

Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategy Committee Held in the Community Office at 8pm on Tuesday 25th October 2011

Present:

Councillors:

Ian Hill – Vice-Chairman
Barry Adby
Robert Barber
Tim Horton
Tony Williamson
Harvey Batten
Nick Greaves

Officer:

Sarah Pullen

86/11 Apologies for absence

David Tindale, Ted Backhouse, Roger Beattie, Rhian Woods, Nick Hancock, Di Tolan, Charles Rowton-Lee.

87/11 Chairman's Remarks

There were none.

88/11 Minutes of the Strategy Meeting held on 27th September 2011 received by Council 11/10/2011 to be signed as a correct record.

Resolved: That these minutes are a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by Ian Hill, Vice-Chairman.

89/11 Declaration of Interests

Olympic Torch/Diamond Jubilee - Ian Hill, Tim Horton and Tony Williamson declared a non-prejudicial interest in this item and discussed this issue.

90/11 Matters Arising

Triathlon (Minute 85/11 refers) – Barry Adby stated that the Henley Standard have reported that the Triathlon 2012 has already been agreed and applications are being taken for this event.

We need to take this up with our County Councillor. It was noted that the Road Closure Notices will not be published until 13 weeks before the event.

91/11 Short Discussion Items

Olympic Torch and Diamond Jubilee 2012 – Ian Hill reported on the meeting held two weeks ago with people who had expressed an interest in this. They agreed a committee will be set up to co-ordinate events. Tim Horton is preparing a constitution. The next meeting will be held on 7/11/11. This will be an independent committee. Rhian Woods, Ian Hill and Tim Horton will be on the committee which will consist of 9 members who will co-ordinate and advise. The Diamond Jubilee will be the largest event. They are considering erecting a marquee in the Paddock for some of the events. At the moment there is no money for this and there will perhaps have to be some fundraising. The St Leonards Fete will be still take place.

The Olympic Torch event will be on the 10th July 2012 if it is decided that the torch will pass through Watlington.

Tony Williamson suggested putting a note on this in the Watlington Times including who is on the committee.

Watlington Speaks – Caroline Lye has been away so no further progress to report. The intention is to go ahead with a publishable small document.

Co-op formal agreement for Car Park – There are a few questions from their email which need to be considered – paper was attached to agenda.

There was much discussion on this and a number of points were made.

Resolved: That Tony Williamson and Nick Greaves draft a reply to the Co-op's questions and that this be an agenda item for the next Full Council meeting in November. It was agreed that the invoice for this year be sent to the Co-op.

Risk Assessment Review – Ian Hill had prepared a draft of this which was sent to members. This was discussed and it was agreed that subject to a few changes suggested during discussion, acceptance of this be recommended to Full Council.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That the Risk Assessment for 2011/2012 be accepted.

Insurance Review – paper was attached to agenda. Points brought up were public conveniences, who is responsible for insuring? Also the amounts of cover need to be checked.

Resolved: That BA and the Clerk to review initially and NG to review the lease for the Public Conveniences and this to be an agenda item for the next Strategy Meeting.

Red Kites in the Town – update by TH/RBr – press release was attached to agenda.

It was noted that the University of Reading are going to conduct a survey of people who feed kites in their gardens. We would like to see this survey carried out and it was agreed that we look at the data when it is available and RBr and TH to then come back with a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That no publicity is put out at the present and that Tim Horton and Robert Barber follow up the survey by the Reading University and the data and prepare a recommendation for Full Council at an appropriate time.

Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant Scheme – The aim of this is to financially support projects at a local level – paper was attached to agenda. It was noted that this was not a full copy and the Clerk to issue the full paper to Councillors for the next meeting. It was noted that grants are considered quarterly.

Resolved: That this be an agenda item for the next meeting.

92/11 Main Topics for Discussion

Review of Subsidised Bus Services – June 2012 – Ian Hill stated that the regular review of subsidised bus services this year included the 125 service to Wallingford. The tender for this service was re-issued last year for one year only when the previous service provider withdrew from the contract. At that time the service was reduced from a Monday to Saturday service with 2 trips in each direction, to the present three days a week (Monday, Thursday and Friday) with only 1 service in each direction. The proposals Oxfordshire County Council have put forward for the review this year are:

a) No change from present service.

b) Reduce to Friday only service with a single trip in each direction and combined with the 126 circular service between Wallingford and Chalgrove. The new route would be Watlington, Britwell Salome, Ewelme, Chalgrove, Stadhampton, Newington, Warborough to Wallingford. This would increase the journey time from Watlington to Wallingford from 25 minutes to 40 minutes.

c) Withdraw service completely

d) Replace with community bus or dial-a-ride service

Whichever approach is adopted will be the subsidised service for the next four years starting in June 2012. None of the other services from Watlington will be affected by the review. It is important that users of this bus service make their views known to OCC before 24 December this year. IH asked that we take steps to inform users of the bus service, and that we submit a response to OCC based on these responses. TH said that we should be ambitious and ask for an increase in the service. TH and IH to attend the review meeting in Wallingford on 9th November 2011.

Initial Discussion on Budget and Precept review–Budget Update was given out with Full Council papers.

The budget update was discussed in detail. A number of points were raised eg that Sports Field annual rent is a significant part of the budget, The Town Hall grant was cut last year. The sinking fund for the car park, is this an adequate amount? TW stated that it was based on this for 12 years. The pavilion items were also discussed and it was asked if the Pavilion Account would break even this year?

Governments Planning Reforms – letter from John Howell and letter from CPRE was attached to agenda.

It was noted that this has come from the Localism Bill. There were a number of points that need clarification.

Resolved: It was agreed that this item be deferred to the next Strategy Meeting and that John Howell be invited to a Planning Meeting to discuss these issues.

93/11 Correspondence

1. Oxfordshire Repatriation Memorial Bell Appeal – request for donations.

Resolved: That we are unable to help with this appeal as we have no grant money in the budget for this year.

94/11 Items for Future Meetings

Refer to Forward Plan

95/11 Any Other Business to note – Items to be notified to the Clerk in advance of the meeting.
Election May 2011 – TH has sent a letter to Mr Buckle at SODC which may be helpful but will take a while before he receives a response. He will give a copy to the Clerk when one is received.

½ pipe in Recreation Ground – RBr has been approached about this not being in good order – This issue to be dealt with by the Operations Committee, possibly asking the OPFA to meet us on site. BA reported that we have had a recent inspection by ROSPA on this item.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10.15