

Present: Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor Mrs P Buckett
Councillor A Follett (substitute for Councillor Miss L Pye)
Councillor Miss L Hillier
Councillor Mrs R Myer
Councillor I Reissmann
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor C I Pye (ex-officio)
The Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood (ex-officio)

In Attendance: Councillor D Nimmo-Smith
Mr M Kennedy – Town Clerk

Also Present: 1 Member of the Press
1 Member of the Public
PC C Churchill – Thames Valley Police
PC V Simms – Thames Valley Police
Mr Ian Travers Smith – Oxfordshire County Council Emergency
Planning Officer

76. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Miss L Pye and S Smith. An apology for lateness was received from Councillor Mrs J Bland.

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

78. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

There were no questions from the Public.

79. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 26 October 2010 were received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

80. POLICE

The Committee received a verbal update from PC Vicky Simms. The PCSO quarterly report for the period July-September had not been prepared by the District Council and was not available for distribution. However, PC Simms gave a report on the PCSOs work for the last month. 69 parking tickets were issued while 6 surgeries were held during November enabling the public to address their concerns to the Neighbourhood Team. Around 50 people attended each surgery. Specific problems relating to parking violations and obstruction were identified in West Street, Friday Street, Albert Road, Duke Street and Deanfield Road and the police had responded by issuing 27 tickets. The PCSO had also made 47 home visits in response to calls made to the Police.

Members were informed that when the PCSO is on patrol in Henley this is recorded as one patrol whereas a PCSO covering the rural areas could patrol several settlements in a day and would record this as 5-6 patrols in a day.

The Chairman thanked PC Simms for her report and invited questions. A view was expressed that there had been over zealous ticketing for parking violations. PC Simms assured the Committee that this was not the case but that the police were simply responding to the concerns expressed to them by the public. Although the police had not issued any fixed penalty notices for littering offences, several warnings had been given. PC Simms suggested that a partnership approach was required to address the problem of cigarette ends.

Responding to a question on Police Community Surgeries, PC Simms said that they are held in various locations; each surgery is promoted and advertised and are very well attended. PC Simms explained the distinction between anti-social behaviour and crime. The former does not involve criminal damage but is behaviour that lacks consideration for others and that may cause damage to society.

Thanks were recorded to the Police for their support throughout the Christmas Festival on Friday 3 December. Unlike last year, there were no reports of anti-social behaviour at Mill Meadows. In response to a question on how the Council can make objections to the Licensing Authority on licensed premises, PC Simms confirmed that application must be made to SODC. An objection must be based on one of the four licensing principles. No reference can be made to objections raised by the Police.

The Chairman thanked PCs Churchill and Simms for their attendance. It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the report be received and noted

81. CCTV

Members had before them details of the CCTV revenue costs for 2010/11 and estimated costs for 2011/2012, the notes of a meeting of the CCTV Management Group held on Tuesday 26 October 2010 and the CCTV quarterly report for Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford, copies having been issued. It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the reports be received and noted

82. EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Chairman welcomed Mr Ian Travers-Smith, the Emergency Planning Officer for Oxfordshire County Council to the meeting. Mr Travers-Smith gave an interesting and lively PowerPoint presentation (available on the OCC website) on Emergency Planning. He highlighted the explosion and fire at Sutton Courtenay Tyres and petrol station in 2008, which led to about 100 nearby houses being evacuated and the involvement of the emergency services and volunteers.

Mr Travers-Smith explained how Parish and Town Councils can prepare a Community Emergency Plan. This would record safe places that people displaced from their homes could use as Survivor Reception Centres or Rest Centres. The plan would also identify those people that can and are willing to help in an emergency, equipment that might be useful for self-help in an emergency and a list of useful contacts for use in a crisis.

Councillor Mrs J Bland entered the meeting at 8.14pm

The Chairman thanked Mr Travers-Smith for his presentation and invited questions. The following points were covered:

- The provision of sand bags in flooding situations is a District Council function with the County Council overseeing the allocation from a strategic perspective;
- Mass evacuations, for example during the Regatta is a police function;
- The location of Survivor Reception and Rest Centres is not normally publicised as this could lead to potential terrorist attacks; and
- A Parish or Town Emergency Plan is lodged with the District Council but the location of the Survivor Reception and Rest Centres is made known to the County Council.

The Chairman thanked Mr Travers-Smith for his attendance. It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the report be received and noted and that the Town Clerk be encouraged to prepare an Emergency Plan for the Town.

The Committee proceeded to consider information from the Henley Community Snow Clearing Volunteers 2010, copy having been issued. Their aim is to provide a co-ordinated response in case of heavy snow or ice by:-

- Organising volunteers to help clear snow and ice to improve pedestrian safety in the mains streets in Henley;
- Encouraging retailers and businesses to clear snow in front of their premises; and
- Working with local authorities to ensure snow clearing is arranged speedily.

In noting that some 30 volunteers have already pledged their support, the Committee was asked whether the Council would be willing to give assistance in kind such as providing access to grit from the council's own supply; small help from the council's parks service; disseminating information to local traders; encouraging local businesses to help clear snow from pavements and clarifying the position on public liability. It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the Council provides assistance in kind as outlined in the report and that the Town Clerk prepares a letter to all local business in the town that explains the situation on the risk of litigation caused by snow clearing and encourages all shopkeepers to clear snow from outside their premises.

Councillor Nimmo-Smith left the meeting at 8.40pm

83. PROGRESS

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

Bus Shelters in Henley

In noting the installation of a new shelter in Hart Street, it was reported that the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan, LTP3, makes reference to working with Henley Town Council to provide five or six bus shelters within the town. As this is now in hand, it was suggested that this should be removed from LTP3.

Lay Lights

Members expressed their disappointment that no further progress had been made on this item. It was noted that Denis McCoy had not yet been approached to work with the Council to find the best way forward with this application. It was

RESOLVED

that the Committee Administrator takes urgent steps to progress this item.

Wi-Fi

The Town Clerk reported receipt of an email from the editor of the *Henley Standard* requesting that the working group co-opts Narin Bahar their web strategist, to be a member of the group by virtue of her knowledge and expertise. It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that Narin Bahar from the *Henley Standard* be co-opted onto the Wi-Fi Working Group.

Henley Town Centre Litter Working Group

In noting that a response is still awaited from OCC and Verdant on the installation of the new litter bins, for which this Council has agreed to spend £5,000, concern was expressed that this expenditure must be incurred by 31 March. It was

RESOLVED

that the Committee Administrator takes urgent steps to progress this item.

84. BUDGET

Members had before them the budget report to October 2010 copy having been issued. It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the report be received and noted.

85. HENLEY INFORMATION CENTRE

Members had before them a summary of the number of enquires handled by staff at the Information Centre to 30 November 2010 and the number of visitors attending the Centre. It was reported that at a recent meeting of the Henley Partnership's Tourism Group a huge compliment was paid to the Council for the profile of the Henley Information Centre and the work carried out by the Information Centre Staff. It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the reports be received and noted and that the information on footfall be conveyed to the County and District Councils once a full year's data had been collected at the end of the year.

86. ALABASTER STATUE

The Committee considered a comprehensive report prepared by the Chairman regarding the late nineteenth century alabaster and bronze statue currently located on the second floor landing of the Town Hall. It was unanimously

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the Council should retain the statue and do nothing at this time except to clear away the coat stand and chairs in order that the statue may be seen and enjoyed by more people.

87. CONSULTATION ON CONCESSIONARY FARES

The Committee considered a letter from Oxfordshire County Council regarding the change of responsibility for Concessionary Fares Schemes from the District Council to the County Council. The Town Council's views on the new arrangements were invited for which comments must be submitted by 14 December at the latest. It was reported that subject to confirmation by full council, SODC will continue to fund the Henley handibus for the next 3 years. It was

RESOLVED

that the following representations be made to the public consultation:

- Confirmation from OCC that they will continue to issue concessionary bus passes to over 60s;
- Support the County Council's proposal to offer a common 9am weekday start;
- Support the proposal to continue to offer companion passes to those people required to travel with qualified disabled residents;
- Express no strong views to the proposal that the County Council will not offer alternatives to concessionary bus passes; and
- Express concern that support will continue in some way for the handibus which is used by elderly residents and that some alternative system of funding is found if concessionary fares are removed.

88. BLACKOUT BLINDS IN THE LARGE HALL

The Committee considered a request from the Henley Royal Regatta to install a permanent roller blackout blind in the Large Hall reducing the need for contractors to come in just prior to the Regatta Draw to blank off the South facing window so that the overhead projector could clearly be seen by all those attending the draw. It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that permission be granted provided there is no cost to the Council and subject to the views of the Listed Buildings Conservation Officer.

89. HENLEY FESTIVAL TOWPATH CLOSURE

Members considered a request from the Henley Festival for a short diversion of the tow path for the stage build from Monday 4 July to Wednesday 6 July, full diversion on show nights Wednesday 6 July – Sunday 10 July 2011 and short diversion for stage de-rig from Monday 11 July – Tuesday 12 July. It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that the application to close and divert the footpath be supported.

90. DIAMONDS AND PEARLS

The Committee received and considered a letter from Councillor Dr B Wood to the *Henley Standard*, copy having been circulated, requesting action from Henley Town Council regarding Diamonds and Pearls Lap Dancing Club. It was reported that 5 letters of support have been received by the Council.

It was reported that SODC will adopt the new Government guidelines that requires lap dancing clubs to be licensed as “sex establishments” which will come into force in March 2011. It was understood that this will give the District Council greater powers to restrict the licensing of these establishments. Applications can be refused on a wider range of grounds than the four licensing objectives set out in the Licensing Act 2003. It was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

that this Council urges the District Council to adopt the new Government guidelines that requires lap dancing clubs to be licensed as “sex establishments;

that representations be made to SODC seeking advice on the new regulations relating to lap dancing clubs;

that SODC be further informed that this Council has received 5 letters of complaint relating to Diamonds and Pearls and requests guidance from SODC as to whether town and parish councils are now able to influence the District Council’s decision on whether or not to grant a separate license; whether the Town Council is now considered to be an “interested person” and can make representations to the licensing authority; the process the Town Council would need to follow and any further advice as to how the Town Council can convey to the District Council the views expressed by concerned residents.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm

MWK

Chairman