

Present: Councillor Dr B G Wood, Chairman
The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, Vice-Chairman
Councillors Mrs J Bland
Councillor Mrs G Dodds
Councillor C W Gibson
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood

In attendance: Mr A Brown, River & Rowing Museum
Mr R Rigby, Robert Rigby Architects

Mrs A Gliddon, Committee Administrator

1 Member of the Public

28. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Dr P J Skolar and Mr G Bartle

29. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

30. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Mill Meadows/River Sub-Committee held on 7 May 2009 were approved and signed by the Chairman, Councillor Dr B G Wood

31. PROGRESS REPORT

Councillors received and noted the progress report.

The Chairman, Councillor Dr B G Wood, invited Mr Robert Rigby to the table for the following item

32. REFURBISHMENT OF TOILETS AT THE LEICHLINGEN PAVILION

Councillor Dr Wood advised that there had been much debate on this subject in the past and, now that items (i) and (ii) below had been ratified by Full Council on 8 December 2009, the matter could be progressed by the working group in conjunction with Mr Rigby with a view to the project to commencing in the winter of 2010/11 in order that new toilets would be ready in time for the 2012 Olympics.

- (i) a working group consisting of Councillors Mrs G Dodd, Mrs E Hodgkin, Dr B Wood and Mrs J Wood meets to progress the matter, and
- (ii) the 'in principle' plan is progressed and the working group meets with builders to produce a final plan for submission to Council.

Dr Wood reminder Members that Mr Rigby had submitted a plan to the Town Council some time ago:

Mr Rigby suggested that the first meeting of the working group should work to :

1. determine the actual brief, firm up on proposals and work out the best way forward,
2. give instructions for the submission of a planning application to South Oxfordshire District Council, bearing in mind that it would be eight weeks before their decision was known,
3. put together a set of documents to be sent to three contractors.

Councillor Mrs Dodds agreed that there was no clear brief and plans could not be drawn up until this was given. The inclusion of turnstiles in the original plan was a concern. The Council had taken the decision that charges would be made for use of the toilets. A number of Councillors were not happy with this decision and, as this had been made more than six months ago, the matter could be looked at again. She would prefer not to charge but to increase car parking charges by 50p.

It was agreed that the inclusion of turnstiles had been rejected by the Council.

Following further discussion, it was **RESOLVED**

that the working group and Mr Rigby meet at 9am on Thursday 7 January 2010, in the Town Hall to progress the matter, with the plans submitted previously being made available at that meeting.

Mr Rigby advised that he would prepare a set of questions for the meeting, to enable Councillors to clarify what was required.

The Chairman thanked Mr Rigby for attending and Mr Rigby left the meeting

Councillor C W Gibson sought clarification with regard to funding the project. He understood that one proposal was to take out a loan and asked whether the rate could be fixed now to avoid any increase in interest rates.

The Chairman confirmed that taking out a loan was one possibility and advised that a full proposal would be submitted to a future meeting of Full Council.

33. MILL MEADOWS ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

The Chairman, Dr B G Wood, advised that at a meeting of Henley Youth Council held on 23 November 2009, the young people present had come up with some good ideas. It had been a useful meeting at which Mrs S Yeates, local resident, had made a presentation as well as PC Vicky Sims. There had been a good debate on issues surrounding the adventure playground.

The Chairman advised Members that Mrs Yeates had expressed a wish to speak at the meeting. He invited Mrs Yeates to the table.

Mrs Yates thanked the Chairman for keeping the item on the Agenda. She stated that although she had lived in the area for 15 years, problems had only recently started, with 40-50 children regularly in the area on Friday and Saturday evenings. She advised that when the police are present the young people quickly disperse. The signage at the playground was not adequate but it was a matter of enforcement. On the evening of the recent Christmas Festival on Friday 4 December, in excess of 200 young people had been in the playground and the entrance to the meadows drinking and racing backward and forwards. The police had been called and the following morning she had spoken with a policeman patrolling the area who had advised her that word had been spread on a social networking site that people should congregate at the meadows.

Mr Brown advised that he had called the police. A dinner was being held that evening at the River & Rowing Museum for the International Canoe Federation. A coach taking 60 attendees to the dinner was forced by large numbers of young people at the entrance to stop and could not pass through. They had also caused problems further down the meadows towards the Museum and on the Museum's jetty. This was a prestigious dinner and the behaviour had not created a good impression of Henley to the attendees and had been very embarrassing for the Museum. The problems had continued all evening until the last train had left Henley. It was the worst anti social behaviour they had experienced. He agreed that people put events on Facebook and within a short time there could be 200-300 people in the area.

The Chairman, Councillor Dr Wood advised that this occurrence should be disconnected from the Adventure Playground. It was embarrassing for the town and due to a breakdown in law and order. He asked the Town Clerk if an evening caretaker could be built into the role of the Parks Service Staff. The Town Clerk replied that the assumption was that staff would be there in daylight hours only.

Councillor Mrs Dodds suggested that there should be a highly visible police presence on the meadows at the next Christmas Festival and that this should be an agenda item for the Christmas Decorations Sub Committee to action.

Mrs Yeates advised that she was grateful to the Youth Council for taking the matter seriously and agreed that some good ideas had come out of their meeting. The message should be sent out to schools that it is a sensitive area. Enforcement was an issue. She noted that the next item on the agenda was the possible provision of a Youth Shelter at the Meadows and agreed that this may be a good idea.

The Chairman, Councillor B G Wood thanked Mrs Yeates and she left the meeting.

34. YOUTH SHELTER

Following a presentation from Monster Play Systems on 24 November 2009, Councillors considered the possibility of installing a Youth Shelter at Mill Meadows. The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that there had been a desire for a Youth Shelter at the Meadows for a number of years. Nomad and Henley police had expressed a wish for a shelter to be located in the former putting green area.

Discussion ensued on whether a Youth Shelter would attract more young people to the area and some Councillors were of the opinion that the area should be left as a meadows.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that this Committee supports in principle the provision of a Youth Shelter at Mill Meadows and that work should continue to

1. agree a location
2. seek grant funding
3. hold a public consultation with the neighbours

35. **ENTRANCE TO MILL MEADOWS**

The Chairman gave a verbal report on a meeting he had held with a representative from Monson, Mr Bartle and Mrs Gliddon on 14 December 2009, when the drawing up of plans and costings for improvements to the pathway to reduce conflict between pedestrians and traffic had been discussed. The plans would be brought back to a future meeting of this Committee and would include proposals to reduce the ivy shrub on the right hand side and move the spaces on both sides to allow for the pedestrian footpath to be extended.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, suggested that reducing the width of the island would enable to cars to turn around when the car park was full without being forced to go to the end of the car park in order to turn around. It was agreed that Monson would also be asked to proposals /quotations for this work.

Mr Brown advised that a pinch point was missing at the edge of the last property before the entrance to the Meadows and narrowing the island would prevent this. The officer from Oxfordshire Highways had made this suggestion.

Post meeting note: The representative from Monson will contact Mr Brown to discuss this further.

36. **MOORINGS**

Minute 77, Full Council 3.11.09 refers

Councillors received and the noted the notes of a meeting of the Moorings Working Group held on 3 December 2009 . It was noted that a meeting would be held with the Environment Agency and other local Councils in the New Year.

37. **EXCESS CHARGE NOTICES**

Councillors received and considered a report. It was agreed that this was a real success and Mrs Hastings was being tenacious in her work to chase unpaid excess charges. Also that the Parks Service staff were being more pro-active in the matter.

The Committee RESOLVED

that Mrs Hastings should be invited to attend the next meeting of this Committee to give a verbal report on the process.

38. **MOORINGS AND CAR PARKING, INCLUDING INCOME, REPORTS**

Councillors received and noted a report.

39. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Thursday 21 January at 9.30am in Henley Town Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.50am

Chairman

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