

**Present:** The Mayor, Councillor Mrs P Phillips  
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin  
Councillor M Akehurst  
Councillor S Gawrysiak (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor W Hamilton  
Councillor Miss L Hillier  
Councillor Ms L Meachin  
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith  
Councillor I Reissmann (Chair)

**In attendance:** Mr M W Kennedy – Town Clerk  
Mrs H King – Committee Administrator  
Mrs L Jones – HTC Accountant  
19 members of the public (inc Cllr D Hinke)  
1 member of the press

99. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

100. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith:

Min 103 – Progress Report (Northfield End) – personal (OCC Councillor)  
Min 101 – Northfield End – personal – (OCC Councillor)

Councillor Miss L Hillier

Min 114 i) – Legal update (West Street Stores) – prejudicial (prospective tenant)

Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin

Min 105 – Grants– Henley Wildlife Group member, Town & Visitors Regatta– personal – vice president

Councillor Mrs P Phillips

Min 105 – Grants – NOMAD – personal – management committee member

Councillor I Reissmann

Min 105 – Grants – personal - Henley Wildlife Group, Henley in Transition

101. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

*Mr T Foxall (Glanville)*

Mr Foxall read out a statement in respect of the Stopping-Up application at Bell Street and specifically the report prepared by Cllr Reissmann which was attached to the agenda. A copy of his statement has been filed with the official copy of these minutes.

*Pippa Hare (Bell Street)*

Ms Hare advised the meeting that the green at Northfield End was not included in the original sale documentation and reinforced the fact that it was highway.

*David Prestt (Bell Street)*

The resident enquired whether any legal advice had been sought by the Council on the subject of Northfield End. The Chairman confirmed that it had not but that course of action should be considered.

*Mrs A Weait (Bell Street)*

Mrs Weait pointed out that the current parking arrangements were not acceptable and, in her view, presented a safety issue due to the proximity of cars and pedestrians. She suggested that parallel parking would be a far safer option and pose less of a risk. Considering the number of children using the area (from Rupert House School), safety should be a priority and the Stopping-Up Order should be opposed.

*Sue Prior (NOMAD)*

Mrs Prior spoke in support of the NOMAD grant application. The funds had been requested to assist a number of young people to find employment, to instil a model work ethic and to attempt to break the cycle of workless households.

*Cllr D Hinke*

Councillor Hinke also spoke in support of the NOMAD application stressing the importance of the work undertaken and planned.

*Mr T Howell (Blandy Road)*

Mr Howell referred to the grant application submitted on behalf of AFC Henley. He pointed out that a great deal of money had been spent on the artificial pitch at Jubilee Park but there had been no investment in the grass pitches at the site. The football pitches were made available by the Club to a large number of local organisations. AFC Henley were to provide 50% of the required funding for the pitch refurbishment and were looking to the Council for the remaining 50%.

Due to the large number of members of the public that were in attendance to listen to the debate on Northfield End

**it was RESOLVED that the order of business be varied in accordance with Standing Orders and that Agenda item 14 (Northfield End) be moved forward to the next item of business.**

102. **NORTHFIELD END**

There was a long debate concerning this issue and how it should be progressed. A resolution needed to be found to the problem and it was felt that there should be a meeting between all the parties affected i.e. HTC, OCC, SODC, the developer and those objecting and supporting the Stopping-Up

Order. It was pointed out that OCC had already held discussions with stakeholders and there may be a case for compromise in the public interest. On the subject of the footway, although this would remain highway, it was not felt that any shared surface presented a safe solution. There was the suggestion that the issue of the Stopping-Up Order should be the subject of a Special Full Council meeting therefore involving all Councillors not just those on the Finance Committee. However, the Chairman believed the current committee process meant this would not be necessary.

The developer had offered to gift the 'green triangle' to the Council if it lifted its objection to the Order. It was proposed that the offer be refused and a recorded vote was requested on the recommendations set out in the report as amended at the meeting

**FOR**

Councillor Mrs P Phillips  
Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin  
Councillor M Akehurst  
Councillor S Gawrysiak  
Councillor Mrs L Meachin  
Councillor I Reissmann

**AGAINST**

Councillor Mr W Hamilton  
Councillor Miss L Hillier  
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith

The proposal was carried whereupon is was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND to Full Council that:**

- **HTC continues to support the principle of retention of public assets where there is need – including opposing the Stopping Up Order for the area in front of 94-102 Bell St;**
- **HTC rejects the responses to the Glanville's letter of 24 Jan, on behalf of Chesterton's, to HTC objections to the Stopping Up Order. HTC to write to OCC communicating the last three points in the previous resolution and inviting them to take the lead in bringing the parties together to resolve the situation (also to include SODC);**
- **HTC rejects this specific offer of the "green triangle" in return for dropping its objections to the Stopping Up Order as in the Glanville's letter of 23rd Feb on behalf of Chesterton's;**
- **HTC restate that its position remains that the issue needs to be resolved by discussion and negotiation in order to achieve an outcome that is fair and reasonable to all;**
- **HTC calls on OCC to take a lead as Highway Authority and set up discussions with stakeholders including residents and HTC in order to plan a solution that is fair and reasonable to all;**
- **In the event of OCC refusing to engage with the stakeholders, HTC discuss directly with the other stakeholders;**
- **HTC exercises its right under 1980 Highway Act S130 (incl ss2 & ss6) calling on OCC as the Highway Authority to explain why, under its duty under HA 1980 S130, the "Green Triangle" was not designated as highway in 2010. HTC refers OCC to the evidence submitted by HTC to OCC on 3 November 2009 which clearly**

shows the Green Triangle to be Highway and appears incontrovertible;

- HTC writes to Glanville responding to their letter communicating the previous resolution, including the suggested responses in this report; and
- HTC writes to OCC communicating the points raised and inviting them to lead in the negotiations with all parties including the developer, the town and district councils and the residents affected by the stopping up order.

103. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 7 February 2012 were received, approved and adopted and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

104. **PROGRESS REPORT**

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

Northfield End – Amenity space fronting Sydney House

The Town Clerk advised the meeting that an e-mail had been sent to Kevin Haines (OCC) reminding him that the options list he was to construct, following the site visit, was still outstanding. The Chairman alerted the meeting to the fact that one of the properties at the site was for sale and that the particulars included a parking space. Councillor Nimmo-Smith said he would e-mail OCC to alert them to the situation as they may not be aware.

IT Website Review

The HTC Accountant reported that rapid progress had been made on the website and it was expected that the go-live date would be the beginning of April. Over 600 documents had been transferred from the old site to the new. The website would also contain a poll asking people what they thought of the change. The Accountant undertook to send the website link to members of FS&M so they could see the latest developments.

*Action: HTC Accountant*

105. **FINANCE**

i) Budget Monitoring

The Chairman thanked officers for looking after the Council's finances so well and was pleased to see that a healthy surplus was expected at the end of the financial year. A question was raised regarding the £10k allocation for a youth shelter in the Capital budget. It was explained that the original thinking was for the shelter to be placed at Mill Meadows but confirmation was needed from the Youth Council that this was the preferred site. The matter falls under the remit of the Recreation & Amenities Committee. It was

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

ii) Investment Performance

It was noted that the performance of the Investment Managers had outperformed the stock market and still realised the expected income. It was agreed that the Council's investments were in a good shape and

**RESOLVED that the update be received and noted.**

iii) List of payments

There were no material comments made regarding this agenda item. It was

**RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.**

106. **GRANT APPLICATIONS AND USES FOR CONTINGENCY BUDGET UNDERSPEND**

A contingency budget of £20k had been set up for 2011-12 to cover unforeseen eventualities. To date only half the budget had been used and there was the opportunity to reallocate the monies. As the grants budget was originally relatively small (£5k) and following the September grants awards, only c£1,800 remained, it was felt that the remaining £10k could be added to this amount. As the grant applications totalled in excess of £36k, this supplementary amount would be extremely useful. It was

**RESOLVED that the application of the remaining contingency budget be applied to the grants budget.**

The Town Clerk explained that there was a unique situation with the festival applications (Fringe & Youth) in respect of the "free-use" involved and the potential associated cost. Last year a separate report was presented to Committee on the Literary and Fringe Festivals and it was agreed that the two applications from the Fringe and the Youth Festivals be withdrawn and considered at the April meeting along with the pending application from the Literary Festival. There was a good case for removing all festivals from the grants budget and having a separate budget for these events. It was

**RESOLVED that a further report encompassing all Festivals and applications for "free use" be presented to the next meeting of FSM in April.**

Prior to Committee's consideration of the remaining grant applications. Members discussed how the grant applications should be presented to Committee in the future given the large amount of paper/photocopying involved. Views ranged from having a one page summary sheet; only copying to FS&M members; and retaining the status quo. It was agreed that to fully appreciate each application and the work of the organisation, then all the documents needed to be seen and reviewed. However, it was hoped with the launch of the new website, all the applications would be made available on-line thus obviating the need for paper copies in the future.

**It was RESOLVED**

**(i) that the following grants be awarded:**

- South & Vale Carers £500.00
- Regatta for the Disabled £400.00
- South Oxfordshire Mencap Society £500.00
- Henley Wildlife Group £100.00
- Henley in Transition £200.00
- Henley on Thames Round Table £500.00
- AFC Henley £3,787.50
- NOMAD £2,000.00

(ii) that the following applications be awarded no grant:

- Henley Rowing Club
- Henley Festival Trust – Tree of Light

(iii) that the following applications will be referred to the Olympic Sub - Committee for consideration from the Olympic budget:

- South Oxon School Sport Partnership
- Town & Visitors Regatta

(iv) that the unapplied balance of £3817.50 be added to the General Fund Balance

107. **VALUATION OF ASSETS FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES**

The HTC Accountant explained the background to the paper and the difference between the ‘historic value’ and the ‘facsimile value’. She updated the meeting with a better definition of the historic value which should now read as follows:

The historic value is the re-instatement cost that would be incurred in reproducing the item with a copy that is as similar to the original as possible assuming that original/‘contemporary at that time’ materials are used.

The facsimile value is the cost that would be incurred in reproducing the item with a copy that is as similar to the original as possible assuming that modern materials are used. The historic value would normally be higher. It was

**RESOLVED that the Accountant is given authority to appoint Jones & Jacob Ltd to undertake a full insurance valuation of the contents of all Council properties and the basis for the valuation to be on a facsimile basis.**

108. **SAVINGS ON CONTRACTS**

The Town Clerk stated that all officers had taken on board the comments made by Councillors and the public concerning value for money and had made strenuous efforts to achieve savings in all areas. The Chairman passed on his congratulations to all the staff concerned. It was

**RESOLVED that Councillors note the pro-active approach to reviewing contracts being undertaken by the Accounts Department, and the positive results being obtained.**

109. **PURCHASE OF NEW EPOS TILL FOR HENLEY INFORMATION CENTRE**

It was appreciated that the new equipment was needed to achieve greater efficiency both in terms of reconciling cash and stock control. It was

**RESOLVED that Councillors note the prospective purchase.**

110. **PETTY CASH**

The report set out the Officers' reasons for increasing the imprest balance from its present limit of £100 due to the increasing number of transactions. An increase to £250 would improve efficiency and save officer time. It was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that an increase in the imprest amount of petty cash to £250 be approved and the relevant amendment to the Financial Procedures Manual be authorised.**

111. **FUTURE OF VALUE FOR MONEY AND RESOURCES GROUP**

There was much discussion concerning the VFM&R Group and its remit. Officers believed the Group was worthwhile as it gave them the opportunity to have input into the discussions and allowed the time to promote a wider range of thinking.

It was debated whether the subject of asset management should be dealt with by VFM. It was recognised that although the Investment Managers were afforded more time at VFM to present, they should appear at FS&M instead to ensure transparency in the eyes of the public. Sufficient time should be allowed for IM presentations at future FS&M meetings.

There was a case for having more/regular VFM meetings to ensure the budget timetable was not compromised and necessary decisions were in place. It would also have the ability to look more closely at expenditure. It was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that**

- **the Group be renamed the Financial Planning and Scrutiny (FPS) Group**
- **the Terms of Reference be amended to allow the Chair OR Vice Chair of FSM to chair the FPS Group**
- **the Investment Managers would, in future, make their presentations to FS&M (and the agenda should take accounts of the time required)**
- **the Group to meet 4 times a year.**

112. **ARRANGEMENT FOR EXTERNAL AUDIT**

The report set out the arrangements for the 2011/12 external audit. It was

**RESOLVED that**

- (i) the Unaudited Statement of Accounts be prepared for the year ended 31 March 2012 in a similar format to those of 31 March 2011.**
- (ii) the Annual Return and Unaudited Statement of Accounts be recommended at FS&M on 22 May 2012 for approval by Full Council on 12 June.**

113. **ENERGY PROJECT**

The Committee reviewed the notes of the meeting held with Henley in Transition on 5 January and their proposals for energy saving methods. It was noted that St Mary's Church had recently installed photovoltaic panels on the roof (which could not be seen from street level) and the Town Clerk was urged to speak to Brian Brent who was involved in the project as he may have some useful advice. It was agreed that this energy initiative should be supported. However, the question was posed as to where the money would be found to pay for the work. It was confirmed that no budget currently existed. It was

**RESOLVED that further investigations be carried out into**

- (i) the installation of photovoltaic panels on the Town Hall and Leichlingen Pavilion roofs; and**
- (ii) the provision of a water sourced heat pump from the River Thames to service both the River and Rowing Museum and the Leichlingen Pavilion; and**
- (iii) that Henley in Transition invites MSc students from the University of Reading to prepare an Energy Descent Action Plan designed to generate income over the next 10 years.**

114. **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 20 MARCH 2012.**

115. **CONFIDENTIAL**

**i) LEGAL UPDATE**

The meeting reviewed the report and made the following comments:

Sports Centre

The Town Clerk explained that this matter was still outstanding as Nexus (who had recently been taken over by Greenwich Leisure) now had to refer to Greenwich Leisure for further consultation. He would be monitoring the service level carefully now the group was under new ownership. It was

**RESOLVED that the update be received and noted.**

As the meeting was still in session after 10pm, it was proposed and agreed that the meeting be now adjourned and that the remaining items of business be considered at a reconvened meeting on Wednesday 28 March 2012 at 7pm.

**It was RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned.**

The meeting closed at 10.10pm.

Chairman

21.3.12