

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

held on Monday 3rd July 2006

PRESENT Councillor V.M. Abraham, Vice Chairman (presiding)

Councillor	M. Bignell	Councillor	C.H. Spruytenburg
"	N.L. Brown	"	Mrs P.R. Wilkinson MBE
"	M. Fayyaz	"	P. Woodburn
"	Mrs P.R. Lindsley	"	P.W. Yerrell
"	Mrs M. Molesworth		

In Attendance

Councillors A.K. Bacon, E.L. Bamford, Mrs J.C. Fulford and Mrs S.M. McEwan.

Officers: W. Richards - Town Clerk
 Ms K. Graves - Policy and Projects Officer

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

In light of the recent resignation of Councillor Ms Bramwell from the Council, it was proposed by Councillor Brown, and agreed, that the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Abraham, be elected Chairman for the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Yerrell declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 5 as a governor at Newtown School.

3. MINUTES

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 8th May 2006 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

4. CCTV PROVISION IN CHESHAM

The Committee considered the update from the Town Clerk in respect of the future of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) provision in the town.

Members noted that the police review of countywide CCTV provision, referred to at the previous Policy and Resources Committee, was at its very early stages and it was likely that no meaningful position would be adopted before the end of the next financial year. Consequently, Members were advised that the issue of revenue costs for 2007/8 remained pertinent.

It was agreed that the Council should begin a dialogue with Chiltern District Council in regard to provision for the next financial year and it was

RESOLVED

that a meeting with Chiltern District Council in regard to CCTV provision be requested by the Town Clerk and that Councillor Bacon and Mr Bernard Meldrum be appointed to represent the Council, along with the Town Clerk, at this meeting.

5. UPDATE ON 'GETTING CLOSER TO COMMUNITIES' INITIATIVE

The Committee was advised of recent developments in regard to the 'Getting Closer to the Communities' (GC2C) initiative being instigated by Buckinghamshire County Council. Members were reminded that Chesham was a pilot area for the initiative and that therefore the County Council was keen to make some progress, particularly as the Council is a 'Quality Town Council' and therefore deemed suitable to be devolved services to administer.

The Committee debated the list of possible services to be devolved, as suggested by the County Council, and the desirability of the Council taking over the running of some, or all, of these services. It was noted that the Parks and Premises Manager was reluctant to be tasked with weed killing operations and it was agreed that this should be rejected as a possible service to be undertaken by officers. All the other tasks were deemed provisionally suitable and the principle of devolution was endorsed. However, Members agreed with the Town Clerk's recommendation that no extra services could be considered to be taken on unless funding was in place to provide for extra staffing provision. Moreover, Members emphasised the need to ensure that all additional costs, such as possible vehicle provision and other miscellaneous expenses, were fully calculated and presented to the County Council before the adoption of any new services.

The Committee then considered the draft Charter needed to be agreed by both parties for service transfer to take place. It was noted that the Council has been advised to disregard the clause, which stated that 'the Town Council shall not delegate the exercise of the Delegated Functions to any of its officers' and

Members welcomed the clause that stated that all expenses would be defrayed by the County Council. However concern was expressed on the matters of indemnity and being the designated agents for the County Council and it was agreed that these would need further clarification and discussion before proceeding.

Nominations were sought for the GC2C cluster meeting scheduled for the 10th July and it was agreed that Councillors Bacon, Bamford, Mrs Fulford, Mrs Pirouet and Mrs Wilkinson would attend representing the Council.

It was

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee agree to continued participation in further discussions in regard to the 'Getter Closer to Communities' initiative.
2. That the draft charter, as presented, be agreed in principle, subject to the concerns raised by Members being satisfactorily allayed.

6. **CLEANER NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 2005**

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act gives the parish and town councils the power to prosecute or give fixed penalty notices to people in respect of littering, graffiti or fly posting offences committed in their area and also provides for them to implement a regime for controlling dogs in their area by use of Dog Control Orders. The Committee was therefore asked to consider whether it wished to further consider adopting these powers or to determine them as unnecessary for Chesham.

Members were of the view that, while there would be many practical issues to consider, it would be wrong at this juncture to express no interest in adopting the powers, particularly in light of the earlier discussions in regard to taking on devolved services from the principal authorities.

It was therefore

RESOLVED

that the Council enter into further discussions with central government, the principal authorities and the police on the possible adoption of powers to issue fixed penalty notices through the provisions of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

7. **LOWNDES PARK SKATEPARK AND PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

Two issues pertaining to Lowndes Park were brought to the Committee's notice by the Town Clerk.

Chiltern District Council's Environment Health Officers had contacted the Town Clerk citing alleged breaches of the conditions laid down in respect of the Noise Abatement Notice in place for the skatepark. Accordingly, they were requesting a 'case conference' meeting to discuss ways to prevent further breaches. Members agreed on the importance of compliance with the Notice and it was agreed that Councillor Spruytenburg and the Town Clerk should attend the meeting on behalf of the Council.

In respect of the public conveniences, it was reported that serious damage had taken place to the doors. Members discussed whether they wished to commit further monies to the facility to install security frames. The prevailing view was that it would be prudent to wait until the insurers' report had been received and advice thereof considered, before committing to the commissioning of such frames. The Committee then debated as to whether it wished to formally approach the police to request that one of the CCTV cameras in Lowndes Park be fixed entirely on the public conveniences' entrance. However it was considered that this might compromise the safety of other users in the park and therefore would be inappropriate.

It was

RESOLVED

1. That Councillor Spruytenburg be authorised to represent the Council at meetings with Chiltern District Council in regard to the skatepark's Noise Abatement Order.
2. That the Committee defer any decision on the installation of security frames at the public conveniences until the insurers' report was received.
3. That the police not be requested to permanently fix the CCTV cameras on the public conveniences but be requested to increase their monitoring of the facility if possible.

8. **COMPLIMENTARY USE OF TOWN HALL**

The Committee considered a request from the Heritage Weekend Steering Committee for complimentary use of the Council Chamber and Lowndes Room on the 9th and 10th September 2006.

Members noted that the Council was heavily involved with the weekend and reiterated its support for the event.

It was

RESOLVED

that free use be granted for the use of the Town Hall for the Heritage Weekend on the 9th and 10th September 2006.

9. **FINANCIAL REPORT FOR ONE MONTH TO 30TH APRIL 2006**

The Financial Report for one month to 30th April 2006 was presented.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Report be noted.

10. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

The items presented on Information Sheet No. 4 were received and noted.

In respect of item 13, Councillor Mrs Lindsley advised that a section on the hand sweeping and litter-picking schedule appeared to be missing.

11. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 9.12pm.

CHAIRMAN