

Present: Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin (presiding)
Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mr S J Gawrysiak
Councillor Mr M Akehurst
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor Mr D Clenshaw
Councillor Miss S Evans
Councillor Miss K L Gehrman
Councillor Mr W Hamilton
Councillor Miss L M Hillier
Councillor Mr D Hinke
Councillor Ms L Meachin
Councillor Mr D R Nimmo-Smith
Councillor Mrs P A Phillips
Councillor Mr I Reissmann
Councillor Mr D M Silvester
Councillor Mrs J Wood

In Attendance: Mr M W Kennedy - Town Clerk
Mrs P Price-Davies - Minute Taker / Committee Administrator
Mr C Austin - Town Sergeant
County Councillor Dr P Skolar
District Councillor W Hall

Also Present: 1 member of the press
7 members of the public

The Town Clerk read out the fire evacuation procedure and reminded Councillors and members of the public of the Code of Practice relating to Public Participation as stated on the agenda. He also drew members of the public's attention to the laminated rules placed on each seat in the public gallery.

9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Miss L M Hillier – item 10, Prejudicial interest - to sign and seal the lease between Henley Town Council and Miss L M Hillier for West Street Stores, Henley-on-Thames.

11. MINUTES

The minutes of the following meetings were approved and signed by the Chairman, as a true record:

- (i) Full Council meeting held on 8 May 2012.
- (ii) Annual Meeting held on 14 May 2012.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mrs A Collinson, Bell Street

Mrs Collinson enquired as to whether Henley Town Council (HTC) had received a response from their correspondence with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) requesting a dialogue between HTC, Chestertons and South Oxfordshire District

Council (SODC) in regards to the Stopping Up Order in Bell Street. The Town Clerk confirmed that OCC were not prepared to enter into any further negotiations on the issue as there was now a date set for an enquiry and this was to be held at the District Offices in Crowmarsh.

Mr D Whittingham, The Malthouse

Mr Whittingham referred to the issue of litter bins within the town and felt that they should all be replaced with triple bins of the same design as the one currently installed outside Boots in Bell Street. He felt concerned that the litter bin on the Henley Bridge was inadequate and he wanted assurance that it would be replaced with a triple bin before Henley Regatta. Mr Whittingham also drew attention to the fact that Wokingham Borough Council had removed the litter bin from the Berkshire side of the bridge and stated that it was important that a replacement was installed.

The Mayor confirmed that a triple bin had been sourced and would be installed on the bridge once delivery had taken place. She also agreed that HTC would write to Wokingham Borough Council requesting the replacement of the litter bin on the Berkshire side of the bridge.

Councillor Mrs J Wood, Blandy Road

Councillor Mrs J Wood informed the meeting that Leichlingen (Henley's twinned town) had presented the Town with a gift of a sculptured apple which had been installed at Gravel Hill Flower Bed.

13. **DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Members had before them reports from District Councillors Mrs J Bland, Mrs E Hodgkin and Mrs J Wood. It was **RESOLVED**

that the reports be received and noted.

Matters arising from reports:

District Councillor W Hall was congratulated on being elected chair of the Community Investment Fund (CIF) panel. He confirmed that Henley CAB is outside the limits imposed by other grants, therefore any funding opportunities with SODC would not be affected.

It was noted that with regards to the recent Chinnor by-election there had been problems. It was also confirmed that the Chief Executive was the Returning Officer.

The Town Clerk reported that he had attended a meeting in Oxfordshire and had been informed that a review of Parish boundaries in South Oxfordshire is currently being held on the possible reduction of the number of District Councillors from four to three in Henley (36 in the district). Members urged the Town Clerk to express their unhappiness through SODC. These issues would be addressed at the next meeting of Finance, Strategy and Management.

County Councillors' Reports

County Councillor Dr P Skolar referred to his report which he had emailed to Councillors previously and gave a verbal update:

Social Care Meeting: The contract between OCC, OCP and the Primary Care Trust for the procurement of the new Townlands Hospital will have no impact on the contracting or timetabling of the building programme.

Proposed White Paper on Social Care: This paper is due out during the month before the annual Parliament recess. It is a report on the funding of Adult Social Care for the Elderly.

The Henley Neighbourhood Plan: Shiplake Parish Council have confirmed that they only want involvement in an observatory role.

County Councillor Mr D Nimmo-Smith referred to his report which he had emailed to Councillors previously and gave a verbal update:

Henley Primary Schools: It was confirmed that due to unforeseen increases in the number of primary aged schoolchildren requiring places this year, OCC were currently looking for an additional 500 places across the county. It was noted that this swell in school population would obviously also have an impact on Secondary School provision in the future, and that County Council Officers were aware of these issues and the subsequent impact on housing. Places for all these schoolchildren would be found within the County and all Henley schoolchildren would be placed within the Town, although the places offered would not necessarily be the first choice.

Badgemore Primary School Extension: It was reported that there had been no increase in the number of children applying for places at Badgemore. The funding for the extension has been allocated and is available when required.

Damaged Bollards: Funding for the necessary work has been approved and will be funded from Section 106.

Pedestrian Crossing at the Tesco Entrance: The crossing is sited on private land and not on a public highway. Following an inspection, HTC will now pursue funding for the necessary work from Tesco under the terms of their current lease.

Cleaning of road signs: OCC will only clean signs where there is a Health and Safety issue and cut back branches where a danger exists. Members expressed concern over this approach and the Mayor reiterated her concern over the road signs on the A4155 from Shiplake to Henley. County Councillor Dr P Skolar confirmed that he had agreed for this work to be carried out with funds from his Localities Budget.

14. **FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members received copies of reports from the Henley Partnership Arts Group and The National Association of Local Councils.

A member reported that The Henley Partnership are currently proactive in promoting business in the town. During the regatta period, a satellite tourist office will be erected on the regatta site, staffed by members of the Henley Information Centre and young people from the Henley Youth Partnership. It is hoped that this will encourage business and footfall into the town during this period.

The Henley Partnership are also ensuring that information leaflets are displayed in hotels in the town, and the Henley Youth Partnership are currently offering young people life coaching skills and opportunities - this scheme has proved popular with students from both Gillotts and Henley College.

15. **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Members had before them the list of Mayoral engagements from 2 May 2012 -14 May 2012 for the ex-Mayor and a report from 15 May 2012 - 6 June 2012 inclusive for the Mayor, copy attached to the agenda. It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be received and noted.

The Mayor highlighted some of the Jubilee events that she had attended during her first month and extended thanks to Councillors and staff for all the work over the Jubilee weekend. Members also expressed thanks to The Henley Standard for the excellent coverage of the celebrations.

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Mr I Reissmann and Councillor Ms L Meachin on their recent marriage.

16. VARIATION TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

It was **RESOLVED**

that the order of business be varied to take agenda item 9, Annual Return before agenda item 8 Reports of Committees.

17. ANNUAL RETURN AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2012

Members had before them a copy of the Unaudited Financial Statements for the year ending 31 March 2012. The following items were proposed for adoption:

- (a) The Annual Return 'Section 1 - Accounting Statements for Henley on Thames Town Council' as recommended by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee on 22 May 2012. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Annual Return 'Section 1 - Accounting Statements for Henley on Thames Town Council' as recommended by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee on 22 May 2012 be approved.

- (b) The Annual Return 'Section 2 - Annual Governance Statement' acknowledging Full Council's responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements.' It was **RESOLVED**

that the Annual Return 'Section 2 – Annual Governance Statement' acknowledging Full Council's responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements' be approved.

- (c) The Unaudited Financial Statements as recommended by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee on 22 May 2012, be approved following the inclusion of the words '*The Green Field at Gillotts Corner*' on page 13 under the list of Community Assets. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Unaudited Financial Statements as recommended by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee on 22 May 2012 as amended per above, be approved.

Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Accountant for preparing the financial statements.

18. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- (i) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 15 May 2012 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 15 May 2012 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 29 May 2012 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 29 May 2012 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted, subject to the recording in the minutes of the declarations of interest declared by Councillor Miss L M Hillier in minute number 14.

- (ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 15 May 2012 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 15 May 2012 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 6 - Police

Members recorded their congratulations to Inspector M Harling following his recent appointment as the new Neighbourhood Inspector for South Oxfordshire and expressed their thanks to the Henley Standard for their press coverage of recent successes.

Minute 9 – Signage and Physical Town Promotion Project

Members expressed their congratulations to the Mayor, Councillor Mr D Hinke and to Deborah O' Brian (SODC) for their work and production of the new leaflets promoting Henley.

Minute 9 – Decriminalisation of Parking

It was noted that a response had been received from SODC and that this item would be included on the agenda at the next meeting of Town and Community.

- (iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 22 May 2012 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 22 May 2012 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

- (iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 29 May 2012 were before the Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 29 May 2012 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 10 – Henley in Bloom and Civic Pride Sub Committee

It was **RESOLVED**

that Councillor Miss L Hillier be elected to serve on this sub-committee.

Minute 12 – Jubilee Park Car Wash Proposal

A Member proposed that this item should be referred back to committee in the light of new legislation on the installation of inceptor tanks for collecting all waste water and chemicals and the fact that power washing of cars uses eight times less water than hand washing. Several Members spoke against the motion for the reasons set out in the minutes. The motion was put to the vote and was lost.

Minute 16 - Henley-on-Thames Allotment Association

A Member commented that the notable improvement in the relationship between HTC and the Allotment Association was down to the work of the current administrator, and her predecessor.

(v) Townlands Steering Group (TSG) Committee

(a) Members received a verbal report on the TSG. It was confirmed that the planning permission and full business case were on schedule, and that there was a PCT Board meeting scheduled for next week. As of to date, no issues or concerns have been received that had not been previously addressed, so it is likely that permission will be granted. Members were assured that public consultation would be a constant feature in the development of the project.

Matters arising from the report:

It was confirmed that the date for the special meeting of Full Council to consider the application for the redevelopment proposals for Townlands Hospital was 17 July 2012. It was noted that this is an open meeting and there would be public participation in the normal way and this 20 minute session could be extended by the Council if required.

A Member aired concern over the fact that there were only ten days between the public consultation and the plans being submitted and wanted reassurance that the questions and issues raised had been fully addressed by the developer. It was suggested that the PCT be invited to compile a list of questions and answers to satisfy any concerns. It was stated that the planning process was in itself a consultation and the public were welcome to submit their comments to the Planning Authority at SODC.

(b) Members had before them a report from the Town Clerk on the arrangements for discussing the planning application, as set out above. There were no matters arising from this report. It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be received and noted, and that a special meeting of Full Council be held on the 17 July to consider the plans.

Councillor Miss L M Hillier having previously declared a prejudicial interest in the following item left the Council Chamber and took no further part in the proceedings.

19. LEASES AND LICENSES

(i) It was proposed to sign and seal the lease between Henley Town Council and Miss L M Hillier for West Street Stores, Henley-on-Thames. It was **RESOLVED**

that the lease between Henley Town Council and Miss L M Hillier for West Street Stores, Henley-on-Thames be signed and sealed.

Councillor Miss L M Hillier rejoined the meeting.

ii) It was proposed to sign and seal the lease between Henley Town Council, Sue Ryder and Henley in Transition for the underlet of land at Tilebarn, Henley-on-Thames. It was **RESOLVED**

that the lease between Henley Town Council, Sue Ryder and Henley in Transition for the underlet of land at Tilebarn, Henley-on-Thames be signed and sealed.

20. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING FOR HENLEY

Members had before them a report on the Neighbourhood Planning from the Town Clerk.

Arising from the report:

It was reported that an extremely productive Public Opinion Day was held on Saturday 9th June in the Market Square. All Councillors that had attended the event were thanked for their support and attendance. It was confirmed that public questionnaires had been issued and 140 opinions gathered throughout the day. Over 200 people examined the exhibition and it is apparent that site allocations are the most important issue.

HTC to go through an initial process of defining the boundary (three of the possible housing sites are outside Henley). SODC are keen to ensure HTC can go ahead with the Neighbourhood Plan, but it is likely that the Parish Boundary will be set as the current Henley Parish Boundary.

The possibility of further 'Public Opinion Days' was suggested to ensure that there is a clear understanding of what the town wants, it was felt that if they were held at other sites such as outside Waitrose and Tesco on weekends other people could be targeted. It is important that any data gathered at the Public Opinion Days is analysed and reported back to the next Full Council meeting. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Council note the progress on the Henley Neighbourhood Plan to date, and authorise the payment of up to £20,000 from the contingency budget towards further development of the plan.

Members discussed the appointment of a Neighbourhood Planning Steering Committee to analyse the outcomes from the Public Opinion Day and to report back to Full Council. It was **RESOLVED**

that the appointment of a Neighbourhood Planning Steering Committee, and the membership thereof be adopted as set out below:

Mr M W Kennedy - Town Clerk (Chair)
Councillor Mr M Akehurst
Councillor Mr W Hamilton
Councillor Mr D Hinke
Councillor Mr D R Nimmo-Smith

Councillor Ms L Meachin expressed an interest in being involved in this steering group.

20. CODE OF CONDUCT

The report of the Town Clerk on the new Code of Conduct was before the Council.

Arising from the report:

Several Members expressed concern over the set procedures for handling complaints made by individuals towards Councillors for alleged breaches in the Code. The view was expressed that this Council should influence SODC in the way it handles complaints to avoid the damaging way in which complaints have been investigated in the past.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the Council adopt the Oxfordshire Code of Conduct with effect from 1 July 2012 incorporating the recently published statutory instrument defining pecuniary interests as a replacement for the Council's existing Code of

Conduct adopted on 1 July 2007; and that the Town Clerk writes to SODC'S Monitoring Officer confirming the Council's wish to discuss more fully the way in which complaints are handled and our desire to be fully involved in that process.

The meeting closed at 10pm

ppd

Mayor