

Present: The Vice Chairman, Councillor D Clenshaw
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor S Gawrysiak
Councillor M Akehurst (substituting for Councillor Mrs J Wood)
Councillor Miss S Evans
Councillor Miss K Gehrman
Councillor D Nimmo Smith (substituting for Mrs J Bland)
Councillor D Silvester
Councillor I Reissmann

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

Also Present: Councillor D Hinke (part)
2 members of the public
1 member of the press

In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, the Vice Chairman, Councillor D Clenshaw took the Chair.

53. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood and the Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin

54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

55. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Mr R Atkin – Elizabeth Road – Minute 48 - spoke in support of his proposal to create a Jubilee Walk along the Fairmile and his report on the agenda and questioned the informal comments from Oxfordshire County Council Highways Department regarding pedestrian safety.

56. MINUTES

- i. The minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 13 November 2012, as amended by Full Council on 27 November 2012, were approved and then signed by the Chairman, Councillor D Clenshaw as true record.
- ii. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee held on 20 November 2012 and the following comments were made:-
- *Page 4 – Tiered Planters in Market Place* – A member suggested Henley in Bloom investigate replacing the tiered planters rather than repairing the damage. It was noted this will be passed to the Henley in Bloom Committee for consideration.

- *Page 4 – Hanging Baskets – Greys Road.* A member queried whether the hanging baskets should be purchased rather than hired for one year? A member responded that the intention is that the baskets would be hired as part of the horticultural contract on the same basis as the other Council hanging baskets in the town, which includes planting up, watering, feeding etc.

- *Page 4 – Hanging Baskets –* A member queried entering the national “In Bloom” competition in this time of recession bearing in mind the associated costs. A response was given that Henley was only eligible to enter the national competition in 2013 due to its success in the regional competition in 2012. It was noted the funding was a matter for discussion by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee and as part of the budget setting process could be raised at Full Council on 15 January 2013 when the precept for 2013/14 is considered.

- *Page 1 – Area Adjacent to the Fire Station –* A member referred to the removal of the horse chestnut outside of the Fire Station, which had made a large expanse of wall visible and this was still a matter of concern for a number of residents in West Street. In response a member confirmed residents along with officers at the Fire Station are supportive of the Henely in Bloom initiative to create a flowerbed in this area.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee held on 20 November 2012 be received, approved and adopted.

- iii. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Christmas Events and Decorations Sub Committee held on 12 November 2012 and

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the Christmas Events and Decorations Sub Committee held on 12 November 2012 be received, approved and adopted.

- iv. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Christmas Events and Decorations Sub Committee held on 26 November 2012 and

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the Christmas Events and Decorations Sub Committee held on 26 November 2012 be received, approved and adopted.

- v. a) The Committee received and considered the notes of the Toilet Refurbishment Working Group held on 11 December 2012 and the following comments were made:-

- contact has been made and meetings are planned to take place with the British Toilet Association and a local disability group to seek their views on the project
- Councillors are asked to put forward their views
- the toilets are in a prime position and are well known and therefore the refurbishment should commence as soon as possible
- it was noted that although speed is a consideration it is also important to ensure the refurbishment is considered and undertaken to a high standard
- it is an excellent idea to convert the overflow ladies toilets into a family room and this facility will be popular with families visiting the Meadows
- the specification needs to be more precise and any expertise from Councillors would be welcome

It was **RESOLVED**

that the notes of the Toilet Refurbishment Working Group held on 11 December 2012 be received, approved and adopted.

- b)** The Committee received the proposed terms of reference of the Toilet Working Group and after discussion **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the following terms of reference for the Toilet Working Group be adopted:-

- **to report to Recreations and Amenities Committees rather than the Mill Meadows Committee for reasons of expediency.**
- **to draw up a draft specification for the refurbishment of the toilets within a draft revenue budget of £50,000 (subject to Full Council approval on 15 January 2013), to be submitted to Recreations and Amenities for final approval**

- c)** The Committee received, considered and noted the amended draft specification and **RESOLVED**

that a further specification, taking into account the views of members, the British Toilet Association and a local disability group be presented to a future Recreation and Amenities Committee.

57. **FAIRMILE VERGES – JUBILEE WALK**

The Committee received, considered and noted a report which provided an update on the Jubilee Walk as follows:-

- funding from TOE2 was declined as the Board felt the provision of the bridge was not necessary to create the walk and they raised concerns regarding encouraging people to cross the Fairmile at the carriageway splitter (by the 30mph speed limit signs), which is not a designated pedestrian refuge.
- informal technical advice from the Highways Department which raised concerns regarding this crossing point confirming that the island is not a pedestrian facility.
- an alternative route for the walk less than 100m away which utilised an existing culverted bridge negated the need for a new pedestrian bridge over the Assendon Spring and would not encourage pedestrians crossing the A4130 by the carriageway splitter

The Committee also received, considered and noted a report from the proposer Mr R Atkin which questioned the safety concerns of crossing at the carriageway splitter.

The Committee noted that issues regarding traffic safety should be considered by the Traffic Advisory Committee rather than Recreation and Amenities Committee.

After discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Town Council supports the principal of creating a Jubilee Walk along the Fairmile using an existing culverted bridge rather than installing a new pedestrian bridge.

that the Traffic Advisory Committee considers the safety aspects of the Jubilee Walk as proposed by Mr Atkin – in particular the part of the walk that proposes crossing the A4130 at the carriage way splitter by the speed limit change to 30mph at Northfield End. This crossing point is required if the adjacent pedestrian bridge with hand rails over the Assendon Spring is to be installed.

58. **BUDGET**

The Committee received and noted the outturn of the budget report to November 2012 and were pleased to note the income from the Mill Meadows Car Park despite the inclement weather in November.

59. **PROGRESS REPORT**

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

A Sculpture in Henley (Mermaid) – it was noted the Heads of Terms document would be an agenda item on the next Recreations and Amenities Committee. The Town Clerk agreed to circulate to all members the initial thoughts of the Council's solicitors with regard to the Heads of Terms document. The Town Clerk reported a letter had been received from the Planning Department at South Oxfordshire District Council advising that planning permission will not be required for the mermaid statue to be located at Red Lion Lawn.

Red Lion Lawn – the Committee noted the works at Red Lion Lawn have been carried out to a very high standard and thanked the Town Clerk and Councillor D Nimmo Smith for their assistance on this project.

Footpath at 40 Acre Field – The Committee noted a delay has been experienced in the formal dedication of the path due to the need to seek clarification of the exact ownership boundary on the ground with the adjoining land owner. It is hoped dedication will be formalised in the spring and in the meantime the path is open for the public use.

60. POPLAR TREES AT MILL MEADOWS

The Committee received, considered and noted a report on the replanting proposal for the poplar trees at Mill Meadows following the removal of seven trees at the eastern edge of the River and Rowing Museum (left hand side of the main entrance). The Committee acknowledged that in consideration of the District Council granting a 5 day notice order for the removal of these trees it was on condition that they be replanted. The suggested species was noted as the fastigate oak.

The Committee was asked to consider the planned removal of the remaining five trees (subject to planning approval). The full replanting proposed was required by South Oxfordshire District Council before they would consider the removal of these trees which are covered by a Tree Protection Order.

During discussion the following points were made:-

- further consultation with the River and Rowing Museum should take place and it was suggested a Working Group be formed
- the Town Clerk confirmed consultation had taken place with interested parties including the River and Rowing Museum, Tree Wardens and South Oxfordshire District Council Forestry Department.
- members noted the season for planting trees finishes at the end of March however the proposed trees will be in situ for many years and the choice of type requires careful consideration
- the Parks Services were thanked for their swift action in attending to the fallen tree at 10pm and the Town Clerk for liaising with all parties

The Clerk reassured the Committee that the River and Rowing Museum had been fully informed of the progress in this matter at every opportunity and that it was the Council's responsibility to ensure the health and safety of the public. There is already an obligation to replant 5 trees and the removal of the remaining 5 poplars with a total of 9 fastigate oak trees was the recommended species of tree put forward by the Council's appointed arboriculturist and endorsed by South Oxfordshire District Council and the Tree Wardens.

After discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that an application be made to South Oxfordshire District Council for the removal of the remaining five poplar trees on the eastern verge of Mill Meadows outside the River and Rowing Museum, the replanting of fastigate oaks and selective crown reduction works to six trees on the western verge; and that the replanting proposal in support of the application be approved.

61. OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Committee received the consultation document on the initial review of Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) 1 and the outline RoWIP 2 and after discussion the Committee **RESOLVED**

that Councillor S Gawrysiak complete the return form and circulate to members prior to submission to Oxfordshire County Council.

Post meeting note: The response deadline has been extended to 31 January 2013.

62. OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – FOOTWAY PROGRAMME 2012/13 – RIVERSIDE

The Committee received a report from Oxfordshire County Council regarding the proposed resurfacing of the footway along the riverside between Friday Street and Station Road and considered which colour the Town Council would prefer for the surface from a selection of swatches. The Committee noted the works are due to take place in Spring 2013 (depending on the weather).

After consideration the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Oxfordshire County Council Highways Department be advised that maple gold be put forward as the preferred colour option and option 1 re the preferred footway cross section of the Town Council for the resurfacing of the walkway between Meadow Road and Friday Street.

63. MILL AND MARSH MEADOWS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee received, considered and noted a report regarding a Management Plan for Mill and Marsh Meadows and the application for national accreditation under the Green Flag Award and made the following comments:-

- adequate distinction should be made between the character and uses of Mill and Marsh Meadows.
- the Parks Services Manager has expertise particularly as he is a Green Flag Judge

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Town Council adopts the concept of the Mill and Marsh Meadows Management Plan. The initial draft to be updated with input from Councillors and further contribution from the Parks Services. An updated version to be presented to the Mill Meadows and River Sub Committee on 22 January 2013 for information and comment prior to submission for the Green Flag Award. The Recreation and Amenities Committee to be updated with progress and developments.

that the Town Council gives approval for the Parks Services to apply for national accreditation for Mill and Marsh Meadows under the Green Flag Award.

64. **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 matters which were about to be discussed were considered to be confidential.

MINUTES OF THE CONFIDENTIAL SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2013

65. **CONFIDENTIAL**

i) **FIRST CHAPEL**

The Committee received the lease relating to the First Chapel, Fairmile Cemetery with George Orwell's Henley Limited in order for signing at Full Council and after consideration and discussion **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the lease relating to the First Chapel, Fairmile Cemetery with George Orwell's Henley Limited be approved for signing and sealing at Full Council on 15 January 2013.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

bw

Chairman