

Present: The Chairman, Councillor Miss Kellie Hinton
The Vice Chairman, Councillor Dave Eggleton
The Mayor, Councillor Julian Brookes
Councillor Miss Lorraine Hillier
Mr Tuc Ahmad
Mrs Caroline Langler
Ms Marisa Francini

In Attendance: Gareth Bartle – Parks Manager
Helen Barnett – Town Manager
Becky Walker – Minute Taker

Also Present: 2 members of the press
5 members of the public
Mr Richard Francis – Sensescape

41. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Michaela Clark and Phil Simms.

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

43. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

The Chairman advised that questions could be taken during the presentation.

44. MINUTES

The minutes of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee (HiB) held on 26 July 2016 were received, approved and adopted and were signed as a true record by the Chairman.

45. CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS

The Chairman advised that she was thrilled that Marisa Francini had agreed to re-join the Sub Committee and after discussion the Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

that Marisa Francini be co-opted on to the Henley in Bloom and Civic Pride Sub Committee

46. VARIATION IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

In accordance with Standing Orders 5 (a) (vi), it was **RESOLVED**

that in view of the number of people in the public gallery attending for agenda item 7 – Air Pollution in Henley – this item be taken next

47. AIR POLLUTION IN HENLEY

The Chairman welcomed Mr Richard Francis, whose business “Sensescape” offers planting solutions to a number of issues relating to modern day living including air pollution.

Mr Francis gave a presentation and made the following points:-

- levels of air pollution are increasing, particularly in towns and cities which is harmful to health
- there are a wide variety of components which constitute air pollution which result from different activities eg particulates of varying sizes from diesel emissions, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrous oxide, volatile organic compounds. Measuring of these components are also complex and research is being undertaken by a number of universities and other organisations in to how best to test the air and what are acceptable levels
- an informal air quality management survey has been undertaken in Henley which indicates towards a number of pollution hot spots where readings are higher
- research is being undertaken into the effectiveness in planting reducing air pollution levels. Early research shows that certain types of plants are more effective than others eg ivy, hairy leaved plants.

A member asked for clarification regarding the recent air quality management study including:-

- what components are being tested?
- what are considered acceptable levels?
- what device/calibration is being used?

A discussion ensued – it was acknowledged that it is generally accepted that air pollution is damaging to health particularly for those with an existing respiratory condition and solutions need to be found. However in order to find an effective solutions accurate measuring processes need to be developed (eg to measure before/after levels with effective and calibrated machines and acceptable levels identified) otherwise the effectiveness of these solutions cannot be gauged. Currently South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) measures nitrogen dioxide but does not measure particulates as is the case nationwide. It was noted the Transport Strategy Working Group (TSWG) are including in their proposal to SODC and Oxfordshire County Council to help pay for enhanced air pollution measuring.

Mr Francis presented information on a product which Sensescape produces which is an “active” green wall incorporating an air purification system which utilises the plants and the substrate the plants are rooted in. The walls can maximise space as they are purportedly to be more effective at reducing air pollution than a “passive” green wall which is composed purely of plants. Walls are also available which incorporates “active” and “passive” walls eg including the air purification system within an ivy screen and sponsor plaques can be incorporated. A proposed site in Henley is the wall of Longlands which faces St Mary’s Church.

Mr Francis explained there are no examples available as yet re this product being used in an urban setting and its effectiveness (eg before and after data) however research is on-going.

Mr Francis was asked for costs re active and passive green walls and he agreed to forward this information.

Councillor Miss Lorraine Hillier left at 10.27 am.

The Chairman summarised the discussions as follows:-

- Henley in Bloom is very concerned re air quality however SODC is the authority responsible for it
- Henley in Bloom does not have the budget for this kind of product however can help to educate re the effectiveness of planting and air pollution (eg Schools in Bloom), sourcing sponsors, help identify possible locations for green walls etc
- Henley in Bloom should feed into the Transport Strategy Group to be incorporated into the paper they intend to present to SODC and OCC. It is important to encourage these authorities to invest in enhanced air pollution measuring systems and investigate further including planting in planning conditions
- The Mayor, Councillor Julian Brookes to liaise between HiB and TSWG planting to help reduce air pollution be included in the horticultural review

The Mayor, Councillor Julian Brookes left the meeting at 10.29 am.

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

that a nominated member of Eco Henley be invited to liaise with and/or Henley in Bloom re all aspects of planting and air quality including identify sites for potential green walls/costs etc

that the Mayor, Councillor Julian Brookes be asked to be the link between Henley in Bloom and the Transport Strategy Working Group

that air quality be a future Schools in Bloom project

48. SCHOOLS IN BLOOM

The Sub Committee considered projects for future Schools in Bloom projects. It was noted for a Schools in Bloom project to be most effective it needs to link into the school's curriculum which are set well in advance. It was therefore suggested discussions with schools should start this term for 2017/18 projects. It was noted that it would be appealing for the schools if there was a financial incentive. Due to the planning required it was felt air pollution would be a better topic for next year rather than this year.

The Chairman advised it is hoped to work with Gillotts School as well as all the primary schools and she is in conversation with the Business Manager.

Members discussed topics for this year's projects and members were asked to bring suggestions to the next meeting. Members felt popular projects included an element of competition and in order to take advantage of discount seeds an allocation of money should be set aside for sunflower (tallest) and pumpkin (heaviest) seeds. Also earlier planting of British cut flowers (autumn rather than spring) should be progressed to ensure flowering before the end of term.

It was suggested leaflet/cheat sheets also be written and produced to offer advice on which plants are best to grow in schools and which can produce results in term time, how to care for plants, watering etc. Marisa Francini agreed to help with this initiative and to investigate the possibility of a gardening mentor to offer advice.

After further discussion it was **RESOLVED**

that leaflets/info sheets be written for schools advising which plants to grow that can be sown and flower/produce in term time along with planting, care and watering advice. Marisa Francini offered to co-ordinate this initiative

that up to £125 be allocated from the Bloom budget to fund the Schools in Bloom projects for 2017 including purchase of sunflower, pumpkin, British grown cut flower seeds and the production of advice leaflets for all the primary schools

that Schools in Bloom be an agenda item for the next agenda and members be asked for suggestions for 2017 and 2018

49. THAMES AND CHILTERN IN BLOOM

- i. Members noted that Henley was awarded a Gold in the Town Category of the Thames and Chilterns in Bloom campaign and noted the Judges' comments.

The Mayor, Councillor J Brookes congratulated the Sub Committee on achieving gold.

- ii. Members considered Henley's entry to Thames and Chilterns in Bloom 2017 and **RESOLVED**

that Henley enter the Thames and Chilterns in Bloom 2017 and the fee be allocated from the Henley in Bloom budget (£100 in 2016)

50. GARDENS OF HENLEY AWARDS EVENING

The Chairman updated members re the Gardens of Henley Awards Evening and Allotment Association Awards held in the Town Hall on Thursday 8 September 2016 and advised the evening was a success.

The Chairman suggested a wash-up meeting be held to review 2016 and to start planning for 2017. Attendees to include Marisa Francini who can advise from the Allotment Association point of view.

The Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

that the Chairman arrange a wash-up meeting for 2016 and for plans to be discussed for 2017

51. HORTICULTURAL CONTRACT

Members were asked for their comments/thoughts regarding the floral/horticultural displays in the town following a request from the Recreation and Amenities Committee. The Chairman advised this is an opportunity for new and innovative

ideas to be put forward. The aim is to provide a comprehensive report form which a manageable, realistic and staged plan can be developed.

The Chairman asked for ideas to be emailed to her by Monday 10 October 2016 in order that a report can be compiled for consideration at the Recreation and Amenities meeting on 25 October 2016.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**

that members provide suggestions to the Chairman by Monday 10 October 2016 for inclusion in the first report to the Recreation and Amenities Committee regarding the review of floral displays in the town

52. EVENTS

i. Members considered suggestions/dates for Henley in Bloom events for 2016/17 including:-

- **Halloween Event** to be held in the Market Place on Saturday 29 October 2016

Marisa Francini agreed to ask the Allotment Association Committee re the feasibility of Allotment plot holders being asked to grow and donate pumpkins for next year's event.

- **Christmas Tree Shredding** – the Parks Manager advised the Parks Service had agreed to once again provide Christmas Tree shredding at Mill Meadows on Saturday 7 January 2017 between 10 am and noon at Mill Meadows (and possibly the Sunday also). Funds raised to be donated to Henley in Bloom.

Councillor Dave Eggleton offered to collect trees from householders if Henley in Bloom could cover the cost of petrol. Those wanting collection to contact Councillor Dave Eggleton direct.

- **Wishing Tree at the Christmas Festival** – Friday 2 December 2016 in Millennium Court. The Chairman volunteered to man this event.

ii. Members considered a date for the 2017 Litter Pick. The Chairman advised the national Keep Britain Tidy "Great British Spring Clean" is to be held between Friday 3 to Sunday 5 March 2016 and suggested the Henley Litter Pick co-ordinate with this.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**

that the Henley Litter Pick take place on Saturday 4 March 2017

53. CELEBRATION BEDS

The Chairman asked members to consider themes for the Celebration Beds at Mill Meadows for 2017 and were asked to bring their suggestions to the next meeting and a decision will be made at this meeting.

54. SPONSORSHIP

The Chairman asked members for suggestions for ideas of a project for a £300 donation from SOHA ideally on land they own and to bring their suggestions to the next meeting. The Parks Manager suggested a wildflower bank opposite Badgemore School.

55. OBELISK PLAQUE

Members considered Henley in Bloom contributing to the latest historical plaque which outlines the history of the Obelisk at Mill Meadows and after discussion
RESOLVED

that £150 be allocated from the Henley in Bloom budget as a contribution to the plaque outlining the history of the Obelisk

56. GARDENING BUDDIES UPDATE

The Sub Committee received and noted the dates and on-going projects being undertaken by Gardening Buddies.

57. BUDGET UPDATE

Members received and noted the budget to date.

The Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

that the budget report be noted

58. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Friday 18 November 2016.

Chairman

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