

Present:

Councillor Mrs J Wood, Chairman
Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, Vice Chairman
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor A J Follett
Councillor C W Gibson
Councillor Miss L Pye
Councillor S R Smith
The Mayor, Councillor Mrs G M Zakss (ex-officio)

In Attendance: Mr M Kennedy, Town Clerk and Mrs A H Gliddon, Committee Administrator/Minute Taker

Also Present: Councillor A J Elliott, Councillor Miss L Hillier; Inspector Stewart Haveron, PC Vicky Sims, Acting Neighbourhood Sergeant Dave Atherton, Thames Valley Police; Mr Robert Rigby and Mr R Davey, Robert Rigby Associates; Mr Richard Cole, England's Hidden Heritage, Mr Jonathan Hobbs, Ms Louise White, Windsor, three members of the public and one member of the press.

1950. **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Dr P J Skolar. An apology for lateness was received from Councillor Mrs J Bland, who was attending a meeting at South Oxfordshire District Council.

1951. **RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are hereby reminded that, under the provisions of Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 (The Code of Conduct), a member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent. A member with a personal interest in a matter also has a prejudicial interest in that matter if the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest. A member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting is being held whenever it becomes apparent that the matter is being considered at that meeting, unless he has obtained a dispensation from the standards committee of the responsible authority; and not seek improperly to influence a decision about that matter. For the purposes of this Part (of the Act), "meeting" means any meeting of the authority; or any of the authority's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees.

None received.

1952. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Management Committee held on 6 January 2009 were approved and signed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood.

The Committee RECOMMENDS

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Christmas
Decorations Sub-Committee held on 15 January 2009 be adopted.

Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that the proposed date of the Christmas Festival was Friday 4 December 2009. She asked for any comments as soon as possible.

The Committee RECOMMENDS

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Henley in Bloom / Civic Pride Sub-Committee held on 15 January 2009 be adopted.

Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that the annual Hit Litter campaign would commence the week beginning 26 April 2009, with the main Hit Litter day being Saturday 2 May 2009.

The Committee RECOMMENDS

that the Minutes of the Mill Meadows / River Sub Committee meeting held on 27 January 2009 be adopted.

1953. **PROGRESS**

Councillors received and noted the Progress Report and made the following comments:

OCC Agency Agreement for Verges and Sign Removal – Minutes 1730&1948

It was noted that an Estate Agent's board had been placed on the grass verge at Reading Road, outside Waterman's and in addition a number of vehicles are parking there.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the agreement with OCC for the removal of unauthorised signs from the highway has been signed and that a contractor has been appointed to remove signage. He advised that he would establish ownership of the cars parking on the verge via DVLA and write to the owners to inform them that they are parking illegally on Town Council land and should refrain from doing so in the future.

Mill Meadows Playground - Minute 1908

Councillors agreed that it was good news that an order for the new equipment had been placed, following confirmation of funding from the Play Builder scheme

Mill Meadows Kiosk, Minutes 1090&1913

The Town Clerk confirmed that Mrs Battista's reply is still awaited.

Finger Signage/ New Street Furniture

Councillor Mrs Hodgkin expressed gratitude to SODC for funding these two projects which would significantly improve the appearance of the town centre.

1954. **BUDGET**

(i) Councillors received and noted the monthly budget report for December 2008. Councillor A J Follett sought permission to discuss an item included in the budget regarding CCTV strategy actions, which required urgent attention due to SODC seeking a response from the Town Council by 11 February 2009. Councillors had been notified and forwarded details by email inviting comment. A meeting had been convened the previous evening which three Councillors had attended to discuss the matter. A proposed response had been put together at

that meeting and this was tabled, together with a copy of an email from Councillor T B Buckett.

Councillor Follett advised that this was not a very satisfactory way of dealing with the matter but was required due to the short notice period provided by District Council.

Councillors studied the paper and email, following which

The Committee RESOLVED

that the Town Clerk sends the two papers tabled at the meeting, as the Town Council's response in respect of CCTV strategy actions, and this should be done as a matter of urgency the following day, with the caveat that these papers had not yet been put before Full Council

(ii) Councillors received and noted a paper giving details of proposed increases in fees for the financial year 2009/10, for annual licences, continental markets, car park and moorings fees, calculated at the rate of increase agreed by Full Council when considering the budget

Some Councillors expressed concern regarding the proposal to increase car parking and temporary mooring fees and suggested that the current charges should be retained. Other Councillors disagreed and were of the opinion that the increase in charges was required to keep to the budgeted figures, in light of the fact that there are to be no charges at Mill Lane car park.

It was proposed and seconded

that fees for all car parking and temporary moorings remain at the 2008/9 levels

Vote taken; 3 for, 3 against, 1 abstention.
Chairman's casting vote; against the motion

The motion was declared lost whereupon

The Committee RECOMMENDS

that the increase in charges, as shown in the paper, is implemented for 2009/10 subject to the introduction of an hourly rate for car parking.

1955. **POLICE**

(i) The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, invited Inspector Stewart Haveron, PC Vicky Sims, Acting Neighbourhood Sergeant Dave Atherton to the table

Sergeant Atherton introduced himself to Councillors and advised that he was working in Henley as a replacement for Keith Stacey who had been promoted to Inspector and was now working in Reading.

He reported that from 1 December 2008 to date, burglary numbers were similar to the previous year – 60 / 58. This was higher than the police would like and had been the main focus recently. A leaflet drop had been made, with the assistance of the neighbourhood group, to 2,000 properties and mock Christmas cards handed out by PSCOs to commuters and around the town, offering assistance on the prevention of burglaries.

Following recent burglaries, some local people had been arrested. In the past week, two males had been arrested in London as a direct result of burglaries carried out in Henley. They had been charged and released on bail on condition that they do not enter Oxfordshire.

PCSO's PC Vicky Sims advised Councillors of the following work carried out by PCSOs:

- 280 visits to victims of crime; 77 intelligence reports notified; 191 ECNs issues (compared to 74 in Didcot).
- Information provided by a PCSO had led to the arrest of two drink drivers and following criminal damage, a PCSO had kept the offender until police officers arrived.
- PCSO surgeries continued to be carried out with the latest held at Mount View the current day, when a suggestion box had been available for comments from members of the public and warnings given not to let unidentified callers into houses.
- The café at Mill Meadows would be open during half term on 20 February and twice monthly thereafter as funding of £200 had been secured from SODC.

Councillor C W Gibson asked if the Neighbourhood Watch scheme produces results.

PC Sims replied that this assists the police by being the 'eyes and ears' of the community in looking for suspicious cars and taking down registration details etc.

Sergeant Atherton confirmed that the scheme provides the police with useful intelligence. Councillor A J Follett agreed that it was useful and costs very little to provide and should be encouraged and promoted.

Councillor Mrs J Wood advised that she had received a request from a member of public for the police to work as a liaison with Henley College to ask students not to block the Highway and force other members of the public to walk in the road.

PC Sims confirmed that this would be done and a report brought back to Committee.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs G Zakss, asked if, following an article in the Henley Standard that the nightclub in Greys Road car park would not open, reports that the club had in fact opened the previous Saturday were true and if so, whether there had been any bad behaviour reported.

Sergeant Atherton confirmed that the club had opened and no reports of bad behaviour received.

Councillor A J Follett referred to a survey currently being conducted by the police and asked if Councillors could assist people to fill these in as this needs to be done face to face.

PC Sims advised that 250 surveys had been completed to date with more required, particularly from the elderly age group. Forms were available on the front desk at Henley police station.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, asked what impact was perceived of the Town Council reducing funding to support only one PCSO in the next financial year.

Sergeant Atherton confirmed that a post would be lost in the town centre with visits, ECN's and other duties consequentially reduced.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, thanked the police for attending and the three officers left the meeting at 8.05pm

Councillor Miss L Hillier left the meeting at 8.05pm

(ii) Councillors considered the matter of signing a new Memorandum of Understanding for Partial Funding of 1 PCSO for two years for the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2011.

The Committee RECOMMENDS

that an agreement is entered into to commit the Town Council to a two year contract for funding 1 PCSO until 31 March 2011

1956. **LEICHLINGEN PAVILION**

Minute 253, Mill Meadows/River Sub Committee meeting, 27 January 2009, refers

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, invited Mr Robert Rigby and Mr Robert Davey to the table.

Mr Rigby explained that had been invited by the Town Council to look at upgrading the sanitary ware and produce an overview for improvements to the Pavilion and surrounding area. They had observed that Mill Meadows was a multifunctional space, close to the River & Rowing Museum and the Pavilion, housed a bowling club and nursery on the top floor. The building was not user friendly and was possibly in the wrong place. There is conflict between vehicles and pedestrians with bowls club parking in direct conflict with pedestrian usage. It is a generally underused facility which can be improved.

Mr Rigby stated that he had been given details of a proposal for refurbishments to the toilet facilities produced by a specialist contractor which provided satisfactory suggestions for internal refurbishments. He had looked at improvements to maximise the potential of the outside of the building without too much cost. A visual display of these proposals was shown to the meeting and a handout and drawings produced. These will be available in the One Stop Shop for Councillors not at the meeting to view.

Mr Rigby advised that costs were estimated as follows:

Healthmatic's proposals for refurbishment of the toilets c£140,000

Application of soft landscaping and external changes to entrances, ramps, stairs etc c £140,000.

Total demolish of building and reconstruct with same footfall £850k to £1M

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, thanked Mr Rigby and Mr Davey for their excellent presentation and they left the meeting

Action: Report and drawings available in the One Stop Shop at the Town Hall for Councillors to view.

1957. **HENLEY PARTNERSHIP TOURISM GROUP**

(i) The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, invited Richard Cole, Chairman of the England Hidden Heritage Project (EHHP) and Jonathan Hobbs Chairman of the Henley Partnership to the table. Mr Hobbs requested that they be joined by Julia White, Visitor Manager for Windsor, who had signed up to the project.

Mr Hobbs thanked Councillors for permitting them to give a presentation on the project. He had recently been appointed Chairman of the Henley Partnership and had first hand experience of marketing Henley to day visitors and group visitors but the American market had not previously been marketed.

Mr Hobbs handed over to Mr Cole who advised that the group had formed in 2007 with the intention that the initial development phase would last for three years. Henley would be a great advantage to the project to assist to generate business from the US cruise market coming into Southampton and Dover. Previously visitors had been at the mercy of taxi drivers. The intention was to plug the market by developing contacts in the USA and they were working with a group of cruise specialists in Miami and looking to start a similar arrangement in New York.

In response to a question, Mr Cole advised that an organisation called Hospitality Lines would work as a trade partner to EHHP and would finalise an itinerary for visits by groups of 10-20 people.

Mr Hobbs advised that Henley would be promoted as having two stately homes, Greys Court and Stonor, the River & Rowing Museum, The River Thames, boat trips on the river, town for lunch and overnight stay in a local hotel.

Councillor A J Follett asked if the Town Council provided support, what would the money buy and would this be required on an annual basis? Also would the Olympics in 2012 be considered?

Mr Hobbs replied that funding would be used towards promotion and marketing costs with ideas being tried and tested prior to the Olympic Games. Ms White gave details of Windsor's involvement. She advised that overseas marketing is very expensive if carried out alone and combining forces makes this more cost effective. The time is right with the exchange rate in US visitors favour.

Councillor Mrs J Bland entered the meeting at 8.40pm.

Mr Hobbs advised that Tourism South East had promised £2,000 towards Henley's membership of EHHP. South Oxfordshire District Council had indicated that they would provide £750 and were seeking matched funding from the Town Council. He envisaged that when partners see the benefits to Henley they would start providing funding themselves, as had happened in other areas. Future markets to be considered for targeting would be the Far East and the younger US market

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, thanked Mr Hobbs, Mr Cole and Ms White for attending and they left the table.

(ii) Councillors considered a request from the Henley Partnership Tourism Group for funding of £750 + VAT on condition that SODC provides matched funding towards membership of EHHP and an opportunity for Henley to be promoted in England's Hidden Heritage brochure.

Councillor A J Follett advised that he felt it a worthwhile project to pursue. The Town Council should be showing support to the Partnership.

The Committee RECOMMENDS

that funding of £750 is provided towards membership of the England Hidden Heritage Project, from the Action Plan town improvements budget, on the condition that matched funding is provided by South Oxfordshire District Council.

1958. **VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE**

Councillors received and noted the following reports

- Visitor report running total for year 2008/2009
- Budget report –December 2008/ January 2009
- Report for 1 December 2008 to 31 January 2009

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, referred to an item in the third report which was in response to a point raised by Councillor C W Gibson at a previous meeting

The Town Clerk advised that the contract with French Jones ends on 31 March 2009. The budget for 2009/10 had been reduced by 50% and he had been charged with preparing a report on the future of the Visitor Information Centre and the relationship with the One Stop Shop. He was seeking a decision for French Jones to continue to run the Centre for the first six months of the financial year.

The Committee RECOMMENDS

that the contract with French Jones to run the Visitor Information Centre is extended for the period 1 April 2009 to 30 September 2009.

Councillor C W Gibson reported on a meeting he had attended with the Henley Partnership Tourism and Leisure Group (HPLG) on 22 January 2009. The matter of continued funding for French Jones had been discussed and Mr J Hobbs was investigating whether the HPLG could help with this and would report back to the Town Council. The various 'Henley' related websites had also been discussed including a proposal to produce a single website promoting Henley which would act as a hub for all the other Henley related websites. Mr Paul Mains from the River & Rowing Museum and Mrs Terrie Jones of French Jones were due to meet for further discussions on the way forward.

1959. **HORTICULTURAL AMENITY CONTRACT**

Minute 1918, 14 October 2008 refers

Councillors considered the recommendations of the working group and Town Clerk, following a meeting with Miles Watson-Smythe, Director, Windowflowers, on 21 January 2008.

The Committee RECOMMENDS

that the maintenance contract between HTC and Windowflowers is extended for a further two years.
that an increase of 2% in contract fees is agreed .
that changes to improve Henley's Civic Pride are made to the contract, at no extra cost to the Town Council.

1960. **HENLEY ARTS AND CRAFTS GUILD – ARTS TRAIL IN HENLEY**

Councillors considered a request from Henley Arts and Crafts Guild to display a banner (approximate size 2.5' x 10' plastic vinyl on stake) on the grass verge at the Reading Road entrance to Henley, by the entrance to Waterman's Allotments for one week ending 2 May 2009.

Councillors noted that the event takes place annually on the spring bank holiday and involves individual art exhibitions held at various venues in Henley and the surrounding area with fund-raising for the local air ambulance team carried out during the event. Last year the event attracted c2,500 people to the town. Permission is also being sought from the District Council to place similar banners on Highway verges.

Councillors were minded to support the application although were of the opinion that the land involved may belong to Oxfordshire Highways.

The Committee RECOMMENDS

that Henley Town Council confirms that it has no objection to the banner being placed on the grass verge;
that the approval of Oxfordshire County Council should be sought;
that the Henley Arts and Crafts Group have the necessary public liability insurance in place prior to the event;
that all banners are removed after one week.

1961. **USE OF MARKET PLACE, HENLEY**

Councillors considered a request from Reading Blue Coat School's Young Enterprise Company to set up a stand in the Market Place to sell their cookbook.

The Committee RECOMMENDS

that permission is given to the students from the Blue Coat School Young Enterprise Company to sell their cookbook on one weekend day in February/March, on the Market Place for a fee of £50, subject to them obtaining all necessary licences/permits and no other booking being made for the area on the same day.

that the £50 is charged as part of the business learning initiative and donated to a local charity via the Mayor's Relief and Convalescent Fund.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 09:10 pm