

Present: The Chairman, Councillor Simon Smith
Councillor Dave Eggleton
The Mayor, Councillor Lorraine Hillier
Mrs Caroline Langler

In Attendance: Gareth Bartle – Parks Manager
Becky Walker – Minute Taker

Also Present: 1 member of the press
Councillor Jane Smewing
Mrs V Newton

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Victoria Newton of the Chelsea Fringe in Henley to the meeting.

60. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Miss Kellie Hinton. Mrs M Clarke and Mr P Simms.

61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

62. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

None.

63. VARIATION TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

In accordance with Standing Orders 5 (a) (vi), it was **RESOLVED**

that as the Mayor had to leave the meeting at 10.00am the order of business on the agenda be altered to allow item 5 – Minutes to be moved up the agenda and be considered next

64. MINUTES

The minutes of the Henley in Bloom and Civic Pride Sub Committee held on 2 November 2015 were received and the following comments were made:-

Minute 56 – Progress Report – Greener Streets : Better Lives – the Mayor advised that she would make an informal approach to South Oxfordshire District Council to see if they would, in principal, either sell or turn over the maintenance to the Town Council of the large bed on the left hand side as you enter the Kings Road Car park from the entrance nearest to the town centre.

Minute 48 – Sponsorship – the Chairman advised he had spoken to a member of the Town Team and a further update would be provided under the Progress Report

The Sub Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2016 which were then signed by the Chairman as a true record.

65. **CHELSEA FRINGE**

The Chairman welcomed Victoria Newton, organiser of the Chelsea Fringe in Henley to the meeting.

Mrs Newton thanked members for inviting her to the meeting to give an overview of the Chelsea Fringe in Henley 2016:-

- the Chelsea Fringe is an alternative festival to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show which is community driven and aims to be more accessible. Originally it focused on London but now is worldwide.
- the Chelsea Fringe in Henley started in 2015 when a variety of events were held including the Floral Flotilla.
- Fringe events have a small registration fee payable to the central organising Committee in London - the main benefit of which is being included in their nationwide press coverage. Last year the Fringe in Henley events had coverage in the RHS's garden magazine, a piece in the gardening section of the Telegraph and the Gardens illustrated magazine.
- the Floral Flotilla based at Mill Meadows will be the opening event of the Festival on Saturday 21 May and the Festival will run until 12 June 2016
- other events include Meditative Garden Walks are also being held at Greys Court

Cut Flower Market - Mrs Newton asked Henley in Bloom if they would like to be involved in holding a cut flower market in Henley during the Chelsea Fringe. Local professional growers and flower shops would be invited to have a stand to sell cut flowers. It would also be hoped that local residents would bring flowers from their gardens for sale.

Members were very supportive of both the Chelsea Fringe and the cut flower market and possible locations were considered. It was felt holding the event in one of the town's parks had advantages but may not attract the footfall.

The possibility of combining the event with the Plant Sale was also discussed and it was agreed advice should be sought from the Allotment Association (AA).

Mrs Newton asked if Councillor D Eggleton would provide a guided walk for the Chelsea Fringe showing the recent horticultural and community projects he and the Gainsborough Residents Association have been involved in.

After further discussion the Sub Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Henley in Bloom support the proposal to hold a cut flower market

that the Parks Manager meet with Mrs Newton to investigate possible locations for the cut flower market including the town's parks and advice be sought from the Allotment Association for the views on whether holding a cut flower market in the Market Place on the same day as the plant sale would be complimentary

***Post Meeting Note:** The Parks Manager met with Mrs Newton and visited the proposed sites. It was felt Makins and Freemans would not attract sufficient footfall, particularly in the first year of this event, and the Market Place would be the best location. The proposed dates would be Saturday 28 May 2016 which is the same day as the Plant Sale if the AA are in agreement.*

66. HENLEY IN BLOOM GARDENING AWARDS

Mrs C Langler advised the gardening competition brochure is in the process of being produced and she is keen to start distributing it.

Mrs Langler agreed that Pubs and Restaurants should be invited to enter the Pubs and Restaurants in Bloom competition (pub gardens and frontage) and who would produce the leaflet would be considered. It was hoped the local media could promote this competition.

The Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

that up to £200 be allocated for the printing and distribution of the Gardening Competition and Pubs and Restaurants entry leaflets

The Mayor, Councillor Lorraine Hillier left the meeting.

67. PROJECTS FOR 2016

Members considered for projects for 2016 including:-

- **HiT litter** – members agreed the date as **Saturday 16 April 2016**
It was felt the arrangements worked well last year having a meeting point at Market Place and the Gainsborough Estate. Investigation to be made as to whether soup can be provided at Christ Church and the costs.

The Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

that up to £100 be allocated to provide soup for the HiT litter event

Members were asked to consider ways to tackle litter throughout the year as part of the Town Council's Corporate Plan and the following suggestions were made:-

- cigarette bins should be provided outside each pub and restaurant in the town centre and establishments be encouraged to empty them regularly
- that cigarette bin attachments be added to the town centre bins
- that chewing gum boards should be provided around the town centre to deter chewing gum marking the pavements

The Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

that the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee feed back to the Town and Community and Recreation and Amenities Committees to suggest:- cigarette bins be encouraged outside all pubs and restaurants in the town centre; cigarette bin attachments be added to town centre bins where possible and chewing gum boards be provided in the town centre to encourage people to dispose of their chewing gum in a responsible way

- **Plant Sale** - members received information from the Allotment Association (AA) regarding the plant sale. Originally the money was split equally between the AA and Henley in Bloom which reflected the provision of plants provided by growers from the AA and the HiB/Gardening Buddies – the latter has

now declined therefore it seems reasonable that HiB does not benefit in the same way financially. Members agreed it was part of the remit of HiB to work with community groups and support events such as the Plant Sale and therefore were keen to still be involved regardless of the financial return.

After further discussion the Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

that the Allotment Association be thanked for their comments regarding the Plant Sale and that proceeds will not be donated to Henley in Bloom however offered to support the event eg via promoting and manpower on the day if required by the Allotment Association

- **Town Centre Pollution** - members considered ways to reduce town centre pollution through planting as follows:-
 - Mrs Langler is very supportive of finding ways to reduce air pollution particularly in canyon streets and suggested the planting of small silver birches at the bottom of Market Place and/or outside Huddledays in Duke Street where the pavement widens.

Mrs Newton informed members of a new initiative in London (organised by Team London Bridge) whereby a competition was held to create small, portable, modular micro-parks that can replace car parking spaces from a week to up to a year – they include seating and planting aimed improving air quality and the local environment and includes an air quality monitor. This highlighted the point that any planting to reduce air quality should be publicised so that residents and visitors are aware.

The Chairman advised that as part of the Town Council's new horticultural contract (from May 2016) pollution reducing planting would be considered.

It was acknowledged that it was important to monitor before and after pollution levels to gauge the effectiveness of pollution reducing planting.

Members noted a number of Committees and organisations are discussing ways of reducing air pollution eg the Henley Transport Strategy Group, Henley in Transition as well as the Town Council and these groups may have access to budgets if the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee could make suggestions.

It was **RESOLVE TO RECOMMEND**

that investigation be undertaken into the possibility of having planters with pollution reducing plants eg silver birch saplings in planters at the bottom of Market Place and on the wider areas of pavement in Duke Street and this be considered by the relevant Town Council Committee

Post meeting note: Mrs C Langler and the Parks Manager met with Mr K Stenning, Area Steward, Oxfordshire County Council highways and he agreed in principle to allowing the Town Council placing

planters in certain places in Duke Street, Market Place and Bell Street subject to precise locations, size of planters and plants being submitted to the him and subject to specific conditions regarding responsibilities, insurance, maintenance etc. The location of planters must be 0.45 m from the kerb, must leave at least 1.2 m for the footway and there must be a clearance of at least 2.3 m head height (eg trees with branches).

- **planter on the bridge** – members discussed purchasing a second quadrant planter to match the existing one by the bridge in order make the size more comparable with the planter opposite by the Royal Regatta Headquarters. The Chairman advised that it is proposed to include the quadrant planters in the Horticultural Contract. Mrs Langler to continue discussions with the Leander Club re possible sponsorship.
- **Floral Train** – Mrs C Langler advised she was in the process of getting quotes for the repairs to the train and once received proposed contacting Great Western Railways regarding possible sponsorship to cover the cost of the repairs.

68. SCHOOLS IN BLOOM

The Parks Manager advised Mrs V Greenwood had suggested “A Bee and Butterfly Year” be the Schools in Bloom project for 2016 whereby schools are invited to focus and develop the year round habitat of bees and butterflies in their school grounds and create a pictorial record. An initial approach had been made to Badgemore School to investigate the viability of this project and it is planned to invite all primary schools in Henley to participate.

The Chairman advised Badgemore School had been awarded funds from the Henley Educational Charity for a Sensory Garden.

It was **RESOLVED**

that the Schools in Bloom project for 2016 be based on “the Bee and Butterfly Year”

It was suggested the schools could also be asked to grow plants for the cut flower market.

69. THAMES AND CHILTERN IN BLOOM

- i. Members considered entering the regional Thames and Chilterns in Bloom 2016 and **RESOLVED**

that Henley enter the regional Thames and Chilterns in Bloom competition in 2016 and approved the entry fee of £100 from the Henley in Bloom budget

- ii. The Sub Committee noted the postponement of the Thames and Chilterns in Bloom seminar to Autumn 2016.

70. BUDGET UPDATE

- i. Members received and noted the budget to date. The Chairman advised he is in the process of meeting with current sponsors.
- ii. The Sub Committee noted the Parks Services raised £112 from Christmas tree shredding in association with Henley in Bloom. Councillor D Eggleton offered to collect trees for shredding next year. Members noted this initiative is growing every year and thanked the Henley Standard and Henley Herald for publicising it.

71. SPONSORSHIP

The Chairman advised there are plans to involve the Town Manager, Rachel Rae in seeking sponsorship with aim of having improved communication with local retailers and businesses. The possibility of combining Henley in Bloom sponsorship with other Town Council initiatives eg Henley on Christmas in Bloom is also being investigated.

72. GARDENING BUDDIES UPDATE

The Sub Committee received a request for up to £400 to pay for projects the Gardening Buddies would like to carry out in 2016 including the revitalising and re-shaping of the Fire Station bed in West Street and putting edging in. Members acknowledged the considerable amount of work the Gardening Buddies undertake in the town and look forward to updates.

It was **RESOLVED**

that up to £400 be allocated from the Henley in Bloom budget for the Gardening Buddies to buy plants etc for new and existing projects in 2016 including revitalising of the Fire Station bed (as long as the planting is sustainable and low maintenance as the Fire Service do not have spare time to maintain the be)

Post Meeting Note – the Lions Club have donated £100 for plants for the Lions Wishing Well bed on the Reading Road.

73. CELEBRATION BEDS AT MILL MEADOWS

The Sub Committee received suggestions for a theme for the Celebration Beds 2016 from Gardening Buddies:-

- Her Majesty the Queen's 90th birthday (geraniums in white, red and a touch of blue in a petal design. Geraniums are drought resistant and easier for watering than marigolds)
- 350th Anniversary of Fire of London
- 950th Anniversary of William the Conqueror

Members discussed the options and **RESOLVED**

that the theme for the Celebration Beds for 2016 be Her Majesty the Queen's 90th birthday and further liaison take place between the Gardening Buddies and the Parks Manager re the planting scheme

that up to £200 be allocated from the Henley in Bloom budget for the interpretation board

74. PROGRESS REPORT

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

Greener Streets : Better Lives - the Mayor has agreed to speak informally with the District Council to see if they would consider, in principal, the Town Council maintaining the large shrub bed as you enter the Kings Road car park

Fruit Tree "Grow Your Own Initiative" – leaflets had been produced and distributed offering discounted fruit trees but there were no responses. It was felt this was a worthwhile project and was worthy of repeating possibly incorporating other types of trees. It could possibly combine this with the launch of the Community Orchard and the purchase of a community apple press.

75. NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Members acknowledged it would be beneficial to have additional member on the Sub Committee and considered suggestions – an update to be brought to the next meeting.

76. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting date was set as Tuesday 8 March 2016 at 9.30 am.

bw

Chairman