

Present: Cllr. P.Melhuish, Cllr. H.Heamus, Cllr. B.Leech and Cllr. L.Jackson

Guests: Simone Bentley, Julie de Bastion, Sue Osbourne, Judith Lindley, Norman Kench, Paule Jones

Apologies: Tara Winters

Peaches Melhuish as chair.

P.M – Intro given as the firstly the lay out of the new councils structure and the setup of the working parties as well as the purpose of said parties.

B.L – extended overview of the council's current objectives.

Preparation of Annual Report and Accounts 2015/2016

Short discussion of the previous reports and peoples thoughts on them – guests stated the “boring” appearance and uninteresting lengthy lay out.

B.L went on to show the group an example of other parish councils report lay outs.

The guests and Cllrs present were asked to look at these and give feedback.

Simone Bentley stated she found the Hartley example much more exciting and appealing.

This opinion was then echoed by all those present with comments such as “interesting” “fun” “new” and “less likely to go in the bin” being the main focus.

Sue Osborne commented about the change in reports effect on costing for printing the report and how could we stop those from becoming higher.

B.L – local businesses could be given change to advertise with in this and cover the costs of printing.

Sue Osborne was concerned by the reactions of residents if we chose to go down this route.

P.M – went on to suggest if this option is taken then we should focus only on local businesses, charities and events it would make the residents less likely to see it as an issue as it is promoting solely things that effect our parish.

B.L – proposed to show a more ambitious report to include and attract all local people

PM – the possibility to make this more of a booklet and more useful. A product containing the report as opposed to just a report with adverts.

Simone Bentley suggested including useful local numbers for local businesses, charities, groups, library, etc.

Judith Lindley said it would be very nice to show an up to date map of the area in this handbook too

Sue Osborne suggested with in the useful numbers listing less known groups with in the town like the shooting club, chess club and various hobby groups.

Everyone said how nice this would be for residents to be able to find these groups all in one place. For all residents, the elderly, young parents and children's activity groups.

Simone Bentley suggested calling the booklet “the Henley Handbook”

The general idea from all in discussion was to make the report in to a product that is more useful and helpful to the community and includes this report within that.

Sue Osborne – could we use or adapt this product to be included in a welcome pack for new residents and to have in the local estate agents showing the community events and offering prospective buyers an insight in to the community.

All present thought this was a great idea.

The idea of also having a community calendar within the handbook showing events of all community groups rather than the ones they produce themselves only showing there events. Will be good to have everything in on place.

Pm – discussed the possibility of bringing the community in to this project more by including local schools in the design of the handbook using artwork and pictures made by local children.

A full size calendar could also then be used by local school to sell for charity events etc.

All present were very interested in these ideas and proposed to take this forward to council to obtain their opinions.

Sue Osborne was “volunteered” to help with the designs of this handbook along with Cllr Melhuish.

Publication of the report is due May – Accounts section will not be able to be entered until March – However design can go ahead prior to this.

NEXT STEP

- Discuss with council
- Get a basic layout idea done to then take back to council clearer costings etc.
- Discuss with local schools the possibility of assistance from them with the drawing etc.

Support for Court Leet Day

Pm – referred to Norman Kench as to what we could do as a council to assist them any more if needed at all?

Norman Kench – They are not currently looking for any additional support from the parish council as the court leet do prefer to be independent but they would never turn down the support of the council and councillors. Financially they currently don't need any support but in reference to publicity with in things such as the handbooks etc. they would strongly welcome. They hope that all Cllrs will come and are always welcome to events.

- Next event being Sat 16th February morning 10:30 – 12:30 – coffee morning to celebrate the refurbishment of the Coats of Arms and Shields of the Lords of the manor.

(An offer came forward off several councillors to help publicise this)

Wires across the High street

PM – gave a quick introduction to the group present as the wires and uses and the information and work gathered by the working party prior to this meeting.

All present like the idea of the wires and feel they will definitely be useful for organisations with in the town.

One concern that arose was the costing to organisations for this banner.

It is suggested following this discussion that:

Rental charges should not be issued where possible. After the initial outlay of the wires there is little on going charges to the council with the liability insurance being the only regular cost that is only an extension on the current policy. Therefore we feel that the council will not have to charge a rental charge for using this space and if we do then it should be as minimal as possible.

We also feel that many organisations with in Henley may not have the money to outlay £250-£300 on the banner in one lump sum or at all.

Therefore it is proposed that we take back to the council the introduction of these banners being a part of the mini grants scheme. Offering organisations the chance to apply for a mini grant solely for a banner.

It was also discussed that we feel it should be done on a first come first served basis for dates to which they would like to hang the banner and that it should only be used for local events NOT BUSINESS ADVERTISEMENT. There was also an all-round feeling that no permanent should be hung when event banners aren't displayed. – These mini grant banners and use of the wires should be offered to all those eligible for a grant and mini grant.

Support for the Henley town choir

BL – mentioned that he had been approached by several residents hoping to set up a town choir. He wanted therefore to discuss it here and get everyone's opinions on a town choir and what place the parish council have in that.

All guests and Cllrs discussed how great a town Choir would be and there are currently a few residents known of who have to travel to surrounding areas to be a part of a choir.

It was discussed as to how lovely having our own choir would be and that the town choir could be a big part of many of the events around Henley all year round.

PM – although thoroughly agreeing with how nice it would be to see a Henley choir she noted that this necessarily was not something that should fall under the parish council and proposed that the parish councils part in this should be to refer those mentioned to the correct people to help facilitate them and to offer publicity and support as done with any other organisation to help them succeed.

BL – agreed to pass on the information offered by guests of the use of places such as the Methodist church and Heritage Centre and to allow the choir to contact them directly.

Agreed that no further actions need to be taken in reference to this.

Christmas Decorations and Carol Service

PM – went on to discuss the previous work looked in to by the working party in reference of Henley in Arden Town Wreaths.

At first the majority of the group were unsure of this success or interest residents may have in this.

PM – went on to discuss that this wouldn't just be a Henley wreath the whole process would need to involve the community – using organisations such as the WI and local schools to make this a community event.

All were a lot more interested in this from this perspective and it was suggested to take this to the council and if agreed to take further begin discussions with organisations and schools to begin taking this further.

BL – went on to discuss the Christmas tree. Currently held outside the old police station.

There were mixed reviews from all present.

BL – went on to suggest a change this year with the moving of the tree to in front of the market cross and become more of a focus point for Christmas time events.

It was agreed to take the proposal forward to the council for them to fund this as of 2016.

Any other business

Guests asked about what was being done by the parish council and the working party in reference to the Henley music festival and the current issues being discussed.

PM – went on to state that at the minute this was not a Parish Council issue. And although of course we had initially bought up this topic with the current organisers it was more to give residents there chance to voice their concerns and that we hope to hear back from these organisers as to what changes if any have been made to accommodate the concerns of those residents without losing the festival itself.

BL – went on to say that the council has requested a report from the festival organisers with all information to then release to the residents to show what work is being done.

BL – went on to make the working party aware of contact with a twined town in France and that there was the upcoming opportunity of a visit to themselves in may but that he would update all on it as things developed. And that the parish council hopes many local organisations will be involved.

PM- went on to that those who attended and discuss if those attended as guests would consider joining the working party if put forward to the council.

All were willing to do so.

Proposition to add all those present to working party to take place at next council meeting.

Close of meeting.

