

Present: The Chairman, Councillor Mrs G Dodds
The Vice Chairman, Councillor Miss L Pye
The Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor C I Pye
Councillor Mrs P G Buckett
Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin
Councillor Mrs R Myer
Councillor Dr B Wood

In attendance: Mr M Kennedy – Town Clerk
Mrs B Walker – Committee Administrator / Minute Taker

Also present: 1 Member of the Press
4 Members of the Public

60. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Dr P Skolar.

61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs G Dodds declared a personal interest in minute 68 as a member of Transition Towns.

62. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

None.

63. SPORTS IN HENLEY/OLYMPIC FESTIVAL

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs G Dodds welcomed Mr Graham Horner, the Henley College Sports Co-ordinator and Ms Amy Sanders, the Gillotts School Sports Co-ordinator to the meeting.

It was RESOLVED

that standing orders be suspended to enable Mr Graham Horner and Ms Amy Sanders to speak to the meeting.

Mr G Horner thanked the Committee for inviting him to the meeting and explained he was not only speaking as the Sports Co-ordinator for the Henley College but also as someone with an interest in the Henley Rugby Club and as a sports fanatic. His reason for attending was to share with Councillors his vision of reviving the Henley Sports Council, which had not met for a number of years, and combined with this, possible ways Henley could celebrate the 2012 Olympics.

Mr Horner explained that the aim of the Henley Sports Council would be to bring together all the sporting clubs in the town and provide an opportunity for them to meet and share knowledge, resources and problems. He envisaged the Sports Council involving as diverse a range of clubs as possible (from Rugby to Bowls) and with members of all ages. An initial topic for the Henley Sports Council to discuss

could be how the sporting community of Henley could celebrate the Olympics and how this could create a legacy. This could also provide an opportunity for the clubs to forge relationships by working together in planning the celebrations. Although Mr Horner had no firm ideas on the nature of the celebrations he hoped it could be done in a way that would encourage as many people as possible, of all sporting abilities and ages, to get involved in sport and develop a healthy lifestyle now and in the future.

Mr Horner explained that it would be particularly significant for Henley to celebrate the Olympics as the town has close links with the Modern Olympics, as Pierre De Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic games modelled the International Olympic Committee on the Henley Royal Regatta Committee. Also the Olympic rowing events took place in Henley at the 1908 and 1948 Olympics.

In conjunction with the above, Ms Amy Sanders of Gillotts School explained her vision for involving the schools and colleges of South Oxfordshire in the Olympic celebrations. Her idea was to have a "South Oxfordshire Olympics", which would be a year long competition between the schools and colleges involving as many sports as possible. The aim would be for each school in the area to host two or three sporting events, to arrange competitions for all the different year groups and for the students to be fully involved in all aspects of the organisation. The results of each competition would be compiled in a league table similar to the Olympic medal table and would be awarded on participation as well as success. The intention would be to involve and inspire as many young people as possible. Involvement could take many forms and utilise many of the students's skills including:- participating in the competitions at all levels, organising and administration, producing promotional material, IT for recording events, catering etc.

Local Olympians would be invited to be involved and hopefully could present prizes. It is envisaged there would be an opening and closing ceremony and the possibility that these may be held in Henley. It was noted that as these events would take place between September 2011 and July 2012 it is important to start planning as soon as possible.

Members expressed support for the revival of the Henley Sports Council and the "South Oxfordshire Olympics" and asked how Mr Horner and Ms Sanders felt the Town Council could support these ideas.

Mr Horner asked whether the Town Council could organise the inaugural meeting of the Henley Sports Council, with his and Ms Sanders's support, and for items on the agenda to include how Henley could celebrate the Olympics and also the "South Oxfordshire Olympics" project.

The question of the Town Council helping to finance the celebrations was raised. It was noted that this could be a possibility and that a further application could be made to the Town Council as the plans progress.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Town Council invite sporting organisations in the town to an inaugural meeting of the Henley Sports Council to be held during the next two months, with the aim that the Henley Sports Council becomes a self-organising body thereafter.

The Chairman thanked Mr Horner and Ms Sanders for attending the meeting.

It was RESOLVED

that standing orders be re-instated.

64. MINUTES

- i. The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21 December 2010 were approved, adopted and signed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs G Dodds.
- ii. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Christmas Events and Decorations Sub Committee held on 13 January 2011.

It was RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the minutes of the Christmas Events and Decorations Sub Committee held on 13 January 2011 be received, approved and adopted.

- iii. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee meeting held on 13 January 2011.

It was noted that the first sentence in minute 34 second bullet point be amended to read "Focus this year to be made on the one acre set aside for the HiT Tilebarn Wood and the one acre for the Sue Ryder Care Woodland Memorial on the Council's 40 Acre Field."

It was RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that subject to the first sentence of minute 34 second bullet point being amended to "Focus this year to be made on the one acre set aside for the HiT Tilebarn Wood and the one acre for the Sue Ryder Care Woodland Memorial on the Council's 40 Acre Field." , the minutes of the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee held on 13 January 2011 be received, approved and adopted.

65. BUDGET

The Committee received and noted the budget report to December 2010.

A member commented that the income from parking at Mill Meadows had risen in 2010 compared to 2009 each month until August then has fallen each month since.

66. PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received and noted the progress report and made the following comments:-

The First Chapel – the First Chapel Working Group had a very positive meeting with Mr Burness-Smith on Friday 28 January 2011 and a fuller report will be presented to the Recreation and Amenities meeting on 15 March 2011. "The George Orwell Society Henley" has now been formed with the full support of the son of Eric Blair (George Orwell) - Richard. The Committee was informed that this is the only George Orwell Society in England although there are others overseas. Plans are progressing regarding the First Chapel and the project has now been structured into two phases:-
Phase 1 to consist of:-

- "The George Orwell Society Henley" applying for charitable trust status

- Further investigation and consideration be given by the Town Council on whether to lease the First Chapel to the above society.
- If a lease is entered into the First Chapel to become the Society's "home" and occasional lectures, debates etc to be held there.

Phase 2 to consist of:-

- Following phase 1 the opening of a Visitor Centre be investigated and the Town Council be approached for further approval

It was noted the project may or may not develop to phase 2.

Watermans Allotments – the Committee noted that the area has been cleared for the starter plots and the site manager is very pleased with the quality of the new plots. The deer fencing and tap installation to take place by April.

Sports Centre – the following points were noted:-

- there is still concern regarding the lighting levels by the pedestrian crossing at the Sports Centre and investigation be made as to how to improve the situation. The Town Clerk reported that the information requested from Oxfordshire County Council under the Freedom of Information Act regarding the availability of Section 106 money was due in the next few days and if any money is available this could possibly provide a source of funding for an additional light.
- the cut-through by the astropitch gate has been blocked off with a stronger fence.

Astropitch – The Town Clerk updated the Committee on two meetings he had had with officers of South Oxfordshire District Council regarding the replacement of the astropitch and asked for a steer from the Committee on which avenue to follow.

The first meeting raised the possibility of South Oxfordshire District Council taking over the astropitch and the second meeting the possibility of applying for a grant from the CIF fund to help part-pay for the replacement astropitch (replacement cost would be in the region of £200,000) and thereby the Town Council retaining ownership of the asset. Additional grant applications could also be applied for from other sources to help fund the project.

During discussion the following points were made:-

- It was noted considerable background work would be required in order to submit the application including wide consultation and the time restraints maybe too tight (the scheme opens 28.2.11 and closes on 8.4.11). The Town Clerk advised the aim would be to divide the workload in order to make it manageable and to enable the deadlines to be met.
- The Town Council to look at ways to part fund the project from its own resources alongside the grant applications.

It was RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the Town Clerk proceeds with the work required in order to submit a grant application for CIF funding to part pay for the replacement of the astropitch with the aim to submit in 2011 if ready.

that the Finance Strategy and Management Committee consider the question of part funding of the astropitch from the Town Council's reserves.

67. HORTICULTURAL AMENITY CONTRACT 2011

The Committee received and considered a report regarding appointing a contractor to carry out the town's planting and floral decorations from 1 June 2011 along with the current work specification, which identified certain areas which the restructured Parks Services Team could take in-house from June 2011.

The Committee considered the work specification and made the following comments/amendments:-

- the Mill Meadows area is currently undertaken in-house.
- The Reading Road roundabout area is currently funded by sponsorship via the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee
- the Exhibition Centre, Millennium Court Car Park side and Central Courtyard be taken in house
- Gravel Hill and Red Lion Lawn to remain in the work specification for the outside contractor.
- A longer contract period for instance 5 years, with a review after 2 years, may result in more favourable pricing.

The Committee praised the Parks Services Team for the high standard of work they undertake, particularly at Mill Meadows.

After consideration the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the following areas be removed from the current Horticultural specification and these areas be taken in house from June 2011:-

Exhibition Centre

To seasonally plan and fully maintain one 2.5 metres x 1 metre bed within the pavement beneath a large deciduous tree with a short metal fence surrounding.

Millennium Court Car Park Side

To fully maintain one brick built bed with mainly evergreen planting and some seasonal colour, measuring 6 metres x 2 metres.

To also maintain five pavement level beds with Buxus and other evergreen planting.

To also maintain brick paviours and pebbled area to keep free from weeds.

Millennium Central Courtyard

To also maintain all areas within the Central Courtyard planted with lavenders, clematis and roses including two pots with Buxus.

To also maintain the bricked paviours free of weeds.

that, with the above amendments to the Horticultural specification, the Town Council proceed to tender stage with a contract length of 5 years (with a 2 year review/opt out clause).

that a further report be presented to the Recreation and Amenities Committee on 26 April 2011 with the tender results.

68. FENCING OF 40 ACRE FIELD

The Committee received a report regarding a proposal to extend and re-position the proposed new stock-proof fence along the western boundary of 40 Acre Field in order to create a public right of way linking Pack and Prime Lane and Footpath H6. This would create a circular walk around 40 Acre Field. The Finance Strategy and Management Committee recommended funding of this fencing up to a cost of £9,000 at its meeting on 25 January 2011 subject to the further consideration of the scheme by this Committee.

After discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that stock proof fencing be erected along the western boundary of 40 Acre Field from Pack and Prime Lane to the junction with Footpath H6 and it be suitably positioned in order to create a footpath.

that investigations be made as to whether the footpath can be included on the definitive map, the associated process, legal costs, maintenance issues and timescale.

that the footpath be restricted to walkers and investigation be made into any appropriate signage required.

that the Town Clerk be given delegated powers to authorise the fencing work, with the budget approved by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee on 25 January 2011, up to a maximum of £9000 – order to be placed in this financial year.

The Committee acknowledged that it was Nigel Wigmore's last evening of reporting the Council's meeting for the Henley Standard and wished him all the best for the future.

The meeting closed at 9 pm.

bw

Chairman