

Present: The Chairman, Councillor Sarah Miller
The Vice Chairman, Councillor Dave Eggleton
Councillor Sara Abey
Councillor Donna Crook (substituting for Councillor Helen Chandler-Wilde)
Councillor Sam Evans
Deputy Mayor, Councillor Lorraine Hillier
Councillor Glen Lambert
Councillor Ian Reissmann

In Attendance: Mrs Janet Wheeler – Town Clerk

Also Present: 1 member of the press
2 members of the public
Lynne Adams – River and Rowing Museum

73. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Helen Chandler-Wilde (Councillor Donna Crook substituting) and Councillor Kellie Hinton.

74. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

75. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Catharine Notaras – Elizabeth Road – Minute 76 – Ideas from the River and Rowing Museum at Mill Meadows - more details are required before a decision can be made on the alternative temporary uses for the car park. Regarding the proposal to have benches at the front of the Museum for the café - Ms Notaras highlighted that the area is a wildlife area – also need to be mindful of the Piazza Café.

Minute 81 – Fencing at Makins Recreation Ground – Ms Notaras urged members to plant hedging as well as fencing to soften the view and encourage wildlife and emphasised it would provide a habitat for hedgehogs.

Minute 84 - Community Orchard – felt it was too early for a plaque as plants needed to establish and that measures could be taken to encourage wildlife.

Minute 85 – Fairmile Cemetery – First Chapel – felt the proposal to have a columbarium was old fashioned and probably expensive.

Minute 86 – Progress Report – Recording Lost Rights of Way – would the Town Council consider giving one of the books purchased to the library.

Cllr Sara Abey enters the meeting.

Mr Ian Clarke – Cromwell Road – Minute 79 - asked members to consider placing the new playground proposed for Makins Recreation Ground at Mill Meadows as this location would be more beneficial to visitors to Henley.

Members responded that Mill Meadows already has two good quality playgrounds and the upgraded playground at Makins would benefit the residents of Henley along with proposed improvements for Freemans Meadow.

76. IDEAS FROM THE RIVER AND ROWING MUSEUM AT MILL MEADOWS

The Chairman invited Lynne Adam, Head of Museum Operations at the River and Rowing Museum (RRM) to the table. Ms Adam spoke to the summary of ideas attached to the agenda regarding developing commercial opportunities in order to raise income which would be re-invested in the education programme.

Ms Adams explained that the RRM were keen to maximise their core commercial activities such as the café, hiring out of meeting and event spaces, group visits, talks and lectures, the gift shop, organising events around key dates eg Mother's Day, Easter, Christmas etc.

Ms Adams advised that improvements were also planned for the outdoor spaces including:- the re-planting of Ratty's Refuge by volunteers using the original planting scheme and fixing the pond; re-planting the education garden and improving the walkway to the rear of the Museum and adopting measures to "Champion the Hedgehog"; improving the area to the front of the Museum including planting wildflowers (which will not impact on the stream).

The proposals for consideration by members included:-

- utilising the car park at quiet times (eg during the Regatta) by hiring it out for car parking to a corporate partner and possibly holding craft markets. An added benefit of these proposals would be to increase footfall to the Museum area.
- installing picnic benches and have a coffee and cake service to encourage people to enjoy this area although there are operational challenges to overcome as the café is to the rear of the Museum. The RRM is also mindful of the Piazza Café's trade.

The Town Clerk advised that sub-letting the car park area would be in breach of the lease and would need to be considered by Finance Strategy and Management Committee.

Members discussed the proposals and the following comments were made:-

- the Henley Wildlife Group needs to be consulted regarding the planting scheme in front of the Museum
- the Kingwood Trust has been involved in planting projects and may like to be involved
- the RRM could be a venue for multi-location market events including workshops similar to the format of the Henley House and Garden Show
- a review of markets in Henley is currently being undertaken in Henley and the RRM could be involved

The Chairman thanked Ms Adam for attending who left the table.

Lynne Adam left the meeting at 7.55 pm.

77. MINUTES

- i. The minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 16 January 2018 were received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
- ii. The minutes of the Open and Green Spaces Sub Committee meeting held on 19 January 2018 were received and considered.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the Open and Green Spaces Sub Committee held on 19 January 2018 be received, approved and adopted

78. BUDGET

The Committee received and considered the management accounts to January 2018.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the management accounts up to January 2018 be noted

A member reminded the meeting that she would like some research to be done as to why the monies made on the moorings have increased.

79. MAKINS RECREATION GROUND – PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS

- i. The Committee received and considered the notes of a meeting with Wicksteed Leisure held on 13 February 2018.

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the notes of the meeting with Wicksteed Leisure held on 13 February 2018 be noted

- ii. The Town Clerk circulated the revised quoted which had been received today and included suggestions made at the meeting with Wicksteed including:--
- additional wet pour in the “Toddler Zone”
 - replacement of the existing fencing to match the proposed fencing
 - 2 picnic tables
 - “H” flag instead of the pirate flag

The Committee noted delegated powers had been given for expenditure up to £80,000. The revised quote had risen to £95,000 however the amount allocated to play equipment was within £80,000. Additional items such as the bins and picnic tables could be sourced elsewhere possibly at a lower cost elsewhere and the fencing (£16,892) be allocated to a maintenance budget (capex).

The Committee **RESOLVED**

that the order be placed with Wicksteed Leisure for the play equipment only including installation which is within the budget of £80,000

that further costs be sought for bins, benches, picnic tables and fencing

80. MAKINS RECREATION GROUND – OUTDOOR GYM EQUIPMENT

The Committee received and considered a report regarding outdoor gym equipment at Makins Recreation Ground. The Town Clerk advised the Accountant is researching grants which would provide match funding and the application would need to be submitted by the end of April.

A discussion ensued and the following comments were made:-

- are there additional maintenance costs? The Town Clerk advised these pieces of equipment typically have low maintenance which can be carried out in-house
- consultation via the Henley Standard, Henley Herald and social media to find out what equipment would be preferred

- physical trainers be asked to recommend what pieces of equipment would be best for different parts of the body and also for beginners and more experienced users
- noted the decision already taken for the equipment to be located around the edge of park
- information to be requested from other Councils who have installed equipment to ask which pieces are most popular
- it would be beneficial to meet with outdoor gym companies
- more information is required in order to make a decision

It was **RESOLVED**

that the installation of outdoor gym equipment be referred to the Open and Green Spaces Sub Committee to be held on 23 March 2018

81. MAKINS RECREATION GROUND – FENCING

The Committee received a report regarding fencing between the Makins Recreation Ground, the car park and Brunner Hall.

Members discussed the fencing and the following comments were made:-

- it was noted the preferred option of Headway is the mesh fencing
- it was suggested holes be made in the fencing, a gap at the bottom or a hedgehog flap be provided to allow hedgehogs through
- to check the length of the current tenancy
- is there a need for a fence between the car park and the recreation ground? A member explained fencing was required to prevent unauthorised vehicular access eg travellers entering the park
- tree stumps or removal bollards could be used instead of fencing between the car park and the recreation ground

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that 6 foot mesh fencing (with hedgehog consideration) be installed on the boundary between Brunner Hall and Makins Recreation Ground (section 1 on the map) with a hedge in front of the fence

that the fencing between the car park and Makins Recreation Ground be referred to the next Open and Green Spaces Sub Committee

82. MILL MEADOWS – ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND FENCING

The Committee received a report regarding the quotes for the replacement of the fencing at the Adventure Playground. The fencing to be as the existing (3 foot wooden palisade fencing). Members noted the fencing with hedging around it would need to wait until the nesting bird season finished.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Company 1 be allocated the works, at a cost of £5250.80, to replace the fencing at the Adventure Playground at Mill Meadows subject to the provision of images of the proposed fencing

83. MILL MEADOWS – WELCOME WALL

The Committee received and considered the draft design for the Welcome Wall at Mill Meadows and made the following comments:-

- the image provided is too clinical and a more artistic impression would be preferable
- the Welcome Wall is too large and against the spirit of the Meadows. A small lectern style noticeboard would be preferable

- the River and Rowing Museum needs to be included on the town map
- Hobbs Boatyard to be included on the map and the Canoe Hire
- the Wishing Tree to be included on the Marsh Meadows map
- the park rules should be in a larger font
- a “short walk” rather than a “10 minute” walk away
- have a larger map with icons on the map rather than in a key
- information to be future proof eg do not name shops as they may close
- make it clearer where the shops and restaurants are in the town centre
- deck chairs available
- invite someone who does not know the town to comment on future designs to ensure they convey the message required

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that a brief be drawn up for the Welcome Wall to provide information on all the facilities on offer and the close proximity of the town centre and alternative designers be asked for quotes to design the Welcome Wall

84. COMMUNITY ORCHARD

The Sub Committee considered the principal of placing a bench alongside the path at the Community Orchard at Paradise Road and an illustrated map of the trees and wildlife in the area.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the principal of installing a bench alongside the path and an illustrated map of the trees and wildlife in the area be approved and costs to be sought

85. FAIRMILE CEMETERY – FIRST CHAPEL

The Committee received and considered a report on the proposal to convert the First Chapel into a columbarium and the response from the Planning Officer for pre-application advice.

A discussion ensued and the following comments were made:-

- is there demand for a columbarium in the area? The Town Clerk advised the Accountant is investigating this and the potential income
- the likely catchment area
- a columbarium provides a use for the building which is acceptable to the planners and the covenant on the building
- cremation is an environmentally hostile practice and the Town Council should not encourage this
- the cost of the architects producing a 3D model and inserting it into a photograph to show what the columbarium could look like was felt to be expensive at £975
- it would be beneficial for Councillors to meet with the architect

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Officers be thanked for the report and, prior to any decisions being made, more information be provided on the possible demand for a columbarium in Henley and the potential income and costs

86. PROGRESS

The Committee received, considered and noted the progress report.

River Bank Repairs – investigation is being made into sourcing a surveyor

Recording Lost Rights of Way – ongoing

Budget – Henley Town Football Club - the Football Club to be asked for dates when they can meet and this to be circulated to Councillors in order that a meeting can be arranged

Tree Management Software – Councillor Glen Lambert is carrying out research into tree management. Another member queried the current contractual arrangement with Reading Borough Council.

87. FLORAL FLOTILLA

The Committee considered granting permission for the Floral Flotilla (organised by the Chelsea Fringe in Henley and supported by Henley in Bloom) to take place at Mill Meadows for the 4th year on Sunday 20 May 2018 between 2 and 4 pm.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that permission be given to the Chelsea Fringe in Henley, supported by Henley in Bloom, to use the temporary moorings at Mill Meadows for the Floral Flotilla on Sunday 20 May 2018 between 2 and 4 pm

88. THAMES AND CHILTERN IN BLOOM

The Committee considered whether Henley should enter the regional Thames and Chilterns in Bloom competition in 2018 following discussions at the Henley in Bloom meeting on Thursday 22 February 2018.

A discussion ensued and the following comments were made:-

- Henley would benefit from a year of not entering and it would give the opportunity to re-evaluate current projects and develop new ones
- a momentum has been built up over the last few years and should be continued
- Bloom projects can continue without entering the competition
- the Bloom competition is not about winning and should be supported

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Henley does not enter Thames and Chilterns in Bloom in 2018

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Chairman