

CHESHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the TOWN COUNCIL

held on Monday 24th September 2007

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs M. Molesworth, Town Mayor (presiding)
Councillor Mrs A.M. Pirouet, Deputy Mayor

Councillor	V.M. Abraham	Councillor	F.G. Holly
"	A.K. Bacon	"	D.J. Lacey
"	E.L. Bamford	"	Mrs C. Littley
"	M.Z. Bhatti	"	C.H. Spruytenburg
"	M.E. Brand	"	Mrs P.R. Wilkinson M.B.E
"	N.L. Brown	"	P.W. Yerrell
"	Mrs J.C. Fulford		

Officer: Mr W. Richards - Town Clerk

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms J.E. Bramwell, M. Fayyaz and Mrs C.M. Michael

39. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Town Mayor invited questions from the public.

Mr Vince Crompton, Chairman of the Allotments Group, asked how the Council could justify its 50p per pole rental increase for Cameron Road plots recently agreed at the Recreation and the Arts Committee without investment in security fencing and why the monies accrued from the sale of Stoney Grove allotments back in 1985 had not been re-invested into allotments.

Councillor Bacon replied on behalf of the Council. In response to the latter question, he stated he could not answer for a previous Council particularly for a decision taken so long ago. In regard to the rental increase, he stated he believed that a rise of £5 per annum for a ten pole plot was not unreasonable especially in light of recent investment in the Cameron Road site. Moreover he highlighted the fact that allotment holders were subsidised to the amount of in excess of £18,000 last financial year. In respect of the fencing, he opined that the estimate for the steel palisade fencing was very expensive and aesthetically questionable.

The Mayor added that the Council was aware of previous difficulties between the allotment holders and the Parks and Premises team over the cutting back of prickly bushes designed to deter intruders but expressed her view that planting of such bushes seemed the obvious solution to increasing security.

Mr David Page asked how many estimates had been received for the fencing. The Town Clerk advised only a 'ball-park' figure had been obtained to ascertain whether the Council wished to proceed with a proper tendering process.

Mr Allen Tilbury, Secretary of the Allotments Group, asked how much was previously spent on clearing a small-holding. The Town Clerk replied he did not know but would try to find out before the Allotments Group AGM.

Mrs Kate Folly asked what a 'Hobby Home' in respect to the allotments was. Again the Town Clerk agreed to research and report back.

THE TOWN MAYOR OPENED THE COUNCIL MEETING AT 8.25PM

40. **MINUTES**

It was

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 16th July 2007 be confirmed and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.

41. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In respect of Agenda Item No. 9 – Payment to Strides Gymnasium Owner - Councillor Mrs Fulford declared a personal interest as a regular user of the leisure facilities in Moor Road.

Councillors Brand and Mrs Molesworth declared a personal interest in any item pertaining to the Christmas Day Party for Older People as members of its Working Party.

Following a matter raised under Mayoral Announcements, Councillors Brown and Mrs Pirouet declared a personal interest as representatives of the Board of the Chiltern Citizen's Advice Bureau.

42. **MAYORAL ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members had before them and duly noted the list of the Town Mayor's engagements from 17th July – 24th September 2007. The Mayor reported that she had visited the Beavers on the 21st September rather than meeting them at the Town Hall as listed.

In respect to the event held on Saturday 21st July, the Mayor paid tribute to all the officers for their efforts in the opening of the Moor Fitness gymnasium located at the Open Air Pool. The Mayor also expressed her pleasure in the town obtaining the Silver Gilt award in the regional 'Britain in Bloom' contest.

The Mayor then recommended to the Council that it hosted a public open meeting to raise awareness on the perceived current financial crisis facing the Chiltern Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB). Some Members questioned the necessity of this since the CAB had recently held its Annual General Meeting and local newspaper reports had implied that additional funding had been secured. The Mayor responded by opining that the newspaper reports had not been entirely accurate and problems still remained. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that such a meeting should be held but only if it was deemed necessary by the current Chairman of the CAB.

43. **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

It was moved by Councillor C. H. Spruytenburg and seconded by Councillor A.K. Bacon and

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Development Control Committee held on 23rd July 2007, be received and approved.

It was moved by Councillor C. H. Spruytenburg and seconded by Councillor F. G. Holly and

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Development Control Committee held on 3rd September 2007, be received and approved.

The record of the inquorate meeting of the 13th August 2007 was also presented and noted by the Council.

Councillor Bhatti left the meeting at 8.40pm

44. **RECREATION AND THE ARTS COMMITTEE**

It was moved by Councillor Mrs J.C. Fulford and seconded by Councillor A.K. Bacon and

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 3rd September 2007, be received, approved and adopted.

45. **BUILDING IN LOWNDES PARK**

Arising from *Minute No.25* of the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 3rd September 2007, Councillor Bamford raised the matter of the proposed possible building within Lowndes Park as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund bid. While, as a member of the Lowndes Park Lottery Steering Group, she was supportive of a bid, she opined that the Council needed to be aware of the on-going revenue costs of such a facility and that at the moment, not enough financial details on this were available.

The Town Clerk advised that a business plan for the facility was being presently drawn up and in no way would a bid, with or without a building, be submitted to the Lottery without Council's final approval and upon Members being cognisant of the financial implications. However he expressed his view that it was important to move the bid forward and that approval be granted to commission a local architect to give an 'artist's impression' of such a building so consultation with the public could take place though he fully accepted that such a building would not be guaranteed to obtain planning consent.

After some discussion it was agreed that the recommendation be confirmed and that the architect be commissioned to devise an artist's impression of the building at a cost of no more than £1,250.

46. **CHRISTMAS DAY PARTY FOR OLDER PEOPLE**

Arising from *Minute No.31* of the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 3rd September 2007, a query was raised to the accuracy of the minute. The view was expressed that the Committee had formally accepted Councillor Mrs Wilkinson's offer to work as an unpaid administrator for the Christmas Day Party. The contrary view was put forward that this was not the case since it was not within the powers of the Committee to appoint a Member to an outside body.

After some debate, the Mayor called for a vote from those in attendance at the Recreation and the Arts Committee to determine the accuracy of the minute. Following this vote, it was

RESOLVED

that Minute No 31 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

47. **BRIDLEWAYS OPEN TO ALL TRAFFIC**

Arising from *Minute No.32* of the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and the Arts Committee held on 3rd September 2007, Councillor Brown questioned whether the minute should be amended to 'the Council' rather than 'the Committee' restating its position in objecting to the orders upgrading of bridleways to bridleways open to all traffic.

The Clerk responded by informing the Council he had already replied to Buckinghamshire County Council's since the matter had been resolved and had expressed the Council's opposition to the orders.

Councillor Mrs Pirouet left the meeting at 9.00pm

48. **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

It was moved by Councillor C.H. Spruytenburg and seconded by Councillor F. G. Holly and

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 17th September 2007, be received and approved.

Councillor Mrs Littley left the meeting at 9.05pm

49. **PAY SCHEDULE NO. 3**

Following consideration of Pay Schedule No. 3, it was

RESOLVED

that Pay Schedule No. 3 in the grand total of £362,724.22 be approved and the various payments and transactions set out therein be confirmed.

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

It was moved by the Mayor and

RESOLVED

that the public and the Press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Access to Meetings) Act 1960, as matters which are considered to be confidential are about to be discussed.

51. **PAYMENT TO STRIDES GYMNASIUM OWNER**

The Committee considered the current position in respect of a possible final payment to the former owner of Strides Gymnasium at the Moor Road Swimming Pool and sports facilities for the period of operation between April 17th 2007 and June 12th 2007.

It was

RESOLVED

that the Clerk be authorised to proceed in connection with this matter in the terms expressed at the meeting.

52. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

TOWN MAYOR

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