

Present: The Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood, Deputy Mayor
The Vice Chairman, Councillor D Clenshaw
Councillor M Akehurst. Mayor
Councillor Mrs J Bland
Councillor S Gawrysiak
Councillor Miss S Evans
Councillor Miss K Hinton
Councillor I Reissmann
Councillor D Silvester

In attendance: Mr M Kennedy – Town Clerk
Mrs B Walker – Committee Administrator/Minute Taker

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

51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

52. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

53. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Mr D Dickie, St Katherine's Road – Minute 54 ii – Henley in Bloom minutes – Mr Dickie was very pleased to see that Henley in Bloom were investigating ways to reduce air pollution in the town by planting trees, particular silver birch. He confirmed there is a lot of activity in this area in other towns and trials have been proven very successful in Lancaster.

A member commented that there are trees in the Kings Road Car Park which need replacing. The committee was informed that Henley in Bloom were already in contact with the South Oxfordshire District Council on this matter along with a wider project with local businesses, retailers etc to improve the area.

54. MINUTES

- i. The minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee held on 25 November 2015 were approved and then signed by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs J Wood as a true record.
- ii. The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Henley in Bloom/ Civic Pride Sub Committee held on 9 December 2014.

In response to the comment in public participation regarding air pollution, members were advised that a representative from Henley in Transition had been invited onto the Sub Committee with a view to look at air quality matters.

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the minutes of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee held on 9 December 2014 be received, approved and adopted

- iii. The Committee received and considered the notes of the Outdoor Gym Equipment Working Group held on 2 December 2014 and 13 January 2015 and the recommendations therein.

Councillors were apprised of the views expressed by members during discussion on this matter at the Mill Meadows Sub Committee held on 22 January 2015 and advised overall the members had felt the putting green was not the right location for a number of reasons. These included:- it is overlooked and people may want a degree of privacy when exercising; the area is visitor focussed (especially in summer) and local residents may not use the equipment as much as if it was at a resident focused location; the equipment may be better used if arranged in a trail format and the putting green was well liked by families and should be retained.

It was also highlighted that Mill and Marsh Meadows has a Management Plan (a condition of its Green Flag status) which encourages any developments in this area to be seen from the perspective of what is best for the Meadows in the first instance.

A lengthy discussion ensued which considered the location, type of equipment and layout and the following views were expressed:-

- other locations should be re-considered eg Makins Recreation Ground, Freemans Meadow, Marsh Meadows and the Town Green (Gillotts Field)
- a trail format is more likely to be used and is more conducive to outdoor gym equipment as it enables people to jog/run between pieces of equipment and enjoy the surroundings rather than trying to transfer the indoor gym format to the outside
- wooden equipment in a trail format may be more fitting for the surroundings eg around the periphery of Marsh Meadows
- public consultation on the location and style of equipment is required – it was noted there is a poll on the Town Council's website regarding the location
- Councillors should be invited to speak at the Working Group meeting in public participation to share their views

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the notes of the Outdoor Gym Working Group held on 2 December 2014 and 13 January 2015 be received and noted however the recommendation to locate the equipment at the putting green, Mill Meadows and associated recommendations (eg type of equipment wooden/metal and layout trail/grouped) be not adopted and the Working Group be asked to re-consider these matters at its next meeting.

55. BUDGET

The Committee received, considered and noted the Management Accounts to 31 December 2014

A member queried whether there had been a reduction in water usage at Mill Meadows following the refurbishment of the toilets at the Pavilion and the introduction of water saving measures eg dual flush toilets and movement sensor activated taps. The Town Clerk reported that it was too soon to tell but this would be monitored and the Committee updated in due course.

56. PROGRESS REPORT

i. The Committee received and considered the progress report and made the following comments:-

Makins Recreation Ground – Table Tennis Table (minute 42 – 21.10.14 refers)
Members received details regarding the cost of a concrete table tennis table and a suggestion from the Gainsborough Residents Association (GRA) that they raise a third of the funds in order to encourage residents to have a sense of ownership and to encourage users to value the new facility.

Members were concerned that this was an item on progress and not an agenda item and made the following comments:-

- would the Town Council own the table if it was jointly funded
- the table would be available for use by all members of the public not just those on the Gainsborough Estate
- the purchase of a table tennis table emanated from a survey carried out by the GRA of residents on the estate and a subsequent request to the Town Council. Should other areas also like to suggest improvements they too would be considered
- this is a relatively small amount of expenditure – the total amount is approx. £2,800 with GRA offering to fund 1/3 (£900) and the Town Council 2./3 (£2,800)

Members felt a holistic view of facilities at all the recreational areas owned by the Town Council should be considered rather than a piecemeal approach and this should be an agenda item. Members can then give their views on improvements to all the recreational areas.

A motion was proposed and seconded that this item be brought back for further consideration at the next meeting with a detailed report – a vote was taken and the motion was lost. It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Henley Town Council allocates £1,900 from the recreational improvements capex programme for 2014/15 to be put towards the purchase of a concrete table tennis table at Makins Recreation Ground and that the Gainsborough Residents Association fund the remaining third (£900)

that Henley Town Council own the table following installation

that the Town Clerk and the Parks Manager have delegated powers to decide the details eg the style and location in liaison with the Gainsborough Residents Association

Henley Highwayman – members noted the swimming event of the Henley Highwayman will take place on Friday 5 June 2015 rather than Friday 19 June 2015

Skatepark – Makins Recreation Ground – members noted an update from the Chairman of the Henley Skatepark Initiative, Mr Colin Brathwaite.

Budget – Mill Meadows Car Parking Charges – members noted the charges have not yet been set for 2015. A member remarked that the increase in fees which would normally be implemented from 1 January had been delayed as the Council had not agreed the budget for 2015/16.

ii. The Committee received and considered the Makins progress report and noted the following:-

- *Item 5.* – the wooden play equipment had been removed by the Parks Manager due to its condition.
- *Item 7* - Gainsborough Residents Association and SOHA are liaising regarding a possible dual use of the car park at the top of the pram walk

It was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Makins progress report be noted

57. HUMPHREY GAINSBOROUGH INFORMATION BOARD

The Committee received and considered a request for the Town Council to take ownership of an information board to Humphrey Gainsborough to be located at the entrance to the Gainsborough Estate. Members praised Mrs V Greenwood for her hard work in researching and designing the plaque.

The Committee noted the plaque had been paid for by donations from the Gainsborough Residents Association, the Henley Archaeological and Historical Society, Henley in Transition, Henley in Bloom and SOHA.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that Henley Town Council take ownership of the plaque to Humphrey Gainsborough to be placed at the entrance to the Gainsborough Estate

58. FINGERPOST SIGNAGE FOR PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

The Committee received and considered a report regarding providing additional signage for public rights of way in and around Henley (minute 30 - 9.9.14 refers).

The Town Clerk advised that the Oxfordshire County Council's Transport Strategy (LTP 3) supports improvements to rights of way and suggested the County Council be asked if they would be willing to help fund the new signage. Members noted other societies (eg the Open Spaces, Chiltern Society) would be asked to help progress this project with local knowledge and they also be asked if they would like to contribute financially however it was noted they are charities and may not have the available funds.

After further discussion it was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the provision of additional signage for public rights of way in and around Henley be progressed and that funding support be investigated however, if none is available, the Town Council allocate up to £500 from the recreational improvements 2014/15 capex budget

59. 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 publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

MINUTES OF THE CONFIDENTIAL SESSION OF THE RECREATION AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2015

60. CONFIDENTIAL

i. MOORINGS

Members received and considered a report regarding the principle of altering the current pricing structure for permanent moorings at White Hart, River Terrace and Mill Meadows with effect from 1 April 2015. Members also considered using an outside source to administer the permanent moorings at the above locations and considered increasing the number of spaces available for occupancy at White Hart and River Terrace by taking back the three moorings available for public use.

Members praised the Town Clerk and the Accountant for a very comprehensive report and noted the recommendations would result in an increase income, improved service and a reduction in the work load from the Visitor Information Centre in the Town Council's offices.

The Town Clerk answered a number of questions with regard to the detail of the proposal and confirmed further investigations would need to take place should the Council agree to the proposal.

The majority of members were not in agreement with removing 3 of the moorings from public use as it was felt this was a very useful asset for a riverside town and they benefited residents, visitors, retailers, restaurants etc, however it was noted there would be a reduction in the potential income by retaining their free use/public status. Members acknowledged it was difficult to ascertain how well the public moorings are used but following conversations with boat owners and local marinas they do appear to be well

used and liked. Members agreed improved signage would increase their use and felt a maximum stay of 3 hours would be appropriate.

After further discussion the Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the Town Council approves moving the administration of the permanent moorings to a third party business that would look after lifting/winter storage and authorises the Town Clerk to make all necessary arrangements for the new management regime to be in place by 1 April 2015, subject to further discussions with alternative providers

that the Town Council supports the introduction of an annual charge to boat owners inclusive of lifting and winter storage of the boats at the White Hart, River Terrace and Mill Meadows moorings as detailed in the report

that the Town Council retain the two public moorings at White Hart and the one public mooring at River Terrace and new signage be erected advising of a 3 hour maximum stay (free of charge)

ii. **TOILET REFURBISHMENT**

The Committee received and considered recent correspondence with Robert Rigby Architects regarding the toilet refurbishment at Mill Meadows.

Members noted the Town Clerk and members of the Toilet Working Group are continuing to work to ensure all items outstanding are completed and are in discussions with the architects.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

that the recent correspondence with Robert Rigby Architects be noted; that a further meeting of the Working Group be convened to resolve all outstanding issues and that the interim fee account in the sum of £1,592.10 (including VAT) be now paid.

The meeting ended at 9.55 pm

bw

Chairman