

Present: Mayor, Councillor Miss L Hillier
Deputy Mayor, Councillor J Brookes
Councillor Ms S Abey
Councillor Miss H Chandler-Wilde
Councillor Miss S Evans
Councillor D Eggleton
Councillor S Gawrysiak
Councillor Miss K Hinton
Councillor W Hamilton
Councillor Miss S Miller
Councillor D Nimmo Smith
Councillor I Reissmann
Councillor Mrs J Smewing

In Attendance: Mike Kennedy - Town Clerk
Paula Price-Davies - Minute Taker / Committee Administrator

7 members of the Public
1 member of the Media

The Mayor called for one minute's silence in respect of the recent atrocities in Paris as a mark of respect.

44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(i) Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Martin Akehurst and Dylan Thomas.

(ii) An extended period of absence of six months was received for Councillor Martin Akehurst from 22 December 2015 on grounds of ill-health. It was

RESOLVED

that extended leave of absence be granted to Councillor Martin Akehurst for six months on grounds of ill health.

45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

46. MINUTES

(i) The minutes of the Special Full Council meeting held on **28 September 2015** were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record, save for the following extent:

that Councillor Simon Smith's apologies for absence were recorded.

(ii) The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on **29 September 2015** were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

(iii) The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on **12 October 2015** were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

47. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ken Arlett, Elizabeth Road

Ken Arlett enquired as to whether Councillor Dylan Thomas had resigned from the Town Council, Members disputed his claim.

Pam Phillips, St Mark's Road

Pam Phillips aired her concern over the Finance, Strategy and Management Committee's recent decision to recommend awarding grants to various local Sports Clubs, she urged Members to re-consider this support in the form of loans.

Gillian Nahum, Henley Business Partnership

Gillian Nahum congratulated the Council on co-ordinating the new Christmas initiatives that would hopefully increase footfall within the town centre over the upcoming festive period, benefitting local businesses. She suggested that the post of Town Centre Manager be increased to a fulltime position and that the role should incorporate marketing and promotion of the town. She also volunteered the services of certain members of the Henley Business Partnership in the selection process for the position of a new Town Clerk.

Malcolm Dodds, Henley in Transition

Malcolm Dodds enquired as to the status of the Transport Study Report that had been undertaken by Peter Brett Associates. A Member invited him and other members of the public to attend the first Transport Strategy Meeting that was scheduled to be held on 30 November 2015 which would drive the Strategy that would hopefully be supported by Officers at SODC.

Gill Dodds, Greys Road

Gill Dodds called on conservative Members to communicate to Central Government the impact that the proposed cuts from OCC would have on communities and families throughout the county.

Ken Arlett, Elizabeth Road

Ken Arlett urged Members to accept the changes to the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan as contained within the Nigel McGurk's Examiners report in order that the Plan may swiftly progress to referendum.

Stanley Hall, Henley Cricket Club

Stanley Hall applauded the Council's support of local sports clubs but questioned the recent recommendation to award a grant of £200k to Henley Rugby Club when Henley Cricket Club and other Sports Clubs had been awarded loans.

Mike Phelan, Deanfield Road

Mike Phelan urged members to accept the amendments to the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan as this was an opportunity to progress to referendum and prevent independent housing development.

48. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORTS

Members had before them a report from District Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak. It was **RESOLVED**

that the reports be received and noted.

Matters arising from the reports

Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak aired his concern that SODC have recently reduced the provision of litter collecting in surrounding villages and the indication that they may make savings by cutting their budget allocations to both the Henley Town Team and the role of the Henley Town Centre Manger. He urged Members to encourage SODC to invest in the communities that they serve rather than depleting their services.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Members had before them a report from County Councillor David Nimmo Smith. It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be received and noted.

Matters arising from the report:

County Councillor David Nimmo Smith referred to his report which had been previously circulated to Councillors and gave a verbal update on the following issues:

He spoke on the recent issue of public exchanges between the Prime Minister and the leader of Oxfordshire County Council, which illustrated the fact that OCC were being financially prudent as part of the austerity programme that was a central government initiative.

He also confirmed that Officers at OCC were currently working to ensure that none of the waste recycling centres throughout the County had to close; therefore it was still being dealt with through the budget consultation. The funding of the Children's centres throughout the County was also being addressed through this consultation process.

49. FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Members had before them reports from the Town Clerk on Oxfordshire Larger Council's meeting held on 13 October 2015 and the meeting of the Town and Parish Councils Forum which was held on 17 November 2015. It was **RESOLVED**

that the reports be received and noted.

50. MAYOR'S CIVIC ENGAGEMENTS

Members had before them the list of Mayoral Civic engagements from the Mayor for the period **23 September – 11 November 2015**. It was **RESOLVED**

that the list of Mayoral civic engagements be received and noted save for the following extent:

**03.10.15 – the meeting with Aida Hersham was held at Fawley Court
08.10.15 – this was the only meeting date with the Living Advent
Calendar**

27.10.15 – attended a meeting with John Cotton (Leader of SODC)
07.11.15 – the competition that was judged was ‘Best Guy Fawkes’

51. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

(i) The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on the 22 September, 13 October and 3 November 2015 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 22 September, 13 October and 3 November 2015 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

(ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee, held on 13 October 2015 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 13 October 2015 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute No. 61 – Town Centre Manager

Members discussed the principal of upgrading the role of Town Centre Manager to a full time position for a two year period from 1 April 2016, they were in agreement that this was an important role and that a Working Group should be set up to address the specification of this role and explore funding sources for it. It was also suggested that the title of the position be altered to Town Manager to be more reflective of the role representing all businesses located within the town. It was **RESOLVED**

that the principal of upgrading of the role of Town Centre Manager to a full time position for a two year period from 1 April 2016 be referred back to the Town and Community Committee.

Minute No. 62 – Town Team

Several Members agreed to attend the next meeting of the Town Team in the capacity of observers in order to ascertain the workings and role of this group so that informed decisions could then be made. Members were in agreement that the Council needed to operate in partnership with businesses and organisations to ensure that the best result for Henley was achieved. A Member agreed to circulate a list of all the upcoming scheduled meetings of The Town Team, she informed Members that all this information was already posted on the Town Council website. It was **RESOLVED**

that the issue of the Town Team Constitution be referred back to the Town and Community Committee once the Working Group have attended the next Town Team meeting and fully understand the workings and membership of the Town Team.

Minute No. 63 – Festivals

Henley Highwayman will now not be requiring the Market Place so the Henley Food Festival will now take place on the original date scheduled for 13 June 2016.

Minute No. 65 – Budget

Members discussed the allocation of £8k for an additional CCTV camera to be installed at Mill Meadows but established that there was already a CCTV camera installed next to the Park area at Mill Meadows so this additional camera was deemed to be unnecessary. It was **RESOLVED**

that the allocated budget of £8k for an additional CCTV camera to be installed at Mill Meadows Play area be withdrawn from the 2016-2017 Draft Budget Figures.

Members questioned the delivery and £50k cost of the Transport Strategy and it was confirmed that this invoice had been paid and that a Member was currently co-ordinating a meeting with Peter Brett Associates to discuss various aspects. It was **RESOLVED**

that the issue on the delivery and payment of the Transport Strategy be referred back to the next Finance, Strategy and Management Committee meeting due to be held on 8 December 2015.

Minute No. 70 – Townlands Hospital

A Member confirmed that the completion date for the new Townlands Hospital facility had been delayed, and it was now scheduled to be January 2016, therefore the official opening was expected to be in February 2016.

He informed Council that a new Stakeholder Group had been established by the CCG but he aired concerns over various issues of this group and confirmed that the next meeting of the Townlands Steering Group was scheduled to take place in December 2015 where this issue would be discussed.

Minute No. 71 – Christmas Events and Decorations

A Member urged all Members to support and attend all events related to 'Henley at Christmas' that were scheduled to take place throughout December, drawing particular attention to the new Henley High Street Hootenanny initiative which was supporting local retailers and businesses.

(iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 27 October and 3 November 2015 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meetings of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 27 October and 3 November 2015 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute No. 56 – Henley Women's Regatta

Members discussed the recommendation to award Henley women's Regatta a grant of £10k which would provide an opportunity for TV internet streaming of the event which would also provide a platform for potential sponsorship. There was general support for this event and recognition of the business it generated throughout the town.

Minute No. 57 – YMCA

Councillor Julian Brookes confirmed that he had been elected onto the board of YMCA Trustees along with Councillor Kellie Hinton. He also gave an update on their fundraising programme. It was **RESOLVED**

that the agreed Grant Award payment of up to £100k to Henley YMCA be scheduled to be available from April 2016.

Minute No. 60 – Henley Rugby Club

Members discussed the recommendation to make an award of a £200k grant to the Henley Rugby Club. A wide ranging discussion ensued over the justification of this grant award to this local Sports Club and that it would be more appropriate for it to be an award of part loan and part grant. Comparative loans that had been made to other local sports facilities were highlighted and several members felt that this proposed level of funding was an unprecedented amount for a grant award and that a loan was a more conceivable funding option. Clarification was sought on which budget this would be drawn down from, and the Town Clerk confirmed that as the funds were being used to enhance a Community facility it was correct for it to be sourced from the Capital Reserves budget.

A Member proposed that the amount requested (£200k) should comprise of a grant of £50k and a loan of £150k, contrary to the recommendation in the Finance, Strategy and Management Committee minutes. Following a vote, the motion was lost. A second proposal was made to award a grant of £100k with the balance (£100k) being provided in the form of a loan. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Henley Rugby Club be awarded a £100k grant and £100k loan towards the redevelopment of the Club's facilities.

Minute No. 63 – Corporate Plan Working Group

A Member confirmed that the next Corporate Plan working Group was scheduled to meet tomorrow morning. A Member suggested that an introduction needed to be incorporated into the Corporate Plan to improve its structure.

Minute No. 75ii – Staffing Matters

The Mayor aired her disappointment that she had not been involved in the initial phase of the recruitment process for the new Town Clerk. As Chairman of the Council, the Mayor should be involved from the outset.

(iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on **20 October 2015** were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 20 October 2015 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute No.41.ii – Henley in Bloom

The Chairman congratulated the In Bloom Committee on Henley achieving its first Gold Award, highlighting the input and dedication of both the Councillors and Officers involved in this achievement.

52. JOINT HENLEY AND HARPSDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINER'S REPORT

Members had before them a copy of the Examiner's report on the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan. The Council discussed the recommendations and gave due consideration to the Examiner's report which had been previously circulated and **RESOLVED**

that the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan Examiner's report be received, approved and the recommended changes adopted in order for the Plan to progress to referendum.

53. STAFFING MATTERS – TOWN CLERK'S RETIREMENT

(i) The Town Clerk's letter to the Town Mayor confirming his intention to retire on 13 February 2016 had been previously circulated to Members. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Town Clerk's letter to the Town Mayor confirming his intention to retire on 13 February 2016 be received and noted.

ii) Members had before them a report from the Working group meeting held on 17 November 2015 on the appointment of a New Town Clerk. It was **RESOLVED**

that Chris Rolley Associates be appointed as the consultant to support the Council in the recruitment process of a new Town Clerk.

iii) Members discussed the membership of the Recruitment Panel responsible for conducting the shortlisting, interviews and selection process and for making recommendation to Full Council as to the preferred candidate for the position of Town Clerk. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Mayor, Councillor Lorraine Hillier, Councillors Will Hamilton, Ian Reissmann, Jane Smewing, Office Manager, Nicci Taylor and Parks Manager, Gareth Bartle be appointed to serve on the Recruitment Panel.

Councillor Sam Evans volunteered to negotiate a competitive media rate for the costs of advertising the post on behalf of the Council. Members thanked the Town Clerk for all the excellent work that he had undertaken during his seven years of service to the Town Council.

54. THE SANTA FUN RUN 2015

Members considered the proposal to suspend the Parking Place Order at Mill Meadows Car Park for the duration of The Santa Fun Run on Sunday 6 December 2015. It was **RESOLVED**

to suspend the Parking Place Order at Mill Meadows Car Park for the duration of The Santa Fun Run on Sunday 6 December 2015.

55. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE RIVER AND ROWING MUSEUM

The Chairman informed Members that the representatives of the Town Council that were Trustees of the River and Rowing Museum were able to register a

proxy vote on behalf of the Town Council at the forthcoming Extraordinary General Meeting of the River and Rowing Museum Foundation to consider revisions to the Memorandum & Articles of Association being held on Friday 20 November 2015. It was **RESOLVED**

that Councillors Lorraine Hillier and Will Hamilton would register a proxy vote on behalf of the Town Council at the forthcoming Extraordinary General Meeting of the River and Rowing Museum Foundation to consider revisions to the Memorandum & Articles of Association being held on Friday 20 November 2015.

The meeting closed at 10.02pm.

ppd

Mayor