

Present:

Councillor Mrs J Bland  
Councillor A J Follett substitute for Councillor C W Gibson  
Councillor Mrs R Myer  
Councillor Miss L Pye  
Councillor C I Pye, Vice-Chairman  
Councillor D Nimmo Smith  
Councillor Dr P J Skolar  
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 H Gliddon, Committee Administrator/Minute Taker

1 member of the press

1. **TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN**

The Mayor called for nominations for the election of Chairman.

Councillor A J Follett proposed and the Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, seconded, that Councillor Mrs J Wood be elected Chairman for the year 2009 – 2010.

Councillor Dr P Skolar proposed and Councillor Mrs R Myer seconded, that Councillor D Nimmo Smith be elected Chairman for the year 2009 -10.

There being no further nominations, and following a vote, it was RESOLVED

that Councillor Mrs J Wood be elected Chairman of the Town & Community Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

*Councillor Mrs J Wood took the Chair*

2. **TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman Councillor Mrs J Wood called for nominations for the election of Vice Chairman. Councillor A J Follett proposed and Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin seconded that Councillor Miss L Pye be elected Vice Chairman for the year 2009 – 2010.

There being no further nominations it was RESOLVED

that Councillor Miss L Pye be elected Vice Chairman of the Town & Community Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

3. **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C W Gibson

4. **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

5. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Councillors considered the Terms of Reference for the Town and Community Committee.

Councillor Dr P Skolar suggested that, for clarity, the wording of section v of the report should be changed from:

'To monitor the financial performance of the Committee's budgets ...' to:

'To monitor the financial performance of **this** Committee's budgets ...'

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND

that, with the above amendment, the Terms of Reference for the Town and Community Committee be adopted.

6. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Management Committee held on 21 April 2009 were received, approved, adopted and signed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood.

7. **PROGRESS**

Councillors received and considered the Progress Report and made the following comments:

Mill Meadows Kiosk, Minutes 1909 & 1913. In response to a question regarding progress on the provision of toilets for the café staff, the Town Clerk confirmed that there were some issues regarding the pump operating the septic tank and options were being investigated.

Bus Shelters in Henley, Minute 1937. The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, urged Councillors to look at the brochure available in the One Stop Shop giving details of bus shelters available free of charge to local councils / authorities in return for the right to advertise on them. She requested that Councillors give their opinion to the Committee clerk as to the suitability of such a shelter for the bus stop at the top of Harpsden Road which was used by large numbers of elderly people and had been identified as in need of a shelter.

8. **BUDGET**

Councillors received and accepted the final monthly budget report of the Town Management Committee for March 2009:

9. **VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE**

Councillors received and accepted the following reports

Visitor report running total for year 2009

Budget report –April 2009

Report for 1 to 30 April 2009

Councillor A J Follett drew Councillors particular attention to page 3 of the reports which gave details of a number of visits made by the VIC staff in April 2009 to give talks about Henley and other places within South Oxfordshire etc. as well as housing the RSPB nestcam, which it was agreed had been very successful and a fantastic marketing initiative for Henley.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND  
that the staff at the VIC are thanked for all the good work they have carried out.

10. **STREET FURNITURE**

Councillors received and considered a report regarding the removal of posters on street furniture in Henley

The Town Clerk advised that the past Mayor had requested that this be an Agenda item to highlight the difficulties which had arisen since the Town Council took on this responsibly from OCC. No guidelines had been issued as to any furniture being acceptable and any areas being permitted. A zero tolerance approach had therefore been adopted and posters had been removed from railings, street furniture and along the Fairmile. These had included posters for the Mayor's Mile of Coins charity event and the Food Festival, which had caused consternation. Following discussion with the Chairman of the Henley Partnership, Food Festival signs directing people to car parks had been permitted.

The Town Clerk advised that a request had recently been received from the Licensing Authority and Thames Valley Police, seeking permission to place signage on lamp posts in Henley town centre to highlight the location of the railway station and taxi ranks to members of the public attending this year's Henley Royal Regatta. If permission was granted, the signage would be put in place on Thursday 2 July and removed on Monday 5 July.

During discussions, Councillors were of the opinion that the responsibility for removal of posters should not be handed back to OCC and that no posters whatsoever should be permitted on the green street furniture. It was agreed that all commercial signs should be removed and that the Town Clerk, after consultation with the Chairman, be given delegated powers to approve other requests, e.g. from charities, Farmers' / Continental Markets, Festivals or Town Council events, with no posters being permitted more that one week prior to an event and must be taken down without delay after the event and that permission should be sought prior to the event otherwise signage should be removed.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that

- a. the Council continues to remove unauthorized signs from the Highway as agents for the County Council but within strict guidelines set by the Council and,
- b. events / organisations for which the display of signs and boards will be granted are local charities and Festivals, Farmers and Continental markets and Council events, and
- c. the consent of the Council for the display of signs and boards shall be sought beforehand, and if prior permission has not been sought posters shall be removed, and,
- d. strictly no use of green street furniture shall be permitted, and
- e. signage to be put up no more than one week in advance of the event and removed immediately after the event has taken place, and
- f. the Town Clerk, after consultation with the Chairman, is given delegated powers to grant permission for those events deemed by him to be within the acceptable criteria.

It was RESOLVED

that permission is given to the Licensing Authority and Thames Valley Police to place signage on grey, but not green, lamp posts in the town centre, from 2 to 5 July 2009, to highlight the location of the railway station and taxi ranks to members of the public attending the Henley Royal Regatta.

11. **HENLEY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**

Councillors received and noted the notes of a meeting dated 6 May 2009

Councillor A J Follett advised that it had been an interesting meeting and all who had attended had been happy with the discussions. It had however been important to separate practicalities from artistic content. The Council would be able to help with facilities, support and advice rather than offering any financial assistance.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND

that the notes of the meeting held on 8 May 2009 be accepted

12. **HENLEY SCHOOLS TRAVEL PLANS WORKING GROUP**

Councillors received and noted the notes of a meeting held on 1 April 2009.

Councillor A J Follett advised that the working group had achieved its objectives and it had been proposed that no future meeting dates would be arranged until such time as Oxfordshire County Council provided funding, e.g. for a cycle route map.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND

that the notes of the meeting held on 1 April 2009 be accepted

13. **LAY LIGHTS**

Councillors received and considered a report and the following attachments thereto

- a). letter from South Oxfordshire District Council dated 15 April 2009, in response to;
- b). letter from the Town Clerk dated 11 February 2009
- c). quotation Option 1 – for like for like repairs cost c£25k
- d). quotation Option 2 – for replacement with a modern concrete construction cost c£13k.

The Town Clerk reported on the background to this item, which had been under discussion for many years, during which time some patched repairs had been carried out. It was noted that £13,865 had been allocated to lay lights in the Council's 2009/10 capital programme.

Councillors discussed the two options and noted that a successful listed building application would be required prior to the implementation of Option 2. Councillor A J Follett advised that during discussion with SODC it had been indicated that planning permission for Option 2 was unlikely to be granted. He agreed that £35k was an incredible amount to have to spend on refurbishment of lay lights and this was a drawback of being the custodians of a grade 2\* listed building. Discussion ensued on the two options. Councillors were concerned about the effects on capital reserves if Option 1 was agreed and also acknowledged that planning consent was unlikely to be granted for Option 2. It was noted that other lay lights on the pavement to the sides of the Town Hall had been removed in the past, although agreed that this was prior to the building having received Grade 2 \* status.

Councillors acknowledged that spending of a minimum of £13k would be required if the lay lights were to be made good, and suggested that matched external funding be sought. If successful, Option 1, like for like repairs, could then be achieved at no additional draw on the Town Council's capital reserves.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND

- a. that this Committee supports the implementation of Option 1, like for like repairs
- b. that matched grant funding for like for like repairs is sought by this Committee
- c. that, if like for like funding is not secured, the matter is referred to the Finance Strategy and Management Committee for consideration on the budgetary implications of progressing this scheme.

14. **MARKET TOWN ACTION PLAN FOR HENLEY**

(i) Councillors received and considered a letter dated 20 April 2009 from South Oxfordshire District Council.

Councillor D P Skolar was of the opinion that very little Partnership working had been included in the proposals despite both Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council having highlighted the importance of Partnership working in their reports.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood advised that although the reports stated that Henley would receive support in relation to the 2012 Olympics, funding for a Visitor Information Centre was nevertheless still being withdrawn.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND

- a. that the letter dated 20 April 2009 from South Oxfordshire District Council is noted, and,
- b. that it is noted that none of the points raised by Henley Town Council have been addressed by SODC,
- c. that a request is made to SODC for money to be relocated from pointless exercises, such as 'asking people what they do at the river' and put into funding a town manger for Henley
- d. that a reply is sent to SODC and copied to the Economic and Development officer at OCC, outlining the Town Council's concerns and requesting that a Town Manager is funded for Henley.

(ii) Councillors received and considered a request for funding of £750 from the Town Improvements Action Plan budget towards the production of a town centre poster to be displayed in the green notice boards around the town. Plan to include:

Detailed colour coded street plan,

Individual shops/business,

Legend with shop/business categories.

Total cost £1500; proposal that £750 is paid by The Henley Partnership and £750 by HTC.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, advised that street plans had been put in place in the notice boards some three years ago and she was of the opinion that these were still relevant. Shops and businesses had been named on previous maps but it had been decided not to include these due to the frequency of changes.

The Town Clerk advised that names of businesses colour coded into categories such as banks, retailers, hairdressers etc would be included in the new proposals. These could be easily changed and would assist visitors with identification of premises. This was a powerful way of promoting a town and was used successfully elsewhere. The Town Clerk confirmed that the Henley Partnership would be responsible for making and paying for changes.

Councillors agreed that it was important to be seen to be working with the Henley Partnership, but that the signs were likely to be out of date prior to the implementation of the maps.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND

- a. that funding of £750 is granted from the Town Improvement Action Plan budget towards the production of a town centre poster to be displayed in the green notice boards around the town,
- b. that the Henley Partnership should be responsible for updating the signage as and when required.

15. **CCTV**

(I) Councillors received and considered a letter from Ann Ducker, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council and noted that it had been resolved at the meeting of Full Council on 12 May 2009 (*Minute 4104 (v)*) that the Mayor and another Councillor and the Town Clerk would attend a meeting with Councillor Ann Ducker arranged for 27 May 2009 to discuss the contents of this letter. In response the district council has decided that the Town Clerk and one politician should attend the meeting from each town.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND  
that the letter from Ann Ducker is noted

(II) Councillors considered the appointment of a Member to attend the meeting to join Councillor Ducker and the Chief Executive of SODC for talks the following day.

It was RESOLVED  
that Councillor Dr B Wood be appointed to attend the meeting on 27 May 2009 at SODC with the Town Clerk.

16. **LEGISLATION ON LICENSED PREMISES**

- (i) Councillors received and noted letters dated 27 April 2009 from Ann Ducker, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council and 30 April 2009 from John Howell MP
- (ii) Councillors considered the Council's position in response to an application submitted by Latino's Club for an extension of licence to 5.00am.

Councillor A J Follett advised that the Town Council had no influence in respect of licensing applications as it is not a 'responsible local authority' as designated under the legislation. Residents are able to influence decisions and he recommended that residents should be advised of this via the Henley Standard and encouraged to contact SODC with their views on whether the extension to 5.00am should be granted. Councillor Follett suggested that a letter be sent to SODC expressing the concerns of the Town Council at the likely increase in noise, litter and late night food operators, with a copy sent to the Henley Standard. Henley was not the right place for such clubs.

Councillor Mrs J Bland advised that she had requested that the Henley MP bring the matter up in Parliament. She suggested that a letter should be sent direct to central government.

It was RESOLVED

that letters are sent to South Oxfordshire District Council and central government expressing Henley Town Council's objections with copies sent to the Henley Standard,

17. **CLAMPING IN HENLEY**

Councillors received and considered

- a). a report concerning the appointment of TCBS Securities Ltd for enforcement of the Upper Market Place car park in the light of the public reaction to the enforcement measures operated by this company in other parts of the town and
- b) a letter from Oxfordshire County Council Trading Standards regarding the contractor

The Town Clerk reminded Councillors that TCBS Securities were employed by the Town Council to manage the Upper Market Place which is used by the Mayor, staff and visitors to the Town Hall. Removal of TCBS would leave the area vulnerable to illegal parking.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, advised that the area referred to in the Trading Standards letter is not the responsibility of the Town Council. She asked if any complaints had been received about clamping on Council land.

Councillor A J Follett advised that there had been reports in the local paper of issues in the Kings Road car park, mostly regarding insufficient signage.

Councillor Mrs J Wood queried whether the Town Council could request that a cap is put on TCBS's charges in Henley.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND

- that a reply is sent to OCC confirming that there have been no problems with TCBS Securities on Henley Town Council land, and
- that a letter is sent to TCBS Securities asking for details of their rates and suggesting that a limit is fixed on fines in Henley.

18. **WEED CONTROL IN HENLEY**

Councillors received and noted a letter dated 22 April 2009 from Brian Fell at Oxfordshire Highways and a letter sent to Councillor Ian Hudspeth at County Hall, Oxford, seeking information on the allocation of the £375k and whether some of this could be ring fenced for weed killing in Henley.

The Town Clerk read out a response received from Councillor Ian Hudspeth the current day endorsing Brian Fell's letter dated 22 April, in which he had stated that OCC had approved the 2009/10 budget and, apart from an amount of £78k for dealing with noxious and invasive weeds, there was no funding specifically allocated for weed control. A sum of £375k has been allocated to "Street Scene Maintenance" and there is an expectation that it will be used in partnership with the District Councils to enhance the main approaches to Oxford City.

Councillor D Nimmo Smith advised that this had not been his understanding of what the Conservative group had agreed. It appeared that the officer had taken the decision that funding would be for Oxford City Centre. This was not the intention of the Conservative group.

Councillor Dr P Skolar agreed that he had understood that there would be specific funding for weedkilling in the county.

Councillors agreed that the decision taken by Oxfordshire County Council was appalling. There had been no consultation. Residential areas would be badly affected and residents paid a very high council tax in Henley.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that Councillors will have noticed that the Henley Standard is showing support to the Town Council in the matter.

It was RESOLVED

that a reply is sent to Councillor Ian Hudspeth expressing the Town Council's deep regret and great disappointment that OCC are being selfish with their funding and pointing out that Henley represents the whole of Great Britain at the time of the Henley Royal Regatta and cannot be seen as a weed infested town.

19. **NOMAD SUMMER ACTIVITY PROGRAMME 2009**

Councillors received, noted and approved the use of the Council's open spaces in support of the attached programme of events.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, referred to the proposed information point at Mill Meadows, which would be run in conjunction with the café opening and police presence on Friday evenings in July and August. The Boom Bus was used as an aid to providing entertainment for young people and would be located at Makins Recreation Ground and the YMCA over the weekend of Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August and at Mill Meadows on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August.

Concern was expressed that the bus should not be taken onto the grass at Mill or Marsh Meadows but kept on a hard standing.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND

that the Nomad's requests are approved, subject to

- a. the Boom bus being kept on a hard standing at Mill Meadows
- b. the Boom bus not taking place at Mill Meadows on Saturdays and Sundays and
- c. all events ending by 9.30pm

Councillors resolved that a letter of thanks should be sent to Nomad for all the works they will be organising during the summer

20. **REGATTA FIREWORKS**

Councillors received and noted a request from James Brennan for funding towards the cost of a firework display to take place following Henley Royal Regatta

It was RESOLVED

that the matter is referred to the Finance Strategy and Management Committee for consideration through the normal grant process, and that Mr Brennan is advised accordingly.

ahg

Chairman