

Present: Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, Chairman  
The Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood  
Councillor Mrs J Bland  
Councillor A J Follett

In attendance: Mr M Kennedy, Town Clerk  
Mr G Bartle, Parks Service Supervisor  
Mrs C Robb, Moorings Administrator  
Mrs B Walker, Committee Administrator/Minute Taker

2 members of the public

**30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C W Gibson and Councillor Dr P Skolar. Apologies for lateness were received from the Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood.

**31. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin welcomed Councillor A J Follett as a member of the Mill Meadows and River Sub Committee.

**32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin declared an interest in any discussion of the Environment Agency.

**33. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

None.

**34. MINUTES**

- i. The Minutes of the Mill Meadows and River Sub Committee held on 9 September 2010 were approved, adopted and signed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin.
- ii. The Sub Committee received and noted the notes of the Representatives of Town and Parish Councils along the River Thames meeting held on 6 October 2010 and expressed the view that the meeting had been well supported and very informative. It was noted that additional riverside parishes, including Shiplake and Pangbourne, have expressed an interest in attending the next meeting which is to be hosted by Wallingford Town Council in March 2011.

The Sub Committee thanked Mrs C Robb, Moorings Administrator for organising the meeting.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood joined the meeting at 9.40 am.

**35. PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee received, considered and noted the Progress Report and made the following comments:-

Entrance to Mill Meadows – the Sub Committee were pleased to note that the works were complete and that the area was now much safer for pedestrians. The “mother and child” area is now marked in front of rather than in the bays and the opinion was that this would be more effective.

Youth Shelter – an amount of £10,000 has been placed on the wish list for capital expenditure and if this amount is granted this item should be placed as an agenda item in order to consider fund raising, grant opportunities and location. It was noted that although there is currently no Youth Council formed the youth of the town should be involved in this project.

Adventure Playground – an amount of £4,000 has been placed on the wish list for capital expenditure and if this amount is granted this item should be placed as an agenda item in order to decide the type of replacement equipment and that best efforts should be made that the choice be DDA compliant.

It was noted that the nest swing which was removed from the Adventure Playground at Mill Meadows could be used as a replacement for the nest swing at Makins Recreation Ground which is beginning to look worn.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the nest swing removed from Mill Meadows be kept and be used as a replacement for the nest swing at Makins Recreation Ground when required.

**36. MAZE**

The Sub Committee received a proposal from a resident of Henley, Mr M Read, to establish a maze at Marsh Meadows as an attraction for locals and visitors alike. It was suggested the maze could have waist height hedges with a mound in the middle to provide an overview. Information boards could be positioned at various places in the maze describing the Meadows and various aspects of the town.

The Sub Committee also received an email from Mr P Mains, Chief Executive of the River and Rowing Museum which raised the following objections:-

- Marsh Meadows is an important transition from the semi urban feel of Mill Meadows and the true countryside beyond the lock and any development, such as a maze, would be detrimental.
- Marsh Meadows is a floodplain and therefore the planting may not survive. Also permission may not be given by the Environment Agency.
- The maze as an attraction for locals and tourists was questioned.

The Chairman asked the Sub Committee whether they would like to suspend standing orders in order to invite Mr M Read, who was in the public gallery, to participate in the discussion.

It was **RESOLVED**

that standing orders be suspended to enable Mr Read to speak to the meeting.

Mr Read came to the table.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:-

- local mazes are located at Marlow and Sonning Common Herb Farm
- Marsh Meadows floods so would not be a suitable site for a maze with hedges
- the design of the maze could reflect a local theme or could celebrate a special occasion for instance the Jubilee or the Royal wedding
- the area previously used as the putting green could be a possible location – the size would be ideal and the area is already surrounded by a hedge, however this area maybe better used as a putting green again as it was very popular with all ages
- tall hedging could create child safety issues
- charging would be difficult as would require the maze to be manned

Mr Read left the table.

It was **RESOLVED**

that standing orders be re-instated.

The Sub Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that further investigation be made into the feasibility of a maze in the old putting green area at Mill Meadows together with the alternative suggestion of re-instating the putting green and that this be considered further at the next Mill Meadows meeting.

Two members of the public left the meeting at 10.05 am.

**37. MOORINGS AND CAR PARKING – ACCOUNTS/BUDGET**

The Sub Committee received and noted the management accounts up to September 2010 for Mill Meadows including moorings and car parking income reports.

The Sub Committee observed that the mooring income was higher than budgeted as was the car parking budget although the latter was down compared to the previous year for August and September.

The Sub Committee recognised the excellent work of the Parks Services staff and asked that thanks be extended to Mr G Bartle and his team.

**38. EXCESS CHARGE NOTICES**

The Sub Committee received the report regarding excess charge notices and noted that over £4,000 had been collected from ECNs. The Sub Committee acknowledged the excellent work of Ms L Hastings and the Parks Services Team in administering and issuing ECNs respectively. The Sub Committee appreciated that people seeing tickets being issued by the Parks Services staff and seeing parking tickets on car windscreens are added deterrents.

Concern was expressed regarding whether there were repeat offenders and asked that further details be sought from Ms L Hastings for the next meeting. The view was expressed that any repeat offenders should be pursued rigorously.

After discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that ECNs from February to May 2010 be archived and not appear on future ECN reports.

**39. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed the next meeting would be held at 9.30 am at the Town Hall on Thursday 20 January 2010.

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

It was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED**

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

**41. TEMPORARY MOORINGS**

Mrs C Robb reported that mooring fees were being paid by the boats on the temporary moorings and they hope to leave in the near future.

The meeting closed at 10.35 pm.

bw

Chairman