

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

In Attendance: Mr M W Kennedy – Town Clerk
Miss J Smith – Minute Taker / Committee Administrator
Mr C Austin - Town Sergeant
District Councillor W Hall
County Councillor Dr P Skolar

Also Present: 1 member of the press
11 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.

55. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs J Wood.

56. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Mrs E Hodgkin & Mrs J Bland, Finance Strategy & Management, minute 79 Henley Day Centre – personal (member of the management committee)
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith Planning Committee, 10 January minute 160 Planning Application by Lafarge Aggregates Ltd – personal (County Councillor member of Oxfordshire County Council Planning & Regulation Committee)

57. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 29 November 2011 were approved and signed by the Chairman, as a true record.

58. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr K Arlett, Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett wondered why it had taken South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) 38 years to find savings of 2.5% in their council tax (Councillor W Hall's report refers). He also referred to the Town Council's proposed 1.6% increase in the precept and suggested the precept should either remain the same or should be reduced given the savings of £73k in 2011/12.

It was agreed to cover Mr Arlett's question under agenda item 8(iv).

Councillor Miss L Hillier, River Terrace

Councillor Miss Hillier raised an issue regarding a complaint about bicycles obstructing the highway outside her coffee shop in Friday Street. Members were advised that the Highways Officer had suggested that as space on the pavement outside her shop was limited perhaps a bicycle rack should be installed at the end of Friday Street replacing the existing planter.

This matter was discussed at the Traffic Advisory Committee held on 17 January 2012.

Mr C Russell, Bell Street

Mr Russell referred to the successful legal action he had taken out against the clumper at Northfield End who had clamped his vehicle whilst unloading his car in front of his house. Mr Russell also asked if the formal objection regarding the Bell Street stopping up order had been sent.

It was confirmed a letter of objection had been sent and an acknowledgement had been received from the Department for Transport.

In response to a member's question as to why this letter had not been circulated to members of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee before it was sent, the Council was advised that this had not been possible due to time pressures.

Mr K Arlett, Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett referred to District Councillor W Hall's report (attached to the agenda) regarding Review of Polling Stations and asked why SODC were considering having an additional polling station when in 2011 there were fewer people on the Electoral Role, and a greater number now receive postal votes. He suggested this was yet another misjudgement by the Returning Officer and would potentially mean more costs borne by Henley Town Council (HTC).

It was agreed to cover Mr Arlett's question under the District Councillor's reports agenda item.

Mr K Arlett, Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett referred to District Councillor Mrs J Wood report and the statement made by a Minister of Religion in the Cabinet who said 'statistics show most of the unemployed are probably drug addicts/teenage mothers'. He felt that if this statement had been reported correctly it was offensive and an apology should be made by the Cabinet Member.

As District Councillor Mrs J Wood was not present at the meeting clarification could not be sought.

Post meeting note: A response has been received and forwarded to Mr Arlett.

Councillor W Hamilton, Greys Road

Councillor Hamilton referred to the recent 'Living Advent Calendar' event and enthused that this was a fantastic event and HTC should formally write to Mrs J Perigo to thank her for organising this free event.

A member confirmed that Mrs Perigo had undertaken a mammoth piece of work with help from a dedicated organisation committee and the event had been very successful. A future event would be discussed at a forthcoming Christmas Events and Decorations Sub Committee to be held next week.

59. **DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Members had before them reports (attached to the agenda) from District Councillors Mrs E Hodgkin, Mrs J Bland, Mrs J Wood and W Hall and from County Councillors Dr P Skolar and D Nimmo-Smith. It was

RESOLVED that the reports be received and noted.

The Chairman congratulated the District and County Councillors for submitting their thorough reports in a timely fashion.

Matter arising from reports:

District Councillors Reports

In response to a question on how Councillors had voted on the debate regarding the District Councillor allowances scheme held on 15 December 2011, all three District Councillors confirmed that they had voted against an increase in these allowances.

A member asked what progress had been made on progressing a meeting with the Youth Council sub committee. It was confirmed Mr Sam Bowden had provided a very comprehensive report and that a meeting date was still to be arranged.

County Councillors' Reports

County Councillor Dr P Skolar gave the following verbal update:

Boundary Report: final report was now available, with elections for divisions being made in 2013.

HGV's: Lafarge have put in for Planning to increase extraction of gravel and sand in Sonning which will increase HGV traffic through Henley.

Big Society Funds: confirmed following a recent seminar funding will still be available next year. He confirmed that following a question raised by a member regarding the future of the Henley Bluebells Group that he was pleased to report that funding will continue for the foreseeable future.

Social Services Care Responsive Team: confirmed a team had been set up to respond 24/7. Contact numbers: 0845 050 7666 – daytime weekdays and 0800 833 408 – evenings, weekends and bank holidays.

County Councillor Dr P Skolar advised that he had been selected to take part in the Queen's Jubilee Pageant on the River Thames on 3 June 2012. He would be flying a flag for Oxfordshire and asked permission to fly a flag for Henley Town Council. It was

RESOLVED that permission be granted.

A member asked that as 400 extra houses were planned for Henley the monitoring of NO₂ omissions needed to be readdressed in Duke Street and asked for someone to contact SODC to resurrect this issue in the town.

It was confirmed that the Traffic Advisory Committee were already addressing this issue with SODC and a representative had been invited to attend a future meeting to discuss the EU Directive on these omissions.

A member referred to County Councillor D Nimmo-Smith's report concerning the meeting to be held on the 22 February regarding the 2012 Henley Triathlon at the Town Hall. It was agreed that the Henley Standard should publicise this date and ask for members of the public to pass on comments via the Councillors. It was confirmed that this was not a public meeting but all Councillors were invited to attend. It was also confirmed that a Henley Partnership Business Section meeting was due to be held in late January and that Mrs J Perigo should also publicise the meeting on the 22 February with local retailers to invite their comments.

60. **REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members had before them copies of the following reports from outside bodies (attached to the agenda) which were noted:

- (i) A report from Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils held on 21 November 2011.
- (ii) A report on the Larger Local Councils conference held on 30 November 2011.

61. **MAYOR'S REPORT**

- (i) Members had before them the list of Mayoral engagements from 23 November 2011 to 11 January 2012 inclusive, copy attached to the agenda. It was

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

- (ii) The Mayor advised she had no other announcements to make.

A member asked how successful the inaugural Santa Fancy Dress Fun Run had been on 4 December 2011. The Mayor confirmed that £300 had been raised for the Mayor's local charities. The Mayor took the opportunity to thank everyone who had been involved in organising all the Christmas events in 2011.

The Mayor confirmed that copies of the Councillors' photographs taken on the 29 November 2011 would be made available soon.

62. **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

- (i) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6 and 20 December 2011 and 10 January 2012 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6 and 20 December 2011 and 10 January 2012 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

- (ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 13 December 2011 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 13 December 2011 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 79 - Elections

A view was expressed that it was too early to ask Mr David Buckle to come and talk to the Council about elections in 2015, especially as an independent review had been already been held and lessons learnt.

It was suggested that clarity needed to be sought following poor planning in the 2007 and 2011 elections that this would not happen again in 2015. A motion was put forward that no further action be taken at this time. Motion was lost, whereupon it was

RESOLVED that Mr Buckle be invited again to come and talk to this Council, and that payment for the election costs be withheld until such time as talks have taken place.

Minute 85 – Bus Shelter on the Reading Road

It was proposed the resolution be changed to 'that contact be made with Tesco and the bus company to see if it would be acceptable to relocate the bus stop/shelter. Consultation should take place with the developer, the residents and the public.' It was

RESOLVED that contact be made with Tesco and the bus company to see if it would be acceptable to relocate the bus stop/shelter. Consultation should take place with the developer, the residents and the public.

- (iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 20 December 2011 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 20 December 2011 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 75 – Review of Final 2012-13 Budget & Precept

It was proposed that item 9 on the agenda be brought forward and approval sought for the final 2012-13 revenue budget (attached to the agenda) and capital expenditure budget having regard to the notes of the Value For Money & Resources Group (VFM&R) Group meeting on the 5 January 2012 (attached to the agenda) be approved.

63 .

2012-13 BUDGET

In response to Mr Arlett's question during Public Participation, it was confirmed that the budget included a deficit of £17k and a likely surplus of £73k in 2011/12. However, the increase in the precept was to cover any unforeseen or increased expenditure e.g. Red Lion Lawn retaining wall repairs.

A discussion ensued regarding increasing the precept at this time, especially when for instance an increase to the Mayor's allowance had been agreed. It was suggested that HTC should be managing the budget without having to raise the precept. A member advised it was a modest increase and compared to the precept of other major Oxfordshire towns Henley was still the lowest offering Henley residents value for money.

A recorded voted was requested.

| For | Against | Abstention |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Cllr M Akehurst | Cllr Mrs J Bland | |
| Cllr D Clenshaw | Cllr Miss S Evans | |
| Cllr S Gawrysiak | Cllr W Hamilton | |
| Cllr Miss K Gehrmann | Cllr Miss L Hillier | |
| Cllr Mrs E Hodgkin | Cllr D Nimmo-Smith | |
| Cllr D Hinke | Cllr D Silvester | |
| Cllr Ms L Meachin | | |
| Cllr Mrs P Phillips | | |
| Cllr I Reissmann | | |

The Motion was carried whereupon, it was

RESOLVED that having regard to the notes of the VFM&R Group meeting on the 5 January 2012, the 2012-13 revenue budget, and capital expenditure budget be approved.

64.

2012-13 PRECEPT

It was proposed that item 10 on the agenda be brought forward and approval sought to approve the level of precept (£487,500) to be levied on South Oxfordshire District Council.

A recorded voted was requested.

| For | Against | Abstention |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Cllr M Akehurst | Cllr Mrs J Bland | |
| Cllr D Clenshaw | Cllr Miss S Evans | |
| Cllr S Gawrysiak | Cllr W Hamilton | |
| Cllr Miss K Gehrmann | Cllr Miss L Hillier | |
| Cllr Mrs E Hodgkin | Cllr D Nimmo-Smith | |
| Cllr D Hinke | Cllr D Silvester | |
| Cllr Ms L Meachin | | |
| Cllr Mrs P Phillips | | |
| Cllr I Reissmann | | |

The Motion was carried whereupon, it was

RESOLVED that the level of precept to be levied on South Oxfordshire District Council for the year 2012/13 shall be £487,500.

65.

COUNCIL TAX LEAFLET

It was proposed that item 11 on the agenda be brought forward and approval sought for the Council Tax Leaflet. A revised copy had been tabled at the meeting.

A debate ensued on the wording in the leaflet, in particular the fact that a new AstroTurf pitch at the newly renamed Jubilee Park was already open, therefore, not something new for 2012-13. Concern was also expressed regarding the mention in the Mayor's message to the cuts to funding made by District and County Councils and members asked for this sentence to be removed from the statement.

A recorded vote was requested.

| For | Against | Abstention |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Cllr M Akehurst | Cllr Mrs J Bland | |
| Cllr D Clenshaw | Cllr Miss S Evans | |
| Cllr S Gawrysiak | Cllr W Hamilton | |
| Cllr Miss K Gehrman | Cllr Miss L Hillier | |
| Cllr Mrs E Hodgkin | Cllr D Nimmo-Smith | |
| Cllr D Hinke | Cllr D Silvester | |
| Cllr Ms L Meachin | | |
| Cllr Mrs P Phillips | | |
| Cllr I Reissmann | | |

The Motion was carried whereupon, it was

RESOLVED that the Revised Council Tax leaflet as tabled at the meeting be approved, without further amendment.

The Council proceeded to consider matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance, Strategy and Management Committee held on 20 December 2011.

Minute 80 – SODC Budget Consultation

It was confirmed that the consultation consolidated response had been returned before the 13 January 2012 deadline.

Minute 81 – Northfield End – Stopping Up Order

It was confirmed that Councillors Reissmann, Gawrysiak and Akehurst had collectively constructed and sent a response to the Department of Transport stating the Council's objections under delegated powers.

A member stated that this minute had not been actioned correctly as a draft response should have been circulated to the members of the Finance, Strategy and Management before forwarding to the Town Clerk for submission under delegated powers. It was confirmed the final response would be circulated by the Town Clerk to members of the committee.

66.

TOWNLANDS STEERING GROUP

Members had before them and noted a written report (attached to the agenda) from the Chairman of the Townlands Steering Group (TSG).

Arising from the report:

It was confirmed that responses to the concerns raised by TSG members regarding the difficulties in scrutinising the commercial aspects of the bidders' proposals were still being considered by the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and a meeting had been proposed on the 24 January 2012 to go through these concerns with PCT.

Confirmation was given on the timetable that a meeting would be held on the 18 January 2012 with the two bidders, Amber Solutions and Kajima. On 20 February at the Town Hall at 7.30pm the bidders will present information to the community for comments/views. This will be the last chance to influence the final decision on the successful bidder, before a final decision takes place at the end of March. The Henley Standard would be asked to promote this public meeting as well as it being publicised on the town's notice boards.

A member asked if the companies were British and it was confirmed that one was European the other Japanese.

A member asked if the TSG members concerns had increased. It was confirmed that there were not concerns with the technical part of the proposal and that all health services requested would be provided. However, the concerns raised by TSG were to do with the master plan, the hospital layout and making sure the financial model is right and good value for Henley in the future.

The Chairman invited Councillors, officers and members of the public to join her for refreshments in the Mayor's Parlour.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

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Mayor