

Present: The Chairman, Councillor Kellie Hinton
The Vice Chairman, Councillor Donna Crook
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Dave Eggleton
Councillor Ian Clark
Councillor John Hooper
Councillor Paula Isaac
Councillor Glen Lambert
Councillor Sarah Miller
Councillor Laurence Plant

In Attendance: Sheridan Jacklin-Edward – Town Clerk
Becky Walker – Estates Manager
Karl Bishop – Parks Manager
Judith Smith – Committee Administrator

Also Present: 1 member of the press
1 members of the public
Sue Prior - Nomad

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from The Mayor, Councillor Ken Arlett.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

30. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Helen Gaynor representing Friends of Freeman's Meadow - Minute 31 – Makins Recreation Ground – Ms Gaynor expressed residents' concern and disappointment that the types of anti-social behaviour experienced at Makins Recreation Ground, had also been occurring at Freeman's Meadow over the summer, e.g. intimidating groups of young people, vandalism, broken glass left on play equipment, suspected drug taking and drug dealing on the footpath. Residents were very concerned that the investment that the Town Council is making to improve the playground would be spoiled by this anti-social behaviour, which should not be tolerated.

The Chairman thanked Ms Gaynor for voicing these concerns on behalf of residents. It was noted that the Parks Team do regularly inspect park equipment and that any incidents of anti-social behaviour should be reported to the police rather than approaching the perpetrators directly.

31. MAKINS RECREATION GROUND

Members received and considered a report and considered a number of practical measures which could be used to tackle recent anti-social behaviour at Makins Recreation Ground and other parks as follows:

i. Increased Youth Outreach Work

The Chair invited Sue Prior representing Nomad to the table.

Nomad currently provide two afternoons of youth outreach work in the area and would be willing to increase this to include a further two hour evening session, to be held at different sites as the need requires. Allocation of extra money would be in addition to the grant that the Town Council already provides to Nomad.

The cost for a two hour session with two staff (the required minimum) would be £5,000 per annum with a three year commitment from April 2020 to March 2023. Sue Prior confirmed that Nomad have applied for a community grant from the Town Council which may enable these sessions to start in this financial year and are already increasing their volunteer numbers to help with the sessions.

Members recognised the valuable service Nomad provides and, whilst not being the total solution to the problem of anti-social behaviour, acknowledged that working with young people and families and building relationships really can make a difference.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that funding be provided for additional youth outreach work by Nomad for a three year period from April 2020 to March 2023 at £5k per annum.

The Chair recommended that Nomad invite members to the D:Two Centre to provide an update on the outreach work on a six monthly basis.

The Chair thanked Sue Prior for attending the meeting who then left the meeting at 8.06 pm.

ii. Anti-vandal paint

Members discussed whether the application of anti-vandal paint to the walls and/or the roof of the Headway building would be an effective deterrent to young people climbing on to it. Benches had been removed from the front of the building to prevent young people congregating, but they were still climbing onto the roof which had caused damage to the building. The Chairman, Estates Manager and Parks Manager had met with the Manager at Headway who was in support of the proposal.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that funding up to the amount of £200 be allocated for the purchase of anti-vandal paint to apply to the roof/walls of Brunner Hall along with appropriate warning signage.

iii. Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)

A PSPO has been in place for Henley-on-Thames since 2018, which allows police to take alcohol from anyone who is behaving anti-socially in a public area. Members considered whether to seek further information from South Oxfordshire District Council on varying the current PSPO to include other forms of anti-social behaviour. Members noted that the police do currently have powers to deal with underage drinking and drug offences and the PSPO already includes Makins Recreation Ground and Freemans Meadow. The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the PSPO for Henley should remain unchanged.

iv. Installing gates on the entrance to the car park

It has been reported that vehicles coming in and out of the Makins Recreation Ground car park late at night were causing a nuisance (the frequency is unknown) and this might be prevented by lockable gates at the entrance to the car park. A

combination lock and code shared with key users of the car park was proposed, with a number of key holders responsible for locking and unlocking the gates. Councillor Eggleton offered to lock the gates in the evenings but further investigation would be needed to establish whether the gates can be unlocked in the mornings and at weekends.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that further investigations be undertaken to establish whether Makins Recreation Ground car park could be locked to vehicles overnight.

v Additional Signs at Makins

Members considered whether additional signs asking members of the public to report anti-social behaviour to the police or relevant authorities would enable incidents to be properly dealt with, rather than being broadcast via social media.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the costs of signage for all parks be investigated.

The Committee further discussed the role CCTV can play in deterring anti-social behaviour and dealing with crime. It was suggested that in other areas of the town where CCTV has been installed, incidents of vandalism have been significantly reduced however it was noted it can also simply displace rather than reduce the activity. It was recognised that installation of CCTV would require the Council to have a CCTV Policy in place. Whilst members were fully supportive of a holistic approach to anti-social behaviour including increased youth outreach work, any criminality must be addressed. Members agreed that if the installation of CCTV is part of the solution, it warrants further investigation.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the costs and implications of installing CCTV be investigated and a report brought back to this Committee.

32. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 2 July 2019 were received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

33. BUDGET

The management accounts to July 2019 were considered by the Committee.

The Chair advised that recent figures showed that this year had seen the best ever August income from the Town Council's car park.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the management accounts up to July 2019 be noted.

34. PROGRESS

Members received and considered the progress report:

Fairmile Chapel – First Chapel – On-going. It is intended that the refurbishment will be undertaken in the spring.

Welcome Wall – On-going.

River bank repairs – On-going. It is proposed to include river bank repairs in the "River Review" due to be undertaken this autumn.

Lido/Splash Park in Henley - surveys had been completed on one of the two possible sites. The working group are meeting again on 24 September 2019.

Provision of Toilets at Mill Lane Car Park and Makins Recreation Ground – it was noted that an allocation of the costs for this project in the 2020/21 budget be considered prior to placing the agreed specifications on Contracts Finder.

Freemans Meadow Playground – The contractor is due to start the upgrade of Freemans Meadow playground week commencing Monday 16 September 2019 with the work due to take 5 – 6 weeks. An opening event is planned for the afternoon of Wednesday 30 October 2019 in association with Nomad.

River Clean – The organisers have confirmed all permissions have been received and the first exploratory dive is scheduled for Saturday 14 September 2019 at Hambleden Lock, to determine in which areas of the river the rubbish is collecting.

Henley in Bloom – quorum – The Town Clerk confirmed it was inadvisable to reduce the quorum to two Councillors, since if the second member disagrees with the Chairman, the Chairman can simply use his casting vote to decide the matter - hence the Committee would be in the control of one Councillor. As an alternative, the Town Clerk advised that expenditure could be delegated to an officer in consultation with the Committee. After discussion it was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that expenditure for Henley in Bloom be delegated to the Estates Manager in consultation with the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee.

The Henley Litter Challenge – This had been expanded to a town wide project with the aim of making Henley a “plastic-free” town in the future. It will be an agenda item for Full Council.

Signage Working Group – A meeting will be held on Friday 27 September 2019 for the cross-committee working group on signage.

35. ADDITIONAL PARKS SERVICES VEHICLE

Members received and considered a report regarding the purchase of an additional vehicle for the Parks Services. The Parks Manager explained that now the team is fully staffed there is a need for an extra vehicle to maximise efficiency. A quad bike is preferred as it offers versatility and best value for money.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Town Council purchase a quad bike at a cost of up to £8,600 and equipment at a cost of up to £7,200.

1 member of the public left the meeting at 8.40pm.

36. 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 publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

1 member of the press left the meeting at 8.42pm

37. HORTICULTURAL CONTRACT

The Committee considered an update from the Chairman and information which was tabled, noting the new contract was for five years with a one year review and a two year break clause, and **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Horticultural Contract 2019 – 2024 be awarded to Windowflowers Ltd

The meeting closed at 8.48 pm.
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Chairman