

Present: The Vice Chairman, Councillor M Akehurst
The Mayor, Councillor S Gawrysiak
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor D Clenshaw
Councillor Miss S Evans
Councillor Miss K L Hinton
Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin (substituting for Councillor I Reissmann)
Councillor Mrs P Phillips (substituting for Councillor Mrs J Wood)
Councillor D Silvester

In attendance: Mrs L Jones - Accountant
Mrs N Taylor – Senior Committee Administrator
Mrs B Walker – Committee Administrator/Minute Taker

Also Present: 20 members of the public
1 member of the press
Councillor W Hamilton
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith

42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood (Councillor Mrs P Phillips substituting) and Councillor I Reissmann (Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin substituting).

43. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

44. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Mrs G Dodds, 192 Greys Road – Minute 46 – Skatepark Working Group- has worked with the Henley Skatepark Initiative (HSI) and the Town Council's Skatepark Working Group (SWG) and is in favour of upgrading/replacing this piece of play equipment which is reaching the end of its life. Mrs Dodds felt the skatepark should not be compared to sports clubs as it had been done in the past, but to play equipment – clubs involve membership fees etc. and this a free to use facility for all. Also reference has been made in the past to the BMX track and she recently spoke to someone who recalled it was made of hard-core mounds and tarmac not concrete.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith – 78 St Andrews Road – Minute 47 iv - Mill Meadows Car Parking Charges – spoke against raising the car parking charges and gave a comparison with other car parking charges in Henley and other riverside towns which were far lower than the proposed charges. He felt the Town Council did not need to make these kind of profits and it would deter visitors particularly families on a budget. *Minute 46 – Skatepark Working Group* – Councillor Nimmo-Smith quoted figures showing an increase in expected costs for a new skate park facility, felt the report presented by HSI to this Committee this evening was short on detail and queried whether the location of a new facility should be at Makins. Councillor Nimmo-Smith suggested if money was given to HSI it would be difficult for the Town Council not to

give to other clubs and that it was a travesty there were no public tennis courts in Henley.

Paula Isaac – 41 Gainsborough Road – Minute 46 – Skatepark Working Group – spoke in favour of replacing the skate park and made the following comments:-

- the skatepark will provide a much-needed facility for older children – the younger children are well catered for in the town with playgrounds however facilities for older children are lacking in the town
- the passion for a new facility by the older children has been demonstrated through the work of the HSI and members willingness to work to raise funds and look after the new facility. Comments regarding the misuse of the current facility are unfounded
- it would encourage younger and older children to mix as the older ones would be able to and are keen to teach the younger ones to skate
- following a survey of residents on Gainsborough Estate, it is apparent an overwhelming number of residents support the facility

Joseph Lunnon – 63 Gainsborough Hill – Minute 46 – Skateboard Working Group – spoke in favour of replacing and upgrading the facility and made the following comments:-

- as a former user of the BMX facility he can confirm it was of poor quality and unsafe
- now a skater he feels the current facility is reaching the end of its safe life
- providing an upgraded facility will enable skaters to skate in a safe environment and therefore not in other areas in the town

Councillor W Hamilton - 153 Greys Road – Minute 46 – Skatepark Working Group spoke on behalf of John Newton, 151 Greys Road and Peter Anderson, 159 Greys Road and referred to a letter they had sent the Chair and Vice Chair that day and made the following comments:-

- concerns re increasing the size of the skatepark facility and want to keep the green area at Makins
- the Town Council has to prioritise its finances and other youth organisations such as the Youth Centre and Nomad should have a greater priority at this time

Dr Anna L Van Leemputten – 38 Gainsborough Road – Minute 46 – Skatepark Working Group – spoke in favour of replacing the skatepark and made the following comments:-

- as a rower and a skater she believes the skatepark should not be compared to other sporting clubs in the town. Clubs e.g. rowing clubs require fees and many rules and regulations – the skatepark would be a free to use facility for all
- the skatepark is and would be used by all - girls as well as boys and those from all walks of life
- it is not just residents of the Gainsborough Estate who are supportive but also those in Elizabeth Road, Badgemore, Hop Gardens etc.
- a replacement/upgrade needs to be considered from a safety point of view

Jake Clarke – Highmoor – Minute 46 - Skatepark Working Group – spoke in favour of replacing/upgrading the facility as a member of the HSI and re-iterated that a new facility would provide something for everyone – all ages and abilities and the skateboarders are like a big team or family and all are welcome.

45. VARIATION IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

In accordance with Standing Order 5 (a) (vi) it was **RESOLVED**

that in view of the public present at the meeting the order of business on the agenda be altered to allow the Committee to consider Agenda item 7 – Skatepark Working Group (minute 46) next

46. SKATEPARK WORKING GROUP

The Committee received and considered a report from the Henley Skatepark Initiative (HSI) providing an update on their work and that of the Henley Town Council Skatepark Working Group. The Chairman welcomed Mr C Brathwaite and Mr J Lipscombe, Chair and Vice Chair of the Henley Skateparking Initiative to the meeting and invited them to the table.

Mr Brathwaite answered queries raised from the public gallery as follows:- regarding the brief update report given this evening he referred to the 70 page report previously submitted to this Committee; this report contained specific costings and the figure of £250,000 which has not changed; Nomad and the Youth Centre support the HSI.

Mr Brathwaite spoke to his report and gave a brief review of the HSI and the Henley Town Council Skateboard Working Group's (SWG) work to date and made the following comments:-

- the recent application to Sport England for £50,000 was unsuccessful however the feedback advised that the HSI had presented a very strong bid and the key reason it was rejected was due to a lack of partnership funding particularly from a local authority. Sport England have encouraged the HSI to re-apply once a larger percentage of partnership funding is in place
- a draft tender document has been completed by HSI, and at the Skatepark Working Group meeting held on 15 October 2013, it was unanimously agreed, in line with the terms of reference, to send out the tender document to the three short listed suppliers – once the document had been reviewed by the Town Clerk

Mr Brathwaite, on behalf of the HSI, asked that the Town Council consider making provision in the budget for 2014/15 a figure that would be in-line with replacing the existing skatepark like-for-like taking into account inflation. He referred to figures provided in the report presented this evening. Having the pledge of this funding would enable the HSI to apply for the additional funding required. It is planned to apply again to Sport England and the Community Investment Fund (CIF) run by the South Oxfordshire District Council. The Town Council's investment in this asset and additional funding would enable the Town Council to have a brilliant new facility in the town.

The Chairman asked members for questions/comments and the following comments were made:-

- the work undertaken by the HSI and the SWG and their attitude is immensely impressive and appreciate unless you have a pledge of money from the Town Council you will be restricted in your funding opportunities
- only two funding bodies have been mentioned this evening and there are many more available

- need to see more detail before pledging money and the need for a larger facility was queried
- the current skatepark is a Town Council asset and unless a replacement/upgrade is undertaken the Town Council will lose this asset
- there are not enough free to use sporting and recreational facilities in the town and the provision of a skatepark should be encouraged particularly in these times when obesity is a problem
- the plans for the skatepark would come back to this Committee for approval
- the skatepark is a family orientated facility and local schools are supportive

The Chairman thanked Mr Brathwaite and Mr Lipscombe who left data from Dorset Police showing the provision of skateparks reduced antisocial behaviour.

47. **MINUTES**

- i. The minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 17 September 2013, as amended by Full Council on 1 October 2013, were approved and then signed by the Chairman, Councillor M Akehurst as a true record.
- ii. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee held on 17 September 2013.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee held on 17 September 2013 be received, approved and adopted.

- iii. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting of the Christmas Decorations and Events Sub Committee held on 18 September 2013.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the Christmas Decorations and Events Sub Committee held on 18 September 2013 be received, approved and adopted.

- iv. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Mill Meadows and River Sub Committee held on 15 October 2013, which included a recommendation for the car parking charges for 2014 to be increased by, on average, between 6 and 7 % with no increase for Regatta parking, the weekly, monthly and quarterly business permits nor the mooring fees.

A discussion ensued in which the following comments were made:-

- the charges should not be increased as adequate money is already generated by the car park and to increase them is to penalise visitors and residents alike
- the rise in the car parking charges will go towards paying for the planned improvements at Mill Meadows e.g. the refurbishment of the toilets and the toddler playground
- the car parking income currently generated should be enough to pay for the above improvements

- the car park is in a beautiful area and people expect to pay more to park in such areas
- if any car parking charges should be raised it should be the Regatta car parking

After further discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Mill Meadows car parking charges for 2014 remain the same as for those for 2013

Members considered the proposed increase of the Mill Meadows permanent mooring charge from £150 per metre per year (including vat) to £160 per metre per year (including vat) and **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Mill Meadows permanent mooring charge be increased from £150 per metre per year to £160 per metre per year for 2014

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the Mill Meadows and River Sub Committee held on 15 October 2013, with the above amendments, be received, approved and adopted.

- v. The Committee received and considered the notes of the Jubilee Park User Group held on 16 October 2013.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the notes of the Jubilee Park User Group held on 16 October 2013 be received, approved and adopted.

48. PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received and noted the progress report and **RESOLVED**

that the licence for Red Lion Lawn be removed from the Progress Report as this item has now been transferred to the Town and Community Committee as the Committee who considers the Town Council's licences

49. FAIRMILE CEMETERY CHARGES 2013

The Committee received and considered a report regarding proposed charges for the Fairmile Cemetery for 2014 and after discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the following charges, in bold, be adopted for the Fairmile Cemetery for 2014 (from 1.1.14)

		Traditional Section	Lawn Memorial Section New cemetery only	Green Burial Section
Interment Fee				
(No charge for under 12 years)	Burial	£215 (£220)	£215 (£220)	£215 (£220)
(No charge for under 12 years)	Ashes	£145 (£150)	n/a	n/a
Cemetery Maintenance Fee	For all interments (burials/ashes)	£270 (£280)	£270 (£280)	£270 (£280)
Exclusive Rights of Burial	Child to 12 years	£370	£185	£185
per grave space/ashes plot	Adult	£575 (£590)	£310 (£320)	£310 (£320)
	Cremation Urn or Remains	£130 (£135)	n/a	n/a
Gravestone, Tablet and Monumental Inscriptions	Headstone and Kerbs - (not exceeding 3ft 6" (1.07m) in height)	£245 (£255)	n/a	n/a
	Headstone only	£245 (£255)	£180 (£190)	n/a
	Temporary Monument (inc wooden crosses) not exceeding 2ft x 2ft x 2ft (61cm x 61cm x 61cm)	£85 (£90)	£85 (£90)	n/a
	Additional Inscriptions	£75 (£80)	£75 (£80)	£75 (£80)
	Memorial Plaque for Cremated Remains not exceeding 18" x 18" (46cm x 46cm)	£85 (£90)	n/a	n/a
	Memorial Tablet not exceeding 9" x 4" (23cm x 10cm)	n/a	n/a	£85 (£90)
Tree Planting – Green Burial Section	Provision and planting of native species tree	n/a	n/a	£165 (£175)
Hire of Cemetery Chapel		£85 (£90)	£85 (£90)	£85 (£90)
Non residents of Henley - sliding scale of charges apply (Definitions of Henley Resident/sliding scale – see overleaf)		Up to Treble	Up to Treble	Up to Treble
Administration Fees				
	Search Fee	£15 (£20)	£15 (£20)	£15 (£20)

50. **BUDGET**

- i. The Committee received, considered and noted the budget report to September 2013.
- ii. The Committee received and considered the first part of a report on preliminary budget figures for **Income and Expenditure 2014 / 2015** and considered each point in turn and made the following comments/ recommendations:-

- a) **Mill Meadows Car Park resurfacing (stage 2)**. The surveyor has advised that the second stage can be delayed as there is still wear in the surface. The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that stage 2 of the resurfacing is not one of the projects to be covered under planned maintenance in 2014/15.

- b) **Toddler Play Area at Mill Meadows**. The Committee noted In 2013/14 a figure of £30,000 was budgeted for this project within the planned maintenance programme budget, and that it is now felt that the project will result in a complete overhaul of the play area, and cost at least a further £20,000. The cost should come from Capital rather than Revenue as the project is no longer just a refurbishment of the existing equipment.

Concern was expressed that £50,000 may not be enough to pay for the proposed works to the Toddler Playground and that the amount may need to be re-considered once costings have been sought, although it was noted that funding maybe available.

After discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the additional cost of £20,000, for the refurbishment of the Toddler Playground at Mill Meadows, be included under capital expenditure.

- c) **Permanent Moorings at White Hart and River Terrace** – members noted that due to low occupancy and in order to be competitive it is proposed not to raise the mooring fees for the permanent moorings at White Hart and River Terrace in the budget for 2014/15.
- d) **Henley in Bloom** – the Committee considered the inclusion of £5,000 in the budget for 2014/15 for Henley in Bloom. The Committee noted £5,000 had been placed in the budget for 2013/14 in recognition of extra costs that may arise as a result of entering Britain in Bloom in 2013 and that Henley has once again been nominated to enter in 2014.

A discussion ensued, not only in relation to the inclusion of £5,000 in the budget for 2014/15, but also as to whether there should be a permanent provision (a line) within the budget (amount to be decided in due course) for Henley in Bloom and the following points were made:

- up until 6 or 7 years ago there was provision made in the budget for Henley in Bloom and supporting this Sub Committee can be compared to the financial support given to the Christmas Decorations and Events Sub Committee who also partly rely on sponsorship
- as the name of the Sub Committee indicates, Henley in Bloom is not

only about flowers but also about Civic Pride and work continues all year round helping communities improve their environment, enhance areas, creating new beds etc. Sponsorship is sought however in order to make new initiatives sustainable and to build on projects year on year the extra support and commitment of the Town Council is also needed

- Henley enters the regional Thames and Chilterns in Bloom each year and holds its own Henley in Bloom competitions for residents, pubs and restaurants in Henley
- Henley in Bloom is not only about entering the competitions and the Sub Committee works hard all year round with the community to improve Henley
- although the hard work and achievements of the Sub Committee were recognised, some members were concerned about the including permanent provision of funding each year to Henley in Bloom and suggested that it should be considered year on year

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that in 2014/15 there should again be a contribution of £5,000 from Henley Town Council to the Henley in Bloom budget and that there should be permanent provision in the budget (a line) in the accounts for Henley in Bloom

- e) **Flower beds** – the Committee noted the horticultural contract with Windowflowers is index linked and therefore the budget recommendation for 2014/15 is £33,000 plus £2,000 for water rates.
- f) **Henley Outdoor Sports Centre (Jubilee Park)** - the Committee noted that the budget includes an annual provision of £16,700 (starting in 2012/13) towards the replacement Astropitch in 2023/24, by which time a reserve of £200,000 will have built up. The Accountant was congratulated for this provision.
- g) **Parks Service Salaries** – the Committee noted that the budget figure of £188,600 which assumes the current workforce will remain for 2014/15, that staff will be awarded contractual incremental increases where eligible, and that there will be a national 1% pay rise. It will also assume that all Staff will have joined the pension scheme and that the employers' pension contribution will be 15.1%, and that employers' NI contributions will be 13.8%

The Committee noted the transfer of costs of staffing the Information Centre Kiosk at the Pavilion of £5,500 from Town and Community to this Committee as this cost relates to Mill Meadows.

- h) **Christmas Festivities.** The Committee noted the Accountant, had recommended that the Christmas Festivities Sub-Committee budget lines be transferred to the Town and Community Committee's budget since the activity occurs within the town centre and fits in better with Town Centre/Action Plan initiatives, however members felt this should be delayed until after the elections in 2015.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Christmas Festivities Sub Committee budget line be transferred to the Town and Community Committee's budget at the beginning of the next Council's term in May 2015 and in the meantime the £6,500 allocation remains with the Recreation and Amenities Committee and the budget be amended accordingly

- i) **Repairs and Improvements** – the Committee noted the budget provision remains at £11,000, however also noted this figure takes into account the Parks Service increase wear and tear on equipment due to undertaking the grass cutting and also that a new line, previously allocated to this budget, has been created for the repair and renovation of benches of £2,000 as recommended by the Mill Meadows and River Sub Committee 15 October 2013.
- j) **Other Amenity Areas** – the Committee noted the budget will remain at £10,000 although additional duties have been allocated to the Parks Service, e.g. clearing of the water course in the Wildlife Area at Mill Meadows however it was noted that a large proportion of this will be labour costs.
- k) **Mill Meadows events.** Members considered the provision of £5,000 in the budget to cover the possible cost of Town Council organized events at Mill Meadows, for instance the First World War Centenary event in June/July 2015 and the following comments were made:-
- the 'Usage of Mill Meadows Policy' may need to be re-visited if it is the intention to hold more large scale events at Mill Meadows
 - the amount of £5,000 was queried. The Accountant informed the Committee that the cost of each panel dedicated to the local area for the World War 1 Exhibition is £1,000 and should the Council decide to proceed with providing panels the expenditure for making these panels is likely to occur in 2014/15 even though the exhibition takes place in the 2015/16 financial year
 - members noted there may be a number of events around the town connected to the centenary of the First World War which may require funding/grants and that these potential costs should be highlighted to the Town and Community and Finance Strategy and Management Committees. The Accountant agreed to notify each Committee of this possible expenditure.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that a budget of £5,000 is included in the budget 2014/15 for events at Mill Meadows including covering the cost of additional panels for the First World War Centenary event in 2015

Post Meeting Note: A line has been added to the FSM budget under grants and the £5000 put there as it was to cover anything to do with WW1 and just those events taking place at Mill Meadows. The amount will now be removed from R&A.

- l) **Cost of signage and other suitable promotional costs for Mill Meadows.** Members considered costs of promoting the Information Centre Kiosk, the putting green, the hire of deck chairs at the Pavilion and other facilities at Mill Meadows and after discussion **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that £2,000 be placed in the budget for 2014/15 in order to promote the Information Centre Kiosk, the putting green and the hire of deckchairs etc.

- m) **Tree works** - Members noted the proposal to increase the budget to £7,000 to support works that may arise from the tree survey. The Committee noted the survey cost of £3,000 per year for three years was recommended to the Finance Strategy and Management Committee on 22 October 2013.
- n) **Riverbank Repairs** – the Committee noted that following the recent survey, it is anticipated the costs of the works required on the river bank, particularly at Mill Meadows will be met from the planned maintenance budget (2013/14 and 2014/15).

The Committee received and considered the second part of a report on preliminary budget figures on the **Capital Expenditure (CapEx)** ‘wish list’ for onward consideration by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee and made the following comments/recommendations:-

- o) **Toddler Play Area – £20,000** - members noted the additional expenditure of £20,000 (£30,000 already budgeted in 2013/14) on the Toddler Play Area at Mill Meadows (see 50. ii b above)
- p) **Skate Park (Makins Recreational Ground) - £75,000** – a discussion ensued and the following points were made:-
- there is currently no clarity regarding the details and figures of the proposal and therefore what the vote is for. It was also observed neither were there details and figures for the Toddler Playground proposal above
 - it is a sensible provision to place this amount in the budget so it is available should the Council require it
 - the existing skatepark is reaching the end of its natural life and provision should be made in the budget for its replacement otherwise the Town Council will lose an asset
 - there is no actual figure for replacement of the facility or plans and this should be addressed with some urgency

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that £75,000 be placed in the capital expenditure budget for 2014/15 to be put towards the future cost of replacing/upgrading the skate park at Makins Recreation Ground

- q) **Adult Outdoor Gym Equipment - £10,000** – during discussion it was commented that outdoor gym equipment would be an asset to the town and should be included in the budget and its consideration should form part of the Neighbourhood Plan. The idea of mixing adult gym equipment with children's play equipment was raised

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that £10,000 be placed in the capital expenditure budget for 2014/15 to be put towards the future cost of providing adult outdoor gym equipment

- r) **Additional paths for the Fairmile Cemetery - £5,000 (year 2 of 3)**

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that £5,000 (year 2 of 3) be placed in the capital expenditure budget for 2014/15 for the additional paths at the Fairmile Cemetery

- s) **Continuation of annual provision for replacement of/additions to the Parks Services Equipment, £20, 000 per annum, year 2**

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that £20,000 (year 2) be placed in the capital expenditure budget for 2014/15 for Parks Service Equipment

- t) **Storage Facility for Parks Service –£40,000** - the Committee noted the suggestion for a budget of £40,000, for Phase 2 of a storage facility for the Parks Services Department's equipment (off the Reading Road beyond the Football Pitches near Tesco) is delayed until 2015/16. Phase 2 would cover lockup units. Fencing of the area under Phase 1 is ongoing in the current year.

- u) **New Recreational Equipment – £20,000** - the Committee considered the provision of new sports equipment at Makins Recreation Park, for instance a multi-use games area, street snooker, multi-gym equipment, and outdoor table tennis etc., £20,000. This would be the second year of two making a total of £20,000. The provision for 2013/14 has not yet been spent. During discussion it was apparent members wanted a holistic approach with all recreational areas being considered and all types of recreational equipment and **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that an additional £20,000 be put in the capital expenditure budget for 2014/15 (year 2 of 2) for recreational equipment at all the Town Council recreational areas be considered

- v) **Purchase of Land - £50,000** – members considered a provision of £50k to purchase land in Henley should the opportunity arise, however, felt that although this may be prudent there was not enough detail to make a decision. After discussion it was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the consideration as to whether to make a provision of £50,000 in the capital expenditure budget 2014/15 to purchase land should the opportunity arise be passed to the Finance Strategy and Management Committee for consideration

The Committee noted the budget figures as presented by the Accountant for 2014/15.

51. TOWN GREEN – GILLOTT'S FIELD

The Committee received the information that permission has been given by the Town Clerk under delegated powers for Gillotts Field to be used as a car park for a triathlon to be held at Gillotts School on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 June 2014. There is expected to be 200 cars on the Saturday and 600 on the Sunday and £1 per car will be given to the Town Council (£1 to the Henley Lions, who will organise the car park and £1 to the organisers). The Committee noted that liaison has taken place with the Henley Wildlife Group and the Parks Service who were in agreement.

Members felt this area should be protected as it is an environmentally sensitive site with rare wildflowers and should not be used for this type activity particularly involving vehicles and that this permission could set a precedent. After further discussion the Committee **RESLOVED TO RECOMMEND**

that permission is not given for the use of Gillotts Field as a car park for the Schools Triathlon on 21 and 22 June 2014 and that permission is not given in the future for similar activities (particularly involving vehicles) on Gillotts Field

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm

bw

Chairman