

Present: Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin
Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor Mrs G M Dodds
Councillor A J Follett
Councillor C W Gibson
Councillor Miss L M Hillier
Councillor R Myer
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith
Councillor C I Pye
Councillor Miss L H Pye
Councillor I Reissmann
Councillor Dr P Skolar
Councillor S Smith
Councillor Dr B G Wood

In Attendance: Mr M W Kennedy – Town Clerk
Miss J Smith – Minute Taker / Committee Administrator
Mr C Austin, Town Sergeant

Also Present: 2 member of the press
11 members of the public

Before the meeting commenced, the Town Clerk read out the fire evacuation procedure. The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin reminded Councillors and members of the public of the Code of Practice – Public Question Time as stated on the agenda.

53. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T B Bucket.

54. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In addition to those already declared in the minutes of the relevant Committees: Councillor Miss L Hillier declared a prejudicial interest for agenda item 10 (v), however, she stated she wanted to speak regarding this item but would leave during the debate. She declared a prejudicial interest for Minute number 51 on the Town and Community Minutes – 8 September 2009. Councillor Miss L Hillier also stated that the Declaration of Interest statement on the agenda needs updating. Councillors Dr B Wood and Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood declared a prejudicial interest for agenda item 13 as they conduct business with KVB Design Limited.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith declared a personal and prejudicial interest on Finance, Strategy and Management 15 September – Minute number 32 Grants - member of Town and Visitors Regatta.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin declared a - personal interest: Finance, Strategy and Management Committee 15 September – Minute number 32 Grants – Lions and a prejudicial interest: for Thamesfield Youth Association (work at Youth Centre).

Town & Community Committee 8 September – Minute number 48 - A Boards (married to chairman of Talking Newspapers).

55. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 11 August 2009 were approved and signed by the Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, as a true record.

56. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Mr W Hamilton - Greys Road

Mr Hamilton referred to a letter in the Henley Standard on 21 August regarding Councillors not claiming expenses. He felt that the author was misleading the public because a summary of expenses paid to Councillors in 2008/9 is displayed in the town notice boards.

The Town Clerk confirmed that Councillors' expenses were required to be published each year. He confirmed that Councillors do not receive special allowances and do not receive an attendance allowance. Expenses are only claimed if Councillors travel outside the Parish on Council business.

Mr K J Arlett – Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett referred to Minute 48 of the Town and Community Committee held on 8 September 2009 and stated that it was obvious that members had not read the policy guidelines for 'Unauthorised Signs, Displayed Goods and Other Items on Adjacent to the Highway' copy attached to the Full Council agenda, if they had then the recommendations would not have been proposed. He asked if Henley Town Council (HTC) has a policy on equality.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin confirmed that HTC does have an Equal Opportunities Policy.

Mr Arlett went on to advised that he had an email from the Deputy Leader of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) who stated that he was not aware of any town in the County that have taken the proposed types of measures regarding 'A' Boards, and therefore felt the recommendations in Minute 48 were wholly inappropriate and Members should have read OCC's policy.

Mr R Atkin – Elizabeth Road

Mr Atkin congratulated HTC on getting Gillotts Field registered as a Town Green under the Commons Act 2006. He went on to ask if HTC were going to cut the Ragwort down in Gillotts Field before it seeded.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin confirmed that there were various programmes in place to eradicate the Ragwort in Gillotts Field and these were carried out in part by HTC and the Henley Wildlife Group.

Mr K J Arlett – Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett asked following his question at the last meeting what the status was on maintaining the HTC notice boards as they were in total disrepair.

The Town Clerk confirmed that arrangements had been put in place to regularly clean the green town centre boards, and asked that the maintenance programme for the other HTC notice boards would be put on the agenda of the next Town and Community Committee.

Action: Town and Community Committee Clerk to add maintenance of HTC notice boards to the next Town and Community meeting agenda on 13 October 2009.

Mr W Hamilton - Greys Road

Mr Hamilton asked if the trees with tubes around them at Makins are being watered on a regular basis. In addition, he asked if Makins Recreation Park could be registered as a Town Green like Gillotts Field.

Councillor Mrs J Bland confirmed that she had recently done a Makins site visit with the Parks Supervisor and the trees were being watered regularly.

Mr K J Arlett – Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett asked does HTC think it is about time SODC was dissolved as so many issues are 'loss leaders', for instance the Community Investment Fund of £2m was no longer available.

Mayor, Mrs E Hodgkin advised that Members were not able to comment on Mr Arlett's statement.

Mr R Atkin – Elizabeth Road

Mr Atkin referred to the 2005 'A' Boards Policy Guidelines and the fact that it does not use correct English. He had asked that any future guidelines issued should be corrected.

Mr W Hamilton - Greys Road

Mr Hamilton asked if maintaining the HTC notice boards was an issue has HTC considered reducing the number of them.

Mayor, Mrs E Hodgkin stated that reducing the notice boards would not be considered as these were used to notify the public of meetings and the green ones in the town were used for public information.

57. **PROGRESS REPORT**

Members had before them a progress report on the following matters, copy having been issued. The Council was apprised of the latest developments.

One Stop Shops – Minute numbers 4047- 9/12/09; 4060 – 21/1/09; 4070 – 3/3/09; 14 -12/5/09; 52 – 11/8/09

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith advised that at a meeting last week OCC had confirmed that they will not be providing funding for One Stop Shops.

Review on yellow lines in and around the town – Minute numbers: 4058 – 27/1/09; 4070 – 3/3/09 and 14 12/5/09; 47 11/8/09

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith advised that HTC needed to respond back to OCC by the 31 October 2009. He confirmed that businesses are to be consulted this time and their comments passed on to OCC.

Councillor I Reissmann stated that the 31 October deadline falls prior to the next Full Council and therefore would not incorporate all Members comments.

Councillor A Follett confirmed that the report would be taken to the next Town and Community Committee on the 13 October 2009 and asked that all members get their comments to the Chairman prior to this meeting. An extension of time would be sought from OCC until 4 November following Full Council on 3 November.

Weed Killing – Minute numbers 4035 – 4/11/08; 1866 – 14/10/08; 4046 – 9/12/08; 4060 – 27/1/09; 4070 – 3/3/09; 14 – 12/5/09; 35 – 21/7/09; 47 – 11/8/09

Councillor Dr B Wood stated that weeds in his road were now 16 inches high and what were OCC going to do about weed killing in the town.

Councillor Dr P Skolar stated that OCC were only dealing with Ragwort, however, there are plans to try and obtain monies for weed killing from other OCC budgets.

New Waste Recycling Scheme – Minute 35 – 21/7/09; 47 – 11/8/09

Councillor A Follett asked that in respect to the New Waste Recycling Systems that all issues should have been resolved by 8 September. However, he asked if District Councillors would visit the residents in the houses in Gravel Hill that still have the bins on the pavements because they have no where to put them, to discuss a satisfactory solution and so that these bins could then be removed.

Councillor Mrs J Bland said that she would take up the issue. Councillor Miss L Hillier advised that she had already visited the residents and would liaise with Councillor Bland.

58. **DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

The Council received the following verbal reports from District and County Councillors.

District County Councillor reports:

District Councillor Mrs J Bland reported on the following matters:

- Community Investment Fund: confirmed that following Mr Arlett's comment in Public Question Time that from the £2m allocated funding in previous years Henley had received a large allocation and that this year from £1m allocated funds four organisations in Henley had been given grants.
- Litter in the town: advised that from the 1 September 2009, PSCO's would be issuing on the spot fines of £80 for anyone caught dropping litter in the town. However, she urged local retailers and businesses to clean outside their own premises.
- Distinctive Towns: advised that Miller Associates were conducting workshops in Henley, Thame and Wallingford with a meeting in November with Caroline Wood, Economic Development Officer, SODC.

District Councillor Miss L Hillier advised that she had been approached via email by a resident regarding the state of the litter in the streets and had copied Councillor Ann Ducker who had confirmed that Mrs Sally Wilson had recently had meetings with Verdant and that progress would be made.

Councillor S Smith suggested that Verdant should be cleaning the streets in early hours of the morning when the streets were empty rather than during the day.

Deputy Mayor, Councillor, Mrs J Wood stated that she was disappointed as she felt the streets were not as clean as they were before Verdant took over.

Councillor Dr B Wood asked if District Councillors were doing anything about the Red Lion development next to Chantry House.

District Councillor Miss L Hillier stated that more information had been given to Mr Frank Dixon and confirmed that further action would be taking place regarding this development.

County Councillor reports:

County Councillor D Nimmo-Smith reported on the following matters:

- Grants: he confirmed that a grant of £3320 had been given to the Youth Centre.
- Oxon News Publication: suggested that this publication should be discontinued due to the current economic situation.
- Speed Checks: were taking place at the Northfield End and that the re-jigging of parking spaces would cause the road to be narrower with the intention of slowing down traffic. Bix village residents still want a 30mph speed limit in the village but OCC is only prepared to change the restrictions to 40 mph.
- Education: confirmed that Trinity school had been given planning permission for an additional school building.

County Councillor Dr P Skolar reported on the following matters:

- Speed Reference Group: confirmed he was a member of this group and there would a review of speeds on all A and B roads in the County. He stated that Bix does not qualify for a 30 mph speed limited. He stated that Henley were still pushing for 20 mph around the schools.
- Primary Schools: informed that this year no Henley children would be going to primary schools outside the town limits.

- NHS: had recently attended meetings regarding changes to Oxford Ratcliffe. He confirmed that the Primary Care Trust needed to sort out their financial problems and that £240m would need to be saved over the next four years. He stated that the NHS post 2010 would look completely different.

59. **FEEDBACK REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

There was nothing to report.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin requested that at the next meeting a Member gives a short update on their representation on an outside body.

60. **APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that there had been an error and that item 8 (ii) should not be on the agenda. With reference to item 8 (i). It was

RESOLVED that Councillor Mr I Reissmann is appointed as the representative to Henley Partnership Environment Group Committee replacing Councillor Mr C Gibson.

61. **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Members had before them the list of the Mayor's Mayoral engagements from 7 August 2009 to 24 September 2009 inclusive, copy attached to the Agenda.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, thanked the Deputy Mayor for deputising for certain events on what had been a very busy 4/5 weeks. She advised that the Front and Back Gardens and Pubs and Restaurants Awards Ceremony on 10 September hosted by the Hotel du Vin had been a terrific event and that residents should be congratulated for all their efforts.

Councillor C Pye asked what the outcome had been regarding the Henley Orchard at the meeting on 25 August. The Mayor, Mrs E Hodgkin confirmed that she was not able to give any further details at this present time.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin confirmed that the Mayor's elected charity for this year would be the 'Staying Alive Foundation' and that the major fund raising event would be held on 20 February 2010.

62. **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

- (i) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 11 August 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 11 August 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

- (ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1 September 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1 September 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

- (iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22 September 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22 September 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

- (iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 1 September 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 1 September 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted subject to the following changes.

Arising from the report:

Recreation and Amenities Committee 1 September 2009 – Minute 31 – First Chapel, Fairmile Cemetery

Councillor C Pye stated that he felt the recommendation that taking no further action at this time was not the right way forward, the property should be sold as it was costing the Council money. He recommended that the item needed further debate by all Members.

The Town Clerk reminder Members that a full extensive report had been debated during a confidential session of the Recreation and Amenities Committee on 1 September, therefore, specific details should not be discussed in this public session.

There was a discussion among Councillors as to whether the item should be referred back to Committee or put on the next Full Council agenda. The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin put the recommendation to a vote. The recommendation that further action should be taken regarding the First Chapel having been defeated, it was

RESOLVED that the report is referred to a confidential session at the next Full Council meeting on 3 November 2009.

- (iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 8 September 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 8 September 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted subject to the following changes.

Arising from the report:

Town and Community Committee 8 September 2009 – Minute 45 – Police

Councillor Dr P Skolar stated that the Police had been issuing CPN's to vehicles parked in the loading bays for unauthorised vehicles, but in fact there is not a sign saying for commercial vehicles only, therefore, there were not in fact unauthorised vehicles parked and so these CPN's could have been issued unlawfully.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin stated that there needs some clarification on this matter from the Police.

Councillor Dr B Wood stated that HTC should have a stance on the licences that are issued within the town e.g. White Lotus.

Councillor S Smith confirmed that notices have been displayed stating that the public have 28 days in which to comment.

Councillor Dr B Wood proposed that HTC should put in comments to SODC licensing authority to oppose or modify the White Lotus liquor licence. It was

RESOLVED that HTC puts in comments to SODC licensing authority to oppose or modify the White Lotus liquor licence.

Action: Committee Clerk for Town and Community Committee to send letter to SODC with Members comments on the liquor licence for the White Lotus establishment.

Town and Community Committee 8 September 2009 – Minute 48 – Advertising Boards on Pavements in Henley Town Centre

Councillor Miss L Hillier stated she was delighted to see some retailers in the public gallery and that she had been asked to make representation on the traders behalf at this meeting. She advised that she had drawn up a petition for fellow traders, which stated: "I have put together this petition as I am concerned about the ultimatum being issued by HTC to local businesses with regard to the use of 'A' boards. If you have an 'A' board and feel it necessary for your business, please sign this petition and display for your customers to sign to show their support." She confirmed that she had received over 500 signatures in the past 2/3 days. Equal comments had been received from the chains and multi-nationals as well as the independents, who were all in support of the 'A' boards not being removed.

Councillor Miss L Hillier having made her statement declared a prejudicial interest and left the chamber.

A long debate took place regarding the fact that a zero tolerance of 'A' boards in the town was unworkable and that there needed to be flexibility. It was also discussed that the OCC guidelines should be issued to traders and businesses on the use of 'A' boards.

Councillor A Follett concluded that this was an emotive topic and proposed that the Full Council does not approve the recommendation in minute 48 (a), (b) and (c) of the Town Community Committee on 8 September 2009, but that revised guidelines should be issued to retailers and businesses with Henley Partnership promoting the OCC guidelines. The situation should be monitored and if complaints are received regarding certain 'A' boards then appropriate action should be taken to the boards in question. It was

RESOLVED that the recommendation in minute 48 (a), (b) and (c) of the Town Community Committee on 8 September 2009 is not approved, but that guidelines are issued to all retailers and businesses on the use of 'A' boards having regard to the published guidelines issued by OCC.

Town and Community Committee 30 June 2009 – Minute 53 – Litter in Henley

Councillor S Smith advised that he could not consider the recommendation to remove the litter bins outside Starbucks and Bell Street, as the bins are next to the bus stop in Bell Street and are used by people using the buses. He suggested that HTC should consider placing more bins around the town like Eton and Windsor who have won awards for the cleanest towns. He recommended that the Waste Action Group take this on and look at the various options of controlling the bin situation.

Councillor Mrs J Bland reiterated that people should be encouraged to take their rubbish home with them and not have more bins provided.

Mayor, Mrs E Hodgkin advised that the proposal was a serious one after many complaints had been received and that these bins are currently full when half a dozen coffee cups are put in them. She reiterated that the state of the bins need were a disgrace and needed refurbishment and that more and more bins would only encourage more and more litter. In addition, she pointed out that the bins on the outskirts of the town were

being used for domestic/household waste and urged SODC to carry out an investigation.

Councillor Smith stated that SODC's current litter campaign's slogan is 'don't drop it, bin it' and HTC's recommendation to reduce bins does not fit with their campaign remit.

A further discussion took place regarding the design of the current litter bins.

Councillor A Follett supported the recommendation for a trial period, but that in addition HTC should write to the coffee shops within the Market Place requesting that they provide more waste disposal bins and regular emptying of these bins as part of their Market Place licence agreements. It was

RESOLVED that the litter bins outside Starbucks, Market Place and Bell Street are removed for refurbishment and that the coffee shops in the Market Place are sent a letter asking them to provide adequate waste disposal facilities for their customer's litter as part of their licence agreements.

- (v) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 15 September 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 15 September 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted subject to the following changes.

Arising from the report:

Finance, Strategy and Management Committee – Minute 38 (i) VIC Working Group and (ii) OSS Working Group – 15 September 2009

(i) VIC Working Group: In addition to Deputy Mayor, Mrs J Wood and Councillor A Follett it was recommended that an appointment of two councillors serve on the VIC Working Group. It was

RESOLVED that the Mayor, Mrs E Hodgkin and Councillor Mrs R Myer serve on the VIC Working Group.

(ii) OSS Working Group: In addition to the Value For Money Group it was recommended that an appointment of one councillor serves on the OSS Working Group. It was

RESOLVED that the Mayor Mrs E Hodgkin serve on the OSS Working Group.

Finance, Strategy and Management Committee – Minute 40 - 15 September 2009 – Northfield End Highway

Councillor I Reissmann recommended that for Minute number 40 (ii) that two Councillors and the Town Clerk should coordinate the paperwork necessary as part of its response to OCC. Councillors I Reissmann and D Nimmo-Smith agreed to carry out this work with the Town Clerk.

Councillor I Reissmann went on to further recommend that the wording in recommendation in item 40 (iii) be changed as in about 2006 HTC formally wrote to OCC under S130, subsection 6 of the Highways Act 1980 asking that as OCC as the Highways Authority justify its behaviour in not managing land at Northfield End as publicly maintained highway. HTC is using its statutory powers under the Act to make this request. It was

RESOLVED that

(i) Councillors I Reissmann and D Nimmo-Smith ensure that facts are gathered and passed to the Town Clerk for onward transmission to OCC; and

(ii) The current wording in recommendation 40 (iii) be changed to: 'HTC formally requests using its authority under Section 130, subsection 6 of the Highways Act 1980 for all of the land outlined in the attached and that OCC as the Highways Authority justify its behaviour in not managing this land at Northfield End as publicly maintained highway.'

(vi) The Minutes of the meeting of the Townland's Steering Group (TSG) held on 21 August 2009 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meetings of the Townland's Steering Group held on 21 August 2009 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

In addition, Mr I Reissmann gave the following verbal update:-

Following a meeting on 1 September of the PCT Townlands Project Group (of which Cllr I Reissmann is a member) there would be a revised timetable which would almost certainly mean delays, this was due to additional information being made available to potential Bidders which included: clinical requirements; financial viability; population changes; local planning opportunities/requirements and Estates and IT guidance. The opportunity for extended dialogue with Bidders and initiation of the planning process with South Oxfordshire District Council in the spring of 2010 and that these timescales still had to be reviewed at the next TSG.

The 2010 General Election would almost surely put fiscal pressures on the project. The PCT current plan does include Townlands, although there is risk that there would be money in the budget and they would be seeking reassurance from PCT. He advised that the current CEO, Mrs Andrea Young had resigned and the acting CEO was Mr Matthew Tate. He advised that he would also be seeking reassurance at the next PCT Townlands Project Group on Oct 7th that the new timetable would be comprehensive and robust.

He confirmed that the next Community Forum was on 12 November 2009, not 11 November as previously published.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith confirmed that at the recent AGM the PCT stated that they would be honouring ongoing commitments.

63. **HENLEY TOWN COUNCIL – STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2008/9**

It was noted that the Revised Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2009 have not been completed due to staff annual leave commitments. It was

RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts, Auditor's Report and the Auditor's Annual Governance Report to those changed with governance will be presented for approval by Council on 3 November 2009.

64. **COUNCILLOR T B BUCKETT, MBE DISPENSATION FOR ABSENCE OF OFFICE FOR A PERIOD BEYOND SIX MONTHS**

Members considered extending the period of absence for Councillor T B Buckett on the grounds of ill health for a further six months from 12 November 2009. It was

RESOLVED that the period of absence for Councillor T B Buckett is extended for a further six months from 12 November 2009.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin extended Members best wishes to Councillor T B Buckett and his family and asked that a letter be sent to him conveying these wishes.

Councillor Dr B Wood and Deputy Mayor, Mrs J Wood left the chamber.

65. **LEASE OF PART OF THE BARN, MARKET PLACE**

The Town Clerk requested Members approve the signing and sealing of the Lease between HTC and KVB Design Limited for the lease of the Ground Floor of the Barn (Council 11.8.09 Minute No 52 (i) refers). It was

RESOLVED that the Lease between HTC and KVB Design Limited be signed and sealed for the lease of the Ground Floor of the Barn.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin invited Councillors and members of the public to join her refreshments in the Mayor's Parlour.

The meeting closed at 09:55pm.

js

Mayor