

Present: Mayor, Councillor M S Akehurst
Deputy Mayor, Mrs Councillor J Wood
Councillors Mrs J Bland
Councillor D Clenshaw
Councillor S Gawrysiak
Councillor Miss L Hillier
Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin
Councillor Miss S Evans
Councillor W Hamilton
Councillor Miss K Hinton
Councillor Ms L Meachin
Councillor D R Nimmo Smith
Councillor Mrs P A Phillips.
Councillor I Reissmann
Councillor D Silvester

In Attendance: Mr M W Kennedy - Town Clerk
Mrs P Price-Davies - Minute Taker / Committee Administrator
Mr C Austin - Town Sergeant

14 members of the Public
2 members of the Press

100. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Hinke.

101. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

102. MINUTES

(i) The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on **10 February 2015** were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

(ii) The minutes of the Special Full Council meeting held on **16 March 2015** were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

103. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr O Wait, Bell Street

Mr Wait called for confirmation from Councillor D Nimmo Smith on the situation regarding the drafting of the Traffic Regulation Order for the residents permit parking scheme on Bell Street. He aired the residents' frustration on the delay of this initiative. Councillor D Nimmo Smith shared his view that OCC's delay was disappointing and that this problem was not unique to Henley but that he would enquire with the relevant Officers to get some clarification on the situation.

Mr S Reiss, New Street

Mr Reiss spoke of his growing concern regarding three main road and traffic issues within Henley Town Centre:

1. The excessive amount of HGVs - especially in New Street.
2. The unacceptable state of the road surfaces.
3. The air pollution which was compounded by the HGVs and the speeding traffic.

District Councillor Mrs J Bland was in agreement with his observations and concerns, she then highlighted some of the new initiatives that District Council was implementing and how they were addressing and funding these issues. The Mayor suggested that Mr Reiss reported the potholes at the Fix My Street website www.fixmystreet.com which had been created to encourage people to report local problems to Oxfordshire County Council by locating them on a map.

Mr D Whittingham, The Malthouse

Mr Whittingham expressed his concern about the state of the alleyway that was located between Sainsbury's and Boots, calling for urgent action to be taken with the owners to address it. A member of the public, Mr S Smith (a Sainsbury's employee) informed the meeting that Sainsbury's also shared this concern but that they were not permitted to clean it as it was private property.

Mr J Brookes, Parkside

Mr Brookes enquired as to whether the Neighbourhood Plan Traffic Scoping report had been sent out to tender, he was informed that this would be dealt with under Agenda Item No.8v.

Mr C Braithwaite, St Marks Road

Mr Braithwaite spoke on the decision of the Finance, Strategy and Management Committee to recommend the funding of the Henley Skate Park initiative Noise Study through the Professional Fees budget and hoped that the Council would fully endorse this decision and he thanked the Council for their continued support.

Mrs G Dodds, Greys Road

Mrs Dodds reminded Council that despite several attempts to get SOHA to cut back the hedge between the Pramwalk and Greys Road, this maintenance work had still not been undertaken. She requested that John Backley at SODC should be approached to ensure that this work is undertaken as it was now even more pressing due to the Entente Florale Europe judging scheduled for this summer.

104. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORTS

Members had before them reports from Councillors Mrs E Hodgkin, W Hall and Mrs J Wood. It was **RESOLVED**

that the reports be received and noted.

Matters arising from the reports:

A Member enquired as to how the District Councillors had voted on the recent decision to cut the Council tax in South Oxfordshire.

Councillor Mrs J Bland – for
Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin - against
Councillor Mrs J Wood - against

The Chair of Finance Strategy and Management Committee informed Council that the Committee Administrator had invited District Councillor W Hall to the last meeting as he had requested at the last Full Council but he had declined the invitation.

Members spoke on the Air Quality Assessment issues, fully supporting the £50k grant that had been provided by Defra but sought reassurance that the issue of HGVs would be addressed as this compounded the problem. District Councillor Mrs J Bland assured them that it was all in order and that it was being fully addressed.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Members had before them two reports from County Councillor D Nimmo Smith. It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be received and noted.

Matters arising from the reports:

County Councillor D Nimmo Smith referred to his reports which had been previously circulated to Councillors and gave a verbal update on the following issues:

He spoke of the recent decision from central Government to commit to giving OCC the sum of £12.8m to embark on a road maintenance programme dealing with improving roads, drainage systems and street lighting. He informed Council that the funds for raising of the section of the Playhatch Road at Sonning was still under discussion and in order for this major work to be undertaken it would have to be funded through the Capital Programme budget at the expense of other projects being deferred or shelved altogether. He also spoke of the intention for electric buses to be introduced to the Henley bus routes (Arriva) as had been done with the Electric Oxford bus scheme.

A Member requested that OCC not only addressed the current street lighting maintenance within this programme of work but also considered installing additional lighting within the Henley area; he agreed to discuss this with Officers.

A Member aired her frustration at OCC's delayed response in resolving the Traffic Regulation Order at Bell Street and the issue of HGVs within the town centre, Councillor D Nimmo Smith re-iterated the fact that this issue could not be addressed in isolation but had to be considered on a county wide basis. A Member also drew Council's attention to the fact that the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) had not been legalised, meant that HTC Traffic Wardens were powerless to deal with drivers that parked on double yellow lines within the Town Centre. He called for Councillor D Nimmo Smith, in his capacity as Cabinet Member to urge the Officers at OCC to address this important traffic issue.

105. FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Members had before them a report from Councillor Mrs J Wood on the River Thames Alliance. It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be received and noted.

106. MAYOR'S REPORT

Members had before them the list of Mayoral engagements from the period **4 February – 17 March 2015**. It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be received and noted.

Matters arising from the report:

The Deputy Mayor Mrs Councillor J Wood pointed out that the nationwide act of remembrance to commemorate World War 1 ceremony held on 9 March in the Mayor's parlour had been omitted from the list. She expressed the hope that this event would be held in each of the 3 succeeding years for each year of the war.

107. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

(i) The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on the 17 February & 10 March 2015 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 17 February & 10 March 2015 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

(ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee, held on 24 February 2015 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 24 February 2015 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute No. 101 – Henley Branch Line Users Group (HBUG)

A Member announced that First Great Western had been awarded a franchise extension by the Department for Transport running from September this year, this will ensure the eventual introduction of electrification, upgrades and new stock on Henley Branch services.

Minute No. 107 – Fairtrade

A Member thanked Mr Baker on the renewal of Henley's Fairtrade status; also stating that in her opinion Henley should apply for the Blue Plaque scheme to commemorate this endorsement.

Members asked for Council and members of the public to attend the Fairtrade Campaign being held in the Town Square this coming Saturday (28th March), along with participating in the Henley in Transition litter campaign being held throughout the town.

Minute No. 108 – Traffic Advisory

A Member sought clarification from OCC on how they were intending on reducing and monitoring the flow of HGVs through the town centre, Councillor D Nimmo Smith explained the method and the operation of the permit scheme.

Members called for all the towns within South Oxfordshire to be assessed individually rather than on a county wide basis under LTP4 as they all had unique needs and problems that required solutions.

A Member pointed out that the four key stakeholders in the proposed pedestrian Crossing at Greys Road were not consulted before Mr K Stenning's recommendations were put forward and he requested that this decision be referred back to the Town and Community Committee for further consultation with these groups. It was **RESOLVED**

that the matter be referred back to the Traffic and Advisory Committee and that the four stakeholders be consulted.

(iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on **3 and 16 March 2015** were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meetings of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 3 and 16 March 2015 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

(iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on **10 March 2015** were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 10 March 2015 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute No.64iii – Minutes of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee held on 24 February 2015.

Several Members questioned whether due process had been adhered to regarding the selection of the winning design for the refurbishment of the Reading Road roundabout and the authorisation of the work and the financial arrangements. Members were assured by the Chair of Henley in Bloom and the Town Clerk that due process had been adhered to and that the relevant papers had been circulated to members. Members were in agreement that there needed to be consistency and fairness in such decision making protocol (regardless of how the project was being funded) relating to all public works of art and design installed and that this roundabout formed a highly visible gateway of the town. It was agreed that the winning design would be emailed to all Members as soon as possible.

Minute No.66 – Progress Report

The chair thanked the Committee Administrator, Mrs R Walker for all her work in ensuring that all the designs and installation of the new signage had been undertaken.

Minute No.68 – Review of Town Council’s Recreation Facilities

Members discussed the necessity of setting up a Working group to review HTC’s leisure facilities in order to take a holistic approach in order to agree on a long-term strategy of the maintenance and improvement of them. It was **RESOLVED**

that the membership of this Working Group would comprise of:

**Councillor Miss S Evans
Councillor S Gawrysiak
Councillor D Silvester
Councillor Mrs J Wood**

- (v) The Minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Governance Committee held on the **25 February 2015** were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Governance Committee held on the 25 February 2015 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute No. 62 – Public Participation

A Member enquired as to whether the questions that were put to the Chair by Mr Birch had been formally answered. He was informed that the Chair would address this on his return.

Minute No. 62 – Public Participation

Members discussed Councillor S Gawrysiak’s observations regarding the imbalance in the political make-up of the membership of the Neighbourhood Planning Governance Committee. Although Members were in agreement that the Neighbourhood Plan itself was essentially a non-political plan, some Members highlighted the importance of the membership representing the new political make-up of the Council (in-line with all the other Committees). It was concluded that this principal should be adhered to when the Committee membership was drawn up under the new Council.

The Vice-Chair of the NPGC confirmed that the Six week Public Consultation on the pre-submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan had closed and approximately 700 responses had been received. The responses from both Statutory and Non-Statutory bodies had been uploaded onto the Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan website and Nexus Planning were currently collating and processing all the completed questionnaires, it was hoped that these results would be presented at the next NPGC meeting.

It was confirmed that a budget of £50k had been set aside for the Transport Strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan, the deadline for tenders was set for 27 March 2015. Members stressed that in order for this piece of work to represent best value for the residents of Henley it had to link in and take account of similar work undertaken by SODC, OCC and TAC. Members were reassured that the Traffic Scoping report had ensured that all these aspects were highlighted in the tender document.

(vi) The Minutes of the meeting of the Townlands Steering Group Committee held on the 4 March 2015 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Townlands Steering Group Committee held on the 4 March 2015 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute No. 342 - Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman informed Council that the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 26 March 2015 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall. He confirmed that a representative from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) would be making a presentation and would be available to answer any questions or concerns regarding the development.

108. DISPENSATION

Members had before them a report on Dispensation prepared by the Town Clerk. The Council gave due consideration to the Report, which had been reproduced and had been previously circulated and a discussion ensued regarding the granting of dispensation to Mr P Simms (News Editor for the Henley Standard) and Mr S Khan (Local Businessman) to speak and vote at meetings of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee and the reasons for doing so. Several Members were in agreement that this dispensation was in the interests of the work, promotion and community engagement of this Sub Committee. The Chair informed Council that she had invited Mrs M Clarke (Henley Herald) to join the Sub Committee but that decision would have to be referred to the next Henley in Bloom Committee meeting.

The motion having been proposed and seconded was put to the vote. It was **RESOLVED**

that Messrs Khan and Simms be granted a dispensation under section 34 of the Localism Act 2011 enabling them to speak and vote on all matters as this would be in the interests of Henley in Bloom continuing the good work that it does for the residents of Henley and the particular expertise and knowledge that they bring to the committee.

The motion was carried.

The meeting closed at 9.48 pm.

ppd

Mayor