

Dear Graham,

As the founder member of Friends of Elms Park and Music in the Park I am writing to you as I feel there needs to be some discussion as to the funds currently held by the council on behalf of FOEP & MitP.

Friends of Elms Park was started in 2008 with the help of the then Town Clerk who organised for a member of the council to become a part of the group. This was to help establish FOEP, raise funds and to ensure accounts could be audited appropriately by the council.

The whole ethos of this group was to raise funds for park improvements and this group then gave rise to MitP and therefore the members of FOEP became members of MitP.

MitP was set up in 2010 with the first event taking place in 2011 and the ethos of this group continued to be to raise funds for the park. In 2015, the committee decided to seek charity status and the committee is now allocating grants to other organisations within the local and surrounding area.

As a trustee of MitP and chairman of FOEP I raised my concerns with the committee that the priority for fund raising should continue to be for Elms Park. This was therefore incorporated into the charities commission application which is currently being reviewed for submission in the very near future.

My concern is that the cost of running the event continues to increase and therefore it is essential that the current funds held on behalf of FOEP & MitP are ring fenced to be spent on park facilities.

I appreciate that investment will be required to further support the event but I think it would be advantageous to have an agreement in writing between the Town Council, FOEP & MitP prior to MitP gaining charities status. This will ensure that funds will be used for the park or that a significant percentage will be earmarked for the park, including funding for benches as agreed.

Regards

Alison Champken-Woods.