

Present: Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin  
Deputy Mayor, Councillor S Gawrysiak  
Councillor M Akehurst  
Councillor D Clenshaw  
Councillor Miss S Evans  
Councillor Miss K Gehrman  
Councillor W Hamilton  
Councillor Miss L Hillier  
Councillor D Hinke  
Councillor Ms L Meachin  
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith  
Councillor Mrs P Phillips  
Councillor I Reissmann

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

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

The Mayor spoke of the recent news of Baroness Thatcher who had passed away, she wished to publicly express condolences to her family and friends. She also informed members that as a mark of respect, Henley Town Council would be flying the Union Jack at half mast on the day of her funeral, which was to be held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

The Mayor then informed the Council that from 26<sup>th</sup> March until after the local elections are held on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013, the Council is to follow a code of practice guidelines on local government publicity. This code of practice has placed a ban on publicising the views of all political parties and is informally known as 'Election Purdah'.

The Town Clerk read out the fire evacuation procedure and reminded Councillors and members of the public of the Code of Practice relating to Public Participation as stated on the agenda. He also drew members of the public's attention to the laminated rules placed on each seat in the public gallery.

**94. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs J Wood, Councillor D Silvester and Councillor Mrs J Bland.

**95. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**96. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2013 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Councillor I Reissmann entered the meeting at 7.38pm.

Arising from the minutes:

Minute No.90 – Poplar Trees at Mill Meadows

The Town Clerk reported receipt of a letter from the District Council's Tree Officer through the consultant Sylva Planting. The Council had submitted an application for the removal of the remaining five poplar trees on the eastern verge, to be replaced with nine fastigate oaks planted four metres apart, and the crown reduction of the remaining six poplars along the western verge. The Tree Officer's preferred option was the removal of all eleven poplars on amenity grounds and for replanting to occur with fastigate oaks five metres apart. The Town Clerk confirmed that the Tree Officer would therefore issue a decision notice in two parts, approving the removal of the five trees on the eastern verge and refusing that part of the application relating to crown reduction. Since the Council had an obligation to fell the trees that had been shown to be unsafe, Members were asked to amend the Council's application for crown reduction of the remaining poplar in favour of their removal on amenity grounds. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the Council supports a variation to the Tree Preservation Order application in favour of the felling of all eleven poplars and the replanting with fastigate oaks at five metre spacings.**

**97. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*Mr P Anderson, 159 Greys Road*

Mr P Anderson commented on the proposed development site of the Skateboard Park at Makins Recreation Ground. As a resident in the immediate vicinity he was concerned that he, along with other residents had not been consulted and they had concerns about the suitability of this site for such a development. The Mayor informed Mr Anderson that there was an established Skateboarders Group that were keen to engage with the community on this proposal and the reason that there had not yet been any public consultation was because no plans had yet been submitted.

*Mrs G Dodds, Elizabeth Road*

Mrs G Dodds thanked the Council for erecting The Kings Arms Barns Sign and was informed that that the other signage would also be erected in due course. She raised concern over the safety of the steps between Deanfield Road and Church Street and requested that the Council investigate who owned them and when the necessary repairs were due to be carried out. The Mayor informed her that they were the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council.

*Mr P Mains, River and Rowing Museum*

Mr P Mains requested that the Council re-consider the opportunity to enter into further discussion with the Museum regarding replanting the Poplar Trees at Mill Meadows. He re-iterated the fact that the Museum were in full support of the recommendation to fell all the trees on the western side of the Museum but objected to the choice of the replacement trees. He expressed his opinion that fastigate oaks were not the ideal choice for the site and he repeated his request for the Council to enter into further consultation with the Museum over this matter. The Mayor responded to his concerns, stating that the Council had observed the correct procedure and that the application had to include choice of species as a prerequisite and that there would now be fewer trees with greater spacings. The urgency had always been a safety issue, both with regard to the public and the Museum.

*Mr D Whittingham, The Malthouse*

Mr D Whittingham spoke of the fire that had occurred at The Malthouse last week and expressed gratitude at the bravery of the fire fighters who had dealt with the incident.

**98. DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

**District Councillors' Reports**

Members had before them reports from District Councillors Mrs J Bland, Mrs J Wood and Mr W Hall. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the reports be received and noted.**

Matters arising from the reports:

Councillor W Hall referred to his report which had been circulated to Councillors previously and gave a verbal update on the following issues:

**CIF Budget:** He reported that this budget had been doubled to £1,000,000 and urged all Councillors to encourage groups to apply to the fund.

**Garden Waste:** He reported that the move to Direct Debits for this service had increased efficiency of collection and greatly reduced the costs.

A member welcomed the increase to the CIF fund but urged SODC to scrutinise their investment performances as Henley Town Council had witnessed a more superior investment return. Councillor W Hall confirmed that he would refer this repeated request to Cabinet.

**County Councillors' Reports**

Members had before them reports from County Councillors P Skolar and D Nimmo-Smith. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the reports be received and noted.**

Matters arising from the reports:

The Mayor thanked County Councillor P Skolar for attending meetings of the full council as this was his last meeting as County Councillor.

County Councillor P Skolar referred to his report which had been circulated to Councillors previously and gave a verbal report on the following issues:

**The Townlands Development:** He announced that finally the development was going ahead and he expressed gratitude for Mr John Howell MP's recent intervention which had prevented further delays. He felt that work would realistically begin in June 2013 and would be completed in August 2015.

**Education:** He stated that there were 8,000 Primary School places available for the 2013/14 intake and that 7,341 applications had been received to date. He was pleased to report that over 90% of Secondary School applicants will get their first choice.

**Potholes:** He had recently inspected the state of Vicarage Road and was appalled by the condition of it and the amount of potholes, as a result he had submitted a request to Highways for the urgent action to be taken.

County Councillor P Skolar then read out a personal statement announcing that he was standing down as a County Councillor for Henley. He spoke of his involvement with HTC over the last 9 years, which had been mostly as a County Representative, as an enjoyable experience and he felt privileged to have represented the people of Henley.

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

**Removal of bollards in the Town Centre:** He reported that the work to the damaged bollards sited in the Market Square had finally been undertaken. Several members requested that the same work be undertaken to the bollards on the

opposite side of the square. Councillor D Nimmo-Smith responded to the request to investigate the possibility of this work being undertaken.

**Potholes:** Several members welcomed the news that a pothole repair programme had been established by OCC. They hoped that the Management of OCC Highways would oversee a comprehensive long-term solution to the current unacceptable condition of many roads in the vicinity. Councillor D Nimmo-Smith assured the Council that he would investigate the funding and management programme that OCC had in place.

**Cleaning of Road Signs:**The Mayor remarked on the fact that the road signs on the A4155 from Shiplake to Henley had been cleaned but she enquired as to when the signage on the other side of the town would also be cleaned. Councillor D Nimmo-Smith said that he would enquire and report back to the Council.

**99. FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

There was nothing to report.

**100. MAYOR'S REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members had before them the list of Mayoral engagements from 20 February - 2 April 2013 inclusive for the Mayor, copy attached to the agenda. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the report be received and noted.**

ii) The Mayor made the following announcements:

- A Special meeting of the Full Council was to be held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April at 7pm when the Twinning Ceremony between Henley Town and Bled, Slovenia would take place.
- There would be a Henley litter Blitz on 20 April 2013.
- A Volunteers Fair was to be held in Market Place on 27 April 2013.
- She had recently attended a meeting of the Parkinson's UK, Henley branch where the Mayor of Henley had been formally invited to become an Honorary Patron.

**101. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

(i) The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 5 and 26 March 2013 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 5 and 26 March 2013 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.**

(ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 12 March 2013 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 12 March 2013 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.**

Arising from the report:

Minute No.94 – Julie Perigo – The Henley Partnership Update

A member requested clarity over the Articles of Association of The Henley Partnership, stating that Henley Town Council needed to be assured that the company was legally constituted. It was agreed that as the Chair of The Henley Partnership, Julie Perigo should be invited to the next Town and Community meeting to clarify this issue.

Minute No.95 – Decriminalisation of Parking

Members reported that the meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2013 with Henley, Didcot,

Thame and Wallingford had been extremely productive and that the minutes would be distributed at the next meeting.

Minute No.97 – Old Fire Station Gallery and Kings Arms Barn Working Group

A member informed the Council that the booking system for both venues had been improved and that both deposits and bookings could now be carried out either online or in-person at the Town Hall.

Minute No.98 – Twinning with Bled

A member aired concern over the lack of consultation at Full Council regarding the decision of the twinning of Henley-on-Thames with Bled, Slovenia.

(iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 19 March 2013 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 19 March 2013 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.**

*Arising from the report:*

Minute No.98 – Grants

Councillor W Hamilton reported that The Springbox Gym Club had not been in contact with him to date to take up his offer of help with applying for a CIF grant.

Minute No.100 – Community Governance Review

A member confirmed the outcome of the recent Boundary Commission Review into the electoral arrangements for South Oxfordshire. It was confirmed that a single three member ward for Henley would be contested at the next District Council Elections. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the matter be noted.**

Minute No. 102 iv – Confidential – Staff Appraisals

A member suggested that the Henley Town Council's Staff Appraisals should be reviewed. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the process for conducting Staff Appraisal System be reviewed and the matter be referred to a future meeting of the Finance, Strategy and Management Committee meeting for further consideration.**

(iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 26 March 2013 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 26 March 2013 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.**

*Arising from the report:*

Minute No.78.iv – Minutes

A member proposed that the expenditure of £2,640 from the Christmas Events and Decorations Sub Committee for the replacement of various tree lights should come solely from the Capital budget rather than part funded from the Revenue budget. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the expenditure of £2,640 from the Christmas Events and Decorations Sub Committee for the replacement of various tree lights be referred back to the next Finance, Strategy and Management meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2013 for further determination as to the source of funding.**

Minute No.82 – Progress Report

A member announced that the date for the installation ceremony of the Mermaid Sculpture and the re-opening of Red Lion Lawn was confirmed as 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013 and all Councillors would be receiving an invitation to this reception.

(v) The minutes of the Neighbourhood Planning Governance Committee (NPGC) meeting held on 8 March 2013 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the Minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Governance Committee held on 8 March 2013 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.**

*Arising from the report:*

Minute No.7 – The Joint Neighbourhood Plan Application

Councillor D Hinke, as Chairman of the Neighbourhood Planning Governance Committee confirmed that the revised Joint Neighbourhood Plan application, combining the parishes of Harpsden and Henley had been submitted and accepted by SODC. The six week consultation process had begun and concludes on 7 May 2013.

Minute No.7 – Appointment of Consultants

The Chairman confirmed that the draft of the tender specification for the Joint Neighbourhood Plan had been written and would then be sent out to at least three selected Consultants.

A member expressed concern that the Committee had been awarded delegated powers to spend up to the allocated budget. He felt that any monies spent should be reported back to Full Council for approval, keeping it consistent with the budget control of the other Committees and Standing orders. Members discussed this issue in the context of the Joint Neighbourhood Plan being a single project. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the Neighbourhood Planning Governance Committee should have delegated powers to act and oversee the delivery of the road map on time and to budget.**

(vi) Townlands Steering Group (TSG) Committee

Members had before them an update report from The Chairman of the Townlands Steering Group. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the report be received and noted.**

The Chairman gave a verbal update, confirming that all the planning conditions for the Townlands Development had finally been met. He announced that the Bicester re-development had now actually achieved financial closure, he regarded this as a positive progression for the Townlands re-development as they have both been run by the same PCT team. Anticipating financial closure for the Townlands re-development in either April or May 2013, he assured members that he would report back any further developments to the progress of the project.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.