

Present: Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin (Chairman)
Councillor I Reissmann (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor Mrs P G Buckett
Councillor Miss L Hillier
Councillor Mrs R Myer
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith (Substitute for Councillor S Smith)
Councillor Miss L Pye
The Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood (ex-officio)
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor C I Pye (ex-officio)

In Attendance: Mr M Kennedy – Town Clerk
Ms N Taylor – Committee Administrator / Minute Taker

Also Present: One member of the Press
One member of the Public
Councillor A Follett
Mr O O'Dell, Town Co-ordinator

37. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor S Smith (Councillor D Nimmo-Smith - substitute) and Councillor Miss L Pye for late arrival at 8.00pm.

38. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were received from Councillors Mrs J Bland – Prejudicial - Item 11, Continental Markets - Local Trader and Councillor Miss L Hillier - Prejudicial – Item 11, Continental Markets – Local Trader.

39. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Mrs Jones, 4 Rupert Close

Q – What if anything is happening with the problem of speeding on the Marlow Road?

A – The Chairman advised that this Committee was not the correct place to be asking this question and suggested that Mrs Jones send her question in a letter so that it can be added to the next Traffic Advisory Committee that is being held on 5th October 2010 for consideration.

40. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 29 June 2010 were received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

41. SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE MARKET TOWNS ACTION PLANS 2010-2011

(i) The Committee received and considered the South Oxfordshire Market Towns Action Plans 2010 -2011 Consultation response. Members made a number of observations on the following matters: -

- (a) Promotion of the new Chilterns Cycle Way – an initiative led by the Chiltern AONB who have provided sign posts around Henley.
- (b) Airport Buses – Airport Buses – Oxfordshire County Council will promote buses if bus operators are willing to provide a service.

Councillor Miss L Hillier entered the meeting at 7.40pm.

- (c) Arts Group – The District Council's involvement in Cornerstone (Didcot) the largest town in the district provided space which would mean that no financial support could be offered to Henley.
- (d) Electronic Signage – South Oxfordshire District Council is minded to provide some signage to advertise car parking capacity. This could be extended to real time travel information at bus stops.

(ii) The Committee received and considered the South Oxfordshire Market Towns Action Plans 2010-2011 and made the following observations: -

- (a) The provision of wi-fi similar to that which has been provided in Thame should be extended to Henley.
- (b) The absence of any reference to Air Quality in the Action Plan is to be deplored and the Henley Air Quality Steering Group should be reconvened.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the views expressed by the Committee be considered in more detail at the Meeting with the Henley Partnership and SODC on 28 September 2010.

42. HENLEY MARKET TOWN CO-ORDINATOR

The Chairman welcomed Oliver O'Dell to the meeting and invited him to the table.

(i) Presentation by Mr O'Dell

Mr O'Dell gave a verbal update of his work and involvement for the last six months: -

The Market Town Co-ordinators are employed by South Oxfordshire District Council, and as such he is responsible for delivering recommendations set out in the Action Plan. Thame and Wallingford are both in the Small Rural Town Programme and have benefited from funding from SEEDA.

The Arts Group – Hoping to produce a leaflet listing organisations.

Henley Town Council – Involvement in the Christmas Festival Committee, Town Guide, monthly meetings with the Town Clerk and in close contact with the Mayor.

Henley Partnership – Looking at delivering tangible benefits; proposed new membership scheme, Portfolio, Fees; SODC funded website; discussions on ways to take local partnerships forward; generating local revenue & funding through various organisations. Film Festival – promotion to retailers, Video Pod Car, opening film; Regatta shop window competition (featured in Horizons & Futures magazine); Head Concierge's visit (three independent sponsors); River & Rowing Museum torchlight procession for the Christmas Festival; Christmas leaflet; small Christmas trees; Website; Networking event

17 October 2011; Olympic Working Group; Aspirations Group 13 October 2011; Dorney Lake benefits; SODC branding initiatives.

Councillor Miss L Pye entered the meeting at 8.00pm

Mr. O'Dell offered to support any bid and help with the writing of funding bids. He suggested the Town Council should consider any bids it wants to make and make these in conjunction with the Partnership. The Chairman invited comment and questions to Mr. O'Dell.

A view was expressed that markets in Henley take away trade from the town and effects traders, this extends to Continental Markets. It was suggested that car parks are often full with visitors to the market, preventing customers from patronising the town's retail sector.

An invitation was extended to Mr O'Dell to meet with the Environmental Group so that environmental sustainability issues could be worked into the Action Plan.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the report of the Market Town Co-ordinator be noted.

(ii) Banner Advertising on Lamp Columns

Mr O'Dell presented a report on the proposed use of lamp columns for banner advertising on the approach roads to Henley.

In response to Members' questions Mr O'Dell advised that the cost to produce each banner was £250.00 and of that £58.00 would be the revenue generated. He confirmed that the banners would be attached to spring loaded arms on the lamp columns.

Recognising that the County Council is trying to de-clutter the streetscape, the view was expressed that the Fairmile and White Hill were not suitable places for banners advertising. Notwithstanding the advantages of banner advertising Members were of the opinion that they would cause over cluttering across the town, and as Henley has some very sensitive areas the scale of this proposal is too much and not right for Henley

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the proposal be not accepted and that no further action be taken on this matter.

Mr O'Dell confirmed that he would attend the meeting of this Committee in March 2011 and give his next 6 monthly update.

The Chairman thanked Mr O'Dell for his report.

Mr O'Dell left the meeting at 8.30pm

43. POLICE

The Committee received an update from the Police advising that there are two new Officers joining the Neighbourhood Team – Steve Finnis, who has been on shift at Henley for the last two years and Carl Churchill who is joining Henley from Didcot.

The Committee received a report on PCSO key performance indicators, Summary Report, Quarter one 2010-2011.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be received and noted

44. PROGRESS

The Committee received a report on progress and made the following observations: -

Road Reports – Members accepted that this item be now removed from the report given that the next cycle of submissions are imminent

Lay Lights – Final quotations have been received for the replacement of the original pavement lights in the sum of £30k, (this would have to be financed by a drawing down of investments). This price is for a like for like replacement as SODC has now refused the Council's planning application to replace the lay lights with York Stone or a modern version of the Lay Lights.

The Town Clerk explained that Blandy and Blandy have an ex Chief Planning Officer working for them, who for a fee would be able to look at the plans and see if, in his opinion, it would be worth the Town Council taking the application to appeal.

A Member expressed consternation that SODC could insist that in these difficult financial times this Council should spend this amount of public money, and supported a proposal to engage Solicitors to see if it was in the Council's interest to take the application to appeal.

An opposite view was put forward that it would be a waste of money to take SODC to appeal, and that further representations should be made to the conservation team to see if there is any chance that they will change their decision.

A request was made as to why the works had not been completed before now.

Action: Town Clerk to submit a written response.

A Member reminded the Committee that Henley Town Council is the custodian of the Town Hall therefore the fabric of this listed building is the Council's responsibility. SODC have upheld the appearance of the Conservation Area. The Town Council should not go to appeal but should just act as responsible custodians and carry out the repair using similar materials to maintain the building's fabric and appearance. The Council should not waste money on an appeal that the Council could lose and would then still have to carry out the repairs.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that a meeting be arranged with the Conservation & Planning Officer dealing with the application to discuss the matter in more detail.

45. BUDGET

The Committee received and considered the budget report to July 2010.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be noted.

46. ESTIMATES FOR 2011/2012

The Committee received and considered the draft Revenue Estimates for 2011/12. Attention was drawn to the fact that Insurance is down from £16.6k to £13.3k.

The following observations and comments were made: -

- (i) PCSO – The budget amount of £16.5k was match funded by Thames Valley Police. If the Council withdrew funding then the dedicated PCSO for Henley would be lost.

The Town Clerk advised Members that the Town & Community Committee's share of the budget actually represents a reduction from the year's previous budget of £137.2k down to £98,900.

A Member suggested that since Thames Valley Police is a precepting authority, it is not the Council's responsibility to fund PCSO's.

An alternative view was expressed that the Police were having a reduction in funding from Government which would mean less Police on the street, therefore, if the Council withdraws the funding for a PCSO we would be putting Henley at risk; PCSO's do not just give tickets, they are a reassuring presence on the street.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the cost of funding a PSCO be reinstated and that the figure of £16.5k is added back onto the 2011/2012 draft revenue estimates.

Councillors Mrs J Bland and Miss L Hillier having previously declared a prejudicial interest in the following item left the Council Chamber and took no further part in the proceedings

47. CONTINENTAL MARKETS

The Committee considered the matter of Continental type markets in Henley in 2011; how many should be permitted and if there should be a price increase. Members recognised the popularity of these Markets, for which there is a waiting list; the colour they bring to the town while raising the profile of Henley; the fact that they encourage tourists and provide much needed revenue for the Council.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that this Council agrees once again to four Continental style Markets, and that the fee be increase by 2.5%.

Councillors Mrs J Bland and Miss L Hillier rejoined the meeting.

48. SABAUDIA TWINNING

The Committee considered a request from INAS (Italian Welfare) regarding the possible twinning of Sabaudia, Italy with Henley on Thames.

The Town Clerk advised Members that there was no over arching Twinning Association set up for Henley on Thames but that all twinning groups had their own separate associations for each of our twin towns.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

- (i) that the Henley Standard be asked to publicise the twinning request to see if there is enough interest in forming a Twinning Association to take this further;
- (ii) that INAS be informed of what is happening; and
- (iii) that no further action be taken unless the Henley Standard generates sufficient interest from the public.

49. REGISTRATION OF TOWN HALL FOR MARRIAGE CEREMONIES

The Committee considered an update from the Information Centre Manager. In noting that the Registrars were no longer able to relocate to the Town Hall for a while, Members proceeded to consider the viability of holding Civil Weddings at the Town Hall.

Concern was expressed that in the absence of sufficient information on costs and staffing implications, it was not possible to make a positive recommendation to Council.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Mayor, Committee Chairman and the Information Centre Manager carry out further research and put together a business plan to be presented at the next meeting.

50. HENLEY INFORMATION CENTRE

The Committee received and considered a footfall report to August 2010 for the Information Centre and recorded their thanks to the staff for supplying this information.

A Member suggested that the production of this report was a waste of Officer's time. Opposing Views were expressed that the information provided would go a long way towards proving that sufficient numbers use the Information Centre to warrant the need for an Information Screen. The information provided in the report demonstrates that the public like dealing with a person rather than a computer. The Information Centre provides an important service and had been a Council expense well spent.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be noted.

51. FREE USAGE OF THE TOWN HALL

The Committee received and considered a written summary of the free usage of the Town Hall.

It was accepted that the Townlands Committees are both Henley Town Council Committees and should be removed from the list.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be noted subject to the removal of the Townlands Committees from future free use reports.

52. SALT AND GRIT BINS

The Committee received and considered a report on the possibility of this Council funding Salt and Grit bins around the town in response to requests from residents.

A Member suggested that if specific Residents Associations wanted these bins then the Council could purchase these through the County Council on their behalf provided they are fully funded by them.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that this Council is happy to place orders for Residents Associations who would like a Salt / Grit bin, but that the Association would have to provide the funds to pay for them.

53. CITIZENSHIP CEREMONIES

The Mayor advised the Committee that she would be attending a Citizenship Ceremony in Oxford shortly, and would bring a report back to the next meeting; including information from the Deputy Lord Lieutenant as to why he recommended using Henley Town Hall for Citizenship Ceremonies.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be noted and that a more detailed report be presented to the next meeting.

54. LICENSING ACT 2003 – DRAFT JOINT STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

The Committee considered a letter from South Oxfordshire District Council regarding a draft Joint Statement of Licensing Policy drawn up between South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council.

It was **RESOLVED**

that Members be encouraged to submit their individual comments to the Town Clerk for submission to SODC by Monday 11 October.

55. REFURBISHMENT OF LITTER BINS AROUND HENLEY

The Committee considered quotations from contractors to repaint the Cast Iron litter bins around the town in groups of 10 (30 in total). It was noted that all bins would be repainted on site in Green and Gold, with all paint and materials supplied by the contractor.

A Member questioned the need to repaint all the bins when the Council had previously agreed to the cost of replacing certain bins with larger capacity bins.

Notwithstanding this fact, a Member suggested that the repainting of these bins was long over due and desperately needed.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Council proceeds with the scheme to repaint the street bins around the town in groups of 10 (30 in total) and that quotation B) for £47.00 per bin is accepted.

56. PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES

The Committee considered an invitation to attend a communal event being held to promote the development of simple Community Emergency Plans.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be noted.

57. HENLEY TOWN CENTRE LITTER WORKING GROUP

The Committee received the notes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 July 2010.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be noted.

58. LITERARY FESTIVAL BANNER

The Committee considered a request from the Henley Literary Festival to erect a 4ft x 5ft, 4mm thick, lightweight waterproof plastic fluted board banner that would be attached to a wooden post. The banner would have a design that would be in colour and would include the dates of the Festival plus the Festival logo and if space the web address.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that permission is granted for the banner to be erected for one week.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm