

Present: The Chairman, Councillor Miss K Hinton  
Councillor Mrs P Phillips  
Councillor Mrs J Wood  
Mr D Eggleton  
Mrs C Langler  
Ms M Francini

In attendance: Mr G Bartle – Parks Services Manager  
Mrs B Walker – Minute Taker/Committee Administrator

1 member of the press

**83. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr P Simms and Mr S Khan – the Chairman noted the matter of sponsors sitting on Sub Committees would be discussed at Full Council (24.3.15). Apologies were also received from the Mayor, Councillor M Akehurst and Ms K Kobik.

**84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**85. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

None.

**86. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Henley in Bloom / Civic Pride Sub Committee meeting held on 24 February 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**87. BUDGET UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received and noted the budget to date for 2014/15.

**88. ENTENTE FLORALE EUROPE**

i. The Chairman gave an update of the presentation given by Peter Holman, the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) appointed mentor on Tuesday 17 March 2015. Mr Holman was accompanied by two fellow Entente judges Mark Wasilewski (St James's Park and Green Park, Park Manager, Royal Parks) and David Little.

Members commented the presentation was very informative and realistic regarding the amount of work which will have to be undertaken and the costs.

During discussions the following comments were made:-

- the Entente judging criteria and expectations of the judges are wider ranging than the In Bloom criteria.
- the Entente judges will expect a certain amount of pomp and ceremony as will be provided by other towns and cities entering in Europe – for example a dinner will be expected on the evening of the judging day.

- there are between 10 and 12 judges – accommodation, food, airport transfers, transport for judging day etc will need to be provided.
- it was acknowledged the costs would be significant and a discussion took place on the validity of entering and the value it would bring to Henley. Members felt it was an honour to be chosen to enter by the RHS and could provide opportunities to encourage new supporters in the community and business world and would be a significant marketing tool for Henley. It was acknowledged tourism is very important to the town and although Entente is not as well known in Britain in Bloom it is hugely popular in other European countries.
- Entente could open doors to wider media interest to promote Henley eg in-flight magazines, national press etc.
- sponsorship will be sought but it is more likely to be in-kind rather than cash.
- there will also be costs associated with the regional and national In Bloom campaigns.
- it was suggested regarding the judges visit, that as funds are restricted a few aspects should be chosen and done to a very high standard rather than undertaking a wide-range of activities.
- members suggested the following people and organisations who should be invited to participate in the entry including representatives from the County and District Councils, the Environment Agency, residents with expertise in trees, town planning, environmental matters, local businesses eg energy companies, Open Spaces Society, First Great Western, Thames and Chilterns in Bloom etc.

Members acknowledged there was a considerable amount of work to be undertaken to accommodate the judges and prepare the tour. The Chairman advised the Entente Working Group which was set up in December 2014 would continue to progress these matters and asked if any other members would like to join the Working Group. Mrs C Langler and Mr D Eggleton would like to help when time permits. Councillor Mrs J Wood advised she would like to join the group.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**

**that Councillor Mrs J Wood join the Entente Florale Working Group who will progress matters related to accommodating the judges during their stay and in preparing for the judging tour. (Membership of the Working Group is Councillor Miss Kellie Hinton, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, Councillor Mrs J Wood, Ms M Francini and the Parks Manager, Mr G Bartle).**

- ii. Members noted the Entente Judging Day is Sunday 19 July 2015.
- iii. Members considered setting a budget for the entry into Entente Florale. It was acknowledged that there would be substantial costs and if members felt the financial commitment was too large it would be advisable to withdraw now. The Chairman advised Bournemouth had spent £40,000 on their entry last year and Edinburgh had spent £8,000.

After a lengthy discussion it was **RESOLVED**

**that a budget of £7,000 be allocated from the Henley in Bloom budget (including the £2,000 already allocated for the accommodation costs) for costs relating to the Entente Florale entry eg accommodation costs for the judges, food, airport transfers/transport, communications systems, mock judging day costs, production of a pr pack, portfolio, road book and presentation, small gift for the judges and dinner event following the judging**

**that sponsorship/in-kind support be sought wherever possible**

**that the Entente Florale Working Group progress the arrangements for the Entente Florale entry within the budget of £7,000 eg booking coaches, accommodation arrangements, communication systems, arranging the dinner, producing portfolio, road book and presentation etc**

**that regular updates be given to the Henley in Bloom Sub Committee**

## **89. BRITAIN IN BLOOM/THAMES AND CHILTERN IN BLOOM**

- i. Members received and considered this year's projects as follows:-
  - a. **Greener Streets : Better Lives** – the Chairman updated members regarding this project which is focused on “greening up” the Kings Road Car Park. Initial contact has been made with South Oxfordshire District Council (who own the car park) who are supportive. Businesses, organisations and residents who are located near the car park will be contacted to ask for suggestions and whether they will volunteer for a work day or sponsor the project. The Army Cadets are also keen to help. Members felt this was a worthwhile project particularly regarding the large number of people who use this area.
  - b. **Henley in Bloom Candle and/or Diffuser** - The Chairman advised she had met with a local company – ScentElite Ltd– regarding the possibility of producing a Henley in Bloom candle and/or diffuser. The company would like to celebrate Henley, as their home town and would donate a proportion of the sale of each candle or diffuser to Henley in Bloom (HiB). There would be no cost to Henley in Bloom. It was suggested an Entente Florale candle be produce with a small leaflet in the box explaining the Entente campaign and this could possibly be a gift for the judges, although weight maybe an issue. It is hoped the candle would be sold in local shops and also through the company's existing outlets. Members were asked to smell a section of fragrances made by the company. Members discussed the proposal and **RESOLVED**

**that Henley in Bloom work with ScentElite Ltd to produce a candle and/or diffuser promoting Henley and Henley in Bloom (at no cost to Henley in Bloom). The Chairman to have delegated powers to negotiate regarding the donation per candle/diffuser to be made to Henley in Bloom. The preferred fragrance was “Bluebell”**

- c. **Floral Train** – members considered the floral train which has been in storage over the winter months. The Parks Manager advised the wheels were in need of repairs as they had delaminated and are in need of re-painting. Members noted to plant the train up would cost approximately £1000 and First Great Western are unlikely to provide sponsorship this year. Alternate ways of using the train were considered eg decorating it with metal flowers as an art project however it was felt this would be very expensive. A member suggested a cheaper planting plan as a compromise – to cover the body of the train with artificial grass and plant with durable and bright annual planting at the top and bottom eg red polyanthus.

**Action:** Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin be asked for her opinion regarding the floral train.

- d. **Reading Road Roundabout** – the Chairman advised the refurbishment is underway and Gardening Buddies are scheduled to plant the roundabout with the designer on 10 April 2015 at 9.30 am. Committee members are welcome to help with the planting. The Chairman also advised Councillor Mrs Hodgkin had met with Keith Stenning, Oxfordshire County Council Area Steward on site with regards to the project. It was noted that the project is within budget and money had been saved by Southern Plant Hire loaning equipment and the Parks Service clearing the site (the Parks Service re-used the stones from the roundabout by placing them in the potholes at Watermans Allotment). There had also been some additional cost eg the requirement of plant membrane.
- e. **Station Park** – members considered installing flagpoles on Station Park however felt this project should be put on-hold for the time being.
- f. **Front and Back Gardens competition and It's Your Neighbourhood (IYN)** – Gainsborough Residents Association (GRA) will be entering in the Thames and Chilterns In Bloom IYN for the second year. Mr Eggleton informed members that a new planter had been placed at the entrance to the Gainsborough Estate.

Mr Eggleton also advised the GRA in conjunction with Henley in Bloom (HiB), the local PCSOs and community volunteers would be holding a one hour presentation at the YMCA to encourage local communities to get together and improve their surroundings.

HiB will be running a Blooming Together campaign to run alongside, and as a stepping stone to the regional IYN – the campaign will encourage neighbours to join forces and improve their local street scene.

- ii. Members noted the judges for Britain in Bloom will be Brendan Mowforth and Ian Beaney and the judging dates will be circulated in early June.

## **90. HANGING BASKETS**

Ms M Francini advised she had investigated whether a discount should be given to people buying more than 2 but less than 10 baskets as requested at the last meeting and felt providing a discount would not necessarily encourage increased sales of baskets as the number of baskets bought is usually governed by the frontage of their property or the number of brackets they have.

Ms M Francini however advised that whilst looking through the hanging basket sales it became apparent there were a number of customers who had purchased baskets consistently over the years and consideration could be given to rewarding this loyalty and she would investigate this further.

## **91. PLANTER AT HENLEY BRIDGE**

Mrs C Langer advised permission had been granted by Wokingham District Council for a planter to be placed on the pavement by the bridge on the opposite side of the road to the planter outside the Regatta Headquarters.

Windowflowers have a second-hand quadrant planter which will complement the planter on the other side of the bridge. The cost for Windowflowers to supply and fill with a single specimen plant will be £145 (plus vat) and to fully maintain in a similar fashion to the display outside the Regatta Headquarters will be £5 per week. It was suggested Henley in Bloom purchase the planter rather than hire it and it was agreed a price be sought for this. Henley in Bloom may need to pay for the planter out of its budget and recoup the money once sponsorship is found.

Members thanked Mrs C Langer for liaising and organising the planter.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**

**that a second-hand quadrant planter be purchased/hired from Windowflowers and they fill with compost, plant and fully maintain subject to the costs being covered by sponsorship - the costs to be funded from the Henley in Bloom budget and recouped from sponsorship.**

## **92. PLANTING TO REDUCE AIR POLLUTION**

Mrs C Langer advised members of further research she had carried out regarding planting in order to reduce air pollution. The intention would be to plant silver birch saplings in pots in the streets with the worst air pollution subject to the necessary permissions from the County Council.

In order to progress this project in a timely manner it was suggested a small working group be formed to research the costs of plants and planters, identify possible locations and liaise with the Highway Authorities. Further updates will be presented to this Committee.

Members thanked Mrs Langer for her hard work on this project and were fully supportive of the principles behind trying to reduce air pollution particularly in the town centre. It was observed that the streets where air pollution was worst also presented the most challenges in finding suitable places to locate planters and it was suggested a site meeting with the Area Steward would be the best approach.

After further discussion it was **RESOLVED**

**that a Working Group be formed to progress the initiative to provide planting in the town centre in order to reduce air pollution eg research the types/sizes of plants, the costs of plants and planters, identify locations, to liaise with the Highway Authority and seek possible sponsorship. The Working Group to consist of Mrs C Langler, the Parks Manager – Mr G Bartle and Ms M Francini. Further updates to be brought to this Sub Committee.**

**93. CELEBRATION BEDS**

The Chairman advised Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin had suggested the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta as the theme for 2015, members felt this was an excellent idea. Members considered the cost of the information board and after discussion **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**that up to £200 is allocated from the Henley in Bloom budget for the production of the information boards for the Celebration Beds 2015 at Mill Meadows – the theme to be the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta.**

**94. HENLEY IN BLOOM BANNERS**

The Sub Committee considered the purchase of new Henley in Bloom banners for the Market Place as the current banners were ripped from wind damage. Members noted the cost of the current banners was £552 in 2013 and alternative quotes would be sought.

After discussion the Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

**that up to £600 be allocated from the Henley in Bloom budget for 2 vertical banners for the Market Place flagpoles**

**95. HIT LITTER**

The Chairman updated members regarding the HIT litter event to be held on Saturday 28 March 2015 and advised the Lions of Henley had been asked to provide the soup following the event.

**96. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 22 April 2015 at 2 pm in the Council Chamber.

The meeting closed at 11.44 am

bw

Chairman