

Present: Councillor Sarah Miller (Chairman)
Councillor D Eggleton (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Miss S Evans
Councillor Will Hamilton
Councillor Miss L Hillier (ex officio – Chairman of Town & Community)
Councillor K Hinton

Mr R Rodway – *Living Advent Calendar*
Mr R Reed
Mr L Morris – *Laurence Menswear*
Mrs J Wheeler – Town Clerk
Ms H Barnett – Town & Community Manager
Mr K Bishop – Acting Parks Manager
Mrs N Taylor – Office Manager
Mrs L Wisely – Mayors PA
Mrs A Osborne-Jones – *Nordic Walkers*

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman of Town & Community, Councillor Miss L M Hillier called for nominations for the election of a Chairman for the year 2018-19.

Councillor Miss K Hinton proposed and Councillor Dave Eggleton seconded that Councillor Sarah Miller be elected Chairman for the year 2018-19.

Following the nomination Councillor Miss S Evans queried if it was appropriate in the light of transparency and all thing clear for Councillor Miller to stand as Chairman as she had recently started her own events company which she felt may cause a conflict of interest.

Councillor Miss K Hinton stated that she stood by her nomination and as HTC were not using Councillor Miller's company to organise any HTC events it would be good to have an expert as a Chairman. There would be no pecuniary Interest unless using Councillor Miller's company to organise or help with an event. Councillor Evans comments she felt were unnecessarily political and Councillors should stay away from political nonsense and undermining each other and work together for the benefit of the Council.

Councillor Miss S Evans replied that her comment had not been in anyway a personal or political attack on Councillor Miller as she had supported Councillor Miller in the past, she had she stated not stood as a Councillor for political reasons but purely for the good of the town. Councillor Evans further stated that she was simply concerned with how it would look to the people of the town when HTC needs to remain whiter than white and fully transparent.

Councillor Sarah Miller replied that she was a full time Project Manager at her current job so there would be no crossover. She had arranged a one-off Classical event at the Kenton Theatre for later in the year to bring something to the town.

Councillor Miss L M Hiller stated that in fairness, in the past the Chairman did not make any decisions; it was always a committee decision i.e. awarding contracts etc. with the Chairman just there to direct the meeting.

The Town Manager stated that the only event that Councillor Sarah Miller was responsible for organising was the May Fair and it was noted that this was not a HTC event so there was no conflict of interest.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that Councillor Sarah Miller be elected Chairman for the year 2018-19.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Sarah Miller called for nominations for a Vice-Chairman for the year 2018-19.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that Councillor Dave Eggleton be elected Vice Chairman for the year 2018-19.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received but Karl Bishop advised that he would have to leave at 10.30am and Councillor Miss K Hinton at 11.00am.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillors D Eggleton and Miss L M Hillier declared an interest in item 7, Henley at Christmas when Friday Street is discussed.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2018 were received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Anita Osborne-Jones – Nordic Walkers informed the meeting that Walkers are Welcome would like to officially launch on Sunday 30 September on the Market Place. The Town & Community Manager advised that the Henley Literary Festival have agreed that a small awning can be placed next to their marquee as they have the Market Place booked for the Festival from 28 September – 7 October 2018.

Mrs Osborne-Jones was advised that if she brought some information into the Council Offices it could be put into the bus launch goody bags on 4 August.

Laurence Morris – Laurence Menswear, Duke Street stated that he was very disappointed with the Christmas Festival in Duke Street last year.

Councillor Will Hamilton suggested that Mr Morris join the Committee as he was a local trader who often attended and gave input to the meeting. Mr Morris stated that he would like to join the Committee.

A vote was taken and it was agreed the Mr Laurence Morris be co-opted onto the Sub Committee.

Councillor Miss L M Hillier – Hot Gossip, Friday Street stated that Friday Street was very poor last year and for the first time she had closed her shop during the evening. She stated she would like to see something happening on the street.

7. HENLEY AT CHRISTMAS 2018

A Henley at Christmas leaflet will be produced that will list all the events that are taking place over the Festive period.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL 30 NOVEMBER 2018

FORMAT

Members reviewed the format of last year's Christmas Festival and it was agreed that it did not work having all the food stalls in one street.

It was agreed that the event needs to have more of a traditional 'Henley at Christmas' feel to it.

ORGANISATION

Members reviewed the organisation of the Christmas Festival including the Food Court, Fair Ground Rides and Craft Stalls. It was agreed that there should not be a food court this year, instead the food should be spaced around the whole area to encourage footfall in all streets and easier movement as Bell Street was very crowded and messy last year.

Organisations such as the Creative Duck it was suggested should be contacted to see if they would like to have stalls at the Festival.

Thame it was noted have asked residents what they would actually like to see at their Festival this year. It was agreed this might be a good idea for next year's event.

It was suggested that people with younger families may be discouraged from attending the event because of the amount of teenagers attending the funfair. It was however noted that the start of the evening is geared towards families with younger children (Lantern Parade, Father Christmas, Reindeer) leaving the latter part of the evening for families who have older children and teenagers.

Roving eccentrica was considered to be a good idea as it would attract people to different areas of the event.

Henley Music School and the Gillotts Choir to be contacted to see if they would like to perform on the end of Duke Street and Bell Street.

Room must be left to allow people access to pitches on the Market Place.

Bagatelle to be contacted and officially asked not to sell Silly String on the night unless they wish to help with the cleaning up after the event.

Karl Bishop left the meeting at 10.32am

Peddlers are to be prevented from entering the site early again this year, and if seen moved on.

Shops / Businesses to be contacted to find out who is going to be open on the night so plans can be put in place as to where stalls will be placed.

More attention needs to be placed on Duke Street to encourage footfall both in Duke Street and down to Friday Street.

The possibility of sponsorship for the event should be looked into to improve the quality of the event. Henley Festival has advised that they are happy to help.

Action: Letter to be sent to Bagatelle requesting that unless they are going to take part in the clearing up after the Festival they do not sell Silly String on the night.

Stall Holders to be given a full set of guidelines advising that there is strictly no trading after 9pm, all vehicles must be removed before 11pm when the road closures are removed, protection must be placed underneath food pitches to protect the floor from staining and grease, and all rubbish must be taken away (additional black bags will be provided if required). Traders who do not adhere to these rules will not be allowed back again.

Contact to be made with shops / businesses to see who will be opening at the Festival so that a plan of where the stalls will be placed can be drawn up by November.

Contact to be made with Henley Music School and Gillotts School to see if they would be interested in performing on at the end of Duke Street and Bell Street.

FOOD

All food pitches to be advised that they have to protect the floor underneath their pitch from spillage / grease etc. and that they have to finish serving food at 9pm at the very latest to allow time for their equipment to cool down and be packed away and their vehicles off site before the road closures are lifted.

It was agreed that rather than using an outside contractor to provide food pitches (as last year) this year arrangements should be made in house using local people with the contractor only being contacted if insufficient numbers of food pitches are booked.

Local food and drink outlets to be contacted to see if they will be taking part i.e. Catherine Wheel and Machins etc.

A request has been received from Robert Cooper to bring his German Sausage stall back to this year's event as he has supported the event for the last 10 years but was not permitted to attend last year. It was agreed that he would be welcome back again this year but control over the amount of stalls selling the same food items must be tightened

Stephen Curtis who organises the Fair rides to be contacted if we need Chestnuts or Hot Chocolate etc.

Action: Contact to be made with local food / drink outlets i.e. Catherine Wheel and Machins etc. to see if they would like to take a pitch at this year's event.

ROAD CLOSURE

It was agreed that the road closure should this year be extended until 11pm to allow for all traders to have dismantled and removed their stalls / rides / vehicles before the closure is lifted.

As the Country is still on a high security alert, vehicles will be used to block the road closures again as last year with the Oxfordshire County Council vehicle blocking Hart Street.

The road closure should be well publicised and a letter put through the door of all businesses in the town centre and roads affected.

Action: Road Closure to be applied for from 3 - 11pm and a notice to be put through the door of all town centre businesses / shops on the roads affected.

Instructions to be given to all stall holders that the roads will be reopened at 11pm and all vehicles must be off site by then.

FRIDAY STREET

It was agreed that something needs to be done on Friday Street. The Living Advent has in the past pulled people down to Friday Street but as the Festival is on 30 November this year there will be no Living Advent performance.

Councillor Miss K Hinton left the meeting at 11.00am.

REINDEER

Members considered introducing Reindeer to the event for the first time. It was agreed that the quote from Riverways Farm in Twyford be accepted for two reindeer with two handlers.

The Reindeer are to lead the parade and then be static in Friday Street where people can come and for a donation pet the Reindeer and take a photograph.

The final route of the Lantern Parade to be discussed with Riverways Farm once decided (by the beginning of November).

Action: Final route of Lantern Parade to be discussed with Riverways Farm by the beginning of November.

Councillors Miss S Evans and Will Hamilton left the meeting at 11.09pm.

LANTERN PARADE

Members considered moving the Lantern Parade to another day but agreed that it should stay at the Festival as it is a popular and important part of the event. Santa it was felt should be separate from the Lantern Parade. The Mayor / Deputy Mayor and the Reindeer should lead the parade.

The route of the Parade needs to be changed from last year as this was felt to be too dangerous along the river in the dark. At least four more Marshalls are also required to walk alongside the parade with walkie talkies.

It was agreed that the children parading into shops does not work as it slowed the parade up. If shop owners wish to give something to the children they will need to stand outside their businesses to hand out.

It was suggested that the parade starts at the River & Rowing Museum, goes through Mill Meadows Carpark and then along by Hobbs. Final route to be confirmed.

MAYOR

The timing of event needs to be looked at to make sure the Mayor is not expected to be in two places at the same time. i.e. leading the Lantern Parade and hosting his reception in the Parlour.

Action: Mayors PA to discuss the timings of the Mayoral Reception and its format and confirm timings.

SANTA'S GROTTTO

It was agreed that the Santa's Grotto set up in the Council Chamber for the Family Sunday last year looked fantastic and should be set up the same for the Santa's Grotto at this year's Festival. Having the Grotto in the Town Hall will mean that parents and children will not have to queue up in the cold and / or wet.

It was suggested that Santa's face could be projected onto the front of the Town Hall.

FIREWORKS

It was agreed that it was not appropriate to have Fireworks at the Christmas Festival.

PROMOTION OF HENLEY AT CHRISTMAS EVENTS

All the Christmas events to be promoted via Social Media, the local press and radio (possibly Debbie McGee) and leaflets.

The possibility of the Regal Cinema promoting the Henley at Christmas events was discussed and agreed that the question should be asked but felt that it is unlikely that they will be able to help.

Action: Regal Cinema to be contacted to see if it is possible to promote Henley at Christmas on the big screen.

LIVING ADVENT

Richard Rodway advised that this is his 5th year of organising the Living Advent and that he is ahead of schedule and has the 24 venues booked and is finalising the acts.

The Advent will take place on the Market Place on Saturday 1 December, in the Town Hall on Friday 21 December, Market Place Sunday 23 December and St Marys Church on Monday 24 December.

The event is not normally announced until after the Literary Festival in September but may be announced in early September this year.

Thanks were given to Richard for all his hard work.

SMALL CHRISTMAS TREE SCHEME

Members considered the cost of the 2018 Small Christmas Tree Scheme. It was felt that lots of the lights on the trees last year failed leaving many of the businesses who had purchased a small tree without lights for a considerable amount of time, for which no refund was received. It is now believed that this was the fault of the supplier and not an issue with the lights.

Members felt that better value might be gained by HTC purchasing the lights themselves and having them put on and erected by an electrical contractor rather than by the tree supplier.

It was agreed that this year there should be no increase in cost to the retailers who wish to be a part of the tree scheme.

Members discussed the idea that in the future HTC pick up the cost of the whole scheme, therefore ensuring many more trees are erected around the town over the festive period.

Action: Quotations to be sought for the supply of small trees, lights and the fitting of the lights and installation of the small trees.

LARGE CHRISTMAS TREE

Having a Local Celebrity to turn on the Christmas Lights was suggested. It was agreed that this was a good idea and Mary Berry was the favourite Celebrity.

Action: Contact to be made with Mary Berry to see if she is available and willing to turn on the lights.

The large tree has been ordered from the Tree Barn and will be chosen by the Mayor and sponsor.

Post Meeting Note: Unfortunately discussions have not yet taken place with Invesco Perpetual re the sponsorship of this year's tree.

Action: Town & Community Manager to meet with Invesco Perpetual on 9 August to discuss sponsorship.

CHRISTMAS WINDOW COMPETITION

Members discussed ideas for themes for this year's competition and the following were suggested:

- Frost Fair
- Icing on the Cake (tie in with Mary Berry turning on the lights)

It was also suggested that investigations be carried out into the possibility of frosting the windows of empty shops.

Action: Town & Community Manager to investigate the possibility of frosting the windows of empty shops for the festive period.

CHILDREN'S FESTIVE TREASURE HUNT

Members discussed the Children's Festive Treasure Hunt and the Town & Community Manager suggested this year having the event last over the whole of the Festive period rather than just one or two days.

Rather than having children going into shops to look for clues it was suggested that it may be better for the retailers to just have the clue in the window.

A Treasure Hunt at Easter was also suggested.

FESTIVE LIGHTING

Members considered the Festoon Lighting around the town and it was noted that although HTC is signed into a five year contract with the current supplier it is possible to alter the current scheme. The look of the scheme can be changed / added to i.e. adding Snowflakes etc.

Action: Contractor to be asked what can be added / changed on the current scheme.

RETAIL CHRISTMAS EVENT

The family Sunday was a great idea for families and children, which was unfortunately ruined by the snow.

The Town & Community Manager asked for ideas and volunteers at the last Retailers meeting but none were received.

SANTA FUN RUN

Members discussed the Santa Fun Run and it was agreed that it would be nice for it to take place in its original format again this year.

Last year it was noted the Lions Club pulled out of the organisation so it was taken over by the Park Run organisation and took place at 40 acre field.

Richard Rodway and Laurence Morris left the meeting at 11.38am

8. REMEMBRANCE WEEKEND

Saturday 10 November 2018

- Marking 100 years since the end of World War One, Kenton Theatre - 4pm, Royal British Legion, Henley Town Council, Gillotts School and the Come and Sing Company present an afternoon of poetry, music and theatre in honour of the fallen. Students from Gillotts will perform excerpts from Joan Littlewood's Oh What a Lovely War! Hear George Butterworth's classical interpretation of AE Houseman's A Shropshire Lad. Butterworth himself was a composer and soldier who died during The Somme. Local primary school children will read their own poetic responses to the horrors of a century ago.
In addition, the Come and Sing Company will lead an enlightening and light-hearted sing-a-long performance of some of the music that boosted troop morale, helped spread propaganda and even kept them marching in time! You will be able to join in as we all sing classics such as *It's a Long Way to Tipperary*, *Good-bye* and *Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag*. As per 100 years ago, no previous soldiering (or singing!) experience required. Just some good old fashioned British spirit!
Tickets will cost Adults £8 and Children £6. *Proceeds from this event will go to The Royal British Legion*
- Aliquando 'In Memoriam - Lest we Forget' Concert in aid of The Royal British Legion, Poppy Appeal' St Mary's Church, Henley-on-Thames - 7pm - doors open 6.30.
Tickets on sale from 1 October – from the Aliquando website and 01491 578238
Programme of Music: Orchestra Accompanist - Joanna Miller-Shepherd, 'Libera Me. - Bruckner, 'The Ground' - Ola Gjeilo, 'Song of Songs' - Patrick Hawes - Soprano, Lisa Rijmer, Bugle Call of the Rifles 'Advance' Kevin Ransom, 'Judex' - Gounod (ceremonial entrance of the RBL Standards), 'In Flanders Fields' – Choir, 'Bring Him Home' Tenor, Alex Haigh, 'Remember' - Patrick Hawes, 'Make me a channel of thy peace', 'Lux Aeterna' – Elgar, 'Last Post'- Kevin Ransom

Sunday 11 November 2018

- **Remembrance Sunday Service** (Town Hall / Market Place)
Organisation all taking place.

Post Meeting Note: the Mayor has organised a possible fly past along the river at a time to be confirmed, e-mail sent to the Civic Aviation Authority regarding Licences etc.

- **Evening Beacon Lighting Remembrance Event** (Makins) prior to his departure at 10.32am Karl Bishop advised that there had been a bit of vandalism to the Beacon which he would be ordering shortly, once this part is received the Beacon will be rebuilt ready for the 11 November. Councillor Dave Eggleton requested training on the lighting of the Beacon prior to the event and was advised by Karl Bishop that all the equipment required and training would be provided.

9. **OTHER HTC SUPPORTED EVENTS**

The Mayors PA advised that the Civic Service will be taking place at Trinity Church on 9 September 2018 at 10am; Refreshments will be served after the Service at the church.

The Mayor is working in conjunction with the Kenton Theatre on a Halloween event (more details to follow), and the Civic Dinner date is still to be decided but it is thought that it will be in March 2019.

The Town & Community Manager raised the possibility of a Health and Wellbeing Day on the Market Place in September / October to support all the local Health & Wellbeing providers in the town i.e. fitness instructors, gyms etc. The event could also include demonstrations of activities such as Tai Chi.

It was agreed that this was a good idea but consideration should be given to holding the event indoors in the Queen Elizabeth II Hall should the weather be bad.

Bus launch on the Market Place Saturday 4 August.

Action: Town & Community Manager to proceed with organising a Health & Wellbeing Day.

10. **BUDGET UPDATE**

Members received and noted the update on the Christmas Events and Decorations budget 2018.

Members considered a combined budget with separate lines for each event for all HTC organised events and agreed that it would be a good idea.

Action: New budget format to be introduced.

11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Members discussed the opening of the new Playground and Outdoor Gym equipment at Makins Recreation Ground.

It was agreed that as SODC had provided a grant to help with the cost of the Outdoor Gym equipment they should be invited to the opening. It was also agreed that there should be a budget of £500 for the opening ceremony.

Goody bags are being provided by both The Outdoor Gym Company and Wickstead.

Post Meeting Note: A meeting has taken place with the Chair of R&A and the Committee Administrator and it has been agreed that The Mayor should open the Play Ground and SODC the Outdoor Gym Equipment as they provided grant funding.

Possible ideas for the opening included having a fitness instructor demonstrating the equipment (Angie / Calum Best), a gazebo with music, bunting & balloons, Scouts & Headway having a stall and catering i.e ice cream van, burger van, crepes etc.

12. SUGGESTED DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- A) Friday 14 September (9.30am – further planning and updates for Christmas and Remembrance.
- B) Friday 19 October (9.30am – To include planning dates for 2019)
- C) Friday 19 October (11am – SAG Meeting for Festival events on 30 November)
- D) Friday 11 January (9.30am – Christmas Wash Up Meeting)

The Meeting closed at 12.02pm

Nt/jw

Chairman