

Present: Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor W Hamilton
Councillor D Hinke
Councillor Miss K Gehrman
Councillor Ms L Meachin (Substitute for Councillor Mrs J Wood)
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith
Councillor I Reissmann
The Mayor, Councillor Mrs P Phillips (ex-officio)
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin (ex-officio)

In Attendance: Mr M Kennedy, Town Clerk
Ms N Taylor, Committee Administrator / Minute Taker

Also Present: Councillor M Akehurst
Councillor S Gawrysiak
Councillor Miss L Hillier
Councillor D Silvester
District Councillor W Hall
1 Member of the Press
PS G Pink
Inspector M Harling

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Mayor called for nominations for the election of Chairman for the year 2011-12.

Councillor D Hinke proposed and Councillor I Reissmann seconded that Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin be elected Chairman for the year 2011-2012.

There being no further nominations, and following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** that

Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin be elected Chairman of the Town and Community Committee for the following municipal year.

Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin took the Chair.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, called for nominations for the election of a Vice-Chairman for the year 2011-2012.

Councillor Mrs P Phillips proposed and Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin seconded that Councillor Miss K Gehrman be elected Vice-Chairman for the year 2011-2012.

There being no further nominations, and following a vote, it was **RESOLVED** that

Councillor Miss K Gehrman be elected Vice-Chairman of the Town and Community Committee for the year 2011-2012.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference for the Town & Community Committee were considered. It was **RESOLVED** that

the Terms of Reference for the Town and Community Committee be adopted.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs J Wood. An apology for lateness was received from Councillor Mrs J Bland.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Mr K Arlett, Elizabeth Road, questioned A) Whether the percentage stated by David Buckle at the meeting held on 12 April of 70% postal and 30% personal voters was correct and suggested this should be 424 postal votes and 1666 personal votes or 25%:75% B) How can David Buckle carry out an independent review of the election when the problems with the election have arisen through him and he is indirectly the problem? C) How can a review be carried out when Mr Buckle has already stated that the problem does not lie with his staff but with the printers and the Royal Mail? D) Who is Tim Revell? E) How is the review independent if David Buckle is running it?

Councillor M Akehurst, (Town Councillor) Two Tree Hill, stated that anyone sending work to a printer should know that the printer would supply a proof copy, which is corrected and then sent back to the printers giving them the authority to print. Printers do not proof read unless they are asked to do so; it is the customers' responsibility to authorise print orders. Mr Akehurst questioned A) Did Mr Buckle proof read the copy or did the printer? B) If the printer was delegated to carry out the proof reading, under who's authority, and was it legal?

Councillor W Hall (District Councillor) New Street advised that he would like to be considered as a volunteer to sit on the Youth Council / Henley Town Council Liaison with Young People Working Group.

Councillor Hall informed the meeting that following discussions with David Buckle, he had promised to consider moving the count for the parish back to Henley at the next elections. Councillor Hall will firm up this commitment at his next meeting with David Buckle.

Councillor Hall requested that the language used in any reports made regarding the election be independent and refined and not treated as political as any reports will be investigated by the Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor M Akehurst, Two Tree Hill stated that there are two clear issues here, one being the moving of the count and the other the appropriateness of how the last count was carried out.

Councillor W Hall, New Street suggested that work needs to be carried out across party lines and not between parties and a full report needs to be made.

7. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 12 April 2011 were received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

8. **VARIATION TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS**

It was **RESOLVED** that

agenda items 11 and 12 be now taken in recognition of our visitors present this evening.

9. **POLICE**

The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Pink and Inspector Harling to the meeting and invited them to the table.

Inspector Harling gave a brief introduction and expressed his pleasure at being appointed as the new Inspector for Henley, stating that he had grown up in Henley and was looking forward to working for the town and with the Town Council for some considerable time.

Sergeant Pink reported the following:

- Neighbourhood crime / criminal damage had increased on the Reading Road, St Mark's Road and Mill Meadows. A proactive response has been taken and staff have been increased to 4 foot patrols on Friday and Saturday nights.
- Underage drinking is being tackled at Mill Meadows.
- Contact is being made with residents in troubled areas giving out contact details for the Police to enable a quicker police response.
- No other increases in crime are causing any concerns

A Member questioned the criminal damage on St Mark's Road, and was advised that it was damage to vehicles caused by a corrosive substance, and damage to wing mirrors.

Another Member asked if the Police intended to continue their visits to the allotments, as the allotment holders would appreciate an occasional visit. PS Pink confirmed that the allotment sites were still on the patrol areas and a check would be made to find out the date of the next scheduled visit.

It was questioned if the level of Police presence would be similar at this year's Regatta as in the past? Inspector Harling confirmed that this would be the case and that there would be a comprehensive list of activities and resources for this year's Regatta, headed by a Superintendent. There would be a Command Centre with Regatta Radio and resources on both sides of the river as before. The Neighbourhood team would be working the late shift to deal with any incidents on the outskirts of town and other resources would be used in the centre of town.

When questioned if the Neighbourhood Action Group would continue, Inspector Harling advised that he was fully supportive of the group, and considered it to be of tremendous importance. Inspector Harling also informed the meeting that he had a meeting with his superior the next day to discuss this issue.

A comment was made that Henley did not seem to have much of a crime problem at the moment. However, there were a number of flash points arising from night time activity particularly from noise; criminal damage; people buying alcohol from the Esso Service Station in the early hours of the morning; Queen Street and the bottom of Greys Road.

The problem at Makins Recreation Ground on Sunday afternoons with a motorcycle and approximately 8 riders was noted. A Police presence was requested.

A Member stated that he received regular updates from the Thames Valley Ringmaster advising of crimes in the area and suggested that it would be helpful for all Councillors to receive it.

Inspector Harling said that he would send the details to the Town Clerk to be circulated with the minutes.

Post Meeting Note: www.tvpcommunitymessaging.org

Another Member thanked the Police for all their hard work on St Mark's Road and was advised that 104 doors were knocked on requesting information.

The issue of illegal parking was raised and a request made that Market Place including the bend in front of the Town Hall, be better enforced especially on a Thursdays and Saturdays.

A question was raised regarding young motorists and if anything could be done to stop young drivers from speeding around the town in overloaded cars, shouting crude comments out of the windows and playing really loud music. This was especially a problem on Queen Street and Mill Meadows. Inspector Harling advised that in areas where young people congregate, the Police do their best to dissuade them from having loud music and revving their engines, but it is not easy to catch people driving in this manner, as when they see the Police they tend to turn down the music and drive slower; but if they are seen the Police will deal with the problem.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Harling and Sergeant Pink for their reports.

10. CCTV QUARTERLY REPORT

Members received the 2010-2011 quarter four report for Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford and after the following observations noted the information contained therein.

A Member questioned if all the cameras were working and was advised that they were.

Another Member queried why, when reading the report, Henley is stated as being the busiest town in terms of incidents monitored and suspicious behaviour. PS Pink advised that it was just the way the data was reported. Henley has very good links with the camera operators and is signed up to Business Watch. The other towns are not, therefore, Henley is monitored more than the other towns.

When questioned why a SOHA CCTV sticker had appeared at Gainsborough Crescent, Inspector Harling advised that the Member would have to speak to SOHA as it was nothing to do with the Police.

Inspector Harling and Sergeant Pink left the meeting at 8.05pm

A member questioned who was the Council's representative for the Neighbourhood Action Group and was advised that an appointment would be made in June when election to Outside Bodies would be considered by Full Council.

11. PROGRESS

Members received and considered a report on progress and after the following observations noted the information contained therein.

Pavement Lights

Awaiting notification of the date for the inspection visit.

Pinsent Redgrave Award

Disappointingly low response, Henley Standard to run an article.

Diamonds and Pearls

Appeal pending.

Litter Bins

5 new bins installed on Friday, response received from members of the public is good so far. A Member questioned if the bin outside the Kebab shop was going to be replaced and was advised that an e-mail has been sent asking about this bin and a reply will be brought to the next meeting.

Road Reports

Committee Administrator to send an e-mail to all Members to find the most suitable Wednesday when Mr Stenning could attend a training day to advise what information Highways require on road reports.

Cycle Stands

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith to investigate whether any funding was available from Oxfordshire County Council. The Town Clerk to re-circulate the Section 106 Developer Funding spreadsheet. Anyone with suggestions for Developer Funding should contact the Town Clerk with details.

Councillor Mrs J Bland entered the meeting at 8.15pm

Queen's Diamond Jubilee

The location of the beacon to be a future agenda item. A Member understood that this Council had celebrated a past Jubilee by lighting a Beacon and that Greys Parish Council has one. The Committee Administrator to contact Greys Parish Council to obtain further details.

11. APPOINTMENT OF SUB COMMITTEES, THE MEMBERSHIP THEREOF AND THEIR TERMS OF REFERENCE

It was **RESOLVED** that

- (i) a Traffic Advisory Committee be appointed with the following membership for the municipal year 2011-2012 as follows:

Councillor Mrs J Bland (representing SODC)
Councillor W Hamilton
Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin
Councillor Ms L Meachin
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith (representing OCC)
Councillor Mrs P Phillips

- (ii) a Hero's Return (Working Group) / Olympic Planning be appointed with the following membership for the municipal year 2011-2012 as follows:

Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor Miss K Gehrman
Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith
Councillor Mrs J Wood

- (iii) a Youth Council/Henley Town Council Liaison with Young People (Working Group) be appointed with the following membership for the municipal year 2011-2012 as follows:

Councillor Miss K Gehrman
Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin
Councillor W Hall (SODC)

13. BUDGET

Members received the budget report to 31 March 2011. It was **RESOLVED** that

the report be received and noted.

14. LATE NIGHT BUS SERVICE

Members had before them the notes of a meeting held on 19 April 2011, copy having been issued, on the provision of a late night bus service on the Regatta Friday and Saturday nights and after the following observations noted the report.

A Member suggested that Hart Street was not the best location for a bus stop due to bottlenecking and that other areas would be more suitable. After being reassured that the police had been involved in this decision it was decided to use this location this year, but to monitor the situation and to review the position next year.

Action: Committee Administrator to contact Reading Buses to see what feedback the Police have given.

15. ADVERTISING BANNERS IN HENLEY ON THAMES

Members considered a report on advertising banners across Bell Street. It was **RESOLVED** that

the Town Clerk writes to Henley Office and Window Cleaning seeking a copy of their Public Liability Insurance, and advising them that they should obtain permission from the Council before banners are erected to ensure compliance with the Council's Policy for the display of signs and boards in Henley is upheld.

16. **LOCAL ELECTIONS 2011**

i) Members considered the outcome of the Town and District Council Elections for Henley and after the following observation noted the information.

A Member questioned if the turn out figures were available, and was advised that the Council was not in possession of this information but that the Town Clerk would check.

Action: Town Clerk to find out if figures are available.

ii) Members noted the fact that the Returning Officer, David Buckle, had commissioned a review of the way in which the recent local elections and AV referendum were conducted.

iii) Members considered whether the Council wished to make any representations to South Oxfordshire District Council on the conduct of the Local Elections 2011 and made the following observations:

Following the attendance of the Returning Officer, Mr David Buckle, at a meeting of the Town & Community Committee held on 12 April 2011 when it was made perfectly clear to Members of Henley Town Council that he, and he alone was responsible for the conduct of the election and the decision to hold the count at Thame Leisure Centre on Friday 6 May, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- this Council records its concern in the manner in which the election process was conducted with specific regard to the arrangements for postal voting and the subsequent verification and counting of the ballots at Thame;
- registers its concerns in the Returning Officer in whom this Council hold solely responsible and records a vote of no confidence in him for presiding over a disorganized and shambolic electoral process;
- questions the appointment by the Returning Officer and independence of Mr T Revell to conduct a post election review;
- seeks an audience with Mr Revell so that the views of Henley Town Council may be properly articulated, and have input into the review;
- gives notice on the Returning Officer of this Council's intention to reserve its position on payment, in part or in full, of the election fees payable until this Council is satisfied as to the results of the post election review;
- requests that those responsible and found to be at fault by the review are disciplined appropriately; and
- seeks better consultation in the future from the District Council's Returning Officer.

All Councillors should inform the Town Clerk of any additional comments they would like to make on this matter, for consideration as a Full Council item on 21 June 2011.

In accordance with Standing Orders 17a(v) and 17c, the Chairman ruled that the Clerk be authorised to write to the Returning Officer rather than await referral to Full Council on grounds of urgency.

17. **HENLEY GOOD NEIGHBOURS**

Members considered a request from Liz Smith for permission to use the Henley Crest on a press release promoting Henley Good Neighbours; a new service offering care to isolated elderly residents of Henley, it was **RESOLVED** that

the Council fully supports this initiative and grants permission for Ms Smith to use the Henley Crest on her press release.

18. VOLUNTEER FAIR

Members considered a report from the Voluntary and Community Groups Evening held on 12 May 2011, copy having been issued. It was **RESOLVED** that:

- the Council fully support a Volunteer Fair in the Market Place on Saturday 9 July 2011
- the Council will provide the venue for a further Community Group Evening later in the year.
- contact be made with the Henley Festival to advise them that the Market Place has a booking on 9 July, and will not be available if they wanted to use it.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm

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Chairman