

## Stronger Communities Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



**Monday, 20th March, 2023 at 6.00 pm**

To members of the Stronger Communities Committee - O Collins, J Aitman, L Ashbourne, L Duncan, H Eaglestone, V Gwatkin, A Prosser and R Smith (and all other Town Councillors for information).

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney** for the transaction of the business stated in the agenda below.

### Admission to Meetings

All Council meetings are open to the public and press unless otherwise stated.

Numbers of the public will be limited, with priority given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda. Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the Deputy Town Clerk [derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk) in advance.

### Recording of Meetings

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 the council's public meetings may be recorded, which includes filming, audio-recording as well as photography.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Town Clerk or Democratic Services Officer know before the start of the meeting.

### Agenda

#### 1. Apologies for absence

To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

Committee members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Committee Clerk [derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk) **prior to the meeting**, stating the reason for absence.

**Standing Order 30(a)(v)** permits the appointment of substitute Councillors to a Committee whose role is to replace ordinary Councillors at a meeting of a Committee if ordinary Councillors of the Committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer **before** the meeting that they are unable to attend.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in any items under consideration at this meeting in accordance with the Town Council's Code of Conduct.

#### 3. Minutes (Pages 3-6)

- a) To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2023.
- b) Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda. (Questions on the progress of any item).

4. **Public Participation**

The meeting will adjourn for this item.

Members of the public may speak for a maximum of **five minutes** each during the period of public participation, in line with Standing Order 42. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

5. **Finance Report** (Pages 7-14)

To receive the report of the Responsible Financial Officer.

**Communications & Community Engagement**

6. **Communications Report** (Pages 15-20)

To receive the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer.

7. **Community Engagement Report** (Pages 21-28)

To receive the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer.

**Street Furniture & Infrastructure**

8. **Projects Update** (Pages 29-38)

To receive the report of the Project Officer.

9. **Madley Park Bus Shelter** (Pages 39-46)

To receive the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

**Events**

10. **Witney In Bloom** (Pages 47-54)

To receive the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer.

11. **Coronation of King Charles III** (Pages 55-58)

To receive the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer.



Town Clerk

**STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday, 23 January 2023**

**At 6.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney**

**Present:**

Councillor L Ashbourne (Chair)

Councillors:	V Gwatkin A Prosser	R Smith
Officers:	Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie Sharon Groth	Deputy Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Town Clerk
Others:	None.	

**SC36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Duncan, J Aitman and O Collins.

**SC37 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**SC38 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Stronger Communities committee held on 14 November 2022 were received.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the 'chat bench' was nearly ready and would be installed soon.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Stronger Communities committee held on 14 November 2022 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the chair.

**SC39 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**SC40 FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer.

A Member asked what the plans were for spending the £10,000 budgeted, but yet unspent of 408/4111 – *Water Safety/Education*. The Town Clerk confirmed that there were plans to enhance the signage around the lake and any remaining funds would be rolled over to next year to be used as needed.

**Resolved:**

That, the report be noted.

SC41 **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

The Committee received the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer.

Members discussed the options for the delivery of the annual Newsletter to residents and preferred Contractor Two as this would be a separate A4 newsletter and not included inside another publication. Members had concerns that Contractor Two wouldn't deliver to Windrush Place however the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed this estate would be covered for an additional cost but would include Colwell Green, outside of the parish boundary.

To get the most reliable results members suggested that a space for the respondent to write their postcode on the reply questionnaire would allow officers to remove any responses that were outside of Witney.

Members delegated to Officers, in conjunction with the Chair of the Stronger Communities Committee, to resolve any issues that arose in relation to the issuing of the newsletter.

Members also discussed the review of press coverage; they were pleased to hear that press releases issued by the council generally always appear in the media. Members agreed that any council news, however small, was shared with the media to maintain clear communications with the residents of the parish. Members asked for the Press Spreadsheet to cover any press releases including those that do not get picked up by the media outlets.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report, and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the Council proceeds with Contractor 2 for the newsletter distribution and,
3. That, any issues with this should be delegated to the Deputy Town Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair and,
4. That, any news is forwarded to the media no matter how small and,
5. That, all official press releases should be noted on the Press spreadsheet.

SC42 **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

The Committee received the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer.

The Committee welcomed updates on the annual resident's survey which was due in March, a revamped mailing list, and advertisements on new Councillor recruitment ahead of elections in May.

The Deputy Town Clerk gave a verbal update advising members that a meeting attended by the Deputy Town Mayor regarding Le Touquet airport was in fact with representatives from a company who were tendering to manage it and therefore this was not something the council would engage in further.

Members discussed the request from Witney Blanket Hall for a display in the administration office window and agreed to install three A3 advertising boards to promote 'Witney Heritage', one of which could be provided to the requestor. The others could be offered to other historical organisations in the town, and these would be to advertise the buildings, their work and locations but not advertise fee-paying events; the Council had noticeboards for the latter and would be happy to advertise community events there.

The Committee discussed the request from the Rotary Club of Witney to have a window display for two months at the end of the year to highlight the 'Wrap Up Project'. Members considered the request which was outside of the policy and thought it unfair whilst there was such high demand from other groups, particularly in the run up to Christmas. Members agreed to limit the window display to one month however agreed for Rotary to display an A3 poster in the window for the additional month if space allowed.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report, and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the Rotary Club request for a two-month display be refused however the offer of one-month additional advertising by way of a A3 poster be granted and,
3. That, Witney Blanket Hall, Cogges Farm Museum and Witney Museum be approached by officers to provide display advertising material for the Heritage display boards in the administration office window.

**SC43 CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III**

The Committee received the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer, this was an updated report following the announcements from Buckingham Palace the day before the meeting regarding the type of events King Charles III wished to hold over the coronation weekend.

The Deputy Town Clerk provided a verbal update advising members that there would no longer be a bonfire as this was specifically requested by the King.

Members supported a suggestion that the Corn Exchange be offered to volunteer groups on 8<sup>th</sup> May in order to meet with the King's idea of "The Big Help Out".

The committee heard the bunting campaign and schools commemorative book idea would commence soon. The bunting campaign would ask the parish to create sections of bunting, ideally upcycling old material, to be hung over the coronation weekend which would then be used for future events.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report, and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the Corn Exchange be offered as a subsidised let to local Volunteer groups for the Big Help Out.

SC44 **THIRD PARTY EVENTS REPORT**

The Committee received the report of the Venue & Events Officer.

Members were pleased to see that the children's play day event would be hosted at Oxlease after several successful years in the South of the town, this was a welcome alternative that would allow families from the North and East areas of Witney, that couldn't reach Burwell to participate.

The Committee welcomed the schedule of other third-party events and agreed for the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) to host a pop-up stand on The Leys in February and August.

A member asked if the Theatre Group which performed to children on The Leys recreational field last year would be returning. Officers advised it was currently not known but enquiries could be made.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the request from BBOWT be granted and,
3. That, the Venue & Events Officer contacts the Oxford Playhouse theatre group to see if they wish to host an event this year.

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The meeting closed at: 6.53 pm

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Chair

## STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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**Date:** Monday, 20 March 2023  
**Title:** Finance Report  
**Contact Officer:** Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) – Nigel Warner

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***Should Members have any queries about this report advance notice would be appreciated, in writing, by 5pm on the Friday before the meeting to allow for a full response at the meeting.***

### **Background**

Detailed income and expenditure statements for budgets which are the responsibility of this committee are enclosed. The period to which this report relates is 1 April 2022 to 31 January 2023.

### **Current Situation**

A full review of the budgetary position was undertaken during the budget-setting cycle. Most areas of interest were raised at the last meeting of this committee and at the extra-ordinary meeting of the council. The RFO refers members to the finance/ budget reports of the Town Clerk which were approved at those meetings for further details.

Current year budget: In terms of the report presented at this meeting, the current year (2022/23) budget is that which was projected when the estimates were revised and agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4 January 2023. It should be noted that the revised (projected) estimates were produced by your officers in the autumn of 2022. This means that with the year end (31 March 2023) rapidly approaching, there will be some cases where the actual spend to date exceeds the revised estimates. Conversely there will be other lines where actuals at 31 March will not reach the projected estimate figure. Overall, the impact on budget should be broadly neutral when the year-end accounts are produced.

Members are reminded that expenditure is not necessarily incurred evenly over the course of the year. For example the vast majority of expenditure in relation to nominal ledger code 4025 (insurance) is incurred in April each year when the annual premium is paid. There will also be similar patterns on the income side such as grants received.

Estimates for 2023/24: These are shown in the report in the three columns on the right hand side of the page. The report of the Town Clerk to the Extraordinary Council meeting of 4 January 2023 stated that “it should be noted that the revised estimates and the estimates for next year do not include the recharges from these (*works/ central support*) cost centres; these will be calculated after the budget has been adopted.” This is standard practice and following

agreement of the budget the recharges have been processed and these are reflected in the estimates for 2023/24.

Recharges: With the cessation of the grounds maintenance contract there have been a number of changes to the cost centres (CC) and these are summarised below:

CC 503, Agency services. The cost centre ceased on 30 September 2022, with recharges being made to that date. From 1 October 2022 these costs are accounted through CC 604, Works depot (includes most property, vehicles and equipment) and CC606 Grounds maintenance (mainly staffing costs). Note that at present recharges have not been processed in “actual YTD” column although they are represented in the projected estimates for 2022/23 and the estimates for 2023/24.

CC 601, Works department – cost centre ceased 30 September 2022. These costs are now accounted through CC 604, Works depot (includes most property, vehicles and equipment) and CC605, General maintenance (mainly staffing costs). Recharges for CC605 have been made to 31 January 2023.

CC 602, Central support. This cost centre remains in place and recharges made to 31 January 2023.

#### **YEAR-END AND EARMARKED RESERVES**

Overall, the management accounts for this committee comprise the two cost centres Community Infrastructure (CC402) and Community Activities (CC408). They show the following in relation to the current year:

	2022/23 Year to date	2022/23 Projected estimate
Income	£11,718	£9,665
Gross Expenditure	£316,671	£495,237
Net expenditure (i.e., gross expenditure minus income)	£304,952	£485,572

Income to date compares very favourably to the projected budget, the income for ten months representing at exceeding by £2,053 the amount which was expected when your officers projected the estimates for the full year, £9,665 which itself was revised upwards from the original budget of £1,000. This comprises grants and donations relating the services provided by this committee.

More material are expenditure variances. Expenditure to date is below the projected estimates. The main reason for this relates to recharges. As noted above recharges have yet to be made re the depot (dept604) and the grounds maintenance team (previously under



contract). In relation to the other recharges there are also some areas where these have not been as high as anticipated. Estimates for where recharges are allocated, costs centre by cost centre, are based on historic data but within the year will depend on where staff time is spent. The latter will then be driven by activity, projects and priorities. Taking all recharges together the amount allocated to date amounts to £121,446 compared with the projected spend of £215,582, a difference of £94,136. On a simple straight-line calculation there will also be additional expenditure of £39,045 by year end (this figure excluding recharges). These two items would result in gross expenditure increasing from £316,671 (month 10) to £449,852 (month 12), which is 91% of projected budget.

Therefore, the financial position is favourable with the Committee's services being delivered within budget.

Ahead of the year end your officers will be thoroughly examining the various budget lines and proposals will come forward to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee on 27 March 2023 where they may be some modest proposals from your officers to allow for transfers to the earmarked reserves where specific budgets in some of the committee's activities are underspent. This would be in line with the Council's de facto policy to maintain prudential reserves where expenditure has not been required this year but will in future years.

#### **CLEANING OF THE WAR MEMORIAL**

The Operations Manager has requested that the Council funds the periodic professional cleaning of the War Memorial. The estimated cost is £3,000.

The Council has an earmarked reserve for Memorial Maintenance. This reserve has a balance of £30,974. Release of earmarked reserve funds requires approval by the Town Council (Financial Regulation 4.12).

The Committee is requested to recommend to the Town Council that the periodic professional cleaning of the War Memorial take place and is funded from the Memorial Maintenance Earmarked reserve.

#### **Environmental impact**

The Council declared a Climate Change Emergency at its meeting on 26 June 2019; with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Officers are continually assessing the environmental impact of services and assets to ensure where possible measures are taken to support the Council's climate declaration of carbon neutrality by 2028. This extends to the procurement of goods and services.

#### **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Members are reminded that collectively they are custodians of the public purse with most of the funding coming from the taxpayers of Witney. Therefore, Officers ensure they get best value, value for money, and comply with the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and Procurement Policy.

### **Financial implications**

This report forms part of the Council's due diligence and a process in line with its Financial Regulations. The financial implications are detailed above and also in the attached appendices.

### **Recommendations**

1. Members are invited to note the report.
2. To recommend to the Town Council that the periodic professional cleaning of the War Memorial take place at an estimated cost of £3,000 and is funded from the Memorial Maintenance Earmarked reserve.

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 11)

Note: Income & Expenditure to 31 January 2023

		<u>Last Year 2021-22</u>		<u>Current Year 2022-23</u>				<u>Next Year 2023-24</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
<b><u>Stronger Communities</u></b>										
<b><u>402</u></b>	<b><u>COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE</u></b>									
1052	EXPENSES RECOVERED	0	2,488	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1170	GRANTS RECEIVED	0	1,990	0	7,365	7,365	0	0	0	0
1171	DONATIONS RECEIVED	0	1,468	1,000	3,967	2,300	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total Income</b>	0	5,945	1,000	11,332	9,665	0	0	0	0
4001	SALARIES	0	0	0	1,529	0	0	0	0	0
4002	ER'S NIC	0	0	0	162	0	0	0	0	0
4003	ER'S SUPERANN	0	0	0	332	0	0	0	0	0
4013	RENT PAID	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
4014	ELECTRICITY	800	1,189	1,000	1,827	2,100	0	4,100	0	0
4017	CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	4,000	1,015	5,000	1,745	5,000	0	3,000	0	0
4025	INSURANCE	125	112	120	112	112	0	120	0	0
4035	BUS SHELTER MAINTENANCE	2,000	18	2,000	20	2,000	0	2,000	0	0
4036	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	2,630	438	2,630	625	2,630	0	2,630	0	0
4037	GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	3,000	0	3,000	0	3,000	0	3,000	0	0
4038	OTHER MAINTENANCE	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
4039	HORTICULTURE	750	209	750	0	750	0	750	0	0
4040	ARBORICULTURE	29,750	12,820	35,480	9,443	35,480	0	20,000	0	0
4066	TREE REPLACEMENT	8,000	5,836	6,000	4,450	6,000	0	8,000	0	0
4067	Tree Survey	6,250	6,201	8,000	4,446	8,000	0	8,000	0	0
4105	XMAS LIGHTS, TREE & INFRASTRUC	0	44,752	35,120	31,877	40,000	0	44,000	0	0
4166	DEFIBRILLATOR EXPENDITURE	2,500	1,161	4,000	1,632	4,000	0	4,000	0	0

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 11)

Note: Income & Expenditure to 31 January 2023

		<u>Last Year 2021-22</u>		<u>Current Year 2022-23</u>				<u>Next Year 2023-24</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
4200	STREET FURNITURE	0	3,732	1,000	2,170	2,089	0	1,000	0	0
4205	CLIMATE EMERGENCY	25,788	788	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4208	COVID-19 MEMORIAL	0	0	1,500	1,667	1,500	0	0	0	0
4210	CHURCH CLOCK	3,000	0	4,500	69	4,500	0	1,500	0	0
4215	IN BLOOM - INC SCHOOLS CHALLENGE	8,000	731	7,250	1,013	7,250	0	7,250	0	0
4491	TFR TO EARMARKED RES	0	57,430	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4495	TFR FROM EARMARKED R	-29,500	-48,500	-33,730	-23,730	-33,730	0	0	0	0
4888	O/S STAFF RCHG	73,887	31,970	70,952	10,881	25,116	0	0	0	0
4890	O/S O'HEAD RCHG	11,601	7,126	14,476	5,880	7,990	0	0	0	0
4891	AGENCY SERVICES RECHARGE	150,692	170,187	81,866	81,866	81,866	0	0	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	12,675	14,103	16,543	11,375	14,706	0	17,967	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	0	4,073	4,590	3,656	4,147	0	5,176	0	0
4894	GROUNDS STAFF RECHARGE	0	0	0	0	19,812	0	70,697	0	0
4895	GROUNDS O'HEAD RECHARGE	0	0	0	0	12,212	0	26,103	0	0
4896	MTCE STAFF RECHARGE	0	0	0	26,083	47,271	0	87,913	0	0
4897	MTCE O'HEAD RECHARGE	0	0	0	3,447	3,951	0	8,604	0	0
4899	DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	0	0	0	4,965	0	9,187	0	0
4990	CONTRN TO CCTV SCH.	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	0	10,000	0	0
5198	Deferred Grants Released	0	-1,039	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5199	Depreciation Charge to Service	0	4,647	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Overhead Expenditure</b>	<b>325,953</b>	<b>329,000</b>	<b>282,052</b>	<b>192,581</b>	<b>322,717</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>344,997</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<b>(325,953)</b>	<b>(323,054)</b>	<b>(281,052)</b>	<b>(181,249)</b>	<b>(313,052)</b>		<b>(344,997)</b>		

**408 COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 11)

Note: Income & Expenditure to 31 January 2023

		<u>Last Year 2021-22</u>		<u>Current Year 2022-23</u>				<u>Next Year 2023-24</u>		
		Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
1052	EXPENSES RECOVERED	0	0	0	386	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total Income</b>	0	0	0	386	0	0	0	0	0
4001	SALARIES	0	0	0	9,851	4,231	0	4,778	0	0
4002	ER'S NIC	0	0	0	959	449	0	502	0	0
4003	ER'S SUPERANN	0	0	0	2,112	918	0	1,037	0	0
4103	GRANT YOUTH COUNCIL	500	0	500	0	0	0	500	0	0
4104	GRANT CARNIVAL/XMAS ROTARY CLB	0	2,100	4,100	4,100	4,100	0	4,500	0	0
4106	GRANT - PLAY DAY	0	0	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	1,000	0	0
4109	BLUE PLAQUES	1,000	0	1,000	300	1,000	0	0	0	0
4111	WATER SAFETY/EDUCATION	0	0	10,000	0	10,000	0	2,000	0	0
4112	GRANT - WITNEY TOWN BAND	0	0	660	660	660	0	750	0	0
4141	EVENTS	10,212	2,501	9,000	5,649	9,000	0	9,000	0	0
4145	QUEENS JUBILEE (2022)	0	0	3,000	2,092	3,000	0	0	0	0
4146	KINGS CORONATION (2023)	0	0	0	100	0	0	3,000	0	0
4160	TOWN TWINNING	0	500	500	0	500	0	500	0	0
4161	TOWN TWINNING ROOM HIRE	0	0	500	0	250	0	500	0	0
4167	BUS SERVICE	0	21,000	21,000	12,250	21,000	0	21,000	0	0
4169	CHILDREN & YOUTH PROVISION	0	35,913	44,340	28,834	44,340	0	40,000	0	0
4170	ADVENT FAYRE	0	634	2,000	1,399	2,000	0	2,000	0	0
4491	TFR TO EARMARKED RES	0	5,340	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4495	TFR FROM EARMARKED R	-1,000	-3,000	-1,000	-5,340	-5,340	0	0	0	0
4892	C/S STAFF RCHG	54,266	56,413	66,172	45,499	58,823	0	71,867	0	0
4893	C/S O'HEAD RCHG	0	16,291	18,362	14,625	16,589	0	20,704	0	0
5199	Depreciation Charge to Service	0	98	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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Annual Budget - By Committee (Actual YTD Month 11)

Note: Income & Expenditure to 31 January 2023

	<u>Last Year 2021-22</u>		<u>Current Year 2022-23</u>				<u>Next Year 2023-24</u>		
	Budget	Actual	Total	Actual YTD	Projected	Committed	Agreed	EMR	Carried Forward
<b>Overhead Expenditure</b>	64,978	137,790	181,134	124,090	172,520	0	183,638	0	0
<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<u>(64,978)</u>	<u>(137,790)</u>	<u>(181,134)</u>	<u>(123,704)</u>	<u>(172,520)</u>		<u>(183,638)</u>		
<b>Stronger Communities - Income</b>	0	5,945	1,000	11,718	9,665	0	0	0	0
<b>Expenditure</b>	390,931	466,790	463,186	316,671	495,237	0	528,635	0	0
<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<u>(390,931)</u>	<u>(460,845)</u>	<u>(462,186)</u>	<u>(304,952)</u>	<u>(485,572)</u>		<u>(528,635)</u>		
<b>Total Budget Income</b>	0	5,945	1,000	11,718	9,665	0	0	0	0
<b>Expenditure</b>	390,931	466,790	463,186	316,671	495,237	0	528,635	0	0
<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<u>(390,931)</u>	<u>(460,845)</u>	<u>(462,186)</u>	<u>(304,952)</u>	<u>(485,572)</u>		<u>(528,635)</u>		

## STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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**Date:** Monday, 20 March 2023

**Title:** Communications Report

**Contact Officer:** Communications & Community Engagement Officer - Polly Inness

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### **Background**

The Town Council is seeking to outsource the website and transfer to a gov.uk template style site. At the same time, it is moving to improve communications as per the Communications Strategy actions by improving content and information on our noticeboards and reinstating a digital mailing list.

### **Current Situation**

#### **Spring Newsletter Distribution Problems**

There has been a very disappointing delay to the distribution of the Spring newsletter, despite deadlines for copy being met. The original plan to have the newsletter delivered by Royal Mail in the week beginning 27<sup>th</sup> Feb did not happen and the print/design company offered the week beginning 6<sup>th</sup> March. In response they were told that this was too late and would mean the newsletter would be reaching homes too close to the Annual Town Meeting and would not give residents sufficient notice. The company then offered hand delivery starting the 28<sup>th</sup> Feb that would “happen earlier but take a little longer”. It has in fact taken two weeks and is still not complete on the day of the Annual Town Meeting. The company owner has apologised for this in response to a complaint made.

This company has been used successfully before and the hand delivery company employed by them had been much more efficient. The weather has not been noticeably bad enough to cause a delay of such length and there was no reason to suppose that they would fail on this occasion.

### **Website**

The website is consistently full and deleting items through the WordPress library is having little impact. The Communications Officer will set aside some time to remove backups from the hosting server.

The Communications Officer has contacted website providers for quotes on the attached appendix. The quote request stipulates that it is important to retain the Council’s current domain name and that the Mod Gov system must be able to be integrated.

In the meantime, the Communications Officer has carried out website mapping and started streamlining the current website and adding quick links to items such as news etc. from the homepage.

### **Mailing List**

The mailing list capture forms are being prepared and will be implemented on the Council's social media sites and website. Other opportunities to sign people up to the mailing list will be exploited where possible including sign up slips at the Annual Town Meeting.

### **Noticeboards**

The noticeboards have been updated and the criteria for display of posters and information in various areas has been revisited as a result of a few spurious requests to display items that do not meet these, in order to ensure that everyone is treated fairness, and no one has cause to complain. The cemetery noticeboards are currently being refreshed with consistent messaging and accurate information.

The noticeboards at The Leys have now all been vandalised to the extent that they are not useable, and some have now been removed. The boards are smashed and kicked through. If the boards are to be replaced (there is a need for information to be available in the area) it is suggested that one is mounted on a wall of The Coffee Shed (in consultation with Court Hubs CIC), so that it cannot be kicked through. Prices for a tamperproof 4 x A4 board with locks start at around £350.

### **Press Coverage**

Not available at this meeting due to staff resourcing issues. The items from the last period will be included with the next report.

### **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

### **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

### **Financial implications**

- Until quotes are received it is not possible to give a financial estimate for the website.
- Indicative price for noticeboards to replace the one at the Leys are above.



## **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Review the sites provided by the web companies/advise if there is a preferred style and,
2. Whether the Council wishes to purchase and install a new noticeboard at The Leys and,
3. To note, discuss the disappointment of the newsletter distribution.

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## **STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

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<b>Date:</b>	Monday, 20 March 2023
<b>Title:</b>	Community Engagement Report
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Communications & Community Engagement Officer - Polly Inness

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### **Background**

The purpose of this report is to update members on the latest Community Engagement activities of the Town Council.

### **Current Situation**

#### **NHS 75th Birthday**

The Town Clerk/CEO and Communications and Community Engagement Officer (CCEO) have had a brief meeting with Rev'd Toby Wright about a celebration event to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NHS on 5th July. St Mary's Church has been reserved for this occasion.

Initial plans are for a drink's reception with entertainment. The Church would like Witney Town Council involvement/assistance and possible sponsorship towards this. The Town Clerk has suggested contact is made with the Communities Office at WODC to ascertain if there is any money available from the Healthy Communities budget. Rev'd Wright will make initial contact with hospital and GP Practices to enquire as to who to invite and how to share the message. The CCEO suggested contacting local radio to provide entertainment and the organisations that request Lighting up of the Corn Exchange for various medical conditions as potential guests.

There is no budget set aside for this and as yet no costings, so a budget implication cannot be given at this point. There will potentially be some money available in the events budget. The Town Clerk did however refer to it in her finance report to this committee in November.

There is a follow up meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March so that next steps can be considered.

#### **Great British Spring Clean 2023**

Is due to take place imminently. The Council could initiate a Community Litter Pick with Councillors also taking part. The Ranger suggests consideration is given to the type of litter pick needed.

- Shallow – on hard standing and just off the path/road
- Deep – wellie/boots and into the undergrowth

The second is more needed as we keep on top of general litter around the town (no harm though in a thorough check) but lack deep cleans of public areas.

### **Tower Hill Cemetery - Wild Bank Planting**

Last year the Council was approached by the Rotary Club of Witney to ask if they could take part in some wildflower planting or other green initiative. The Town Council had been planting wildflower test beds in various parks, but there is a particularly tricky piece of land in Tower Hill Cemetery that requires rejuvenation and that would fit well with In Bloom entries last year.

The 'wild bank' behind the cemetery chapel is steep and very difficult to mow and keep tidy in conventional ways. Much of the area had given way to cow parsley and little else. Rescued plants from town centre beds such as primulas and some bulbs were struggling to grow on and be visible. The area was suggested as a project and several meetings with the Rotarians, and officers followed.

The Rotarians stressed that as their members were generally advancing in age, they were not able to do much physical work but were willing to access funding and pass that on to allow planting to take place. In discussions with the Ranger, it was decided that the soil and conditions of the bank are unknown and test planting would need to happen ahead of deciding on a permanent solution.

With funding from the Rotary Club, the Ranger has purchased wildflower seed, seed matting and plug plants and these will be planted up in the next week or so. A press release is being prepared along with a comment from the Rotary Club about the partnership working on this project.

### **Witney Carnival**

The theme for this year's Carnival is currently unknown. If the Council is considering a presence at it could be once again, to display the Schools In Bloom barrows unless any other ideas are put forward.

### **Smoke Free Play Areas**

The Project Officer has included details of this competition in her report to the Committee.

### **Witney Forum**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2023, are attached as Appendix 1

### **Environmental impact**

The wildflower planting, litter pick and Smoke Free play areas are all positive impacts that the Council is contributing to the local area.

**Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

**Financial implications**

Described here or as stated in the report above.

- Funds towards the NHS 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event, held in conjunction with St Mary's Church

**Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Agreement to support the NHS 75 event in principle and,
2. Decide if a community litter pick should take place and what sort of litter pick is required to highlight the Great British Spring Clean week and,
3. To note, the wildflower planting at Tower Hill Cemetery and,
4. Determine what presence, if any, it would like at the Witney Carnival in July and,
5. Note the minutes of the Witney Forum held on 2 February 2023.

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## STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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**Date:** Monday, 20 March 2023  
**Title:** Projects Update  
**Contact Officer:** Project Officer - Nicky Cayley

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### Background

The purpose of this project is to update members on the projects that sit under the Stronger Communities Committee.

### Current Situation

#### Covid-19 Memorial

The District Council has now confirmed that planning permission is not needed to install the large stone/rocks. Once payment has been made a date will be set with the company providing them for installation. The Operations Manager will need to order a bench as the ones held in stock have now all been used in other areas.

The Project Officer has carried out extensive research on possible signage for the memorial. The signage needs to “fit” with the memorial and compliment it rather than look like an add on – she does not believe a traditional “information board would look right (unless that is members’ preference). She has therefore investigated alternatives and has spoken to Fergus Wessel, one of the UK’s leading stone carvers based in Chipping Norton. The idea is to carve the words “together” on one half of the stone and “apart” on the other. The slate we have chosen is apparently perfect for carving. Fergus will make a site visit to advise once the stones are in place and give a quotation. Members can view his work here: - <https://stoneletters.com/>. A simple wooden sign could then be erected with “Covid-19 Memorial” inscribed. These can be reasonably purchased for under £200.

A strong press release would be able to explain the concept and story behind the memorial. There are lots of examples of public art that leave the viewer to interpret the exact meaning (e.g. Conversation Piece, South Shields; The Messenger, Plymouth; and The Line Sculpture Walk, London).

The project is currently over budget (£1, 500) at £1666.67 (VAT not included) so consideration will need to be given to funding to complete the project.

### QEII Jubilee Garden

The Works Team installed the sundial pedestal but on the first night it was pulled up from its base. This may have been partly due to the concrete not going off completely. The Project Officer has discussed the issue at length with the Operations Manager and if the Committee is so minded, it could be reinstalled but may suffer a similar fate. The alternative is for it to be reinstalled somewhere else in the town that is less secluded – Officers would welcome suggestions from the Committee.

If the sundial is to be relocated, the Committee is asked to consider if it wishes to proceed with the planting scheme at Unterhaching Park.

### Town Hall Reception Signage

The Deputy Town Clerk has designed a scheme for the signage for the Town Hall Reception office windows and sign board (appendix 1). The Project Officer has obtained quotations as per appendix 2 for the Committee's consideration.

### Smoke Free Play Areas

This initiative was originally brought to the Council by the Town Clerk and followed up by the RFO as it was understood a grant could be obtained. The project has now been handed to the Project Officer to realise. She has worked with Smokefree Oxfordshire, and the Town Council has now launched a competition for primary school children to design "smoke free play area" signs. The closing date is Friday 14 April at 12pm. The Mayor and Chair of the Parks & Recreation Committee will be invited to pick winners. It is hoped that there will be enough entries to pick one winning design for each park and ideally for each winner to be matched with a park near to their school. Smokefree Oxfordshire can produce the signs once the designs are selected at no cost to the Council.

### Windrush Generation Tribute

This is a small project to commemorate those who arrived in the UK via HMT Empire Windrush. The proposal is to put up a framed print in the Corn Exchange such as that in appendix 3. This print is a 10 x 10" risograph print based on original illustration by Kim Thompson to commemorate the arrival of the Windrush generation to the U.K. in 1948. 100% of profits go directly to BME Cancer Communities (UK). It would need to be framed – a frame with a mount can be purchased for under £20.00 on Amazon.

Underneath, it is proposed to have a small bookcase/bookshelf that will be filled with carefully curated books about the Windrush generation. There are lots of books written by those who came to England on the ship and their experiences afterwards. This would be a mix of adult and children's books. The aim is rather than simply having a picture, to encourage education on diversity and race and to provide voices for the Windrush Community. This could either be left as a permanent exhibition or brought out annually for a few weeks around Windrush

Day- 22<sup>nd</sup> June. The print is £30.00 and books are priced at c.£9.99 each. A budget needs to be identified for this project.

### **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates. The only project with any environmental impact is the smoke free play areas signage which is expected to have a positive effect.

### **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability. The project with risk attached to it is the QEII Jubilee Garden, in terms of the vandalism of the sundial if it's replaced.

### **Financial implications**

The financial implications are stated within the above report.

### **Recommendations**


Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Whether to proceed with exploring carving onto the Heather slate boulders, and erecting a small wooden sign for the Covid -19 memorial and how this should be funded;
2. Whether to try reinstalling the sundial at Unterhaching Park, and if not, to decide upon an alternative location; if the sundial is not installed should the bed be planted up anyway?
3. Which quote for the Reception signage to accept;
4. How to proceed with the HMT Windrush commemorative project.

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# Witney Town Council - Town Hall Reception Window Design

February 2023



**WITNEY**  
TOWN COUNCIL

GREEN1 RGB: 64 137 64 CMYK: 77% 24% 92% 7% HEX: #408940  
 RED RGB: 230 44 41 CMYK: 0% 92% 85% 08% HEX: #E62D29  
 YELLOW RGB: 255 222 90 CMYK: 2% 11% 73% 0% HEX: #FFDE5A  
 BLUE RGB: 36 34 76 CMYK: 100% 98% 38% 35% HEX: #24224C

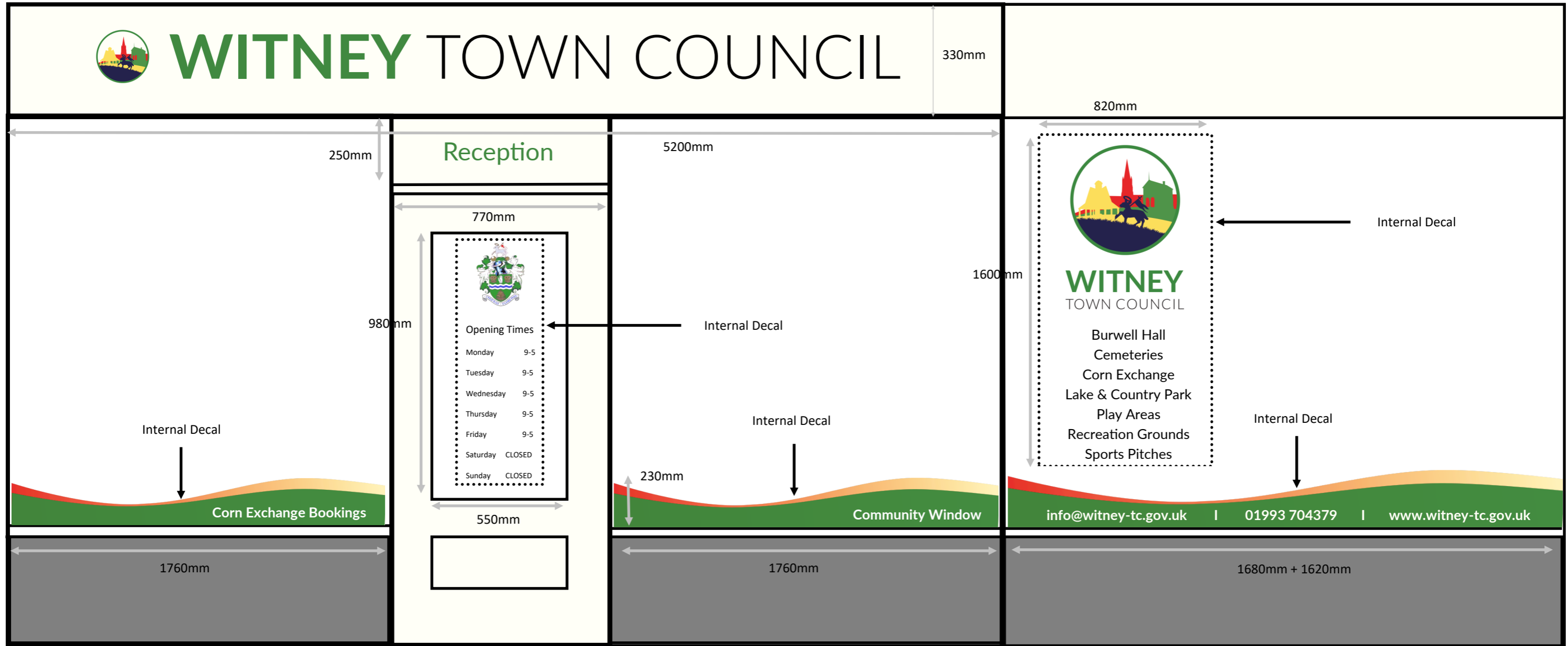
**Fascia Board**

Manufactured from:

Background Colour:

Colours: →

Font: Lato/Lato Bold



All exterior paintwork painted in:  
Honeysuckle Yellow/Cream

Colours as above

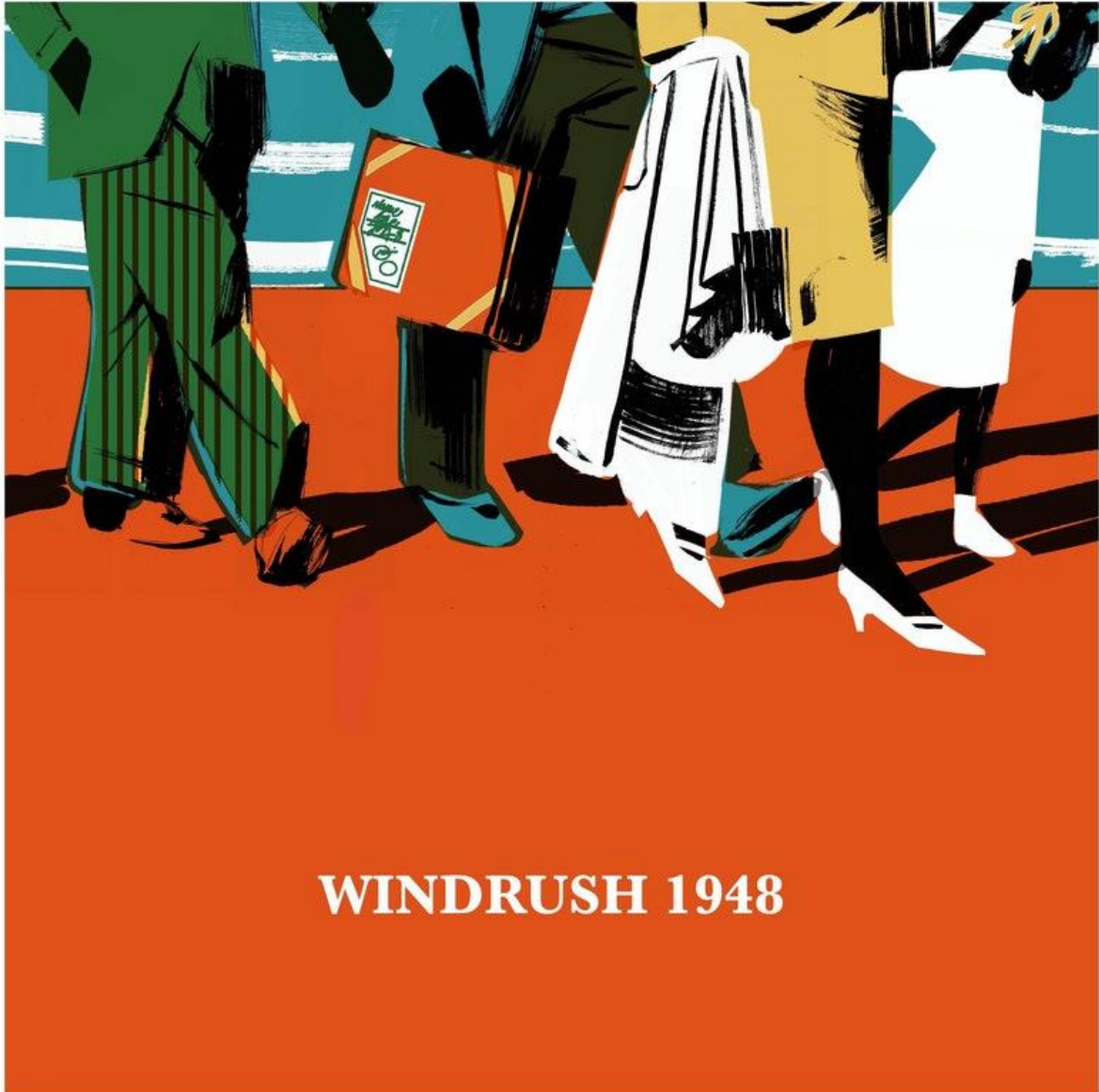


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## STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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**Date:** Monday, 20 March 2023

**Title:** Madley Park/Woodstock Road – Bus Shelters

**Contact Officer:** Deputy Town Clerk - Adam Clapton

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### Background

At the meeting of Witney Traffic Advisory Committee on 10 January 2023, a member of the public raised concerns regarding the bus shelters at Woodstock Road which serve residents of Madley Park. The alignment, lack of a crossing, lack of hardstanding/overgrown vegetation and mud at the shelter were raised.

### Current Situation

Both shelters are the responsibility of the Town Council and current pictures are attached as Appendix 1.

The first, on the southbound side towards Witney was installed in 2006. The alignment would be what was considered appropriate at the time of installation and the shelter is structurally sound.

The second, on the northbound side towards North Leigh was installed in 2018 at the request of the then County Councillor for Witney North & East. Funding was sourced at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) which paid for the hardstanding, the shelter and installation on the County Council maintained verge. The Town Council agreed to maintain the shelter but the reason why the shelter was installed in its current alignment is not known; it was installed by a reputable bus shelter supplier, and it may be due to its proximity to the road and safety.

The bus shelters receive a basic clean, including graffiti and sticker removal on a periodic basis, typically 4-6 times a year. Nothing can be done by our team to improve the condition of the hardstanding as this is an engineered issue caused by the drain and drop kerb location. Any action to clean the area would only see short term benefits and it would soon return to a poor state.

To help aid with the appearance of the bus stops the Town Council could push its maintenance out to the hedges and surround grass by around 1 – 2 meters as part of its ground's maintenance specification. Providing the County Council give an agreement to this.

### Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Trimming around the hardstanding/shelters would damage a small area of natural biodiversity.

## **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

There is a financial risk should the Council wish to relocate either shelter as damage could be caused to structurally sound bus shelters resulting in their replacement.

These bus stops aren't located close to any area the Town Council maintains regularly, so grass cutting in line with the current specification would be hard to achieve. Realistically the area would only be cut 4-6 times a year when the bus stops are cleaned.

## **Financial implications**

- Costs for regular trimming and cleaning would be met from the Grounds Maintenance budget.
- The replacement of either shelter is not currently planned or budgeted for. Funds remaining in 4035/402 (Bus Shelter Maintenance) would not extend to a new shelter.

## **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Whether to agree to extend out the maintenance of the bus stops to 1 – 2 meters including hedges and verges.

Towards North Leigh





Towards Witney









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## **STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

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**Date:** Monday, 20 March 2023

**Title:** In Bloom Update

**Contact Officer:** Communications & Community Engagement Officer - Polly Inness

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### **Background**

As the gardening season approaches it is time to consider the Council's entries to the In Bloom competition and how it can support community and school gardeners this year.

### **Current Situation**

#### **In Bloom – Community Gardeners**

There is a meeting of the In Bloom group on Tuesday 21 March at 3pm in the Main Hall of the Corn Exchange. It's an opportunity to inform the groups of the Council's plans for planting and entries to the Thames and Chilterns competition this year.

Leftover bulbs and compost from the pot planting activity at the Winter Warmer sessions has been passed on to two of the gardening groups who said they could make use of them.

The Edible Gardens group have taken the advice of the Council's In Bloom judges and entered the 'It's Your Neighbourhood competition' so they will be judged in their own right and get valuable feedback as a group. They have requested permission to add small compost bins to one of their beds, "It would be another aspect of our educating people about GYO and being as 'green' as possible." They have not stated whether they would be paying for these themselves or would request a further voucher towards the cost, as the Council has previously done to assist with the purchase of water butts for our gardeners.

The Community Engagement Officer is exploring ways to increase the amount of community activity with gardeners and other In Bloom partners in terms of year-round activities and events, to improve the score it gets for the 'Community' Thames & Chiltern's criteria.

### **Schools In Bloom**

The Operations Manager has reported that some of the wheelbarrows previously used for the competition are showing signs of wear and may need replacing next year. The Communications and Community Engagement Officer has suggested a rolling cycle of replacement beginning with the worst ones first, replacing up to four at a time.

No theme has yet been announced by the RHS for In Bloom. The wheelbarrows do not have to be themed, but the Council normally offer some guidelines.

The BBC Gardening programme runs an annual wheelbarrow competition. Their theme for this year is “a meal in a barrow” and last year was a “travel barrow”. Possible themes could be flag colours or a desert garden. Following on from the Platinum Jubilee with the Coronation, another red, white and blue theme is not particularly desirable. If members have any ideas they would like to put forward, they would be welcome.

Some changes to the judging process to fit in with those requested by the Rotary Club who generously supply a £100 prize, will be instigated this year. Members should also consider where the finished barrows will be displayed. Last year the position outside the depot on the Leys meant that they could easily be watered by the works team and there was no vandalism of them.

### **Grants**

In 2021 both schools and community gardening groups received £30 each as their grant. In 2022 the grant to groups increased to a one-off £100 and schools received £40 each to enable them to add extra wow for the Jubilee.

While £30 is an adequate sum for the barrows where they have received free compost it is a low sum for the community gardeners, who are maintaining much larger areas. The Council no longer have compost being supplied by our contractors so will either have to provide that ourselves or increase the grant sum to cover it. Further money is spent on prizes, refreshments and entry fees, but there is enough to cover some reasonable increases.

Councillors may like to consider an increase for the community gardeners to £50 to cover rising costs of their resources.

### **Witney Town Council’s In Bloom Entry**

The Council needs to decide which sites it would like to enter this year. Possibilities are:

- **The Lake and Country Park**
- The Leys
- Tower Hill Cemetery
- **Windrush Cemetery**
- Eton Close and the Tiny Forest
- Any other

Of these, only the ones in bold type have not been entered previously and Tower Hill, Eton Close were entered in 2022. Members may decide that continuity would be a good way to gain some consistent insight into progress or may decide that it is a good opportunity to ‘benchmark’ a new site. We usually enter two sites, but The Lake and Country Park would take

up the entire judging time we have allocated, so if that is chosen, it will need to be just that site.

When considering sites, it is useful to note that the Thames & Chiltern judging criteria which is attached to this report. Some may simply may never be able to attain the gold status, but other such as the Lake & Country Park demonstrate many already.

### **Impact Project – Welcome to Witney Planters**

Unspent budget from last year was made available for an impact project. Councillors have opted for planters on the entrances to town, The Operations Manager and Communications and Community Engagement Officer have explored some options. Most planters are very expensive so, again this may be something that is implemented over a couple of years.

#### Option 1 Cotswold Stone Planters

These would have to be positioned in front of the Welcome to Witney signs as there isn't room directly beneath them. We do not currently have a price for these but Woodstock Town Council have them and we may be able to get a rough idea of price from them. They would require a large amount of compost but would hold a lot of plants and retain water relatively well if lined. There would be some longevity with this type of planter and maintenance around them should be fairly easy.

A photo is included in Appendix 1.

#### Option 2 Tree slices

These would be a sustainable and cheaper solution. It is unlikely they would hold as many plants as a conventional planter. The Council could ask its tree surgeons if they are able to supply some of these. They would need to be planted on a sloping pile of earth in order to have maximum visibility. They would eventually rot down and provide insect habitats and compost. They would be easily replaceable. Because of the lack of height and definition maintenance of the area around them might not be as easy as around the stone ones.

A photo is included in Appendix 1.

### **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Additional or enhanced planting for In Bloom projects would help create more biodiverse green and flowering areas.

## **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

## **Financial implications**

Described here or as stated in the report above.

- The existing In Bloom budget is adequate to cover entry fees for up to two sites (£100) into the competition, any increase to grants decided prizes, plus other occasional expenditure on items such as water butts and compost bins.
- An increase in community and school gardening projects can be met from the current In Bloom budget.
- The In Bloom underspend is likely to be able to cover either Option 1 or 2 to improve entrance to Witney signs.

## **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Which site/s to enter for the Thames & Chiltern In Bloom Competitions and,
2. A theme for the Schools In Bloom Wheelbarrows and,
3. Agreement on whether they should be displayed as previously at the Leys and,
4. Whether an increase to the community gardening grants to cover rising costs is appropriate and,
5. Which type of Welcome to Witney planters the Council should investigate installing within the agreed budget.



In Bloom March 20, 2023

**Appendix 1 Planter styles**

Option 1

Cotswold Stone style



Option 2 Tree rings



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## Thames and Chilterns in Bloom - Parks & Open Spaces Assessment Criteria

<b>Community</b>	<b>Gold 9/10</b>	<b>Silver Gilt 7/8</b>	<b>Silver 5/6</b>	<b>Bronze 3/4</b>	<b>Cert. of Achievement 1/2</b>
Demonstrate community involvement and support. This includes fund raising an events programme and site development plans	Excellent level of community involvement, communication, use of social media, internet. Funding in place and being used. Inclusive programme covering diverse use as applicable to location. Excellent joint working with site owners/ authorities in place and active. Record to demonstrate successful implementation of projects or maintenance on site.	Very good communications and involvement with the community. Events programme in place and active. Fundraising programme in place. A suitable record to evidence progress to improve or maintain the site. A very good working relationship with site owner/authority.	Good communication takes place with the community. Fundraising takes place as needed. Events have taken place and proposals exist for further events. Plans in place for continuing development of the group. Good and developing partnership with the site owners/authority.	Satisfactory communication takes place with the community. Some events have taken place with plans in place for further events. Funding plans are being established. Partnership with owners /authorities is starting to develop. Future plans are being considered.	Group formed and starting to develop plans for community activity to support the site. Some community communication has taken place. Funding plans are being considered and developed.
<b>Maintenance &amp; Development</b>	<b>9/10</b>	<b>7/8</b>	<b>5/6</b>	<b>3/4</b>	<b>1/2</b>
Arboriculture Conservation Groundsmanship Horticulture As appropriate to the site and its purpose.	Excellent standard of maintenance and development. There is a planned maintenance programme in place. All are appropriate to the site and its purpose.	Very good standard of maintenance and development. All are appropriate to the site.	Good standard of maintenance and development, as appropriate to the site. Plans are being developed to review standards.	Maintenance is carried out to a satisfactory standard as appropriate to the site.	Fair standard of maintenance is undertaken and plans are being developed to raise standards and or make it more appropriate to the site.
<b>Environment</b>	<b>9/10</b>	<b>7/8</b>	<b>5/6</b>	<b>3/4</b>	<b>1/2</b>
Litter, graffiti, condition of structures/buildings, use of the site. Scale of endeavour The site and buildings use interpretation and information and group objectives.	Free from established litter and graffiti, property and furniture maintained to an excellent standard. High level of site use. Excellent interpretation if appropriate. Buildings all appropriate to the site. Excellent recycling rates/programmes.	Nearly litter and graffiti free, property and furniture maintained to very good standard. Usage levels are high and very good interpretation is present if appropriate. Very good recycling rates/programmes.	Many areas litter and graffiti free and furniture maintained to a good standard. Usage levels are good and good interpretation is available if appropriate. Good recycling rates/programmes.	Levels of litter and graffiti are not intrusive and furniture maintenance is satisfactory. Plans for interpretation in place as appropriate to site. Satisfactory recycling takes place.	Intrusive levels of litter and graffiti are present. Property and furniture maintenance is fair but under development. Plans to increase usage are being developed. Fair recycling takes place and is developing.

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## STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

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**Date:** Monday, 20 March 2023  
**Title:** King Charles III Coronation Update  
**Contact Officer:** Communications & Community Engagement Officer - Polly Inness

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### Background

Preparations and planning for the Coronation of King Charles continue. With information from the Royal household being issued relatively late the Council is having to make changes and be agile about days and content as much as possible. Events are listed below in date order.

### Current Situation

The CCEO has contacted several local groups and organisations regarding events to mark the occasion, but up to the time of writing, feedback and therefore confirmation of content is proving slow. The current timeline of events is listed below:

#### Wednesday 3 May

**Corn Exchange - Tea dance** - Seniors- Corn Exchange/External Event. Corn Exchange will be decorated in red, white and Blue and Dancers encouraged to dress up.

#### Thursday 4 May

**No events – ELECTIONS**

#### Friday 5 May

**Corn Exchange -Jazz** – external event but they have been asked to theme if possible.

#### Saturday 6 May

**Screening of the Coronation in the Corn Exchange.** The BBC has confirmed that no TV license is required to screen the Coronation at Public Events. 131 people can be seated to watch this on the new cinema screen. The event, though free would need to be ticketed to ensure it was not oversubscribed.

There would be in conflict with a Children’s crafting event (Advent fayre style) planned for 2-4pm but with no timing being given for the Coronation and the likelihood that it would be late morning, there would be little to no time for a turnaround of the hall for the crafting event. The Working party will make a decision on this shortly. One possible solution is that the craft event is downscaled and perhaps a few tables with simple and easy to transport and self-

managed activities are made available at the picnic in the park event on Sunday. There will not be sufficient officers to cover and manage any activities so these MUST be stand alone.

Originally this was the day on which a picnic in the park and bonfire were planned. With a directive from the King being passed on via the Pageant Master requesting no beacons or fires to be lit because of the proximity of the Platinum Jubilee to this event the bonfire has had to be cancelled. The picnic in the Park has moved to Sunday 7th in order to be in line with the Big Lunch Plans issued by the Palace.

### Sunday 7 May

**Church Service – St Mary’s** – external event with Civic invitations

**Best shop window competition** judging with Mayor and Town Crier

**Best Fancy-Dress** winners chosen at the Leys picnic.

### **The Leys - Picnic in the Park. 2pm -8pm**

- The Coffee Shed and Witney Music Festival will be contributing but plans are unconfirmed as yet.
- WOAPA will perform for around 30 minutes.
- Thames Valley Police will do Bike Marking
- The Vikings Junior football team will organise some soccer skills games such as a penalty shoot-out or football darts.
- Windrush Radio have been invited to do an Outside Broadcast with interviews and requests. They are asking how much they would be paid and with a modest budget, this will need to be negotiated.
- Premier Tennis have been invited to offer free tennis sessions but have not yet responded.
- Hatwell’s Funfair will be bringing some small rides.
- There has been no response from anyone willing to run a tug of war competition yet.
- The Park Runners declined the offer to run round the lake for H&S reasons and because it might impact on Junior Park Run, but are willing to be involved if there is something they can do other than this.
- As we cannot have a bonfire the Operations Manager and Communications and Community Services Officer are investigating being able to ‘close’ the event with red, white and blue smoke cones. As they cost very little we will purchase some to see how effective they are and how many we would need to make it effective.
- First aid is in place at a cost of around £500.

Monday 8 May

**Market Square – Day of Dance and Music**- there has been slow uptake on this – we are lacking musical content and only have three dance groups currently. The Communications Officer could put a post on Social Media inviting groups to come forward.

Volunteer Link up have declined to organise a Volunteer Recruitment day, but may do a litter pick in conjunction with the Land Army to mark the Volunteer Day as promoted via Buckingham Palace.

### **Community Projects**

**Schools – Create a Commemorative Book Project** – four schools have accepted the challenge so far to create a legacy book of their Coronation celebrations.

**Bunting Making Project** – we have received a number of shorter lengths and issued 4 packs of the 25m lengths to crafting groups, schools and care homes.

**Admin Window Memorabilia display** will be installed on 17th April and will include items from former coronations and King Charles' life.

### **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

### **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

### **Financial implications**

Described here or as stated in the report above.

➤ All items are currently within the £3,000 budget set by the Council.

### **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Delegation to the Mayor & Deputy Mayor (and Chair of this Committee) to expediate decisions ahead of the events in less than two months.

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