

# Chesham Town Council

Bill Richards  
Town Clerk



Tel: 01494 774842

Fax: 01494 582908

[www.chesham.gov.uk](http://www.chesham.gov.uk)

Email: [admin@chesham.gov.uk](mailto:admin@chesham.gov.uk)

6<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Dear Councillor

I hereby give notice of a meeting of the **RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE** to be held in the Council Chamber, The Town Hall, Chesham, on

**MONDAY 16<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2012 AT APPROXIMATELY 8.00 PM**

(or immediately following the close of the meeting of the Development Control Committee which commences at 7.30pm)

when the business set out below is proposed to be transacted:

## AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Declarations of Interest.
3. To receive and confirm the Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2011.
4. To receive and consider the Minutes of:
  - i) *Elgiva Board of Management of the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011.*
  - ii) *Environmental Group of the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2011.*
  - iii) *Chesham Moor Gym & Swim meeting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2011.*
  - iv) *Allotments Group meeting of the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2011.*
5. Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre Update.
6. Elgiva Pantomime (report to follow).
7. Green Flag Entry 2012.
8. Impact of Oak Processionary Moth on trees.
9. Diamond Jubilee and 2012 Events Update – verbal report from Councillor Mrs Pirouet.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Richards'.

Bill Richards  
Town Clerk



continued . . .



**Circulation**

**Councillor Ms R. K. Bhatti**  
" **Mrs .P.R Cherrill**  
" **T. Franks**  
" **P.J. Hudson**  
" **D. J. Lacey**

**Councillor R.C McCulloch**  
" **Mrs. C.M Michael**  
" **Mrs A.M. Pirouet**  
" **C.H. Spruytenburg**  
" **Mrs. G. Walker**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ELGIVA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT  
AT 10.30AM ON TUESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2011 AT THE TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT**

Trevor Pilling (Chairman, presiding)  
Roy Abraham  
Anthony Ogden  
Patricia Cherrill  
Stephen Cherry  
Yvonne Plester  
Brian McCollum  
Mick Carling

Officers: Bill Richards – Town Clerk  
Mark Barnes – Manager, Elgiva  
Moira Little – Deputy Manager, Elgiva

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1. Apologies were received from Linda English.

**NEW BOARD MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS**

2. Trevor welcomed new Board members Mick Carling and Brian McCollum to the meeting and asked that they give a little background on their professional background and involvement with the arts.

Mick explained that he was member of the Chesham Chamber of Trade and Commerce and Better Chesham and was hoping to be able to forge better links between the theatre and the local community. He advised that he had a professional background in marketing and was formally Head of Promotions at Warner Brothers and help set up an Arts Centre in Teesside.

Brian introduced himself as the Director of Performing Arts at Chiltern Hills Academy (formerly Chesham Park Community College). Before taking up this role he advised that he had worked for AXA, the financial services company for 22 years. He said that he hoped he could help build links between the theatre and school and educational establishments.

The rest of the Board members then gave a brief synopsis on their backgrounds and roles within the Board.

3. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011 were agreed as a true and correct record.

Patricia advised that the Council's proposed Marketing Review, as referred to in Minute no 4, was going ahead and both she and Roy were on the panel. A brief résumé on current marketing strategy then took place, mainly for the benefit of Mick and Brian.

Patricia queried as to whether card payments could be considered for the café. Mark advised that the franchise holder considered card use charges too high to be viable.

4. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Trevor circulated his reports for the months of September and October 2011. He was delighted to say that the figures were much more promising and, indeed, the average monthly deficit was now almost exactly the same as last year. However income was still below what it was last year and much would depend on the success of the Pantomime. Mark concurred with Trevor. He explained that the last two months had been helped by a week long booking ('Pivotal Education') in September and a very successful film ('Jane Eyre'). He pointed out that, despite very difficult times, the deficit remained broadly the same as it was when he took over the Manager's post 8 years ago.

5. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mark reported on the following:

- Panto bookings slightly up from last year but this was not entirely good news since last year's income was badly affected by the snow. However school bookings were up and, as the trend recently has been to book later, he was relatively confident of improving the agreed budget for the Panto. Brian offered assistance with further promotion in schools if desired. Yvonne mentioned a former Amersham pupil had a leading role and this may have marketing potential within her old school(s).
- Press night tickets had been circulated to Board members and councillors. Mark opined it would be nice to have some councillors in attendance to show support.
- Sainsbury's had agreed to take Panto leaflets for the first time. Moreover Mark was now renting a leaflet rack space at Sainsbury's for £10 a week for a supermarket with a footfall of 35,000 per week. Mick briefly commented on the importance of reminders to people of what's on at the theatre through the use of social media and phones. It was agreed he and Mark would have a separate conversation about this.
- Mark advised he was negotiating with Sainsbury's and Waitrose as to the possibility of erecting notice-boards near their outlets. Mick reported that Better Chesham was also pushing for a better town centre notice-board. He opined that it was disappointing that the rotundas had been removed. Mark explained that they were rateable, constantly vandalised and defaced and did not feel they reflected well on the theatre. Steve then circulated photographs of the sort of electronic advertising screen he and Trevor had raised at the last meeting to be potentially located in the town. Trevor also advised he was liaising with members of the Chesham Action Partnership on this and it was agreed a more detailed proposal be brought back to the next meeting. Brian suggested that these electronic displays were commonplace in big employers like GE Healthcare and perhaps therefore the Elgiva could try and promote itself on these.
- Lead on the roof has been replaced following insurance pay-out. Security advice from the police to stop future thefts had been sought and received.
- New 'What's On' brochure out today. Mark reported that he considered the programme relatively strong despite there being fewer acts on offer to be booked.

*Steve Pearson, the Council's Finance and Contracts Manger arrived for the next item.*

6. **BUDGETS, FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2012/2013**

Trevor presented the detailed budget as drawn up with Steve Pearson.

Trevor reported that he and officers were recommending a 5.2% increase in line with the current Consumer Price Index. The Board members raised no objections to this.

Steve Pearson commented on this year's figures and how they had been hit predominantly by a fall in income and the long term staffing cover required for the Technical Manager.

The Board discussed next year's budget and how it would be increasingly hard to increase income during this economic downturn by increasing attendances. Mark said he was fully aware of the Council's wish not to raise the Council Tax at all if possible. Trevor opined that all costs had been cut 'to the bone' during last year's budget review and reminded everyone that Mark had already lost the Marketing Manager's post this year and, with only 4 full-time staff members, probably had one of the smallest staffing structures for a theatre of this size in the country.

Anthony also suggested that the Board make the Council aware of how much of the expenditure is out of the Manager's hands and is fixed, particularly the cost of utilities such as gas and electricity which are going up by 20% and 15% respectively.

Steve Pearson advised that officers had made the Council aware of these pressures but suspected that it would still be looking at a standstill budget to accord with the concept of a 0% increase in the local Council Tax precept. Roy concurred but also stated that it was positive that the theatre appeared to be structurally sound and so there were not likely to be great demands on the Renewals and Repairs budget.

Mick suggested that income could be increased by the formation of a 'club' with incentive schemes similar to that instigated at the Rex cinema. Mark advised that the Board and he had looked at the setting up of something similar many times but was very happy to discuss the matter again with Mick. The latter also suggested income could be generated by linking in to a local texting scheme being developed by Better Chesham where reminders of shows could be undertaken and last minute cut price tickets could be offered. Mark again said he would be happy to talk to Mick privately about this but selling discounted last minute tickets was problematic since this was usually the promoters' decision rather than the theatres. Moreover both Roy and Yvonne questioned whether it would be good practice to regularly offer cheap last minute tickets if the trend was increasingly to book late as it was currently.

Trevor opined that in these difficult times the burden for the theatre should not be entirely down to the Chesham tax-payer as the facility was used by many outside the town so agreed to write a letter on behalf of the Board to Chiltern District Council expressing this view and requesting a financial contribution.

Mick advised that they may be monies forthcoming from the Olympics celebrations if the Elgiva could link itself to the events in some way.

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Trevor advised that Linda, as Minute Secretary, could not make Tuesdays and therefore asked what other days were good for Board members. Yvonne reported that she no longer worked on Mondays so it was agreed to return to Mondays as the meeting day.

The next meeting of the Board of Management will be on a Monday in January. Date to be circulated.

The meeting closed at 12.40pm.

**ELGIVA THEATRE MONTHLY FIGURES**
**Sep-11**

	HIRE DAYS		HIRE FEES	BAR PROFITS	ICE-CREAM	Total	Total
	2010	2011	2011	2011	2011	2011	2010
COMMUNITY							
PROFESSIONAL	11	16	9131	2090	168	11,389	4,474
FILM	9	5	794	163	26	983	1,561
	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9,925</b>	<b>2,253</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>12,372</b>	<b>6,035</b>

	2011 B/F Total	2011 monthly Total	2011 C/F Total	2010 B/F Total	2010 monthly Total	2010 C/F Total
COMMUNITY	33,488		33,488	33,502		33502
PROFESSIONAL	13,532	11,389	24,921	21,864	4474	26338
FILM	2,824	983	3,807	5,152	1561	6713
	<b>49,844</b>	<b>12,372</b>	<b>62,216</b>	<b>60,518</b>	<b>6,035</b>	<b>66,553</b>

	2011 ATTENDS	2010 ATTENDS	2011 CONCESSIONS	2010 CONCESSIONS
COMMUNITY				
PROFESSIONAL	1863	1162	655	636
FILM	410	653	170	313
	<b>2,273</b>	<b>1,815</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>949</b>

	CURRENT YEAR	PRIOR YEAR ACTUAL	PRIOR YEAR PROJECTED
PROJECTED MONTHLY RUNNING COSTS	25,421	25,395	27,076

AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME	10,354	11,092	11,092
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AVERAGE MONTHLY DEFICIT	15,067	14,303	15,984
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**ELGIVA THEATRE MONTHLY FIGURES October 2011**

	HIRE DAYS		HIRE FEES	BAR PROFITS	ICE-CREAM	Total	Total
	2010	2011	2011	2011	2011	2011	2010
COMMUNITY	13	11	6528	1,608	160	8,296	7,634
PROFESSIONAL	9	9	5281	2067	129	7,477	5,916
FILM	4	6	2392	253	25	2,670	531
	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14,201</b>	<b>3,928</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>18,443</b>	<b>14,081</b>

	2011 B/F Total	2011 monthly Total	2011 C/F Total	2010 B/F Total	2010 monthly Total	2010 C/F Total
COMMUNITY	33,488	8,296	41,784	33,502	7634	41,136
PROFESSIONAL	24,921	7477	32,398	26,338	5916	32,254
FILM	3,807	2670	6,477	6,713	531	7,244
	<b>62,216</b>	<b>18,443</b>	<b>80,659</b>	<b>66,553</b>	<b>14,081</b>	<b>80,634</b>

	2011 ATTENDS	2010 ATTENDS	2011 CONCESSIONS	2010 CONCESSIONS
COMMUNITY	1019	1312	509	704
PROFESSIONAL	1472	1541	557	655
FILM	904	192	434	78
	<b>3,395</b>	<b>3,045</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1,437</b>

	CURRENT YEAR	PRIOR YEAR ACTUAL	PRIOR YEAR PROJECTED
PROJECTED MONTHLY RUNNING COSTS	25,421	25,395	27,076

AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME	11,523	11,519	11,519
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AVERAGE MONTHLY DEFICIT	13,898	13,876	15,557
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Minutes of Chesham Environmental Group  
17th November 2011  
Chesham Town Hall, at 7.30

		ACTION
1. Present	Phil Folly (Chair), Trevor Brawn, Kate Folly, Georgina Lomnitz , Jean Queripel, Richard Berry, Helen McGrath, Rosemary Main, Roger Main, Michael Brown, and Andrew Clark. Ian Freeman arrived 8.25	
Welcome	The Chair welcomed everyone and introduced Helen	
Apologies	Cllr Colette Littley, Timandra Slade, & Ken Austin (Treasurer)	
2.Minutes of Last meeting	No amendments	
3. Approval of minutes	Minutes approved	
4. Matters Arising (Not on Agenda)	<p>GL, asked if there was any more information on the concept of a community orchard, PF said it had be suggested that Canon's Meadow might be a possible area for a Orchard, this has not as yet been pursued. TTC have been following up on a public notice that had been put on Facebook. A Chesham Land owner has offered land to create an orchard.</p> <p>RB said, that Rotary are still interested in the Planter outside Lucia's. RB also suggests that area around the tree outside The Red Lion PH where the bricks are coming up could be made into a low walled planter.</p> <p>PF wanted it known that both the Walkers are Welcome noticeboards are now up thanks to the efforts of Ken Austin. Eventually Ken got permission from London Transport to fix a notice board, to the wall outside Chesham Station. The other board was unveiled by The Mayor, Derek Lacey in Water Meadow Car Park at the end of September and it was reported along with a photo in the Bucks Examiner.</p>	

<p><b>5. Financial Report</b></p>	<p>Ken Austin Treasurer left report with the Chair.</p> <p>In the bank £841.80, cash in hand, £5.70, £90 from chalk Streams spent on 12 litter picks, &amp; yet to be received Charitable grant from CTC £272, and £10 donation from Allotment Group. Total 1209.50 - £90 = 1119.50</p> <p>Known future expenses Insurance £280</p> <p>Display boards £160</p> <p>Workaid donation for tools £50</p>	
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<p><b>6. Impress the Chess</b></p>	<p>Chair Change: MB who is a member of ItC confirmed that the new Chair of ItC is Cllr Jane Bramwell.</p> <p>Fish rescue: TB believes there should be some emergency procedure to remove the stranded fish from the drying up areas of the River Chess and move them down river. Some of us responded to an Urgent Alert message stating that it was distressing to see fish struggling in a puddle near Amy Lane roundabout. We moved as many of the fish as possible to below Lords Mill where the river is flowing. It may not be the best idea or lawful to move fish but in an emergency we should be prepared to help.</p> <p>Work at Lords mill: AC gave an account of work being carried out a Lords Mill to shore up the walls that are in need of repair (it was suggested that Canon's Weir is in a worse state). Ken Austin and PF attended a talk given by Allen Beechey Chiltern Conservation Board Chalk Streams Project and Mel Challis Environment Agency to the local councillors on the condition of the River Chess. Lords Mill was mentioned in the talk and one of the issues was to make it more fish friendly so the fish can travel up and down the weir, and fish rescue wouldn't be needed.</p>	<p><b>PHIL</b></p>
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	<p>Publicity for CEG: The suggestion is that we should publicise our ourselves more. GL said we have list of volunteers on email it also goes to Merrin at Chiltern Voice. A suggestion that we should publicise our working party events on Facebook, or leaflet the area we are to working in. PF said like when we clear Himalayan Balsam along the riverbank and allotments. It was pointed out that allotment holders might not like the idea of hoards of people clambering over their vegetables, and as of this year we haven't found that much on the allotments, anyway. In this case we could have a notice with a photo of Himalayan Balsam fixed to the allotment gate reminding allotment holders that Himalayan Balsam is now listed on the Countryside Act as an invasive plant and if allowed to escape to country the perpetrator could be prosecuted.</p> <p>Deflectors: Two deflectors have now been placed along the Cannon Mill chase. They are not In the beauty stakes they may not look all that, and need to be tidied up but they seem to be doing the job. Hope to put one or two more along that stretch of the river next year.</p>	
<p>7. working party</p>	<p>i :Captain's Wood and its future: PF and HM delivered leaflets advertising CEG's litter pick of the woods next Sunday. HM being local to Captains Wood also handed leaflets to dog walkers. AC reported back on a meeting we had with Roger Newman Chiltern Society who was in negotiation with Bucks County Council on the proposal that the Society lease the woods from them.</p> <p>ii :Moor road and Meads Water Gardens both mid week cleanups, cutting back the whips and Rose Bay Willow herb Mel Challis had agreed that there was to much foliage along the length of the new riverbank . There was also a very successful September afternoon, when CEG members and the local residents cleared an area on the corner of Germain St and Water Lane.</p> <p>iii : Jacobs ladder: If the weather is with us we will clean up the pathway during our December working party, and dash to the Queens Head for a festive drink afterwards.</p>	

8. Nash Field	Reported at our last meeting Phil Irving of Greensand Trust would send his survey results on Nash Field and the top of Lowndes Park to Chesham Town Council's project manager. TB informed us that Phil Irving's report had been received and he thought that Nash Field is of interest and recommended a management plan for the field. CEG could help by clearing back some of the blackthorn shrub to the east of the field. It was agreed that January's working party would assist in this area. He found that the top of Lowndes Park wasn't of as much interest. AC to post on CEG's website working parties tasks for December's and January.	<b>ANDREW</b>
9. Chap's contribution to the recent Surface Water Management Plan consultation. Responses to	<b>Improved maintenance</b> Under comments: Volunteers could help clear the open area of the vale brook, Newtown. Under response :The Chesham Environmental Group, as well as other potential volunteer groups, will be engaged if this option is taken forward. At the current time there are no expectations of any involvement in the proposed options <b>Action:</b> None. The meeting commented asking who owned the open area at the bridge in Townsend Road. PF Its privately owned, I remember wanting to clear it up with another group many years ago, we where told not go on to the land.	
10. AOB	The meeting was reminded that Allen Beechey Chilterns Chalk Streams Project manager is giving a talk at Green Drinks, venue The Drawing Room, Francis Yard. Green Drinks takes place on the last Thursday of the month, 7.30pm. PF That he represented the Group, at The Pride of Bucks Awards. The evening was organised by the Waste Partnership, Bucks CC. and took place at Weston Turville, Holiday Inn. We didn't get an award!! Helen let us know that she organises a regular Irish night at the Gamekeepers Lodge, all would all be welcome.	
11 Next Meeting	The next meeting is our AGM, Date not yet decided.	

Meeting ended at 9.05pm

**Minutes for the 'Friends of Moor Road' 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2011**  
**Short Pre-Christmas Dinner Meeting**

**Apologies:** NA (Nicola Atuanya), AC (Alan Corner), TD (Trevor Davies)

**Present:** PA (Peter Ashby-Chair), NK (Nazma Khan - Minutes), DE (Danny Essex), PH (Peter Hudson), TM (Tina Michael), RC (Roger Comer), JF (Justine Fulford), SH (Sue Hutcheson), TC (Tricia Croot)

<b><u>AGM Review:</u></b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>
<p><b>General Impressions:</b> 'getting better every year' (TM), 'TD figures are extremely clear' (JF), 'generally more swimmers than gym but a good increase in attendance, those who did attend were able to make the points they wished' (DE).  <b>The Friends</b> briefly reviewed some of the suggestions made by the attendees as follows :</p> <p>April swimming was raised and the price of £10 for 2 extra weeks or £20 for the month was considered fair. Overall attendees thought season tickets were 'good value for money'. It was also confirmed that DE would be able to make the decision on April opening. If all maintenance complete, weather appeared good etc.</p> <p>The issue of advertising was raised. Many Friends still felt many people are unaware of the Centre. RC suggested the need to look at the changing trends in advertising away from literature and more towards social media.</p> <p><b>Lessons for next year:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A list of attendees should be kept and their emails collected.</li> <li>-people who are speaking should come to the front for clarity.</li> <li>-there should be an AGM follow up newsletter to let people know how their suggestions have been received. (Current newsletter template is awaiting approval and for the sign up facility to be activated by Millipedia. Marketing subgroup aiming to start the promotional newsletters from January 2012).</li> </ul>	<p>Marketing subgroup to take on board</p> <p>Marketing subgroup to follow up</p>
<p><b><u>Manager's Report:</u></b></p> <p>Generally quiet time of year for the Centre; a new vinyl floor is being fitted into the pool view room and foyer. This will allow the pool view room to be used more for functional exercise in winter. Promotional offers at the moment are bring a friend and in January 2012 Town talk a free induction offer. The Friends discussed the overall uptake after these offers, PA stated the figures can be obtained, actual vouchers goes to Steve Pearson at CTC.</p> <p>La Roche in Amersham is closing at the end of the year and Top Notch has been bought by a budget chain so there will be two budget gyms in Chesham. Bill Richards contacted Nexus after they had been advertising in the Elgiva who have suggested working together with the Centre on promotions and advertising. DE suggested that was good but to also advise caution with Nexus.</p>	<p>PH to design flyer.  DE to arrange distribution.</p>

<p>A leafleting campaign either outside of La Roche or in the car Amersham town car park was suggested to attract La Roche users. TC also suggested an increased presence in local publications about the Centre at this time. Friends asked again about using Direct Debits especially for gym membership. This will be explored in more detail by a sub team.</p>	<p>TD, PA, PH, DE explore</p>																
<p><b><u>Finance</u></b>  PA said figures from the till takings showed :</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Till</td> <td>2010</td> <td>2011</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct Swim</td> <td>£1,500</td> <td>£4,500</td> <td>Very good increase!</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nov Gym</td> <td>£4300</td> <td>£2800</td> <td>PAYG nearly down 35%!</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nov All</td> <td>£5400</td> <td>£3700</td> <td>Down 35%</td> </tr> </table> <p>PA stated that the figures showed that PAYG gym revenue had dropped significantly in recent months. This meant that the budget deficit has increased from £74k last year, to a forecast £89k this year and next year a budget projected deficit of £95k. PA thought that there was only limited scope for savings on costs so this was a worrying trend. More usage was the top priority! This presented a challenge to the Marketing team.</p> <p>PA said that CTC Rec. &amp; Arts had approved the price changes recommended by the Friends. In particular they had an agreed to the 'carnet' of 10 visits to the gym for £40 and £20 for 10 junior swims.</p>	Till	2010	2011		Oct Swim	£1,500	£4,500	Very good increase!	Nov Gym	£4300	£2800	PAYG nearly down 35%!	Nov All	£5400	£3700	Down 35%	<p>Marketing team to promote these.</p>
Till	2010	2011															
Oct Swim	£1,500	£4,500	Very good increase!														
Nov Gym	£4300	£2800	PAYG nearly down 35%!														
Nov All	£5400	£3700	Down 35%														
<p><b><u>Solar</u></b>  RC reported that the panels are in place and final wiring is to be carried out next week, well before the 12<sup>th</sup> December deadline.</p> <p>Total installation cost is £23,500. RC will confirm the figure for the potential savings. RC also suggested the Centre order a screen for reception that can be wired in to actively show the power usage for the building and the amount of power generated. SH suggested that this could be potentially taken from the marketing budget as the Centre could also sell advertising on it.</p>	<p>RC to get savings figure and monitor usage.</p>																

**NEXT MEETING 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012**

**Proposed Future Dates :**

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February (Changed from 14<sup>th</sup> Feb)

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> May

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> July

# Chesham Allotments Group

## Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday 13th December 19:30

Venue: Chesham Town Hall

Attendees: Allen Tilbury (Chair), Vince Crompton (Vice Chair), David Page, Andrew Sinclair, Chris Challis (Coffee Morning Coordinator), Robin Plumridge (Social Secretary), Yvonne Webster (Minutes Secretary), Sara Saunders, Colette Littley (Councillor), Wayne Hambridge, Simon Jones (Treasurer), Marshall Hall (Correspondence Secretary), Mick Goodman

Apologies: Jim Abbott, Jill Walker

### Actions

- Marshall to provide a written contract for the hire of the marquee. Marshall to provide a new box for the marquee.
- Sara to advertise the web site address plus a separate promotion of the Christmas Grower.
- Vince to find out the cost of hiring the McMinn Centre, as an option for the Fish and Chip evening.
- Yvonne to run Google Analytics against the web site for usage stats.
- Marshall and Andrew to approach Neil Page to meet with them and Allen on site to discuss changes to the Focal Point structure. Allen thanked Andrew and Marshall for their presentation of ideas. The Focal Point needs to be treated with preservative, Marshall and Andrew agreed to take care of it.
- Sara to post a notice on the gates asking for interest in the trip to Stoneleigh Park on Sunday 18th March. Deadline is 20th January.
- The council has agreed that only Chesham residents will be considered for allotments in the future. Existing allotment holders who are not Chesham residents will not be affected.
- Correspondence Secretary's report to be added to the agenda.

### Information

- Minutes approved by Vince, seconded by David Page
- Thefts of produce at the Ashridge Road site during the summer: Council has increased the height of the wire fencing at the road entrance as a response.
- A 10p per pole rise is to be levied in October 2012, a 3% rise. The work done at Ashridge Road has resulted in a lower rise than the norm of 5.2% in recognition of the contribution made by allotment holders.
- Membership card latest: Allen reported that the Endeavour Centre are prepared to give a 10% discount. South Heath Garden Centre will offer 10% discount on shop goods, excluding compost. Allen will speak to other suppliers. Simon provided a printed

summary of options for setting up card membership. To be discussed at the next meeting.

- The original cost of the marquee was £400 including delivery and VAT. It was agreed that Hirers of the marquee should pay a refundable deposit, £40 was agreed. Hirers must be either charities at a refundable deposit of £50 and a hire fee of £40; or privately to allotment holders at £100 refundable deposit and a hire fee of £60, given that the hirer is known to the group.
- Simon gave his Treasurer's report showing a net profit from the Fish and Chip Quiz night of £143.16, the profit coming from the raffle. Cash in hand is £443.67, in the bank is £1410.51.
- A vote of thanks was given to Robin for organising the Fish and Chips Quiz night
- Coffee mornings to be run from Saturday 14th April until Saturday October 13th. Ashridge Road events to be 19th May, 14th July, Saturday 8th September.
- Andrew and Marshall have reviewed options for moving the serving hatch at the Focal Point to make access easier and safer.
- Brushwood, Waterside and Elmtree Nursery schools would like to visit the allotments in early April. Committee members were asked to support the visits.
- JPS Stationers has offered to give 10% discount to allotment holders
- Simon raised the idea of using unworkable plots as targets for 10-12 of those applicants at the top of the waiting list who could work together to learn the ropes and hopefully bring the plots into a workable state. Simon to work on a proposal.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 21st February, 2012



## **AGENDA ITEM NO: 5 - CHESHAM MOOR GYM AND SWIM CENTRE**

**Reporting Officer: Stephen Pearson (01494 583825)**

### **Summary**

1. To consider the financial report up to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011 and other matters pertaining to the Chesham Moor Gym and Swim Centre.

### **Background Information**

2. At the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2007 *'it was resolved that the Officers, in consultation with the Friends of Chesham Moor Swim & Gym, produce a five year business plan and that there be regular monitoring reports to each Recreation and the Arts Committee Meetings.'* (Minute 38 (1b)).

### **Financial Implications**

3. As outlined within the report.

### **Equality Act Implications**

4. Non applicable.

### **Strategic Objectives**

5. Accords with the Council's strategic aim 1 – *'To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.'*

### **Detailed Consideration**

6. The revised budgets for this financial year 2011/12 show a forecast subsidy requirement of £88,943 compared to an original budget of £80,070, an increase of £8,873. This is mainly due to lower gym income-see details below.
7. The monthly gym takings (**excluding** VAT @ 17.5% unless shown otherwise) are detailed in the table below:

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£	£	£	£
April	5,771	5,859*	6,111	5,808**
May	4,753	6,678*	7,058	6,327**
June	3,805	6,590*	6,453	6,796**
July	5,239	8,084*	7,569	5,679**
August	5,185	6,182*	6,653	4,962**
September	4,965	5,688*	5,960	6,027**
October	5,090	5,464*	6,987	6,552**
November	5,587	4,818*	6,675	4,971**
December	4,384*	4,747*	6,137	4,974**
January	6,490*	6,443	7,153**	
February	5,007*	6,608	5,625**	
March	7,880*	7,618	6,823**	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>64,156</u></b>	<b><u>74,779</u></b>	<b><u>79,204</u></b>	<b><u>52,096</u></b>

\*VAT @ 15%

\*\* VAT @ 20%

The figures above, for the nine months of this financial year show an overall reduction of 9.5% when compared to the same period last year (2.5% of which is mostly due to the VAT change). This rises to a **22%** reduction when comparing just the last two months. As previously reported this reduction could be due to a number of factors, including the new price structure and the loss of some ‘sleepers’ following the letters sent out informing gym members of the increase but the more recent drop is probably due to the current economic climate and increased competition from two of the local gyms which have recently been taken over and offer low priced membership. The reduction is being closely monitored and the advertising campaign targeted at local sports clubs is underway. One club has been recruited attracting a further nine participants. The budgets for this year had originally provided for a 5.4% increase but the recently produced revised budgets have taken the above downturn into consideration and now show a revised target for the year of £72,000 (a 9.3% overall reduction when compared to last year). However this revised target and next year’s target would not be achieved if the last two months drop was to be repeated.

#### 8. **Swimming**

The budgeted income for 2011 season tickets was £18,605 and it is pleasing to see this was slightly bettered with £19,035 being received. Income from general swimming, pool hiring’s and merchandise profit was slightly below budget with £43,810 being received compared to a budget of £45,065.

#### 9. **Other Income**

Income from room hire, multi-courts, football pitch hire and profit from the sale of food and drink is on course at the time of doing the revised budgets with income expected to reach £19,410 against an original budget of £19,430.

### **Recommendation**

**That the financial position be noted.**

Report to **RECREATION & THE ARTS COMMITTEE**  
meeting to be held 16<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO 6 : - ELGIVA PANTOMIME**

**Reporting Officer:** Mark Barnes (01494 582902)

### **Summary**

1. To receive a review of the Elgiva 2011/12 pantomime and to approve the pantomime for 2012/13.

### **Background Information**

2. At the Recreation and the Arts Committee of the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2009, it was resolved '*that the Committee support the principle of producing an 'in-house' pantomime at the Elgiva Theatre for the 2010/11 season.*' (Min no. 63).

### **Financial Implications**

3. As outlined within the report.

### **Strategic Objectives**

4. Accords with the Council's strategic aim 1 – '*To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.*'

5. **Equality Act Implications**

Non applicable.

### **Detailed Consideration**

6. The Manager would like to mention that the theatre has seen improved performance results in September, October and November 2011 against PI's for the same months in 2010. This comes against continued difficult economic climate and he feels it shows that the increased marketing strategies used have had the desired impact and he would like to thank his team for going the extra mile in effort and commitment.

## **‘BEAUTY AND THE BEAST’ PANTOMIME 2011/12.**

7. The Manager is extremely pleased to report favourable pantomime results for ‘Beauty and the Beast’. The reviews and audience feedback on the production have been the most positive ever received (see **attached** example of one of several letters received in praise) and credit must go to the talented cast and crew but, furthermore, the production has proved to be financially much more successful than the previous year, all of which augers well for 2012/13 show if approved.
8. Audience numbers were a total of 10,507 which is an average audience of 198 people over 53 performances equating to a 66% capacity, which, in the opinion of the Manager, leaves room for more improvement this year.
9. The gross income achieved was £103,240 which is an increase of £11,590 on the previous year. This equates to over a 13% increase in gross income. However, due to the second annual increase in VAT, the net income was affected by a loss of £1,830 (2 ½ %) but the net income target of £86,000 was just surpassed, meaning a £8,033 increase (10%) in the net income from 2010/11 pantomime, another fine result.
10. The Manager managed to make savings on his production expenditure and this, together with the increased income levels, will show a net surplus of around **£30,000** without other income streams and, shown against the net surplus of £23,500 last year, this shows a **net surplus improvement of over 27%** which again is an impressive result.
11. Other income streams also surpassed the previous year’s level, with more income taken in merchandise. Furthermore, ice cream sales of £4,141 gross (£3,602 net) showed a net profit of £2,160 over the pantomime season and the bar income was £5,510 gross (£4,592 net) a net profit of £2,387. All of these monies were only possible as the theatre managed to attract over 10,000 people through our doors for the pantomime and the overall net surplus is a vital component in keeping the venue viable.

## **PANTOMIME 2012/13.**

12. For Members’ information, had the Elgiva continued to ‘buy in’ a professional pantomime with Newpalm Productions on the terms of the previous contracts (up to 2009/10), the theatre would have only earned a net surplus of £18,500, some £11,500 short of what has been achieved by producing the panto in-house. It is on this basis that the Manager requests permission to produce ‘Aladdin’ as its annual pantomime for the 2012/13 season. Competing theatres have announced their shows and the Wycombe Swan and Dunstable Grove theatres are presenting ‘Snow White’, whilst the new theatre in Aylesbury is doing ‘Peter Pan’. As it will

be 8 years since the Elgiva last did 'Aladdin', it seems the best choice as it remains one of the most popular pantomime titles.

13. Given the results achieved, the Manager would like to request the go ahead to produce 'Aladdin' as the annual pantomime this year with the same agreed budget expenditure as the previous two years and that is £64,000 net plus £5,000 crew costs. Even though this year the Manager has managed to make some savings against his agreed expenditure budget, it should not be to the detriment of the pantomime so, with rising costs and the fact that 'Aladdin' needs a bigger cast than 'Beauty and the Beast' he feels it is vital to have sufficient monies to actually produce the quality and standard of professional production that has been achieved over the last two years and also the standard that audiences today expect.
14. To conclude the Manager would like to thank Members for their continued support of what is Chesham's biggest annual entertainment event by some way and he hopes they will agree that the excellent results achieved this year vindicate their decision to allow him to produce the pantomime last year and hopefully also this year.
15. The Chairman of the Elgiva Board of Management and the Theatre Manager will be in attendance at the Committee to answer any further questions Members may have.

**Recommendation**

**That the 2011/12 Pantomime figures be noted and that the Committee support the principle of offering an 'in-house' pantomime again next season at the suggested budget, subject to there being no major objections from the Elgiva Board of Management.**

pass on our thanks to the  
cast and all concerned with the  
production.

We also enjoyed last  
years performance of Robin Hood  
& we all look forward to the  
next panto. at the Elgiva.

Thanks again to all concer  
yours faithfully

Denise Jimenez

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05.01.12

Dear Mr Barnes,  
My husband & I  
visited the Elgiva with our five  
Grandchildren to see Beauty & the  
Beast on Friday December 23rd.  
The Childrens ages range from  
4 1/2 to 7 years & they all enjoyed the  
Pantomime immensely. They laughed,  
sang, boo-ed & hissed in all the  
right places. We thought both the  
acting & costumes were great & as  
Grandparents we were pleased  
the dialogue was suitable for the  
children - no smutty jokes.

It was an added  
bonus that the Jimenez family  
were welcomed by name - a nice  
surprise, and we all enjoyed our  
pre performance lunch at the  
Cafe Encore. Will you please

Report of the Officers to a meeting of the  
**RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE**  
on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

**AGENDA ITEM NO: 7 - GREEN FLAG**  
**APPLICATION FOR LOWNDES PARK FOR 2012**

**Reporting Officers: Bill Richards (01494 583824) & Kathryn Graves (01494 583798)**

**Summary**

1. To decide whether Lowndes Park should be entered for the Green Flag award for 2012.

**Background Information**

2. The Council has applied for the Green Flag Award for Lowndes Park every year since 2007. The park failed to achieve the award in 2007 and 2009, but obtained the award in 2008, 2010 and 2011. The deadline for entries is the 21<sup>st</sup> January.

**Financial Implications**

3. The Green Flag application costs £175, but significant investment in the park is required annually to attempt to ensure continued success.

**Strategic Objectives**

4. Achieving Green Flag status is in accordance with Strategic Objective 1, *‘To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents.’*

**Equality Act Implications**

5. A percentage of the judges’ marks are based on how accessible a green space is for those with disabilities.

**Detailed Consideration**

6. Following the failure of Lowndes Park to achieve Green Flag status in 2009, there was significant investment in the park during 2009-10 and early 2010-11 to secure the Green Flag during judging in May 2010. This included £71,308 in revenue costs, £54,192 capital expenditure on regenerating the play area and £13,000 on footpath improvements.
7. The judges’ feedback from 2009 was acted upon, resulting in a significant redraft of the Lowndes Park Management Plan, including the creation of a financial section for the first time; inclusion of the annual review of the Council’s

Environmental Policy; adding a section on partnership working; and breaking the components of the Heritage Lottery Fund bid into smaller sections and prioritising them within an Action Plan.

8. Significant advances in policies relating to the park were made, in line with the recommendation of the judges. A Tree Management Policy was adopted, with a specific supplement relating to the park and a new system of management for the Upper Park grassland area was implemented.
9. Many physical improvements have been brought about through the work of your officers and the Friends of Lowndes Park, including: new welcome signage; tree planting and weed clearance in Archena Gardens; a new raised flower bed; a full audit of the park's furniture and its condition; new litter bins; improved graffiti clearance; removal of superfluous equipment (e.g. the defunct drinking fountain); painting of old play equipment; planting of 5,000 spring bulbs; re-surfaced footpaths; and the regeneration of the main play area.
10. Despite altering the Management Plan to follow the 2009 judges' feedback, and despite the fact that the 2010 judge made far fewer recommendations for improving the park's plan than in previous years, the score for the Management Plan decreased from 2009 to 2010. Despite all the investment and effort outlined in points 7 and 8, the judge's comments on the 2010 feedback sheet concluded with the following; "*The park has achieved a Green Flag Award this year by a narrow margin....*" which had a very demoralising effect on the team involved.
11. Following this judging, your officers questioned whether there is consistency in marking between judges and felt that the awarding of the Green Flag is subject to the vagaries of individual judges, rather than a reflection of the actual condition of the park. Therefore it was recommended that the park did not enter the competition in 2011. However at the Council Meeting of the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2010, it was resolved that '*Lowndes Park be entered into the Green Flag Award scheme for 2011*' (Min no 60).
12. In view of this decision, further investment was made in the park, most notably the new Performance Area and Seasonal Canopy (which, while not installed by the time of the judges' visit in May 2011, was heavily promoted). Other investment included the purchase of a mechanical sweeper to clean the paths surrounding Skottowes Pond, the installation of recycling bins and replacement litter bins and significant amounts of tree work in line with the Tree Management Policy.
13. In actual fact, the judges' comments for 2011 were very positive (**attached**) and the park comfortably retained its status. That being said, officers still have reservations on how much judges' personal interests and preferences (e.g. horticulture over community initiatives) may affect the overall marking. Nonetheless, it does not appear that the 2011 judges are recommending much in the way of further capital investment so assuming the status quo can be maintained, there would appear little reason why the Council cannot obtain Green Flag status for the park in 2012.



14. Whilst entering the scheme does focus your officers' attention upon the park at certain times of the year, the major benefit of the Green Flag scheme has been the development of a comprehensive Management Plan. An annual Action Plan is included within the plan and an annual revision of the plan is scheduled into officers' timetables. Officers are currently updating this Management Plan and this will be presented to Members at a future Committee.

**Recommendation**

**That the Committee confirms that Lowndes Park be entered for the Green Flag Award for 2012.**



**Lowndes Park  
Chesham Town Council  
Green Flag Award 2011/2012**

**Bandscores**

<b>Desk Assessment</b>	0-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-30			
<b>Field Assessment</b>	20-29	30-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-70
<b>Overall score</b>	30-44	45-54	55-59	60-65	66-69	70-74	75-79	80+

**Status - Pass**

**Overall band score 75-79**

**Desk Assessment Feedback**

**Band score 20-24**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>Presentation</b>	A thorough document (the Management Plan [MP]). Each area or aspect of the park and its associated management is covered well.	Due consideration has been given to this MP. A good breakdown of the goals (to be achieved) at the beginning of the MP and the overview that this provides.
<b>Health, Safety &amp; Security</b>	H&S considerations are thought through. CCTV is available at key entrances and monitored by the local police.	
<b>Maintenance of equipment, buildings &amp; landscape</b>		This could be expanded and more details provided regarding ownership of equipment and the location of depot. A list of relevant courses or onsite training provided to staff would be of interest.
<b>Litter,</b>	According to the MP there are daily	Positive responses provided from

<b>cleanliness, vandalism</b>	patrols for litter picking.	previous years' judges' feedback reports.
<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>		It would be useful if this area could be expanded upon, including compost storage and usage, recycling facilities and any further proposals.
<b>Conservation of heritage &amp; nature</b>	The plan provides a good, concise description of the historical and nature elements of the park and the action plan provides additional information with regard to future plans.	Once a complete audit is carried out and the Council have a full and informative understanding of all their assets, it will be interesting to see how the park evolves and moves forward.
<b>Community Involvement</b>	Inspiring efforts from the Friends of Lowndes Park: this is great to read about and see; more close partnership like this is desirable.	A matrix of work carried out by the 'Friends', when this is carried out and how the 'Friends' work alongside the Council would be of interest with the plan. A statement by the chairman of the 'Friends' would be a positive inclusion to provide an aspect from a volunteer's viewpoint.
<b>Marketing Strategy</b>	Good use of maps and leaflets online.	Include an example of the walking leaflets and event posters inside the plan to illustrate the marketing of the Park.
<b>Overall management</b>	Good to see MP objectives and tasks clearly set out for the reader; very readable, with obviously strong community involvement.	

**Additional comments**

Excellent work, impressive progress made on this town park. 'On paper' this park appears well managed; the MP provides good coverage of the relevant issues pertaining to the park. Importantly, previous years' GFA judges' feedback comments have been positively 'recycled' into the updated MP; helpful inclusion of the 'Action Plan' for the park (at the end of the MP).

We would recommend the inclusion of an illustrative masterplan of the site at the beginning of the management plan to highlight all the character areas described in the subsequent chapters, and the inclusion of more illustrative information including historical and photographic.

**Field Assessment Feedback**  
**Band score 50-54**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>A Welcoming Place</b>	This is indeed an open and welcoming park with good views in and out of the park. Attractive new black signage on main entrances.	Consider eventually incorporating a map of the park as part of the signage to orientate visitors, possibly A1 in size or larger.
<b>Healthy, Safe and Secure</b>	The park feels open, safe and comfortable. CCTV equipment strategically positioned around the park and clearly visible. Open aspects, trees crown lifted for clear sight lines. Good use of the new cleaning system around the pond to clear bird muck from the path. Good provision of facilities for all age groups and users.	The church/conservation entrance has a wonky rail that could easily be straightened and painted for an immediate visual improvement to this entrance in to the park. Perhaps consider adding a phone number for park users in they need support in terms of safety – perhaps the main number provided does this? Possible addition of a handrail by the steps leading down from the ‘bandstand’ area to the pond.
<b>Clean and Well Maintained</b>	Overall a very clean park. The grounds maintenance staff together with the FoLP obviously spend a great deal of time on maintaining the beds, trees and overall infrastructure. The horticultural results are impressive.	There was some areas of bird fouling seen, although in practical terms impossible to eradicate.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Good progress on many areas, including the trees and woodland areas.	Consider future inclusion of information boards pertaining to environmental and conservation education, linked in with the installation of loggeries, wildlife trails, bird and bat boxes, flower meadows for insects and pollination, etc.
<b>Conservation and Heritage</b>	Some excellent initial research already undertaken relating to the conservation and heritage features of the park; further surveys and research will undoubtedly reveal more interesting aspects to the park’s history.	This new information, when it becomes available, will no doubt be of interest to local and wider visitors to the park i.e. continue to promote and educate visitors on this aspect. Please continue to consider and apply for further funding

		opportunities.
<b>Community Involvement</b>	This is an excellent area of the work being carried out. Great local links between CTC and FoLP and other community groups. It is readily apparent that there is a good deal of local pride in the park. There appears to be a very good working relationship between CTC and FoLP.	
<b>Marketing</b>	An imaginative and fun status to be awarded a 'Walking Town' status.	Continue to draw visitors in from the town environs into the park; perhaps installation of a sign by the train station highlighting the short distance it takes to reach the park? Perhaps consider a plan to draw more visitors up to the top corner of the park to enjoy the views and experience more of the wildlife?  It is positive to see that forward planning regarding events is taking place and that all age groups are being considered when expanding the calendar.
<b>Management</b>	The obvious efforts put into the park by the grounds maintenance staff and management is clear for all to see, keep the great efforts up.	

**Additional Comments**

This is a welcoming park that has a lot of local pride imbued within it. The park caters for a whole range of users, from toddlers, children and mums, teenagers, dog walkers, and probably more! There is a real variety to the park, although the overall impression is not one of it being cluttered. The park is of a good size for a town park, and is clearly a real asset within and around Chesham. It is good and important that there is an annual forward plan to plan ahead resources and goal-setting. Continue to consider what future opportunities and threats the park may experience, and plan ahead accordingly.

Report of the Officers to a meeting of the  
**RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE**  
on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

**AGENDA ITEM NO: 8 - OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH**

**Reporting Officer:** Kathryn Graves (01494 583798)

**Summary**

1. To consider whether the Council should write to DEFRA and Mrs Cheryl Gillan MP regarding the threat of oak processionary moth.

**Background Information**

2. The oak processionary moth, *Thaumetopea processionea*, is native to central and southern Europe.
3. The moth's distribution has increased northwards during the latter half of the twentieth century which may be a consequence of climate change. The moth has previously been found in the UK in small numbers along the South coast of England, where it is likely to have arrived naturally either by the adults flying, or being blown, across the Channel. However, the moth was found for the first time in London in 2006, where the first breeding population in the UK was recorded. Monitoring identified that the species was able to overwinter successfully in this country. Other outbreaks have developed in five West London boroughs since 2006. In 2010, isolated outbreaks were detected in Pangbourne and Sheffield. All known outbreaks in the UK have been confirmed as originating from imported nursery tree stock from Europe.
4. The larvae (caterpillars) have hairs that carry a toxin which can be irritating to the skin, eyes and bronchial tubes of humans and other animals. Irritation can result in itchy skin lesions that are unpleasant but not dangerous, and, less commonly, sore throats, breathing difficulties and eye problems. Irritation can occur if people touch the caterpillars or their nests, or if the hairs are blown by the wind into contact with people. If a larval population becomes so large that it reaches "outbreak proportions", it can pose a significant human health problem.
5. The caterpillars are present from April to June and their main host plants are species of oak. The caterpillars feed on the leaves which can lead to serious defoliation. Whilst the trees will recover and leaf in the next year, this weakening could combine with other factors to have a negative effect on tree health. For example, the moth is regarded as a contributor to oak decline in Germany. Whilst reports from other countries indicate that repeated attacks can reduce a tree's vigour and occasionally prove fatal, there are no known records of tree deaths attributable to this species in the UK.

6. According to the Forestry Commission, this species has been associated with other trees on the Continent including beech, birch, hazel, hornbeam and sweet chestnut, but this is normally only where heavily-infested oak trees are nearby.
7. It is suspected that this moth will be capable of breeding in most of England and Wales. The original phytosanitary risk assessment for the species concluded that the likelihood of spread from the London populations is very high unless these populations are controlled or severely contained.

### **Financial Implications**

8. If oak processionary moth infestations spread to Town Council land, there would be a cost associated with eradicating these infestations. Financial losses could result from the inability to hire out open spaces while they are infested due to the risk to public health.

### **Strategic Objectives**

9. Accords with the Council's strategic aim 1 – *'To enable residents to enjoy high-quality social, recreational, and cultural facilities within the town and to seek the continuing improvement and development of these facilities in accordance with the desires expressed by the residents'*.

### **Equality Act Implications**

10. None pertaining to this report.

### **Detailed Consideration**

11. The Forestry Commission was responsible for an eradication programme of the moth, invoking powers under the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005, which provides enforcement powers for treatment and the prevention of movement of potentially infested material. However, these powers do not allow the Forestry Commission to assist tree owners in dealing with the pest or to pay for carrying out treatment. As the outbreaks covered land owned by a multitude of landowners, ranging from public authorities to individuals, the speed and level of response in treating the outbreaks, and therefore their level of success, varied significantly.
12. In 2011, the government was informed by scientific advisors that it was "no longer practicable" to eradicate the moth from the five West London boroughs where it has become established. Therefore, a policy of containing the moth in this area has now been adopted. This means that the Forestry Commission will no longer issue statutory notices requiring tree owners within the zone to have the nests and caterpillars removed. Any action to manage the moth in the zone will now be up to local authorities and tree owners. The Forestry Commission will, however, annually survey a buffer zone extending to a radius of 6 miles outside the core zone and will serve

statutory notices requiring the removal of infestations found in the buffer zone. Restrictions will also be imposed on the movement of oak material from the core outbreak zone.

13. In a press release in March 2011, Mr Roddie Burgess, Head of the Forestry Commission's Plant Health Service said "...our experience on the ground and the scientific advice indicate that it was going to be almost impossible to completely eradicate it. It is therefore clear that the wisest use of the available resources is to continue to work towards keeping it contained at the lowest practicable level within the current core outbreak area and to prevent it from spreading outwards to the rest of the country."
14. Our tree warden, Mr Bernard Meldrum, has requested that the Council writes to the Amersham and Chesham MP, Mrs Cheryl Gillan, and DEFRA, to urge that the decision by the government be reversed and that the policy of eradication be re-introduced.
15. Owing to the limited powers and resources of the Forestry Commission, the eradication programme was unsuccessful, which may also suggest that the containment programme will be unsuccessful as it will operate on similar principles. This is likely to result in the moth spreading out of London and causing significant impacts on recreational areas, such as woodlands and parks, both in terms of tree health and human/livestock health problems. There will also be cost implications for landowners in controlling infestations.
16. As Chesham is in relatively close geographical proximity to West London, it is possible that Chesham will experience oak processionary moth infestations in the not too distant future. If trees on Town Council land become infested, this could require the Council to prevent access to affected open spaces to safeguard public health. The infestations could also have a negative impact on the health of some of the Council's tree stock. It would be necessary for the Council to control the infestations on its land, at its own cost. At present, the most reliable method of control in the UK is for pest controllers to spray the caterpillars with an approved insecticide. However, this will have significant, negative impacts on native, invertebrate wildlife. For these reasons it would be desirable to do everything possible to remove the risk of the spread of this pest to Chesham.
17. It would seem that the reinstatement of the eradication programme alone may not be worthwhile as it failed to prevent the pest establishing in the five West London boroughs. Your officers would suggest that the Council either (i) accepts containment as the practical option, with the associated risk of the spread of the pest, and takes no action or (ii) that a letter be written to Mrs Gillan MP and DEFRA requesting that the eradication programme be reinstated and that greater powers and resources are provided to the Forestry Commission to enable effective eradication of existing infestations and to prevent the establishment of this human health and phytosanitary pest in the UK.



**Recommendation**

**That the Committee decides whether a letter be written to DEFRA and Mrs Cheryl Gillan MP to request the re-instatement of a more effective oak processionary moth eradication programme.**

Bill Richards  
Town Clerk