

Present: Mayor, Councillor Mrs P A Phillips (presiding)
Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin
Councillor M S Akehurst
Councillor D Clenshaw
Councillor S J Gawrysiak
Councillor Miss K L Gehrmann
Councillor W Hamilton
Councillor Miss L M Hillier
Councillor D Hinke
Councillor Ms L A Meachin
Councillor D R Nimmo Smith
Councillor I Reissmann
Councillor D M Silvester

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

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

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 public attention to the laminated rules placed on each seat in the public gallery.

17. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs J Bland, Miss S Evans and Mrs J Wood, County Councillor Dr P Skolar and District Councillor W Hall.

18. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor W Hamilton – Recreation and Amenities Committee – 19 July 2011 – item 23 Makins Recreation Ground – personal interest as a resident.

19. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 21 June 2011 were approved and signed by the Chairman, as a true record.

20. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr K Arlett, Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett referred members to the recent South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) bulletin and the reference made to Henley's Town Centre Manager. He understood that Mr Oliver O'Dell had recently resigned from the post and suggested that Councillor Judith Nimmo-Smith, Cabinet Member for Economic Development be invited to give an overview of what has been achieved by the Town Centre Manager in the past 18 months.

Clerk's Note: Mrs S Malcolm, SODC Economic Development Manager will prepare a written report to the next Town and Community Committee.

Mr Baldwin, West Street

Mr Baldwin made reference to nine bollards that had been erected outside number 39 West Street by the resident Mr N Bastian. He advised that after contacting SODC and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Highways there appears to be have been no permission granted and asked if the Council were aware of any permission being granted for these bollards. He stated that Victorian tiles worth £120 each had been removed, plus access by wheel chairs and baby's buggies was restricted with the bollards installation.

Councillors confirmed that photographs had been taken and sent to the Planning Enforcement Officer at SODC and OCC Highways asking them to be removed as they were an eye sore in a conservation area. It was requested that the item be placed on the next Planning Committee.

Action: Planning Committee Administrator to add to Planning Committee agenda on 23 August 2011.

Mr J Newton, Greys Road

Mr Newton asked that as there had been objections from numerous residents regarding the improvements to the skate board park in Makins, would other locations be considered in Henley to house the skate board park.

It was explained that the skate board project was still in the investigation stage and discussions regarding whether the current site is suitable or could an alternative be found had not yet been discussed by the project group but this would be something to consider at a future meeting. It was noted that two Councillors attend the project meetings held by the skate boarders and report back to Council with developments.

Ms A Chumas, Bell Street

Referred to the Planning Committee item 34 of the minutes on 28 June 2011 and asked that as reference had been made to her by Councillor I Reissmann in a statement made to the Henley Standard could she have a copy of his statement. In response, Councillor Reissmann said that he had not prepared a written statement but had read from notes.

Ms Chumas was advised that Councillors are free to speak from the heart and not required to put everything in writing.

Miss S Hoskins, Watermans Road

Miss Hoskins explained she was a 17 year old hockey player and that she was very happy about the decision by the Council to refurbish the Astro pitch as this is where she had been playing at a very early age. She gave members a brief biog of her sporting accolades to date.

Mrs J Fletcher, Henley Arts and Crafts Guild

Mrs Fletcher explained that the Henley Arts and Crafts Guild frequently use the Old Fire Station Gallery and would like it to remain as an exhibition centre. She confirmed that both Mr Fletcher and herself were very happy to be a co-opted members of the working party which had been set up to find better ways to promote and market the Old Fire Station Gallery.

Mrs C Stephens, Reading Guild of Artist

Mrs Stephens reiterated Mrs Fletcher's comments and asked that the Old Fire Station Gallery remains open as an exhibition centre.

A member reassured Mrs Fletcher and Mrs Stephens that the Old Fire Station Gallery would remain as an exhibition centre.

Mr A Nath, West Street

Mr Nath explained that he was a part time employee of Henley Youth Centre and had just received redundancy notification from OCC. He praised the Town Council who had agreed to fund the Youth Centre with £10k for the next three years but that there was not enough funding to keep staff employed.

It was confirmed that members were committed to keeping the Youth Centre open and that Henley Town Council (HTC) had pledged £10k. A call for volunteers to help run

the youth centre had also been made. A request was made to the Henley Standard to include a piece about Mr Steve Curran (a full time worker) who had worked at the centre for over 15 years and who had also been given his redundancy notice.

Mr C Baker, Henley Hockey Club

Mr Baker expressed his thanks for the Council's support in providing funding for the refurbishment of the Astro pitch.

21. **DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Members had before them reports (attached to the agenda) from District Councillors Mrs E Hodgkin, Mrs J Wood and County Councillor Dr P Skolar. It was

RESOLVED that the reports be received and noted.

County Councillors' Reports

County Councillor D Nimmo-Smith gave the following verbal update:

Triathlon: advised that this event had now been slimmed down but that the closing of roads in Henley would remain as before. However, the organisers had advised that their intention was to reopen the roads as quickly as possible.

Stonework Repairs on Henley Bridge: advised that these works were expected to commence on 22 August 2011 and be completed by 7 November 2011. The road would only be closed for deliveries of materials and footpaths closed when repairing the balustrades. All work would be carried out from the river and would not impact traffic on the bridge.

Road Repairs: advised road repairs would be undertaken in Gravel Hill and Northfield End.

Freedom of Information: advised that County is often asked how many Freedom of Information enquiries they get. This number was considerable and costly to administer.

A member referred to the Big Society Fund and asked if an application had been made for the Henley Youth Centre. It was confirmed that an application was being processed and supported by County Councillors. It was also stated that Mr John Howell, MP had been invited to a meeting with the Councillors on 22 September, 2011 and that a question on the Big Society Fund would be put to him then.

District Councillors' Reports

District Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin gave the following verbal update to her report:

Scrutiny Committee: explained that what she had reported in her report was incorrect regarding the outcome of the independent review. Thirty recommendations from the report were in fact being actioned now and the Scrutiny Committee would be meeting in six months time to receive an update on the actions that are being carried out.

A member enquired as to why District Councillor Hall's report regarding SODC's Community Investment Fund had not been submitted following the request made at the last Full Council. It was confirmed that an email from District Councillor Hall had been sent to members, and this showed a significant drop in funding but needed further explanation. Members were advised that District Councillor Hall would have been at the scheduled Full Council on the 2 August but because this had been rescheduled to 9 August he already had other commitments.

Action: District Councillor W Hall to provide a written report for members at the next Full Council meeting on 18 October 2011.

22. **REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members had before them a report from Councillor D Silvester on Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils attached to the agenda.

Councillor D Silvester referred members to the remarks outlined in his report given by Mr Keiron Mallon on Localism regarding police reform, health and social care, education and delivery of financial savings. He explained there were around 4,500 Oxfordshire community groups vision and principle plans and it was the county's

intention to divide the area into 14, centred on the big market towns, with a locality officer or Lead Councillor in each and Councillors to act as champions.

Also in his report he explained a good example of the Big Society already happening was in Buckinghamshire where 14 libraries had gone into Community Control giving a 20% saving in costs.

23. **MAYOR'S REPORT**

- (i) Members had before them the list of Mayoral engagements from 17 June – 2 August 2011 inclusive for the Mayor, copy attached to the agenda. It was

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

- (ii) The Mayor invited Councillors to support her proposal at Mayor Making to re-introduced the holding of regular monthly Councillors Surgeries (first Saturday in each month) for electors and asked that two Councillors are available with District and County Councillors to hold these surgeries either in the Market Place (in good weather) or in the Committee Room, Town Hall. She understood that District Councillors and County Councillors may not be available to attend every surgery.

24. **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

- (i) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 28 June 2011 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 28 June 2011 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 28 – Public Participation Session

A member requested the planning application number be quoted against the name of the member of the public for future minutes.

Action: Planning Committee Administrator to quote the planning application number against the name of the member of public.

Minute 34 – Objections

Councillor I Reissmann stated that this minute did not reflect what he had said.

A member of the public interrupted the meeting several times and was asked to leave by the Chairman.

Councillor I Reissmann proposed that the second paragraph of the minute. be changed to include the following:

"Councillor Reissmann joined the table and reported that as a result of the complaint made about him under the Code of Conduct, the SODC monitoring officer had advised him not to represent HTC on this matter. This was to protect him from increasing the scope of any complaint against him and also to prevent his damaging HTC. As a result of the latter, he had reluctantly decided to withdraw from representing the Town Council's view on the application. Cllr Reissmann stated that he had no personal interest, and regarded the complaint as baseless and vexatious. Cllr Reissmann regretted that due to SODC's refusal to provide any information concerning the nature of the complaint it was difficult to demonstrate convincingly that the complaint was baseless."

There was a disagreement among members as to whether this minute should be changed as some felt it was correct and others felt the proposed revised statement better reflected what Councillor Reissmann said at the meeting. In addition, it was questioned that any changes to this minute should have been changed at the

Planning Committee on 19 July rather than at Full Council. However, it was noted that as Councillor Reissmann does not sit on the Planning Committee it was decided that this was the next appropriate time for any amendments to the minute to be made.

A recorded vote was requested. It was

RESOLVED that notwithstanding the fact that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 28 June 2011 had been approved and signed by the Chairman at the subsequent meeting of the Planning Committee held on 19 July, that the following be noted in the minutes of this meeting of Full Council.

"Councillor Reissmann joined the table and reported that as a result of the complaint made about him under the Code of Conduct, the SODC monitoring officer had advised him not to represent HTC on this matter. This was to protect him from increasing the scope of any complaint against him and also to prevent his damaging HTC. As a result of the latter, he had reluctantly decided to withdraw from representing the Town Council's view on the application. Councillor Reissmann stated that he had no personal interest, and regarded the complaint as baseless and vexatious. Councillor Reissmann regretted that due to SODC's refusal to provide any information concerning the nature of the complaint it was difficult to demonstrate convincingly that the complaint was baseless."

For	Against	Abstention
Cllr M S Akehurst	Cllr W Hamilton	Cllr D R Nimmo-Smith
Cllr D Clenshaw	Cllr Miss L M Hillier	
Cllr S J Gawrysiak	Cllr D M Silvester	
Cllr Miss K L Gehrman		
Cllr Mrs E Hodgkin		
Cllr D Hinke		
Cllr Ms L A Meachin		
Cllr Mrs P Phillips		
Cllr Mr I Reissmann		

Councillor I Reissmann requested that he be given the opportunity to clarify what exactly the complaint was that had been made against him and made the following statement:

"The complaint alleged I was a friend of Mrs Pippa Hare who wanted the application to fail and I had used my position improperly for the advantage of Mrs Hare. I am not a close acquaintance of Mrs Hare. My only motivation on this issue is to preserve and protect assets which belong to us all from being appropriated by unscrupulous and greedy developers and their supporters. The complaint also stated I was not aware of the details of the application before opposing it. I have examined the applications in great detail and at great length. I have been accused of a few things on this issue, but not knowing the details is a new one! The complaint also alleged I had tried to influence other Councillors by sending an email telling them how to vote. As I didn't send the email, and it didn't tell people how to vote, this is an absurd enough complaint, but even if I had done that, it would still have been perfectly proper!"

"Not surprisingly given that all parts of the complaint were bogus and vexatious, it was rejected by the Assessment Panel as unworthy of investigation. I believe it was a little more than a dirty trick to pressurise me into silence on the issue. Those responsible should be ashamed of themselves for this apparent abuse of process."

In response to a member's question on free speech, the Council was advised that Councillors are covered under qualified privilege.

- (ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 19 July 2011 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 19 July 2011 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

- (iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 5 July 2011 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 5 July 2011 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 23 – Progress Report – Pinsent Redgrave Aware

It was confirmed that an ideal candidate had been nominated and would be presented with the Award.

Minute 23 – Progress Report – Cycle Stands

It was confirmed that there could be funding for additional cycle stands and County Councillor D Nimmo-Smith requested that a list of preferred locations for racks are given to him to discuss with OCC.

Action: Committee Administrator to add as an agenda item for the meeting in September 2011.

Mention was also made to the blocking of the exiting cycle rack by the Thursday market stall holders and Green Olive and requested that this is addressed with those concerned.

Minute 26 – Old Fire Station Gallery

Members were asked if they wanted to join the working group which already had membership of The Mayor, Councillor Mrs P Philips, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin and Mr & Mrs Fletcher. No other councillors were nominated.

Minute 31 – Jubilee Celebrations (i)

Members were asked if they wanted to join the working group which already had membership of the Mayor, Councillor Mrs P Phillips, Councillors Mrs J Bland, Mrs E Hodgkin and Miss K Gehrmann. In her absence, Councillor Miss S Evans had requested to be included in this working party. It was

RESOLVED that Councillor Miss S Evans be added to the Jubilee Celebrations Working Group.

Minute 34 – Town Entrance Gates

A member asked if at this stage only estimates had been requested and this was confirmed as the case. A decision on what material to be used would need to be decided.

Minute 35 – Grey's Road Pedestrian Crossing

It was noted that two possible positions for a pedestrian crossing in Greys Road were to be considered. However, it was confirmed that if a pedestrian crossing was to be implemented it would likely to be positioned further up the hill from Sacred Heart School. It was suggested that a consultation with the school should take place before a final decision was made. It was requested that this item be put on the agenda for the next meeting on the 20 September 2011.

Action: Town and Community Committee Administrator to add as an agenda item for the meeting on 20 September 2011.

- (iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 12 July 2011 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 12 July 2011 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 26 - Funding a Replacement Astropitch

It was confirmed that there had been a few developments since the meeting on 12 July 2011 and the following proposals were proposed:

- (i) The shortfall on the original scheme of £100k by investment drawdown to bridge the funding gap has been reduced to a maximum of £78k.
- (ii) In light of the recent down turn in the market, Drawdown on the funds would be discussed with the HTC Accountant and financial investment advisors before any investments were sold. It was noted that this was likely to take place in January and February 2012.
- (iii) Investigations for a pitch surface that would service both hockey and football leagues were to take place. A new hybrid pitch of 30mm weave was to be considered and the Town Clerk, Mayor Councillor Mrs P Phillips, Councillors Reissmann and Hinke with the Chairman of the Hockey Club are to visit such a pitch in situ at Southall School before a decision is made. It was confirmed the quote remained the same for either an 18mm or 30mm weave.
- (iv) Easigrass Sports quotation of £162,201 for the supply and installation including the sprint lanes, running tracks and improvements to the entrance is accepted.

A member proposed that individual votes should be taken on each of the above proposals. Motion was lost.

A lengthy debate took place regarding the timing and maximum amount of the investment drawdown, the option of taking a bank loan instead of selling investments and the timings of any sales. It was confirmed that the Council had the money to go ahead with the project now but would need to sell investments early in 2012 to meet cash flow requirements. It was also discussed about the suitability of the new pitch for both hockey and football leagues. Confirmation was given that the quote supplied by Easigrass Sports was highly competitive and it was noted that this quote did not include street snooker, hockey goals, or the 5-a-side football goals and these options would be separately decided at the next meeting of Recreation and Amenities Committee. It was

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The shortfall on the original scheme of £100k by investment drawdown to bridge the funding gap is reduced to a maximum of £78k.
- (ii) Drawdown on the funds would be discussed with the HTC Accountant and financial investment advisors before any investments were sold and this was likely to take place in January and February 2012.
- (iii) Investigations for a pitch surface that would service both hockey and football leagues take place and that a new hybrid pitch of 30mm weave be considered following a site visit by the Town Clerk, Mayor Councillor Mrs P Phillips, Councillors Reissmann and Hinke with the Chairman of the Hockey Club with the final decision to be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultations with Mayor and Chairman of Finance Strategy and Management Committee.
- (iv) Easigrass Sports quotation of £162,201 for the supply and installation including the sprint lanes, running tracks and improvements to the entrance be accepted. (It was confirmed the quote remained the same for either an 18mm or 30mm weave).

Minute 31 – Confidential (ii) Barn Lease Renewal

A member expressed concern regarding renewing the Barn Lease and requested that this be brought back to the Finance Strategy and Management Committee to

discuss further before agreeing to lease it for a further five years to the existing tenants. Several members felt that this building should be available for the public to use and not rented to a private company. However, it was confirmed that the option to continue the lease for five years was an agreed option in the lease for the existing tenants, therefore, the Council's hands were tied. A member asked that a clause be added into the lease agreement to allow free passage between Millennium Court and the car park. In addition, members agreed that there should be better marketing of the Margaret Day Room to increase the uptake of bookings.

- (v) The Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 19 July 2011 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 19 July 2011 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 19 – Public Participation Session

A member requested that a subject reference be quoted against the name of each member of the public making representations for future minutes.

Action: Recreation and Amenities Committee Administrator to record the subject against the name of the member of the public for future minutes.

Minute 20 - Minutes

A member requested that all acronyms in minutes should be written in full followed by a bracketed acronym when first used in a set of minutes and then abbreviated thereafter.

Action: All Committee Administrators to note that for future minutes all acronyms should be written in full followed by a bracketed acronym when first used in each set of minutes and then abbreviated thereafter.

Minute 23 – Makins Recreation Ground

A member referred to this project and stated that the Council should encourage the skateboarders and users to investigate other potential sites for a skate board park in Henley before any changes are made to the existing park. It was noted that the project group were acting very maturely and looking in to all options.

Minute 26 – African Queen, Mill Meadows

A member expressed her delight that the African Queen had been allowed to moor at Mill Meadows again.

- (vi) The Minutes of the meeting of the Townlands Steering Group held on 30 June 2011 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Townlands Steering Group held on 30 June 2011 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

An update report and timetable from the Chairman of the Townlands Steering Group (TSG) Committee was tabled at the meeting. It was

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

The Chairman outlined various items from his report:

Strategic Health Authority:

The Strategic Health Authority (SHA) board met on 28 July to consider the Townlands Business Case. They approved the business case which was a major step forward. This key milestone has not been achieved in any of the previous projects to redevelop Townlands. The SHA approval of the Full Business Case is still needed and will take place in March 2012. This should be considerably more straightforward as the approval gained on 28 July gave the Primary Care Trust (PCT) clear approval of a very specific and detailed proposal on going to the market.

European Journal Advertisement:

The advert closed on 29 July 2011 with 12 responses being evaluated.

Additional items:

Councillor I Reissmann confirmed that there were still issues regarding the closing of Chiltern End Nursing Home and developing this on the Townlands site.

He also advised that he would be meeting with Dr Peter Ashby, Mr Dave Smewing and also with Mr Richard Darch and Ms Riana Relihan from the PCT in the first week of September and would report back following these meetings at the next Full Council meeting.

25. **LEASE FOR 357 READING ROAD**

It was proposed to sign and seal the lease between Henley Town Council and Nexus Community on 357 Reading Road (formerly Exclusively Ladies). It was

RESOLVED that the lease between Henley Town Council and Nexus Community on 357 Reading Road be signed and sealed.

26. **RED LION LAWN RETAINING WALL**

Members had before them a copy of a report by the Town Clerk (attached to the agenda) regarding a recent survey of the retaining wall at Red Lion Lawn. The Town Clerk produced and circulated to members photographs from the surveyors report which showed the wall in a state of severe disrepair. He explained that the reason this report was being presented to Full Council now was so that a decision could be made before Council went into recess. Approval was needed to engage a structural engineer, preferably from OCC, to design the scheme of works; prepare the contract documentation to go out to at least three piling companies; evaluate the tenders and supervise the works. The Structural Engineer would also be required to deal with the Environment Agency, SODC and other interested parties.

He confirmed that there was no money in the budget to cover this work, however, the Structural Engineer's fees would be met from within the budgetary provision for Professional Fees and that the estimated cost of the steel piling work up to £20k be met from Earmarked Reserves within the Planned Maintenance Budget in 2011/12.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith advised that he was keen to be involved and keep a watching brief as this was in his field of expertise. It was noted that concerns were expressed over the bridge being Grade I listed in addition to the archaeology interest. The Town Clerk explained the preference to use a Structural Engineer from OCC was because OCC was about to carry out bridge repairs to the Henley Bridge.

Importantly, the Town Clerk highlighted that the diving company's report had recommended that because of health and safety risks the area should be closed with immediate effect. It was noted that a number of licences had been granted for commercial moorings and that the relevant licensees needed to be contacted, especially in light of the forthcoming Henley Rewind Festival when this area would be heavily used. It was suggested that the Town Clerk investigate other areas that the commercial moorings could use e.g. Singers Park. It was

RESOLVED that the recommendations in the report be adopted:

- (i) Having regard to the diving company's findings and recommendations, the Council employs a structural engineer, preferably from OCC, to design the scheme of works; prepare the contract documentation to go out to at least three piling companies; evaluate the tenders and supervise the works. The Structural Engineer would also be required to deal with the Environment Agency, SODC and other interested parties.
- (ii) The Structural Engineer's fees be met from within the budgetary provision for Professional Fees and that the estimated cost of the steel piling work up to £20k be met from Earmarked Reserves within the Planned Maintenance Budget in 2011/12.
- (iii) Due to Health and Safety risks the area is closed to the public and use by the commercial mooring licensees with immediate effect.

The Chairman invited Councillors, officers and members of the public to join her for refreshments in the Mayor's Parlour.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

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Mayor