

Present: The Chairman, Councillor Sarah Miller
The Vice Chairman, Councillor Dave Eggleton
The Mayor, Councillor Miss Kellie Hinton
Councillor David Nimmo Smith
Councillor Sam Evans

Lynne Adam – River and Rowing Museum
Sally Rankin – Henley Wildlife Group

In Attendance: Janet Wheeler – Town Clerk
Karl Bishop – Senior Park Warden
Marcus Militello – Conservation Park Warden

Also Present: 8 members of the public
1 member of the press

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

18. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Peter Lloyd – 10 Leicester Close – Minute 19 – Freemans Meadow

There was a good response from the survey conducted by the Friends of Freemans particularly from Luker Avenue and the Badgemore Estate. Five easy wins were identified:- to maintain the tranquil nature of the Meadows, remove the shelter; provide benches; mow the grass more frequently and providing more dog/general bins.

The Town Clerk advised that the dog waste bins are emptied by South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) who have advised they would not add additional bins to this contract partly as dog waste can now be placed in general rubbish bins. Bins could be re-located in liaison with SODC.

Mr Lloyd asked whether there would be succession planting for the 2 trees which were felled (suggested Silver Birch) and whether the hedgerows would be improved.

Mr Lloyd reported that response were split from residents on the possible use of Freemans Meadow for a Junior Park Run. Concerns were raised regarding the lack of parking and toilets.

Catharine Notaras – Elizabeth Road - Minute 19 – Freemans Meadow – highlighted that a Park Run could be disruptive to wildlife. Also would encourage the Town Council to plant flowering trees and to be aware of birds nesting seasons and hibernation when carrying out maintenance works.

Members thanked the members of Friends of Freemans for the work they have undertaken in this area.

Ian Tiffin – Northfield End – Minute 19 – Freemans Meadow – requested that the missing dog bin by the corner of Pearce’s Orchard be replaced.

19. FREEMANS MEADOW

- i. Members received and considered a report from the Friends of Freemans regarding a survey they had conducted of local residents’ views on Freemans Meadow. A discussion ensued and the following comments were made:-
- the Community Payback team had carried out works at Freemans Meadow to cut back the overgrowth and going forward the Parks would work monitor this work more closely
 - the Conservation Park Warden to look at options to promote wildlife and biodiversity at Freemans Meadow and produce guidelines
 - the playground company appointed to undertake the improvements to the playground at Makins was appointed recently and will be asked to look at improvements to the Freemans playground also including fencing, surfacing and additional/replacement of equipment. The Town Clerk advised that any expenditure on a project over £25k would need to be placed on Contracts Finder. This may slow the process down.
 - removal of the shelter will be undertaken
 - memorial benches/seats could be offered at Freemans
 - members would welcome suggestions and involvement from the Friends of Freemans regarding the types of benches
 - grants to be investigated

The Sub Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the report be noted

- ii. Members considered a request to hold a Junior Parkrun at Freemans Meadow. Concerns regarding the lack of parking were raised. It was noted Marsh Meadows is too marshy during certain months of the year.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**

that a small number of Councillors meet with Mr James Barr to discuss and investigate alternative sites for a Junior Park Run in Henley including the Henley Rugby Club

20. MINUTES

The Sub Committee received, approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Open and Green Spaces Sub Committee held on 13 October 2017 and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

21. HENLEY WILDLIFE AREAS AND OPEN SPACES

- i. Members received a verbal update from Mrs Sally Rankin on the wildlife areas and open spaces as follows:-
- the HWG worked with the Conservation Park Warden on cutting back around the ponds at Marsh Meadows which should ensure a good display of fritillaries in the spring
 - work is continuing on the Valley Road Chalk Bank

- ii. Members received and considered a report from Marcus Militello, Conservation Park Warden re the Town Council's wildlife areas and open spaces and the following aspects were highlighted:-

Chalk Bank – ways to prevent erosion of the Chalk Bank are being looked at and creating a natural hedge barrier is suggested.

The Sub Committee **RESOVLED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Conservation Park Warden plant hawthorn to create a natural barrier at the base of the Chalk Bank slope, which will restrict the access points and will protect the delicate floral habitats and help prevent the destabilisation of the chalk at an approx. cost of £100

Engaging with local schools – utilising the Town Council's wildlife sites by offering educational visits to local schools is suggested. This work would be incorporated into the time allocated for conservation projects and would not impact on the Parks Service work. A DBS check would be required.

The Sub Committee **RESOVLED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Conservation Park Warden engage with local schools to enable educational visits to the Town Council's wildlife sites including Gillotts Field, Watermans Spinney, the Chalk Bank and Mill/Marsh Meadows. The Parks Manager to ensure the programme is compatible with the Parks Services commitments. A DBS check to be sought at an appox cost of £70

Wildlife sign for the Greys Road Embankment – members received a draft illustration of an information board showing the wildlife which exists in this area and how the area is managed to encourage biodiversity. A Henley Wildlife Group member has offered to design the sign free of charge,

that an interpretation board be installed on the Greys Road embankment outlining the wildlife that can be found in this area (subject to permissions). Approx cost of production is £70

that thanks be extended to Margaret Ormonde for designing this information board free of charge

The Conservation Warden updated members on other on-going conservation projects as follows:-

- **Watermans Spinney** – the deer fencing has been repaired. The installation of the gate has been delayed due to SGN gas works however is now scheduled for February/March
- **Gillotts Field** – working towards implementing the management plan
- working with the **River and Rowing Museum** regarding help and advice on improving "Ratty's Refuge"
- met with **Henley in Transition** to foster links, to help increase the volunteer base and to offer help for the School's Science Competition

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- **Paradise Road Community Orchard** – planting to take place on 20 January of 21 fruit trees and an edible hedge – all welcome,
Post meeting note – over 30 local residents helped plant the orchard and the edible hedge

The Chairman thanked the Conservation Warden for his report and hard work.

The Senior Park Warden left the meeting.

22. RIVER AND ROWING MUSEUM

Members received an update from Lynne Adams, Operations Director regarding the River and Rowing Museum who outlined current projects as follows:-

- extended thanks to the Conservation Park Warden for his help and advice on a number of projects including advice on improving the educational garden, Ratty's Refuge and the area to the front of the Museum
- clearing and planting will take place during 2 days in April by corporate volunteers
- this year's schools' projects include adopting hedgehogs, bug hotels, promoting sustainability and recycling projects
- the Barbara Hepworth exhibition opens in February
- Henley College is currently in the Community Art Room
- the winter months are often quiet for visitor numbers and the opportunity has been taken to concentrate on cleaning, painting, health and safety matters etc
- work on promoting the café so it can be a destination for non-museum as well as museum visitors
- planning Regatta 2018 and Christmas 2018
- a temporary exhibition to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War

The Chairman thanked Lynne Adams for her update.

23. MAKINS RECREATION GROUND

- i. Members received an update from the Chairman regarding the purchase of a table tennis table at Makins Recreation Ground.

The Chairman advised that feedback had been sought via the Gainsborough Residents Association's social media on the demand for a table tennis table at Makins and the response had been limited.

Members agreed this message should be put on other social media outlets in the town however a table tennis table should only be purchased if there was the demand.

Councillor Sam Evans offered to place on other social media outlets.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that this item be added to the next Open and Green Spaces Sub Committee agenda in order to gain more feedback from Henley residents on whether there is demand for a Table Tennis Table

- ii. Members received and considered a report regarding fencing on the lower boundary between the recreation ground and Headway and the car park.

The Town Clerk advised that Headway has suffered from vandalism and are asking for security fencing.

Members did not feel the palisade fencing was appropriate for the area. It was suggested a photo shop image of various options is arranged.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that this item be referred to the next Recreation and Amenities Committee

that the suppliers be asked for a visual representation of the different types of fencing

24. PROGRESS

Members received and considered the progress report.

Concern was expressed at the length of time taken regarding the signage project at Mill Meadows including the Welcome Wall.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the progress report be noted

25. MOORING AND CAR PARKING – MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

Members received the management accounts for Mill Meadows up to December 2017.

26. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting date was agreed as **Friday 23 March 2018** at 9.30 am.

The meeting closed at 10.35 am.

bw

Chairman