to achieve customer and staff satisfaction, and thereby attract more income to the venue
- (4) to attract more local and private hires into the venue and make it a hub for community usage
- (5) to keep the cost of the service down to a mutually agreed level, whilst still providing a first class and efficient service

(ii) Town Hall

The specific aims of the service are:

- (1) to provide a high standard, cost-effective service that helps to meet the needs and wishes of the residents
- (2) to ensure high quality social, recreational and cultural facilities are available to all sections of the community

iv. Cost and Unit Data

Detailed cost and unit data for The Elgiva and Town Hall are presented in appendices one and two, respectively.

3. CHALLENGE

“Challenge” is central to Best Value. The basis consists of:

- Why the service is provided
- What the service provides
- How the service is provided

i. Why the Service is Provided

(i) The Elgiva

The town council provides this service to achieve its mission statement which is ‘To improve the quality of life of the residents of Chesham’. The Elgiva is charged, therefore, with achieving this aim, and attempts to ‘improve the quality of life’ by ensuring that a varied programme of entertainment, social and cultural activities is available to all sections of the community. The council had adopted this strategic objective as its reason for continued provision of this service.

The 2005 Residents Survey indicated the popularity of The Elgiva, with 58% of respondents having been to see a film within the previous 12 months, 51% having visited the café, 37% attending the pantomime, 36% seeing an amateur theatre performance and 27% attending a professional music performance.

In the 2007/08 Elgiva hirer survey (please see Section 4. Consult, page 10), 66.7% of respondents said that it was “very important” that they are able to hire The Elgiva, whilst 29.2% said it was “quite important”. Only 4.2% said that it was “not important”. In the 2007/08 Elgiva audience survey, 100% of respondents agreed that it was important to have The Elgiva in Chesham.

(ii) Town Hall

The Town Hall replaces the facility previously available in the council’s former community building, known as The Malt House. The town council supplies this service to satisfy its mission statement ‘To improve the quality of life of the residents of Chesham’.

In the 2007/08 Town Hall hirer survey (please see Section 4. Consult, page 9), 84.6% and 15.4% of respondents said that it was “very important” and “quite important” to have rooms available for hire in the Town Hall, respectively.

The Challenge Panel agreed unanimously that the requirement for the theatre and the Town Hall was unquestionable.

ii. What the Service Provides

(i) The Elgiva

The programme covers a wide range of events, including amateur dramatic productions, local dance schools, local performing arts schools, cinema screening, professional dance shows, children's productions, professional pantomime, rock nights and private/community hire.

The 2006/07 usage was as follows:

- 12 weeks amateur productions
- 5 weeks dance/performing arts
- 1 week festival
- 80 days of film
- 3 dance productions
- 4 weeks professional pantomime and 2 weeks amateur pantomime
- 21 days of children's productions
- 13 rock nights
- 9 high profile/low risk events

The theatre was used/hired for 334 days out of 365 and closed to the public for 31 days (19 of these were taken up by annual maintenance).

The bar is open and available for service on most occasions when events are taking place at the theatre. The Spotlight Café is open six days a week from 10 am until 3 pm.*

(ii) Town Hall

All rooms have disabled access, use of a kitchen facility and there is a baby changing facility in the ground floor disabled toilet. Hirers may also request the use of cutlery, crockery, an overhead projector, screen and flipchart, which are included in the hourly charge. A laptop, data projector, wireless internet connection and delegate microphones may be hired at additional cost. Tea, coffee and biscuits are also provided at a small, additional charge.

The Community Hall is located on the ground floor and has a seating capacity for 100, 90 for receptions, parties, etc. or a clear floor of 125 m². The Hall has adjoining kitchen facilities. The Community Hall is used extensively by clubs, groups and other local organisations as well as private/social hire.

The Lowndes Room is on the first floor and can seat up to 50 and has its own private kitchen. It is commonly used for meetings, classes and children's groups.

The Council Chamber (also on the first floor) can accommodate 100 and is used for Council committee meetings. It is also ideal for conferences and training courses. The Town Hall is Chesham's only licensed venue for civil marriages and partnerships and the Chamber is used for these ceremonies. The Chamber is normally available for use one day per month for these ceremonies, which are conducted through the Wycombe Register Office. The Chamber is referred to as The Lowndes Suite when used for marriage and partnership ceremonies.

**The café at The Elgiva is operated by Mancinellis, as of 16th June 2008.*

The Small Meeting Room (also on the first floor) can hold eight people. It is kept available for use as kitchen facilities by hirers of the Council Chamber, but when not required it is used for meetings.

The Challenge Panel considered whether the above components of the service should continue to be provided by the Town Council.

The Challenge Panel was satisfied overall with the existing service provision, but made a number of recommendations regarding specific aspects of the service. (Please see Section 7, p. 30)

iii. How the Service is Provided

(i) The Elgiva

The service provided by the Elgiva hinges around the sensitive and responsive programming by the manager that is publicised to the local community:

- Publicity – is delivered by the provision of a regularly up-dated website, the use of newspaper editorials and adverts, the publication of three issues of the theatre's What's On brochure (which can be collected from the theatre, Town Hall, libraries, mailed out to customers and is also delivered to 38,000 homes by the Royal Mail's Door-to-Door service), and the use of banners in front of the theatre and poster sites around town.

Once the service has been publicised to the customers the tickets for events then have to be sold. This service is facilitated by the provision of a box office between 10 am and 3 pm six days a week and for one hour prior to evening performances:

- Tickets may also be ordered or requested by e-mailing the box office, faxing or writing to the box office.

Once tickets have been purchased, they may be posted out to a customer or held on the premises until collected. On a performance day in particular, the venue is operated by the following staff: the manager (full time), deputy manager (full time), technical manager (full time), technical assistant (full time), box office assistants (part time), contracted catering staff (part time), bar supervisor (part time), bar staff (casual), volunteer stewards, contracted cleaning staff (part time) and casual technicians (part time). These staff ensure the smooth running of the venue and its availability to customers and users.

(ii) Town Hall

The administrative staff of the town council are based at the Town Hall. The staff deal with booking enquiries in person, over the phone and via email. The diary for recording bookings is held in the general office. Charges are hourly and payment is accepted by cash or cheque. Invoices are sent on request and this is administered by the finance department.

The caretaking staff support bookings by providing the hirers' requirements in terms of furniture layout, IT requirements, crockery, flipcharts, etc. They also clean the

premises. There are two caretakers with the duties split between daytime and evening/weekends and both posts are part time.

The Parks and Premises department support the running of the Town Hall by undertaking small repairs, e.g. minor plumbing tasks, and through the collection and transportation of goods.

The Challenge Panel considered whether the services should continue to be provided through the existing arrangements.

The Panel conducted a site visit to Chequer Mead Arts Centre, which is operated as a sole custodian trust (see Section 5. Compare) to investigate whether The Elgiva could be operated in this way.

The Challenge Panel was satisfied with the existing system of management for both the Elgiva and the Town Hall.

However, the Panel recommended that there is further investigation into managing The Elgiva as a sole custodian trust. The Panel also agreed that it would be appropriate to investigate whether it would be cost-effective to accept payment by credit and debit cards at the Town Hall.

4. CONSULT

Consultation with service users, partners and the town residents is essential to run an effective service. A key recommendation that came from the Best Value Service Review of Democratic Services and Corporate Management was to carry out targeted consultation with key groups in the town on the services the Council provides.

The council has endeavoured to consult with both users and non-users of the facility on an on-going basis through a variety of surveys. The door-to-door Residents' Survey that was carried out in February 2005 collated data on usage of The Elgiva and the Town Hall and satisfaction with the services. These questions can be viewed in Appendix Three. The survey is currently repeated every five years.

(i) The Elgiva

The Elgiva's web site, www.elgiva.com contains a lot of information that can be accessed by the public, including a programme of events, pantomime information, how to book tickets, seating plans, etc. The web site also has the facility for the public to send messages/comments to The Elgiva's staff.

(ii) Town Hall

The Town Hall has an on-going customer satisfaction survey.

The Challenge Panel considered whether further consultation should be conducted.

The Challenge Panel agreed that further data would be helpful to this Review. Four paper surveys were conducted: (i) Elgiva audience survey (ii) Elgiva hirer survey (iii) Town Hall user survey and (iv) Town Hall hirer survey. The results of the surveys were used by the Panel to develop improvement measures for the service.

CONSULTATION RESPONSE

i. 2005 Door-to-Door Residents' Survey

The survey was sent to 8683 households on 3 February 2005, with a deadline of 10 March 2005. A total of 2314 surveys was returned, giving a response rate of 27%.

Please see Appendix 3 for the Elgiva and Town Hall questions included in the survey.

1. All Elgiva facilities received high satisfaction scores. 78% said that the staff and the box office were either 'good' or 'excellent'. 72% rated the auditorium as 'good' or 'excellent'. 71% rated the publicity/What's On guide as 'good' or 'excellent'. 65% said that the café was 'good' or 'excellent'.
2. The results indicated that between 2000 and 2005, the number of residents visiting the Town Hall had increased from 42% to 62%. Of those that visited in 2005, 76% said that the facilities were 'good' or 'excellent'.

ii. 2007/08 Elgiva Audience Survey

A survey consisting of 19 questions, plus room for additional comments, was made available to Elgiva patrons, with automatic free entry into a prize draw for pantomime tickets. A total of 27 surveys were returned.

Please see Appendix 4 for the survey. A summary of the survey results is listed below (please note that percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number, so overall figures may be greater or less than 100% by 1%). Please see Appendix 5 for the full results.

1. 54% of respondents were Chesham residents.
2. 46% of respondents had visited The Elgiva five or more times in the last year, 12% visiting four times, 15% three times, 12% twice and 15% once.
3. The most popular performance type was cinema, being seen by 74% of respondents, followed by professional theatre (63%) and music other than classical (46%). The least popular type of event was exhibitions (7%).
4. The most popular method of finding out what's on at The Elgiva is the What's On guide, used by 63% of respondents, followed by show leaflets (52%) and posters in town (26%). The Elgiva web site was used by 11% of people.
5. The preferred way to buy tickets was at the box office (44%), followed by over the internet (37%) and then over the phone (22%).
6. 100% of respondents regarded the service at The Elgiva as 'excellent' or 'good' and 89% had never had cause to complain.
7. For all types of productions/events, the majority of respondents rated the current programming as satisfactory to excellent. Classical music received the lowest satisfaction rating, with 25% regarding the programming as unsatisfactory to poor.
8. The major factor influencing people's decisions to visit The Elgiva was its proximity to home/easiness to get to (85% of respondents), followed by choice of film/show (78%), cost (59%) and welcoming atmosphere (56%).
9. 100% of respondents said they received value for money on their visit to The Elgiva.
10. The following percentage of those surveyed regarded the specified facilities as 'good' or 'excellent':

Bar – 61%	Overall experience – 86%
Ticket booking process – 75%	Service from staff – 88%
Café – 76%	Disabled facilities – 73%
Cleanliness – 85%	Quality of show – 87%
Car parking – 65%	Visibility of staff – 92%
Comfort – 81%	
11. 100% of respondents rated The Elgiva overall as 'good' or 'excellent' and agreed that it is important to have The Elgiva in Chesham.

12. 96% of respondents felt The Elgiva should receive funding from Chesham Town Council and that The Elgiva represented value for money in terms of its cost to the tax payer.

iii. 2007-08 Elgiva Hirer Survey

A survey consisting of nine questions, plus room for additional comments, was sent out to 43 people/groups that had hired The Elgiva within the last year. Twenty-four responses were received, giving a response rate of 56%.

Please see Appendix 6 for the survey. A summary of the survey results is listed below (please note that percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number, so overall figures may be greater or less than 100% by 1%). Please see Appendix 7 for the full results.

1. The majority of respondents (67%) had used the venue once in the last 12 months, but 21% had used the venue three times.
2. 96% of respondents said that it was 'very important' or 'quite important' that they can use The Elgiva.
3. The key factors influencing the hirers' decision to use The Elgiva were: that it is easy to get to (67% of respondents), ease of booking (63%), quality of service (63%) and parking (54%).
4. For all aspects of The Elgiva's service (administration, bar, box office facility, café, cleanliness, cost of hire, disabled facilities, lighting system, staff service, sound system, cloakroom, publicity & marketing, car parking and toilets), the majority of respondents rated the facilities as 'satisfactory' to 'excellent'. However, the greatest level of dissatisfaction was expressed with regards to the box office facility with 34% regarding it as 'unsatisfactory' or 'poor'. 31% of respondents considered the car parking to be 'unsatisfactory' or 'poor'.
5. 100% of respondents rated The Elgiva's facilities overall as 'excellent', 'good' or 'satisfactory'.
6. 91% of respondents said that they would book The Elgiva again.

iv. 2007/08 Town Hall User Survey

A survey consisting of 7 questions, plus room for additional comments, was made available to users of the Town Hall. A total of 43 surveys were returned.

Please see Appendix 8 for the survey. A summary of the survey results is listed below (please note that percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number, so overall figures may be greater or less than 100% by 1%). Please see Appendix 9 for the full results.

1. The most commonly used room was the Community Hall, used by 65% of respondents, followed by the Council Chamber (40%), the Lowndes Room (19%) and the Meeting Room (7%).
2. The type of function most commonly attended was a group activity (such as a class), attended by 33% of respondents. The next most popular functions were conferences (28%), social occasions (28%) and meetings (21%).

3. 93% of respondents had no difficulty finding their room, although it was noted that the Meeting Room has no name plate and can be mistaken for a kitchen.
4. 100% of respondents were satisfied with the cleanliness and layout of the room they used.
5. 97% and 96% of respondents were satisfied with the cleanliness and supply of provisions, respectively, in the toilets.
6. 98% of respondents regarded the Town Hall facilities overall as 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent'.

v. 2007/08 Town Hall Hirer Survey

A survey consisting of 12 questions, plus room for additional comments, was made available to Town Hall hirers. A total of 13 surveys were returned.

Please see Appendix 10 for the survey. A summary of the survey results is listed below (please note that percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number, so overall figures may be greater or less than 100% by 1%). Please see Appendix 11 for the full results.

1. The most commonly used room was the Community Hall, used by 54% of respondents, followed by the Council Chamber (23%), Lowndes Room (23%) and Meeting Room (15%).
2. The majority of respondents were frequent hirers, 85% having hired the Town Hall five or more times in the last 12 months.
3. 100% of respondents said it was 'very important' or 'quite important' to be able to hire rooms at the Town Hall.
4. The most commonly cited factors influencing hirers' decisions to book the Town Hall were: parking (77%); ease of booking (62%); cost of hire (54%); quality of service (54%) and close to home/easy to get to (46%). The factor least cited as influencing people's decision to hire was discounts/special offers (23%).
5. 100% of respondents regarded the cleanliness, toilets, administration & booking process and service from staff as 'good' or 'excellent'.
6. 100% of respondents regarded the kitchen facilities, car parking, room presentation and overall comfort as 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent'.
7. 85% of respondents rated the hire charges as 'about right', with 15% regarding them as too expensive.
8. Of the respondents, 42% were Chesham based, 58% coming from outside the town.
9. The majority of hirers found out about the Town Hall facilities through word-of-mouth (54%), although 15% used www.chesham.gov.uk.
10. Overall, 62% rated the Town Hall facilities as 'excellent', and the remaining 39% as 'good'. 100% said they would book the Town Hall again.

ANALYSIS

The Elgiva

Consultation has demonstrated a high level of satisfaction from users of The Elgiva, both in the 2005 and 2007/08 surveys. The comparatively low use of the poster sites by the public for finding out what's on at The Elgiva led the panel to recommend making improvements to poster roundels*. More than one respondent remarked that the heating/air conditioning was unsatisfactory.

The 2007/08 survey also demonstrated a high level of satisfaction from hirers of The Elgiva. However, hirers did recommend that the box office opening hours and the number of phone lines be increased, as well as implementing on-line booking.

The Town Hall

Consultation also showed a high level of satisfaction with the Town Hall room hire, for both hirers and users. However, the ease of finding the meeting room could be improved by the addition of a nameplate for the room. Both hirers and users stated that the air recirculating system in the Community Hall can create a draught and that the other hireable rooms can get very hot in summer.

The Town Hall hirer survey indicated that discounts were not a major consideration when deciding to hire a room. The Panel recommended that size of the discount for block-bookers is reduced from 50%.

** Following vandalism, the roundel located outside Sainsbury's in the High Street has been removed.*

5. COMPARE

The Challenge Panel's comparisons with other service providers were undertaken by conducting site visits to three theatres, run by a city council, a borough council and by a sole custodian trust. A site visit was also undertaken to a town hall operated by a town council.

'Compare' is not only about external comparisons, but also comparing in-house performance year-on-year and seeking continuous improvement. The Council operates its own local indicators that form part of the annual Best Value Performance Plan and are listed in Appendices 12 and 13.

i. SITE VISITS

The Panel visited the following theatres: the Guildhall theatre in Derby, Thameside theatre in Grays and the Chequer Mead Community Arts Centre in East Grinstead. The Panel also visited Thame Town Hall. The site visit reports are included in this section.

Notes from the Site Visit to Guildhall Theatre, Derby on 22 November 2007

Present: Mark Barnes, Kathryn Graves, Jean Pritchard

Guildhall Theatre staff: Andy Falconer (Manager)

The building is approximately 150 years old, but has been used as a theatre since 1971.

The Guildhall operates a theatre programme quite similar to the Elgiva, with a mixture of agency (amateur) and Council (professional) hires. The amateur productions are the main business of the theatre. Dance shows are particularly successful. Unlike the Elgiva, the Guildhall does not screen films. The Guildhall does not open over Christmas, as two other venues have pantomimes in Derby.

The theatre is not a trust and is completely funded by Derby City Council. The Council also operates the Assembly Rooms, a larger theatre, and there is some sharing of resources, but the two theatres have separate budgets.

In addition to the main Theatre room, the venue also has a foyer, a large club room and a small club room, all of which can be hired. Some office space is rented by a local theatre group. The theatre is located on the first floor and is accessible to the disabled via a lift. All sets, props, etc. have to come through the front door and be taken upstairs to access the theatre.

The Guildhall has 242 saleable seats, compared to 300 at The Elgiva. There are c.180 seats in the main theatre area, with c.60 seats on the balcony, which is where the main lights and sound are also located. There are three seats suitable for disabled people. There is a piano at the venue, on a hydraulic lift. The stage has no wings.

In the backstage area there are two dressing rooms, but the club rooms are used as overflow dressing rooms, e.g. for dance groups.

The Guildhall has no air conditioning and the heating is controlled remotely by computer from another building. The entire external front of the building will be renovated in 2008. This will be a four to five month project, throughout which the theatre will be kept open.

The large club room is also hired out for record fairs, market research and book fairs. It is in need of redecoration, which will take place next summer, after which it will also be available for hire as a conference venue. The large club room has its own entrance and toilet facilities.

The foyer was previously hired for art exhibitions, but this occurs very infrequently now. The foyer is increasingly being used for theatre receptions and the management plan to start charging for this use.

The staff at the Guildhall consists of: manager; duty manager; and part-time duty manager (c. 20 h per week as and when required). There are 9 technicians at the Assembly Rooms and they attend the Guildhall on a rota. All administration and finance is done at the Assembly Rooms and council offices. Cleaning is carried out by contract cleaners.

The Box Office, which uses the Databox system, is shared with the Assembly Rooms, although the Guildhall is supplied with a computer that enables them to sell tickets from the Guildhall for an hour before each show. The Assembly Room's box office is open 9.30 to 5.30 six days a week, and for longer if a production is on. Tickets can be booked by phone, at the Assembly Rooms box office, by post and on-line. Credit and debit cards are accepted. A "Friends of the Assembly Rooms and Guildhall Theatre" scheme operates, costing £18 per year, which offers benefits including money off shows and priority booking.

There are three marketing officers who manage the marketing for the Assembly Rooms, the Great Hall at the Assembly Rooms and the Guildhall. Marketing includes the production of a What's On guide three times a year, posters and mailing lists.

A handout was provided of room hire and additional charges. Hire of the Guildhall is for a maximum period of 10 h per day, any additional hours are charged at £40 per hour. Hire includes the provision of a technician and any equipment that is part of the building. There are additional charges for anything else, e.g. smoke machine, radio mics, etc.

There is a separate bar area, which is open before, during and after performances. Andy manages the bar and there are approximately nine bar staff who work on an as and when basis. The bar has one till and drinks are sold in glasses. The theatre buys in its own stock for the bar. Tea, coffee and soft drinks are also available for sale at the coffee bar on the first floor, which is open before the shows and during intervals only. Ice creams are sold from the bar, the coffee bar and from the foyer.

Andy provided handouts detailing lettings income, admissions, lettings by area, show predictions and budgets. It was requested that this material was not made publicly available.

Notes from the Site Visit to Thameside Theatre, Grays on 10 January 2008

Present: Mark Barnes, Jeff Eales, Kathryn Graves

Theatre staff: Mark Allinson (Arts Manager at the Thameside Centre)

The 323 seat theatre is located on the third floor of a complex that also contains a register office, café and library. The building was built in 1971 and the theatre opened in 1972.

The theatre foyer was refurbished three years ago and includes a small bar area, seating and tables and a kiosk for selling refreshments including ice creams.

The theatre itself has no upstairs seating, the upstairs contains a technical suite. There is a sound desk in the auditorium, there is no lighting bridge and no equipment for flying. The cinema screen is on a roller. There is a lift in the wings by which scenery can be brought into the theatre. Anything larger has to be carried up the stairs. A passageway runs behind the stage and there is a prompt corner in the wings.

The technical suite contains a £76,000 digital projector, which can be used for playing DVDs, and tapes. In order to show "Hollywood content" a server would be required because of the encryption technology used, which the theatre do not have. However, there are 18 other cinemas in the borough, so bringing Hollywood content to the Thameside is not a priority, particularly as the theatre programme is so full. However, the projector gets a lot of use for video showings, independent films and is used in the pantomime. The projector has meant that the spooling benches could be removed and has eliminated some manual handling issues.

The dressing rooms are located on the floor below, along with the prop store. There are also showers in the toilets. There is a theatre office, staff room, store room and beer cellar. The box office is located on the ground floor in the reception area.

There is an additional, small room known as Thameside 2, which is rented out for meetings.

There are four amateur companies that hire the venue for productions, taking up approximately seven weeks per year. The majority of the productions are musicals. The tickets are cheaper than for amateur productions at The Elgiva, e.g. a standard price of £7, compared to £12-16. This was attributed to the different demographics of the audiences in the Thurrock borough compared to Chesham. It is difficult to sell drama in Thurrock and the interest in amateur shows is declining.

The pantomime is highly successful and runs from early December to mid January. The pantomime do not rehearse at the theatre.

They try not to close the theatre for maintenance, although they will close for occasional days in September.

The theatre has a £350,000 turnover and receives £180,000 from Thurrock Borough Council. The theatre runs at a deficit, but many of the costs are related to the running of the building and various other facilities in the building, such as the Register Office, do not contribute towards these costs. It was noted that the subsidy for sports in the borough is ten times the subsidy for arts. Budget figures and takings for productions were provided as hand outs.

Originally, Mark Allinson managed the entire building and all the theatre staff. Two years ago, the Council outsourced the administration, building maintenance, security and box office. The staffing of the theatre is as follows:

Mark Allinson – spends 80% of his time as theatre manager, but is also the Borough's Arts Officer
Full time Box Office Manager
3 Box Office staff on 30 hours per week (h p/w)
Full time Technical Manager and 2 technical staff on 25 h p/w and 3 on 6 h p/w
Two Front of House Managers on 8 h p/w (who also act as bar managers) and they share 7 ushers who do 8 h p/w. There are no volunteer staff. Per performance, a Front of House Manager will be in attendance with 3 ushers. An additional member of staff may be brought in to work at the bar if it is likely to be busy.

The Box Office is open from 10 to 5, Monday to Saturday, plus 1h before a show. The Box Office also sells tickets for the Civic Hall, another venue in the town. In addition to the Box Office, there is a call centre at the Town Hall with 6 staff trained in dealing with Box Office enquiries. The theatre has an online booking system which accounts for about 10% of all transactions. The system does not allow you to pick your seats. The system is not real time and only allows sales of up to ten tickets for a performance. Larger group bookings need to be done over the phone in order to cope with seating groups together, avoiding breaks across aisles, etc.

25,000 events brochures are produced and 18,000 are sent to people on a mailing list.

Stewards and two technicians are provided for hirers. There is a performance surcharge of £72 per performance for setting up the production on the box office system, etc. Details of additional hire rates, e.g. for mics, will be provided. The theatre can be hired between 6 and 11 pm. Any use before 6 pm is charged at an hourly rate. A scale of charges for hirings and a price list for technical extras was supplied.

There are four hire tariffs across the week, going up in price: (i) Monday to Thursday (ii) Friday (iii) Saturday (iv) Sunday.

There are three hire tariffs based on hirer type, increasing in price: (i) local, non-profit amateur groups (ii) commercial hirers in Thurrock, e.g. dance schools and (iii) commercial hirers from outside Thurrock.

The option of becoming a trust was considered, but it was found not to be feasible because of the difficulties associated with splitting the theatre away from the rest of the building.

Notes from the Site Visit to Chequer Mead Theatre, East Grinstead on 1 February 2008

Present: Jeff Eales, Kathryn Graves, Bill Richards, Jean Pritchard, Donna Hughes, Steve Cherry, Cllr Mohammad Fayyaz, Cllr Merrin Molesworth, Cllr Patricia Lindsley

John Durrant, Chequer Mead CEO, Hannah Kester, Deputy CEO, Cllr James Baldwin, Trustee and Leader of East Grinstead Town Council, Cllr Ginnie Waddingham, Deputy Mayor and Vice-Chair of Trustees and Chris Rolley, Town Clerk and Clerk to Trustees.

The population of East Grinstead is approximately 25,000.

The venue is a Victorian-built school, which was converted to a community theatre and arts centre 11 years ago. The centre is open 7 days a week. The building is fitted with an intruder alarm.

Trust Status and History

An earlier theatre in the town had closed. In 1992 East Grinstead Town Council purchased the building, conducted feasibility studies and then developed the centre using a lottery grant to fund a quarter of the total cost. The centre was run by the Chequer Meads (Arts Centre) Trust Limited for 7 years, before financial difficulties resulted in insolvency practitioners being called in in March 2004. This first trust was a company limited by guarantee and was composed of both councillors and non-councillors. Because of the various and conflicting views held by trustees, the trust did not gel very well.

During 2004/05 the town council operated the premises. Based on the advice of an appointed solicitor, a sole custodian trust, Chequer Meads Community Arts Centre, was then set up to commence in April 2005. The new trust has charitable status.

The benefits to having this charitable trust status are as follows:

- (i) The trust does not have to pay uniform business rates, which saves approximately £38,000 to £40,000 per year.
- (ii) The trust has easier access to grants than the town council
- (iii) The perception that the centre is not being run by a local authority, but by a trust in the community that everyone has an interest in helps attract volunteer support and develop the Friends group that raises money for the centre.

All councillors are trustees and the town clerk also acts as clerk to the trust. It is simple to change trustees (following an election, for example). The staff are employed by the trust and not by the town council. Staff have a stakeholder (not local authority) pension and they do not have local authority conditions or pay. The town council does not get involved in the detailed running of the centre. The town council leased the building to the trust on a pepper-corn rent for 28 years (it was thought that the Charity Commission would not approve of a term below 21 years). The trust has limited liability for its trustees, but this is dependent on the trustees providing assurance that they have taken the best decisions on the information that they have been given. Councillors advise that liability insurance is essential. It should also be noted that in the event of something going wrong, officers can be pursued by creditors, even though they are not trustees. It is therefore essential to have a clear audit trail and minuted decisions with a high level of scrutiny.

At the formation of the new trust, the town council provided the trust with an initial £50,000 followed by £80,400 per year (this does not increase with inflation). The total

amount of assets belonging to the trust is £165,000 currently. The town council only guaranteed the £80,400 per year until the next administration. The policy is to reduce the grant given to the trust, but only when it is prudent to do so (this is felt to be when the Trust has £250,000 in assets).

The town council has a Charities Committee, where trustees meet quarterly to make policy decisions, e.g. decisions about budget, hire rates, etc. The committee has full resolution powers. The trustees do not get involved in programming decisions. There is also a Planning and Review Group, where councillors and representatives from the Friends group deal with more day to day issues.

Staffing & Volunteers

All staff are based in the box office area at the front of the building. There are 10 staff, four of whom are full-time. The part-time staff work 20 to 25 hours per week. The staff are as follows:

Chief Executive Officer

Deputy CEO

Theatre Technical Manager

Assistant Theatre Technician

Marketing and Public Relations Assistant (two part-time job share personnel)

Finance Officer (part-time)

Administrative assistant (part-time)

Volunteer Co-ordinator (part-time)

Cleaner (part-time)

All stewarding is conducted by volunteers. There are approximately 100 volunteers who can be called upon and also undertake other functions, including box-office work, publicity, front-of-house, bar stewarding and technical work. Every quarter a lists of shows is sent out to the volunteer pool, and the volunteers sign up for particular tasks for shows which allows a staff rota to be devised. The theatre work hard to ensure that the volunteers are felt valued and that they have direct input into the development of the venue. For example, regular coffee mornings are held for the volunteers where they have the opportunity to put their ideas forward for the theatre. There is also a party held each year for the volunteers. Free car parking is made available for volunteers in the staff car park.

An arrangement with the local probation service has enabled people on community service to provide labour for maintenance work on the centre during the two-week shut down period after pantomime season.

Rooms at the venue include:

Restaurant area (with 12 tables), foyer, office/box office, meeting room, two dressing rooms, gallery, theatre (seating capacity 340), rehearsal/dance studio, technical store/office, and an arts/crafts workshop. Free of charge wireless internet access is provided for the use of visitors and facility users.

The variety of rooms available mean that the various rooms are hired for the following uses: business meetings, dance rehearsals, band rehearsals, martial arts classes, lectures, arts festivals and craft fairs.

Restaurant

The catering franchise operates on a 5-year contract and is held by a local family-run business. The catering business pays rent monthly, plus a percentage of their

income. If the theatre is not in use, private dinner functions can be held in the restaurant. Approximately 80 people can be seated in the restaurant.

Gallery

The gallery is used for exhibitions by local artists (sculpture, painting, textiles, photos, etc.) and is already fully booked for 2008. The gallery is manned by the exhibitors, the contract specifying that exhibitions are left at the exhibitor's risk. Functions are also held in the gallery and on show nights interval drinks are held in the gallery (with the displaying artist's permission).

Theatre

The theatre has a circle and an orchestra pit. There is no fly-tower. There is DDA access to the stage. There are wings and it is possible to walk around the back of the stage. There is no air conditioning as it was too expensive to install, but there is an air-handling system.

There is no projection unit for showing films, DVDs are used. Screening films is not a priority for the venue as there is a cinema nearby.

Hire and Rates

Part of the reason for the financial failure of the previous trust was the guarantees that were being given to artists in order to attract big names to the venue. Guarantees are no longer given. There are two hire rates for the theatre and gallery; community rate and commercial rate. There are three hire rates for the other rooms; community, commercial and regular (regular being the cheapest of all). The majority of hirers are community groups. All the costs are detailed in Appendix B of the centre's business plan. The hire rates are reviewed by the trustees every year.

Room hire is very successful. The rooms are almost fully booked in the evenings. During the day the rooms are hired by local businesses.

Parking

There is a car park opposite the venue. All-day parking costs £2.30. Parking is free after 6 pm. There is an additional, very large car park only a few minutes away from the centre.

Box Office

There are no dedicated box office staff. The box office is manned by the office staff and also by volunteers, both on show nights and sometimes during the day. Refunds on tickets are not given in advance, only if the tickets can be sold.

The Box Office is open from 9 to 6. On a show night the Box Office will remain open until the interval.

There are 6 phone lines in the office and bookings are also done online through Databox, although there have been significant technical problems with this system during the first six months of its operation. There is a £1.50 charge per ticket for booking online. There is a £1 charge per booking if tickets are bought at the box office. The online system works live with the ticketing system.

Promoters used to be able to take an unlimited number of tickets to sell, but this caused difficulties. Now promoters are given a percentage of tickets and the box office takes back all unsold tickets two weeks before the performance.

Friends of Chequer Mead

Members of the public can join the Friends of Chequer Mead at a cost of £10 per year. The Friends hold a number of events through the year, such as a Valentine's night and quiz nights. They also hold raffles during performances.

The Trust puts in bids for equipment to the Friends using the funds that the Friends have raised.

Publicity

There is a charge for appearing in the venue's brochure. Approximately 15,000 brochures are printed and 8,000 of these are mailed out to patrons who have attended in the last one to two years. Mail outs are done by volunteers. The remaining brochures are distributed to hotels, leisure centres, etc. A special mail out can be done for a particular show, but the company must supply stamped envelopes and they are charged staff time for stuffing the envelopes.

All leaflets, posters, etc. are produced by promoters.

The theatre has a policy of cross-promotion with theatres in nearby towns.

Notes from the Site Visit to Thame Town Hall on 9 November 2007

Present: Kathryn Graves, Jean Pritchard

Thame Town Council Officers: Morag Robinson (Customer Services & Office Manager) and Adam Barnes (Project Officer).

Facilities

Thame Town Hall is a Victorian building which consists of an Information Centre, which acts as a first point of contact for the town, district and county councils; a Tourist Information Point; a Meeting Room (one large table that can sit approximately 8 people); a Council Chamber (known as the Upper Chamber); a kitchen; and offices. There are toilets available for use by hirers, including a disabled toilet. There is a passenger lift and a goods lift. The Town Council also operates two car parks in Thame centre on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council, which operate on a time-limited free parking basis (3 hours free parking).

Included in the hire of the Upper Chamber (15m x 9m) is the use of the kitchen and the following:

24 tables, 90 chairs, crockery (no glasses), electric cooker, fridge, hot water heater, microwave and kettle.

The following are not provided:

Washing up liquid, hand and tea towels, dish cloth, plastic beaker, cutlery (available upon request), saucepans and other cooking equipment.

The Upper Chamber can accommodate 120 people standing, 90 sitting.

The Tourist Information point was set up following the closure of Thame TIC in 2006. The Information Point does not sell tickets or arrange accommodation, but provides local information. There are also two PCs that can be used for free by the public to access the internet. Internet Nanny is installed to prevent inappropriate use. Printing is charged at 10p per sheet.

Staff

Under Morag Robinson's line management, the following staff are concerned with the operation of the Town Hall facilities and car parks: two Customer Services Officers (one part-time) who man the front desk and maintain the council's website, one Caretaker (who works 2 hours per day and also cleans the Upper Chamber), one Office Cleaner and three part time Car Park Attendants.

Licences & Use

The Town Hall is currently not licensed for weddings or civil partnership ceremonies and does not have an alcohol licence. The council does not actively market the hire of the Upper Chamber or Meeting Room.

The Upper Chamber is the main room that is hired and is used by local groups, such as the town twinning group and environmental group and for classes, such as a pilates class.

Application Form, Conditions of Hire, Charges

Copies of the application form and conditions of hire of the Upper Chamber were provided.

The charges for the hire of the Upper Chamber and the meeting room are as follows:

£22 per hour (between 08:00 and 23:00)

£25 per hour (between 23:00 and 01:00) with all-night storage of goods charged at the same rate.

There is a lower rate for Thame charities and Thame branches of national charities:

£10 per hour (between 08:00 and 23:00)

£25 per hour (between 23:00 and 01:00) with all-night storage of goods charged at the same rate.

Free use is granted by the Council for certain local groups, e.g. the local conservation group.

There is one regular hirer who books and pays for more than 10 sessions at a time and is given a 10% discount. However, this is an informal arrangement and block booking discounts are not publicised.

Payment is taken by the staff at the Information Centre, either by cash or cheque. Monies go through a till and a weekly spreadsheet is kept. The Council is currently investigating installing card processing facilities. Payment must be received one month in advance of the hire.

If a hirer is to be at the Town Hall for longer than three hours, the hirer only will be provided with a car parking permit to allow them to stay over 3 hours in the car park immediately in front of the Town Hall.

The application forms can be downloaded from the Council's website:

<http://www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/infopage.asp?infoid=1258>

The form can either be printed off and filled in, or filled in electronically and returned by email.

Banners may be hung from the Town Hall for up to seven days, subject to certain conditions. This is free of charge for community organisations, but commercial organisations hiring the hall are charged £25.

Health & Safety

The booking form has recently been amended following a fire risk assessment to ensure that a hirer is appointed as a "temporary responsible person".

All groups holding events or classes must have public liability insurance.

The Council do not currently ask hirers to supply a risk assessment and have confirmed that their insurers do not require them to do so. However, they are considering implementing a generic form for hirers to fill in.

Accident forms are available in the kitchen, in case an accident occurs when the Town Hall offices are unstaffed.

Charges

A comparison was made of some of the charges at the different theatres with those at The Elgiva. These can be seen in the below tables:

Theatre:	Cost of amateur theatre tickets:
The Elgiva	£8 to £16
Guildhall, Derby	£10 to £15.50
Thameside, Grays	£5 to £13.50
Chequer Mead, East Grinstead	£10 to £15.50

The lower price range of tickets at Thameside reflects the difference in the socio-economic make-up of the community served by this theatre in comparison with The Elgiva as can be seen from the below data taken from the 2001 census. The rankings in the below table represent the authority's rank out of the 376 local and unitary authorities in England and Wales. Rankings are calculated in descending order: the authority with the highest proportion for a given indicator is ranked '1'.

	Thurrock	Chiltern
Unemployment	123/376	351/376
Lone parent households with dependent children	115/376	369/376
Qualified to degree level or higher	366/367	21/376
No qualifications	65/376	363/376
General health 'not good'	247/376	372/376

Theatre:	Technical Extras – Hire of follow spots	Technical Extras – Hire of radio mics	Technical Extras – Hire of data projector
The Elgiva	£6.50 per unit per day	£6.50 per unit per day	£61 per day
Guildhall, Derby	No info	No info	No info
Thameside, Grays	£20 per unit per session	£25 per unit per session	£50 per session + £10 per hour. Minimum hire 1 hour.
Chequer Mead, East Grinstead	Price on application only	Price on application only	£34 per day

The following tables outline the scales of charges for hiring each theatre:

The Elgiva, Chesham

	Chesham Amateur Theatre		Non-Chesham Amateur Theatre		Non Chesham Professional/Non theatre
	9am-11pm	6pm-11pm	9am-11pm	6pm-11pm	9am-11pm
Mon-Tue	£300	£290	£355	£345	£510
Wed-Thu	£330	£300	£395	£375	£575
Fri-Sat	£370	£315	£500	£460	£725
Sun/Bank Hol	£390	£340	£565	£530	£795
Weekly	£2180		£2760		£4395

Guildhall, Derby

	Standard Rates		Commercial Rate
	Mon to Thu	Fri to Sun	Mon to Sun
Performance	£265	£360	£520
Set up/Rehearsal	£200	£265	
Matinee	£85	£105	
Overtime (after 10h)	£40 per hour	£40 per hour	

Thameside, Grays

	Standard			Thurrock Commercial			Outside Thurrock Commercial		
	Standard Hour	6-11 pm	After 11 pm	Standard Hour	6-11 pm	After 11 pm	Standard Hour	6-11 pm	After 11 pm
Mon-Thu	£41	£182	£95	£94	£310	£132	£108	£385	£143
Fri	£53	£334	£120	£99	£521	£143	£108	£616	£160
Sat	£66	£440	£176	£102	£680	£198	£116	£847	£267
Sun	£86	£528	£198	£166	£800	£264	£176	£1012	£297

Thameside also charges a performance surcharge of £61.28 + VAT for every performance where an audience will be admitted.

Chequer Mead, East Grinstead

	Community				Commercial				
	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun	Weekly	Mon-Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Weekly
9am-1pm	£158	£173	£173	£3192	£266	£271	£293	£316	£5952
1pm-5pm	£158	£238	£238		£266	£271	£293	£412	
5pm-11pm	£245	£390	£390		£411	£630	£672	£704	
9am-11pm	£488	£644	£644		£845	£975	£1029	£1082	
11pm-Midnight	£83 p/h	£83 p/h	£83 p/h	£83 p/h	£83 p/h	£83 p/h	£83 p/h	£83 p/h	£83 p/h
Midnight-9am	£122 p/h	£122 p/h	£122 p/h	£122 p/h	£122 p/h	£122 p/h	£122 p/h	£122 p/h	£122 p/h

The following table compares the room hire charges for the council chambers at Thame and Chesham Town Halls:

	Chesham	Thame Standard Rate	Thame Charities Rate
8 am – 11 pm	£42 p/h	£22 p/h	£10 p/h
11 pm – 1am	N/A	£25 p/h	£25 p/h
All night goods storage	N/A	£25 p/h	£25 p/h

The Chamber at Thame is in need of renovation and does not have modern facilities, unlike those at Chesham Town Hall. It also does not have an alcohol licence.

Following the site visits, the Challenge Panel agreed the following:

The Elgiva

The Elgiva did compare favourably with the other venues in terms of financial performance.

The Elgiva should review its hire charges for technical equipment.

Investigations should be made into running The Elgiva as a sole custodian trust.

The Town Hall

Chesham's facilities compared well with those at Thame and are actively marketed, unlike Thame.

The block booking discount should be reduced from 50%.

Future investigations should be made into running the Town Hall's community rooms through a sole custodian trust.

6. COMPETE

The Panel considered whether it would be possible or desirable for external bodies to take over the running of The Elgiva or the Town Hall.

(i) The Elgiva

It was noted that when the 2002/03 Elgiva review panel approached three private management companies to see if they would be interested in managing the Elgiva, none of the companies expressed an interest.

(ii) Town Hall

In the 2002/03 review of the Town Hall, the challenge panel investigated whether it was feasible for external agencies/organisations to manage the Town Hall. A number of difficulties associated with external management were identified, including the need for a member of staff on site with associated office space.

Following discussion, the Panel agreed that:

The Panel did not feel that it would be worthwhile to pursue management by private management companies based on the results of the 2002/03 review.

7. IMPROVEMENT MEASURES

Having considered the 4 'C's of Best Value and particularly the main issues pertinent to this service, the Panel has put forward a number of suggestions for an action plan designed to lead to continuous improvement. All of the below were debated and the Panel decided upon which should be progressed and recommended to Council for adoption.

PROPOSAL	RECOMMEND FOR ADOPTION ?
The Elgiva	
Investigate operating The Elgiva as a sole custodian trust.	YES
Make improvements to The Elgiva's town centre poster sites.	YES*
Install on-line booking system.	YES**
Review hire rates for technical extras.	YES
Investigate feasibility of extending box office opening hours	YES
Investigate feasibility of increasing the number of box office phone lines	YES
Investigate improvements to the heating/air cooling in the auditorium.	YES
Devise a five-year action plan in line with recommendations from the Elgiva Board of Management	YES
Town Hall	
Investigate the cost-effectiveness of accepting payment by credit/debit card.	YES
Reduce the block booking discount from 50%.	YES
Replace the display board for bookings.	YES***
Install a name plate for the Meeting Room.	YES
Future investigations be made into running the community rooms through a sole custodian trust.	YES

* Following vandalism, the roundel in the High Street outside Sainsbury's was removed.

** Following approval by the Elgiva Board of Management and town council, an online booking service was made available to customers from July 2008.

*** A replacement display board was purchased and installed in July 2008.

APPENDIX 1

BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW - BASELINE DOCUMENT

THE ELGIVA 2007/08

1. Definition of the Service:

Opened in November 1998, The Elgiva is a multi-purpose community theatre owned, managed and funded by Chesham Town Council and is based in the heart of Chesham. The Town Council provides this service to achieve its mission statement which is `To improve the quality of life of the residents of Chesham`. The Elgiva is charged, therefore, with achieving this aim, and attempts to `improve the quality of life` by ensuring that a `varied programme of entertainment, social and cultural activities is available to all sections of the community`. The Council has adopted this strategic objective as its reason for the continued provision of this service.

2. What Is The Service?

The service is a venue that provides the following: an artistic programme of live and cinematic events available on an almost daily basis to the community; the ability to hire the venue for private, business and artistic purposes; a foyer café and bar; provision of work experience for local students; a focal and meeting point for local groups (mother and toddler groups and, indeed, theatre groups).

3. What Are The Specific Aims Of The Service?

The specific aims of the service within the community are:-

- (1) to attempt to build and strengthen the venue's accessibility and reputation within the local community
- (2) to offer a first class, wide range and well-respected programme of entertainment, which is seen by members of the community in preference to going outside the area
- (3) to achieve customer and staff satisfaction, and thereby attract more income into the venue
- (4) to attract more local and private hires into the venue and make it a hub for community usage
- (5) to keep the cost of the service down to a mutually agreed level, whilst still providing a first class and efficient service

4. How Is The Service Delivered?

The service provided by the Elgiva hinges around the sensitive and responsive programming by the manager that is publicised to the local community:

- Publicity – is delivered by the provision of a regularly up-dated website, the use of newspaper editorials and adverts, the publication of three issues of the theatre's What's On brochure (which can be collected from the theatre, Town Hall, libraries, mailed out to customers and is also delivered to 38,000 homes by the Royal Mail's Door-to-Door service), and the use of banners in front of the theatre and poster sites around town.

Once the service has been publicised to the customers the tickets for events then have to be sold. This service is facilitated by the provision of a box office between 10am and 3pm six days a week and for one hour prior to evening performances:

- Tickets may also be ordered or requested by e-mailing the box office, faxing or writing to the box office.

Once tickets have been purchased, they may be posted out to a customer or held on the premises until collected. On a performance day in particular, the venue is operated by the following staff: the manager (full time), deputy manager (full time), technical manager (full time), technical assistant (full time), box office assistants (part time), contracted catering staff (part time), bar supervisor (part time), bar staff (casual), volunteer stewards, contracted cleaning staff (part time) and casual technicians (part time). These staff ensure the smooth running of the venue and its availability to customers and users.

5. What Does The Service Consist Of?

The programme of the venue covers a wide range of events. A typical year at the Elgiva would contain the following events:

- Amateur dramatic productions
- Local dance schools
- Local performing arts schools
- Cinema screening, including Chiltern Film Club
- Professional dance/ballet shows
- Children's productions
- Professional pantomime
- Rock nights
- Private/community hire

The programme for an `average year` represents an attraction, broadly, across the whole community. Some patrons may only attend community events, or cinema, or theatre. The intention, however, of providing a varied

programme is to encourage as many local people into the building as possible.

A long stay car park surrounds The Elgiva which is 'Pay and Display' and owned and managed by Chiltern District Council. The car park can accommodate 70 vehicles and includes three spaces for registered disabled users.

6. Reasons For The Current Programming Decisions

The factors that determine the programming of the venue are varied. The reasons `why` the manager programmes the venue in the way that it is currently timetabled are as follows:

- Demand – popularity of events or desire for those events as shown by attendance or requests. For example, cinema or pantomime
- Facilities – whether or not the Elgiva is designed for, or can cope, with a proposed event. For example, dinner dances or conferences
- Competition – other local venues who provide similar or more appropriate facilities which may lure customers away. For example, the White Hill Centre, Chartridge Conference Centre or Wycombe Swan
- Cost – the cost of the venue may encourage some users and prohibit others. For example, Chesham Model Railway Club moved to the Elgiva because, even though it was more expensive than their previous venue, it was more accessible
- Tradition – some local groups continue to use similar slots in the timetable based on tradition and expectation
- Analysis has also provided us with the time of year to programme events e.g.: dance sells extremely well in autumn / winter but performs very badly in late spring or summer. For these reasons no events will be programmed in August with this month being set aside for maintenance only

The programming of a year's diary is usually achieved on a mixture of accepting regular bookings from returning or first time hirers, or by looking for and encouraging new hirers into the venue, or in house programming of product.

7. Regular Hirers Of the Venue

The Elgiva is used by many local groups and people. Below is a list of hirers for 2006/07:

- Amersham and Wycombe College
- Amersham Dance Studio
- Ashley Green Youth Centre
- Big Dog Theatre Company
- Blag Youth Theatre
- Boost Performing Arts

- Boxmoor Dance Academy
- Buckinghamshire County Council
- Chesham Arts Festival
- Chesham Bois Catholic Players
- Chesham Chamber of Trade and Commerce
- Chesham Model Railway Club
- Chesham Musical Theatre Company
- Chesham Park Community College
- Chesham Theatre Company
- Chesham Town Twinning Association
- Chess Valley Barbershop Singers
- Chess Valley Male Voice Choir
- Chiltern Youth Chamber Orchestra
- Chiltern Young Enterprise
- Harmony Dance School
- Maggie Monk School Of Dancing
- New Penny Theatre Company
- Panda Players
- Rickmansworth Players
- Sargent & Plester School of Dance

These local groups include a cross-section of the local community who use the Elgiva and who also bring friends, families and colleagues to see their shows.

8. Ongoing Objectives For The Service

The Council's objectives for the theatre's future are to attempt to:

- continue to heighten the profile of the venue
- regularly quality assess the service we provide
- increase the publicity and awareness of events at the venue
- promote more positive press relations
- increase income to maintain an acceptable level of subsidy
- increase the number of Chesham residents who use the facility
- continue to offer the best quality theatrical events possible

9. Categories of Demand

The demand which is placed on the venue is currently divided into the following categories:

- amateur and community hire (details of groups who hire the theatre are listed on page 3)
- cinema
- professional theatrical productions (including pantomime, one nighters, music and dance)

The programming of the venue attempts to accommodate all of the above `demands` on the theatre's time. The business plan requires a set number of weeks / days in each category, which is broadly adhered to. Below is a table which details the business plan's requirements and compares that to the actual usage in the financial year 2006/07:

BUSINESS PLAN REQUIREMENTS	ACTUAL USAGE IN 2006/07
10 weeks amateur productions	12 weeks amateur productions
2 weeks dance schools	5 weeks dance/performing arts
1 week festival (Arts Festival)	1 week festival
30 weeks of film (showing 4 days per week)	80 days of film
1 dance/ballet production per year	3 dance/ballet productions
4 weeks pantomime	4 weeks professional / 2 weeks amateur
Children's productions	21 days of children's productions
10 Rock Nights (including local bands)	13 Rock Nights (including 2 local events)
10 x 11-15 discos	No longer
4 high profile / low risk events	9 high profile/low risk events

The results for usage for 2006/07 shows the Elgiva Theatre was available and either used/hired for 334 days out of 365 and closed to the public for 31 days (19 of these days were taken up by necessary annual maintenance).

The Elgiva is open on average six days in every seven. However, when the venue is made available for hire by local amateur groups, the theatre may not necessarily be open to the public, but used by the hirer to prepare and rehearse their productions.

The bar is open and available for service on most occasions when events are taking place at the theatre. The Spotlight Café is open six days a week from 10am until 3pm (in line with the Box Office opening hours).

10. Cost and Unit Data

The table of fees and charges payable for the hire of the Elgiva from 1 April 2007 (see below) were approved by the Recreation and the Arts Committee on 27 November 2006. The fees and charges are reviewed annually. The Manager has been allowed some flexibility within the hire rates and has been authorized to make suitable changes and to use his discretion if the changes are for the benefit of the theatre and to avoid losing potential bookings.

AMATEUR THEATRE PRODUCTIONS (CHESHAM BASED COMPANIES)

HIRE PERIOD	HIRE CHARGE
Full week (Sunday to Saturday)	£2180 (inc VAT)
9am-11pm Mon or Tues	£300 (inc VAT)
9am – 11pm Wed or Thurs	£330 (inc VAT)
9am – 11pm Fri or Sat	£370 (inc VAT)
9am – 11pm Sun or Bank Holidays	£390 (inc VAT)
6pm – 11pm Mon or Tues	£290 (inc VAT)
6pm – 11pm Wed or Thurs	£300 (inc VAT)
6pm – 11pm Fri or Sat	£315 (inc VAT)
6pm – 11pm Sun or Bank Holidays	£340 (inc VAT)

AMATEUR THEATRE PRODUCTIONS (NON-CHESHAM BASED COMPANIES)

HIRE PERIOD	HIRE CHARGE
Full week (Sunday to Saturday)	£2760 (inc VAT)
FULL DAY USE	
9am-11pm Mon or Tues	£355 (inc VAT)
9am – 11pm Wed or Thurs	£395 (inc VAT)
9am – 11pm Fri or Sat	£500 (inc VAT)
9am – 11pm Sun or Bank Holidays	£565 (inc VAT)
EVENING USE ONLY	
6pm – 11pm Mon or Tues	£345 (inc VAT)
6pm – 11pm Wed or Thurs	£375 (inc VAT)
6pm – 11pm Fri or Sat	£460 (inc VAT)
6pm – 11pm Sun or Bank Holidays	£530 (inc VAT)

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

SERVICE	CHARGE
Additional staff per hour	£15 (plus VAT)
Hire of technician after midnight	£30 (plus VAT)
Hire of Duty Manager after midnight	£30 (plus VAT)
Stage Electricity Used	£56 (plus VAT)
Piano hire – Yamaha C7 (not tuned)	£28 (plus VAT)
Ticket admin (per performance)	£26 (plus VAT)
Ticket commission	6% of gross (plus VAT)
Display of publicity material	£53.50 (plus VAT)
Radio mic hire (per unit per day)	£6.50 (plus VAT)
Smoke machine (per unit per day)	£12 (plus VAT)
Follow spots (per unit per day)	£6.50 (plus VAT)
Data/Video projector (per day)	£61 (plus VAT)
Credit Card Commission	Not charged

DINNER DANCES, CONFERENCES, PRESENTATIONS, CONCERTS, NON-CHESHAM BASED PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR COMPANIES

HIRE PERIOD	HIRE CHARGE
FULL WEEK (SUNDAY TO SATURDAY)	£4395 (inc VAT)*
9am – 11pm Mon or Tues	£510 (inc VAT)
9am – 11pm Weds or Thurs	£575 (inc VAT)
9am – 11pm Fri or Sat	£725 (inc VAT)
9am – 11pm Sun or Bank Holidays	£795 (inc VAT)

*Amateur companies outside Chesham receive a 10% discount on the full week charge.

A detailed income and expenditure account for the service is reproduced as **Appendix 1**.

11. Consultation with users

There is currently an on-going customer survey being undertaken, and customer views are being sought on a range of issues, including:

1. Programming of venue
2. Cost of venue to users and customers
3. Current additional facilities - bar, café, box office
4. Publicity and marketing
5. Accessibility

Appendix 1: Detailed income and expenditure account for 2006/07

	Actual Year to Date	Revised Annual Budget	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
SALARIES	158,783	157,500	-1,283		
CONTRACTORS' FEES	8,813	8,500	-313		
BAR OVERHEADS	13,812	14,200	388		
STAFF APPOINTMENTS	0	100	100		
TRAINING	-599	1,500	2,099		
TRAVELLING	43	0	-43		
MISC STAFF COSTS	179	1,800	1,621		
RATES	11,171	11,220	49		
WATER RATES	3,762	4,500	738		
ELECTRICITY	8,975	7,500	-1,475		
GAS	6,646	5,500	-1,146		
CLEANING, ETC.	2,315	2,400	85		
SKIP HIRE	1,139	1,310	171		
TELEPHONE & FAX	2,447	2,500	53		
POSTAGE	10,742	8,000	-2,742		
STATIONERY	3,498	5,000	1,502		
SUBSCRIPTIONS	10	10	0		
INSURANCE	7,349	6,825	-524		
PUBLIC LICENCES	906	1,500	594		
RECRUITMENT ADVERTS	2,485	800	-1,685		
OTHER ADVERTISING	909	2,500	1,591		
PUBLICITY	24,139	28,000	3,861		
PANTO PUBLICITY	622	320	-302		
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	971	820	-151		
MAINTENANCE CONTRACT	7,715	11,070	3,355		
PROPERTY HIRE	660	0	-660		
EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	3,078	2,000	-1,078		
VEHICLE FUEL	0	370	370		
ALARM	817	830	13		
EQUIPMENT	1,178	875	-303		
CONSUMABLES	2,520	3,500	980		
ADMIN STAFF RECHARGE	8,400	8,400	0		
ADMIN OVERHEAD	4,513	4,750	237		
RECHARGE					
DEPOT STAFF RECHARGE	128	25	-103		
DEPOT OVERHEAD	149	25	-124		
RECHARGE					
WATER CHECKS	790	360	-430		
FLOWER BEDS, ETC.	0	230	230		
HOSPITALITY	411	450	39		
COUNCIL PRODUCTIONS	45,550	35,340	-10,210		
CINEMA PRODUCTIONS	14,309	11,880	-2,429		
PANTO PRODUCTION	61,800	63,900	2,100		
COST					

	Actual Year to Date	Revised Annual Budget	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
PANTO CREW	4,296	5,000	704		
PANTO EFFECTS	388	250	-138		
CREDIT CARD	3,972	3,300	-672		
SUNDRY EXPENSES	499	475	-24		
WEB SITE	144	440	296		
COMPUTER SUPPORT	0	35	35		
The Elgiva Expenditure	430,434	425,810	-4,624	0	-4,624
BAR COST OF SALES	22,533	26,000	3,467		
ICE CREAM COSTS	4,972	4,305	-667		
RIBENA/LUCOZADE COSTS	1,931	1,185	-746		
The Elgiva Direct Expenditure	29,436	31,490	2,054	0	2,054
BAR SALES	58,966	60,500	1,534		
ICE CREAM SALES	14,470	12,300	-2,170		
RIBENA SALES	1,853	1,500	-353		
HIRE FEES	59,942	50,000	-9,942		
WAYLEAVES	100	75	-25		
INTERNAL GRANTS	0	1,400	1,400		
CINEMA	32,735	25,000	-7,735		
CINEMA MEDIA	4,096	3,000	-1,096		
COUNCIL PROMOTIONS	49,719	45,660	-4,059		
PANTO TICKETS	86,481	77,800	-8,681		
CATERING	6,596	6,740	144		
TICKET ADMIN CHARGE	3,082	2,290	-792		
COMMISSION - TICKETS	9,471	6,400	-3,071		
PANTO SPONSORSHIP	3,000	2,925	-75		
PANTO SUNDRY INCOME	496	245	-251		
CARD CHARGES	5,515	4,400	-1,115		
PANTO MERCHANDISE	323	295	-28		
PROGRAMMES	912	985	73		
EQUIPMENT HIRE	5,276	3,700	-1,576		
STAFF CHARGES	596	540	-56		
ELECTRICITY RECHARGE	2,341	2,350	10		
PUBLICITY INCOME	2,673	1,680	-993		
OVERS/UNDERS	29	0	-29		
BAR OVERS/UNDERS	-52	0	52		
SUNDRY INCOME	1,162	425	-737		
The Elgiva Income	349,781	310,210	-39,571		
Net Expenditure Over Income	110,090	147,090	37,000		

Detailed income and expenditure account for 2007/08

	Actual Year to Date	Revised Annual Budget	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
SALARIES	165,349	163,000	-2,349		
CONTRACTORS' FEES	11,160	9,350	-1,810		
BAR OVERHEADS	11,930	16,000	4,070		
STAFF APPOINTMENTS	0	50	50		
TRAINING	564	1,500	936		
TRAVELLING	87	0	-87		
MISC STAFF COSTS	935	1,000	65		
RATES	11,455	11,570	115		
WATER RATES	5,812	4,700	-1,112		
ELECTRICITY	8,096	8,800	704		
GAS	5,895	8,250	2,355		
CLEANING, ETC.	2,363	2,500	137		
SKIP HIRE	1,313	1,190	-123		
TELEPHONE & FAX	2,255	2,865	610		
POSTAGE	9,252	10,400	1,148		
STATIONERY	4,204	5,000	796		
SUBSCRIPTIONS	60	10	-50		
INSURANCE	7,510	7,500	-10		
PUBLIC LICENCES	1,223	850	-373		
RECRUITMENT ADVERTS	664	750	86		
OTHER ADVERTISING	1,345	1,300	-45		
PUBLICITY	24,548	25,000	452		
PANTO PUBLICITY	505	425	-80		
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	2,797	700	-2,097		
MAINTENANCE CONTRACT	8,344	8,500	156		
PROPERTY HIRE	626	150	-476		
EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	4,852	2,500	-2,352		
VEHICLE FUEL	0	385	385		
ALARM	843	860	17		
EQUIPMENT	1,084	875	-209		
CONSUMABLES	4,343	3,000	-1,343		
ADMIN STAFF RECHARGE	8,735	8,735	0		
ADMIN OVERHEAD RECHARGE	3,574	5,200	1,626		
DEPOT STAFF RECHARGE	0	185	185		
DEPOT OVERHEAD	0	165	165		
RECHARGE					
WATER CHECKS	465	400	-65		
FLOWER BEDS, ETC.	0	230	230		
HOSPITALITY	307	270	-37		
INSURANCE CLAIMS	220	0	-220		
COUNCIL PRODUCTIONS	61,466	47,500	-13,966		
CINEMA PRODUCTIONS	10,505	11,835	-1,330		
PANTO PRODUCTION COST	73,494	63,900	-9,594		
PANTO CREW COSTS	5,802	4,565	-1,237		
PANTO EFFECTS	503	250	-253		
CREDIT CARD	4,161	4,880	719		

	Actual Year to Date	Revised Annual Budget	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
SUNDRY EXPENSES	519	475	-44		
WEB SITE	74	500	426		
COMPUTER SUPPORT	58	300	242		
The Elgiva Expenditure	469,304	448,370	-20,934	0	-20,934
BAR SUPPLIES	26,346	25,410	-936		
ICE CREAM SUPPLIES	4,743	5,000	257		
COLD DRINKS SUPPLIES	994	1,100	106		
The Elgiva Direct Expenditure	32,083	31,510	-573	0	-573
BAR SALES	61,067	60,500	-567		
ICE CREAM SALES	12,818	14,000	-1,182		
ELGIVA VENDING SALES	1,411	1,700	289		
HIRE FEES	50,340	55,000	4,660		
WAYLEAVES	25	100	75		
CINEMA	30,308	29,820	-488		
CINEMA MEDIA	5,895	3,000	-2,895		
COUNCIL PROMOTIONS	84,751	65,000	-19,751		
PANTO TICKETS	99,179	77,800	-21,379		
CATERING	6,905	6,830	-75		
TICKET ADMIN CHARGE	2,306	2,530	224		
COMMISSION - TICKETS	7,823	7,800	-23		
PANTO SPONSORSHIP	3,000	3,000	0		
PANTO SUNDRY INCOME	365	250	-115		
CARD CHARGES	5,225	5,800	575		
PANTO MERCHANDISE	303	300	-3		
PROGRAMMES	1,190	985	-205		
EQUIPMENT HIRE	2,830	4,500	-1,670		
STAFF CHARGES	719	500	-219		
ELECTRICITY RECHARGE	2,581	2,130	-451		
PUBLICITY INCOME	1,060	2,700	1,641		
OVERS/UNDERS	48	0	-48		
BAR OVERS/UNDERS	53	0	-53		
SUNDRY INCOME	498	445	-53		
The Elgiva Income	380,698	344,690	-36,008		
Net Expenditure Over Income	120,689	135,190	14,501		

APPENDIX 2

BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEW - BASELINE DOCUMENT

CHESHAM TOWN HALL 2007/08

1. Definition of the Service:

The Town Hall, which opened in September 1998, is a building combining an office suite for the Town Clerk and the administration staff, a chamber for Council meetings and three rooms for community use. The following rooms are available for hire:

- The Council Chamber
- Community Hall
- Lowndes Room
- Small Meeting Room/upstairs kitchen

The Town Hall replaces the facility previously available in the Council's former community building known as 'The Malt House'. The Town Council provides this service to satisfy its mission statement, which is 'To improve the quality of life of the residents of Chesham'.

2. What Is The Service?

The service is a two-storey venue with lift to the first floor that provides a range of rooms for community use overlooking Lowndes Park. It is accessible on foot from the High Street through Baines Walk, a five-minute walk from the London Underground Station, and by car through Star Yard Car Park, off Blucher Street.

3. What Are The Specific Aims Of The Service?

The specific aims of the service within the community are:-

- (6) to provide a high standard, cost-effective service that helps to meet the needs and wishes of the residents
- (7) to ensure high quality social, recreational and cultural facilities are available to all sections of the community

4. How Is The Service Delivered?

Bookings are taken at the Town Hall office by telephone, email or in person and confirmed when an application form has been completed, signed and returned with the fee due. This is the procedure in most cases, but hirers who require an invoice will be invoiced monthly in advance of their hire date(s). Hirers organising social functions are required to pay a returnable surety deposit of £100, which is held by the office.

Civil ceremonies and weddings are also held at the Town Hall in the Lowndes Suite (Council Chamber). Dates throughout the year are booked previously with the Registrar's Office so these dates are then available for couples to book through the Registrar; the office is then notified by the Registrar, indicating how many weddings will take place and how many guests per wedding will be attending.

The Town Council employs two part-time caretakers. One caretaker covers the duties during the day and the other caretaker covers evenings and weekends. The caretakers' duties include security of the building, cleaning, and preparation of the rooms for hirers, Council meetings and Council-related partnership meetings. This will include the setting out of tables, chairs, refreshments and presentation equipment if required.

Marketing of the venue is undertaken with advertisements in local publications, e.g. the Town Guide and the Chiltern Chronicle, published leaflets and the Council website.

5. What Does The Service Consist Of?

All rooms have disabled access, use of a kitchen facility and there is a baby changing facility in the ground floor disabled toilet. Hirers may also request the use of cutlery, crockery, an overhead projector, screen and flipchart, which are included in the hourly charge. A laptop, data projector, wireless internet connection and delegate microphones may be hired at additional cost. Tea, coffee and biscuits are also provided at a small, additional charge.

The Community Hall is located on the ground floor and has a seating capacity for 100, 90 for receptions, parties, etc. or a clear floor of 125 m². The Hall has adjoining kitchen facilities. The Community Hall is used extensively by clubs, groups and other local organisations as well as private/social hire.

The Lowndes Room is on the first floor and can seat up to 50 and has its own private kitchen. It is commonly used for meetings, classes and children's groups.

The Council Chamber (also on the first floor) can accommodate 100 and is used for Council committee meetings. It is also ideal for conferences and training courses. The Town Hall is Chesham's only licensed venue for civil marriages and partnerships and the Chamber is used for these ceremonies. The Chamber is normally available for use one day per month for these ceremonies, which are conducted through the Beaconsfield Register Office. The Chamber is referred to as The Lowndes Suite when used for marriage and partnership ceremonies.

The Small Meeting Room (also on the first floor) can hold eight people. It is kept available for use as kitchen facilities by hirers of the Council Chamber, but when not required it is used for meetings.

Most rooms have a variety of bookings and detailed below is a sample of use in each room:

COMMUNITY HALL	CHAMBER	LOWNDES ROOM	MEETING ROOM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dancing - Aerobics/Keep Fit - English Classes - Bridge Club - Slimming Club - Celebration parties - Discos - Jumble sales - Older Persons' Christmas Party - Dinners/Receptions - Beer festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisation Meetings - Training Days - Business Meetings - Seminars - Council Meetings - Council partnership meetings - Civil partnership and marriage ceremonies - Slimming Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ante-natal classes - Birthday parties - Group meetings - Children's play groups - Business meetings - Child clinics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings

The short stay Catlings car park surrounds the Town Hall, which is 'Pay and Display' and owned and managed by the Chiltern District Council. The car park can accommodate 59 vehicles and includes three disabled spaces. Three bike racks are fixed to the front wall of the Town Hall.

6. Hirers of the Venue

The table overleaf is a list of hirers of the building during 2006/07. Hirers with an asterisk have a minimum of ten booking per year, which entitles them to a 50% discount. Free-of-charge Council-related bookings have not been listed.

HIRER ('individual' or group name)	PURPOSE
Acclaim Safety Services	Meeting
Adult Community Service	Workshop
Amersham & Wycombe College*	English Class
Bageint Ltd	Meeting
Beaconsfield Register Office	Civil Partnership/Marriage Ceremonies
Blease	Meeting
BMG Research	Meeting
Buckinghamshire Association for the Blind	Exhibition
Buckinghamshire County Council	Meeting/Training Course/Workshop
Buckinghamshire Mind	Meeting
Buckinghamshire Older People's Forum	Meeting
Carers *	Meeting
Bridge Club*	Bridge Club
Bucks Carers	Exhibition
Catalyst Housing Group	Meeting
Ceroc Chilterns Dance Workshop	Dance workshop
Chamber of Trade and Commerce*	Meeting
Chesham Afternoon Ladies' Club*	Meeting
Chesham Building Society	Meeting
Chesham Camera Club	Exhibition
Chesham Evening Towns Women's Guild*	Meeting
Chesham MENCAP	Lunch
Chesham Older Person's Action Group*	Meeting
Chesham Round Table	Beer Festival
Chesham Society*	Meeting
Chiltern & South Bucks Primary Care Trust	Meeting
Chiltern Citizens Advice Bureau	Meeting
Chiltern District Council	Cultural Event/Meeting
Chiltern Ford	Meeting
Chiltern Liberal Democrats*	Meeting
Chiltern Local Area Policing Board	Meeting
Chiltern Racial Equality Council	Cultural Event/Meeting
Chilterns Conservation Board	Seminar
Chilterns Dog Rescue Society	Meeting
Chilterns Gateway Club	Meeting
Churchview Funeral Directors	Carol Service
Diabetes*	Meeting
Drug Prevention Club*	Meeting
Egyptian Belly Dance*	Belly Dancing Class
Eleanor School of Dance*	Dance Class
Essex County Council	Meeting
Exxcom	Meeting
EYDCS	Training
Fanboy Comics*	Games Club
The Freedom Programme*	Counselling
Garnett Foundation	Meeting
Germaine Group*	Meeting
Healthright	Meeting
Hospice of St Francis	Fayre
Individual x28	Party/Luncheon
Individual	Blessing
Individual x2	Christmas Fayre
Individual X2	Tools Class
Individual x2	Funeral Reception
Individual x3	Meeting
Individual x2	Naming Ceremony
Individual	Play Group

Individual	Quiz Evening
Individual	Taster Event
Individual	Tribunal
Individual x7	Wedding Reception
Individual	Yoga
Individual	Creative Express/Story Time
Individual*	Aerobics Class
Individual	Pilates
Initial Senco	Training
Inner Wheel Club*	Meeting
James Antiques	Meeting
Jo Jingles*	Children's Class
Ley Hill School	Tour of Town Hall
Ley Hill Solutions	Meeting
Little Drum*	Children's Class
Mansel Hearing	Exhibition
National Childbirth Trust*	Antenatal Class
National Childminding Association	Childminding Clinic
Neighbourhood Watch	Meeting
NHS*	Antenatal Class
NHS*	Postnatal Class
NHS*	Baby Clinic
NHS*	Parenthood Classes
NHS*	Development Checks
Oxford House*	Meeting
Paradigm Housing	Meeting
Peoples Voices	Meeting
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	Meeting
Sainsbury's	Meeting
Slimming World*	Slimming Club
South Buckinghamshire Mental Health Network	Exhibition
Thames Valley Police Performance Group	Meeting
True Power	Workshop
United Reform Church	Barn Dance
Tsunami Relief Fund	Meeting
USU London Ltd	Meeting
Way In	Workshop
Waymark	Meeting
Weight Watchers*	Slimming Club
Women's Institute*	Meeting
Wyse Leasing	Meeting
Young Lacemakers*	Lace Making Class
Youth Offending Service	Meeting

7. Cost and Unit Data

Detailed below are the current charges for hire of each room. The charges are per hour or part thereof (including VAT) and include use of kitchen, crockery, cutlery, OHP, screen and flipchart (as available).

CHARGES	COMMUNITY HALL	LOWNDES ROOM	COUNCIL CHAMBER	MEETING ROOM
Full Rate	£26.80	£13.40	£40.20	£6.70
50% discount when making 10 or more bookings per year.	£13.40	£6.70	£20.10	-

A maximum daily charge of £160 per room applies.

ADDITIONAL CHARGES

FACILITY	CHARGE
Microphones – full layout	£20
Microphones – top table only	£10
Data Projector	£25
Laptop	£10
Internet Connection	£5
Tea, coffee and biscuits	£1 per head

A detailed income and expenditure account for the service for 2006/07 is reproduced as **Appendix 1**.

8. Consultation with Users

There is an ongoing survey being undertaken with hirers, and views are being sought on a range of issues, including:

1. Hire prices
2. Standard of service
3. Standard of facilities
4. Type of event and level of attendance

Appendix 1: Detailed income and expenditure account for 2006/07

	Actual Year to Date	Revised Annual Budget	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
SALARIES	16,444	18,000	1,556		
TRAINING	0	150	150		
TRAVELLING	9	0	-9		
MISC STAFF COSTS	151	80	-71		
RATES	22,733	22,930	198		
WATER RATES	478	475	-3		
ELECTRICITY	3,273	3,170	-103		
GAS	1,695	2,000	305		
CLEANING, ETC.	902	790	-112		
SKIP HIRE	619	555	-64		
TELEPHONE & FAX	192	215	23		
STATIONERY	190	250	60		
INSURANCE	2,301	1,995	-306		
PUBLIC LICENCES	0	70	70		
RECRUITMENT ADVERTS	620	250	-370		
PUBLICITY	775	775	0		
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	378	500	122		
MAINTENANCE	3,424	4,200	776		
CONTRACT					
EQUIPMENT	3,348	1,000	-2,348		
MAINTENANCE					
ALARM	790	800	10		
EQUIPMENT	1,276	725	-551		
ADMIN STAFF RECHARGE	7,500	7,500	0		
ADMIN OVERHEAD	4,032	4,250	218		
RECHARGE					
DEPOT STAFF RECHARGE	351	545	194		
DEPOT OVERHEAD	272	510	238		
RECHARGE					
TOWN HALL COSTS	-6,163	-5,380	783		
WATER CHECKS	730	355	-375		
HOSPITALITY	189	280	91		
INSURANCE CLAIMS	150	0	-150		
SUNDRY EXPENSES	90	100	10		
NEW INITIATIVES	639	1,000	361		
Town Hall Expenditure	67,388	68,090	702	0	702
HIRE FEES	31,077	28,000	-3,077		
COUNCIL MEETINGS	4,652	7,000	2,348		
INTERNAL GRANTS	733	1,300	567		
WEDDING FEES	936	290	-646		
CATERING	906	700	-206		
EQUIPMENT HIRE	272	50	-222		
SUNDRY INCOME	21	0	-21		
Town Hall Income	38,598	37,340	-1,258		
Net Expenditure Over Income	28,791	30,750	1,959		

Detailed income and expenditure account for 2007/08

	Actual Year to Date	Revised Annual Budget	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
SALARIES	21,847	22,200	353		
TRAINING	0	150	150		
MISC STAFF COSTS	103	120	17		
RATES	23,310	23,555	245		
WATER RATES	533	485	-48		
ELECTRICITY	3,500	3,500	0		
GAS	1,520	2,000	480		
CLEANING, ETC.	961	950	-11		
SKIP HIRE	707	645	-62		
TELEPHONE & FAX	226	200	-26		
STATIONERY	96	200	104		
INSURANCE	2,325	2,490	165		
RECRUITMENT ADVERTS	165	350	185		
PUBLICITY	95	800	705		
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	640	500	-140		
MAINTENANCE	2,977	3,950	973		
CONTRACT					
EQUIPMENT	-1,977	1,500	3,477		
MAINTENANCE					
ALARM	820	820	0		
EQUIPMENT	993	725	-268		
ADMIN STAFF RECHARGE	7,800	7,800	0		
ADMIN OVERHEAD	3,193	4,650	1,457		
RECHARGE					
DEPOT STAFF RECHARGE	45	460	415		
DEPOT OVERHEAD	29	405	376		
RECHARGE					
TOWN HALL COSTS	-5,424	-5,380	44		
WATER CHECKS	400	300	100		
HOSPITALITY	94	280	186		
INSURANCE CLAIMS	150	0	-150		
SUNDRY EXPENSES	133	100	-33		
NEW INITIATIVES	112	360	248		
Town Hall Expenditure	65,222	74,115	8,893	0	8,893
HIRE FEES	34,743	33,300	-1,443		
COUNCIL MEETINGS	5,285	5,000	-285		
INTERNAL GRANTS	453	1,300	847		
WEDDING FEES	766	960	194		
CATERING	1,299	1,000	-299		
EQUIPMENT HIRE	783	150	-633		
SUNDRY INCOME	106	0	-106		
Town Hall Income	43,435	41,710	-1,725		
Net Expenditure Over Income	21,787	32,405	10,618		

APPENDIX 3

Town Hall and Elgiva Questions in the 2005 Residents' Survey

The Town Hall is owned and managed by the Town Council and is located in the centre of town.

20. On average, how many times a month do you or members of your household visit the Town Hall?

4 or more 2-3 Once Less often Never

21. How would you rate the facilities available to you when you visit?

Poor Satisfactory Good Excellent

The Elgiva theatre is owned and managed by Chesham Town Council. The venue provides a range of entertainment and is also available for hire for exhibitions and functions.

22. On average how many times a year do you or members of your household visit the following facilities at The Elgiva?

	4 or more	2-3	Once	Never
The Café	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cinema/Films	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Shows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amateur Performances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tribute bands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional dance/Opera	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Christmas Pantomime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exhibitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private/Social function	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

23. How would you rate the facilities at The Elgiva?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Access to the facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The box office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publicity/What's On guide	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The auditorium (seats, sound light)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The café	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The bar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Web site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Elgiva costs the average household (Council Tax Band D property) £15.03 per year, about £7.67 per elector per year.

24. As value for money, is this(tick one)

Very Poor Poor In Between Good Very Good

Results of the Town Hall and Elgiva Questions in the 2005 Residents' Survey

No.	Question	Number of respondents answering as indicated					
		Total	4 +	2-3	Once	Less often	Never
20	On average, how many times a month do you or members of your household visit the Town Hall?	2,314	142 6.14%	169 7.30%	294 12.71%	843 36.43%	866 37.42%

No.	Question	Number of respondents answering as indicated				
		Total	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
21	How would you rate the facilities available to you when you visit the Town Hall?	1,457	18 1.24%	340 23.34%	825 56.62%	274 18.81%

No.	Question	Number of respondents answering as indicated				
		Total	4 +	2-3	Once	Never
22	On average how many times a year do you or members of your household visit the following facilities at The Elgiva?					
	Café	2,314	354 15.30%	462 19.97%	377 16.29%	1,121 48.44%
	Cinema/Films	2,314	388 16.77%	478 20.66%	461 19.92%	987 42.65%
	Children's Shows	2,314	52 2.25%	181 7.82%	310 13.40%	1,771 76.53%
	Amateur Performances	2,314	107 4.62%	278 12.01%	439 18.97%	1,490 64.39%
	Tribute Bands	2,314	43 1.86%	126 5.45%	229 9.90%	1,916 82.80%
	Professional Music	2,314	70 3.03%	181 7.82%	379 16.38%	1,684 72.77%
	Professional Dance/Opera	2,314	42 1.82%	99 4.28%	271 11.71%	1,902 82.20%
	Christmas Pantomime	2,314	46 1.99%	72 3.11%	738 31.89%	1,458 63.01%
	Exhibitions	2,314	26 1.12%	139 6.01%	418 18.06%	1,731 74.81%

	Number of respondents answering as indicated				
	Total	4 +	2-3	Once	Never
Private/social function	2,314	16 0.69%	43 1.86%	189 8.17%	2,066 89.28%

No.	Question	Number of respondents answering as indicated				
23	How would you rate the facilities at The Elgiva?	Total	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
	Access to the facilities	1,813	26 1.43%	313 17.26%	1,085 59.85%	274 18.81%
	The Box Office	1,737	29 1.67%	368 21.19%	1,004 57.80%	336 19.34%
	Publicity/What's On Guide	1,763	125 7.09%	386 21.89%	866 49.12%	386 21.89%
	Auditorium (seats, sound, light)	1,682	59 3.51%	412 24.49%	911 54.16%	300 17.84%
	The Café	1,432	51 3.56%	444 31.01%	760 53.07%	177 12.36%
	The Bar	1,354	65 4.80%	517 38.18%	645 47.64%	127 9.38%
	Web Site	600	47 7.83%	210 35.00%	269 44.83%	74 12.33%
	The Staff	1,608	17 1.06%	343 21.33%	915 56.90%	333 20.71%

No.	Question	Number of respondents answering as indicated					
		Total	Very Poor	Poor	In Between	Good	Very Good
24	The Elgiva costs the average household (Council Tax Band D property) £15.03 per year, about £7.67 per elector per year. As value for money is this:	2,094	84 4.01%	171 8.17%	616 29.42%	870 41.55%	353 16.86%

APPENDIX 4

Elgiva Customer Survey 2007-08

To provide customers with a service to suit their needs, The Elgiva would appreciate a few moments of your time in completing this survey. Your opinions are important to us and will help us to understand how we can improve our service.

1. Do you live in Chesham?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If no, where do you live?				

2. Please indicate your age range:	Under 24	<input type="checkbox"/>	25-35	<input type="checkbox"/>	36-45	<input type="checkbox"/>
	46-59	<input type="checkbox"/>	60 plus	<input type="checkbox"/>		

3. How many times have you visited The Elgiva in the last 12 months?
Once <input type="checkbox"/> Twice <input type="checkbox"/> Three times <input type="checkbox"/> Four times <input type="checkbox"/> Five or more <input type="checkbox"/>

4. What type of performances do you attend at The Elgiva?
Amateur Theatre <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Theatre <input type="checkbox"/> Ballet <input type="checkbox"/> Cinema <input type="checkbox"/>
Exhibitions <input type="checkbox"/> Classical Music <input type="checkbox"/> Other music <input type="checkbox"/>

5. On your last visit to The Elgiva, how many people were in your group?
One <input type="checkbox"/> Two <input type="checkbox"/> Three <input type="checkbox"/> Four <input type="checkbox"/> Five or more <input type="checkbox"/>

6. How do you travel to The Elgiva?	By car	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Walking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/> (Please specify)

7. How do you find out what's on at The Elgiva?	Local newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Show leaflets	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Elgiva website	<input type="checkbox"/>	Posters in town	<input type="checkbox"/>	What's On guide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local radio	<input type="checkbox"/>
Word of mouth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/> (please specify)				

8. What would be your preferred way to buy tickets for performances at The Elgiva?
At the Box Office <input type="checkbox"/> Over the phone <input type="checkbox"/> On the internet <input type="checkbox"/>

9. How do you find the service you receive at The Elgiva?

Excellent Good Satisfactory Poor Don't know

10. Have you ever had cause to make a complaint at The Elgiva? Yes No

If yes, was the manner in which your complaint was handled:

Excellent Good Satisfactory Poor Don't know

11. How do you rate the current programming at The Elgiva? (Where 1 = Excellent and 5 = Poor)

Amateur Theatre ____ Professional Theatre ____ Ballet ____

Cinema ____ Exhibitions ____ Classic music ____

Other music (middle of the road/rock/folk) ____

12. Which of the following facilities influenced your decision to visit The Elgiva? Please tick all appropriate boxes.

Welcoming atmosphere Bar Choice of show/film

Disabled facilities Café Family Friendly

Public transport availability Parking Ease of booking

Close to home/easy to get to Cost Discount/special offer

Quality of service Other (please specify)

13. On your current visit to The Elgiva, do you feel you have received value for money?

Yes No (please comment)

14. Based on your current visit to The Elgiva, how what you rate the following? (Where 1=Excellent and 5 = Poor)

Bar ____ Service from staff ____ Box office booking process ____

Café ____ Disabled facilities ____ Quality of performance/show ____

Comfort ____ Cleanliness ____ Visibility of staff ____

Car parking facilities ____ Overall experience ____

15. How do you rate The Elgiva overall?

Excellent Good Satisfactory Poor Don't know

16. Do you feel that The Elgiva can be improved?

Yes No Don't know

Please add your comments:

17. Do you think it is important to have The Elgiva in Chesham?

Important Unimportant No opinion

18. The Elgiva is funded directly by Chesham Town Council and through ticket sales. Do you think The Elgiva should receive funding from the town council?

Yes No

19. This year, The Elgiva will cost each Chesham elector £8.67, compared to £10.69 for Chesham's parks, open spaces and playgrounds, £2.58 for the Open Air Pool and £2.05 for the Town Hall. Do you think The Elgiva represents value for money?

Yes No

If you have any additional comments, please use the box overleaf.

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey.

**Please return the completed survey to The Elgiva, St. Mary's Way, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 1HR
by 31st January 2008.**

The survey results will be included in the Town Council's Best Value Review of its Community Buildings, which will be published in April 2008.

If you have any additional comments you would like to make regarding The Elgiva, please use this box:

APPENDIX 5

Elgiva Audience Survey 2007/08 Results

Number of responses received: 27

Q.1. Do you live in Chesham?

Yes 14

No 12

If no, where do you live?

Wendover

St Leonards

Little Chalfont

High Wycombe

Amersham x2

Chalfont St Peter

Beaconsfield

Chesham Bois

Berkhamsted

Wokingham

Q.2. Please indicate your age range:

Under 24 6

25 to 35 2

36-45 4

46-59 4

60 plus 11

Q.3. How many times have you visited The Elgiva in the last 12 months?

Once 4

Twice 3

Three 4

Four 3

Five or more 12

Q.4. What type of performances do you attend at The Elgiva?

Amateur Theatre 8

Professional Theatre 17

Ballet 9

Cinema 20

Exhibitions 2

Classical music 4

Other music 11

Q.5. On your last visit to The Elgiva, how many people were in your group?

1 1

2 8

3 4

4 6

5 or more 8

Q.6. How do you travel to The Elgiva?

By car	19
Walking	12
Public transport	1
Other	0

Q.7. How do you find out what's on at The Elgiva?

Local newspapers	5
Show leaflets	14
Elgiva website	3
Posters in town	7
What's On guide	17
Local radio	0
Word of mouth	5
Other	4

Q.8. What would be your preferred way to buy tickets for performances at The Elgiva?

At the Box Office	12
Over the phone	6
Over the internet	10

Q.9. How do you find the service you receive at The Elgiva?

Excellent	13
Good	14
Satisfactory	0
Poor	0
Don't know	0

Q.10. Have you ever had cause to make a complaint at The Elgiva?

Yes	3
No	24

If yes, was the manner in which your complaint was handled:

Excellent	0
Good	0
Satisfactory	2
Poor	0
Don't know	0

Comments:

Wrote and did not receive a response.

Q.11. How do you rate the current programming at The Elgiva?

Where 1 = excellent and 5 = poor

Amateur theatre

1	3
2	5
3	3
4	1
5	0

Professional theatre	
1	3
2	8
3	6
4	1
5	0
Ballet	
1	3
2	5
3	4
4	1
5	1
Cinema	
1	11
2	8
3	3
4	1
5	0
Exhibitions	
1	1
2	1
3	4
4	1
5	0
Classical music	
1	2
2	0
3	4
4	1
5	1
Other music	
1	2
2	3
3	3
4	1
5	0

Q.12. Which of the following facilities influenced your decision to visit The Elgiva?

Welcoming atmosphere	15
Disabled facilities	0
Public transport availability	0
Close to home/easy to get to	23
Quality of service	8
Bar	5
Café	14
Parking	7
Cost	16
Choice of show/film	21
Family friendly	11
Ease of booking	12
Discount/special offer	5
Other	1
	Not cold

Q.13. On your current visit to The Elgiva, do you feel that you received value for money?

Yes	27
No	0

Q.14. Based on your current visit to The Elgiva, how would you rate the following?

Bar

1	8
2	3
3	7
4	0
5	0

Box Office booking process

1	9
2	6
3	3
4	2
5	0

Café

1	9
2	7
3	3
4	1
5	1

Cleanliness

1	14
2	8
3	2
4	1
5	1

Car parking facilities

1	5
2	8
3	6
4	1
5	0

Overall experience

1	11
2	8
3	0
4	4
5	0

Service from staff

1	14
2	8
3	1
4	2
5	0

Disabled facilities

1	5
2	3
3	1
4	2
5	0

Quality of performance/show

1	12
2	8
3	1
4	2
5	0

Visibility of staff

1	12
2	10
3	1
4	1
5	0

Comfort

1	10
2	11
3	4
4	1
5	0

Q.15. How do you rate The Elgiva overall?

Excellent	15
Good	12
Satisfactory	0
Poor	0
Don't know	0

Q. 16. Do you feel that The Elgiva can be improved?

Yes	10
No	7
Don't know	6

Comments:

Ladies loo – door lock faulty

More seats in lobby

Larger car park

On one occasion the air conditioning was quite cold and uncomfortable.

It needs to be better attended! Barely 40 people at 5th January cinema. Review advertising/choice of films?

More dressing rooms

More "current" movies

More consistent programming

Activities for children films/workshops (visiting actors, authors, drumming/art) that doesn't cost too much.

Appearances of local up and coming bands.

More options on Spotlight menu.

Better advertising.

More children's films please on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Online booking (x 2)

The Elgiva is an excellent local facility and we are fortunate to have it locally, so we must ensure it stays open by funding it properly. If we don't attract decent artistes standards will fall and the theatre will close.

Better maintenance (e.g. ladies toilets, especially the taps).

Better promotion in the theatre itself. We regularly attend the café, but find it difficult to know what's on that day, let alone that week. We arrive to see a film, and invariably have to confirm at the box office that the film we want is actually showing. What about some boards in the foyer announcing "Tonight" and/or "This week"?

Q.17 Do you think it is important to have The Elgiva in Chesham?

Important	27
Unimportant	0
Don't know	0

Q. 18. The Elgiva is funded directly by CTC and through ticket sales. Do you think The Elgiva should receive funding from CTC?

Yes	24
No	1

Q. 19. Do you think The Elgiva represents value for money?

Yes	24
No	1

Additional Comments:

To see a film we would never go anywhere but The Elgiva - its free from seat kicking and pop-corn throwing louts! "The Lives of Others" was SUPERB. We saw 13 films in 07 and Vivaldi and Henry V and we would have liked to book for more, but holidays etc get in the way sometimes.

I had a grate time and I'll come back soon. My name is Scarlet Gaigen. I am 6 years old.

Why do Chesham town residents pay a much higher contribution for the Elgiva than someone in, say, Chartridge? Almost everyone drives, it makes no difference where the amenity is.

I think we are very lucky to have such a good centre of entertainment in Chesham & long may it last! Also I understand that there are voluntary ushers, etc., who we should thank.

It is a great pity that our local newspaper The Bucks Examiner seems to ignore all events at the Elgiva and no publicity is given for events past, present and future. I presume your booklets covering forthcoming attractions have been sent to the Examiner so the event should be known.

Get online booking (x 2)

We are still concerned by the lack of a hand-rail on the steps in the auditorium. If a rail is not practical, surely a simple post could be fitted every two or three steps to enable people to negotiate the rake safely.

APPENDIX 6

Elgiva Hirer Survey 2008

To provide hirers with a service to suit their needs, The Elgiva would appreciate a few moments of your time in completing this survey. Your opinions are important to us and will help us to understand how we can improve our service.

1. Are you a Chesham-based organisation? Yes No

If no, what makes you hire this Chesham venue?

2. Are you: Amateur Theatre Company Professional Theatre Company
Music Promoter Other Non-Theatre Organisation
(please specify)

3. How many times have you hired The Elgiva in the last 12 months?

Once Twice Three times Four times Five or more

4. How important is it for you to be able to hire The Elgiva?

Very important Quite important Not important Don't know

5. Which of the following facilities influenced your decision to hire The Elgiva? Please tick all appropriate boxes.

Cost of hire Disabled facilities Public transport availability
Publicity & marketing Parking Easy to get to
Ease of booking Quality of service Bar
Café Other (please specify)

6. How would you rate the following? (where 1 = Excellent and 5 = Poor)

Administration ____ Disabled facilities ____ Car parking facilities ____
Bar ____ Lighting system ____ Toilets ____
Box office facility ____ Service from staff ____ Café ____
Sound system ____ Cleanliness ____ Cloakroom ____
Cost of hire ____ Publicity & marketing ____

7. What type of productions/functions do you hold at The Elgiva?

- Cinema Concert Conference Dinner Dance
Exhibition Theatre production Other (please specify)

8. Overall, how do you rate the facilities and service at The Elgiva?

- Excellent Good Satisfactory Poor

9. Would you book The Elgiva again?

- Yes No Don't know

If you have any comments on The Elgiva, including any assistance or equipment that would improve future hirings, please use this space:

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey.
Please return the completed survey to Kathryn Graves, Chesham Town Hall, Chesham, Bucks. HP5 1DS by Friday 29th February 2008.

The survey results will be included in the Town Council's Best Value Review of its Community Buildings, which will be published in April 2008.

Chesham Town Council processes data in adherence with the Data Protection Act (1998).

APPENDIX 7

Elgiva Hirer Survey 2008 Results

Number of surveys returned: 24

Q.1. Are you a Chesham based organisation?

Yes	11
No	13

If not, what makes you hire this Chesham venue?

Nearest theatre

We like to use venues throughout the Bucks, Berks & Oxon area, for accessibility to all our members

Excellent management

Quality theatre, good support base in the venue

Best venue for our type of performance

We wanted to take our show to a new area

Part of a national theatre tour booked by tour booker

Touring ballet company throughout the UK (and abroad)

Because it's a great venue and actually not too far to travel to.

Historic location for a once Bucks based organisation. Suitability of venue and helpful and friendly staff

Q.2. Are you:

Amateur theatre company	8
Music promoter	2
Professional theatre company	4
Other non-theatre	10

National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies

Glass, mirror & picture framing company

Youth orchestra

Gospel choir

Educational

Male voice choir

Annual festival organiser (music/dance)

Mosaic Arabic Dance Network

Q.3. How many times have you hired/put on a production/event at the Elgiva in the last 12 months?

Once	16
Twice	2
Three times	5
Four times	1
Five or more	0

Q.4. How important is it for you to be able to hire/use The Elgiva?

Very important	16
Quite important	7
Not important	1
Don't know	0

Q.5. Which of the following facilities influenced your decision to use The Elgiva?

Cost of hire	9
Publicity & Marketing	7
Ease of booking	15
Café	8
Disabled facilities	6
Parking	13
Quality of service	15
Public transport availability	2
Easy to get to	16
Bar	8
Other	10

Location

It's the only theatre in Chesham

We always book it!

Booked by a third party as part of national tour

Relationship with venue

Auditorium with special focus on Chesham

Suitable size auditorium & suitable audience

Need a theatre for dance festival

Very nice public areas

Q. 6. How would you rate the following (where 1 = Excellent and 5 = Poor)

Administration

1	11
2	6
3	5
4	0
5	1

Bar

1	6
2	7
3	7
4	0
5	0

Box Office Facility

1	10
2	2
3	0
4	5
5	1

Café

1	6
2	9
3	6
4	0
5	0

Cleanliness

1	8
2	9
3	4
4	2
5	0

Cost of hire

1	4
2	8
3	5
4	2
5	1

Disabled facilities

1	8
2	3
3	6
4	1
5	0

Lighting system

1	4
2	7
3	7
4	1
5	1

Service from staff

1	10
2	3
3	6
4	0
5	2

Sound system

1	6
2	9
3	7
4	1
5	0

Cloakroom

1	5
2	6
3	7
4	1
5	0

Publicity & Marketing

1	8
2	6
3	5
4	2
5	0

Car Parking Facilities

1	10
2	3
3	3
4	5
5	2

Toilets

1	9
2	9
3	4
4	0
5	0

Q.7. What type of productions/functions do you hold at The Elgiva?

Cinema	0
Dinner Dance	1
Concert	7
Exhibition	1
Conference	0
Theatre Production	13
Other	3
Demonstration/display of flower arranging	
Dance productions	
Competitive dance/music competitions	

Q.8. Overall, how do you rate the facilities and service at The Elgiva?

Excellent	9
Good	10
Satisfactory	4
Poor	0

Q.9. Would you book The Elgiva again?

Yes	21
No	1
Don't know	1

Additional Comments:

As a basic theatre The Elgiva is an invaluable resource for the local community. We hire the theatre 2 or 3 times per annum, and, bar a couple of antiquated follow-spots, and a possibly unreliable sound desk, from a production point of view it is certainly an adequate venue. However, the one and only point of using any venue to present a production is to get the proverbial 'Bums on Seats'. To accomplish this, it is imperative to have normal Box Office facilities, and to have booking available on the internet. The Elgiva offers neither. Every single time we have rented the theatre we get constant moans and complaints from cast, customers and (even more importantly) lost customers that they can never get through to the Box Office, either because it is closed, or, alternatively - engaged. The hours that the Box Office is open

are unacceptably insufficient, and undermine all our efforts to sell tickets. The same applies to the number of lines. Customers expect a Box Office to be open during normal business hours, and before the curtain goes up. If they cannot book their tickets, they won't come to the show, and we all lose money: substantial sums. Similarly, customers now expect to be able to book their tickets on line. They can do this for practically every venue in the country. Except The Elgiva. Putting on any theatrical production is a risky and incredibly expensive business. If the venue being hired is so under-resourced that it makes it nigh on impossible for the public to buy tickets the risk is multiplied many times over and will soon become unacceptable. The solution is simply to resource the Box Office adequately with personnel and phone lines, and enable the website to take on-line bookings. Theatre going is a habit and the easier we make it for customers to book tickets, the more will get into the habit, and the more income will be generated for all parties. Not just that, it's all about providing a basically adequate service - doing something 'right'.

If there were adequate changing rooms for 300 students, I would hire for my annual show. I use the Wycombe Swan where the service isn't nearly as good as The Elgiva.

No comments as services & facilities are excellent.

Free parking for vans in the car park would be nice.

When advertising banners are hung up outside the theatre they are now not so easy to read because of the trees which have now grown in height and partially obscure the signs.

Because they would only offer a percentage deal, I was initially reluctant to attend The Elgiva. However the attitude and approach of your theatre manager convinced us to come. And although financially not good, we received a very good feedback from our website and I know that if we attend again, attendance will be much greater and we will both benefit. I hope Chesham and The Elgiva will continue to take a long term view. Well done!

The Elgiva's acoustic is not particularly good for choirs.

Improved radio microphones and possibly look at developing sound system/ We have always found the staff and management at The Elgiva to be very helpful and supportive during all our hirings.

Changing rooms and tidiness under the stage.

Removal of staircase on S.L. with a different access – the [illegible] space is awful.

Manager never seems to be on duty at weekends.

Uniform on-duty manager and manager could be improved. Suits should be worn – would improve image.

Heating could be improved.

Café and bar staff very helpful and friendly.

Box office workers – generally good – but opening hours could be improved.

Technical staff good during 2007.

As an amateur group our main concern is the high cost of hiring The Elgiva. We can only put on popular plays that will attract large audiences.

APPENDIX 8

Town Hall User Survey 2007/08

To provide people using the Town Hall with a service that suits their needs, we would appreciate a few moments of your time in completing this survey. Your opinions are important to us and will help us to understand how we can improve our service.

1. Which room(s) did you use?	Community Hall	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lowndes Room	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Council Chamber	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meeting Room	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What type of function did you attend?	Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Group Activity (e.g. a class, bridge)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Conference/Seminar	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social occasion (e.g. party)	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Fundraising Event	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other <input type="checkbox"/> (please specify)			

3. How easy was it for you to find the room you were using?	No problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
If difficult, please explain what the difficulty was:				

4. For the room you were using, were you satisfied with the:					
Cleanliness	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Layout provided	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		No	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. If applicable, were the kitchen facilities:					
Sufficient	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	In good order/clean	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		No	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Were the toilet facilities:					
Clean	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sufficient in supplies	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		No	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Overall, how do you rate the facilities at the Town Hall?							
Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have any additional comments, please use the box overleaf.
Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey.

Please leave the completed survey at the Town Hall, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 1DS by 31st January 2008.

The survey results will be included in the Town Council's Best Value Review of its Community Buildings, which will be published in April 2008.

If you have any additional comments you would like to make regarding the Town Hall, please use this box:

APPENDIX 9

Town Hall User Survey Results

Number of surveys returned: 43

Q.1. Which room(s) did you use?

Community Hall	28
Council Chamber	17
Lowndes Room	8
Meeting Room	3

Q.2. What type of function did you attend?

Meeting	9
Group activity	14
Conference/seminar	12
Social occasion	12
Fundraising event	0
Other	1

Q.3. How easy was it for you to find the room you were using?

No problem	40
Difficult	3

Comments:

Easy apart from the meeting room; no name plate and from the outside it's a kitchen.

Q.4. For the room you were using were you satisfied with the:

Cleanliness

Yes	40
No	0

Layout provided

Yes	37
No	0

Q.5. If applicable, were the kitchen facilities

Sufficient

Yes	33
No	0

In good order/clean

Yes	31
No	0

Q.6. Were the toilet facilities

Clean

Yes	36
No	1

Sufficient in supplies

Yes	27
No	1

Q.7. Overall, how do you rate the facilities at the Town Hall?

Excellent	13
Good	25
Satisfactory	3
Poor	1

Additional Comments:

The ladies toilets are unfailingly clean & pleasant to use. Full marks!

Arrows would be useful for those with reading problems to help find the rooms.

Signage on visiting/booking board could be larger.

It is extremely well located, clean, bright and airy.

Not always satisfied with the cleanliness of the Community Hall. Floor has been in poor condition in the past with glass, confetti and sticky drink residue left for groups to dance on - sometimes in bare feet due to the nature of class. Condition has improved over the past few months, but occasionally there is sticky residue and particles which get stuck onto feet which does make you concerned as to what you have trodden on or whether you may get a cut.

Internet access needed.

If the Town Hall is used in future for things to do with the elderly, maybe it would be better to put them on the ground floor and make the Slimming Club use the upstairs as the over 60s health check day was a real mess.

There seem to be a lack of cups in the kitchen

Having been a local resident for over 40 years and a Council Tax payer, a reduction in our quarterly charge would be greatly appreciated.

As we have our monthly W.I. meeting is it possible to have a grant?

Only point I can make is it gets very hot in most rooms.

In the hot weather the air conditioning in the main hall can create a draught in certain parts of the hall. Can it be adjusted?

APPENDIX 10

Town Hall Hirer Survey 2007/08

To provide people hiring rooms at the Town Hall with a service that suits their needs, we would appreciate a few moments of your time in completing this survey. Your opinions are important to us and will help us to understand how we can improve our service.

1. Which room(s) do you normally use? (tick all that apply)	Community Hall <input type="checkbox"/>	Lowndes Room <input type="checkbox"/>
	Council Chamber <input type="checkbox"/>	Meeting Room <input type="checkbox"/>

2. How many times have you hired the Town Hall in the last 12 months?
Once <input type="checkbox"/> Twice <input type="checkbox"/> Three times <input type="checkbox"/> Four times <input type="checkbox"/> Five or more <input type="checkbox"/>

3. How important is it for you to have rooms available to hire in the Town Hall?
Very important <input type="checkbox"/> Quite important <input type="checkbox"/> Not important <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>

4 Which of the following facilities influenced your decision to hire the Town Hall? Please tick all that apply.		
Cost of hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Public transport availability <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Parking <input type="checkbox"/>	Close to home/easy to get to <input type="checkbox"/>	
Disabled facilities <input type="checkbox"/>	Discount/special offers <input type="checkbox"/>	
Quality of service <input type="checkbox"/>	Ease of booking <input type="checkbox"/>	

5. How would you rate the following? (where 1 = Excellent and 5 = Poor)		
Cost of hire ____	Admin & booking process ____	Service from staff ____
Cleanliness ____	Car parking facilities ____	Comfort ____
Toilets ____	Room presentation ____	
Kitchen facilities ____	Disabled facilities ____	

6. How do you rate the hire charges?
Cheap <input type="checkbox"/> About right <input type="checkbox"/> Too expensive <input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE TURN OVER

7. For your most recent hire of the Town Hall, what type of function did you hold?

- Business meeting Conference/Seminar Group Activity (e.g. dancing/bridge)
Social occasion (e.g. party) Fundraising Event Other (please specify)

8. Roughly how many people attended

- Up to 10 10-30 30-50 50-100 Over 100

9. Do you live in Chesham?

- Yes No If no, where do you live?

10. How/where did you find out that the Town Hall has rooms for hire? (Please tick as many as appropriate)

- Newspaper advert Brochure/leaflet Elgiva "What's On" Poster
Council web site Town Guide Town Hall Notice Board
Word of mouth Other (please specify)

11. Overall, how do you rate the facilities at the Town Hall?

- Excellent Good Satisfactory Poor

12. Would you book the Town Hall again?

- Yes No

If you have any comments on the Town Hall, including any assistance or equipment that would improve future hirings, please use this space:

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey.

Please return the completed survey to the Town Hall, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 1DS by 31st January 2008.

The survey results will be included in the Town Council's Best Value Review of its Community Buildings, which will be published in April 2008.

APPENDIX 11

Town Hall Hirer Survey Results

Number of surveys returned: 13

Q.1. Which room(s) do you normally use?

Community Hall	7
Council Chamber	3
Lowndes Room	3
Meeting Room	2

Q.2. How many times have you hired the Town Hall in the last 12 months?

Once	0
Twice	1
Three times	0
Four times	1
5 or more	11

Q.3. How important is it for you to have rooms available for hire in the Town Hall?

Very	11
Quite	2
Not	0
Don't know	0

Q.4. Which of the following facilities influenced your decision to hire the Town Hall?

Cost of hire	7
Parking	10
Disabled facilities	4
Quality of service	7
Public transport availability	5
Close to home/easy to get to	6
Discount/special offers	3
Ease of booking	8
Other	5

Cleanliness of facilities

Size of room

Warm and safe environment

Mid point for attendees

Good accommodation nearby

Transferred from Malt House

Q.5. How do you rate the following? 1= Excellent, 5 = Poor

Cost of hire

1	2
2	7
3	1
4	1
5	0

Cleanliness	
1	8
2	5
3	0
4	0
5	0
Toilets	
1	8
2	5
3	0
4	0
5	0
Kitchen facilities	
1	5
2	4
3	1
4	0
5	0
Admin & Booking Process	
1	8
2	3
3	0
4	0
5	0
Car parking facilities	
1	6
2	5
3	2
4	0
5	0
Room presentation	
1	6
2	5
3	2
4	0
5	0
Disabled facilities	
1	6
2	2
3	0
4	1
5	0
Service from staff	
1	10
2	3
3	0
4	0
5	0
Comfort	
1	7
2	5
3	1
4	0
5	0

Q.6. How do you rate the hire charges?

Cheap	0
About right	11
Too expensive	2

Q.7. For your most recent hire of the Town Hall, what type of function did you hold?

Business meeting	1
Conference/Seminar	1
Group Activity	8
Social occasion	1
Fundraising Event	0
Other	2

Private meeting with client's family
Meetings

Q.8. Roughly how many people attended?

Up to 10	2
10 to 30	4
30 to 50	7
50 to 100	0
Over 100	0

Q.9. Do you live in Chesham?

Yes	5
No	7

Naphill
Amersham
Marlow
Hazlemere
Based in Aylesbury, but work cross-county
Clifton, Beds
Little Chalfont

Q.10. How/where did you find out that the Town Hall has rooms for hire?

Newspaper Advert	0
Council website	2
Word of mouth	7
Brochure/leaflet	0
Town Guide	1
Elgiva What's On	0
Town Hall notice board	0
Poster	0
Other	4

Walk-in enquiry
Transferred from Malt House x 2
Took over booking from previous consultant

Q.11. Overall how do you rate the facilities at the Town Hall?

Excellent	8
Good	5
Satisfactory	0
Poor	0

Q.12. Would you book the Town Hall again?

Yes	13
No	0

Additional Comments:

Cost of parking for hall users. Other halls I use have free parking.

Lowndes Room gets very hot - if windows open very noisy because of traffic.

1 washbasin in the Downstairs Gents has been out of action for weeks.

Please could the teapots be in the kitchen.

In the summer the air con is very noisy and causes a draft.

APPENDIX 12

The Elgiva Performance Indicators from Chesham Town Council's Best Value Performance Plan

Performance Indicator The Elgiva	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Actual 2006/07	Target 2007/08
Cost to the Council per elector	£9.03	£6.81	£9.34	£6.99	£8.67
Income as a proportion of operating costs	67.1%	74.6%	67.8%	76.1%	71.8%
Percentage of respondents to survey indicating that the facilities provided by The Elgiva are 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'excellent'	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	96%
Number of patrons attending cinema performances	12,000	7,670	9,000	9,139	9,000
Number of patrons attending theatre performances	30,000	34,226	34,000	38,224	36,000
Average attendance – cinema (matinee)	12%	9%	10%	12%	12%
Average attendance – cinema (evening)	35%	20%	25%	33%	33%
Average attendance – theatre	65%	67%	67%	63%	65%
Number of social functions	20	23	23	20	20
Percentage of concessionary tickets sold – elderly	25%	28%	28%	35%	30%
Percentage of concessionary tickets sold – junior	20%	13%	15%	23%	20%
Percentage of non-concessionary tickets sold	40%	47%	45%	51%	50%
Number of amateur performances staged	75	96	85	128	100
Number of professional performances staged	75	78	80	91	85

APPENDIX 13

Town Hall Performance Indicators from Chesham Town Council's Best Value Performance Plan

Performance Indicator Town Hall & Little Theatre	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Actual 2006/07	Target 2007/08
Cost to the Council per elector	£1.31	£1.25	£1.89	£1.83	£2.05
Income from lettings as a proportion of operating costs	67.5%	67.1%	55.7%	57.3%	56.7%
Percentage of satisfied users taken from questionnaire*	99%	100%	99%	N/A*	99%
Number of lettings for the Community Hall	550	607	600	603	600
Number of lettings for the Lowndes Room	500	584	600	543	575
Number of lettings for the Meeting Room	75	102	100	75**	90
Number of lettings for the Council Chamber	250	310	275	321	300
Number of Council / Committee / Panel sessions granted	90	124	100	43***	48
Number of Council-related sessions granted	---	---	---	144****	145
Number of free-of-charge sessions granted	50	198	*****PI amended	13	15
Number of civil marriage/partnership ceremonies	25	8	15	21	20

* data taken from questionnaire of users following attendance at a function/ booking at Chesham Town Hall. No completed questionnaires were received in 2006/07.

** The Meeting Room is kept free when the Chamber is booked to provide kitchen facilities for the Chamber hirers. Increased hire of the Chamber means that the Meeting Room is less available for hiring than in previous years.

*** This PI was altered in 2006/07 to include only Council/Committee/Panel sessions granted.

**** This PI was established in 2006/07 to cover Council-related sessions, including any "partnership" meeting held at the Town Hall in which the Town Council takes part.

***** This PI was amended in 2006/07 to include only genuine free-of-charge sessions granted to outside bodies, e.g. Town Twinning.