

Present: Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin
Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor T B Buckett MBE
Councillor Mrs G M Dodds
Councillor A J Follett
Councillor Miss L M Hillier
Councillor R Myer
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith
Councillor C I Pye
Councillor Miss L H Pye
Councillor S Smith
Councillor Dr B G Wood

In Attendance: Mr M W Kennedy – Town Clerk
Miss J Smith – Minute Taker / Committee Administrator
Mr Cliff Austin, Town Sergeant

Also Present: 1 member of the press
7 members of the public

Before the meeting commenced, the Town Clerk read out the fire evacuation procedure. The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin reminded Councillors and members of the public of the Code of Practice – Public Question Time as stated on the agenda.

10. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C W Gibson, Councillor Dr P Skolar and Mr I Reissmann.

The Town Clerk formally informed Members of the resignation of Councillor Anthony Elliott on 6 May 2009 and proceeded to read out the letter received from Councillor Elliott.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin accepted Councillor A Elliott's resignation and asked the Town Clerk to send a response thanking him for his work as a Councillor.

11. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are hereby reminded that, under the provisions of Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 (The Code of Conduct) a member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent. A member with a personal interest in a matter also has a prejudicial interest in that matter if the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgment of the public interest. A member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting is being held whenever it becomes apparent that the matter is being considered at that meeting, unless he has obtained a dispensation from the standards committee of the responsible authority; and not seek improperly to influence a decision about that matter. For the purposes of this Part (of the Act), "meeting" means any meeting of the authority; or any of the authority's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees.

None received other than those already declared in the minutes of the relevant Committees:

12. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on the 7 April 2009 and Special Full Council held on the 14 April 2009 were approved and signed by the Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, as a true record.

The Minutes of the Annual Town meeting held on the 23 April 2009 were received, considered and adopted.

13. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Mr K J Arlett – Elizabeth Road

Congratulated everyone involved in organising the Mayor Making ceremony held on 11 May 2009, he thought it was the best one since 1991! He commented that the layout and agenda for the event were 'spot on' and that the Town Sergeant had done a superb job in leading the Mayoral procession.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin thanked Mr Arlett for his comments and agreed that a lot of work had gone on behind the scenes to make the event a success.

Mr R Atkin – Elizabeth Road

He stated that he attended a recent Primary Care Trust meeting and there seems to be a 'black hole' regarding planning issues for the proposed Townlands site and the site is up for grabs. He suggested that rather than having a developer come in and the site be used for commercial premises, was it not possible for houses to be put on the remainder of the land. He said that that it was up to the locals of Henley to put the pressure on and to put a condition that the remainder of the site should only be used for houses.

Councillor Dr B Wood advised that he was also at the same meeting as Mr Atkin and he did not agree with Mr Atkin's comments. The meeting was very positive addressing issues that had been raised from the Townlands Steering Group, Community Forum and the Procurement Group. He went on to say that at this meeting Mr I Reissmann stated very clearly that the issue of the site being used for a supermarket will not happen and that there was a possibility of putting 50/60 houses on the spare land (3.5 acres). He confirmed that the plans for 'breaking soil' for the new Townlands site were still on for June 2010. He also invited Mr Atkin to join the Community Forum.

Mr R Hamilton, 153 Greys Road

Mr Hamilton explained that he has an elderly neighbour of 85 who has had four or five of the new SODC (South Oxfordshire District Council) bins delivered outside her terraced house which she is not able to move and these bins have been blocking the pavement therefore could the Council arrange for these to be removed.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin responded that this was not a Henley Town Council (HTC) responsibility, but asked one of the District Councillors to respond.

Councillor Miss L M Hillier stated that she had been dealing with numerous similar issues for residents and said that if Mr Hamilton gives her his neighbour's details she would contact SODC and ask for the bins to be taken away. She went on to say that she had been having numerous communications with John Backley, Technical and Support Manager at SODC regarding more exemptions from the new scheme and he asked that these issues will be address but to bear with them.

Mr D Smewing, St Marks Road

Does the Town Council consider that SODC officers have been grossly negligent in failing to mention the Scheduled Ancient Monument at Highlands Farm in the

Sustainability Appraisal portion of the recent consultation on the Local Development Framework Preferred Options, in the light of comments received from the County Archaeologist in 2006.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin asked that this can be put on the next Finance Strategy and Management meeting held on 2 June 2009.

Mr Smewing asked that following his question at the last Full Council's public question time if any data had been given regarding the pollution levels in Duke Street.

Councillor A Follett advised that the Air Quality Strategy meeting due to be held on the 28 April 2009 had been cancelled and was now being held on the 19 May 2009 and confirmed that he has asked for this item to be put on the agenda. He confirmed that he will pass on the report to Mr Smewing following this meeting.

14. **PROGRESS REPORT**

Members had before them a progress report on the following matters, copy having been issued. The Council was apprised of the latest developments.

Pollution levels in the town centre – Minute number 4084 – 7/4/09

Councillor A Follett advised that there was an error on the Progress Report and the title of the meeting should be 'Air Quality Strategy' (AQS) and not 'ITS' as stated. As mentioned in the Public Question Time he will be addressing this at the AQS on the 19 May 2009.

One Stop Shops – Minute numbers 4047- 9/12/09; 4060 – 21/1/09; 4070 – 3/3/09

Councillor B Wood asked Councillor D Nimmo-Smith if he had any more updates regarding funding. Councillor D Nimmo-Smith replied that he would follow this up.

Weed Killing – Minute numbers 4035 – 4/11/08; 1866 – 14/10/08; 4046 – 9/12/08; 4060 – 27/1/09 and 4070 – 3/3/09

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith suggested that a letter is sent to Councillor Ian Hudspeth regarding the allocation of the £375,000 for Oxfordshire.

Action: A letter is to be written to Councillor Ian Hudspeth.

[Post meeting note: Councillor I Hudspeth has been copied in to all correspondence previously sent]

Review on yellow lines in and around the town – Minute numbers: 4058 – 27/1/09 and 4070 – 3/3/09

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith had received feedback that there has been a lack of consultation with the commercial businesses in the town.

15. **DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

The Council received the following verbal reports from District and County Councillors.

District County Councillor reports:

District Councillor Mrs R Myer reported that when the new waste / recycling bins were delivered in Henley South she drove behind making sure they were delivered in the right place as she felt that it was important for a Councillor to be present during their delivery and if bins were put in the wrong place that they were removed. She went on to say that she had also been in contact with John Backley at SODC and had given him the names and addresses of elderly people to make sure that these bins were not delivered.

District Councillor T Buckett had a copy of the Henley Market Town Action Plan and advised that he would pass this to Town Clerk to copy to all members.

The Town Clerk advised that he also had a copy and that this would be circulated at the next Town and Community Committee on the 26 May 2009.

Councillor S Smith stated that SODC has promised that the new waste / recycling bins were to be delivered at the point of the property where they were to be collected, but that this was not the case in Greys Road, as he had noted that there were more than 12 bins on the south side that should not have been delivered and asked that the District Councillors address this with SODC.

Councillor A Follett reported that SODC had not been replying to emails from irate residents that had been received via HTC staff in the One Stop Shop and all their emails had not been answered. He asked if District Councillors Hillier and Myer would follow up with staff in the One Stop Shop to ensure that the concerns that had been received from residents are addressed.

District Councillor Miss L Hillier advised that the reason for some of the delays in responding has been that SODC have been waiting for the outcome of cabinet meetings before addressing complaints, etc.

Deputy Mayor, Councillor J Wood advised that she too had received complaints from elderly residents that had been dealt with quite rudely by staff at SODC and that SODC are not handling callers courteously, which she felt is not acceptable.

District Councillor Mrs R Myer stated that she too had been spoken to rudely when calling, but stated that SODC had a temporary unit set up and were currently employing contractor staff to handle the large volume of callers. She went on to say that other SODC officers were doing a first class job, but were being let down by contractors.

County Councillor reports:

County Councillor D Nimmo-Smith reported on the following matter:

- *Disabled parking spaces in Bell Street and Hart Street:* following correspondence received from Mr Mark Bostock, SODC on the 22 April 2009, there would be one allocated in Bell Street and two in Hart Street and that the legal documentation was in the system. He went on to say about the bus stop in Bell Street and bus operators have stated that this is a key stop and is being retained. This is part of a contract that can not be changed until it comes up for renewal in 2 / 3 years time and so falls within the control of the bus operators.
- *Pot holes in Oxfordshire:* following a recent survey from an insurance company regarding pot holes Oxfordshire has been reported as having the least.
- *Henley Partnership meeting with OCC* – a meeting is due to take place with Mr Paul James, Head of Partnership at OCC and Mr Jonathan Hobbs of The Henley Partnership imminently.

Deputy Mayor, Mrs J Wood remarked how good Bell Street now looks, but that she had received a concern from a mother of two small children that outside the Bull pub the pavement is narrower than it used to be before the new pavement was installed. District Councillor D Nimmo-Smith said that he would take a look at this part of the pavement.

Councillor Mrs G Dodds proposed that a letter congratulating OCC for their superb work in Bell Street and this has really enhanced the area.

Action: A letter to be sent congratulating OCC for their superb work in Bell Street.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin mentioned that Mark Bostock had been excellent in communicating throughout the whole project.

Councillor Mrs J Bland advised that the pavement at the end of Bell Street had also been reduced by two feet.

District Councillor D Nimmo-Smith said that he would take a look at this part of the pavement too.

16. **FEEDBACK REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

There was nothing to report.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin suggested that at a future meeting members give a short update on their representation on outside bodies.

17. **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Members had before them the list of the retiring Mayor's Mayoral engagements from 9 April 2009 to 11 May 2009 inclusive, copy attached to the Minutes.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin took this opportunity and thanked Councillor Mrs G Dodds on behalf of the Members for her dedication and commitment throughout her Mayoral year.

18. **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

- (i) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Transport Committee held on 14 April 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Transport Committee held on 14 April 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Planning and Transport Committee - Minute 3787 – South Oxfordshire District Council Core Strategy – Preferred Options Consultation

Councillor A Follett referred to the bottom of page 9 of these Minutes and asked what stage HTC were at regarding investigating the Commons Registration Act 1965 and taking the steps to register Gillotts Field as a Town Common.

The Town Clerk advised that following unanimous adoption at the meeting on the 14 April an application had been made to OCC for registering the land. The County Council has acknowledged this request and the appropriate forms for registration have been sent to the Town Clerk.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith advised that he was aware that he had witnessed similar applications in the past and that this could take anything from nine months to five years.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin confirmed that this was very worthwhile pursuing.

- (ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Transport Committee held on 5 May 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Transport Committee held on 5 May 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

- (iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Management Committee held on

21 April 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town Management Committee held on 21 April 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Town Management Committee 21 April 2009 – Minute 1985 – The Henley Partnership

Councillor Dr B Wood thanked Councillors for finding the £500 for the Henley Partnership within budget, but that this amount has to be justified and proposed that confirmation is first obtained:

- (a) that matching subscription fees will be paid by OCC and SODC to support Partnership working in Henley
- (b) confirmation that appropriate membership fees and subscriptions are received from other members / member organisations for 2009/10
- (c) that documentation is provided showing what money from the old Henley Partnership has been transfer to the new organisation.

Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood agreed that there needs to be evidence on where the money is being spent, not just HTC's subscription but the membership monies of all the other organisations involved, so that it is totally transparent to everyone.

Councillor T Buckett asked if HTC will be holding on to the £500 until we see these budget / action plan reports.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that these monies would not be paid immediately and they need to meet the necessary HTC criteria.

- (iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee held on 28 April 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee held on 28 April 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Finance and Administration Committee, 28 April 2009 – Minute 1834 – Progress Report – Moorings/Jetties

Councillor C Pye informed members that he had asked for the application to be deferred as the report was inaccurate and needs to be readdressed by SODC's Planning Committee.

Finance and Administration Committee, 28 April 2009 – Minute 1842 – Locality Primary School Review

Councillor Dr B Wood apologised that he can not now fulfil his obligation by attending the meeting on the 23 May 2009 and requested that another member attend.

Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood volunteered to attend on Councillor B Wood's behalf, but would need to check her diary first.

Finance and Administration Committee, 28 April 2009 – Minute 1844 (ii) – Value For Money (VFM) Working Group

The Town Clerk informed members that at a previous Finance and Administration Committee he had been asked to write a letter to Councillor Ann Ducker at SODC regarding the HTC's contribution towards CCTV cameras. He went on to say that colleagues from the three other Town Councils with the district had also written a letter and like him had not received a reply. However, a letter had been received addressed to the Mayor (and the three other Mayors) asking them to meet with Councillor Ann Ducker on the 27 May 2009. A further subsequent email had been received on 12 May 2009 inviting the Mayor and the Town Clerk and he was therefore asking members to give him the authority to proceed and attend.

Councillor Mrs G Dodds advised that this letter had been received during the end of her Mayoral year and wanted to see a resolution to this issue.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin believed a mandate is needed but Councillors have not seen the letters.

Councillor C Pye proposed that one or two Councillors should attend this meeting on the 27 May 2009.

Councillor Dr B Wood stated that he had started this initiative when he was a member of the VFM Committee and felt strongly that HTC are paying too much for four CCTV cameras and had brought the group of four councils together. He stated that these monies put a £5,500 hole in the budget and that it was now time for a resolution, but that it was not fair to put the Mayor in this position and she should be accompanied by another Councillor and the Town Clerk and proposed that he attends.

Councillor C Pye proposed that the Mayor and another Councillor and the Town Clerk attend the meeting with Councillor Ann Ducker on the 27 May, as the Mayor will have no standing on her own. He felt that the other three councils would have the same problem. It was

RESOLVED that the Mayor, another Member and the Town Clerk attends the meeting with Councillor Ann Ducker on the 27 May 2009.

- (v) The Minutes of the meeting of the Best Value and Facilities Management Committee held on 5 May 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Best Value and Facilities Management Committee held on 5 May 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Best Value and Facilities Management, 5 May 2009 – Minute 688 - Allotment Catchment Area

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin informed members that she had received concerns from allotment holders regarding number (4) of the proposal "that a decision be made as to whether a plot can be 'inherited' from a deceased plot holder" – a plot may not be inherited from a deceased plot holder and she proposed the wording be changed so that if a couple works their allotment plot, but the allotment is under one name only and the named person dies, that their partner can keep the allotment. However, if someone who has not previously been involved in the allotment plot (like a

child / relation), and they request to take it on, then this will not be allowed.
It was

RESOLVED that the wording be changed from “that a decision be made as to whether a plot can be ‘inherited’ from a deceased plot holder” – a plot may not be inherited from a deceased plot holder to “that if a couple works their allotment plot, but the allotment is under one name only and the named person dies, that their partner can keep the allotment. However, if someone who has not previously been involved in the allotment plot (e.g. a child / relation), and they request to take it on, this will not be allowed.”

- (vi) A verbal update was given by Councillor Dr B Wood on behalf of Mr I Reissmann of the Townlands Steering Group (TSG). Councillor Dr B Wood reported that:

All the clarifications from the pre qualifying questionnaire from those who had expressed an interest were completed last week. The procurement process should be finalising its shortlist this week and competitive dialog then begins.

The TSG supports the creation of a steering group by Tony Burrage (the project manager). This Steering Group to be the accountable decision maker (key decisions to be referred up to the PCT care outside hospital board). The proposed implementation date of June 1010 (i.e. the start of building) is more than an aspiration. Tony Burrage regards it as his key objective and Ann Nash believes that it is not ambitious but realistic.

Three possible community representatives on the steering group:- Discussions are under way on their status (e.g. voting rights). The ownership of the project by the new steering group changes the role of the project group.

TSG likely to argue for retention but responsibility changes to be a monitoring and scrutinising role. Also to perform communication function:- Community Forum initial meeting was successful: 43 attendees and feedback was good. The relationship between community forum and project group still being considered.

19. **COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES AND FULL COUNCIL FOR THE PERIOD 2008/9**

Councillor S Smith expressed that the percentages were misleading as the report does not state how many meetings are within each Committee schedule. His 40% attendance at the Planning and Transport was in particular misleading as he had only joined the Planning and Transport Committee in November 2008.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin agreed that the report was misleading and that more information needed to be added to flesh out the report.

Councillor Miss L Hillier disagreed with the whole report and asked what the point of this report was as the information was totally misleading and did not take into account sickness or annual leave.

Councillor T Buckett agreed this report should be scrapped.

Councillor A Follett asked that if the report is to be discontinued then members should be reminded about signing the Attendance Register for each Committee.

Councillor Mrs L Hillier proposed that the report be discontinued as it was a pointless and time wasting exercise. It was

RESOLVED that the production of the Councillor Attendance at Committees, Sub Committees and Full Council for the 2008/9 report be discontinued.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin invited members of the public, Councillors and Officers to join her for light refreshments in the Mayor's Parlour.

The meeting closed at 08:50pm.

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Mayor