

Present: Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin (presiding)
Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor Mrs P G Buckett
Councillor Mrs G M Dodds
Councillor A J Follett
Councillor C W Gibson
Councillor Miss L M Hillier
Councillor Mrs R Myer
Councillor C I Pye
Councillor Miss L H Pye
Councillor I Reissmann
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith
Councillor Dr B G Wood

In Attendance: Mr M W Kennedy – Town Clerk
Miss J Smith – Minute Taker / Committee Administrator
Mr C Austin - Town Sergeant

Also Present: 1 member of the press
10 members of the public

The Town Clerk read out the fire evacuation procedure. The Mayor reminded Councillors and members of the public of the Code of Practice relating to Public Participation as stated on the agenda.

104. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dr P Skolar and S Smith.

105. **RESULTS FOLLOWING THE BY-ELECTION ON 11 FEBRUARY 2010 HENLEY SOUTH WARD**

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, congratulated Councillor Mrs P Buckett on her election as Councillor for the South Ward, following the By-election and welcomed her as a Member of the Full Council. It was

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs P G Buckett to be appointed to serve on the Town and Community and Recreation and Amenities Committees for the remainder of the local government year.

Councillor C Pye congratulated the Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin on her election to the District Council following the By-election.

106. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In addition to those already declared in the minutes of the relevant Committees: Councillor Mrs P Buckett declared a prejudicial interest for Agenda item 14, Town Medal Nomination.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith declared a personal interest on Planning Committee, 23 February 2010, item 145 (P09/E1267) as a neighbour.

Councillor Dr B Wood advised that he had been expelled from the Henley Residents Group and would be sitting as an independent on the Council and declared that he was a member of the Liberal Democrat Party.

107. **MINUTES**

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith referred to *Minute 99 – District/County Councillor Reports – Minute 99 Snow Clearing (page 4)* and stated that the Minute should have read: 'Informal feedback from OCC was that Henley's roads and pavements were in the same condition as most of the towns in Oxfordshire and that each town had been dealt with on the same basis.'

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith referred to *Minute 99 (page 5)* and his response to Councillor Dr B Wood question regarding cost cuts to Youth Services and asked that this minute be amended to: 'County Councillor D Nimmo-Smith reported that the budget was to be set in three weeks time but that there would be no appreciable change to the level of service.'

The Minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 26 January 2010 were approved and signed by the Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, subject to the above amendments, as a true record.

108. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr R Atkin – Elizabeth Road

Mr Atkin wanted to bring to the Councillors' attention to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) Green Infrastructure Strategy and the fact that it reported that Henley's requirement for "natural" green spaces provision was zero. After investigation he had found that the "natural" provision counted for Henley were all several miles away and not within walking distance for residents. Mr Atkin also referred to a footpath on Henley Town Council land that had been detoured due to an erection of a fence and asked if access could be restored to what it used to be which was a delightful woodland walk popular for Henley residents. He advised that he had passed his recommendations via a letter to the Town Clerk on the 10 February 2010 and asked that this be circulated to Members.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin thanked Mr Atkin for his observation.

Mr W Hamilton - Greys Road

Mr Hamilton asked if the Henley Town Council's (HTC) website could be updated with the correct local political party information.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin thanked Mr Hamilton for his suggestion.

Mr K J Arlett – Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett referred to a report he had from SODC and quoted the revenue received from all of the district's car parks and the fact that these car parks were showing a loss apart from Kings Road and Greys Road car parks. He asked why Henley was subsidising other car parks in the district and why do car parks in Didcot, Thames and Wallingford offer two hour free parking anytime in the day and Henley only offers one hour free parking between 9:00am -10:00am?

Councillor Mrs J Bland advised that revenue from SODC car parks is ring fenced and these figures did not include maintenance charges. She highlighted that Kings Road car park is subsidised by Waitrose.

Mr D Arlett – Kings Road

Mr Arlett asked if works to the pavement in Kings Road was due to take place as during heavy rain the pavement floods.

Mayor, Mrs E Hodgkin agreed and asked the Town Clerk if this matter could be addressed with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC).

Mr W Hamilton - Greys Road

Mr Hamilton referred to the Full Council Minutes of 21 July 2009, Minute 33 when he asked if the CCTV cameras were still in operation at the bottom of Greys Hill

and what measures had been undertaken regarding the CCTV footage from this camera following the recent armed robbery.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin confirmed that the Police were responsible for using any CCTV footage for their enquiries and that as far as she was aware the camera was in operation.

Mr K J Arlett – Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett referred to Finance Strategy and Management Committee and the item regarding the refurbishment of the Town Hall to incorporate the Henley Information Centre. He stated that as a builder he had looked at the plans and he could not understand why £35,000 was being spent to remove a few partition walls. He also asked what the professional fees costs were for the project.

Councillor Dr B Wood advised that the new design would reflect a cultural change in bringing the One Stop Shop and Visitor Information Centre together and would be more ascetically pleasing. He confirmed that KVB Design had gone out to tender for the work to be undertaken and had also negotiated a reduction in costs on HTC's behalf.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the architect fees were £1,300 and the professional fees were £6,000 for this project.

109. **PROGRESS REPORT**

Members had before them a progress report on the following matters, copy having been issued. The Council was apprised of the latest developments.

Weed Killing – Minutes 4035 (4/11/08, 1866 (14/10/08, 4046 (9/12/08), 4060 (27/1/09); 4070 (3/3/09), 14 (12/5/09), 447 (11/8/09) and 57 (29/9/09)

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin asked that this item is now removed as different measures were now being sought to help control the weeds.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith referred to the last Henley in Bloom Minutes and noted that the Gardening Buddies were now addressing part of this issue.

Councillor Dr B Wood referred to the Waste Recycling Scheme and the fact that there were still numerous outstanding issues to be addressed for around 500 residents in Henley and gave Gravel Hill and Greys Hill as two examples. He asked that the District Councillors obtain a report from SODC for this Council which addresses all the outstanding issues.

Councillor Miss L Hillier confirmed that the letter that had recently been published in the Henley Standard from a resident which had suggested that SODC were not addressing issues was totally incorrect and she had a copy of the response from Councillor Mrs A Ducker, Leader of SODC which outlined what measures had been undertaken.

Councillor A Follett agreed that there were still numerous issues that needed to be addressed in a systematic approach e.g. sacks for the elderly and that it was worth keeping up the pressure on SODC.

Councillor Mrs J Bland advised that Mrs S Wilson and Mr D Dodds had always been very responsive on any issues that she had raised.

Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs J Wood expressed that she had spoken with elderly residents in their 90's who did not want to leave their gates unlocked and who were unable to put out the wheelie bins. They had asked SODC for sacks instead of bins, but had been refused because of the cost implication.

Councillor Mrs R Myer agreed that there had initially been teething problems but that SODC had no choice in implementing this scheme because of the compliance with European Legislation regarding the recycling of waste.

Councillor Dr B Wood referred to the Town Hall meeting that took place on 13 July 2009 where SODC had agreed to have these issues addressed and resolved by

8 September 2009. He therefore proposed that SODC are asked to provide a report which addresses the remaining problems associated with the waste recycling scheme since its implementation in June 2009. It was

RESOLVED that SODC are asked to provide a report which addresses the remaining problems associated with the waste recycling scheme since its implementation in June 2009.

Councillor Miss L Hillier advised that HGV's were still turning the wrong way and disregarding the temporary no right turn in Reading Road while the pavements works are taking place.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith confirmed that he would take the issue up with OCC.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith referred to the Northfield End traffic statistics and confirmed that he had circulated the results from the traffic survey to the Town Clerk. It was

RESOLVED that and the Northfield End Traffic Statistics be considered at the next Town and Community Committee.

Action: Committee Clerk to put Northfield End traffic statistics on the next Town and Community agenda.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that following a question from Mr Cross at Public Participation at Full Council on road safety issues at Hamilton Avenue and Vicarage Road a letter had been written to the Head Teacher, Trinity School regarding parents drop off and collection of pupils in these roads. In addition, advice had been sought from Mr P Ronald, OCC Highways and the issue placed on the next Traffic Advisory Group agenda. Mrs S Wilson, Waste Services Manager, SODC will also be raising the issue of recycling bins obstructing the pavements with Verdant.

110. **DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

The Council received the following verbal reports from District and County Councillors.

District County Councillor reports:

District Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin reported on the following matter:

- SODC Full Council: confirmed that there would be a 0% increase in the precept.
- Dog Bin Collections: confirmed that Henley may receive a small reduction in costs for this service.

District Councillor Mrs J Bland reported on the following matters:

- Sport Centres: Grants are available for talented athletes to provide training and development to help them reach their full sporting potential. This grant comes at a vital time to support local talent in the run up to the Olympics. Greenwich Leisure LTD the council leisure management contractor are the sponsors. Applications are now open until 1 March 2010.
- Community Investment: a grant of £4,550 was granted to the Peppard War Memorial Hall towards a new kitchen. The work is now complete.

District Councillor Miss L Hillier reported on the following matter:

- SODC Housing Initiative: a questionnaire was available online, deadline for completion by 16 April 2010.

Councillor C Pye stated that the dog bins are very seldom emptied so would the reduction in costs for this service also mean a reduction in the current service.

Councillor Dr B Wood confirmed that SODC had made a mistake on the charging for this service in the budget, it was in fact 75p per bin per week instead of £2.35. He confirmed, however, that there was a caveat attached and that these bins would not be emptied every week.

Councillor I Reissmann referred to the recent changes to the planning procedures and asked how District Councillors would ensure future information/changes are reported to Council.

District Councillor Miss L Hillier confirmed that these changes had been buried in a constitution and had not been highlighted. She agreed that it had caused an upset with many people, however, she reiterated that District Councillors still have power to call in planning applications to SODC Planning Committee where the Town Council's Planning Committee had recommended that planning permission be refused. She assured that anything that is refused by HTC Planning Committee will be represented at SODC Committee by a Councillor.

District Councillor Mrs J Bland confirmed that she vigilantly checks planning minutes and agendas and observations from Henley Society and the reasons for the changes were due to so many Parishes not sending representatives to the district council's planning committee which wasted SODC officers' time and cost money. She asked that if any Councillors would like any planning issues addressed to let her know.

County Councillor reports:

County Councillor D Nimmo-Smith reported on the following matters:

- Road Closures: he confirmed Gravel Hill starting at the entrance to the Greys Road car park, for approximately 20m, would be closed from 5 April 2010 for up to two weeks. Henley Bridge A4130 will be closed for urgent resurfacing from 10.00pm on Friday 19 March until 5.00am Saturday 20 March 2010.
Post meeting note: works start on 6 April 2010 for two weeks.
- Highway ownership issues at Northfield End: confirmed that he would be attending a meeting with the Leader of Council and a solicitor on 10 March 2010.
- Decriminalisation of Parking: advised that he had been trailing this issue for a long time. SODC were potentially becoming 'luke warm' to taking this issue over because of the costs involved. He confirmed that he would be taking the issue up with Councillor Mrs A Ducker and Mr D Buckle, Chief Executive of SODC.
- Minerals and Gravel: advised that OCC had to create a land bank for 25% of the gravel in the Thames Valley. The process would take three to four years to work out a full management plan.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin asked why the 20m utilities work in Gravel Hill would take two weeks to complete.

Councillor Mrs J Bland stated that this would affect trade in the town during the Easter holidays which is one of the busiest times.

Councillor C Pye agreed that this was clearly a busy time for traders and that HTC should try to persuade the utilities to rethink these planned works and reschedule them. He proposed that the Town Clerk approaches OCC to discuss an alternative time for these works.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith advised that there is no good time to carry out these works, but that OCC had chosen this date to coincide with the school and college Easter holidays when there would be less commuter traffic. He confirmed he would liaise with Mr T Bowler, but asked what would be a better time for these works.

Councillor Dr B Wood advised that many times in the past planned works had been rescheduled by negotiating with OCC and asked that perhaps in future OCC should come and talk to HTC before scheduling utilities road works.

Councillor A Follett referred to decriminalisation of parking and regretted the further delay, as over many years it has been used as a reason to delay consideration of an integrated parking strategy for both on and off road parking in the town. The control of on road parking regulation under the District Council could encourage a better use of parking spaces especially for short term parking.

111. **FEEDBACK REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members had before them copies of seven reports (attached to the agenda) and two reports: Nomad Youth Work Funding and Henley Borama Friendship Association (tabled at the meeting) from the representatives on Outside Bodies. It was

RESOLVED that the reports be received and noted.

112. **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Members had before them the list of Mayoral engagements from to 21 January 2010 to 24 February 2010 inclusive, copy attached to the Agenda.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that it had been a busy five weeks. The Mayor's charity fund raising events had been very successful. The Mayor's Choir Festival was impressive; the Pancake Race was great fun and went very well and suggested this should be an annual event and the Mayor's Quiz had raised nearly £2,000. The Civic Dinner had been a tremendous success the food was terrific and the cabaret had been fantastic entertainment.

Councillor Dr B Wood praised the Mayor for her commitment over her Mayoral year and that she had been an inspiration for all future Mayors.

113. **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

(i) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 2 February 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 2 February 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

(ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 23 February 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 23 February 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 151 – Tree Preservation Order 01/201

Councillor A Follett referred Members to this minute and highlighted the recommendation that representations are to be made to SODC by 3 March 2010 and advised that this Council support the protection of the area in principle, but that they cannot support a protection of every tree in this area as it is being considered for use as allotments and encourages the District Council to hold further talks with the HTC before imposing a blanket TPO on the whole woodland. Minute 63 (ii) of the Recreation and Amenities Committee, 2 February 2010 also refers.

Minute 155 – 10 Marmion Road

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith stated that as there were no specific details in this minute and it was therefore unclear what planning issue was being referred to for this property.

Councillor A Follett confirmed it was an issue regarding the replacement of uPVC windows in a conservation area.

- (iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 2 February 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 2 February 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 63 (i) – Waterman’s Allotment

Councillor I Reissmann referred to the recommendation and that the Allotment Association had approached them regarding fencing at Watermans Allotment to deter deer from entering and eating produce. He advised that £1200 is available in the 2009/10 budget and asked whether this could be carried forward into 2010/11 towards this project.

The Town Clerk confirmed that unspent budgets could not be carried forward, they become part of the General Fund Balance in 2010/2011. However, subject to Council’s approval appropriate money could potentially be obtained from the general fund balance. He advised Members that this recommendation could not be ratified at Full Council without it being considered as an agenda item or a recommendation from the Recreation and Amenities Committee.

Councillor G Dodds confirmed that this item had been put on the next Recreation and Amenities Committee agenda on the 9 March 2010. Councillor I Reissmann proposed that Council gives the Recreation and Amenities Committee agenda delegated powers to act in this matter. The Motion having been put to the vote was declared lost.

Minute 65 – Gillotts Field

Councillor B Gibson referred to the Town Green status of Gillotts Field and that this area was certainly not an area for children to play or for picnicking as it was littered with dog excrement and asked that this issue be considered at the next Recreation and Amenities Committee.

Action: Committee Clerk to add how to deter dog fouling at Gillotts Field on Recreation and Amenities Committee on 9 March 2010.

- (iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 9 February 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 9 February 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted subject to the following changes.

Minute 93 – Weather Action Plan

Councillor Dr B Wood referred to his proposal and expressed that he was hoping to achieve this plan by involving all three councils (OCC, SODC and HTC). He did not want HTC to take the lead on a consultation process, but wanted initially to have discussions with SODC and OCC and to have a rational debate on putting together a weather action plan. Councillor Dr B Wood asked that the recommendation in this Minute is changed and made the following proposal that OCC and SODC are asked to engage in discussions regarding a bad weather action plan. It was

RESOLVED that OCC and SODC are asked to engage in discussions regarding a bad weather action plan.

Councillor C Gibson stated that a General Election is due and it is known that cuts are coming, therefore, it was about getting the message across that residents and retailers need to take responsibility and clear pavements of snow and ice. He asked if HTC got an infinitive answer from the Chief Legal Officer at OCC regarding whether a person can be prosecuted if someone falls on a pavement that has been cleared by a member of the public.

The Town Clerk confirmed that following a discussion with Mr B Short, OCC Highways, OCC's biggest problem was the lack of guidance coming down from Central Government during the 2009 adverse weather. Advice from Central Government was that provided members of the public had taken all reasonable measures to clear snow from the pavements outside their properties they would be unlikely to be prosecuted if anyone falls over as a result of their actions.

The Mayor asked if Mr Short's comments could be put in writing and circulated to Members.

Minute 95 – Parking Project Initiative for Henley

Councillor Dr B Wood stated that the issue of parking in Henley is strategic not tactically with the car parks being owned by many agencies including OCC, SODC and First Great Western. There were similar problems in Thame and Wallingford regarding car park ownership. He believed the only way the problem would be solved was if the HTC owned the licence to the car parks in Henley.

Councillor A Follett advised that the Council is encouraging Henley Partnership to seek a consensus view from the businesses and therefore should support the recommendation as it stands and get the input from the businesses.

- (v) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 16 February 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 16 February 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

- (vi) The Minutes of the meeting of the Townlands Steering Committee held on 22 February 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Townlands Steering Committee held on 22 February 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Councillor I Reissmann advised that the 'Invitation Participation Dialogue Pack' had not yet been sent to the bidders as it was being reviewed by external lawyers and he hoped that this would not affect the timetable. He confirmed that most of the documents in the pack would be made available to the public once they have been sent to the bidders.

114. **LEASE OF 32 MARKET PLACE**

The Town Clerk requested Council's approval for signing and sealing the Lease between HTC and Citizens Advice Bureau for 32 Market Place. It was

RESOLVED that the Lease between HTC and Citizens Advice Bureau for 32 Market Place be signed and sealed by the Council.

115. **MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR ELECT**

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin asked Members for nominations for the position of Mayor Elect.

Councillor A Follett nominated Councillor Mrs J Wood.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith nominated Councillor Miss L Hillier. It was

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs J Wood be considered the Mayor Elect for 2010/11.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin asked Members for nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor Elect.

Councillor Miss L Pye nominated Councillor C Pye.

Councillor Miss L Hillier nominated Councillor D Nimmo-Smith. It was

RESOLVED that Councillor Mr C Pye be considered the Deputy Mayor Elect for 2010/11.

116. **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.

117. **MINUTES OF THE CONFIDENTIAL SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL HELD ON 2 MARCH 2010.**

TOWN MEDAL NOMINATION

The Minutes of the Town Medal Committee held on 4 February 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of Town Medal Committee held on 4 February 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin invited Councillors and members of the public to join her for refreshments in the Mayor's Parlour.

The meeting closed at 9:25pm.

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Mayor