

Present:
Councillor Miss L M Hillier (Chair)
Councillor Sarah Miller (Vice-Chair)
Councillor K Arlett
Councillor Donna Crook
Councillor D Eggleton
Councillor S Evans
Councillor Will Hamilton
Councillor D Nimmo Smith
Councillor Miss K Hinton (Mayor)

In Attendance:
Mrs J Wheeler – Town Clerk
Ms H Barnett – Town Manager
Mrs N Taylor – Committee Administrator
Police Commissioner – Anthony Stansfeld
Deputy Area Commander – Rob Murray
Mr Ricky Martin – Franco Belge
Mr Mike Rogers – Mot Gelato
Councillor Julian Brookes
Councillor Stefan Gawrysiak
Councillor Sara Abey
17 Members of the Public
2 Members of the Press

88. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

89. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received. Cllr Lorraine Hillier later declared a personal interest in item 6 on the agenda.

90. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Mr David Feary – Walton Avenue questioned if as the nearest Police Station is 23 miles away does this adequately support the needs of Henley town? He also suggested that having a visible police presence in the town at least once a month might remove the current impression of impunity.

91. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 28 November 2017 were received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

92. POLICE

Police Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld and Deputy Area Commander Rob Murray were welcomed to the meeting and invited to the table.

The following information was received:

- Thames Valley Police are a very big Police Force with only three bigger in the Country – London, Birmingham and Manchester.
- Thames Valley Police cover 18 Councils, nine of which are primary Councils.

- Of the £160 per household received 2/3 come from Central Government and 1/3 from the local tax payer which equated to £60-100m less than other forces which would equate to an additional 2000 posts. This formula was set 25 years ago, is an unfair formula as it provides far more cover for Police forces in the north of the country. A second attempt to have this rectified was close to success when the Manchester bombing took place which prevented manpower being relocated.
- It is recognised that TVP are underfunded, and this has been passed to the PCC who have raised band D contribution to £12 per year, this will raise £7.5m and prevent any more cuts to the force this year. There was an 85% acceptance of this raise at consultation stage. This funding should have come from Central Government and shouldn't have had to be raised locally.
- Funding is now in a fairly stable position and as such the Funding for mounted Police will continue.
- 400 Police Officers have been lost over the past six years.
- More visible policing is being promoted with the return of Officers wearing helmets.

(The Mayor, Miss Kellie Hinton, temporarily departed the meeting due to coughing.)

In response to questions from Councillors Mr Stansfeld advised the following:

- Comparatively speaking Henley and the surrounds are in a very low crime area, this rose slightly last year but back down again this year. Crime was up by 15.8% last summer and burglaries rose by 17% - much of this crime was coming in from outside areas.
- Henley Police Station is not closed, TVP have the lease for a further 7 years but there is no budget to have it manned. Records show that only one or two people were using the Station every day.
- Response time will depend on what Officers are already doing and what level of crime has been committed.
- The response time for a crime in progress is 20 minutes; Officers will also attend from Reading if required. Recent investments in IT have made "borderless policing" far more efficient.
- Large Towns/Cities such as Oxford and Reading will have a quicker response time as serious crime is more likely.
- When they were first introduced PCSO's were fairly ineffectual, but today they are very effective as they know the districts that they work in and local people talk to them.
- PCSO's are also very effective against terrorism as they can alert the forces to any odd behaviour observed within the neighbourhood.
- TVP are not getting rid of PCSO's they are down in number because many PCSO's join for two years and then apply to be a Police Officer.
- He is a great supporter of ANPR and would support installation on the bridge.
- He reminded the meeting that Britain is still under a severe terror risk.

Thanks were given to the Commissioner and Deputy Area Commander who then left the meeting at 8.20pm.

93. FRANCO BELGE

The Chairman welcomed Mr Ricky Martin to the table.

Councillor Miss L M Hillier expressed an interest in the following item as a fellow trader who feels that Markets can have a negative impact of trade.

Mr Martin informed the meeting that his family had run Franco Belge in Henley for the past 60 years, the last 40 from the current site. He was one of the last family retailers

in the town. The trading environment he stressed has declined in the town especially in Duke Street.

He questioned what kind of town Councillors wanted Henley to be and how much influence they had. Did they want a Watlington type village of a thriving Market Town? Did they support Independent retailers or chain stores?

Mr Martin questioned if Councillors felt confident that Council Officers were reflecting the values of the Council, and queried if accurate information was reaching the Council as he had struggled to get information.

Mr Martin stated that he felt that Markets and lack of parking provision had a massive impact on retailers and could make the difference between a good week and a loss.

He suggested that more spaces should be made available in the Greys Road car park or a way to create more parking spaces should be found.

Mr Martin acknowledged that his building needed money spent on it but advised that unless he got support then he was not willing to invest in the business and would close, leaving his premises available for more charity shops or a Greggs or Subway.

In closing Mr Martin stated that he was not anti-markets, just anti the way they are currently being managed and the type of traders permitted on the markets. He felt that the lack of parking was also choking the economic growth of the town as people who work in the town were feeding the meter and staying all day, leaving no parking spaces for shoppers.

Following the presentation Members made the following observations:

- A Member felt that she didn't know if Officers or Councillors were qualified to deal with Mr Martin's issues and suggested that a Working Group of highly qualified people around the town be set up as the vision should come from the town not the Council. She mentioned Chesham Renaissance and Reading 2050 – as long term visions in those towns. Henley should aspire to its own long term vision.
- Parking issues could be addressed with better signage.
- The Neighbourhood Plan retail section or the Transport Strategy could be used as a starting point.
- A trial of use of loading bays being used for 20 minute parking should be made.
- Mr Martin should spend money renovating his property and should start selling novelty breads.
- It was questioned where the results of the Market Review carried out by Councillor Chandler-Wilde were?
- It was felt that the Charter Market was fine but the Weekend Markets need to be looked at as they bring nothing new to the town.

It was **RESOLVED**

that investigation be carried out into the possibility of forming a Working Group to direct a long term vision;

that a full report on current Markets; ideas for future Markets and Seating licences be brought back to the next meeting of this Committee.

94. **MARKETS**
It was **RESOLVED**

that the report detailed in Minute 104 should also include a review of the weekend markets and whether they are damaging local trade and if stalls duplicating goods sold in the town should be allowed.

95. **MOTO GELATO**
It was **RESOLVED**

that an item be put on the agenda for the next meeting of this Committee on 20 February 2018 to consider a request from Mike Rogers for permission to bring his Ice Cream Trike to the Market Place.
Members should note that HTC currently charge £300 for small commercial ventures and £500 for national companies to have a pitch on the Market Place and that Mr Rogers has been added to the Charter Market waiting list and been given the details of the Farmers Market.

96. **BUDGET**

Members received the Management Accounts to 31 December 2017. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Management Accounts be noted.

97. **BENCH REFURBISHMENT**

Members noted that Lushglen (the company used to refurbish the benches at Mill Meadows) will be carrying out the refurbishment of the benches in Market Place and at Station Park. It was agreed that once refurbished they should be added to a regular maintenance programme.

98. **STREET CLEANING**

Members considered a report on Street Cleaning. It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that a demonstration of a ride-on piece of equipment be organised by Councillor Hillier.

99. **NETWORK RAIL / GWR RAIL NETWORK CONSULTATION**

Members considered what response this Committee wishes to make to the consultation following an e-mail from Mark Hopwood, Managing Director, Great Western Railway to the Henley Trains Group stating that the Department of Transport will extend the current GWR franchise by 12 months until April 2019.

Closing date for response: 11:45 21 February 2018

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/great-western-rail-franchise

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Patrick Fleming and Neil Gunnell be asked to work together to produce a paper.

100. **BATTLES OVER – A NATION’S TRIBUTE & WWI BEACONS OF LIGHT 11 NOVEMBER 2018**

Members considered if this Council wishes to take part in the beacon lighting tribute on 11 November 2018. There is a gas-fuelled beacon already in situ at Makins Recreation Ground that was erected in 2012 and lit for the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee.

that this item be moved to the next meeting of this Committee on 20 February 2018 for consideration.

101. MERMAID

Members discussed the possible sale of the Mermaid Statue and after an in-depth discussion it was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Mermaid be reinstated at the Red Lion Lawn with more secure fixings.

A Member questioned if the promotional book with pictures and a description of the site of all the 20 statues placed around the world was ever produced, and if so a copy should be acquired and placed in the Information Centre.

102. HENLEY HEROES AWARDS

Members considered a report on providing free use of the Queen Elizabeth II Hall for the Henley Heroes Award in May 2018. The Councillors did not want to confuse these awards with the Town Medal which is awarded by the Councillors. It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Town Council supports the event by allowing free use of the Queen Elizabeth II Hall on 4 May 2018 – but no further involvement.

103. TOWNLANDS UPDATE

Members received a written update from Councillor Reissmann. It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that this item be moved to the next meeting of this Committee on 20 February 2018 for consideration.

104. PROGRESS

Members had before them a report on progress, and after the following observations noted the information contained therein.

Sound Vision and light System for the Town Hall The Conservation Officer has a few queries on the lighting aspect of the project, but the Town Clerk is working with the Contractor and it is hoped that we will receive a partial go ahead for the sound element.

Georgian Paving in Bell Street No update available.

Henley Information Centre Initial plans for the office received but were not suitable. Additional plans being sought.

Street Angels / Street Rangers Item to be removed from progress.

BT Phone Boxes Work to commence as soon as a spell of good weather arrives.

Litter Bins Item to be removed from progress.

Town Manager Report to next meeting.

Town Noticeboards and Town Centre Signage Report to next meeting.

Play Streets As other towns have shown an interest a Policy will be available soon.

Waste Two quotations have been received, awaiting receipt of a third. Once received a meeting will be held to decide how this Council wants to progress ahead of another meeting with the EA.

Councillor Hinton requested it be minuted that she did not wish to be a part of this meeting and did not want to be tagged in any messages.

CCTV An additional visit to be organised for Councillors still wishing to visit but could not make 2 February visit.

Kings Arms Barn Item to be removed from progress.

Wootton Manor Car Park It was reported that half the car park is being fenced off to store contractor equipment. Contractor to be contacted and if this is true be asked to remove any barriers and equipment and make good any damage caused.

REFILL SODC keen to roll the scheme out, Banbury now taking part. A request to be made to District Council for the fountain outside the toilets in the car park to be repaired cleaned and re-sited.

Henley Royal Regatta Awaiting response as to why a Councillor from HTC is not invited to attend the Wash Up meetings in Wokingham.

Parking on the Fairmile Item to be passed to Planning and removed from progress.

Fairmile Verges Policy Item to be passed back to FSM and removed from progress.

The meeting closed at 9.43pm

Nt/jw

Chairman