

Present: Councillor W Hamilton (Chair, presiding)
Councillor Ms H Chandler-Wilde
Councillor D Eggleton
Councillor Miss K Hinton
Councillor Miss S Miller
Councillor I Reissmann
Councillor D Nimmo Smith (substituting for Councillor Miss L Hillier)

In Attendance: Mr M Kennedy – Town Clerk
Ms C Adams – Minute Taker
1 Member of the Press
5 Members of the Public

18. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR MEETING

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Councillor W Hamilton called for nominations for a Chair for the meeting.

Councillor D Eggleton proposed and Councillor K Hinton seconded that Councillor W Hamilton be elected.

There being no further nominations, it was **RESOLVED**

that Councillor W Hamilton be elected Chairman of the Town and Community Committee for this meeting.

19. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Akehurst, the Mayor, Councillor Miss L Hillier and Councillor D Thomas. Councillor D Nimmo Smith was attending as Councillor Miss L Hillier's substitute. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor I Reissmann and Councillor Miss H Chandler-Wilde.

20. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Chris Baker- Lauds Close addressed the committee on agenda item 5 - *Progress (Fairtrade Town)*. He explained that he had been asked to report on a Fairtrade plaque. He suggested that it would be appropriate to locate the plaque next to the Oxfam shop as they created Fairtrade. He would let the council decide on the size.

He felt that the Town Team should have a member of the Fairtrade Group. He had put himself forward as a member of the public, but was rejected as the

team had only just been formed. If they were looking at membership again, he would be interested in joining.

The committee confirmed that Councillor S Smith and Councillor Ms S Abey were on the Fairtrade Group.

Mr J Fielder - St Andrews Road raised the issue of traffic calming requirements due to traffic speed. The Chair stated that the item was not on the agenda, but that Mr Fielder should email the Town Clerk with any concerns. The Town Clerk informed Mr Fielder that the Traffic Study consultants were holding a meeting on 16th July and that he would be invited to attend. Mr Fielder queried the influence that the Town Council has on the Traffic Study. The Chair clarified that the council has an influence on the study, but not on the data. Councillors will make decisions based on the data that may affect roads. These decisions would then be passed to SODC and the County Council for implementation.

Ms M Thomas – Belle Vue Road asked whether the committee was aware that LA Fitness would be closing and the impact that this would have on the town and children. The Chair stated that the item was not on the agenda and that the council was aware that 2,000 members would be affected. The Town Clerk suggested that Ms Thomas telephone him with her concerns.

There being no further items raised by the public the Chairman declared the Public Participation Session closed.

21. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Committee held on 19 May 2015, copies having been issued, were received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

22. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None tendered.

23. **PROGRESS**

Members received and considered a report on progress and agreed the following actions:

Fairtrade Town

Mr C Baker stated that he was not personally convinced of the need for a Fairtrade Plaque. The Town Clerk confirmed that a certificate was displayed in the Tourist Information Office. A member suggested that a plaque should be placed outside Fairtrade businesses. It was noted that other towns have very prominent signs. It was **RESOLVED**

that the Councillors on the Fairtrade Group would be asked to suggest wording for a small sign.

Post Meeting Note: Mr Baker has advised that on 07 July a meeting of the Fairtrade group was held, and at that meeting the existing working committee advised that they would be standing down from 1 October 2015, and that new members will need to be found to increase the town knowledge and interest in time for reaccreditation in February 2017.

Sound System

The Town Clerk updated the councillors on his report. A £70,000 capital budget has been earmarked to improve sound and vision and enable live streaming and better facilities for presentations. Following a meeting with a professional engineer, it was found that the system worked well, but that there was an issue as the transmitter was not compatible with the amplifier. The microphones were also not suited for public meetings. It was thought that a more cost effective solution than the original quotations for £70,000 should be achievable. The Town Clerk was meeting a second company later in the week and hoped to be able to present an updated report to the next committee meeting.

Northfield End/Bell Street Parking

Still awaiting the results of the public consultation.

Bell Street – Reinstatement of Georgian Pavement

Linked to Parking Order item above.

Telephone Box, St Andrews Road

A report on the costs of lifting the box etc to be brought to the next meeting.

Henley on Thames Town Team

Covered under Item 25, Town Centre Manager

24. BUDGET

Members received and considered the Management Accounts to May 31 2015. It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be noted.

25. TOWN CENTRE MANAGER

The meeting thanked Mr P McConnell for his very thorough report. The Town Clerk introduced the report and stated that Mr P McConnell had been with the Town Council for three and a half years. At the previous meeting he was asked to give a breakdown of his achievements and explain what he had done since he arrived. The report also gave information on the Town Team and the constitution for this was attached. Recommendations are given and the committee needed to focus on these. Currently there is an interim Town Centre Manager working on the current plan. Two areas for consideration are the suggestion that a Business Improvement District is set up in Henley and the hours of a future Town Centre Manager (or Business Development Manager). When the council looks to fill the role from April 2016, it needs to decided whether this should be a part or full time role.

A member felt that the distribution of membership on the Town Team was skewed towards members of the Henley Business Partnership, who then used Town Council money to facilitate the advertisement of their own businesses. This would not be allowed for councillors. The Town Clerk said that it was disingenuous to suggest that only three Henley Business Partnership members made all the decisions, they were part of a team. He cited the Mary Portas Review of High Streets as saying that councils needed to fully communicate with business and retail if they were to deliver thriving and successful town centres. Previously no business or key players in the town had been involved in deciding priorities for the town and the delivery of projects in an agreed Action Plan . Now the Town Team included businesses as well as the Henley College, River and Rowing Museum, Brakspears and others.

Councillor Miss H Chandler-Wilde joined the meeting at 7:59pm

The Town Clerk stated that the concept of the Town Team was evolving and mirrors many successful towns across England. A Member enquired whether there was room for a member of the public and whether Mr C Baker could be considered at the next meeting.

Councillor I Reissmann joined the meeting at 8:02pm

The problem for visitors to Henley regarding the time taken to travel down White Hill in the summer was identified in the report. The Chair stated that the Transport Study would come up with solutions to overcome this difficulty.

A member suggested that in the same way that sponsors of Henley in Bloom had their names advertised, it would be nice to see the Town Council mentioned as a sponsor more often. It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be received and noted.

26. LOCAL POLICE AREA UPDATE

The meeting received the report from Inspector M Harling, thanked him and wished him all the best in manning the Regatta and Festival. It was **RESOLVED**

that the report be received and noted.

27. RED LION LAWN MOORING

Members received a report on the Red Lion Lawn Mooring. Mindful of the problems incurred last year and the difficulty of attracting business. It was **RESOLVED**

that an exclusive licence be offered to Hobbs of Henley for £4,000 on the same terms and conditions as the previous year.

28. TOWN ENTRANCE SIGNS

It was felt that the report provided was incomplete as there was no definite cost for the option to add a separate sign listing Bled as a twin town. It was suggested that the council wait for a year to see whether the twinning partnership with Bled was successful, and if so, to then look into either the price for replacement or additional signs. It was **RESOLVED**

that the council review the necessity for a new sign in a year's time.

29. MARKETS

The Chair reported that the new Farmers' Market on a Saturday morning was settling in. The Flea and Twinning Markets were good ideas, but hadn't materialised and the council was down on its budget as a result. It was felt that additional markets brought in extra footfall and suppliers for a flea market and continental market should be sought. It was **RESOLVED**

that officers look for alternative suppliers for 1 continental market and 1 flea market.

30. JOINT HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2015-2020

A query was raised as to whether the committee had the full document with the papers. This can be found on the SODC website. A member suggested that delegated members talk to Nomad and formulate a response by 14th July. It was **RESOLVED**

that Councillor I Reissmann and Councillor M Akehurst would consult with Sue Prior and give a response to Mrs N Taylor for submission by 14th July 2015.

31. PROPOSED CHANGES TO SUBSIDISED BUS SERVICE AND TO DIAL A RIDE IN OXFORDSHIRE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Councillor D Nimmo Smith informed the meeting that he was fronting the consultation at County Level and wanted comments. A member enquired as to whether there was any link between this consultation and the extra facilities that the Clinical Commissioning Group have indicated they will provide to assist access for patient visits in relation to the Townlands redevelopment. Councillor D Nimmo Smith confirmed that they were not linked.

Councillors felt that there will be a major impact on residents if bus services are cut. Discussion revolved around how best to gauge residents' opinions.

An article could go in the Henley Magazine, but this does not come out until 24th August. It was agreed that councillor consultation with the Handibus, Over 60s Club and Henley Volunteer Bureau was necessary.

Councillor D Nimmo Smith stated that OCC currently subsidises buses in the Henley Area by £184,000 a year. Councillors expressed the hope that the Henley Standard would help to publicise the consultation. **It was RESOLVED**

that Councillor Miss K Hinton, Councillor Miss H Chandler-Wilde and Councillor D Thomas would consult with community groups and report back to the next meeting with a draft response. The response must go through Full Council before 14th September 2015.

32. TOWNLANDS STEERING GROUP

A member queried as to why Townlands was not on the agenda. The Clerk advised that the previous minutes had not been signed off by the Chair and could therefore not be circulated. The march on 11th July in support of the beds at Townlands was confirmed.

The meeting closed at 8.29pm