

Present: Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin (presiding)
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 Miss L H Pye
Councillor I Reissmann
Councillor D Nimmo-Smith

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
5 members of the public

The Mayor asked all Councillors and members of the public to remain standing and held a few minutes silence as a mark of respect for Mr J P Green who died at the weekend. Mr Green was Mayor of Henley-on-Thames in 1969.

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.

118. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dr P Skolar, S Smith, Dr B Wood, C Pye, Mrs R Myer and Deputy Mayor, Mrs J Wood.

119. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received other than those already declared in the relevant Minutes.

120. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 2 March 2010 were approved and signed by the Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin, as a true record.

Matters Arising from the Minutes:

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith asked about the road closure in Gravel Hill for two weeks from 6 April 2010.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that although the road had been closed today there was no work being carried out and the road closures were causing chaos to the traffic flow.

The Town Clerk confirmed that he had spoken to the contractor and work would commence on 7 April for a two week period for essential works to the gas mains. Councillor Mrs J Bland, on behalf of the traders, objected to the work being carried out during the Easter break as the road closure would cause disruption at a busy time for the town's traders. She asked why this work could not have been scheduled at another time.

The Town Clerk advised that the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) had scheduled this time with the contractors to coincide with the school term break when there would potentially be less commuter traffic.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith referred to Minute 113 (iv) and asked whether Mr B Short's comments regarding members of the public clearing the snow from the pavements outside their properties had been received in writing. The Town Clerk confirmed that Mr Short's response had not yet been received. Councillor Nimmo-Smith said the he would follow this up with Mr Short.

121. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr K J Arlett – Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett referred to the Gravel Hill closure and the fact that he was caught in the traffic congestion caused by this closure. He stated the planning for the road closure had not been thought through and was a disgrace.

In addition, Mr Arlett referred to the letter in the Henley Standard (12 March 2010) from Councillor D Dodds, South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) regarding Henley Town Council (HTC) taking over the running of the town's car parks and asked that as there appeared to be only two minor reasons why HTC could not take on the running of these car parks were HTC going to approach SODC to make a proposal.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that several years ago SODC were approached regarding HTC taking over the running of Kings and Greys Road car parks as well as the daily maintenance of the Greys Road car park toilets, but SODC had refused the proposal.

Mrs V Alasia – Makins Road

Mrs Alasia asked as the town was receiving many visitors why was the town was not tidied up before the Easter weekend. She referred to the waste recycling bags littering the streets in south Riverside and the pot holes in Meadow Road.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that OCC were working their way round filling all the pot holes in the town. She also advised that the residents in south Riverside had put out the wrong bags for collection which meant that they had remained on the road until the following week.

Mr W Hamilton - Greys Road

Mr Hamilton referred to the recent road resurfacing on the Henley Bridge and the fact that OCC had done a superb job. He asked if HTC had written to them following this work.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin confirmed that HTC work in partnership with OCC and they are always thanked when works had been satisfactorily completed.

Mr K J Arlett – Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett referred to Recreation and Amenities Committee, 9 March 2010, Minute 75 - *Refurbishment of Toilets at the Leichlingen Pavilion* and the recent article in the Henley Standard regarding the costs for the refurbishment of toilets at the Leichlingen Pavilion and how these seemed to be spiralling out of control. He asked how many architects had been approach to tender for the project.

The Town Clerk advised that this project started before he joined HTC and was not able to answer Mr Arlett's question.

Mr W Hamilton - Greys Road

Mr Hamilton asked what assurances were being taken to ensure the costs for the refurbishment of toilets at the Leichlingen Pavilion were not getting out of control.

The Mayor confirmed that the project had not yet gone to tender. Once the specification had been approved costs would be sought. No commitment had yet been made by HTC.

Mr K J Arlett – Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett referred to Full Council, 2 March 2010 *Minute 108 – Refurbishment of the Town Hall*. Having seen the new refurbishment he felt £6,000 for professional fees was very high for the actually work undertaken.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin advised that the refurbishment had greatly improved the image of HTC and had proudly managed to secure a Henley Information Centre (housing the One Stop Shop and Visitor Information Centre) for the town having being refused further funding removed for these services from SODC.

Mr K J Arlett – Elizabeth Road

Mr Arlett referred to Finance Strategy and Management Committee, 23 March *Minute 2010 111 (iv) – Senior Administrator/Review of Service* and asked if the position had been advertised externally.

The Town Clerk confirmed that HTC had adhered to their recruitment process by advertising the position internally. He confirmed the position had now been filled internally following a unanimous decision from the interview panel.

Mr Arlett asked when the recruitment process the Town Clerk referred to had been passed through Committee.

The Town Clerk advised that other positions for the Accountant and Leading Hand for Park Services had been successfully filled internally. He confirmed he would give details of the HTC recruitment process to Mr Arlett.

122. **PROGRESS REPORT**

Members had before them a progress report which was noted. The Council was apprised of the latest developments.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs Hodgkin advised that following a conversation with SODC the residents in Gravel Hill had been given permission to keep their bins on the side of the road.

123. **DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

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

District County Councillor reports:

District Councillor Mrs J Bland reported on the following matters:

- Councillor N Odd - Ward Councillor for Crowmarsh: had sadly passed away on 31 March 2010.

District Councillor Miss L Hillier reported on the following matter:

- Concessionary Bus Passes: the eligibility age had been changed to 65 years as of 6 April 2010.
- SODC Housing Initiative: a questionnaire regarding improving housing options for the elderly was available online, deadline for completion was 16 April 2010.

District Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin had nothing to report.

Councillor A Follett stated the change to the eligibility age for a concessionary bus pass had not been well publicised and he was under the impression it was going to be sliding scale not a 'guillotine' approach. He asked how this was publicised in South Oxfordshire as there was nothing on the SODC website.

District Councillor Miss L Hillier confirmed that she would speak with SODC.

Councillor Miss L Pye asked if the condition of the Station Road car park toilets could be addressed with SODC as they continued to be a disgrace for visitors and residents of the town.

District Councillor Mrs J Bland confirmed that she would speak with SODC.
County Councillor reports:

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

- Highway Maintenance: an officer's report had been completed and would be reviewed by OCC Councillor R Rose. A Snow Manual would be sent to towns and parishes for comments.
- Chairmanships: confirmed he will be chairing the Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee - this deals with highways, minerals & gravels, spatial planning, waste disposal and all environmental issues (carbon footprints, snow, flooding etc). Councillor Dr P Skolar would still be chairing the Health Scrutiny Committee and the new (Madam) Chairman of the County is Hilary Hibbert-Biles, who represents Chipping Norton.
- Oxfordshire Plan for Adult Social Care: discussions at a recent meeting were to try and replicate the Scottish model where adult social care is free.

Councillor C Gibson asked if South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) was still in existence.

County Councillor D Nimmo-Smith confirmed that SEERA had been dissolved in 2009.

Councillor I Reissmann asked about the position regarding highway ownership issues at Northfield End.

County Councillor D Nimmo-Smith confirmed that the findings would be presented at the next Finance Strategy and Management Committee on the 27 April.

124. **FEEDBACK REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members had before them a copy of a report (attached to the agenda). It was

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

125. **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Members had before them the list of Mayoral engagements from to 25 February 2010 to 28 March 2010 inclusive, copy attached to the Agenda.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin informed Members that the Civic Dinner had gone very well. The Henley Youth Festival had been a great success and the gala night had hosted such fantastic local talent. The whole week had been inspirational and the Henley Youth Festival organisers should be congratulated.

126. **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

- (i) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9 March 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9 March 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

- (ii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 30 March 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 30 March 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 177 (b) 1/2010 – Waterman's Spinney

Councillor A Follett referred Members to this minute and advised that although in the past there were concerns over placing a Tree Preservation

Order on Waterman's Spinney as the land could potentially be used as allotments. However, following *Minute 168 – Public Participation*, Mr A Hawkins, Allotment Association and Tree Warden had advised that as another area had been identified for use as allotments they would like the Spinney to remain as a wooded area and hence the Committee's recommendation.

Minute 178 – Changes Made by South Oxfordshire District Council to the Planning System

Councillor I Reissmann asked if clarification had been sought as to whether it was acceptable for Ward District Councillors to sit on the Planning Committee.

Councillor Mrs J Bland confirmed that she had been advised by SODC not to sit on the town planning committee.

As per the recommendation in this Minute, the Mayor asked that the letter from SODC be circulated to Members for clarification.

Post meeting note: Town Clerk to circulate via Councillors weekly newsletter and added to progress report.

- (iii) The Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 9 March 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 9 March 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 75 – Refurbishment of Toilets at the Leichlingen Pavilion

Councillor Mrs G Dodds advised that she shares the concerns regarding the costs of the refurbishment of these toilets.

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith expressed concerns about the increasing costs of the project. He also stated that original plans had included showers for the boat owners but that these were now not shown.

The Mayor, Mrs E Hodgkin confirmed that after consultation with the boat owners most of the boats have showers so this had been removed from the plans.

Minute 77 – Moorings – 'African Queen'

Councillor Miss L Hillier asked for the recommendation to be debated further and proposed that instead of refusing the request for the 'African Queen' to moor at Mill Meadows a letter should be written to the owner requesting more information. Motion was lost.

Councillor A Follett stated that the Minute does not give all the past history and detail of discussions surrounding this recommendation and explained that in the past the owner had been allowed to moor free of charge to carry out repairs to his boat but that HTC had then had difficulties in getting the owner to move the boat after these repairs had been completed.

Councillor Mr C Gibson advised that Reading Borough Council had also had similar issues with the owner of 'African Queen'.

Minute 81 – Temporary Moorings

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith asked what how much money these two boats owed in mooring fees.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin confirmed that investigations were ongoing on these two boats and an update would be given in a confidential session at the next Recreation and Amenities Committee on the 13 April 2010.

- (iv) The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 16 March 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 16 March 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted subject to the following changes.

Minute 108 – Henley International Film Festival (HIFF)

Members had before them a copy of a report (attached to the agenda). It was

RESOLVED that £500 is provided to Henley International Film Festival from Henley Town Council's Action Plan Budget towards the production of a film on Henley war veterans.

Mayor, Councillor Mrs E Hodgkin confirmed that this amount would be match funded by The Henley Partnership.

Minute 114 – Speed Checks on Northfield End

Councillor D Nimmo-Smith advised that this issue was an agenda item on the Traffic Advisory Committee to be held on 20 April 2010.

- (v) The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 23 March 2010 were before the Council. It was

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Strategy and Management Committee held on 23 March 2010 and the recommendations therein be received, approved and adopted.

Arising from the report:

Minute 106 – Revised Local Code of Corporate Governance

Councillor Miss L Hillier asked why an item discussed by the Chairman under this agenda item relating to 'A' Boards was not minuted.

- (vi) Townlands Steering Group (TSG) there had been no meeting of the TSG since last Full Council, therefore, Mr I Reissmann gave the following verbal update:-

Invitation Participation Dialogue Pack: the pack had not yet been sent out to the bidders as it was still being reviewed by external lawyers. There had been various issues which had arisen and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) were responding accordingly to the lawyers. He stated that PCT remained committed to the project and that he would be having a meeting with Mrs Sonia Mills, PCT's new Chief Executive later in April.

Townlands Community Group: 21 April 2010 meeting postponed now being held on 13 May 2010 at 6:30pm in the Council Chamber.

Townlands Steering Group: provisional date of 5 May 2010, venue to be confirmed.

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 8:30pm.