

Present: Councillor C W Gibson
Councillor Miss L Pye, Vice-Chairman
Councillor C I Pye
Councillor Dr P J Skolar
Councillor D Nimmo Smith
Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, The Mayor (ex officio)
Councillor Mrs J Wood, Deputy Mayor (ex officio), Chairman

In Attendance: Mr M Kennedy, Town Clerk and Mrs A Gliddon, Committee
Administrator/Minute Taker

Also Present: Councillor A J Follett, Mr P Ronald and Mr M Bowler, Oxfordshire
County Council Highways
One member of the public and one member of the press.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, welcomed Mr Ronald, Mr Bowler and Councillor
Follett to the meeting.

54. **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors Mrs J Bland
and Mrs R Myer.

55. **TO RECEIVE 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 judgement 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

56. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 8
September 2009 were approved and signed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs J
Wood.

57. **PROGRESS**

Councillors received and noted a report on progress and made the following
comments:

Weed killing Dr P Skolar advised that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) had not been able to identify a budget to which weed killing could be devolved.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, suggested and it was subsequently

RESOLVED that a letter is sent to OCC urging them to include in the 2010/11 budget, funding to replace all granite kerb sets which, due to their decision not to carry out weed killing this year, had been damaged by the growth of weeds and had become dangerous. Councillor Dr Skolar was also asked to take this suggestion back to County Council.

Action: The Committee Administrator to write to OCC as directed.

Action: Dr P Skolar to take the suggestion back to OCC that funding to replace granite kerb sets in Henley is included in next year's budget.

Councillor C W Gibson referred to the condition of the footpath between Trinity School and Norman Avenue. The path is overgrown with thorns and thistles and is in need of urgent attention.

Councillor Dr Skolar advised that Councillor Gibson had alerted him to this in an email three weeks ago at which time he had passed a request for the path to be cleared on to the relevant officer at OCC.

Bus Shelters The Town Clerk advised that correspondence, including a draft agreement, had been received from Primesite today. The company had addressed all the issues raised. The matter would be brought to the next meeting of this Committee, to give members an opportunity to read the document, and to give cognisance to the views of the Conservation Officer which had been sought.

Market Towns Consultation The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, gave a verbal report on a meeting held on 24 September 2009 and advised as follows:

The primary objective of the first workshop in Henley was to introduce the distinctiveness project and the approach to working in Henley. Some fifteen stakeholders attended the initial meeting in the River and Rowing Museum for a presentation of initial findings of the retail distinctiveness surveys conducted by Miller Research UK Ltd. Some useful discussion of the results ensued and a number of key issues were highlighted. One of the main factors brought up was the lack of connection between the river and the town centre, both in physical and conceptual terms. This led to further discussions about the use of car parking at the station and the lack of signage to it, again from the town centre or from routes in to town.

To complete the meeting, a short discussion was held about visitor segmentation – a theme which will be developed more fully in the next session.

The second consultation would be on Thursday 22 October at the River & Rowing Museum in conjunction with SODC.

Lay Lights The Town Clerk advised that the Town Sergeant is due to meet with the District Council's historic buildings officer and a local contractor who may have come up with a solution for the repairs to be carried out within budget.

Advertising boards Councillor C I Pye asked what action the Town Council could take regarding the consequence of irresponsibly placed A-Boards following Council's decision not to enforce the committee's recommendation.

The Town Clerk replied that the OCC guidelines were specific as to how those in breach of the guidelines should be managed. Each case would be dealt with on its merits. Following the extensive reporting in the press, no further complaints had been received. Shopkeepers appear to be heeding the advice given.

Litter in Henley Councillor D Nimmo-Smith referred to two new bins which had been placed outside Starbucks which were very small. The Town Clerk advised that these were standard bins used by Starbucks. He confirmed that a letter had been sent to

Starbucks head office in Bristol with a copy to the Manager of the Henley branch reminding them of their responsibilities for litter included in the agreement with the Town Council for the use of the Market Place.

58. **VARIATION TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, proposed and it was

RESOLVED that, in view of the visitors present who had an interest in these matters, Items 7 (OCC Highways) and 10 (Henley Royal Regatta) on the Agenda, be taken next.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, invited Peter Ronald, Malcolm Bowler and Councillor A J Follett to the table

59. **OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS**

Mr Ronald, Area Traffic engineer for Oxfordshire, reported on the following: Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) this group had not met recently as Henley Town Council (HTC) had not convened a meeting. These meetings are arranged and chaired by HTC. Thame Council had decided they are no longer needed; Didcot Council has resurrected these meetings. Councillors C I Pye and D Nimmo-Smith had attended the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) meetings which had now been concluded. Mr Ronald suggested that all traffic related issues could, in future, be considered by the Henley Town Council Traffic Advisory Committee.

Traffic Management

Mr Ronald advised that

- His team investigate all complaints received from Town and County Councillors and give the best advice they can, often carrying out surveys. Often complaints turn out to be perceived problems rather than actual problems.
- He has access to three budgets; 1. Maintenance - for which there is £1.6m for the whole county and includes minor lining and signing improvement, 2. Accident remedial budget – for areas where there is a history of personal injury accidents; 3. Better Ways to School budget - which is led by schools and children. His officers meet with the school with the aim of changing pupils' mode of transport to and from school to foot or cycle. They discuss their preferred route with the children and address perceived dangers.
- They receive many requests regarding perceived problems on roads and carry out a speed survey to identify if action is needed.
- There is lots of misinformation regarding TSIDs, (Temporary Speed Indicator Device); which flash to show when people are speeding. They are not speed cameras and tend to lose impact after a few weeks.
- If a parish council requests general calming measures OCC will check if there have been any injury accidents in the area. If the criteria have been exceeded they will permit the local council to pay for such measures. They take groups of Councillors round to show them where traffic calming measures have been introduced. An extensive consultation process is carried out prior to introducing traffic calming measures
- Traffic calming measures include humps or cushions. The height of humps has changed from 5" to 3" following changes in government legislation. Buses and HGVs can straddle cushions. Chicanes are only used on long straight roads.
- On street parking is an effective way of controlling traffic
- Experiments have been carried out by removing centre white lines which change the visual appearance of a road. 5 -10% reduction in speeds 1 year later.
- Speed limit review carried out - some speed limits are unrealistically low and retained for longer than necessary beyond the last house
- He is happy to work with the Town Council if the TAC is resurrected. Mr Ronald suggested that, instead of separate meetings such as Air Quality, parking sub group etc, anything to do with traffic is brought together as one meeting, e.g. items relating to Air Quality, Regatta, traffic etc under the control of the TAC.

Councillor A J Follett thanked Mr Ronald and expressed concern that the initiative for the TAC should not be lost. It was very useful to get the police, Town Councillors, OCC and SODC together. He suggested that Air Quality could become part of TAC but not the other way round; e.g. some issues such as pedestrian crossings would not be relevant to Air Quality.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** that the Council reconvenes a Henley Town Council Traffic Advisory Committee and appoints the membership thereof.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, thanked Mr Ronald for his interesting report and invited Councillor to ask questions.

Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin urged Mr Ronald to keep the Town Council involved in items such as the Henley Royal Regatta and to give advanced notice in cases such as the recent improvements carried out in Reading Road.

Councillor Dr P Skolar asked if traffic calming measure can be introduced on A roads and it was confirmed that they could.

Councillor Mrs J Wood agreed that 30mph limits were extended too far. Mr Ronald advised that there were two types of 30mph restrictions; where there is no street lighting repeater signs are permitted on the road; if there is street lighting then no signage is permitted. The 40mph limit does not have this restriction and repeater signs are always permitted in this case.

Mr Bowler reported on the process which had taken place on the proposed Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting and Permitted Parking in Henley, and advised on the following:

90% had been developed as part of the Integrated Transport Strategy and consulted and agreed with Henley Town Council. All proposals had been discussed within ITS including bringing in the parking amendments. Concerns of residents and the Town Council reported in the past year had been addressed. What is on the table is what is on offer. No additions are possible.

Public consultation had take place targeting 950 households with two letter drops. Responses had been received from the pubic and the Town Council's response was sought. Responses were mixed – in the main most of the proposal had met with a degree of approbation.

- In Upton Close there were two separate bodies with apposing views;
- In Northfield End the reception from the community had been good;
- In Deanfield Road there had been a mixed reception;
- Hop Gardens mixed with the majority saying it was a good idea;
- Luker Avenue, Goodall Close, no real comments;
- Thames Side and New Street. Support for the extra parking

Mr Bowler and Mr Ronald would be meeting with the commercial Group of the Henley Partnership the following day. A decision on the proposal would be made by OCC Cabinet on 11 February 2010.

Some minor amendments may be made as there is ability to reduce or amend. What is on the table is the maximum possible.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, invited Councillors to put questions to Mr Bowler

Councillor Mrs Wood advised that a resident of St Andrews Road had expressed a wish for the yellow lines to be extended into Vicarage Road.

Mr Bowler advised that he had spoken with the resident. This could not go any further at this stage but would be considered in the next trance.

Councillor Mrs Wood expressed concern that introducing No waiting 10am to 3pm Monday to Friday to displace college parking into Valley Road, Harcourt & Haywards Closes could encourage parking on either side of the roundabout and even on the roundabout. This would block buses.

Councillor C I Pye advised that if people park on the roundabout the police would have powers to enforce.

Mr Bowler replied that there would be some displacement of vehicles no matter what. He reiterated that what is on the table could not be extended but that this could be revisited in 12 months time when the results will be seen. If there is a TAC meeting next year comments from the Town Council would be noted.

Councillors expressed concern that removal of No Waiting at Any Time in Deanfield Road would cause coaches to park on the Youth Centre side of the road, which would then become blocked twice a day. Large numbers of Lorries also used this road and removing the double yellow line would not only block the road but also create safety issues for people entering and leaving the Youth Centre building.

Mr Ronald agreed to speak to the police regarding the proposal to leave the yellow line in place. He indicated that although no additions to the proposal were permitted it should be possible to retain an existing yellow line.

(ii) Councillors considered a report which they had before them regarding proposed changes to On Street Parking in Henley and considered Henley Town Council's response.

Councillor A J Follett suggested working through the chart included in his report, following which

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Henley Town Council's response to the proposed changes to On Street Parking in Henley are as on Appendix 1 attached to these minutes; and

that the yellow lines on Deanfield Avenue should remain.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood thanked Councillor A J Follett for attending and he left the table

60. **HENLEY ROYAL REGATTA**

Councillors received and considered the notes of an informal meeting held on 1 September 2009 which they had before them.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, advised that it had been a useful meeting with good representation from all organisations. The attempt had been to work together to agree ways of implementing measures for improvement in future.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith advised that when he had been Mayor the police had been very proactive in respect of traffic management, with police motor cyclist assistance provided. At that time a pre-Regatta meeting had been held with all interested organisations present. This had now stopped.

Councillor C W Gibson wondered whether Henley's problems are as a result of excessive alcohol consumption at the Regatta, and suggested an alcohol free zone.

Councillor Mrs Hodgkin confirmed that the police are looking into this and referred to Item 5 of the notes.

Mr Ronald advised that OCC attended two pre-Regatta meetings each year at the Regatta Headquarters. These are called by the Regatta with representation from the Thames Valley Police, Emergency Services, District Council and Remenham Council. He confirmed that Henley Town Council had not been invited to attend.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** that a letter is sent to the Henley Royal Regatta requesting that Henley Town Council is invited to attend all pre-Regatta meetings.

61. **BUDGET**

Councillors received and accepted the monthly budget report for August 2009.

62. **VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE**

Councillors received and noted the following reports:

Visitor report running total for 2009

Budget report to September 2009

Report to September 2009

63. **LITTER**

Councillors received and considered the notes of a meeting which the Town Clerk had attended on 1 October 2009 with representatives from South Oxfordshire District Council, Verdant (SODCs appointed contractor) Didcot, Thames and Wallingford Town Councils.

The Town Clerk reported that the meeting had been very useful. He confirmed that the District Council was responsible for litter in public places other than land owned by the town council.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 and subsequent Code of Practice on litter and refuse sets out the District Council's responsibilities for litter in public places. The Town Clerk explained that most of the town centre is designated as zone 1 and as such received preferential treatment over residential streets. Areas are classified according to the level of litter with Grade A meaning no litter and Grade D litter everywhere. The District Council has half a day to bring a zone 1 area back to Grade A. If, for instance at 1.00pm on a Friday afternoon notification is received that large amounts of litter has been left in a zone 1 area (such as the Market Place in Henley) the District Council would have an obligation to ensure that this was cleared by the following morning. Verdant's target is to clear by 8.00am. They also have a man pushing a broom all day in Henley. The District Council had expressed surprise that the Town Council had not consulted them over the decision to remove bins in Market Place and Bell Street.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, referred to the large number of events being held in Henley for which no additional resources are provided by SODC - e.g. the organisers of the recent Rewind Festival held on the Regatta site had no responsibility to clear the resulting rubbish left in the town centre by large numbers of people visiting the Festival. SODC were encouraging people to visit Henley through its Market Towns initiative but would not assist with additional litter clearance during these events

The Town Clerk advised that SODC has a finite budget and are responsible for cleaning the whole district; not just Henley. Other towns and villages had festivals also.

Councillor Dr Skolar advised that during the Henley Royal Regatta 5 – 10 years ago District Council arranged for rubbish to be cleared 2-3 times per day. It is likely that budgets do not now permit this.

Councillor C I Pye suggested that many of the events are held on the other side of the river to Henley, which is in a different county, which creates reluctance from SODC to deal with issues arising from these events.

Councillor A J Follett left the meeting at 9.30pm.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** that South Oxfordshire District Council is given notice of dates of all forthcoming events in Henley and a request submitted for additional bins to be provided by Verdant and emptied throughout the day.

64. **PARTNERSHIP LIAISON**

Councillors received and considered the action points from the notes of a meeting with the Oxfordshire County Council's Partnership Working Unit on 23 September 2009 and a follow up email from the Town Clerk to David Doughty at County Council. The Town Clerk advised that he had attended with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Nimmo-Smith. It had been a very positive meeting and the Partnership Team had expressed a willingness to work with the Town Council on a number of issues, including the 2012 Olympics as a tourism/economic /sports opportunity.

Councillor Nimmo-Smith advised that the County Council was happy to cascade down but had reiterated that there would be no financial support for One Stop Shops. Councillor Dr P J Skolar agreed and confirmed that he had been happy to arrange the meeting, was pleased it had taken place and would report back to County – this had been a good example of how partnership working works to the advantage of both parties.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

65. **HENLEY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**

Proposed for 25 to 29 MAY 2010; Minute 1967, 17.3.09 refers

Councillors received and noted the notes of a meeting held on 7 October 2009 which they had before them.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, advised that it had been a very good meeting which was upbeat and optimistic. She confirmed that they had been told at the first meeting that no funding would be available from the Town Council.

It was noted that Imperial Tobacco was included in the list of sponsors. Councillor Nimmo-Smith advised that he would not be prepared to support any event sponsored by a tobacco company.

Following further discussion,

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** that a letter is sent to the organiser making it clear that Henley Town Council does not subscribe to tobacco advertising in any way, suggesting that they should not advertise this sponsor in the town and advising that no banners should be displayed on Town Council property advertising tobacco.

66. **NOTICE BOARDS**

From Public Question Time, Minute 58, Full Council, 29.9.09

Councillors received and noted a report which they had before them.

The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council had an obligation to publish details of meetings of this Council. Currently the information is displayed outside the Town Hall and on three notice boards around the town. A fourth board had been removed following repeated vandalism. Councillors were being asked to decide whether this board should be replaced. The cost would be c£700, which included £120 for an integrated Henley Town Council crest. It was noted that a former member of staff had made the existing notice boards which he had also maintained.

Discussion followed including the merits of removing all notice boards other than the one on the Town Hall or purchasing a new notice board to replace the one which had been destroyed in Harpsden Road. It was agreed that it was the wish of the Committee to continue to make information regarding forthcoming Council meetings available to residents in locations away from the town centre.

The Town Clerk confirmed that agendas and minutes were available on the Town Council's website.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** that

the Harpsden Road notice board is not replaced; and

notices of meetings continue to be put on all other boards, and that the Parks Service staff maintain the notice boards during the winter.

67. **EXTENSION OF MEETING BEYOND 2200HRS**

It was moved by the Chairman and

RESOLVED that the meeting be extended beyond 10.00pm to conclude the remaining item of business.

68. **ADOPT A LOCAL RED TELEPHONE BOX**

Councillors received and noted a letter from BT dated 19.9.09 regarding the adoption of the red telephone box at the junction of Belle Vue Road and St Andrews Road, Henley

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** that no further action be taken in this matter.

The meeting closed at 10.05pm.

ahg

Chairman