

Present: The Chairman, Councillor Mrs G Dodds  
The Vice Chairman, Councillor Miss L Pye  
The Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood  
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor C I Pye  
Councillor Mrs P G Buckett  
Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin  
Councillor Dr P Skolar  
Councillor Dr B Wood

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

Also present: 1 Member of the Press  
20 Members of the Public

**79. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs R Myer.

**80. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Dr P Skolar declared an interest in any discussions concerned with moorings.

**81. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs G Dodds welcomed all the members of the public to the meeting and invited questions or comments related to the agenda. Councillor Mrs Dodds noted the large number of users of the Makins skateboard park and asked if anyone would like to speak to the meeting prior to this item's discussion under the following agenda item.

*Mr Jonty French* – explained that the skatepark at Makins is regularly used by skateboarders and bmx bike riders however the age and type of the current equipment along with rubbish (eg broken glass) can mean the area is dangerous to users. Current users would be keen to see the facilities improved/expanded and would like to offer their help in any way to progress the project.

His views were supported by comments from a number of the users of the area who emphasised how popular the site is particularly with teenagers and that it provides a safe area to gather, have fun and learn from each other however the current equipment has limitations.

*Mr James Lipscombe* – introduced himself as one of the users of the site when the existing equipment was installed ten years ago and was pleased to see that the site was still heavily used. He felt the deterioration of the equipment was partly due to the materials originally chosen (wood and metal) and that concrete, although more expensive, would have lasted longer, provided better skating and would have reduced noise.

*Mr Colin Braithwaite – as a resident of Henley for over 35 years, emphasised the importance of choosing the right material for any new project and that concrete would be the most long lasting, sturdy, vandal proof, would produce least noise and would be preferred by users. Although expensive he felt sure users would want to help raise money and would want to be involved in the project.*

*Town Clerk's note: The area is checked for safety and cleared of rubbish 3 times a week. The equipment was further inspected on 27 April following a statement made that the equipment was dangerous. These claims are without foundation. The equipment is also annually checked by ROSPA. There have been no reported injuries to the Town Hall in the last 2 years. Users were advised that any injuries incurred due to the equipment should be reported to the Town Council offices. The Town Clerk also noted the difference between the dangers of the sport and the dangers resulting from the equipment.*

## **82. MAKINS RECREATION GROUND**

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs G Dodds welcomed Mr Dave Adamson to the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED**

**that standing orders be suspended to enable Mr Dave Adamson, and other supporters of renovating the skateboard area, to speak to the meeting.**

Mr Adamson introduced himself and explained that during his role as Group Scout Leader of the unit located adjacent to Makins Recreation Ground, he had got to know many of the users of the skateboard area and was aware of their desire to have improved facilities and would like to play an active part in investigating the feasibility of this. He felt that if this project had the Committee's initial support – he could form a Project Group which could gather information and report back to a future Recreation and Amenities Committee.

He envisaged that the feasibility group would consist of users of the area, neighbours, local businessmen/possible sponsors and Council members and their aims would be to:-

- Survey the neighbours for their opinions
- Survey the users for their opinions
- Investigate the design (above ground or built into the ground) , types of material available and costs
- Scale of the project, provision of toilets, shelter
- Noise issues, graffiti issues
- Investigate the possible sponsorship, funding and fundraising opportunities
- Look at timescales/deadlines (Diamond Jubilee project?)
- Investigate any limitations of the site – eg due to its location on a former tip, covenants on the land etc
- Procedures/planning requirements/health and safety/First Aid issues
- Visit other sites
- Are any other locations available?

The Chairman thanked Mr Adamson and it was **RESOLVED**

**that standing orders be re-instated.**

The Committee discussed the above proposal and made the following comments:-

- Other possible locations for a skateboard/bmx park had been investigated in the past and it was felt that Makins would be the only practical site in Town Council's ownership.
- The Project Group should be driven by the users rather than the Town Council.
- As this is the last meeting of the current Council it would be the decision of the new Committee as to whether it appointed Councillors on to the Project Group but it was felt this would be advantageous to the Group and the Council.
- The Committee was in broad support of the project but recognised that Town Council funding of the project maybe limited however it was noted the Town Council does support other sports in the town such as hockey, football and cricket.
- Local youth groups should also be invited to join the project group such as NOMAD.

**The Committee RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**that the Council supports further investigation into the improvement/ expansion of the multi-sports play area at Makins Recreation Ground.**

**that Mr Dave Adamson and local users form a Project Group in order to seek information to report back to a future Recreation and Amenities Committee on the following aspects:-**

- **the type of equipment envisaged (skateboard, bmx or both)**
- **type of material used – stainless steel, concrete, fibre glass**
- **provisional costs**
- **possible sponsorship**
- **an estimate of the number skateboard/bmx users**
- **noise considerations**

**that the incoming Council decides if it wishes to become involved in the Project Group.**

14 members of the public left the meeting.

**83. QUEEN ELIZABETH II FIELDS CHALLENGE**

The Committee received and considered a report and additional information regarding the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge. The Scheme has been created to mark Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. It aims to protect two thousand and twelve outdoor recreational spaces in communities all across the country as a permanent living legacy, whilst also providing a focal point for celebrations in 2012.

The Town Clerk suggested this presented a unique opportunity to participate in such a scheme however more investigation and consideration would need to be given as to how the scheme should be managed – for instance if an application should be made as a charitable or non charitable trust and also the implication this would have on funding opportunities.

The Committee discussed Makins as a possible site and noted that if nominated it would need to be for the grassed area only and not the area including Brunner Hall and the car park. Also investigation would need to be made into existing covenants on the land.

After discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**that Makins Recreation Ground be considered as a possible site for a Queen Elizabeth II Field and that a further report be brought to a future Recreation and Amenities Committee to include such factors as:-**

- **Ownership implications and restrictions on future use of the land**
- **Extent of possible funding**
- **Implications of registering the Trust as a Charity**
- **Possible costs**
- **Timescales**

**84. MINUTES**

- i. The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2011 were approved, adopted and signed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs G Dodds.
- ii. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee meeting held on 31 March 2011.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

**that the minutes of the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee held on 31 March 2011 be received, approved and adopted.**

- iii. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee meeting held on 14 April 2011.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

**that the minutes of the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee held on 14 April 2011 be received, approved and adopted.**

- iv. The Committee received and noted the notes of the Henley Sports Council meeting held on 14 March 2011.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

**that the notes of the Henley Sports Council meeting held on 14 March 2011 be received and noted.**

- v. The Committee received and noted the notes of the meeting of representatives of Town and Parish Councils along the River Thames held on Wednesday 23 March 2011.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

**that the notes of the meeting of representatives of Town and Parish Councils along the River Thames held on Wednesday 23 March 2011 be noted.**

**85. BUDGET**

The Committee received and considered the budget report to March 2011.

The Committee noted with pleasure a £68,600 positive variance.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

**that the budget report to March 2011 be noted with satisfaction.**

**86. PROGRESS REPORT**

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

Allotments Association – the Committee noted with pleasure the letter from the Allotment Association thanking the Town Council for their support over the past few years.

Woodland Memorial/Henley New Forest – the Town Clerk reported that the draft lease had been received from Sue Ryder Care today.

Outdoor Sports Centre – Astropitch replacement – the Town Clerk reported that the South Oxfordshire District Council had received 18 applications for a total sum of £1.2 million.

**87. HORTICULTURAL AMENITY CONTRACT 2011**

The Committee received and considered a report with regard to the tenders for the horticultural contract due to commence on 1 June 2011.

Three contractors were approached and asked to tender and the following quotations were received:-

Contractor A	£646.45 per week	£33,615.40 per annum
Contractor B	£566.00 per week	£29,432 per annum
Contractor C	£697.34 per week	£36,261.68 per annum

After discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**that the tender from contractor B be accepted at a cost of £29,432 per annum to undertake the Town Council's horticultural contract from 1 June 2011 for a period of five years, including a two year review/opt out clause and with annual price increases in accordance with the CPI.**

The Town Clerk reported, and the Committee were pleased to note, that contractor B was Windowflowers, which is the current contractor.

1 member of the public left the meeting.

**88. NEW FOOTPATH AT 40 ACRE FIELD**

The Committee received and noted the draft plan and schedule produced by Oxfordshire County Council regarding the dedication of the new footpath at 40 Acre Field.

**89. LEISURE FACILITIES STRATEGY**

The Committee received and noted the South Oxfordshire District Council's response to the Town Council's comments with regard to the consultation of the Leisure Facilities Strategy.

**90. THANKS**

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs G Dodds thanked members of the Committee for their participation over the last year.

The Committee thanked Councillor Mrs G Dodds for being an excellent Chairman throughout the last year.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Chairman

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