

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

In Attendance: District Councillor W Hall  
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  
27 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 the public's attention to the laminated rules placed on each seat in the public gallery.

**59. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from the Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin.

**60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**61. MINUTES**

(i) The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 27 November 2012 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

(ii) Members had not received the minutes of the Special Full Council meeting held on 20 November 2012 as approval from SODC had only recently been received. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the minutes of the Special Full Council meeting held on 20 November 2012 would be considered for approval at the next Full Council Meeting to be held on 26 February 2013.**

**62. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*Mrs G Dodds, Grey's Road*

Mrs Dodds stated that she had attended recent Full Council meetings and repeatedly raising three main concerns. She reported that the hedge cutting on Greys Road had been dealt with and that now, according to the Recreation and Amenities minutes it appeared that her concern over the delay of the designation of the footpath around

Forty Acre Field was being addressed too. However, she raised the issue of the lack of adequate signage for the Kings Arms Barn, pointing out that it was owned by the Town Council and that the KVB Design signs dominated the entrances. The Town Clerk informed her that KVB Design had been granted planning permission to erect the signs and that the Kings Arms Barn signs had been ordered and would be installed upon their delivery.

*Mrs Jo Bausor, The Henley Festival*

Mrs Bausor urged the Council to re-consider The Henley Festival's request to use the flagpoles to display the banners creating awareness of their event. She felt that it was important to stress that they were a charity that supports and funds many year round projects in the community, including music bursaries and the Henley Festival Youth Orchestra and that it was a perfectly reasonable request to try and come to some agreement with Henley in Bloom whereby they could use the flagpoles at some point before and during the Festival. She felt that it was unfair that Henley in Bloom was dictating the sole use of the flagpoles for an extended period when major events that provide a huge boost to the local economy like the Henley Festival are on in the town. She also claimed that the Festival had instigated the purchase of the flagpoles for HTC.

*Mr P Mainds, River and Rowing Museum*

Mr Mainds read out a written response from Mr P Nicoll (The Chairman of Trustees, River & Rowing Museum Foundation) to an email sent from Henley Town Council advising the Museum of the recommendation of the Recreation & Amenities Committee, to accept the proposal for replanting the Poplar Trees at Mill Meadows. He acknowledged that the replanting of these trees is a major decision and one that will affect Mill Meadows for decades to come. However, he expressed concern that this proposal has been rushed through and that other options had not been considered. He urged the Council to hold further consultation, not just with the Museum, but with other users and local residents and to find a way of allowing time for further discussion but which may still meet the target of replanting within this season.

*Mr K Rawlingson, Bursar for Rupert House School*

In light of the recent rejection of a Stopping-up Order for 94-102 Bell Street, Mr Rawlingson enquired as to what HTC intended to propose regarding the parking arrangements outside 90-102 Bell Street. He also wanted to know when this issue was going to be addressed by HTC as Rupert House School would like a representative present. A member responded to his questions, agreeing that this long standing affair needed addressing as nothing had been done and it was clear that the current situation was unsafe. He urged the County Council to put a plan in place over the next two weeks and stated that he would work to find a solution that was fair to everyone.

*Mr H Crook, Rotherfield Road*

Mr Crook spoke in support of the development of the Henley Neighbourhood Plan, without its existence then South Oxfordshire District Council would dictate the positioning of the new housing development. He stated the importance of Harpsden joining the initiative, he felt that equal representation of both Henley and Harpsden on the Working Party and flexibility was crucial to its success.

*Dr B Wood, Blandy Road*

Dr Wood re-iterated United's passion about the Neighbourhood Plan and commended HTC on bringing Harpsden into the partnership. However, he felt that the Harpsden Memorandum of Understanding was unworkable and unfair towards Henley - noting that there had not even been a token monetary donation to Henley. His view was that poor governance had taken place in order to protect Henley's position, reflecting Harpsden's attitude and this was causing concern about the organisation of the partnership. He asked the Council if they would consider taking

these recommendations to an emergency meeting of the town so that they had the opportunity to consider it, just as Harpsden had.

*Mr R Simister, resident of Harpsden Bottom*

Mr Simister stated that Harpsden have been democratic and fair and that their voice and decision on the Neighbourhood Plan was the right one. He felt that the main issue with the development was not that there is less population in their community but that any members from any groups need to declare their interests. There needs to be transparency in justifying why Harpsden is being used.

*Mr J Late, resident of Henley*

Mr Late drew the Council's attention to the fact that Henley is built to its boundaries and that Harpsden is one of the largest parishes in the country. He felt that it was unfair if Harpsden were to have equal representation in the Neighbourhood Plan partnership and not offer any funds. He stressed the need for the development but raised concern about building housing without adequate infrastructure, pointing out that HTC will need to fight for all these issues that will need to be a prerequisite to the development.

*Mr G Bassett, Blandy Road*

Mr Bassett urged the Council to ensure that the proposal was approved by the majority otherwise the whole Neighbourhood Plan would result in a waste of time and resources.

*Mr K George, Chairman of Harpsden Parish Council*

Mr George thanked the Council's Neighbourhood Planning Group for engaging with Harpsden on the Neighbourhood Plan, the composition of the working groups and funding arrangements as set out in the draft Memorandum of Understanding. He said that Harpsden had albeit reluctantly, agreed to an extension of the Neighbourhood Plan boundary to include three sites in Harpsden.

On the question of the appointment of the working groups, he said that little difficulty with forgoing equal representation on the working groups proposed to work out the various aspects of a Neighbourhood Plan, and agreed that impartial people capable of objective judgement should be recruited rather than committed representatives of particular standpoints. However, he did not believe redrawing the boundary to include the whole of Harpsden would be accepted by Harpsden Parish Council because there would be very strong objection to its expansion into the ANOB. This would leave Henley to decide whether to go ahead without Harpsden or to stay with Harpsden on something like the compromise terms previously outlined.

## **63. 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 reports:**

Councillor W Hall referred to the item in his report regarding the recommendation to Council for the reduction in South Oxfordshire District Council's share of Council Tax by 2.5% in the 2013/14 budget, this will be the second consecutive year that they have reduced their share. A member felt that these savings should be put towards dealing with the air pollution issue in Henley which was well above acceptable EU levels. It was pointed out that there was currently no budget for the Air Quality Management Area which was an important issue. Councillor W Hall agreed to check on the provision for this initiative.

Councillor W Hall reassured the Council that the by-elections had been going well and he reported that it was working towards a more local count and that he would be happy to deal with any questions relating to this development. A member repeated their request for him to investigate where audio tapes, VHS tapes and paint cans could be recycled, he said that he would make enquiries.

A member welcomed the news that First Great Western were working in partnership with SODC to reduce car parking charges at the First Great Western Car Park at Henley Station.

### **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:*

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

***The Bell Street Stopping Up Order:*** The report was with the County Council for consideration and he was urging them to engage with all the stakeholders. He informed the Council that due to it being regarded as a legal matter, it was currently with Solicitors.

A member re-iterated the need for the provision of mixed recycling depots for Henley residents. County Councillor D Nimmo-Smith assured the Council that he would look into this issue of reducing landfill and alert the County Council to this continued concern.

### **64. FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

There was nothing to report.

### **65. MAYOR'S REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members had before them the list of Mayoral engagements from 21 November 2012 – 8 January 2013 inclusive for the Mayor, copy attached to the agenda. It was **RESOLVED**

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

The Deputy Mayor read out a statement following publication of the Inspector's report on behalf of the Department for Transport rejecting the application for the Stopping Up of 94-102 Bell Street. The Henley Town Council took a principled stand on this matter on the grounds of public/residents safety, public parking, public amenity and preserving the historic part of Henley under public control. He believed that this result was a victory for the people of Henley. He made particular reference to the Inspector's comments regarding safety, the preservation of the green triangle, the principal authorities' failure to attend the inquiry and their mistakes. He concluded by confirming that the matter would be considered in more detail at the next meeting on Finance, Strategy and Management.

### **66. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

(i) The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 4 & 18 December 2012 and 8 January 2013 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 4 & 18 December 2012 and 8 January 2013 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted, subject to a correction to the start time of the meeting held on 18 December 2012.**

- (ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 11 December 2012 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 11 December 2012 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted, save for a correction to Minute No.63 Public Participation Session, that Mr Atkin's quote be added to, with the wording "in order to stop people parking on the pavement".**

Arising from the report:

Minute No.70, Flagpoles. Council considered the request from Henley Festival to use the flagpoles in Falaise Square from Monday 1 July to Monday 15 July 2013 to publicise the festival. Several members spoke in agreement of the Henley Festival using the flagpoles for the requested two week period, they considered it unfair to refuse them any use of the poles which they have allegedly bought. A member stated twice that they had not simply been refused the use of the flagpoles, the issue was that this period coincided with the judging of Henley in Bloom and it was important that the flagpoles flew the banners in support of the town's entry into Chilterns in Bloom competition this year. As a compromise, the Festival had been offered the sole use of the flagpoles in June to promote their event. It was observed that the Festival were being supportive of the town's reason and it was suggested that they were offered the use of one flagpole. It was **RESOLVED**

**that this request from Henley Festival to use the Flagpoles in the Market Place from Monday 1 July to Monday 15 July 2013 to publicise the festival be referred back to the next Town and Community meeting on the 29 January 2013 for further consideration.**

Arising from the report:

Minute No.73 Challenge Henley Triathlon.

A member proposed that the second paragraph of the minute be deleted. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the minute as presented be confirmed without amendment.**

- (iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 18 December 2012 were before the Council. Councillor Miss L Hillier and Councillor Mrs J Bland left the meeting for the discussion on minute no.70 and rejoined the meeting after the discussion of this item. It was **RESOLVED**

**with the exception of minute no.74 Budget 2013-14, that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 18 December 2012 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.**

Arising from the report:

Minute No. 70 Shop Front Improvement Scheme

A member felt that the proposal to include £5,000 in the 2013-14 Budget should be deleted as it was felt that this should be the Landlord's responsibility. A view was expressed that this 'pump priming' grant, which would be matched by SODC and the Landlord, would benefit Henley's economy and should be supported. A motion that this council does not proceed with this scheme and that the budget allocation be deleted was put to the vote and declared lost whereupon it was proposed that the recommendation be amended by including the additional words "subject to further consideration of the scheme in more detail for approval". It was **RESOLVED**

**that a budget of £5,000 be included in the 2013-14 budget towards a Shop Front Improvement Scheme (on the assumption that match**

**funding is forthcoming from SODC), subject to further consideration of the scheme in more detail for approval.**

- (iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 8 January 2013 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

**with the exception of minute no. 60, which will be referred back to the next Recreation and Amenities meeting on the 12 February 2013 for further consideration after consultation with the River and Rowing Museum, that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 8 January 2013 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.**

*Arising from the report:*

Minute No.60 – Poplar Trees at Mill Meadows

Members expressed their opinions and concerns over the replanting proposal for the poplar trees and selective crown reduction works to six trees on the western verge on Mill Meadows following the removal of seven trees at the eastern edge of the River and Rowing Museum. It was generally felt that the decision to plant the fastigate oaks imminently, based on the report of the Council's appointed arboriculturist with further endorsement by South Oxfordshire District Council and the Tree Wardens was premature and that the operation should not be dictated by the Spring planting season. It was agreed that this was an important decision that would dictate the future landscape of Mill Meadows and that there was a period of eighteen months in which all potential options should be explored so the correct decision was made. The Council had agreed that a Working Group be formed to enable further consultation with the River and Rowing Museum. It was **RESOLVED**

**that Councillors M Akehurst; Mrs E Hodgkin and D Nimmo-Smith be appointed to represent the Council on this Working Group.**

- (iv) Townlands Steering Group (TSG) Committee

An update report 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 gave a verbal update on the attempts to resolve the current financial difficulties and the imminent need for the PCT to sign the contract. This was being delayed due to sensitive, technical and political matters and the fact that the PCT was being phased out. He assured members that this a temporary set back and that John Howell MP was fully aware of the situation and had written a letter to the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt availing him of the situation.

**67. HENLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Members had before them the report from The Henley Neighbourhood Plan Working Party on the development of The Henley Neighbourhood Plan.

Arising from the report:

Councillor D Hinke, as Chairman of the Planning Committee thanked the Neighbourhood Planning Working Party for all their work and support on the development of the initiative and also thanked Dr B Wood for putting forward his point of view during the public participation session. He also welcomed the decision of Harpsden Parish Council to become involved in a joint Neighbourhood Plan.

He made it clear that the main issue in question was the extension to the proposed Neighbourhood Plan boundary. Once this extension was confirmed it would then be submitted to the SODC Cabinet for approval. Although the report suggested extending the boundary of Henley to include just the three sites in Harpsden, he suggested that unless the whole of the Parish of Harpsden was to be included in the

plan then there was a risk that the inspector could reject the plan. He pointed out that localism was intended to bring communities together but it could also make them victims if it was not sufficiently embraced and considered fairly.

County Councillor Skolar had offered Harpsden £5,000 from the Big Society Fund and it was important to see if these funds were still available. He highlighted the need for those volunteers on the working groups to come with an open mind as this outcome was instrumental in the future planning of Henley. Considering all the views and opinions regarding the development, it was obvious that the boundary was the main obstacle. The SODC planning policy advice was clear in that all the boundary of Harpsden has to be included otherwise there are risks involved.

He concluded that the following views should be taken into account when considering the proposals and recommendations within the report:

1. Henley Town Council reaffirms its intention of applying for, and submitting a Neighbourhood Plan to SODC.
2. Henley Town Council to work with Harpsden Parish Council on this plan.
3. Henley Town Council to agree terms of a joint working partnership with Harpsden based on the following principles:
  - i) Henley Town Council to provide the majority of funding. Harpsden Parish Council to take up Councillor Skolar's offer of £5,000 from the Big Society Fund.
  - ii) The process of forming the working groups will be fair and reasonable with each individual's skills, experience and knowledge considered.
  - iii) Henley and Harpsden to work together to create the best possible outcome for both parishes by including the full boundaries of both parishes in this proposed Neighbourhood Plan.
  - iv) That the Neighbourhood Plan working group be reconvened until the next Full Council.

Members debated the proposal, highlighting the fact that SODC had approved the building of 400 houses in their core strategy so it was inevitable that this development would happen and they agreed that this housing was needed as housing was in short supply in the town and the surrounding area. The key issue was that if Harpsden and Henley could agree the conditions of their partnership and work together then they would be able to influence where this housing was to be situated.

A member was hopeful that Harpsden would want to work with Henley so that both Council's could steer the process. He felt that these were exceptional circumstances that presented an opportunity to jointly work on the Neighbourhood Plan and use SODC to make sure that the correct decisions were made. A member felt that it was important that Henley worked with its neighbours, supporting whatever decision Harpsden made and that in order for it to be successful, a direct link was to be maintained.

Members agreed that this was an opportunity to address all the other issues pertaining to the infrastructure of any proposed new development. A member added that it should also be embraced as an opportunity to shape the future of Henley, leaving a legacy and it was crucial to get it right.

Councillor D Hinke summed up the debate, stating that that the People of Harpsden and Henley should decide on how this development looks and he urged Mr K George to take the proposal back to Harpsden.

It was **RESOLVED**

**that the following be adopted:**

1. **Henley Town Council reaffirms its intention of applying for, and submitting a Neighbourhood Plan to SODC.**
2. **Henley Town Council to work with Harpsden Parish Council on this plan.**
3. **Henley Town Council to agree terms of a joint working partnership with Harpsden based on the following principles:**
  - i) **Henley Town Council to provide the majority of funding. Harpsden Parish Council to take up Councillor Skolar's offer of £5,000 from the Big Society Fund.**
  - ii) **The process of forming the working groups will be fair and reasonable with each individual's skills, experience and knowledge considered.**
  - iii) **Henley and Harpsden to work together to create the best possible outcome for both parishes by including the full boundaries of both parishes in this proposed Neighbourhood Plan.**
  - iv) **That the Neighbourhood Plan working group be reconvened until the next Full Council.**

**68. DISPENSATION FOR COUNCILLORS**

Members had before them the report from the Town Clerk on the process for the Council to grant dispensations relating to discloseable pecuniary interests. The Council was asked to grant a general dispensation to all Councillors to enable all members to consider Councillors' car mileage rates. Members supported a view that the partial delegation for the granting of dispensation should not be delegated to the Town Clerk as this could place the Clerk in an invidious position. Each matter should come before the Council to determine. It was **RESOLVED**

- i) **that the report be noted;**
- ii) **that the Council grants a dispensation to all Councillors in relation to Councillors' mileage rates.**
- iii) **that all future applications for dispensation be considered by Full Council.**

**69. COUNCIL BUSINESS**

Having regard to Standing Order 1aa and the time meetings of the Council and its Committees shall conclude by 10.00pm, it was **RESOLVED**

**that save for the First Chapel the remaining business on the agenda, relating to the Budget, the Council Tax leaflet and the Town Medal Committee shall stand deferred to a reconvened meeting of the Full Council to be held on 22 January 2013.**

**70. LEASE BETWEEN HENLEY TOWN COUNCIL AND THE FIRST CHAPEL, FAIRMILE CEMETERY**

Council was asked to authorise the lease between HTC and the George Orwell's Henley Limited relating to The First Chapel, Fairmile Cemetery be signed and sealed. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the lease be signed and sealed between Henley Town Council and the George Orwell's Henley Limited relating to The First Chapel, Fairmile Cemetery.**

**71. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

It was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED**

that the public and the press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as matters which were about to be discussed were considered to be confidential.

**MINUTES OF THE CONFIDENTIAL SESSION OF THE FULL COUNCIL HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2013**

72. **CONFIDENTIAL**

i) **LEASE BETWEEN HENLEY TOWN COUNCIL AND THE HENLEY VOLUNTEER BUREAU**

A new lease between the Council and the Henley Volunteer Bureau relating to 34 Market Place was presented for approval. Both parties were in agreement with the new lease which replaces the former lease that expired on 31 December 2012. It was **RESOLVED**

**that the lease between Henley Town Council and Henley Volunteer Bureau, relating to 34 Market Place be signed and sealed.**

ii) **TOWN MEDAL NOMINATIONS**

Concern was expressed as to the manner in which this item had been presented. In view of the lateness of the hour, it was **RESOLVED**

**that the matter be deferred to the reconvened meeting of the Council and that the minutes of the meeting be circulated to members in advance.**

The meeting closed at 22:10.

*ppd*

*Deputy Mayor*