

Present: The Chairman, Councillor S Smith
The Vice Chairman, Councillor Miss K Hinton
The Mayor, Councillor Miss L Hillier
Councillor D Eggleton
Mrs M Clarke
Mrs C Langler

In Attendance: Mr G Bartle – Parks Service Manager
Mrs B Walker – Minute Taker

Also Present: 1 member of the press

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Ms M Francini, Ms K Kobik and Mr P Simms.

28. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

None.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

30. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee held on 16 June and 12 August 2015 were received, approved and adopted and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

31. BUDGET

The Sub Committee received and considered an updated version of the management Accounts.

A member noted the budget for Entente Florale had been £7,000 and the final expenditure figure was under £5,600. This was partly due to the generosity of those who helped including with time or in-kind as follows:- Henley Sales and Charter, The Quince Tree Café, River and Rowing Museum, Waitrose, The Fairmile Vineyard, Henley Management College, Traditional Boat Festival, BIFFA, The Open Spaces Society, Identiti, Jim Donahue

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the management accounts to date 2015 be noted.

32. SPONSORSHIP

The Vice Chairman gave an update on sponsorship in the absence of Ms M Francini and confirmed the Higgs Group sponsorship signs for the Reading Road roundabout would be erected shortly and the sponsorship amount would then be due.

33. GARDENING BUDDIES UPDATE

Members received and noted a Gardening Buddies update which gave an overview of work undertaken this year including planting the Celebration Beds, weeding, replanting and deadheading tubs and areas around the town including those at the Top Shops, Old Fire Station Gallery, Gillotts Corner, Northfield End, Millennium Court, Station Park and Mill Meadows), the horse trough at Mill Lane, circular bed at the Mill Lane Car park, Twinning Beds, Rotary Garden, Two Tree Island and the Gardening Buddies bed on the Reading Road.

Autumn projects include planting bulbs at the Reading Road roundabout and the Gardening Buddies bed on the Reading Road, renovating the bed outside the Fire Station, planting up tubs with winter planting,

The Sub Committee considered requests from Gardening Buddies as follows:-

- £150 to pay for materials to put edging strips on the new Gardening Buddies bed on the Reading Road in order to help it keep its shape and make the mowing easier
- £200 for allium bulbs and tete a tete bulbs for the Gardening Buddies bed to give spring colour.
- £50 to replace the two barrels on the corner of Greys Road and Gillotts corner as they are in a poor state and are in a very popular position.

Members agreed the Gardening Buddies do a huge amount of work around the town and **RESOLVED**

that up to £400 be allocated for the Gardening Buddies to purchase materials to edge the Gardening Buddies bed and allium and tete a tete bulbs to give spring colour.

34. THAMES AND CHILTERN/BRITAIN IN BLOOM/ENTENTE FLORALE AWARDS

The Vice Chairman gave an update on the Awards of the Thames and Chilterns in Bloom Awards and the Entente Florale Awards. Henley was awarded a gold award in the town category and the Best Business Involvement award. Henley received the second highest score in the whole region (Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Hertfordshire) with 176 points. Bray was awarded 180 points (small village category).

Henley was awarded a silver for the Entente Florale awards. Henley received 83.67 points – a gold award required 85 points. No feedback has been received regarding Entente as yet. The national awards are on Friday 16 October 2015.

35. GREENER STREETS : BETTER LIVES – KINGS ROAD CAR PARK PROJECT

The Committee received and considered a tabled report regarding the Kings Road Car Park being a possible project for the Royal Horticultural Society's (RHS) "Greener Streets : Better Lives".

The Vice Chairman informed members that the Greener Streets : Better Lives project is a 3 year project initiated by the RHS and aims to “green up grey Britain”. The Kings Road Car Park has been identified as a possible area which could benefit from greening up for instance re-planting the large shrub bed at the entrance near the Barn to give more colour and all round interest, seeking sponsorship to have planters and hanging baskets in the car park, a possible green wall in the library area, planters on the low wall by the library, repainting bollards, tidying up and weeding. The aim is to tidy up the area improve the visual amenity and also to increase biodiversity by introducing a wider range of plants and encouraging wildlife and to help contribute to a “green corridor” through Henley.

For the project to work it would require members to meet with local businesses, retailers, residents and organisations to garner their support with either time (to help with workdays), in-kind support or money. It was recognised that the Kings Road Car Park is very well used and acts as the High Street for many businesses. The Army Cadets have also shown interest in being involved in this project.

Liaison has taken place with South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) who have given permission for the re-planting of the shrub bed to a design by a volunteer, local horticulturalist, Rosie Bowden, who is very keen to help Henley in Bloom. SODC does not have a budget for the project this year but it is hoped they may do in future years. SODC have agreed to re-plant the trees which are struggling.

Discussions have taken place with Brakspear who are in favour of the money raised by the sale of Blooming Marvellous (approx. £1300) to be used for this project. An initial approach to Waitrose has also been favourable.

Members were also asked to suggest other areas which may benefit from this project.

After further discussion it was **RESOLVED**

that further investigation take place regarding the Kings Road Car Park being a focus for the Royal Horticultural Society’s Greener Streets : Better Lives project and up to £500 be allocated to the project from the Henley in Bloom budget

36. HENLEY IN BLOOM GARDENING AWARDS

Members discussed the Henley in Bloom Awards which are to be held in the Council Chamber on the evening of the meeting. The Vice Chairman advised this is a popular event with participants and arrangements are in place:- the Vice Chairman has made the certificates and bought the Toad Hall Garden Centre voucher which are given as prizes; Mrs C Langler has made a slide show of the gardens which have been entered; refreshments have been purchased, sponsors and participants invited and the running order has been arranged.

37. FLOWERSHOPS

The Mayor advised that she had spoken with the local florists:- Stemtation, The White Garden, Bluebells and The Flower Shop regarding the idea of each florist planting and maintaining a planter in the town with their plaque on, which could act as a showcase for them. However it was realised there were practical problems to having planters particularly regarding the maintenance and investigation should be made into costs of having the horticultural contractor water and maintain them. Other

options were discussed eg sponsoring flower beds, areas and hanging baskets. It was suggested the four florists could have their planters grouped together in the same area and could have a common theme to work to but each could use their own expertise to create different displays.

Members felt this was a worthwhile project which warranted further investigation.

38. ANCASTLE GREEN

Members received and considered a request from a resident (Lucy Boon) of Ancastle Green for financial help to improve the entrance to their road, which is one of the first features as you enter the town from the Rotherfield direction. The Ancastle Green Residents Association (AGRA) was established 40 years ago and each dwelling (approx. 100) currently pays into a fund to maintain the common areas (the recreational green, alleyways, pump house and entrance). The AGRA have investigated various options to improve the aesthetic value of the entrance. The first idea of a green wall was not viable due to cost however the final design includes a green wall interspersed with wooden panelling, mosaic art work, planting, closely planted trees and a new sign. The estimated budget in the brief was £6,000 - £10,000.

Members agreed this was a very worthwhile project however acknowledged that it was beyond the budget of Henley in Bloom however there may be other ways Henley in Bloom could help. It was suggested a site visit be arranged with members of Henley in Bloom and representatives of AGRA to find out more about the project and a possible way forward.

After further discussion it was **RESOLVED**

that a site visit be arranged with members of the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee and representatives of the Ancastle Green Residents Association to investigate ways Henley in Bloom could assist with this project

39. FLORAL TRAIN

The Vice Chairman gave a verbal update on the Floral Train as follows:-

- the Floral Train was given to Henley 3 years ago. It was planted up in 2013 and 2014 and placed at Station Park
- sponsorship helped to cover the cost of planting and repairs in 2013 and 2014
- the train was not planted up in 2015 due to reduced sponsorship
- the cost of compost, plants, watering and repairs is approx. £1400 pa
- the train is currently at the Park Service compound however there is not enough space to accommodate it long term

A general discussion ensued, including the future of the train and the following points were made:-

- the train is very popular with visitors who often have their photo taken in front of it
- a lot of maintenance is required (eg watering and re-planting the plants which work loose) to ensure the train looks good all summer long
- other sites to locate the train were considered eg on the semi-circular flower bed opposite the entrance to the station by the toilets
- alternative methods of planting were discussed eg using coloured ornamental matting/turf to cover the majority of the train and reduced but colourful planting

- it was reported that Lady McAlpine had offered to provide a home for the train
- a member suggested the Henley College or Gillotts may like to be involved in a project to “up cycle” the train
- members of the public may like to have their views considered it was suggested this be done via local and social media

After further discussion it was **RESOLVED**

that a press release be released to ask the members of the public on their views regarding “What shall we do with the Floral Train?”

40. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was set as Wednesday 11 November 2015 at 9.30 am.

The meeting ended at 11 am.

bw

Chairman