

## **CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

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

held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018

#### **PRESENT**

Councillor	Miss E.A. Culverhouse	Councillor	Mrs J.E. MacBean
"	A.W. Franks	"	N. T. Southworth
"	P.J. Hudson	"	Mrs D.M. Varley

#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillors A.K. Bacon and R.C. McCulloch.

Officers: Mr W. Richards, Town Clerk  
Mr D. Cooper, Elgiva Manager

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Q. Chaudhry and M. Fayyaz.

#### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE YEAR 2018/19**

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs MacBean opened the meeting and called for nominations for Chairman of the Recreation and the Arts Committee.

It was

#### **RESOLVED**

that Councillor Mrs J.E. MacBean be elected Chairman for the remainder of the Council year.

Councillor Mrs MacBean called for nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Recreation and the Arts Committee. She advised that she was aware that Councillor McCulloch was keen to join the Committee and become Vice-Chairman but any changes to Committee membership needed to be ratified at full Council. Members agreed that Councillor McCulloch should take on this position, subject to any Committee membership changes being confirmed at the following week's Council meeting.

It was

#### **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Councillor R.C. McCulloch be elected Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the Council year.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs MacBean declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5 and 11 as a member of the Chesham Allotments Group, Elgiva Board of Management and Impress the Chess.

Councillor McCulloch declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5 as a member of the Friends of Chesham Cemetery.

Councillors Bacon, Miss Culverhouse, Hudson and Mrs Varley declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items 6 and 11 as members or regular users of Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre.

3. **MINUTES**

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

4. **IMPRESS THE CHESS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meetings of the Impress the Chess Group held on the 15<sup>th</sup> February and 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

5. **ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Elgiva Board of Management held on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

6. **ALLOTMENTS GROUP**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Allotments Group held on the 13<sup>th</sup> March and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

Arising out of the Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> March, Members noted the discussion regarding possible bee keeping on the allotments and requested that the Chesham Allotments Group bring a formal proposal back to this Committee for consideration.

7. **FRIENDS OF CHESHAM CEMETERY**

Members received the Minutes of the Friends of Chesham Cemetery meeting and AGM of the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes be noted.

8. **NEW ELGIVA THEATRE MANAGER**

Mr David Cooper introduced himself as the new manager of the Elgiva. He explained that he had been in post one month and his time to date had been mostly based around reviewing the current operation getting to know staff and customers. He opined that his immediate priorities were based around staff recruitment and IT connectivity. In the medium term, he was already working closely with the Marketing Manager to deliver a marketing plan to dovetail into a business plan for the theatre. Moreover he had ideas about changing the opening hours to provide a more family friendly centre. He opined that, generally, his predecessor had left the facility in a good position and the new box office and website could only help to move the theatre forward in terms of ticket sales and promotion.

Members welcomed Mr Cooper and the Committee stated it looked forward to further updates from him. Both the Clerk and Mr Cooper paid tribute to Mrs Tracey Hatchett who had done a superb job in overseeing the new box office system and acting as Deputy Manager following the departure of the previous Manager and Deputy Manager and before Mr Cooper started. The Committee agreed completely and asked that its appreciation be conveyed to Mrs Hatchett.

The Chairman thanked Mr Cooper for his attendance and he left the meeting thereof.

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

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

It was also noted that officers were seeking permission to purchase a new coffee machine for customers as the current leasing agreement was due to expire and it was agreed this be determined by the Clerk in liaison with the Chairman in accordance with the Financial Regulations. The Chairman also advised that the Marketing

Manager was investigating the installation of a telephone system that would provide details of open times etc without having to speak to a member of staff.

It was

**RESOLVED**

that the financial position be noted.

10. **FUTURE OF CHESHAM MUSEUM**

The Committee considered a letter from the Chesham Museum trustees following a meeting the Chairman and Clerk had had with them earlier in the year. The Chairman explained that, at the meeting, the Council's representatives broadly expressed the view that, while the museum finding a new location was a fine aspiration, this would be best achieved as part of a 'hub' involving other Town Partners where direct support from the Council and other external funders was likely to be more forthcoming. The letter stated that while the Trustees were not adverse to the 'hub' concept, it would like to see the Council provide leadership and possible funds to help the Museum find a new home.

Members broadly agreed with the Chairman's and officers' view that, while the Council should continue to be in dialogue with the museum as an important town amenity and offer its support when required, particularly with external bids, it should be cautious on taking on an undefined 'leadership' role when it has made a conscious decision to reduce its hands-on administrative support for all other town partners. Moreover it would be difficult for the Council to justify committing 'substantial funding' for another building when it is already heavily involved with the possible significant capital spending on two of its own facilities. To that end, it was agreed much more information was required and it was therefore

**RESOLVED**

that the Museum Trustees be requested to provide further details on clarification of 'leadership' expected from the Council; amounts of funding required for a new facility and an outline of proposals to ensure sustainability and this to be considered at a future meeting.

11. **LOWNDESBOURNE AND TOWN PICNIC 2018**

Members considered providing financial support for the free Lowndesbourne and Town Picnic event. As previously, the organisers were requesting a £500 grant and for the Council to pay for the portable toilets as part of its partnership funding for the event. Members were of the view that, while an excellent community event, it should be looking towards becoming self-financing as it is now in its fourth year. Accordingly it was agreed to contribute £500 but not to fund the hire of the portable toilets. Moreover it was suggested that, in future, the organisers be encouraged to apply for an annual donating which are determined at the Council meeting in October.

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee agrees to support the Lowndesbourne Town Picnic with a grant award of £500.

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

It was moved by the Chairman and

**RESOLVED**

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

13. **POSSIBLE EXTENSION TO THE GYM AND SWIM CENTRE**

The Chairman advised that both the previously reported possible extension drawings and plans for both the Elgiva and Gym and Swim Centre had now been costed up by the quantity surveyor. She advised that the view from the Elgiva Extension Working Party was that an outside agency be engaged to undertake a business plan to ascertain whether an extended building would be sustainable and desirable in the future and opined that this should also be undertaken for the Gym and Swim Centre. She accordingly referred the Committee to the proposed tender document drawn up to seek submissions to undertake this.

Councillor Miss Culverhouse requested that this be referred to full Council as set out in Standing Order 26 (e) as she believed it was important to hear the views of the Centre Managers before the Council made a decision on this. She suggested that they be invited to the meeting and Councillor Bacon added it might be desirable to have the Manager's written views circulated before the meeting as well.

Accordingly it was

**RESOLVED**

that the commissioning consultants to undertake Business Plans for the possible extensions and the tenders and final costs be delegated to the Elgiva Extension Working Group and the Gym and Swim Working Group be considered at full Council.

14. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.47pm.

CHAIRMAN