

- Present: The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood
The Mayor, Councillor S Gawrysiak
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor Miss S Evans
Councillor Miss K Hinton
Councillor I Reissmann
Councillor D Silvester
- In attendance: Councillor D Nimmo Smith
Councillor W Hamilton
Mr M Kennedy – Town Clerk
Mrs B Walker – Committee Administrator/Minute Taker
- Also Present: 11 members of the public
2 members of the media

60. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the Councillors M Akehurst and D Clenshaw.

61. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

62. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Councillor D Nimmo Smith, St Andrews Road – Minute 64 ii – Minutes of the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee held on 16 January 2014- Minute 64 – Telephone Box – advised permission may need to be sought from BT if the telephone box were to be painted gold and it may not be given as strict rules apply. Also questioned whether a use would be found for the box. Minute 55 – Britain in Bloom - queried why 3 people attended the Britain in Bloom Finalists seminar.

Minutes of the Mill Meadows and River Sub Committee held on 23 January 2014 – Minute 47 – Cllr Nimmo Smith queried why 3 people were attending the River Thames Alliance conference and AGM.

Mr D Eggleton, Gainsborough Road – Minute 64 ii - Minutes of the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee held on 16 January 2014 - Minute 64 – Telephone Box – advised the telephone box had been purchased for £1 and it was one of the last remaining phone boxes in the town. The Henley in Bloom Committee can now decide whether to move it or leave it in situ.

Mr Jake Clark, Highmoor – Minute 63 – Makins Skatepark – spoke in support of the proposed skatepark and highlighted the amount of time and effort which had been required to get the project to this stage and he hoped the Town Council would support the request to apply for planning permission.

Councillor W Hamilton, Greys Road – Minute 63 Makins Skatepark - urged the Committee to listen to the views of residents of Greys Road who oppose the skatepark and believe Makins should remain a green park. Cllr Hamilton referred to a petition with 140 names objecting to any development dated November 2007 and an assurance the Council gave at that time that no development would take place without full consultation with the residents of Greys Road.

Ms Paula Isaacs – Gainsborough Estate – commented that the consultation process should take place with everyone and not only the views of the Greys Road residents should be considered but also those living on the Gainsborough Estate, which has houses in closer proximity to the skatepark than those in Greys Road. A recent survey of Gainsborough residents showed a positive response to the proposed plans. *Mrs Gill Dodds Greys Road – Minute 63 Makins Skatepark* – queried the relevance of the petition referred to by Cllr Hamilton which was now 6 years old (therefore signatories may no longer live in Greys Road) and the proposed skatepark today is a completely different type of skatepark. Mrs Dodds felt the Henley Skatepark Initiative had and would continue to consult widely.

63. MAKINS SKATEPARK

- i. The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Skatepark Council Working Group meeting held on 6 January 2014.
- ii. The Committee welcomed Mr Colin Brathwaite, Chairman and Mr James Lipscomb, Vice Chairman of the Henley Skatepark Initiative (HSI) and Mr Russ Holbert, a director of Marverick Industries, to the table.

The Committee also received and noted the location plan, two visualisations, the dimensions of the proposed park and two eye-level views of a park installed by Maverick.

Mr Brathwaite, in response to Cllr Hamilton's comments, listed the actions the HSI had undertaken in order to consult with the members of the public and local residents including 2 public meetings, a consultation morning in the Town Hall (last Saturday), leaflet drops to Deanfield Road, Greys Road and the Gainsborough Estate, adverts in the Henley Standard and posters. The HSI also uses twitter, facebook and its website to convey information and to communicate with the public and are willing to meet with anyone at any time. Mr Brathwaite assured the Committee the HSI will continue to consult throughout the project. He also informed the Committee of a number of supporters who lived in Greys Road and felt it was unfair to infer all residents of Greys Road are against the project.

Mr Brathwaite informed the Committee of the HSI's recent activities including supporting the Henley Round Table's Christmas Float, which raised money for local charity and confirmed the HSI had been chosen as the beneficiary of the Henley Youth Festival's charity bucket/tin collection for 2014.

Mr Brathwaite provided an update on the project as follows:-

Tender Process and Chosen Supplier

- the tender process to choose the supplier of the proposed skatepark has been undertaken and the tender documents were sent out in November 2013
- the submitted tender documents were opened on 23 December 2013, in the Town Clerk's office in the presence of the Mayor in accordance with Town Council's policy,
- the tender submissions were evaluated and the chosen supplier was Maverick Industries by a unanimous vote

Mr Brathwaite introduced Mr Russ Holbert, Director of Maverick Industries. Mr Holbert gave a brief introduction to the company which was founded 6 years ago and combines design and construction and aims to involve skaters in the process. Mr Holbert also sits on the British Standards Health and Safety Board for Skateparks. Mr Holbert had 8 references and 8 examples of skateparks they had built for members to view. He also showed 2 eye-level photos of one of their skateparks in Peterborough which illustrated how they are integrated into the landscape.

Funding and Planning Application

Mr Brathwaite updated members with regard to the funding. The HSI intends to apply for CIF funding from the District Council this year for which the closing date is April 2014. One of the application conditions is that if planning permission is required for a project it needs to be in place prior to the application being submitted.

Therefore the HSI is asking the Committee this evening, to give permission for a planning application to be submitted, in order to allow time for the 8 week planning process. The application would be submitted in the Town Council's name as the landowner and the application, including the maps, drawings etc would be completed by the HSI and Maverick Industries in conjunction with the Town Council. The planning application is concerned with the maximum footprint, height and depth of the skatepark and not the specific features.

The Town Council has given permission for the land to be used, appointed Councillors to sit on the Skatepark Council Working Group and has voted for financial support - seeking planning permission is the next logical step.

Members entered into a question and answer session and the following points were made:-

Footprint - the footprint of the tarmac area of the current skatepark is 504 metres squared and the proposed footprint is 850 metres squared, however the latter includes seating and landscaping.

Concern was expressed at the increase in size. It was explained this increase extends towards the car park, a currently unused area, and does not encroach into the main green area of Makins. The upper line of the proposed skatepark (eg the Gainsborough side) is on the same line as the existing.

The increased size allows the skatepark to flow and provides a circuit. It also includes a number of mature trees and seating – not included in the measurement of the current footprint.

The Committee noted the increased size of the proposed skatepark had been previously discussed in March 2012.

It was felt the increase in size may not be considered favourably by the planners and pre-application advice should be sought. It was also suggested a drawing of the current footprint overlaid on to the proposed footprint be provided for Full Council. Concern was also expressed regarding the concrete path however it was noted this could easily be removed from the plan.

CIF Funding – it was noted the CIF only match funds up to 50% and the total project will cost in the region of £248,000 therefore additional funds will need to be sought. It was noted when considering the allocation of CIF funding the amount of consultation is heavily weighted in the points allocation.

Maverick Industries – has an approx. turnover of £2 million last year. Recent projects have included a £500,000 project in Haverford West and a £1.2 m project for Liverpool City Council. The company employs approximately 15 staff currently.

Exemption to allow the Planning Committee to speak – the Town Council would need to apply to the District Council for an exemption to allow the Town Council's planning committee to debate this application and make comments.

Following a lengthy debate the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Town Council submit a planning application to South Oxfordshire District Council for the skatepark at Makins Recreation Ground based on the submission from Maverick Industries

that the Henley Skatepark Initiative seek pre planning advice from the South Oxfordshire District Council Planning Department in particular regarding the increased footprint

that Henley Town Council apply to the South Oxfordshire District Council Planning Department for an exemption in order that the Henley Town Council's planning committee can discuss this application and make comments without concerns regarding pecuniary interests

Members thanked the HSI and Maverick Industries for all their hard work. Mr Brathwaite, Mr Lipscomb and Mr Holbert left the table.

64. MINUTES

- i. The minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 10 December 2013 were approved and then signed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood 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 16 January 2014.

Councillor Miss K Hinton re-iterated the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee will be asking residents, particularly those in St Andrews and Belle Vue Road for ideas regarding future possible uses for the phone box and felt it was an exciting project.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee held on 16 January 2014 be received, approved and adopted.

- iii.a. The Committee received and considered the notes of the Toilet Refurbishment Working Group meeting held on 16 January 2014. Councillor S Gawrysiak gave a brief verbal report of the short meeting held on 23 January 2014 and confirmed the colour scheme of the cubicles would be turquoise and grey.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the notes of the Toilet Refurbishment Working Group held on 16 January 2014 be received, approved and adopted.

- iii.b. The Committee received and considered a report from the Accountant regarding the appointment of the preferred contractor for the refurbishment of the toilets.

After discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Company A be appointed as the Contractor for the refurbishment of the toilets at the Leichlingen Pavilion at a cost of £90,896

- iv. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Mill Meadows and River Sub Committee held on 23 January 2014.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the Mill Meadows and River Sub Committee held on 23 January 2014 be received, approved and adopted.

- v. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Christmas Decorations and Events Sub Committee held on 23 January 2014.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the Christmas Decorations and Events Sub Committee held of 23 January 2014 be received, approved and adopted.

65. PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received and noted the Progress Report and made the following comments:-

Pram Walk: Suggestions for improvements to the pram walk included re-painting, removing the hand-rail and a complete refurbishment. Members were pleased to note the South Oxfordshire Housing Association is reviewing the use of the area previously used for garages and the Town Council would like to be involved. Members also congratulated the Gainsborough Residents' Association for initiating this review.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that contact be made with the South Oxfordshire Housing Association to request a meeting to discuss the future of the area at the top of the pram walk previously used for garages as the Town Council would very much like to be involved along with the Gainsborough Residents' Association and Henley in Bloom

Moorings: Members noted the accountant's advice not to sub contract out the management of the White Hart moorings at this time and supported this approach.

66. BUDGET

The Committee received, considered and noted the management accounts to December 2013 and parking income graph to December 2013 and noted the rain and floods were likely to affect the parking income for the early part of 2014.

67. RIVERBANK REPAIRS

The Committee received, considered and noted a report regarding Riverbank Repairs. The report contained quotes for repairs to the riverbank identified in a survey of the riverbank undertaken in September 2013 as follows:-

Company A - £25,660

Company B - £40,800

Company C - £37,342

The Committee noted there is provision in the Planned Maintenance Budget for part of the work to be carried out in 2013/14 and the remainder in 2014/15.

It was queried why these repairs had not been included in the 5 year planned maintenance. The Town Clerk advised the planned maintenance programme is being expanded and going forward this type of repair would be included however in the past it had concentrated mainly on Council's buildings.

After discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Company A be appointed to carry out the works on the riverbank identified in the survey undertaken in September 2013 at a cost of £25,660

68. USE OF COUNCIL LAND FOR FITNESS ACTIVITIES

The Committee received and considered a report regarding the proposed approach towards boot-camps and other fitness classes held on Council land and the suggestions for monitoring and controlling the situation.

Members discussed the issues concerning fitness groups using the Town Council's open spaces and possible licencing and made the following comments:-

- larger groups can be intrusive to other users however they often use the areas at non-peak times
- misuse of Council property could lead to damage eg resistance/stretching equipment being used on the bandstand
- any licencing system would be difficult to enforce
- there is a difference between people paying for fitness training (eg commercial) and a group of people getting together to exercise and it is difficult to differentiate between the two on the ground
- people should be free to, and be encouraged to use the open spaces for fitness purposes, but with consideration for other users
- should licencing be introduced a charge should not be made
- licencing is bringing in yet another layer of bureaucracy

After discussion the Committee felt, on balance, a licencing system should not be introduced and instead the Town Clerk should formulate guidelines and a form of words for Councillors to use should they come across a situation whereby Council property is being misused. The situation should continue to be monitored.

After discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that a licencing system is not introduced for fitness groups, boot camps etc using Council land

that the Town Clerk issue guidelines to Councillors and a form of words that they can use should they come across any misuse of Council property

that the use of the Town Council's open spaces by fitness groups and boot-camps continue to be monitored

69. ALLOTMENTS – NOTICE BOARDS

The Committee considered a report regarding the purchase of noticeboards for Greencroft and Watermans Allotments and after discussion **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that up to £1,000 be allocated from the Allotments budget 2013/14 for the purchase of noticeboards for the Allotments subject to there being no unforeseen costs from this budget

70. CONSULTATION DRAFT: RIGHTS OF WAY MANAGEMENT PLAN (RoWMP)

The Committee noted the consultation process for the above plan closes at midday on 18 April 2014 and that all documents and the questionnaire can be found at the following website and all are welcome to participate

https://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/draft_CAMP/consultationHome

The meeting ended at 10.06 pm.

Chairman

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