

Present: The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor Mrs G Dodds
Councillor A Follett (Vice chair)
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith
Councillor C Pye
Councillor Dr P Skolar
Councillors Dr B Wood (Chair)

In attendance: Mr M W Kennedy – Town Clerk
Mrs H King – Committee Administrator
Mrs L Jones – HTC Accountant
A member of the press
4 members of the public
Councillor I Reissmann

112. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Miss L Hillier sent her apologies. Councillor Mrs J Bland gave her apologies for an expected late arrival.

113. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor A Follett – prejudicial – Min 124 – Member of the Lions Club

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin – personal – Min 124 – Related to Lions member.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith – personal – Min 126iv) – OCC Councillor (OCC gave grant to Stepping Stones).

Councillor Dr P Skolar - personal – Min 126iv) – OCC Councillor (OCC gave grant to Stepping Stones).

114. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

Rosemary Beddow (Northfield End resident) raised the question of the status of the highway at Northfield End. The issue had been running for a considerable time with County Council believing the area was a private road although the Borough Council had stated it believed it to be highway. She questioned why it had taken 6 years for the County Council to confirm the Borough Council was correct.

Law currently existed which stated that local authorities must protect the highway against those who attempt to obstruct it in any way.

Councillor Dr B Wood responded by saying that the presentation due to follow should answer the questions raised on this particular subject.

Councillor I Reissmann (speaking as a member of the public) stated that the Northfield End area was a valuable asset and parking spaces there had commanded high sale prices. It was important that it was maintained as public highway and the 20 or so parking spaces be made available for public use. He believed the way the parking bays are currently laid out were dangerous.

Councillor Dr B Wood referred the points to the OCC officials to cover in their presentation.

115. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 23 March 2010 were received, approved, adopted and signed by the Chairman Councillor Dr B Wood.

116. **NORTHFIELD END HIGHWAY**

Mr Steve Howell (Head of Transport – OCC) and Kevin Haines (Asset Manager - OCC) were called to the table to give a presentation on the issue of the highway in the Northfield End area.

This presentation was a result of the informal (confidential) meeting between OCC representatives and the Town Council on 24 March 2010. Minutes of that meeting are at Appendix 1. (Note: the plan referred to can be found at the back of Appendix 2)

Mr Howell stated that the presentation would only cover the area in Bell Street. In answer to the previously asked question concerning the length of time it has taken to progress the issue, Mr Howell explained that it was an issue of resources which had not been available previously but had improved now that a consultant had been employed. He distributed a summary of the presentation, including proposals and a map for information. (Copies of both are attached at Appendix 2.) It was expected that the outcome of the meeting and any proposals agreed (subject to Full Council ratification) would be presented to OCC's Cabinet member, Councillor Rose.

Mr Howell's objective was to gain support from HTC for the proposals put forward and a withdrawal of the Council's initial complaint.

Mr Haines advised the meeting that the consultant's report was due to be released to the public in the next few days.

The proposed 'stopping up' of Bell Street (Area 1 on the map) would be made using the Highways Act and would involve a consultative process with the final decision being made by a magistrate who will determine whether the highway is necessary. The stopping up would not apply to the footway which would be maintained by OCC with the maintenance of the rest of the carriageway being the responsibility of the land owners. Area 1 on the map contained 12 parking spaces which were owned by various parties, not necessarily the adjacent house owners.

In response to a Member's question, Mr Howell explained that the act of stopping up the highway involves extinguishing the area as a public

highway. An application has to be made to the Magistrates Court by the Council under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980.

There was a general discussion concerning how the area had passed into private ownership and the fact that OCC had not been involved with individual house sales/searches as the initial belief was that the land was not highway. Further, and more recent investigations, had revealed declarations of private ownership of the land which had been accepted as proof and on that basis houses had been bought and sold in good faith. OCC was not in a position to challenge the authenticity of these documents. If Bell Street was not stopped up then the question of compensation may arise for the loss of the parking spaces as an amenity space. In addition, if parallel parking was introduced then this would reduce by half the number of spaces available.

It was confirmed that the area outside Rupert House School was part of Area 1 and councillors expressed their unhappiness with that situation as the current siting of the 4 parking spaces were believed to be dangerous.

Councillor Mrs J Bland entered the meeting at 8.10pm

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith enquired whether HTC had a veto over the proposed recommendations. Mr Howell confirmed this was the case.

After a lengthy debate:

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that

- a) Henley Town Council does not withdraw its complaint made under section 130 (6) of the Highways Act 1980, and
- b) Henley Town Council formally supports the proposal to stop up the carriageway at Bell Street (up to but excluding Rupert House) over the area shown as Area 1 on the plan.

117. **PROGRESS REPORT**

Councillors received and considered the Progress Report and made the following comments:

Energy Use

The Town Clerk confirmed that the NIFES energy inspection visits to the Town Hall, Pavilion, Barn and Old Fire Station Gallery would take place on Thursday 6 May.

Alabaster Statue

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin reported that the Henley Standard had taken a photo of the statue and hopefully its appearance in the paper may generate some information about its history.

HTC Strategy Paper

Councillor A Follett pointed out that he had updated section 3 of the document, Specific Project Delivery. He encouraged other Councillors to review the document and welcomed their own suggested input.

Section 2.5 – ‘Produce minutes electronically’ was felt to be too specific and the Town Clerk was asked to reword.

Section 3.2 – Henley Information Centre. It was agreed that a post-implementation review should take place in 6 months time to measure the success of the project and to see if there are any lessons to be learnt. A report to be submitted to the appropriate FS&M meeting.

Section 3.8 – Young Residents Aspirations. Councillor A Follett pointed out that this section may be constantly changing and as such would need regular updating.

Parks Service Review

The Town Clerk advised the meeting that Mr M Thomas had resigned with effect from 26 April and that his position would be advertised in the Henley Standard on Friday. The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin wished Mr Thomas well and passed on her thanks for his long service to the Council.

118. **FINANCE**

i) Budget Monitoring Report

It was noted that the expected outturn for 2009-10 showed a surplus of £50k which was a pleasing outcome.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be received and approved.

ii) Investment Performance Update

Members had before them the Investment Performance Update report for the period 1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010, copy having being issued.

The table showed the value of the Council's investments now exceeded £4m. However, the Chairman pointed out that the FTSE had fallen substantially that very day so the value shown was, in fact, slightly overstated.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Investment Performance Report for the period be noted.

iii) Monthly List of Payments/Cumulative Supplier Costs

Members had before them the List of Payments and Cumulative Invoiced Costs, copies having being issued.

The meeting felt that although the report showing the suppliers cumulative costs was very useful, it did not need to be produced for every meeting. It was agreed that in future a six-monthly report would suffice.

Action: Accts Asst to produce six monthly reports in future (one of which should show the end of year position).

It was **RESOLVED** that the reports be received and noted.

119. **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Members had before them the revised Financial Regulations incorporating new contracting and tendering procedures. The Committee congratulated the officers for their work.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that

the revised Financial Regulations be approved and adopted.

120. **TANGIBLE FIXED ASSET VALUATION**

The Town Clerk introduced the paper and explained the difference between historic cost and current value. As the Council already had its fixed assets valued in 2009 it would be preferable to use these figures as the historic costs in preparing the accounts for 2009/10 under the new FRSSSE regulations.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that

The Council adopts the policy to carry fixed assets at historic cost where historic cost is taken to be the value as 31 March 2009 for all assets owned at that date and at actual cost for all assets acquired subsequently.

121. **EARMARKED RESERVE ACCOUNT**

The Town Clerk explained that the earmarked reserve account will be set up to account for specific/identifiable monies carried forward from the previous year. Both Christmas Lights and Britain in Bloom monies not yet spent will appear in the account.

Councillor Mrs G Dodds asked whether money was being 'put aside' each year to cover the large expenditure that was expected when the Mayor's chain needed to be replaced in a couple of year's time.

Action: HTC Accountant to investigate the accounts to see what provision has been made.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that

the Council approves the carry forward of unspent expenditure for 2009-10 to 2010-11 in the earmarked reserve account as set out in the report.

122. **MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL ASSETS**

The Town Clerk presented his paper giving an update on the Council's property maintenance schedule. It was noted that there had been some minor slippage with not all specified work being carried out in 2009-10 but this was expected to be completed in 2010-11. A further report would be submitted to FS&M detailing the work schedule for 2010-11.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that the Committee

notes the progress on buildings maintenance work undertaken in 2009-10, and

agrees to the carry forward of earmarked reserves for the remaining buildings maintenance work to be undertaken totalling £4,300.

123. **DESPATCH OF AGENDA PAPERS & REVISED CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

The Town Clerk had revised the calendar of meetings which now would follow a 6 week committee cycle, with a 3 week cycle for planning. This had become necessary in order to give committee clerks sufficient time to dispatch agendas within the legal requirement of three clear working days. The definition being:

“This requires three complete periods of 24 hours (excluding weekends and Bank Holidays) to have elapsed excluding the day the notice is received and the day on which the meeting is held.”

Although the cycle is due to be extended to 6 weeks, there would be no meeting the week before Full Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that

the legal definition of the three clear days rule, the timing for despatch of Council agenda papers and the knock on effect this has on the Committee cycle be noted and

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that

the revised Calendar of Meetings for 2010-11 be adopted

124. **REGATTA PARKING**

Councillor A Follett left the meeting having previously declared his personal and prejudicial interest in the matter about to be discussed and took no part in the consideration thereof.

The meeting noted the Lions request to arrange car parking along the Fairmile during the Henley Royal Regatta. The request had been made and granted in previous years. No objections were raised.

It was **RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that

the Council agrees to the Lions request.

Councillor A Follett rejoined the meeting.

125. **THANKS**

Councillor Dr P Skolar expressed his thanks to the Chairman (Councillor Dr B Wood) for all his work both on the Finance Committee and on the Value for Money & Resources Working Group. The ability for all the participants to work closely together had been greatly appreciated.

126. **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 FINANCE STRATEGY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 27 APRIL 2010.

127. **NORTHFIELD END HIGHWAY**

The minutes of the informal meeting with representatives from OCC held on 24 March 2010 concerning Northfield End, copy having been issued and attached to these minutes at Appendix 1, were received and noted.

128. **LEGAL UPDATE**

The Committee received and noted the report on the outstanding legal issues.

ARISING FROM THE REPORT

129. **AFC HENLEY/HENLEY HOCKEY CLUB**

The Town Clerk reported that both leases have been finalised with only a few minor manuscript changes necessary (which have been accepted).

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that

both documents are signed and sealed at the next meeting of Full Council on 4 May 2010.

130. **HENLEY HOCKEY CLUB – RENT REVIEW**

The Hockey Club had asked for details of their new increased rent so that adequate provision could be made during their budgeting process. Although the Council was at liberty to employ a district valuer to determine the new rent, it was felt that the application of an RPI inflator was sufficient.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND**

that an RPI increase (using the latest published figure, likely to be March 2010) be applied. [The RPI figure for September will not be available until the end of October which would be too late for HHC's budgeting process.]; and

that the Town Clerk is given delegated authority to discuss and agree the revised rent level with the HHC at the earliest opportunity.

131. **STEPPING STONES NURSERY**

Members were reminded that Committee had previously considered and agreed an extension to the Stepping Stones Nursery licence until 2016

and the approval of certain internal alterations to the property. However, further consideration was needed as the nursery operator had requested that the current licence be converted into a new 10 year licence. This has become necessary as OCC will only provide the grant for the refurbishment/alteration on condition that a 10 licence is in place.

Councillor Pye said that he had been approached by an interested party who would like to turn the building into a restaurant. Councillor Mrs J Bland thought this could be a positive move as it would have the effect of reducing the anti-social behaviour in the area if there was a presence on site that was open after dark.

Councillor A Follett reiterated previous conversations where he reminded Members that the pavilion was not a building easily adapted for other uses and the fact that the nursery occupied the upper floor was an income generator for the Council. He also doubted whether any restaurant would be happy to share the building with a Bowls Club and a bank of public toilets on the ground floor.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that

a new 10 year licence be granted to Bonham Carter Childcare Ltd to operate a day Nursery from Leichlingen Pavilion until 2020 with 4 yearly rent reviews on the same terms and conditions as the current licence;

the Council's legal fees in drafting the new lease be met by the licensee; and

the Town Clerk be authorised to negotiate a revised rent, details of which should be brought back to Committee for approval.

132. **HEADWAY**

Following his meeting with Richard Gilby on 24 March, the Town Clerk had asked that Headway produce a letter for the consideration by the Committee that encompassed all the issues that have arisen or were likely to arise. This he had done. The Committee noted the points raised and was in agreement with the requests.

The main discussion point was the issue of parking. Although Headway were still assessing the issue, they were keen to be designated a specific parking area on the Makins site which they could police. However, it was recognised that this was for future consideration. Councillor Mrs G Dodds did ask the Town Clerk if he could look at the car park to see if it could be laid out in a better fashion. This may also have the benefit of ensuring that people did not park in Headway's ambulance space. Any proposals concerning the car park and its layout would also have to involve the Scouts.

Action: Town Clerk

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that

the Town Clerk takes forward the points raised in negotiation with Richard Gilby/Headway and that progress is reported back to

Committee. Committee would also like to see the draft revised lease when available.

133. **BATH SITE**

The Town Clerk's confidential paper was discussed by Councillors. It was felt that all six property owners on Rod Eyot (who currently have an interest in the Bath Site via parking licences) should be included in the new lease to ensure fair and equitable treatment. When the Council initially agreed to a lease with Rod Eyot Parking it was not fully aware of the Lester's interest and if it had been, would have insisted that all six parties be included.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that

the Council uses its best endeavours to ensure that the Lesters are included on equal terms with the other owners of residential property on the Island.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

Chairman
28.4.10

**NOTES OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH 2010
REGARDING NORTHFIELD END**

Present: Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Hodgkin – Mayor, Henley Town Council
Councillor Mrs Joan Bland – Henley Town Council
Councillor Alan Follett – Henley Town Council
Councillor Bill Gibson – Henley Town Council
Councillor David Nimmo-Smith – Henley Town Council / Oxfordshire County Council
Councillor Barry Wood – Henley Town Council
Councillor Mrs Jeni Wood – Henley Town Council
Councillor Keith Mitchell – Oxfordshire County Council
Councillor Rodney Rose – Oxfordshire County Council
Mr John Boyd – Oxfordshire County Council (Land & Records)
Mr Kevin Haines – Oxfordshire County Council (Asset Manager)
Mr Steve Howell – Oxfordshire County Council (Head of Transport)
Mr David Mytton – Oxfordshire County Council (Solicitor)

Also Present: Mr Mike Kennedy – Town Clerk, Henley Town Council
Ms Nicci Taylor – Minute Taker

Councillor Rodney Rose advised everyone that the reason for this meeting was to share the Consultant's report on North Field End and Bell Street, which has a 140 year history, and to achieve a programme of solutions to a difficult problem.

The Meeting received a short presentation by Steve Howell and Kevin Haines explaining which areas of Northfield End / Bell Street / Bell Lane were considered to be Highway and which were considered to be in private ownership.

Bell Street used to be Public Highway from the North in the last century as did Bell Lane but the assumption for very many years now has been that they are not Highway. Private individuals have bought their property / land over the years on this assumption, that the land did not have highway status.

The conclusions of the consultant's report are as follows: Area 1 on the attached plan is highway. Areas 2, 3 and 4 are not.

Mr Kevin Haines joined the meeting.

Bell Lane is Highway and the road directly in front of Rupert House School is Highway. This land is not part of the land that has been registered as land in private ownership (in front of numbers 94 to 102).

The simplest solution to the problem would be for Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to 'stop up' (Stopping Up = extinguishment of Highway status and is a permanent change); two steps 1- State that land is Highway, 2- Extinguish status so that the land would no longer be Highway. The stopping up effectively removes the highway status, it does not change the ownership of the land – the title would remain with the relevant landowners. This point will be explained to the local residents.

Councillor Barry Wood asked if Henley Town Council would be able to contest if they did not agree.

Councillor Barry Wood felt that if this was to happen then we would be abdicating our rights.

Steve Howell advised that the process for stopping up Bell Street is covered by Law & Policy. OCC would need to go through Planning Legislation or the Magistrates Court before a decision could be reached.

Planning Legislation (Town & Country Planning Act) - legitimate planning reasons to make Private parking Magistrates Court –as Bell Street is not a classified Road the stopping up could be vetoed by Henley Town Council (HTC).

Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Hodgkin asked about area 2 on attached plan and was advised by David Mytton that this area is not Highway and is privately owned by the same company who owns most of the parking spaces in the Bell Street area.

Councillor Mrs Jeni Wood asked if the roads were classified A, B or C roads and was advised that Bell Street would be an unclassified road.

Councillor Mrs Joan Bland asked who pays for the repairs to Bell Street and Bell Lane and was advised that County have not paid for repairs as it has not been considered as highway, and that it is has been the responsibility of the land owners.

Councillor Barry Wood advised that there are residents who feel very strongly about these areas and stated that OCC and HTC should be together in any announcement that is made and that any decisions made should be legal and supported with public will.

Steve Howell advised that individuals could contest legally a decision by the Council that Bell Street was Highway. [Whether they would have grounds to do so is another matter]

David Mytton advised that there was no automatic obligation for the owners to maintain the roads but an obligation might arise if there were covenants to do so in title deeds.

Stopping up Footway as well as Carriageway – Public rights along main road down Bell Street – Hard to justify stopping footway in front of properties.

Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Hodgkin asked for clarification of the roads in relationship to the areas marked on the presentation (copy attached).

Area 1 - Bell Street (from the junction with Bell Lane to outside Rupert House School) – Highways to take responsibility for the maintenance of footway but not highway that is to be stopped up.

Area 2 - Triangle – Not Highway

Area 3 - Continuation of Bell Street (crosses Lane & Garden)

Bell Lane is used as a private road and has been for many years – can also be ‘Stopped Up’ – individual ownership unclear at present. If remains as Public Highway it is possible that it could be used for public parking rather than private parking.

Councillor Barry Wood requested that OCC talks to the private owners as he feels that Henley Residents would say no to Highways.

David Mytton advised that any evidence given to the Magistrates Court could be challenged as the process at the Magistrates Court gives the residents the chance to oppose the application.

Steve Howell advised that OCC’s stance would be that the road has not performed as a Public Highway for many years, and that the process would require getting approval from Cabinet Members which would allow the public a further opportunity to state their views.

Northfield End – The current position with Northfield End is that some residents and businesses think that the parking spaces are private and are using them as such. Residents are maintaining the planting within the Highway as some householder deeds are showing ownership.

The impact of this is that it is an emotive issue for affected residents, and OCC could receive large amounts of claims for compensation and extensive media coverage. (this could also be the situation at Bell Street).

The proposed action would be for further consultation & dialogue to take place with the residents, parking arrangements need to be considered, and the best way to manage this would be to take it to the parking review in the summer.

Areas considered to be Highways are: Town side of Kings Road (parking chains separating spaces) in front of the Sydney House Hotel and the planted area at the top of Kings Road.

All these areas are considered to be Highways, and may well remain so. However, if OCC were to pursue the Stopping Up of the area then there would be no right to Veto by the TC, although they could object.

More work is required to find out who thinks they own what and this information needs to be incorporated into the parking review. This may be a possible source of income or limited waiting parking dependant on the location.

Councillor Barry Wood asked who was responsible for keeping tidy the planted area towards Kings Road (trees etc) outside the Hotel with the parking behind and was advised that the person who owned the property was currently responsible.

Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Hodgkin advised that the hatched / herringbone area opposite Rupert House could be Residents Parking but the Rupert House School have assumed ownership.

The grass / post area outside Northfield House is Highways but is under agreement with HTC to maintain.

Steve Howell advised that OCC did not want to rush into a decision at the moment but would pick up all these points as part of the parking review and would speak to the owners of frontages.

Councillor Keith Mitchell advised that he had walked the area this morning and wanted to ensure that everyone was aware of what was going to be happening and what everyone else was doing. Communication / Maps / Photographs to be fully available.

The aim of OCC Highways is to clarify ownership of the land but as far as possible to still go along with the status quo.

David Mytton advised that regulated parking within a Highway is allowed but Herringbone parking is problematic at this location because of the space constraints.

Steve Howell advised that potential to increase public parking would be considered as part of the review.

Councillor Barry Wood asked if it is legally recognised that Highways have ownership of land would that affect the potential sale of properties there.

Steve Howell advised that, ideally, OCC would not do anything to change things that are already there but the options will be clearer following further dialogue with the local community

Councillor Barry Wood suggested that a material charge should be made to show who is the dominant partner.

Steve Howell advised that if we do anything it will make changes to the residents parking scheme so Highways are quite happy to not make a big deal and keep the status quo.

Councillors Jeni & Barry Wood did not agree with this and Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Hodgkin did not feel that it was right to keep quiet about the changes.

Councillor Keith Mitchell thought it was best to keep things as they are because there was a belief by some residents that they had bought their parking space.

Steve Howell advised that in Northfield End only and not Bell Street OCC could not allow residents to put up any more signs / chains and once the area is Public Highway it would be a lot easier to make more manageable.

Councillor Jeni Wood questioned if people were told that the parking was part of their property when they bought then surely the person who sold the property is in the wrong and not OCC.

Councillor Joan Bland advised that in the past OCC has told people that the parking was private and will now have to advise that it is public.

Adverse possession does not apply to Highways.

If double yellow lines are painted at Northfield End then they will have to become operable – at the moment the area is thought to be private so is not enforced.

Councillor Allan Follett requested that consultation take place with Peter Ronald as he has had lots of public consultation with other works in Northfield End.

Councillor Elizabeth Hodgkin asked if there were plans to suddenly change land to Highway.

Councillor Barry Wood requested that there were no quick moves as there are twelve residents in total and individual conversations with each of these people to advertise the view that OCC has a right over the Highways. Residents need to be told of the County Council's plans to leave the status quo but with conditions.

Councillor Mrs Jeni Wood suggested that a period of approximately one year would be a good time scale for people to get used to the idea with gradual changes.

Councillor David Nimmo-Smith advised that what ever happened in the area people would still need to be able to park.

Steve Howell advised that there were no plans to reduce overall parking.

Councillor Allan Follett suggested that the parking in Kings Road be changed too from meter to residents parking to soften the blow.

Councillor Mrs Jeni Wood suggested that the whole area become residents parking.

At present cars have to drive over footpaths to reach the herringbone parking, it was suggested that bushes be removed and the area be concreted but it was decided that this was not suitable and too dangerous.

It was decided that things should be left alone at the moment and issues should be raised during discussions with residents and then taken to the parking review in the summer.

Councillor Rodney Rose advised that OCC wanted the issue resolved so there was no doubt in the future.

Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Hodgkin stated that everyone must be sure of what is happening.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith advised that OCC will now have to check to see if elsewhere in the Country other Councils are having the same problems.

David Mytton advised that anyone who had any claims about highway status in the future would have to come to OCC with all the evidence in place as the County Council would no longer do an investigation beyond its own records.

Councillor Allan Follett asked if now that OCC have proved that the land is Highways would they be putting in bollards where the herringbone parking is and was advised that this would require a Traffic Regulation Order.

Bell Lane / Bell Street-behind the triangle – Area 1) There was a degree of agreement that Highway land shown by the hatched marking (see attached plans) should be included in the ‘stopping up’ of the

As the area in front of the School is used as private parking the school will need to be contacted to decide on the way forward. Rupert House School are under the impression that the land belongs to them as they have been there for a very long time. Stopping up should only be the Highway and not the footpath in this area.

As there is so much to be considered it is felt that the planned OCC meeting on 22 April 2010 would be too soon and that a better date would be 3 June 2010. The minutes from this meeting will need to go through HTC committee cycle and then to OCC. Councillor Rodney Rose will attend the HTC meeting to provide answers to any questions raised.

The report going to OCC’s Cabinet Decisions will, so far as a possible stopping up is concerned, only be regarding Bell Lane / Bell Street as Northfield End will be detached and dealt with at a later date.

Highway status = the right to pass over the land.

Councillor Barry Wood suggested that in regards to Northfield End a parking review takes place in six months for Bell Lane / Bell Street but Northfield End remains the same whilst consultation takes place with the residents.

Steve Howell advised that the plan is to hold back on Northfield End whilst consultations take place.

Councillor Bill Gibson asked if Area 1 is Highways and is Stopped Up how will that affect people who have paid money to purchase the land.

Councillor Keith Mitchell advised that residents can clarify on the Deeds if they actually own the land.

Bell Lane – If stopped up this would effectively release land to whoever owns it.

Bell Lane (Bridleway) – Historically went down to the river, if there is a problem with this area then leave well alone and leave as Public Highway. A check needs to be made into what rights there are down this lane.

Bell Street – No gated communities (private signs / shop signs).

Northfield End - Investigation to be carried out by OCC to see what people believe and can support in terms of ownership – Although private owners may have claim to land over which highways pass, this does not restrict the rights of the public to pass along that highway.

Steve Howell agreed that both the corners as you come out of Kings Road should be looked after under agreement with HTC, and will look into drawing up an agreement for both.

To be considered by HTC at Finance Strategy & Management on 27 April 2010 and Full Council on 12 May 2010.

Steve Howell will provide a summary for the Finance meeting on 27 April 2010.

Meeting closed at 11.30am