

Full Council Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 13th April, 2026 at 7.00 pm

To members of the Full Council - A Bailey, J Doughty, O Collins, G Meadows, J Aitman, T Ashby, D Enright, R Smith, D Temple, A Mubin, R Crouch, G Doughty, D Edwards-Hughes, D Newcombe, J Robertshaw, S Simpson and J Treloar

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 Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk in advance.

Recording of Meetings

In accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, public meetings may be filmed, audio-recorded, or photographed. Anyone intending to record the proceedings is asked, as a courtesy, to inform the Committee Clerk before the meeting begins.

This meeting will be broadcast live via Microsoft Teams and recorded; by attending or participating, you consent to the recording and public sharing of audio and video, which may be made available for later viewing. For details on how personal data is handled, please see the our [Privacy Policy](#).

To view the meeting please follow this link [Full Council Meeting | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)

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 **prior to the meeting**, stating the reason for absence.

Standing Order 8(e)(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 of the items under consideration at this meeting in accordance with the Town Council's code of conduct.

3. Minutes (Pages 5 - 13)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 February 2026 in accordance with Standing Order 26 including questions on the minutes as to 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 25. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

5. **Witney Community Policing Issues**

To receive an update from the Witney Police Team (if appropriate).

6. **An Update from Witney Oxfordshire County Councillors and West Oxfordshire District Councillors**

To receive a short verbal update from Oxfordshire County Councillors representing Witney Wards and West Oxfordshire District Councillors.

7. **Report Back from the Councillors on the Work with External Bodies where they serve as the Town Council's Nominated Representative**

To receive a short verbal update from councillors who sit on external bodies where they serve as the Town Council's nominated representative.

8. **Minutes of Committees and Sub Committees**

To receive and NOTE the RESOLUTIONS in the minutes of the meetings held between 17 February and 31 March 2026, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein.

a) **Planning & Development Committee - 17 February, 10 March & 31 March 2026** (Pages 14 - 29)

b) **Parks & Recreation Committee - 9th March** (Pages 30 - 33)

c) **Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - 16th March** (Pages 34 - 37)

d) **Stronger Communities Committee - 23rd March** (Pages 38 - 43)

e) **Policy, Governance & Finance Committee - 30th March** (Pages 44 - 50)

9. **Annual Town Meeting Minutes - 18 March 2026** (Pages 51 - 57)

To receive the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 18 March 2026.

10. **Civic Announcements** (Pages 58 - 59)

To receive the report of the Mayor & Mayor's Secretary.

11. **Mayor Elect**

To agree the Mayor Elect for the 2025/26 Municipal Year in line with Standing Order 2.

12. **Health & Safety** (Pages 60 - 118)

To receive an update from Officers on health and safety items.

13. **Vandalism & Anti Social Behaviour** (Page 119)

To receive an update showing the latest vandalism to Council property and reported Anti-Social Behaviour.

14. **Future of Local Government in Oxfordshire**

To receive and consider a verbal update from Officers, if appropriate.

15. **Civility & Respect** (Pages 120 - 123)

To receive the report from the Deputy Town Clerk.

16. **Communication from the Leader**

To receive such communications as the Leader of the Council may wish to bring before the Council and to consider the recommendation of the Leader on how such communications should be dealt with.

17. **Correspondence**

To receive any correspondence received (if applicable).

a) **Police & Crime Commissioner - Newsletter**

To receive the [February update](#) recent newsletter from the Thames Valley Police, Police & Crime Commissioner.

b) **Notification of the Election Result at Le Touquet**

To receive notification of the re-election of Daniel Fasquelle as Mayor of Le Touquet-Paris-Plage in March and to consider formal acknowledgement from Witney Town Council. The results may be seen at <https://lestouquettois.fr/conseil-municipal-dinvestiture-22-mars-2026/>

c) **National Emergency Briefing**

To receive details of the [National Emergency Briefing film](#) and consider screening it in the Corn Exchange.

d) **Notice of Definitive Map and Statement Legal Event Modification Order 2026** (Pages 124 - 128)

To receive correspondence from Oxfordshire County Council Countryside Access Team.

e) **North Leigh Neighbourhood Development Plan** (Pages 129 - 137)

To receive details of the current consultation open for the North Leigh Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan.

18. **Questions to the Leader of the Council**

Questions to the Leader of the Council concerning the business of the Council in accordance with Standing Order 22.

19. **Sealing of Documents**

To receive details of documents sealed by the Council (If applicable).



Town Clerk

Members Interests & Registration Of Gifts & Hospitality

Members are reminded that any changes to the register of interests previously completed by them or any registration of Gifts or Hospitality received which exceed £50 should be reported to the Town Clerk **within 28 days** of the occurrence.

**MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 16 February 2026

At 7.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor J Doughty (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)

Councillors:	G Meadows	D Edwards-Hughes
	T Ashby	D Newcombe
	D Enright	J Robertshaw
	R Smith	S Simpson
	R Crouch	J Treloar
	G Doughty	
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	Inspector C Ball (Thames Velley Police)	

86 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors O Collins, J Aitman, A Mubin, A Bailey, D Temple.

Councillor J Treloar had advised he would arrive late to the meeting.

87 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

88 **MINUTES**

That, the minutes of the meetings held on 8 December 2025, 15 December 2025, 5 January 2026 and 2 February 2026 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2025, 15 December 2025, 5 January 2026 and 2 February 2026 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

89 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

90 **WITNEY COMMUNITY POLICING ISSUES**

Inspector Ball attended on behalf of Thames Valley Police and provided an update on current policing matters.

He thanked the Council for its support in funding four power-assisted bikes for the neighbourhood team, which were proving effective. Recent anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents, some serious, were being addressed, and youth engagement work was expected to continue over the summer and would hopefully be supported by The Station, who he was pleased to see were using the café at the Corn Exchange for a half-term cafe that evening.

The Christmas period had been generally positive, with good cooperation from local licensees. Assistance had been offered in relation to flooding, and residents were encouraged to make contact if required.

Flags displayed on lampposts were not a criminal matter and fell within the remit of OCC as the highway's authority; however, any instances perceived as intimidating should be reported and that only flags obstructing CCTV cameras or perceived by TVP as an immediate danger would be removed by them.

Regarding pony and trap racing on the A40, new signage and policing powers had proved effective, with a previously planned large-scale event relocated by the organisers outside of the forces area following police liaison.

A representation would be submitted to the planning authority objecting to the McDonald's request to extend their hours to 24 hours on the grounds of ASB, litter, and in particular vehicle-related ASB concerns.

In response to question from Members, it was advised that patrol visibility varied as the team also covered surrounding villages; plain-clothed officers had been effective in addressing illegal high-speed e-bike use. Checks in November 2025 had identified no issues with delivery drivers operating, and any further intelligence to the contrary would be reviewed.

Resolved:

That, the verbal report be noted.

Inspector Chris Ball left the meeting at 7:25pm

91 **AN UPDATE FROM WITNEY OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLORS AND WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

West Oxfordshire District Council

Councillor R Crouch reported that Community First's research relating to the Smith's Estate was ongoing and continuing to support improvements to the livelihoods of individuals and families in need within the area.

Councillor R Crouch further advised that the recent Youth Partnership meeting had been well attended, with contributions from a range of organisations, including The Station, and APCAM; it

demonstrated a strengthening of community partnership working and enhanced links with local organisations.

Councillor D Enright reported that work on the Local Plan 2043 was continuing and included a number of ambitious objectives. It was further noted that the Salt Cross Garden Village scheme had received approval of its plan and was progressing to the next stage, including exploration of proposals to attract world-class employers.

Oxfordshire County Council

Councillor J Robertshaw reported that pothole statistics had recently been published. Contractor performance issues were currently being reviewed, and further assessment was underway.

He also advised that the Oxfordshire County Council precept had been agreed. However, it was anticipated that financial pressures were likely to present greater challenges in the next financial year.

Lastly, he reminded Members of the Local Government Review consultation which remained open and that their views were being actively sought.

Resolved:

That, the verbal updates be noted.

92 **REPORT BACK FROM THE COUNCILLORS ON THE WORK WITH EXTERNAL BODIES WHERE THEY SERVE AS THE TOWN COUNCIL'S NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVE**

Councillor R Crouch reported in relation to the **Witney Twinning Association** that preparations were underway for the forthcoming visit from representatives of Unterhaching and Le Touquet, scheduled to take place from 2 May.

Councillor Crouch also provided an update from **Witney Town Charity**, advising that a review of rental arrangements was being undertaken, alongside a review of the grants awarded by the Charity. Consideration was being given to how funds are best utilised and capital funds invested to maximise community benefit.

Councillor D Newcombe reported from the **RAF Brize Norton Local Consultation Group** that a 16-week closure to fixed-wing aircraft operations was scheduled to facilitate a major construction programme. The works were intended to ensure the continued safety of staff and vehicles on site. It was noted that approximately 800 construction personnel would be present during the works, which was welcomed due to the anticipated positive impact on local business revenue.

Councillor R Smith reported from the **Witney Infrastructure Neighbourhood Group (WING)** that they were eagerly awaiting the resubmission of the North Witney developers planning proposals.

Councillor Smith further updated Members on the **Windrush Against Sewage Pollution** group, advising that a docudrama highlighting the group's work was due to be broadcast on Channel 4. The group had also continued its examination of Thames Water's financial position as part of its ongoing campaign.

Resolved:

That, the verbal reports be noted.

93 **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 9 DECEMBER 2025, 6 JANUARY & 27 JANUARY 2026**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

P58-5 Planning Application 25/03152/S73 McDonalds, Ducklington Lane

In light of additional comments from Thames Valley Police and residents, the response submitted by the committee was discussed following which a proposal was made by Cllr D Enright, seconded by Cllr R Smith that the submission be amended to that of an objection, a vote of which the result was:

For: Eight
Against: Two
Abstention: One

It was therefore agreed that the following additional response be submitted “Anti-social behaviour was a matter raised by Witney Town Council in its original submission and, in light of information and concerns received from Thames Valley Police, the Council is content for its comments to be treated as a formal objection”

Resolved:

1. That, the minutes of the meetings held on 9 December 2025, 6 January & 27 January 2026 be received and any recommendations therein approved and,
2. That, an additional objection submission be made in respect of application 25/03152/S73.

94 **CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE - 13 JANUARY 2026**

The Vice Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Climate & Biodiversity Committee held on 13 January 2026 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

95 **PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE - 12 JANUARY**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee held on 12 January 2026 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

96 **HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE - 19 JANUARY**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee held on 19 January 2026 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

97 **STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE - 26 JANUARY**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee held on 26 January 2026 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

98 **POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE - 2 FEBRUARY**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee held on 2 February 2026 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

99 **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Council received the report of the Mayor and Mayor's Secretary which highlighted the civic engagements of the Mayor and Deputy since the last meeting.

In the absence of the Mayor his deputy provided the update and touched on specifically the Oxon Army Cadet force award ceremony highlighting the work of one of the council's staff, who led a Cadet unit as a volunteer. She asked that a letter be sent on behalf of the Council to acknowledge the commitment.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, a letter of thanks be issued to the member of staff.

Cllr Jack Treloar joined the meeting at 7:52pm

100 **HEALTH & SAFETY**

The Council received the report of the Compliance and Environment Officer regarding Health & Safety matters.

Members were pleased to see the continued training of employees in both tractor use and food safety.

Resolved:

That, the report be noted.

101 **VANDALISM & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

The Council received a list of vandalism and anti-social reports since the last meeting along with additional details on the items in the report from the Committee Clerk.

Resolved:

That, the reports and verbal update be noted.

102 **FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN OXFORDSHIRE**

The Council received notification of the consultation being held to gather opinions on the proposals for Local Government Re-Organisation.

Members received a verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk advising that the consultation was open and welcomed both the Council and individual councillor's responses. It was noted that the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC) had encouraged parish and town councils to submit a response.

The Leader of the Council updated Members on a recent event she had attended in relation to the proposals. She reported that she felt limited information and assurance had been provided regarding the capacity of parishes to expand and take on additional services under any future arrangements.

During discussion, Members expressed support for responding to the consultation and considered the available options. It was suggested that the Council use a free text format to submit a single response reflecting the views of the Council.

A Member suggested that it be delegated for consideration by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee; however, the Town Clerk advised that this would not be feasible due to the consultation closing prior to the next scheduled PGF meeting. It was noted that a special meeting could be convened if Members so wished.

It was agreed that submitting a written statement would be more effective than responding to the consultation questions individually, in order to clearly articulate that the impact on town and parish councils must be central to any future decision-making.

Members identified the following key points to be included in the Council's response:

- That Town & Parish Councils should be appropriately recompensed for any additional services it assumes.
- That representatives from civic, education and traffic bodies should be considered for inclusion on neighbourhood action groups, with the WTC recognised as a primary body.
- That the WTC should take a leading role, supported by robust Service Level Agreements.
- That WTC is capable of taking on an enhanced leadership role.

- That neighbourhood action groups must have a meaningful role in policy development and must be properly funded to ensure long-term sustainability.
- That surrounding villages rely on Witney as a service centre, placing significant demand and responsibility on the Town Council.

It was therefore proposed by Councillor R. Smith, seconded by Councillor R. Crouch and unanimously agreed that Officers draft a response for circulation ahead of its submission.

Members were also encouraged to submit individual responses in addition to any corporate response, recognising that Councillors may hold differing personal views.

Resolved:

1. That, officers prepare a single written corporate response for circulation to Members prior to submission by the consultation closing date of 26 March and,
2. That, Councillor submit their own contribution to the consultation.

103 **COMMITTEE CALENDAR 2026/27**

The Council received the Calendar of Committee meetings for the 2026/27 municipal year reflecting the change to five meeting cycles across the year, as recommended for approval by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee.

Resolved:

That, the Calendar of Committee meetings for 2026/27 be adopted by the Council.

104 **REGISTER OF INTERESTS, HOSPITALITY & DATA PROTECTION**

The Council received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk this time providing a reminder to Councillors of their obligations concerning the declarations of their interests, hospitality and data protection.

Members were reminded that should they have any questions regarding the report or had a request for training that they should contact the Deputy Town Clerk.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Members note their obligations regarding Register of interest, Gifts & Hospitality and Data Protection.

105 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

There was no communication from the Leader.

Cllr David Edwards-Hughes left the meeting at 8:18pm

106 **NALC OPEN LETTER**

The Council received the correspondence from, the incumbent Chair of the National Association of Local Councils which set out his forward-looking strategic vision for strengthening governance, influence, and partnerships across parish and town councils.

Resolved:

That, the correspondence be noted.

During the following item Cllr David Edwards-Hughes returned to the meeting at 8:23pm

107 **CIVILITY & RESPECT - CLLR STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE**

The Council received details of the introduction of a Councillor's Statement of Assurance by the National Association of Local Councils Improvement and Development Board.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that he would be preparing a report on the subject for consideration by the Council at a future meeting however, the statement of assurance was introduced to further support the Civility & Respect pledge that the Council had already signed by allowing individual Councillor to demonstrate further commitment to the parish that they serve.

Resolved:

1. That, the correspondence be noted and,
2. That, a report be prepared by officers for consideration at a future meeting.

108 **WODC - COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW REQUEST RESPONSE**

The Council received the correspondence of West Oxfordshire District Council in response to the Council's letter requesting a Community Governance Review (CGR) for Witney.

Members were encouraged to learn that this would be considered following the conclusion of the Local Government Reorganisation, it was unanimously agreed that the Council push for the commencement of the CGR at the earliest point, thought to be June 2026.

Resolved:

1. That, the correspondence be noted and,
2. That, the Council continue to press for the CGR to be carried out as soon as possible after the direction of Local Government Reorganisation had been agreed.

109 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

A Member asked that Councillors ensure they reply to the invites to participate in Councillor at the café events in order that the necessary arrangements can be made.

110 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

Resolved:

That the seal of the Council be affixed to any documents arising from decisions taken by this meeting of the Council.

The meeting closed at: 8.25 pm

Chair

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 8a

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday, 17 February 2026

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting via MS Teams - Virtual Meeting

Present:

Councillor G Doughty (Chair)

Councillors:	J Treloar (In place of D Temple) J Doughty	G Meadows R Smith
Officers:	Derek Mackenzie Cara Murray	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Admin Support Assistant - Communities & Planning
Others:	None.	

P111 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J Aitman.

Apologies were also received from Councillor D Temple, Councillor J Treloar attended as a substitute.

P112 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

P113 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

Councillor G Meadows joined the meeting at 6:02pm.

P114 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning applications from West Oxfordshire District Council.

Resolved:

That, the comments, as per the attached schedule be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council.

P115 **OCC CONSULTATION – VARIOUS ROADS (CHERWELL & WEST) - PROPOSED DISABLED PERSONS PARKING PLACES**

The Committee received correspondence from Oxfordshire County Council in respect of requests for the removal and installation of disabled parking spaces across the County.

Members had no objections to the proposals presented specifically they reviewed the request to remove a space in Gloucester Place which they supported given the demand for parking in what was a narrow road.

Resolved

That a no Objection response be submitted.

P116 **MHCLG CONSULTATION - REDUCING THE PREVALENCE OF PRIVATE ESTATE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

The Committee received notification of the Government consultation on reducing the prevalence of private estate management arrangements.

Members noted the complexity of the consultation, which comprised 156 separate questions within a 23-page online submission it was therefore agreed that the submission a written response would be more appropriate.

Concerns were raised regarding the potential financial implications and operational impact on the Town Council arising from any proposed changes. In particular how any commuted sums would be calculated to ensure the long-term protection and maintenance of assets that may be transferred to the Council's care. It was also emphasised that the Council should retain the right to refuse the adoption of assets where it is not satisfied that sufficient provision has been made to enable their sustainable long-term maintenance and service delivery for the community.

It was unanimously agreed that the views of all Councillors should be sought prior to Officers drafting a formal response for the Committee's approval and that these be forwarded to Officers no later than 3 March, in order to enable a draft response to be prepared for consideration by the Planning and Development Committee at its meeting on 10 March.

Resolved

1. That Officers issue details of the consultation to all Councillor with a request for submission of their comments and,
2. That Officers prepare a draft response for approval at the next meeting of the Committee on 10 March 2026.

The meeting closed at: 6.24 pm

Chair

Witney Town Council

Planning Minutes - 17th February 2026

114

114- 1 WTC/019/26 Plot Ref :-25/02661/OUT Type :- OUTLINE
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 22/01/2026
 Location :- 61 Mirfield Road Date Returned :- 18/02/2026
 Proposal : Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of 1 self build dwelling. (Amended description)
 Observations : Witney Town Council continue to be minded to object to the application as they feel they still lack sufficient details in order to make an informed decision.

114- 2 WTC/020/26 Plot Ref :-26/00107/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 22/01/2026
 Location :- 16 Church Green Date Returned :- 18/02/2026
 Proposal : Erection of rear dormer window.
 Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

114- 3 WTC/021/26 Plot Ref :-26/00108/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 22/01/2026
 Location :- 16 Church Green Date Returned :- 18/02/2026
 Proposal : Internal and external alterations to include the addition of a dormer to the north roof pitch of the second floor rear bedroom
 Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

114- 4 WTC/022/26 Plot Ref :-26/00246/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 09/02/2026
 Location :- 104 Woodstock Road Date Returned :- 18/02/2026
 Woodstock Road
 Witney
 Proposal : Erection of first floor side extension.
 Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

The Meeting closed at : 6:24pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Tuesday, 10 March 2026

At 6.30 pm in the Virtual Meeting via MS Teams - Virtual Meeting

Present:

Councillor G Doughty (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman J Doughty	G Meadows R Smith
Officers:	Sharon Groth Derek Mackenzie Cara Murray	Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Admin Support Assistant - Communities & Planning
Others:	None	

P126 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D Temple, Councillor J Treloar attended as a substitute.

P127 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

P128 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

P129 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning applications from West Oxfordshire District Council.

Resolved:

That, the comments, as per the attached schedule be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council.

P130 WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 20 January 2026, a verbal update of which had been provided at the meeting held on 27 January 2026. Members present at that meeting confirmed that the minutes were a true representation.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 20 January 2026 be noted.

During the discussion of the following Agenda item.

Councillor R Smith left the meeting at 7:23pm

P131 **MHCLG CONSULTATION - REDUCING THE PREVALENCE OF PRIVATE ESTATE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

Following their initial discussions at the meeting of 17 February, Members further discussed the consultation regarding the reduction of private estate management arrangements. It was noted that the consultation was detailed and covered a wide range of subject areas, with a lengthy questionnaire and varying viewpoints to consider.

It was therefore unanimously agreed that details of the consultation be once again circulated, as they had been following the 17 February meeting, to all Members of the Council to allow them to submit individual responses by the closing date of 12 March 2026.

Resolved:

That, Officers issue a request to all Members asking that individual responses be submitted.

P132 **WEST OXFORDSHIRE LOWLANDS MOVEMENT AND PLACE (MAP) PLAN**

Following a briefing received earlier in the evening from Oxfordshire County Council officers, Members considered the West Oxfordshire Lowlands Movement and Place (MAP) Plan.

It was noted that the Plan was detailed and complex, covering a range of transport and place-based matters.

It was therefore unanimously agreed that details of the Plan be circulated to all Members of the Council to allow them to submit individual responses, should they be minded to do so.

Resolved:

That, Officers issue a request to all Members asking that individual responses be submitted.

The meeting closed at: 7.36 pm

Chair

Witney Town CouncilPlanning Minutes - 10th March 2026

129

129- 1 WTC/023/26 Plot Ref :-26/00133/FUL Type :- FULL
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 19/02/2026
 Location :- 140 THORNEY LEYS Date Returned :- 11/03/2026
 THORNEY LEYS

Proposal : Erection of a detached dwelling and associated works.

Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application on the following grounds:

Overdevelopment - The Council considers that the proposal represents an overdevelopment of the site. The scale, layout and intensity of development would appear cramped and out of keeping with the established pattern, spacing and character of development in the surrounding area. The proposal would therefore fail to respect the prevailing townscape and would result in a form of development that is incongruous within its setting. This is considered to be contrary to Policies OS2 and OS4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the design principles set out in Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Neighbour Amenity - Members raise concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on neighbouring residential properties, including potential loss of privacy and an increased sense of enclosure. The development is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies OS2 and OS4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.

Drainage - Members note and support the comments of the Flood Risk Management Officer. Should officers be minded to approve the application, a condition should be imposed requiring the submission and approval of a full surface water drainage scheme, including soakage testing in accordance with BRE 365, prior to the commencement of development, in accordance with Policy OS3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

129- 2 WTC/024/26 Plot Ref :-26/00245/ADV Type :- ADVERTISED
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 19/02/2026
 Location :- UNIT 4-5 WELCH WAY Date Returned :- 11/03/2026
 WELCH WAY

Proposal : Erection of internally illuminated fascia signage to shop front and western elevation.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

129- 3 WTC/025/26 Plot Ref :-26/00244/FUL Type :- FULL
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 19/02/2026
 Location :- UNIT 4-5 WELCH WAY Date Returned :- 11/03/2026
 WELCH WAY

Proposal : Alterations to shop units 4 and 5 to create one single unit, alterations to include

the installation of an air conditioning unit to rear elevation and a extract grille to west elevation, new shopfront doors and the removal of one entrance.

Observations : Witney Town Council supports and welcomes this application.

Members are pleased to see a vacant unit brought back into active use, which will contribute positively to the vitality and viability of the area and provide local employment opportunities. This is consistent with the objectives of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, particularly policies that support the reuse of existing premises and the strengthening of the local economy, including Policy E6 (Town Centres).

The Committee also notes that national policy within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the effective use of previously developed land and buildings, and encourages developments that promote the vitality of town centres (see NPPF paragraphs 86-90).

However, Members ask that the applicant is mindful of the existing parking and highway safety issues on Welch Way. There are ongoing concerns regarding vehicles parking on double yellow lines and causing obstruction to traffic when customers briefly stop to purchase food and drink. In accordance with NPPF paragraph 115, which seeks to ensure that development provides safe and suitable access for all users, the Committee encourages the applicant to ensure that clear signage is provided advising customers of local parking restrictions and directing them to appropriate nearby parking facilities.

While the Committee commends the reuse of a vacant unit, it considers that careful consideration should be given to the potential for the proposal to exacerbate existing parking and obstruction issues in the immediate vicinity.

129- 4	WTC/026/26	Plot Ref :-26/00355/CLP	Type :-	CERT LAWFU
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	19/02/2026
	Location :- 11 CHEDWORTH DRIVE CHEDWORTH DRIVE		Date Returned :-	11/03/2026
	Proposal :	Certificate of Lawfulness (erection of a single storey rear extension).		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

129- 5	WTC/027/26	Plot Ref :-26/00374/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	23/02/2026
	Location :- 5A WEST END WEST END		Date Returned :-	11/03/2026
	Proposal :	Demolition of a timber workshop and erection of a replacement building comprising 2 x 1-bedroom apartments and associated works.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material planning considerations.		

Members welcome the provision of one-bedroom accommodation close to the town centre, which contributes to housing choice within the town and supports sustainable patterns of development. This aligns with the objectives of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, including Policy H2 (Delivery of New Homes) and Policy OS2 (Locating Development in the Right Places), which encourage the provision of housing within accessible and sustainable locations.

Members note that national policy within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the efficient use of land and encourages developments that make effective use of previously developed land, particularly in accessible locations (see NPPF paragraphs 124-125).

However, Members raise some concern that the proposed bedroom size appears relatively compact, and request that officers consider whether the internal layout provides an adequate standard of accommodation, having regard to the principles set out within the NPPF relating to the creation of high-quality, well-designed places (see NPPF Section 12, Achieving well-designed places) and any relevant internal space standards.

Members also ask that the comments from Environmental Health are taken into account and support the inclusion of a land contamination condition, requiring investigation, risk assessment and remediation should contamination be identified during development. This would be consistent with Policy EH8 (Environmental Protection) of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and national policy within NPPF Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment).

In addition, Members note the comments of the Flood Risk Management Officer regarding the site's susceptibility to groundwater flooding notes at 50-75% and request that appropriate drainage and mitigation measures are secured as part of the development in accordance with Policy EH7 (Flood Risk) of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the principles set out in NPPF Section 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change).

129- 6	WTC/028/26	Plot Ref :-25/02880/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	24/02/2026
	Location :- 6 AERODROME LANE AERODROME LANE		Date Returned :-	11/03/2026
	Proposal : Conversion of loft with front dormer and rear velux rooflights including erection of detached pergola and outbuilding (part retrospective) (amended description)			
	Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.			

129- 7	WTC/029/26	Plot Ref :-26/00350/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	24/02/2026
	Location :- 37 WOODSTOCK ROAD WOODSTOCK ROAD		Date Returned :-	11/03/2026
	Proposal : Erection of single and two storey extensions.			
	Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application on the following grounds:			

Overdevelopment - The Council considers that the proposed two-storey side extension would represent an overdevelopment of the site. The scale, siting and proximity of the extension would significantly reduce the separation distance between No. 37 and 37A Woodstock Road (to approximately 1.2-1.3 metres), resulting in a cramped and visually intrusive relationship between the properties that would appear out of keeping with the established spacing and pattern of development in the area.

The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies OS2 and OS4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the design principles set out in Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which require development to respond positively to local character and maintain appropriate spacing between buildings.

Neighbour Amenity - Members also raise concerns regarding the impact of the proposed extension on neighbouring residential amenity, including potential loss of natural light and outlook and the overbearing scale and massing of the development given the limited separation between the properties.

Concerns have also been noted regarding the potential impact on the existing right of way and drainage infrastructure located between the properties.

The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policies OS2 and OS4 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to ensure development provides a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.

129- 8	WTC/030/26	Plot Ref :-26/00373/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :-	.	Date Received :-	26/02/2026
	Location :-	10 HANGAR CLOSE HANGAR CLOSE	Date Returned :-	11/03/2026
	Proposal :	Change of use of amenity space to enlarge domestic garden, and erection of 1.8 metre fence (retrospective)		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council objects to this retrospective application due to the loss of publicly accessible amenity land and the associated environmental and planning concerns.		

Members consider that the enclosure and incorporation of this land into a private residential garden represents an unacceptable encroachment of private curtilage onto land that currently functions as communal amenity space. The proposal would result in the permanent loss of land that contributes to the openness, character and environmental quality of the area and which is available for the informal enjoyment of the wider community.

The Council considers the proposal to be contrary to Policies OS2 and EH3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, which seek to protect valued green and amenity spaces and ensure that development respects and protects the character, landscape setting and environmental value of its surroundings. The loss of this area of open land would erode the planned layout of the estate and diminish the contribution that the space makes to the visual and environmental character of the locality.

In addition, the proposal conflicts with the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, which emphasises that planning decisions should protect and enhance public open spaces and should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. The Framework also highlights the importance of maintaining accessible green spaces for the health and wellbeing of communities.

Members are also concerned that approval of this application would set an undesirable precedent for the incremental loss of communal amenity land within the area through similar encroachments. Such piecemeal erosion of open space would cumulatively harm the character of the development and reduce the availability of shared green space intended for the benefit of all residents.

Furthermore, amenity grassland and open green areas can provide ecological and environmental benefits, including supporting urban biodiversity, surface water absorption, and contributing to local green infrastructure. The enclosure of this land into private curtilage reduces its communal environmental function and removes it from shared public benefit.

For these reasons, Witney Town Council considers the proposal to represent an unjustified loss of communal amenity land and an unacceptable encroachment into open space. The Council therefore strongly objects to the application and requests that the Local Planning Authority refuse planning permission.

129- 9 WTC/031/26

Plot Ref :-26/00419/FUL

Type :- FULL

Applicant Name :- .

Date Received :- 03/03/2026

Location :- 63 BARRINGTON CLOSE
BARRINGTON CLOSE

Date Returned :- 11/03/2026

Proposal : Change of use of parcel of land from amenity to residential and erection of a boundary fence to enclose garden.

Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application due to the loss of publicly accessible amenity land and the associated environmental and planning concerns.

Members consider that the enclosure of this land into a private residential garden represents an unjustified encroachment of private curtilage onto land which currently forms part of the wider communal amenity space within the development. The proposal would result in the permanent loss of land intended for the benefit and enjoyment of the wider community and would erode the openness and character of the area.

The Council considers the proposal to be contrary to Policies OS2 and EH3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, which seek to protect valued green infrastructure, amenity land and the character of the built and natural environment. The loss of this area of communal land would diminish the contribution it makes to the environmental quality and visual amenity of the locality.

The proposal is also inconsistent with the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, which emphasises that planning decisions should protect and enhance public open spaces and support healthy, inclusive communities through the provision and protection of accessible green infrastructure.

Members also wish to highlight that, although similar applications may have previously been approved in the locality, Witney Town Council strongly considers that the continued incremental loss of communal amenity land through such proposals is harmful to the overall character and function of these spaces. The approval of further applications of this nature would risk establishing or reinforcing an undesirable precedent that could lead to the progressive erosion of shared green space intended for the benefit of all residents.

For these reasons, Witney Town Council objects to the application.

However, should West Oxfordshire District Council be minded to approve the proposal, the Town Council requests that a planning condition be imposed to ensure the land remains as green space, ancillary to the dwelling and that permitted development rights are restricted to prevent the erection of buildings, structures or further development on the land in the future.

The Meeting closed at : 07:36pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Tuesday, 31 March 2026

At 6.30 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor G Doughty (Chair)

Councillors: J Doughty T Ashby (In place of D Temple)
R Crouch (In place of J
Aitman)

Officers: Adam Clapton Deputy Town Clerk
Derek Mackenzie Senior Administrative Officer &
Committee Clerk

Others: None.

P174 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Smith & G Meadows.

Additionally, apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Aitman & D Temple, Councillors R Crouch & T Ashby attended as substitutes.

P175 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or officers.

P176 MINUTES

The minutes of the Planning & Development Committee meetings held on 27 January; 17 February & 10 March 2026 were received.

P58 – 25/03152/S73 - The Committee acknowledged the decision taken by the Council to submit a further response to support the concern of Thames Valley Police and object to the application (FC Minute 93 16.02.26 Refers)

Following a request from the planning authority received on 30 March requesting consideration for the application of a condition to ensure that the restaurant remained closed as per its current hours, with only the drive thru becoming 24/7, the Committee confirmed their agreement however, asked that their comments regarding the impact of external and internal lighting on residential amenity due from the extended opening hours, particularly during the additional night-time hours be fully considered.

Resolved:

1. That, the minutes of the Planning & Development Committee meetings held on 27 January; 17 February & 10 March 2026 be approved as a correct record of the meetings and be signed by the Chair and,
2. That, confirmation of the Committees support for a condition to allow only extended hours to the drive through only be submitted to the planning authority for planning application 25/03152/S73.

P177 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

The Committee received representations from a resident of Kingfisher Meadows concerning the most recent version of his nature survey of the Windrush Valley area around Dry Lane. The Committee welcomed the information and agreed that it should be shared with the other neighbouring four parishes in order that they be informed in their responses to any future planning submissions.

The Committee reconvened.

P178 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning applications from West Oxfordshire District Council.

Resolved:

That, the comments, as per the attached schedule be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council.

The Member of the Public left the meeting at 6:52pm.

P179 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning decisions received from West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC).

The Committee Clerk summarised the reasoning for the decisions that were contrary to the Committee's submission.

Resolved:

That, the list circulated advising of WODC planning decisions be noted.

P180 **WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Committee received the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 17 March 2026.

A Member present at the meeting highlighted that the local bus routes currently supported by Oxfordshire Country Council were soon to be issued for tender for their renewal.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 17 March 2026 be noted.

P181 SALT CROSS GARDEN VILLAGE AREA ACTION PLAN (AAP)

The Committee received the confirmation of approval by West Oxfordshire District Council of the Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan

Resolved:

That the correspondence be noted.

P182 OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - PLANNING APPLICATION: R3.0037/26 - MOORLAND CENTRE, DARK LANE, WITNEY

The Committee received and considered Oxfordshire County Council planning application R3.0037/26 at Moorland Centre, Dark Lane, Witney.

Members acknowledged the importance of having a safe location to store vehicles which provided valuable community transport.

Resolved:

That, Witney Town Council has no objection to this application.

P183 TELECOMS BASE STATION UPGRADE - BURFORD ROAD, WITNEY

The Committee received and considered the correspondence from Cornerstone Infrastructure Services Ltd regarding an upgrade to their existing telecommunications site at Burford Road Junction with Deer Park Road, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 0NB.

Members noted that the equipment and installation would be of the same dimensions as existing and recognised the importance of improvements being made to key infrastructure.

Resolved:

That, Witney Town Council has no objection to this application.

The meeting closed at: 7.03 pm

Chair

Witney Town Council

Planning Minutes - 31st March 2026

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178- 1 WTC/032/26 Plot Ref :-26/00431/FUL Type :- FULL
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/03/2026
 Location :- 8-10 THE CRESCENT Date Returned :- 01/04/2026
 THE CRESCENT
 Proposal : Demolition of conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension along with the subdivision of dwelling to form two separate dwellings and associated works.
 Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the loss of permeable drainage and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

178- 2 WTC/033/26 Plot Ref :-26/00470/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/03/2026
 Location :- 178 MANOR ROAD Date Returned :- 01/04/2026
 MANOR ROAD
 Proposal : Erection of single storey front extension.
 Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the loss of permeable drainage and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

178- 3 WTC/034/26 Plot Ref :-26/00460/S73 Type :- VARIATION
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/03/2026
 Location :- SCRAP YARD REAR OF 58 Date Returned :- 01/04/2026
 WEST END
 Proposal : Variation of condition 3 of permission 25/02265/FUL to allow the use of slate tiles in place of the previously approved asbestos and metal roof covering.
 Observations : Witney Town Council does not object to this application.

They welcome the use of slate as the material of choice, as they felt it represents a more appropriate and high-quality finish that is likely to enhance the overall appearance of the development and better reflect local character.

The Council considers that this amendment aligns with the design principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places), which encourages developments to be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

The request also aligns with the objectives of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, including Policy OS2 (Locating Development in the Right Places), which seeks high-quality design and appropriate material use.

178- 4 WTC/035/26 Plot Ref :-26/00490/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/03/2026
Location :- 104 THE CROFTS Date Returned :- 01/04/2026
THE CROFTS

Proposal : Erection of self-build dwelling and detached garage, demolition of existing dwelling, and associated works,

Observations : Witney Town Council does not object to this application.

They consider that, in principle, the development is acceptable and broadly consistent with the objectives of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, including Policy OS2 (Locating Development in the Right Places) and Policy H2 (Delivery of New Homes).

However, they note that the proposal involves the removal of four existing trees and request that the noted replacement trees are secured and delivered as part of the development, to ensure no net loss to local amenity and biodiversity. This would align with Policy EH3 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Local Plan and the environmental objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Section 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment).

The Council also raises concerns regarding drainage and requests that appropriate measures are secured to ensure the development does not increase flood risk or surface water issues in the area. They ask that the advice of the relevant drainage and flood risk consultees is fully taken into account, in accordance with Policy EH7 (Flood Risk) of the Local Plan and NPPF Section 14 (Flooding and climate change).

178- 5 WTC/036/26 Plot Ref :-26/00478/S73 Type :- VARIATION
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 19/03/2026
Location :- SCRAP YARD REAR OF 58 Date Returned :- 01/04/2026
WEST END
WEST END

Proposal : Variation of condition 2 of permission 23/02730/FUL to allow reconfiguration of internal layouts, slight widening of dormers to plots 8 and 10 and the addition of a small window to plot 10.

Observations : Witney Town Council does not object to this application.

They welcome the introduction of additional natural light to the properties, which has the potential to improve the overall quality of accommodation and residential amenity. This aligns with the design principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places), which encourages developments that provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.

They consider that the proposed changes are minor in nature and would not result in any material harm, and are therefore broadly consistent with the objectives of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, including policies relating to good design and residential amenity (notably Policy OS2).

They request that Officers ensure the amendments do not give rise to any overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.

Members request that officers ensure the amendments do not give rise to any overlooking or loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.

The Meeting closed at : 7:03pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

**PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 9 March 2026

At 6.01 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	S Simpson J Treloar	R Smith J Doughty
Officers:	Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie Mark Lewis	Deputy Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Head of Estates & Operations
Others:	None.	

PR117 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Edwards- Hughes & A Bailey.

Though no formal apologies were received it was advised by another Member that Cllr D Temple would be absent from the meeting.

PR118 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

PR119 MINUTES

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 12 January 2026 were received.

PR18 – Officers advised that further details of a visit to West Witney would be discussed under Agenda item 7a.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 12 January 2026 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

PR120 PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

There was no public participation.

PR121 FINANCE REPORT

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) detailing income and expenditure for budgets which were the responsibility of the committee.

A Member raised the potential for the introduction of more adult exercise equipment. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that there was not a specific allocation requested during the 2026/27 budget setting period for this provision however, the Committee may wish to consider this as a future proposal.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the management accounts of the Committee for the period to 31 December 2025 be approved.

PR122 SPORTS PITCHES UPDATE

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Estate & Operations.

In light of recent reporting from the Football Association on the standard of sports pitches across the country Members received data on the level of use of the pitches under the Town Council's control. Despite exceptional wet weather Officers were pleased to report that the level of use remained high; although some matches had been cancelled these had all been at the request of football clubs.

The Committee also heard of the potential return of cricket to The Leys following interest from Witney Mills Cricket Club, Officers were currently agreeing the details however were hopeful for its use between May & September. Members expressed their support and heard that any cricket would be structured around the other events held at The Leys such as Witney Carnival and seasonal fairs. It was also raised that any potential opportunity for English Cricket Board (ECB) support be explored.

The Leader of the Council, supported by the Committee expressed their thanks to the Ground Maintenance team for their hard work to ensure that the sport playing surfaces were kept in good order, special thanks went to the two members of the team who received long term service awards at the Civic Reception event held on the previous Friday.

The suggestion was made that Officers investigate the opportunities for members of the works team to be enrolled in FA accredited training days to further improve their knowledge and skills.

Lastly, Members heard that there had been approaches from other football teams outside of the town to use pitches, as capacity was at a high level these requests had been declined. In response to a question Officers assured Members that if any capacity became available then a further report would be presented for consideration and for a policy to be agreed.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Officers explore potential ECB funding and,
3. That, Officers investigate the opportunity for further sport pitch accredited training and,

4. That, the thanks of the Leader of the Council and Committee be passed to the Grounds Maintenance Team with special mention to the two long service members.

PR123 WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND PROJECTS

The Committee the report of the Project Officer along with a verbal update from the Head of Operations and Estates regarding the progress of the West Witney depot and clubhouse refurbishment projects.

Members welcomed the positive progress of the new depot, noting that it was nearing completion and that the Works Team had commenced phased occupation of the facility. It was further noted that this would enable the surrender of the temporary accommodation.

The Committee also noted that the redevelopment of the main social club building was also progressing well, with a proposed completion date in May.

Members commended officers on the high quality, factual and well-structured update reports provided throughout the project. In light of this, it was agreed that a pre-completion site visit was not necessary.

The Committee expressed a desire to formally recognise the completion of both projects and requested that two separate opening events be arranged to celebrate their delivery.

Members also noted that the project remains on track to achieve a significant saving against the original tender cost, attributed to the diligent work of officers, contractors and the Council's building consultants.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Officers make arrangements for celebratory opening events.

PR124 THE LEYS/COURTSIDE HUB

The Committee received the report of the Project Officer along with a verbal update from the Head of Operations and Estates (HE&O) regarding the progress of the Courtside CIC redevelopment at The Leys.

Members were advised that the works were now entering the final stages and that completion was scheduled for May 2026.

It was noted that the temporary closure of the skate park had been necessary to enable the current phase of works to be undertaken safely. Members were further advised that the tennis courts would be resurfaced to repair damage caused during the construction phase.

The Committee was informed that the Town Council's financial contribution to the project would be released upon the achievement of key project milestones. It was proposed by Councillor J Aitman, seconded by Councillor J. Doughty, that it be delegated to Officers to make the payments when the agreed milestones were reached, the proposal was unanimously agreed.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted; and
2. That, authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in conjunction with the HE&O, to release the Town Council's funding contribution in line with the agreed project milestones.

PR125 RALEGH CRESCENT MUGA/MUSA

The Committee received the report of the Project Officer along with a verbal update from the Head of Operations and Estates regarding the progress of the proposed MUGA/MUSA project at Raleigh Crescent.

Members were advised that officers continued to support West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) in progressing the project. Two potential site options were currently being considered: Raleigh Crescent and the adjacent Deer Park open space. The Committee heard of concerns which were raised by both WODC and the Town Council regarding the viability of the Deer Park site; however, it was proposed that this option be included within the future tender process to determine its financial feasibility.

The Committee expressed thanks to the Project Officer for their continued work in progressing the project in partnership with WODC, particularly in light of delays arising from Section 106 funding requirements.

It was agreed that, in future, the Town Council should seek greater input into Section 106 agreements to help mitigate similar delays. Members requested that the Town Clerk contact the relevant Section 106 Officer to explore the feasibility of this approach.

In response to a Member's question regarding lighting at the proposed sports facility, the Head of Operations and Estates confirmed that advanced LED lighting with timer controls would be installed to minimise impact on neighbouring properties.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted, and
2. That the Town Clerk contact the relevant Section 106 Officer to explore opportunities for increased Town Council input into future agreements.

The meeting closed at: 6.33 pm

Chair

**HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 16 March 2026

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

Present:

Councillor R Crouch (Chair)

Councillors:	J Robertshaw R Smith D Temple	J Doughty (In place of G Doughty) J Treloar J Aitman (In place of O Collins)
Officers:	Sharon Groth Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie	Town Clerk Deputy Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	None.	

H133 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors O Collins and G Doughty, Councillors J Aitman and J Doughty attended as substitutes.

An apology was also received from Councillor A Bailey.

H134 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Robertshaw declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 6 as he was an established author.

There were no other declarations from Members or Officers

H135 MINUTES

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 19 January 2026 were received.

H38 – The Committee heard that at the meeting of Policy, Governance and Finance on 2 February a grant of £2,000 was awarded to Lakeside allotments for the installation of raised beds. (Minute: F82 PG&F 02.02.2026 Relates)

Resolved:

1. That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 19 January 2026 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.
2. That, the update be noted.

Cllr R Smith joined the meeting at 6:02pm.

H136 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

H137 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) detailing income and expenditure for budgets which were the responsibility of the committee.

Members were pleased to receive details of the sales increases for the Café & Bar in the Corn Exchange and asked that their thanks for the hard work of the whole team be extended.

The Committee welcomed the news that the Responsible Financial Officer had moved quickly to secure the energy contract ahead of the increases due to the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the management accounts of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee for the period to 31 December 2025 be approved.

H138 **PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

The Committee received a report from the Venue and Events Officer (VEO).

The VEO advised that an Art Display Policy had now been drafted. Members considered the policy and proposed an amendment to the honesty commission on sales feeling that 10% was more appropriate, in recognition of the requirement for the Council to charge VAT. The amendment was unanimously agreed.

The VEO also presented details of the proposed 1 in 200 Local Author scheme. He reported that a positive meeting had been held with the organisers and that the Corn Exchange would be the only venue in Witney to stock the books. A dedicated, clearly defined zoned area would be created for the display and the sale of books.

Members noted that there would be no cost to the Council for hosting the bookcase, that administration required from Corn Exchange staff would be minimal and that books would be rotated on a quarterly basis. It was further suggested that an Authors Day could be introduced, providing an opportunity for local authors to attend, promote the scheme, and engage with the community.

Members expressed enthusiasm for both the Art Policy and the 1 in 200 schemes, commenting that these initiatives would bring energy to the Corn Exchange.

With regard to proposed hearing loop improvements, Members agreed that a future-proofed scheme should be pursued and requested that all available grant and funding opportunities be fully explored to provide this equipment in all areas.

In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that there had been no uptake on the seating sponsorship scheme. Officers advised that they would continue to highlight the scheme.

Following discussion on the report the Town Clerk read a letter of appreciation that she had received from a visitor to the town which praised its facilities and appearance.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Local Art Display Policy be recommended for approval by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee, subject to the amendment introducing a 10% honesty commission and,
3. That, the 1 in 200 local author scheme be supported and progressed.

H139 CORN EXCHANGE BUSINESS REPORT

The Committee received the Corn Exchange Business Report from the Venue and Events Officer (VEO).

The VEO reported that January was traditionally a quieter month; however, events had been well attended overall. Cinema attendance was noted to be improving, and two quiz events had been held, both of which had received positive feedback.

Members were also advised of the two tribute music events had taken place. One featuring a returning performer, which had seen a 25% increase in ticket sales and a second event had performed at near full capacity. The VEO highlighted that much of this success had been attributable to the Venue and Events Assistant, particularly in relation to effective ticket promotion.

Venue usage figures were presented, including the addition of a new regular hirer. It was noted that the hirer had also transferred some existing sessions to the Corn Exchange, citing the high level of service provided by the caretaking and bookings staff as the reason.

In response to a question regarding cinema programming, the VEO advised that feel-good British films had proven most successful, based on audience feedback and it was further noted that the potential for private cinema hire by groups would be explored.

The Committee considered a proposal relating to schools' theatre provision. Members heard that children's theatre events at the Corn Exchange had previously taken place outside of term time however there was interest in introducing term-time performances, with three schools having expressed interest. The Corn Exchange offered a cost-effective alternative to trips to Oxford or further afield, where the cost of coach hire for schools made trips prohibitive. The programme would be self-funding and therefore would not place any financial burden on the Council and events that events would potentially start from September.

The VEO also reported on discussions with West Oxfordshire Performing Arts Foundation (WOPAF) regarding their Speech and Drama event. Plans were being developed to host this

community arts event at the Corn Exchange, with the organisers having presented a well-prepared proposal.

In addition, the Deputy Town Clerk (DTC) advised that a meeting would be arranged with the WOPAF organisers, alongside Councillor Crouch as Chair of the HCA Committee, to discuss the allocation of the Council's £1,000 grant and how this would be used to support a bursary award.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and
2. That, Officers progress with exploring the idea of theatre programming for schools and,
3. That, the Deputy Town Clerk progress the discussions with WOPA in conjunction with the Chair.

H140 PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE BIN STORAGE AREA AT THORNEY LEYS SHOPS

The Committee considered the request from West Oxfordshire District Council regarding the use of Town Council land to site the bins.

Members heard that Officers were arranging a site visit to better understand the proposal and the requirements.

The Committee discussed the matter and gave agreement in principle to proceed with the siting of the bins, with delegated authority to Officers to progress and implement the necessary actions and due diligence.

Recommended:

1. That, the request be noted and,
2. That, it be delegated to Officers to proceed with the arrangements.

H141 FRIENDS OF THE CEMETERIES

The notes of the meeting of the Friend of the Cemeteries meeting held on 11 March 2026 were received by the Committee along with a verbal update from the Committee Clerk.

Members were pleased to hear of the meeting and that the date for the next meeting was already set and would be widely advertised to ensure a greater attendance.

Resolved:

That, the notes of the Friend of the Cemeteries meeting of 11 March 2026 be noted.

The meeting closed at: 6.43 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 23 March 2026

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

Present:

Councillor T Ashby (Chair)

Councillors:	R Smith	D Enright
	G Meadows	J Treloar
	D Edwards-Hughes	O Collins (In place of A Bailey)
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	James Edney	Youth Development Officer (WODC)

SC142 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Mubin and A Bailey, Councillor O Collins attended as a substitute for the latter.

SC143 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or officers.

SC144 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Stronger Communities committee held on 26 January 2026 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Stronger Communities committee held on 26 January 2026 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the chair.

SC145 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned for this item.

The Committee received representations from James Edney, Youth Development Officer for West Oxfordshire District Council concerning Agenda Item 10

James provided the Committee with an update on actions being taken following the 2022 Youth Needs Assessment, which highlighted ongoing gaps in local youth provision and the need for stronger, more sustainable support for young people. He also provided updates on several other

youth issues affecting the town and potential future projects and available funding opportunities.

The Committee reconvened.

Following his contribution James Edney left the meeting at 6:32pm

SC146 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) detailing income and expenditure for budgets which were the responsibility of the committee.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the management accounts of the Stronger Communities Committee for the period 31 December 2025 be approved.

SC147 **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

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

Members noted the apparent disappointing delivery rate of the spring newsletter and heard that Officers would follow this up further with the distributor. The Committee looked forward to receiving the results of the annual survey in due course, acknowledging it was still early in the return period.

The Committee welcomed the proposal to include local charity information within the digital newsletter. They also expressed their satisfaction with the successful use of Vevox polling application at the Annual Town Meeting and agreed it should be utilised for future engagement and consultation exercises.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the press coverage since the last meeting be noted and,
3. That, officers investigate the delivery issues with the spring newsletter further with delegated authority to the Deputy Town Clerk to follow up with the distributor as necessary; and
4. That, the Committee consider additional uses of Vevox for future engagement and consultation activities.

SC148 **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer (C&CEO).

The Committee welcomed the plans for the St George's Day event and considered the Council's participation in the Great British Spring Clean. Members agreed unanimously that while the latter initiative should be supported, this should be done virtually by advertising the availability of the Council's litter-picking kits, and that no budget would therefore be allocated for future years.

The Committee was enthusiastic about the request from Thames Valley Orienteering and welcomed the proposal positively. Members also heard the idea to repurpose leftover spring flowers for planting within Windrush Cemetery.

The Committee noted the free domestic-abuse awareness training offered by *Reducing the Risk* and agreed that an invitation should be extended to all Councillors. It was further agreed that the annual Christmas competitions should proceed, with officers again seeking sponsorship for the festive period.

The Committee received an update from a Member regarding the forthcoming visit from Le Touquet and Unterhaching and, subject to approval by Full Council, it was agreed that an informal drinks reception be arranged in the Corn Exchange Café, with a proposed date of 1 May.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and;
2. That, the plans for the St George's Day event be noted and welcomed; and
3. That, the Council support the Great British Spring Clean virtually by promoting the availability of litter-picking kits and,
4. That, the request from Thames Valley Orienteering be supported and welcomed; and
5. That, the proposal to use leftover spring flowers for planting at Windrush Cemetery be approved; and
6. That, an invitation to the free domestic-abuse awareness be extended to all Councillors; and
7. That, the Christmas competitions proceed for 2026, and officers seek sponsorship for the festive period; and
8. That, subject to approval by Full Council, an informal drinks reception for the twinning towns be arranged at the Corn Exchange Café for May.

SC149 **WITNEY FORUM MINUTES**

The Committee received the notes of the Witney Forum meeting held on 29 January 2026.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Witney Forum meeting held on 29 January 2026 be noted.

SC150 **YOUTH COUNCIL MINUTES**

The Committee received the report of the Communications & Engagement Administration Assistant along with the minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on 11 March 2026

Members received an update from a Youth Council Mentor on the recent activity of the Witney Youth Council and were pleased to note that the group was gathering momentum.

Members were advised that the planned *Taste of Witney* event was struggling to attract interest from local restaurants despite the efforts of Youth Council members. In light of this, the Committee discussed potential alternative engagement activities, including the possibility of hosting an event similar to the successful *Pizza and Politics* session previously delivered by Oxfordshire County Council, should the *Taste of Witney* event not come to fruition.

Recommended:

1. That, the verbal update be noted and
2. That, the minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on 11 March 2026 be noted and,
3. That, officers and Youth Council members explore an alternative event, such as a *Pizza and Politics*-style session, should the *Taste of Witney* event not proceed due to limited restaurant engagement.

SC151 **WITNEY: PAST PRESENT & FUTURE WORKING PARTY**

The Committee received the report of the minutes of the working party meeting held on 18 February 2026.

Members welcomed confirmation of the events to be held on St Georges Day and the weekend to follow and thanked officers for their work and the posters advertising the event. Additionally, they acknowledged the arrangements for the follow up meeting for residents to provide feedback which was scheduled to be held on 23 May 2026 in the Corn Exchange.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Witney Past, Present & Future Working Party meeting held on 18 February 2026 be noted.

SC152 **YOUTH SERVICES**

During the public participation item earlier in the meeting the committee had verbal update from James Edney, Youth Development Officer at WODC regarding his work which built on the findings of the Youth Needs Assessment carried out in 2022.

James had outlined the key issues identified in the assessment, particularly the gaps in youth provision and the challenges faced by organisations delivering services for young people. James explained how his work involves supporting and connecting local groups through the West Oxfordshire Youth Partnership. He advised that much of his focus was on helping organisations strengthen their capacity, improve collaboration, and work towards more stable and secure long-term provision for young people.

Members noted with concern that James' role was funded on a one-year fixed-term contract, which created uncertainty around the ability to deliver sustainable, long-term projects. This concern was amplified by the potential implications of any future move toward unitary authority control.

The Committee also discussed current youth club provision in Witney. It was acknowledged that some provision existed at St Mary's Church, Welcome Church, and through the detached youth outreach delivered by The Station; however, Members agreed that additional provision may be needed to address gaps highlighted in the Youth Needs Assessment.

James had also updated the Committee on a developing campaign addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG). He outlined proposals to work with a theatre company to deliver awareness-raising sessions focused on issues such as unwanted attention. Members were pleased to hear that the initiative had received support from Oxfordshire County Council, West

Oxfordshire District Council and Thames Valley Police, with £25,000 of a targeted £50,000 in funding secured to date.

In addition to the verbal update provided by James, the Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the forthcoming launch of the Youth Services Grant.

Members reviewed the proposed timescale for the application and assessment process and agreed unanimously that the evaluation of applications should follow the same approach as the previous year, with delegated authority to a group consisting of the Leader, Deputy Leader, the Chair of this Committee, and the Deputy Town Clerk.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the evaluation of Youth Services grants proceeds under the delegation listed above.

SC153 **WITNEY TOWN CENTRE FORUM**

The Committee received an update from the Deputy Town Clerk advising that invitations to relevant stakeholders had been issued in order to reestablish the Town Centre Forum.

Members were informed that a provisional date of 7 April had been set for the first meeting.

Resolved:

That, the update on the issuing of invitations and the proposed date of the first Town Centre Forum meeting be noted.

SC154 **WODC CONSULTATION - PROPOSED CONTROLS RELATING TO DOG FOULING**

The Committee received a verbal update from Officers confirming that the forthcoming consultation had been postponed by West Oxfordshire District Council due to the upcoming election period.

Resolved:

That, the update on the postponement of the consultation by West Oxfordshire District Council be noted.

SC155 **WITNEY TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk on the progress of West Oxfordshire District Council regarding town centre improvement matters.

Members were advised that proposals from WODC for a bench outside the Shake Shop and additional bin stores were progressing, with the town councils Head of Estates & Operations continuing to liaise directly with WODC on these matters.

In relation to the unspent Section 106 (S106) funding designation for the Town Centre, Officers confirmed that the S106 Officer had advised that the Town Council's proposal for a parklet fell outside the geographical area covered by the available funding. Members noted that WODC had

requested further information and agreed that this could be considered further at a future meeting of the Witney Town Centre Forum, recognising that any such proposal would need to be fully costed, researched and, if progressed, potentially delivered by the Town Council.

Members also discussed wider wayfinding opportunities within the town and considered whether these could incorporate an arts trail as part of a cohesive approach to town centre navigation. It was suggested that a themed concept, such as a “sheep trail”, may be an engaging option. It was agreed that these ideas also be deferred to the Witney Town Centre Forum for further exploration.

Recommended:

1. That, the verbal update be noted; and
2. That, further discussion on potential town centre improvement opportunities, including the parklet proposal, be referred to the Witney Town Centre Forum, noting that any future proposals would require full costing, research and potential delivery by the Town Council; and
3. That, the consideration of enhanced wayfinding options, including the potential for an arts trail or a themed “sheep trail”, be deferred to the Witney Town Centre Forum for further discussion.

SC156 **THIRD PARTY EVENTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue & Events Officer which provided details of the past and upcoming events held on the Council’s land.

Resolved

That, the report be noted and updates be welcomed.

The meeting closed at: 7.33 pm

Chair

**POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 30 March 2026

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

Present:

Councillor J Aitman (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)

Councillors:	J Doughty	D Enright (In place of R Smith)
	T Ashby	G Meadows (In place of R Crouch)
	G Doughty	D Newcombe (In place of A Bailey)

Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Nigel Warner	Responsible Financial Officer

Others: 2 members of the public.

F157 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs A Bailey, R Crouch, R Smith for whom Cllrs D Newcombe, G Meadows and D Enright attended as substitutes respectively. A further apology was received from Cllr S Simpson.

F158 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A personal, non -prejudicial declaration was made by Cllr D Newcombe due to his residence being in an area to be considered under Agenda Item 14.

There were no further declarations of interests from Members or officers at this juncture.

F159 MINUTES

The minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 2 February 2026 were received.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 2 February 2026 be approved as correct records of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

F160 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned for this item.

The Committee received representations from Hanborough Cricket Club and Friends of Witney Community Primary School under agenda item 12.

The Committee reconvened.

The two Members of the Public left the meeting following their participation.

F161 **PROCUREMENT POLICY REVIEW**

The Committee received and considered an updated Procurement Policy for approval by the Council from the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Members heard that the Council had procured heavily in the previous two years due to the level of high value works being undertaken by the Council. This two-yearly review ensured it was reflective of standard statutory regulations and complimented the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.

The RFO suggested good practice would be to consolidate all procurement details into one document for clarity and ease of use for Council employees. It was suggested this could be presented at the September meeting of this Committee.

Members welcomed the review and were pleased to note a section on utilising local suppliers where possible and therefore welcomed the updated document and endorsed the creation of one procurement document.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the revised Procurement Policy, as presented be agreed and adopted by Witney Town Council and,
3. That, the RFO creates a consolidated Procurement document for review at the Committee meeting scheduled for 28 September 2026.

Cllr T Ashby left the meeting briefly between 6.32 – 6.35pm

F162 **CORN EXCHANGE ART DISPLAY POLICY**

The Committee received and considered a Corn Exchange Art Display Policy for approval by the Council.

Cllr J Aitman declared an interest in this item as she hoped to display her art in the facility.

The policy had been recommended for approval by the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee at its meeting on 16 March 2026, subject to changes.

Members agreed with a recommended change for a 10% +VAT commission charge and welcomed the policy.

Resolved:

That, the Corn Exchange Art Display Policy, with the above amendment, be agreed and adopted by Witney Town Council and reviewed after six months.

F163 **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer with the accompanying payment schedules, bank statements and reconciliations for December 2025 and January 2026.

Resolved:

That, the report, bank statements and reconciliations be noted, and the following schedule of payments be approved:

Payment reference	In the sum of:	Account
DDs, ELPs (electronic payments) and Standing Orders December 2025	£463,875.27	General CB 1
Cheques, DDs, BACs and Standing Orders December 2025	£13,257.24	Imprest CB 2
DDs, ELPs and Standing Orders January 2026	£596,706.83	General CB 1
Cheques, DDs and Standing Orders January 2026	£14,147.69	Imprest CB 2

F164 **INTERIM AUDIT REPORT**

The Council received the interim update of the Council's independent Internal Auditor for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

Members were advised there were no issues to draw their attention to and the final year-end report would be received in June.

Resolved:

That, the internal Audit interim update for 2025/26 be welcomed and the whole team be thanked for their work and diligence.

F165 **EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL: CORPORATE & FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) who provided a verbal update to explain the need for a robust corporate risk assessment to be in place.

In accordance with its responsibility for the Council's governance and financial oversight in line with the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015, the Committee considered an updated Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment, comprising nine sections. An action plan was included at the end of the documents and compiled various risks, including malicious representation.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) proposed that, in future, this process be undertaken earlier in the year, suggesting September 2026 as the most appropriate timing, in advance of the annual budget-setting process.

Recommended:

1. That the report be noted and,
2. That, the Risk Management Policy & Corporate Risk Assessment for the financial year 2025-26 be endorsed and signed by the Chair and,
3. That, a future corporate risk assessment be considered at the September meeting on this Committee.

F166 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) detailing income and expenditure for budgets which were the responsibility of the committee.

Members were advised work had taken place on making the costs centres more accurate and accurately reflective, on property budgets and VAT. It was noticeable that income and expenditure were higher for the final economic quarter due to the West Witney projects and the loan and payments tied therein, the bulk of the loan having to be drawn down by the end of the fiscal year.

The Committee also welcomed news that the Council's green energy contract had been renewed, and the Council had been relatively protected from recent changes as officers had accepted a quote prior to energy price rises.

Finally, it was confirmed the Council had continued membership of the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils due to the support provided which would be especially useful with upcoming Local Government reorganisation.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the management accounts of the Committee's services to 31 December 2025 be approved and,
3. That, the endorsement of the actions of officers in agreeing the energy contract with 100 Green for the year commencing 1 April 2026 be noted and,
4. That, draw downs of two loans totalling £960,000 in relation to the West Witney Project borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board be noted and,
5. That, the endorsement of the renewal for the subscription to the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils for the year commencing 1 April 2026 for the sum of £4,508 be noted and,
6. That, the report on investments to the period to 28 February 2026 be approved.

F167 **FINANCIAL MATTERS REFERRED FROM SPENDING COMMITTEES**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk outlining the financial decisions taken by spending committees during the last meeting cycle.

Members noted the recommendation of the Parks & Recreation Committee to release agreed funding to Courtside Hubs for the Leys redevelopment project via delegation. Senior officers were inputting into this issue, and the funds would be released on the completion of project milestones.

Resolved:

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the recommendations of the spending Committees as detailed be approved.

Due to a previous role held with one of the grant applicants the Responsible Financial Officer left the meeting at this point, returning after the conclusion of the item.

F168 **GRANTS & SUBSIDISED LETTINGS**

The Committee received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) concerning grant activity to local organisations.

Members considered each application in turn and noted that any awards would fall within the new financial year, as the 2025–26 budget had been fully expended. It was further noted that a number of organisations applied annually and that, while this may create an expectation of funding, the position was clearly set out within the Council’s Grants Criteria and Subsidised Lettings Policy.

In respect of subsidised lettings, the Committee recognised that the applicants delivered valuable arts and community services and therefore agreed to award these in full, including a reminder that an annual award could not be taken for granted. Full grant awards were also approved for Witney Shed and the annual grant to Witney Town Band in support of civic performances.

Applications from the Friends of Witney Community Primary School and Hanborough Cricket Club were initially deferred to the June meeting. The Committee considered that alternative funding sources may be available and that approving these requests at this stage could limit the Council’s ability to allocate discretionary grants later in the year. Applicants would be provided with further guidance on potential funding options.

The Committee acknowledged the admirable project from Hanborough Cricket Club and the potential wider benefit of the proposed project to some Witney residents; however, it was ultimately concluded that the request could not be justified for funding by Witney Town Council.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Witney Photo Group (£266.67+VAT), Witney Food Revolution (£228.33+VAT), and Witney Town Training Band (£215.50+VAT) be awarded full subsidised letting of the Corn Exchange in the new fiscal year and,
3. That, Witney Shed be awarded a grant of £450 and,
4. That, Witney Town Band be awarded an annual grant of £750 and,
5. That, the grant application from the Friends of Witney Community Primary School be deferred until the June meeting of this Committee and,
6. That, no award be granted to Hanborough Cricket Club and,
7. That, these grants be awarded under the General Power of Competence and awardees be asked to acknowledge the Town Council in any promotional material.

F169 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved:

That in accordance with section (1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

During the following item the Town Clerk left the meeting.

F170 **PROPERTY, LEGAL & INSURANCE MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the confidential reports of the Town Clerk/C.E.O and Head of Estates & Operations.

The Committee firstly received an update from the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) on the Council's insurance procurement, including three quotations for the annual premium. The options presented were broadly comparable in cost. In response to a query regarding the ethical standing of the suppliers, Members were advised that, due to time constraints, a full assessment had not been undertaken however this could be considered in future, subject to the decision made. Members resolved to enter into a three-year agreement with Contractor C, as identified in the report.

The Committee also received an update from the Head of Estates & Operations regarding ongoing negotiations with West Witney Sports & Social Club, including a range of potential leasing options. It was agreed that a decision could not be made at this stage pending further financial and forward-planning information.

Heads of Terms for the transfer and project management of the Springfield Oval Play Area/Open Space were considered and approved and, the Committee further noted correspondence from West Oxfordshire District Council in relation to a planning enforcement matter.

Resolved:

1. That, the confidential reports and updates be noted and,
2. That, the insurance quote from Contractor C in the report be approved on a three-year deal for the sum of £42,574 per annum and,
3. That, further accounting and future business information is requested from West Witney Sports & Social Club and,
4. That, Witney Town Council approves the Heads of Terms and therefore, the transfer and project management of the Springfield Oval Play Area/Open Space, subject to final legal documentation.

F171 **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 5(W)**

Resolved:

That, Standing Order 5(w) be suspended to allow the meeting to continue as it had lasted for two hours.

F172 **THE STATION - DRAFT SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT 2026-2029**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk and accompanying draft Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Bright Futures Oxfordshire for a detached Youth Service, The Station in Witney.

The SLA incorporated amendments as previously agreed by the delegated Members and officers tasked with progressing the matter. At the time of the meeting, a response from Bright Futures had not yet been received.

The Committee approved the proposed amendments on behalf of the Council and reaffirmed the existing delegation to enable the matter to be concluded expediently.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Council amendments to the Service Level Agreement with Bright Futures Oxfordshire be approved and,
3. That, delegation to conclude the negotiations on this matter be re-affirmed to the Deputy Town Clerk, Cllr R Smith, Cllr T Ashby and Cllr R Crouch.

Cllrs D Enright & G Meadows left the meeting ahead of the next item as they were not members of the Personnel Sub-Committee.

F173 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received the minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee meeting held on 25th March 2026 and a verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk. The minutes of the meeting held on 24th February had been circulated prior to this meeting.

Resolved:

That, the confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meetings held on 24th February and 25th March 2026, and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

The meeting closed at: 8.17 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 9

WITNEY ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Held on Wednesday, 18 March 2026

At 7.30pm in the Main Hall, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor A Bailey (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	G Meadows
	T Ashby	A Mubin
	R Crouch	J Robertshaw
	G Doughty	S Simpson
	J Doughty	R Smith
	D Edwards-Hughes	J Treloar
	D Enright	
Officers:	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Lorraine Harwood	PA to the Town Clerk and Secretary to the Mayor
	Polly Inness	Communications & Community Engagement Officer
	Mark Lewis	Head of Estates & Operations
	Nigel Warner	Responsible Financial Officer
Others:	78 members of the public.	
	Inspector C Ball	Thames Valley Police

1 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR OF WITNEY, CLLR ANDY BAILEY

The Town Mayor, Cllr Andy Bailey welcomed the public to the meeting as well as Inspector Chris Ball from Thames Valley Police.

He explained how the evening would proceed and how those present could raise questions and how these would be responded to.

2 OFFICIAL NOTING OF THE TOWN COUNCILLOR APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Witney Town Councillors D Newcombe and O Collins.

3 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF 19 MARCH 2025

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 19 March 2025, copies of which were available at the meeting, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 **THAMES VALLEY POLICE**

The meeting received a verbal update from Inspector Chris Ball of Thames Valley Police (TVP), who provided a general update on policing activity in Witney.

Attendees were advised that, over the previous six months, TVP had carried out targeted operations to address anti-social behaviour. These operations had been successful and focused on individuals identified as prolific offenders with targeted daily engagement visits to those individuals. The work was supported by The Station detached youth service which it was acknowledged was in place due the funding of the Town Council.

Inspector Ball also reported on operations targeting e-bikes, which he advised were of greater concern than e-scooters due to the higher speeds that could be achieved. Operations involved the use of plain-clothes officers, which had reduced the number of pursuits required. As a result of this work, six illegal e-bikes had been seized so far during the year.

In relation to shoplifting, Inspector Ball advised that there had been notable success in tackling this issue and that the use of CCTV had been particularly effective.

Whilst acknowledging an increase in incidents of criminal damage, rising from 123 to 150 cases (an increase of approximately 22%), Inspector Ball advised that some of the overall crime figures for Witney remained among the lowest recorded in the county.

Inspector Ball then responded to questions from those present:

- In response to a question regarding bicycle theft, he advised that there had been some success in addressing these incidents and that bike theft was not currently considered a significant issue within the town.
- A question was raised regarding whether Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) were required to work in pairs. Inspector Ball confirmed that this was not TVP policy and that PCSO's should generally be patrolling solo. He advised he would look into the matter further.
- When asked whether Witney Police Station was open, Inspector Ball confirmed that it was staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and that it was supported by additional police stations in Woodstock, Chipping Norton and Carterton.
- In response to a question regarding the main priorities for policing in Witney, Inspector Ball advised that an issue previously associated with pony and trap racing had been addressed through the introduction of a Public Spaces Protection Order and would be further supported by a Traffic Regulation Order. Current priorities included drugs, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage; however, he did not identify any single overriding concern for the town at that time.

A Town Councillor commented positively on seeing one of the e-bikes, which had been part-funded by the Town Council, being actively used on patrol.

5 **TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL TOWN REPORT - PRESENTED BY THE MAYOR & LEADER OF WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

The Mayor advised that, for the second consecutive year, the Town Council had published an Annual Town Report, copies of which were available to those in attendance.

He introduced the Members of the Town Council and invited those councillors to stand so that members of the public could identify them and know who to approach should they wish to raise questions either after the meeting or at a later date. The Mayor highlighted that the average age of councillors was comparatively low for a parish or town councils and noted that this was something to be encouraged as it helped reflect and represent the wider community.

The Mayor then provided a brief overview of the Council's committee structure, explaining that the work of the Council was delivered through a number of committees, details of which were set out in the Annual Town Report.

He summarised the role of the Planning & Development Committee in reviewing planning and licensing matters affecting the town, the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee in managing community buildings, cemeteries and allotment provision, the Climate & Biodiversity Committee in leading work on environmental sustainability and green spaces, including the Lake & Country Park, and the Parks & Recreation Committee in overseeing parks, play areas, sports pitches and open spaces across Witney.

The Mayor also highlighted the work of the Stronger Communities Committee, which focused on supporting residents by awarding grants to local organisations and investing in projects that strengthen the town and improved people's lives. As part of this item, attendees were invited to watch a short video from The Station detached youth service, following which the Mayor commented that it was an excellent example of how residents were funding and help deliver positive outcomes within the community.

The Mayor advised that the Town Council had supported a number of other organisations during the year, including Yellow Submarine, West Oxfordshire Levellers, Home-Start Oxford and Be Free Young Carers. Short videos from these organisations were also shown demonstrating the impact of their work in supporting some of the town's most important and, at times, vulnerable residents. The Mayor assured attendees that these organisations provided valuable services to the community and noted that they represented only a small sample of the wider work supported by the Council, full details of which were available in the Annual Town Report.

In closing, the Mayor reminded those present that all Town Council committee meetings were open to the public and could be attended in person. He also highlighted that meetings were now being live-streamed, with online access details available on the front page of the meeting agendas.

Following the Mayor's presentation, the Leader of the Council provided a summary of the work of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee. She explained that the Committee played a key role in ensuring that Witney Town Council operated effectively and responsibly.

Its responsibilities included overseeing the Council's finances to ensure public funds were spent prudently, transparently and they maintained strong governance by reviewing policies and ensuring the Council met its legal and regulatory obligations.

The Leader highlighted the Council's partnership working with a wide range of organisations that contributed to community life in Witney. Particular reference was made to Witney Town Football Club and the Witney Music Festival, both of which played an important role in bringing people together through sport and culture. Short videos from each organisation were shown to attendees, highlighting their work and impact within the town.

The Leader then summarised several of the Council's larger capital and investment projects. These included the Council-funded redevelopment of the West Witney Sports & Social Clubhouse, the establishment of a new works depot, and the re-development at The Leys by Courtside CIC, to which the Council was contributing.

She advised that the Council continued to invest in facilities and partnerships that supported sport and community activity across Witney. West Witney Sports Ground was highlighted as an example of this investment, with refurbishment works to the Clubhouse underway following many years of partnership working with West Witney Sports & Social Club.

Plans for a new 3G pitch at West Witney were also progressing to expand all-weather provision for Witney. It was noted that the location continued to support a wide range of user groups, including West Witney Sports & Social Club, Witney Projectile Range, Witney Lawn Tennis Club and Witney Parkrun. Assistance had also been provided to Witney Swifts Cricket Club to support its long-term security and development.

A representative of the Courtside Hub development then provided a brief update, supported by images showing progress at The Leys. The Leader thanked the representative for the presentation and advised that any questions relating specifically to the Courtside development could be raised directly with Courtside after the close of the meeting, as it was not a Town Council project.

6 OPEN FORUM TO DISCUSS MATTERS RAISED BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC AT THE MEETING

The Mayor opened the floor to questions from the public. All were asked to provide their name and home road name before asking their questions.

Q1. What are the Town Councils thoughts regarding the condition of roads and highways within the town and across the County?

Cllr Duncan Enright responded in his capacity as Chair of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee (WTAC) and outlined the role of the Committee. He advised that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) was the responsible highway authority and encouraged residents to raise highways issues directly with their OCC councillors as a first point of contact. It was advised that OCC had given assurances that necessary repairs would be carried out. Attendees were also informed of an upcoming Bus Users Group meeting scheduled for 19 May 2026, which residents were encouraged to attend. Cllr Enright additionally highlighted improvements to the Oxford Tube service to London, particularly at weekends.

Q2. Can the Council confirm how and when the old boxing club site at Newland will be fully made safe and restored, including the removal of all asbestos, rubble and contaminated material by licensed contractors; and measures put in place meanwhile to prevent asbestos contamination, vermin infestation and pollution of the stream; the timetable for complete site clearance and replanting of illegally removed trees; and the Council's long-term plans for the site once it has been cleared?

It was advised that whilst Witney Town Council would do its best to assist residents by providing information where possible, the matter fell outside of the Town Council's remit and West Oxfordshire District Council's planning and enforcement team would be best placed to advise on the supervision of the works being carried out.

Q3. What are the thoughts of the Council regarding the condition of Queen Emma's Dyke and the associated loss of habitat?

The Leader of the Council responded that the Town Council recognised the distress felt by residents and would continue to press the Environment Agency to take action. Cllr Simpson added that works carried out within the Lake & Country Park had helped improve areas of habitat that had previously been in decline.

Q4. What influence does the Town Council have in encouraging OCC to carry out highways improvements, in particular the missing safety barrier on the bridge behind the Leisure Centre?

It was advised that the Town Council would continue to raise and pursue such issues with OCC; however, residents were encouraged to continue reporting specific problems via the *Fix My Street* system to ensure they were formally logged with the responsible authority.

Q5. What is the progress of the High Street/Market Square redevelopment?

A response from the OCC project team advised that works were expected to commence in May 2026, subject to approval by the Cabinet Member at a meeting scheduled for 26 March 2026. Attendees also heard that OCC would hold a public information event immediately prior to works and have a liaison in place to meet with businesses as the works progressed.

Q6. When can we resume desilting around the town bridge and do more joint river clearance work, supported by OCC funding secured by Witney Flood Group and with help from the Volunteer Flood Wardens?

It was advised that the matter would be considered further by the Climate & Biodiversity Committee and an update would be provided in due course regarding any future works.

Q7. I used to see traffic wardens when we first moved here 5 years ago. I haven't seen any recently. Parking illegally on Corn Street is a real problem. It would be useful if wardens were to dish out some fines there.

Residents were advised that the Town Council would write to OCC to request increased patrols and enforcement in the area.

Q8. Is any provision being made for parking in relation to the Courtside Development. In particular is restricted time parking going to be introduced on the Leys?

It was advised that the Town Council had found it difficult to progress enforcement due to a lack of support from OCC. However, the Council's intention remained for the changes and for these to be enforced. It was clarified that the matter related to changes in time restrictions and not the introduction of parking charges.

Q9. What action can be taken to address house sale and rental boards being left in place or positioned in unsuitable locations?

Cllr J Treloar advised that he had visited one estate agent in relation to this issue and had requested that signs be removed promptly and better supervised. Attendees were encouraged to report incidences to the advertising estate agent.

Q10. What has been the result of the introduction of parking enforcement in Church Green?

It was advised that Witney Traffic Advisory Committee would request a report from OCC's Civil Enforcement team and that the level of service being provided within the town was currently not considered satisfactory.

Q11. How will the plans for local government reorganisation impact on Witney Town Council and does the Town Council hold a view on which of the three options it prefers?

The Leader advised that Witney Town Council had issued the same response to all consultation options, setting out its expectations. The Council's position was that any reorganisation should be funding led, ensuring the Town Council was appropriately resourced and reimbursed for any additional services transferred to it.

Q12. What can the town council do to ensure that Woodford Way car park remains as is and is not sold off for development?

It was advised that housing provision at this location had been included in the adopted 2018 WODC Local Plan and that development was therefore well advanced in principle. Residents and the Town Council would, however, be able to provide their views through the normal consultation process once a planning application was submitted.

Q13. What is the Council's policy as far as the proliferation of flags on lampposts?

The Mayor expressed sympathy with residents' concerns but advised that OCC had a policy in place which the Town Council did not have any influence over. Residents were asked to report issues via *Fix My Street* so that appropriate action could be considered.

Q14. What the Town Council's view on the proposed alterations/cutbacks to the Oxfordshire Fire Service?

It was advised that Witney itself was unlikely to see any negative changes to its fire station, however the Town Council remained concerned about the wider impact on fire and rescue resources across the county. The Council was awaiting the outcome following its submission made as part of the consultation.

7 **TOWN MAYOR'S CLOSING REMARKS AND THANKS**

In his closing remarks, the Mayor reflected on how proud he was of Witney and the diversity of its community. He described the town as a welcoming and inclusive place to live and noted that, during his year as Mayor, he had seen and experienced more of what the town, its organisations and residents had to offer than he had during the previous fifteen years of living here.

The Mayor referred to correspondence he had received from a member of the public who had been travelling through Witney, commenting on how welcoming the town had appeared to them. He felt this exemplified the strength of the community and reiterated the message that Witney was "stronger together".

He concluded by highlighting that Witney continued to have a vibrant local economy and, unlike some towns, was focused on growth and expansion rather than decline. The Mayor thanked those present for their engagement and ongoing contribution to the town and its community.

The meeting closed at: 8.57 pm

Chair

FULL COUNCIL



Agenda Item: Civic Announcements
Meeting Date: Monday 13 April 2026
Contact Officer: Secretary to the Mayor

The role of Mayor involves chairing the Town Council, sitting as an ex officio voting member on Council Committees, representing and promoting Witney, organising key events in the town in partnership with others, raising funds for local charities, and supporting community activities which contribute to the life of the town and the objectives of the Witney Town Council. The Mayor is supported by the Deputy Mayor, whose attendance in place of or alongside the Mayor is noted in the report below which detailing the activities of the Mayor since the last meeting of the Council.

Supporting the Community

Iftar Breakfast – Witney mosque

Volunteer Link up celebration for Kings Award – Methodist Church, Witney

Chair of WODC fundraising quiz – attended by Deputy Mayor

Opening of Omera’s Restaurant Witney – also attended by Deputy Mayor

Re-opening of Nationwide Building Society - Witney

Representing and Promoting Witney

Mayor of Bicester Charity Dinner – attended by Deputy Mayor and Cllr Geoff Doughty – The Heyford nr Bicester

Chair of South Oxon charity fundraising supper – Dolphin , Wallingford

Lord Mayor of Oxford charity quiz night – Town Hall, Oxford

South Oxon Chair Charity Rock Choir concert – Dorchester Abbey

Key Events and Council Activity

Civic Reception and Citizen of the Year – attended also by Deputy Mayor

Commonwealth Day flag raising

Annual Town Meeting – also attend by Deputy Mayor

Raising Funds -Mayor’s Charities 2025-26:

Mayor’s charities: Apollos Clothing, Witney Food Bank

Any hospitality totalling £50 or more afforded to the Mayor whilst undertaking any event as Civic Leader of Witney Town Council will be declared as hospitality in line with the Councillor Code of Conduct & Localism Act 2011. The acceptance of any hospitality does not afford the provider any undue influence or favour in any Town Council business.

FULL COUNCIL



Agenda Item:	Health and Safety Report
Meeting Date:	Monday 13 April 2026
Contact Officer:	Compliance and Environment Officer

The purpose of this report is to update Councillors on Health and Safety across the services and facilities provided by the Council.

Background

It is the policy of Witney Town Council to comply with our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (as amended), the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) and other supporting legislation concerning Health and Safety. At all times we endeavour to provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment for our employees, and to protect the health and safety of all visitors; including contractors, temporary workers, and members of the public, who might be affected by our operations.

Current Situation

In accordance with the approved Witney Town Council Health and Safety Policy Statement, Members are reminded that they have a collective responsibility for the Health & Safety of the organisation.

Departmental managers remain accountable for compliance within their areas of responsibility which is overseen by the Compliance and Environment officer.

The key objectives are to ensure that the Council operates in a lawful manner in respect of health and safety compliance with its service delivery and functions, identifying and advising management and Council of possible risks and finding solutions to mitigate such risks.

The Council's health and safety consultants, GH Safety Ltd (part of Opus Safety Ltd) provide additional specialist support to the Council.

Retained Service Review

The retained service agreement with Opus Safety Ltd ends on 31st July 2026. Opus Safety act as the Council's Health and Safety Advisors and the Council's appointed Health and Safety Competent Person. Over the years, officers have worked closely with the consultant who has provided support and undertaken audits on Council activities and properties. Officers will obtain quotes from suitable businesses that can provide the support service to ensure value for money and in line with the Council's Financial Regulations.

Compliance Table

Compliance Inspection, Testing and Servicing Status	Corn Exchange	Town Hall	Admin Office	Burwell Hall	Windrush Ind. Est. Temp Works Depot	Stanley Court Temp Works Depot
Fire Risk Assessment	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Fire Alarm Testing	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Landlord	N/A
Fire Extinguishers	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Steel fire exit staircase	Completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emergency Lighting	Completed	Completed	Due	Completed	N/A	Completed
Security	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	N/A	N/A
Lift	Completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gas Safety	Completed	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A	N/A
Electrical Periodic	Completed	Completed	Due April 2026	Completed	Landlord	Landlord
PAT Testing	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Legionella Risk Assessment	Review	Completed	Completed	Completed	Landlord	Landlord
Asbestos	Completed	Completed	Completed	Review	Completed	Report provided with Lease.
Air Handling Unit	Completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Air conditioning	N/A	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A	N/A

The Windrush Industrial Estate Temporary Works Depot has now been vacated by the Operations Team in line with the lease agreement for the building.

The new Operations Depot at West Witney Sports Ground will be added to the compliance schedule upon full occupation by the Operations Team.

Tower Hill Cemetery Chapel (Consecrated)

Following the recent review of the Fire Risk Assessment for the Tower Hill Cemetery Chapel, it was identified that no formal booking form currently exists for the hire of this facility. A previous recommendation within the assessment highlighted the need to restrict occupancy within the chapel to a maximum of 60 people.

A draft booking form has now been prepared for consideration (Appendix 1). This has been adapted from the Public Halls Booking Form and amended to reflect the specific operational and safety requirements of the chapel.

The chapel is hired throughout the year for a range of purposes, including funeral and memorial services, heritage guided tours, exhibitions, and carol concerts organised by local churches and funeral directors. While not all hirings incur a charge, a completed booking form will be required for every occasion to ensure that hirers fully understand the hire agreement, conditions of use, and their responsibilities. Page 61

The schedule of charges for the facility is reviewed annually and takes effect from 1 April.

Health and Safety Policy Statement

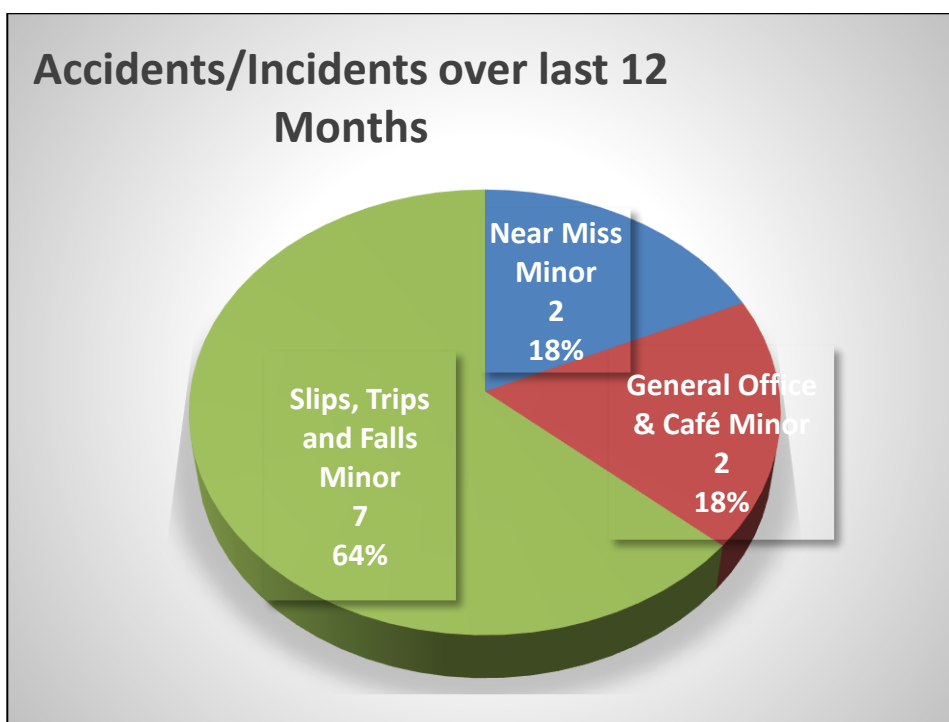
The Witney Town Council Health & Safety Policy Statement 2023 was formally adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4 December 2023 and subsequently reviewed and updated in July 2024. A further review has now been completed following the retirement of the named Opus Safety - Health & Safety Consultant (Competent Person), along with several changes to officer roles within the organisation and an updated list of First Aiders and first aid locations. These are the only material amendments made to the document.

The updated Health & Safety Policy Statement is attached for consideration (Appendix 2). Members are reminded that they hold collective responsibility for the Health & Safety of the organisation, as set out in Part 1 of the document on page 10. By approving the amended Policy Statement, Members are formally accepting these responsibilities.

Health and Safety incidents

- RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)
 - No reportable incidents since the last meeting.
- Accidents/Incident
 - No reported accidents/incidents since the last meeting.
- Near Miss
 - There has been one reported near miss since the last meeting.

A member of the public and a child were briefly trapped in the Corn Exchange lift due to a mechanical malfunction. They were safely released by staff within 10 minutes, and no injuries were reported. The incident has been logged as a lift entrapment with a low/no-harm outcome. The lift engineer has identified the component required to restore full functionality, and the lift will remain out of service until this repair is completed. All hirers have been informed. An update on the repair status will be provided by the Venue & Events Officer at the next Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Committee meeting.



Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Ensuring equality in health and safety measures so that all individuals, regardless of their background, job role, or personal circumstances, have equal access to a safe and healthy environment.
- b) Biodiversity plays a crucial role in health and safety measures, influencing public health, workplace safety, and overall environmental well-being.
- c) Crime and disorder pose risks to health and safety in workplaces, public spaces, and healthcare settings. Issues such as violence, theft, and vandalism can compromise safety measures.
- d) The Environment & Climate Emergency is a critical issue that directly impacts health and safety measures in workplaces and communities. It is important to integrate environmental and climate considerations into the council's health and safety policies to protect workers, reduce environmental hazards, and build resilience against climate-related risks.

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.

All accidents and incidents are properly documented and investigated with measures put in place in order to prevent reoccurrences.

A formal booking process ensures compliance with fire safety and health & safety requirements, protecting all users. This supports the Council's commitment to providing safe, well-managed facilities and demonstrates strong governance and duty of care.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

There are the broader benefits that the Council generates for employees and the public embedding a safer, healthier, and more productive workforce.

The chapel provides a dignified, accessible, and affordable space for funeral and memorial services. By making it available to the community through a clear hiring process, the Council supports residents during times of bereavement and helps strengthen personal and community resilience.

By promoting responsible and structured use of the chapel, the Council contributes to the preservation and appreciation of a valued historic and cultural asset. This reinforces a sense of place and shared identity within the community.

Financial implications

The Council makes budgetary provision in order to carry out its obligations in relation to its statutory compliance checks using external contractors to certify the work accordingly.

Tower Hill Cemetery Chapel provides a small income that supports the ongoing maintenance and management of the facility.

Recommendations

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

1. Adopt the draft form Tower Hill Cemetery Chapel Booking Form.
2. Approve the amended Health and Safety Policy Statement as presented. In doing so, acknowledging and reconfirming Members responsibilities for Health & Safety in the organisation.

Document is Restricted

Witney Town Council

Town Hall
Market Square
Witney
Oxfordshire
OX28 6AG



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

Health & Safety Policy Statement

Issue Date: April 2023

Version: 2.0

Document owner: Mark Lewis – Head of Estates and Operations

Revisions: March 2026

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Witney Town Council Health and Safety Policy Statement


It is the policy of Witney Town Council to comply with our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (as amended), the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) and other supporting legislation concerning Health and Safety. At all times we endeavour to provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment for our employees, and to protect the health and safety of all visitors; including contractors, temporary workers and members of the public, who might be affected by our operations.

The overall objective of our Health and Safety Policy and management system is to minimise the number of instances of occupational accidents and illnesses and ultimately to reduce them to zero. We endeavour to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of our employees. However, health and safety at work is the responsibility of each and every individual associated with our business and all employees are required to be constantly vigilant and concerned for the welfare of themselves and others.

It is the duty of each employee to take reasonable care of his or her own safety and welfare and to report any situation, which may pose a threat to the wellbeing of themselves or any other person. Hazards in the workplace must be reported as a matter of routine and no member of staff will be penalised for complaining to management or a designated Safety Officer if hazards are not addressed in a timely manner. It is every workers' responsibility to report immediately any situation that could endanger the wellbeing of themselves or others and to ensure that the reporting of injuries sustained by a person at work, however small, never goes unrecorded. Accident records are crucial to the effective monitoring and revision of our policy and must therefore be accurate and detailed.

Witney Town Council believes that the success of our Health and Safety Policy can only be achieved through the cooperation of all personnel. Experienced employees must support and assist inexperienced and young employees by not allowing them to unknowingly put their health and safety at risk. An inexperienced, untrained or young worker must not attempt to do hazardous work if they do not feel competent or have not been trained for that work. If any inexperienced or untrained worker is in any doubt about his or her competence in carrying out a work activity they must immediately stop doing the work and inform their supervisor or Safety Officer. Employees will be provided with the required equipment, information, training and supervision required to do their job in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy.

Witney Town Council Health and Safety Policy is regularly monitored and improvements to the Policy will be implemented as necessary. We invite all employees to put forward suggestions for improvements regarding the Health and Safety Policy either informally or in writing directly to the designated Safety Officer.

Name	Position	Signature	Date
Sharon Groth	Town Clerk/CEO		13.04.26

Appendix 2

The person responsible for the overall Health and Safety Policy at Witney Town Council is:

Name	Position	Address for correspondence
Sharon Groth	Town Clerk	Town Hall, Market Square, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 6AG

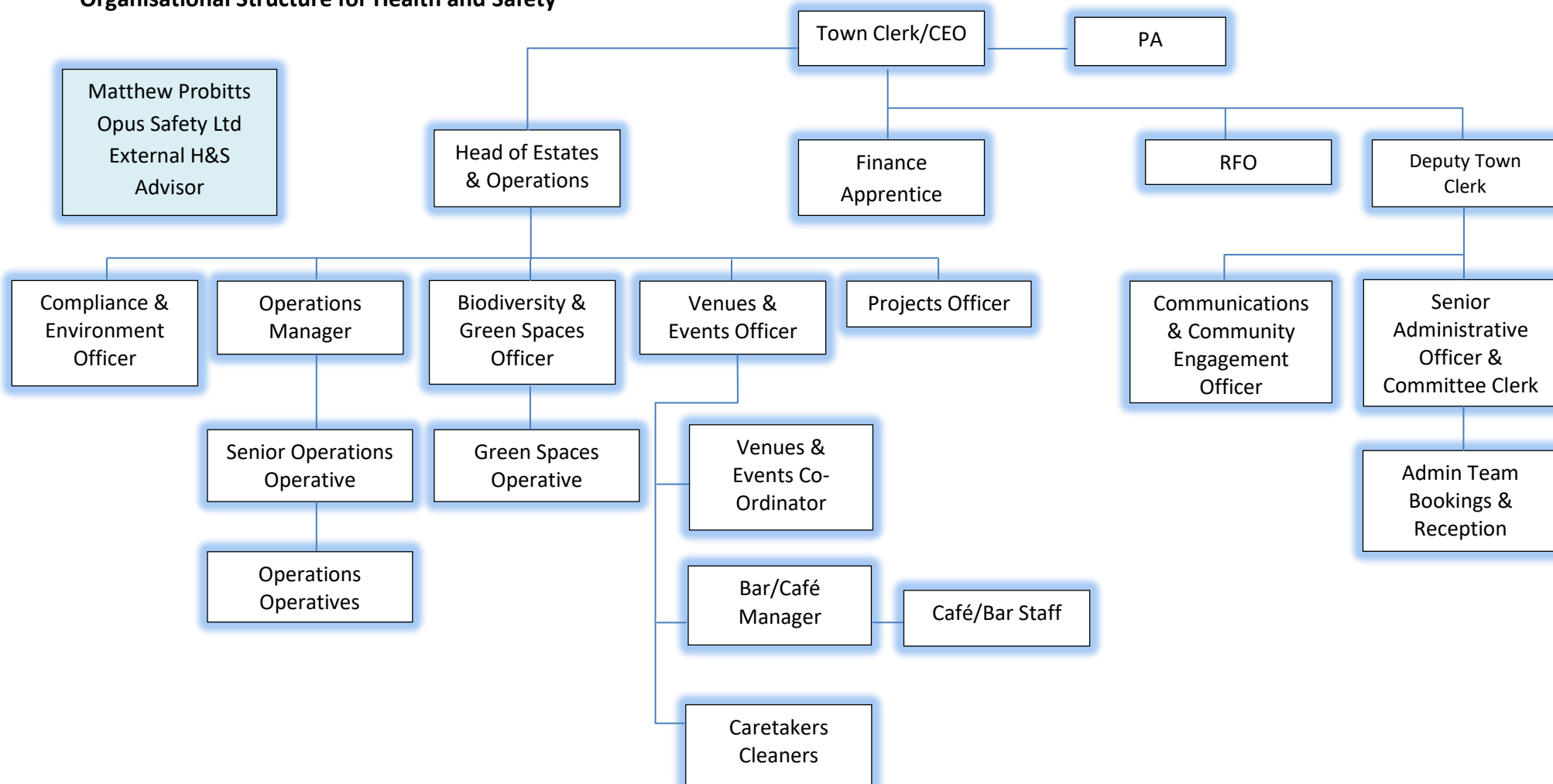
The Designated Health & Safety Coordinator is:

Name	Position	Address for correspondence
Mark Lewis	Head of Estates and Operations	Town Hall, Market Square, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 6AG

The Appointed Health & Safety Competent Person is:

Name	Position	Address for correspondence
Matthew Probitts	H&S Advisor	Opus Safety Ltd. 1 st Floor, 2 Chamberlin Square, Birmingham B3 3AX

Organisational Structure for Health and Safety



Scope of this Policy

This policy describes the Health and Safety Management System for Witney Town Council

Part 1 Health & Safety Responsibilities

Town Clerk & Council Members
Foreman & Supervisors
Employees & Volunteers
Safety Representatives
Health & Safety Coordinator
Health & Safety Advisor

Part 2 General Employee & Office Health & Safety Arrangements

Part 3 Grounds & Building Maintenance Health & Safety Arrangements

Part 4 Council Run Events

Part 5 Managing Contractors

Part 6 Environmental Policy

Appendix 1 Health, Welfare & Safety Committee & Safety Representatives

Appendix 2 Driving Guide

Appendix 3 Mental Health & Wellbeing

Appendix 4 Volunteering

Appendix 5 Events Policy

Appendix 6 Lone Working Policy

Part 1 Health & Safety Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Town Clerk & Council Members

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) says that responsible people must recognise their personal responsibilities and liabilities under health and safety law.

- The Town Clerk and Council Members must accept formally and publicly their collective role in providing health and safety leadership in its organisation.
- Each Council Member needs to accept their individual role in providing health and safety leadership for their organisation.
- Council Members need to ensure that all Council decisions reflect its health and safety intentions, as articulated in the health and safety policy statement.
- Council Members need to recognise their role in engaging the active participation of its workers in improving health and safety.
- Council Members need to ensure that they are kept informed of, and alert to, relevant health and safety risk management issues.

Responsibilities of the Heads of Department/Managers

These responsibilities apply to those who are authorised by the Council to control to a greater or lesser extent the work and working conditions of other employees.

- They are instrumental in improving the level of safety in their defined work areas, as well as helping to embed a positive Health & Safety culture across the whole business
- Be familiar with the provisions of the regulations and code of practice relating to the functions of safety representatives and co-operate with representatives in the execution of the duties specified in the regulations.
- All employees have familiarised themselves with the fire and emergency procedure and evacuation plan
- Ensuring all employees are aware of the procedure for reporting accidents
- Ensuring that all relevant Health & Safety documentation is kept up to date, and made available to the relevant persons within the business

Responsibilities of Supervisors/Foremen

These responsibilities apply to those who are authorised by the Council to control to a greater or lesser extent the work and working conditions of other employees. Where control is exercised indirectly through others, duties will need to be delegated; where officers only have partial control of their subordinates' matters requiring action are to be brought to the attention of superiors.

- To be familiar with the Council's Health & Safety Policy, statutory requirements and safe systems of work applicable to the task on which their subordinates are engaged, insisting that such requirements are observed at all times.
- To be familiar with the provision of regulations and codes of practice relating to safety representatives and co-operate with representatives in the execution of the duties specified in the regulations.
- Investigate all accidents to persons or property promptly, to discover the cause and minimise possible recurrence.
- Report to Line Managers any working practice, defective tools or equipment which detracts from the standard of safety covered by the Councils' policy and relevant legislation.

Appendix 2

- Prevent employees from taking risks and short cuts in working methods. Discourage 'horse play' and take appropriate action where employees fail to consider safety factors.
- Ensure that new employees, particularly trainees and young persons are adequately supervised and trained for tasks allocated.
- Ensure that protective clothing and equipment is issued and available for use where appropriate; that adequate instruction in the use of such equipment is given.
- Ensure that appropriate plant and equipment is operated by a competent person, that defects are reported immediately to a Line Manager and unsafe plant, tools and equipment are not used. Ensure plant and equipment is in a safe secure state when left unattended.
- Wear appropriate protective clothing and equipment and set a personal example in the maintenance of health and safety standards.

Responsibilities of employees

All employees, irrespective of position or status, have a personal responsibility with regard to Health & Safety as follows:

- To be familiar with the Council's Health & Safety Policy and with the standards and procedures it contains and to co-operate and implement its contents.
- Be familiar with the provisions of the regulations and code of practice relating to the functions of safety representatives and co-operate with representatives in the execution of the duties specified in the regulations.
- To understand and comply with all instructions, working procedures and safety rules which apply to their work.
- Take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others, including members of the public, who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. Co-operate with the Council in carrying out its statutory duties as far as is necessary to enable that duty to be complied with.
- Use the correct tools and equipment for the job, use safety equipment and protective clothing which is issued and made available in accordance with regulations and keep tools, plant and equipment in good condition.
- Not to operate equipment unless the employee is trained and authorised to do so.
- To report to Supervisor/Foreman defects in plant and equipment and ensure that plant and equipment is in a safe and secure state when unattended; report to Supervisors/Foreman incidents, working problems or areas that could lead to injury and co-operate in any investigation of an accident or incident with the object of introducing measures to prevent a recurrence.
- To ensure their work area is kept clean and tidy.
- To report all accidents, injuries, industrial diseases, dangerous occurrences and 'near misses' to their immediate Supervisor/Foreman no matter how trivial.
- Take care of items of health, safety and welfare equipment issued for their use.
- Refrain from 'horse play' and acts which could cause hazards to themselves and others.
- To raise any safety matter with the appropriate person.

NOTE: All employees are encouraged to make suggestions for the improvement of health, safety and welfare, details of which should be submitted through their Supervisor/Foreman.

Responsibilities of Volunteers

Although volunteers are not employees of the Council, the Council has a duty of care towards them. Thus, they are offered the same health and safety protection and instruction as employees and are, in return, required to comply with the Council's arrangement for health and safety.

Responsibilities of Safety Representatives

- Immediately report to Management any hazardous conditions coming to his/her notice.
- Co-operate with the Supervisor/Foreman in appropriate accident investigations and plant and workplace inspections.
- Fully familiarise himself/herself with the Council's Safety Policy and subsequent modifications.
- Pass on all health and safety information gained from whatever source to employees whom he/she represents.
- Actively promote safe working practices among fellow employees he/she represents and others.
- Be aware of the correct emergency action to take in the event of an accident or fire.

Responsibilities of the Health & Safety Coordinator

Witney Town Council's Health and Safety Coordinator has overall responsibility for all health, safety and welfare matters within the organisation. They will ensure that there is an effective policy for health and safety, the provision of regular reviews to its efficiency and the provision of adequate staff, funds and materials to meet the policy's requirements.

Key duties will include:

- That responsibility for safety is properly assigned and accepted at all levels.
- That arrangements are made for the provision of suitable and sufficient safety training for all employees.
- That departmental heads are aware of and fulfilling their duties with regard to health & safety standards
- That health and safety monitoring is regularly undertaken.
- That information is obtained from suppliers on the safe use of equipment and materials and that all relevant health and safety information and guidance is provided to employees as required.
- That records of statutory inspections and other appropriate records are kept.
- That records of injuries and work-related diseases are maintained, and that appropriate reporting action is undertaken.
- That appropriate resources are allocated to allow for the elimination and/or control of known hazards and to safeguard against the introduction of new risks.
- That contractors' tenders include adequate provision for safe working.
- That appropriate health and safety arrangements are made with clients and building occupiers.
- The provision of all health and safety documentation.
- The provision of any training including specialised training if required.
- The provision of adequate welfare and first aid
- The action to be taken in the event of fire or other emergency and the provision of suitable fire-fighting equipment.
- The protection of the public.
- To carry out risk assessments of any hazards, which could arise and determine the most appropriate order and method of working and record such assessments. To this end he/she

will liaise with employees, clients and building occupiers over health and safety arrangements.

- To ensure all relevant health and safety matters are discussed with prospective clients and liaise with clients and building occupiers over health and safety arrangements.
- To implement health and safety arrangements made with clients or building occupiers and ensure personnel within their control comply with these arrangements.
- To co-ordinate work of contractors and liaise with main contractors where applicable.
- To monitor health and safety procedures to ensure that all directly employed and contractors' employees operate in accordance with any legal requirements and Council policy.
- To acquire, hold and make available where required, information on the potential hazards of articles and substances used by personnel within their control, and to ensure that all necessary COSHH assessments are carried out.
- To ensure that materials are stored safely and that, where appropriate, fire-fighting equipment is readily available.
- To ensure only trained, competent and authorised personnel use equipment and that young or inexperienced workers are properly supervised.
- To take prompt corrective action whenever unsafe acts are noticed or reported to them.
- To ensure that cleanliness, tidiness and all that contributes to 'good housekeeping' is of an acceptable standard.
- To ensure that all accidents are reported and recorded, and that attention given by medical or first aid staff is appropriate.
- To investigate, report and find the cause of all incidents/accidents, including those, which result in only minor injuries, or cause loss or damage with no injury, and to take appropriate remedial action to prevent re-occurrence.

Responsibilities of Health & Safety Advisor

It will be the Health & Safety Advisor's responsibility to make arrangements for monitoring & auditing the application of the Policy and report the findings to the Management Team. The Health & Safety Consultant is required to:

- Support the implementation of the Council's policy as it affects all employees by assisting the overall organisation to implement systems for ensuring compliance.
- Monitor and audit the implementation of the policy and procedures. Provide advice to ensure that the Council establishes and complies with relevant regulations on safety representation and review matters appertaining to health and safety.
- Ensure the incident investigation procedures are implemented correctly and effectively and there is a positive management reaction to dealing with the elimination of hazards/control of residual risks across the organisation.
- Produce and publish documentation giving information and guidance on matters of Health and Safety including information on approved codes of practice, government and Council statistics and indices and the review of performance, where applicable.
- Encourage regular site safety inspections to be completed, hazard/risks are assessed and prioritised for corrective action and elimination/control on a timely basis.

Part 2 Health & Safety Arrangements

2.1.0 General Health & Safety Guidelines

All personnel must follow the rules and procedures contained in this policy.

- All personnel must immediately report any unsafe practices or conditions in the workplace to their immediate supervisor or the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Personnel under the influence of alcohol or drugs are prohibited from the workplace.
- Any act, including horseplay, which might endanger the health and safety of others is strictly prohibited.
- An employee who is unfit due to injury, illness or fatigue will not be allowed to work if the impairment might put at risk the health and safety of that employee or other persons.
- Employees must not modify, adjust, move or tamper with any electrical equipment or machinery outside the scope of their duties, unless instructed by a senior member of the Company.
- Waste materials, particularly combustible materials and oily rags must be disposed of carefully, and in a way that they do not constitute a fire or other hazards.
- Employees should not undertake a task, which appears to be unsafe to him or her or other personnel.
- Employees will not undertake tasks that require safety training without receiving that training.
- All injuries must be reported to the immediate supervisor of the relevant department and/or the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Protective guards and safety devices must be properly fitted and used where appropriate. Defects in guards and safety devices must be reported to the employee's immediate supervisor and/or the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Only authorised employees are permitted to use chemicals in the workplace.
- Employees must wear suitable clothing and footwear at all times, and personal protective equipment must be worn where appropriate.

Further information on all of the above can be found in the relevant section below.

2.2.0 Access & Egress

Being able to move around the workplace without risk of tripping or slipping is essential, walkways and passageways must be kept clear from obstructions including trailing wires, ropes and cables. Where this is not possible suitable signage and segregation will be provided.

- Walkways or passageways that become slippery should be clearly marked with warning signs until the slippery surface has dried or has been removed.
- Changes in the floor elevation of any walkway or passageway must be clearly marked.
- Long or sharp edges to objects stored in or around walkways or passageways must be covered to ensure the prevention of injury to persons.
- Warning signs must be placed as appropriate to indicate any hazard that may injure or obstruct the accessing persons.
- Never store equipment or supplies on stairs or stairways where they can become a trip hazard.
- Use handrails whilst walking up and down stairs.
- Do not run up or down stairs.
- Ensure lighting is sufficient to see step edges.
- Ensure stair treads/noses are in good repair.
- Ensure that you can see where you are going when carrying bulky items.
- All spillages to be mopped up immediately and colleagues to be advised of any slip hazards.

- If stairs are inconsistent with the height highlight the problem with warning signs.
- Thoroughly clean on a regular basis to remove contaminants.
- When cleaning ensure warning signage is used and notify colleagues.
- Report all concerns that you can't immediately fix to the Health & Safety Coordinator.

2.3.0 Accident Investigation & Reporting

Witney Town Council will comply with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). The Health & Safety Coordinator is responsible for reporting under the Regulations. This will entail the Health & Safety Coordinator or other designated personnel making reports, and the cooperation of all relevant personnel involved is essential in order to establish:

- The circumstances of an accident or dangerous occurrence or disease.
- The nature and severity of the accident or dangerous occurrence or disease.
- The identity of eyewitnesses.
- The time, date and location of the accident or dangerous occurrence or disease.

Eyewitness accounts for the report will be collected as near to the time of the accident as is reasonably practicable.

We will study the completed report and will attempt to discover why the accident or dangerous occurrence or disease happened, and then take action to prevent a recurrence of the accident or dangerous occurrence or disease.

Issues such as liability, proceedings or damages will be assessed following the completed report and, if necessary, the Company will take appropriate professional legal advice.

2.3.1 Accident Procedure

All employees must ensure they report all accidents, personal injuries or 'near misses' and any potentially unsafe items of equipment or working situations. Line Managers and the Health & Safety Coordinator must record ALL ACCIDENTS, no matter how trivial, by completing an Accident Form which can be found in the administration office, first-floor reception, kitchen in the Corn Exchange, Burwell Hall, Works Depot, Cemeteries, and in the P Drive P:\Operations\Compliance\Accidents and Incidents.

Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 – RIDDOR, employees must report to the Health & Safety Coordinator any accident at work which results in personal injury and will be encouraged to identify incidents where injury was fortuitously avoided (i.e. near miss accidents).

The Health & Safety Coordinator will undertake investigation of accidents and where practicable, will recommend a means of preventing a recurrence. All serious (reportable) accidents will also be investigated by the Health & Safety Coordinator.

2.4.0 Asbestos

Asbestos is the greatest cause of work-related deaths in Great Britain. Around 5,000 people die every year from asbestos-related diseases which typically take decades to develop and cannot be cured.

It is made up of tiny, invisible fibres that can be breathed in or rest on your clothes.

Asbestos was used in many industries and buildings until it was banned in 1999. However, while asbestos continues to be safely removed, much of this material is still in place.

This means people who work in older buildings could still be exposed to asbestos fibres today if asbestos is not managed effectively, and is damaged or disturbed. Buildings constructed after 2000 are unlikely to contain asbestos.

All staff should be aware of the risks related to asbestos and staff or contractors identified that could disturb asbestos must be provided with the asbestos reports so all are aware of locations.

2.4.1 If you discover or encounter asbestos

If you suspect asbestos or think you have disturbed asbestos based material, STOP WORK, inform the Health & Safety Coordinator and do not recommence this work until further instructions. Make sure your work colleagues are made aware of the hazard of the asbestos.

2.5.0 Heating and Hot Water Appliances

These should be serviced in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and safety regulations. Gas and oil boilers should be serviced annually with the safety inspection certificates held on file. Carbon monoxide detectors should be installed close by.

2.6.0 Open Spaces & Witney Town Council Buildings

2.6.1 Off site working

Where work is carried out in open spaces and buildings belonging to Witney Town Council, it is the responsibility of each employee/volunteer to ensure:

- That the building manager is advised where employees are working, and arrangements have been made to ensure that their work poses no risk to themselves or other employees
- That employees define and create a safe working area
- That employees only carry out work that they competent and trained to do
- That employees do not put themselves at risk whilst carrying out their duties
- That employees comply with the Witney Town Councils' Health & Safety arrangements
- In advance of carrying out any activity, employees should carry out a visual risk assessment and think of practical working arrangements to reduce hazards in the workplace
- That employees keep their working area clean and tidy and that they tidy up and remove waste at the end of each working day

If work is carried out on Witney Town Councils premises, employees must be aware that they have the overall legal responsibility for the health and safety of all personnel whether personnel are employees, or members of the public. Therefore, employees must make themselves aware of, and comply with, the health and safety procedures of Witney Town Council. In addition, they must comply with safe working practices contained in this policy and/or any instructions given by any On-Site Health and Safety Officer.

When working on Witney Town Council premises, employees/subcontractors should address any immediate health and safety concerns with the On-Site Safety Officer or Health & Safety Coordinator.

Regardless of where employees work, they are responsible for safe working practices at all times.

At the start of each new planned work, a site-specific Risk Assessment will be carried out on behalf of Witney Town Council. An appointed person will be made responsible for ensuring that employees adhere to the findings of the site-specific Risk Assessment. All workers are required to read and sign

the site-specific Risk Assessment and Method Statement for the work activity. Regular safety inspections will be performed throughout the duration of the contract.

2.6.2 Lone working when visiting Witney Town Council owned buildings

When employees are visiting Witney Town Council owned premises they must:

- Ensure regular contact with your line manager or other designated person and maintain appropriate reporting in systems.
- Be aware that certain areas of towns or cities have a higher risk of violence as does working early in the morning and late at night.
- Do not go into a situation if you feel threatened.
- Adopt an early warning policy to alert colleagues about potentially violent clients or problem areas.
- Carry a means of communication with you, such as a mobile phone.
- If you feel threatened, make your excuses and leave. Be aware of your surroundings and make sure you can leave the premises quickly if you need to.
- Follow the signing in and out procedures operating at client's sites. Failure to do so may make you and your employer liable in the event of an incident.
- Make yourself familiar with first aid arrangements when visiting client sites.
- Follow safety rules in operation at clients' sites, including for example, no access areas and the use of personal protective equipment.
- Raise any safety concerns with the Company's Health and Safety Officer in the first instance.
- All accidents and near misses at Witney Town Council sites must be reported to the Health and Safety Officer.
- Where possible, employees should avoid situations where they are working alone at or in Witney Town Councils' premises. Where this is unavoidable follow the lone working procedure and never put yourself in a position where you are exposed to a high level of risk.
- Ensure that you take regular breaks and avoid excessively long hours.
- Make sure your vehicle is parked in a public, well-lit area, which is easily accessible.
- Avoid remote routes.
- Have your vehicle keys in your hand to avoid searching for them next to your locked vehicle.
- In order to maintain appropriate records of incidents it is essential that all incidents where you feel threatened or unsafe are reported to your line manager.

2.7.0 Communication & Consultation

Witney Town Council will endeavour to ensure that employees are familiar with the contents of Witney Town Councils' Health and Safety Policy and will communicate with employees orally, through supervisors, and in writing. We will consult with employees on all health and safety topics that may impact their work and work environment.

2.9.0 Co-operation & Care

This Health and Safety policy and supporting management system are designed to ensure that we provide and maintain a safe and secure workplace for all of our employees and others affected by our work. Employees are expected to co-operate with the Health & Safety Coordinator and to accept their duties under this policy. Disciplinary action may be taken against any employee who violates safety rules or who fails to perform his or her duties in accordance with this policy.

2.10.0 COSHH Precautions

Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) (as amended) the following precautions should be taken:

- Handle hazardous substances with care and use the personal protective equipment supplied as it is supposed to be used.
- Make sure you are familiar with the rules (e.g. COSHH) for using substances always refer to the COSHH assessment.
- Before eating, drinking and smoking ensure that hands are washed.
- Remove lids/stoppers only when the substance is to be used and replace immediately after use.
- Store flammable substances as per manufacturers/suppliers' recommendations.
- Only minimum quantities, required for immediate use, are to be kept in a work area.

2.10.1 Substances hazardous to health

Witney Town Council will comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) (as amended). COSHH risk assessments will be undertaken for all work involving exposure to hazardous substances. The Council will ensure that exposure of workers to hazardous substances is minimised and controlled.

- Employees who may come into contact with hazardous substances will receive training and information on the health and safety issues concerning substances. Employees working with hazardous substances must follow procedures relating to the substances.
- Employees must assume that all substances are hazardous unless known otherwise and you must abide by all the hazard information provided on assessment sheets. If you are in doubt as to the substance or its method of use, ask the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Substances hazardous to health include natural and artificial substances (including micro-organisms), which can be toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant to any employees exposed to them.
- In the event of contamination, the employee should find out the substances and its source and, if injury occurs, he/she should contact the First Aider, his/her own doctor or the Local Hospital (Casualty Department) for treatment without delay.

2.11.0 Driving

Where staff use their own vehicles. only those with a valid driving license and insurance covering business use may drive on council business.

Driving is a hazardous activity, and you are required to drive in a manner that minimises the risks to you, your passengers, other road users and the general public.

Witney Town Council would like to stress the following points:

- Driving at high speed has been shown to be a contributory factor in accidents. You should allow sufficient time to complete your journey without having to drive too fast. You should never need to exceed speed limits in order to reach your destination on time.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that you do not drive when you are tired or if you have consumed alcohol.
- Council and staff vehicles should be kept in a road worthy condition, check tyre pressures, windscreen fluid, lights, etc. and before setting off check the outside of the vehicle for anything broken or unusual.

Witney Town Council requires you to:

- Advise your line manager of any accidents either privately or on Council business that you are involved in.
- To provide a copy of your driving licence on request.
- To advise the office manager of any driving convictions or fines that you receive (including speeding but excluding parking fines).

2.11.1 Use of mobile phones while driving

Employees are reminded that driving whilst using a hand-held mobile phone is an offence. The definition of “whilst driving” includes time spent in traffic jams or at a traffic light. If you are involved in an incident, even with a hands-free device being used you are at risk of prosecution for careless driving.

When driving on Council business you must not either initiate or answer telephone calls. If you are a Council owned mobile phone user, then you must follow this policy both during and outside working hours. If you own your own phone then we strongly advise you to follow the same policy when driving privately and stress that if you receive a business call while driving either on business or privately, then you must not answer it. If you wish to make a business call whilst on a journey, then park when it is safe to do so and make the call with the engine switched off and the handbrake applied. If you receive a call when driving, then park when it is safe to do so and use the answering service or “missed call” facility on your mobile.

2.12.0 Electrical Appliances

This applies to fixed and portable electrical devices located in Witney Town Council Premises and used in an external environment.

- All electrical equipment whether fixed or portable is to be subject to periodic testing and appropriate records kept.
- The correct voltage for tools and equipment must always be used.
- Waterproof fittings must be used for external work.
- Leads must not be allowed to trail, as this may cause a tripping hazard.
- Frayed electrical leads must be repaired or replaced immediately.
- Operators must ensure that they are familiar with any safety instructions (including manufacturer’s instructions) relating to any equipment before use.
- It is forbidden to interfere with any electrical appliance.
- The operator must check all electrical tools, leads, and plugs of any electrical equipment before bringing into use.
- Any obvious sign of irregular operation of electrical equipment should be reported at once to the supervisor.
- If any electrical appliance, is found to be faulty whilst in use it must be reported immediately to the Health & Safety Coordinator
- It is forbidden to carry out any repairs or fit any plug to an electrical appliance unless authorised to do so.
- No electrical appliance may be connected to an electrical system by any means other than the correct plug or connection.
- Care must be taken when using kitchen equipment and any spillages must be cleaned up immediately.

2.13.0 Fire Safety & Emergencies

Fire risk assessments will be undertaken as required under the Regulatory Reform Fire Order October 2005. However, employees must bring to the attention of the Health & Safety Coordinator or Fire Officer any potential fire risks that they may become aware of.

2.13.1 Controlling fire risk

One of the most important areas of fire prevention is to minimise and/or isolate combustible materials as follows:

- Flammable liquids including oils, fuels and paints or other flammable material must be removed from the premises if not normally required for council operations. If flammable liquids/materials are used for council operations liquids/materials must be kept to a minimum and securely stored in appropriate closed metal containers within a properly designed storage facility well away from sources of ignition.
- Gas leaks are a source of fire or explosion, and the detection of a gas leak must be reported to the Health & Safety Coordinator or Fire Officer or the on-site management immediately. All equipment with gas taps including gas bottles not in use should be regularly checked to ensure that the gas taps are turned off and not leaking.
- Any waste including paper, cardboard, pallets, oily rags etc. must not be allowed to accumulate and must be disposed of in appropriately.
- Smokers and vapours must only smoke in designated areas and discarded cigarette butts must be properly extinguished. Do not extinguish or throw cigarette butts into wastepaper bins.
- Faulty electrical equipment is a common source of a fire, therefore, electrical equipment not in use must be switched off and any observable defect of electrical equipment must be reported to the Health & Safety Coordinator or Fire Safety Officer.
- Pallets and refuse bins in yard areas must be positioned a safe distance away from the building.

2.13.2 Evacuation of disabled employees & visitors

All disabled employees and visitors must, where practical to do so, be located in a position within the building where it is easy to exit the building quickly and safely in the event of an emergency. As part of the fire evacuation procedure a check must be undertaken to ensure that the evacuation route is appropriate for a disabled person. Disabled visitors shall be designated two able bodied employees who can assist with the safe evacuation in the event of an emergency. The Site Safety Officer shall be notified whenever a disabled employee or visitor is in the building to ensure that practical, appropriate arrangements have been made.

2.13.3 Evacuation of members of the public, visitors and contactors

If a Company visitor is meeting you, it is your responsibility to ensure they follow the signing in and out procedure and to assist with their safe evacuation in the event of a fire drill or emergency evacuation. Visitors who are left unattended must be made fully aware of the escape routes and evacuation procedure. Ensure that members of the public are escorted from the premises during an evacuation. All contractors working at Witney Town Council premises must be advised of the evacuation procedure by the Health and Safety Officer.

2.13.4 Fire Safety Officer

The Fire Safety Officer has the overall responsibility for the Company's fire and emergency policy and training. All supervisors are responsible for implementing policy and all employees are responsible for carrying out the instructions of the policy.

Witney Town Councils' fire and emergency policy and procedures take account of special fire hazards in specific areas of the workplace with, where available, the cooperation and advice from the local fire service.

The Fire Safety Officer:

The Compliance & Environment Officer is the Fire Safety Officer for Witney Town Council.

2.13.5 General fire procedures

All personnel associated with Witney Town Council must familiarise themselves with this fire and emergency policy. All fire alarms will be acted on by all persons, including false alarms and drills.

Only staff trained to extinguish a fire should attempt to do so, and if there is any doubt that a fire cannot be extinguished immediately without risk or injury to individual persons, all employees must immediately report any fire to the local fire service (dial 999).

Fire alarm

The sounding of fire alarm is the signal that the building must be evacuated. The alarm may be raised for a fire or any other dangerous situation such as an unsafe structure, a bomb scare, and no employee must assume that a situation is not serious because there are no visible signs of an emergency in their immediate locality. When the alarm sounds all employees must leave the building by the nearest available exit and assemble at the designated assembly point, including contractors from other firms, temporary workers and any members of the public. Employees must also ensure visitors leave the building by the designated exit routes. Designated Fire Marshalls will lead and support any evacuation.

Fire detection equipment

Smoke detector alarms and alarm call points or similar devices are located at points throughout the workplace. Employees must familiarise themselves with the location of detectors and alarms.

Fire doors

Fire doors and corridors should never be blocked, jammed or left open.

Fire drills

Fire drill, emergency evacuation procedures, will be carried out you are required to familiarise yourself with this procedure. New employees will be advised of the fire drill during their induction, including the type of alarm given, the fire escape routes and the assembly point.

Fire escape routes & exits

All specified means of escape for the site premises must be properly signed, maintained and kept free from obstruction. It is essential that all personnel are familiar with the means of escape and the route to be followed in case of fire. Fire exits and corridors must never be locked or blocked.

Firefighting equipment

Firefighting equipment is provided throughout the workplace and training in its use is given to fire wardens and other relevant personnel. Make yourself aware of the location and type of fire extinguishers in your work area. Do not remove or relocate extinguishers and report any that have been used so that they may be replaced.

2.13.6 Other emergency procedures

In the absence of the alarm sounding in the case of a fire or other dangerous situation being detected, supervisors will warn employees or members of the public by word of mouth to evacuate the premises. They may order evacuation in the case of a fire or any other dangerous situation and no employee must assume that a situation is not serious because there are no visible signs of an emergency in their immediate locality. Immediately after supervisors give instructions, all employees must leave the building by the nearest available exit and assemble at the designated assembly point. Employees must also ensure that visitors, contractors, temporary workers and members of the public leave the building by the exit routes.

Employees must consider that old people, disabled people or children may need assistance to leave the premises and that people using toilets or other ancillary rooms may not be aware of the emergency.

Discovery of explosives, bombs, suspicious packets

- DO NOT touch anything suspicious
- Warn the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Before leaving, take all necessary measures so that nobody, even mistakenly, comes into contact with dangerous object before the arrival of the police.

2.14.0 End of Day Safety

If you know you will be the last to leave the premises after it has been made secure:

- Make sure your car is parked in a well-lit area that is easily accessible
- Avoid remote routes
- Have your car keys in your hand to avoid searching for them next to your locked car
- Report any suspicious people to the Police and do not leave the premises until you believe that it is safe to do so
- Do not allow entry to any unplanned visitors into the premises when working alone

2.15.0 First-Aid

Personnel trained in First Aid are as follows:

Name	Name	Name
Mark Lewis	Janine Sparrowhawk	Graham Leather
Dudley Beckinsale	Derek Mackenzie	Claire Hermon
Tom Davies	John Silvey	Mike Kingdon
Adam Cook	Naomi Carpenter	Roger Penner
Carl Whitehead	Will Lewis	Justine Tossell-Pugh
Wayne Evans	Steve Pizzey	Daisy Phillips
Vicky-Anne Dealey	Rebecca Cos Torres	Niamh Sutton
Sharon Pateman	Naomi Godfrey	Deborah Kirk

It is the responsibility of the Departmental Manager to maintain the Councils first aid boxes and monitor those held on work vehicles.

Appendix 2

All employees must have ready access to first aid facilities. New employees will be told about first aid arrangements as part of their induction. (Arrangements are recorded in writing).

When shared facilities are not arranged, sites will be provided with a first aid kit in the charge of the "appointed person". Where only one or two employees are involved on work of very short duration, or in vehicles on Council business, small travelling first aid kits will be available.

- First-Aid is only to be carried out by a trained First Aider
- Every first aid box will be of the appropriate size and have the correct contents
- The location of the first aid box shall be clearly identified
- It is the Health and Safety Officer to ensure that the stock is replaced in the boxes as necessary
- In cases of more serious injury employees will be sent or taken to the nearest hospital

As well as applying first aid if qualified to do so, if there is any doubt as to the severity of an injury or the health of any person on Witney Town Councils' premises, employees will not hesitate to dial 999 and ask for the ambulance service.

All accidents or injuries must be reported to the immediate supervisor of the relevant department, and/or the Health & Safety Coordinator.

2.15.1 First-aid boxes

Each company vehicle will have an appropriate HSE approved First Aid kit. First aid arrangements will be agreed in advance prior to working on third party sites. First aid kits can be found in the following locations:

Building	Location
Town Hall & Admin	Ground Floor Reception, First Floor Office & Old Council Chamber
Burwell Hall	Main hall entrance by door, kitchen and bar
Works Depot	Mess Room
Tower Hill Cemetery	Mess Room
Windrush Cemetery	Mess Room
Corn Exchange	Café kitchen, large kitchen, Gallery Room, Main Hall, Staff Office, Green Room A
Tower Hill Cemetery Chapel	Main Chapel

The First-Aid box should be made of suitable material and so designed to protect the contents. All boxes should be clearly marked.

First-Aid boxes and travelling First-Aid kits should contain sufficient quantities of suitable First-Aid materials and nothing else. For most First-Aid boxes sufficient quantities may be considered as:

- A general guidance card on First Aid
- 20 individually wrapped, sterile, adhesive dressings (assorted sizes) appropriate for the work environment
- 2 sterile eye pads, with attachment
- 6 individually wrapped, triangular bandages
- 6 safety pins

- 6 medium sized, individually wrapped, sterile, un-medicated wound dressings (approx. 10cm x 8cm)
- 2 large, individually wrapped, sterile, un-medicated wound dressings (approx. 13cm x 9cm)
- 3 extra-large, individually wrapped, sterile, un-medicated wound dressings (approx. 28cm x 17.5cm)

For persons who use chainsaws, they will have access to a further major incident kit

2.16.0 Housekeeping

Accidents happen more frequently in an uncontrolled or untidy environment. It is necessary to maintain a high standard of cleanliness and the proper and safe storage of all goods and supplies must be ensured. All employees should be vigilant in maintaining their surroundings in a clean, tidy and well organised manner. Where hazards are identified that you cannot readily rectify yourself you must report this to your supervisor or the Health and Safety Officer so that action can be taken to control any risk to yourself and others.

2.17.0 Hygiene & Health Conditions

Paying attention to good personal hygiene will help to reduce the spread of diseases and viruses in the workplace. Most importantly, employees should thoroughly wash and dry of hands after toilet use. The co-operation of all employees in this regard is requested.

If handling food or drink (including tea/coffee making operations) or handling crockery or utensils that are for use by others (kettles or cups for example) employees must wash their hands first.

Employees should be aware of the potential for the spread of viruses through the use of shared telephone handsets, these should be periodically wiped with a clean damp cloth containing detergent or disinfectant. Where possible use dedicated telephone hand set extensions.

Employers should ensure that workplaces are adequately lit, well-ventilated and adequately heated. Any concerns in this regard must be brought to the attention of the Health & Safety Coordinator.

2.18.0 Inspections in the Workplace

We will comply with the Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992 (as amended). This requires regular inspections of the workplace on an on-going basis. Inspections will be of a routine nature and/or as a result of an event or a planned change in working procedures. Inspections will always provide the opportunity to review the continuing effectiveness of safe working practices and therefore implement changes where necessary. Inspections may be recorded and will be discussed at health and safety or team meetings.

2.19.0 Ladders

- No ladder may be used unless it is of sound construction, of the correct length, and either secured or footed.
- Defective ladders must be removed from use immediately and reported to the Health & Safety Coordinator
- Only light work, of short duration, is to be carried out from a ladder
- When working on clients' sites check the specific policy on ladders
- Always carry out a visual inspection to ensure the ladder is not defective prior to use
- Ladders used for work on client sites must be Class 2 EN131
- Ensure the ladder is pitched @ 75 degrees and is tied where possible
- Only one person should access the ladder at any one time

- Ladders used for access should extend 3 runs beyond the surface being accessed
- Never lean sideways when using a ladder
- Avoid lone working when using a ladder

2.20.0 Legionella

Witney Town Council will comply with their duty to consider the risks from Legionella that may affect employees or members of the public and will take suitable precautions to control the risks. Where it is deemed necessary, we will have an assessment of the potable water system carried out by a competent person.

2.21.0 Lone Working

Witney Town Council recognises that some staff are required to work by themselves without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas or out of office hours. These are defined as lone workers.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Witney Town Council has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. However, employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.

Where it is unavoidable to have lone workers in order to meet business requirements of the Council a suitable risk assessment will be undertaken in consultation with workers to assess risks and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary. Emergency procedures will be established and employees trained in them.

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of Council employees and volunteers.

When considering the risks attributed to a lone worker, the responsible person should consider:

- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- Is there a safe way in and out for the person?
- Are there adequate channels of communication in an emergency?
- Does the workplace or task present a special risk to the lone worker e.g. machinery, hazardous substances, lifting objects too heavy for one person?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Have reporting and recording arrangements been made where appropriate?
- Can the whereabouts of the lone worker be traced?

Lone workers must ensure that they fully understand the risks and safe systems of work required where they are working and avoid tasks that have been identified as too high risk for lone working e.g. use of ladders.

- Where possible avoid situations where you are working alone.
- Never attempt a high-risk activity when working alone, as working up a ladder or lifting heavy objects.
- Do not allow any suspicious customers into the premises if you are working alone.

- Carry a means of communication with you or ensure that you have access to a phone.
- Follow any agreed reporting arrangements.

If you know you will be the last to leave the premises after it has been made secure:

- Make sure your car is parked in a public, well-lit area, which is easily accessible.
- Avoid remote routes.
- Have your car keys in your hand to avoid searching for them next to your locked car.

2.22.0 Manual Handling Operations

Witney Town Council will comply with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended). Manual handling operations should be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable where there is a risk of injury.

Where it is not possible to avoid manual handling operations, an assessment of the operation will be made taking into account all factors including the feasibility of the manual handling operation, the load, the working environment and the capabilities of employees and risk to their safety.

- Using mechanical devices rather than manual handling possible, the mechanical devices should be appropriate for the task and are subject to risk assessment.
- The object to be lifted or moved must be inspected for sharp edges and other hazards, i.e. wet or greasy patches, and appropriate steps taken to remove or reduce hazards.
- If lifting or moving objects with sharp or splintered edges, clean dry gloves must be worn to ensure a firm grip.
- The route over which the object is to be lifted or moved should be inspected to ensure that it is free of obstructions or spillage or another hazard.
- Employees must not attempt to lift or move an object which is too heavy and which might damage their health.
- Where the lifting or moving of an object is to be done by more than one person, one of the persons should be designated as the supervisor of the operation, so as to coordinate the lifting or moving.
- Employees should assume a squatting position, by keeping the back straight and allowing the knees to take the weight of an object (rather than the back) when lifting a heavy object off the ground.

2.23.0 New & Expectant Mothers

A risk assessment will be carried out in respect of risks to new or expectant mothers, during pregnancy the risk assessment will be reviewed at least every 3 months and more frequently if required. A further assessment will be made when the new mother returns to work. Where risks to new or expectant mothers are identified, adjustments to working conditions will be made.

2.24.0 Office Safety

All office personnel have a duty to assist in reducing the risk of accidents and fire.

The following rules and precautions are to be observed:

- Keep desks tidy and ensure that wastepaper is disposed of regularly and in appropriate containers.

- Use a safe method of lifting any article and, if necessary, seek assistance.
- Never leave filing cabinet drawers open.
- Never open more than one filing cabinet drawer at a time. Fill from the bottom drawer to minimise any tendency for the unit to overbalance.
- Protective guards and safety devices must be properly fitted and used where appropriate. Defects in guards and safety devices must be reported to the
- Ensure that cables and connections on all electrical equipment are sound before use.
- Ensure all passageways, stairs and exits are kept clear of any obstruction.
- Ensure all flammables are kept in fire resistant storage.
- All personnel must be familiar with the location of all fire-fighting equipment and its use.
- Access to fire-fighting equipment must never be obstructed.
- Avoid high shelving in storage areas that required the use of access equipment such as stepladders. Where unavoidable employees must use suitable access equipment e.g. kick steps and stepladders (minimum Class 2 EN131) that must be regularly inspected and used with care.
- Never use chairs or stools to access storage areas, change light bulbs or other activities at height.

2.24.1 Display screen equipment (DSE) workstations

Witney Town Council will comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended). The risks to users of VDU screens will be reduced as much as is reasonably practicable.

- Display screen users should be provided with equipment that:
 - Has adequate contrast with no glare or distracting reflections
 - Has an adjustable screen with a stable, readable image
 - Has an adjustable, detachable and legible keyboard, with wrist rest if necessary
 - Has appropriate software.
- Employees must receive appropriate safety training before using display screens.
- Employees' workstations should have:
 - Adequate lighting
 - Adequate working space
 - Adjustable seating with footrest if necessary
 - Adequate leg room and clearance to allow postural changes
 - Distracting noise minimised
 - Window covering to minimise glare and reflections
- Employees' workstations should be risk assessed for compliance with the Approved Code of Practice and appropriate modifications made where necessary.
- Employees who consider that their health is being adversely affected by the use of display screen equipment or the workstation must inform the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Employees who require additional information or training regarding how to adjust their equipment, workstation or working practices to minimise risks, should inform the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- All display screen users are entitled to free eye and eyesight tests on request. Users who require a test must inform the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- All display screen users should take periodic breaks during their work.
- All staff must ensure that workstations are kept clean, tidy and free of debris.

2.24.2 Equipment

Operators must ensure that they are familiar with any safety instructions (including manufacturer's instructions) relating to any office equipment before use.

Only trained, competent and authorised personnel should use office equipment and young or inexperienced employees should be properly supervised.

Any obvious sign of irregular operation of office equipment should be reported at once to the supervisor or the Health & Safety Coordinator.

The Company would like to stress that particular care must be taken to use the following equipment safely:

Paper guillotine

- Only trained and authorised personnel may operate the paper guillotine. Employees should contact the Health & Safety Coordinator should there be a requirement to use the paper guillotine.

Photocopiers

- When using photocopiers employees should be mindful that they operate at high voltages.
 - Never tamper with the equipment.
 - Switch power off where necessary.
 - Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for dealing with faults such as paper jams.
 - Beware of hot surfaces inside the equipment

If photocopiers are receiving light use, they should be positioned as far away from work desks as is reasonably possible with adequate ventilation.

If photocopiers are receiving heavy use they should be located in a well-ventilated area, preferably in a separate room where people do not work.

Where the manufacturer of the equipment has identified specific risks or employees are unsure of the safest location consult the Health & Safety Coordinator for guidance.

2.24.3 Filing cabinets

- To prevent filing cabinets from tipping (whether fitted with anti-tilt or not) the bottom drawer should be filled first to minimise any tendency for the unit to overbalance.
- Only one drawer in a filing cabinet should be open at any one time.
- When not in use, filing cabinets and cupboards should be kept shut and drawers should not open into corridors or escape routes.

2.24.4 Home working

Employees who work from home have a responsibility to create a safe working environment. Witney Town Council will supply appropriate equipment and the Health & Safety Coordinator will provide assistance in identifying any risks. Adjustments to working conditions should be made to avoid risks where possible.

2.24.5 Storage & work at height

- Care should be taken not to overload cupboards, cabinets or shelves.

- Where necessary units must be fixed securely to the wall.
- High shelving in storage areas/rooms that requires the use of access equipment such as stepladders should be avoided wherever possible. Where this is unavoidable, employees must use suitable access equipment e.g. kick steps and stepladders.
- Kick steps and stepladders must be accessible, kept in good condition and used with care. They should be regularly inspected and taken out of use until any necessary repairs are made.
- On no account should employees use chairs or stools to access storage areas, change light bulbs or other activities at height.
- Storage areas should be kept clean and tidy and free from clutter. In particular materials or equipment must not be left where people may fall over them, nor piled on top of cupboards and cabinets.

2.25.0 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Witney Town Council will comply with the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (as amended). This requires that all employees who may be exposed to a risk to their health and safety that cannot be controlled by other means will be provided with properly fitting, suitable, and effective personal protective equipment (PPE) or clothing.

All personal protective equipment or clothing will be maintained in good working order and all employees provided with PPE or clothing must wear or use it properly. Employees must report defective personal protective equipment or clothing to their immediate supervisor or Health & Safety Coordinator as soon as it is found to be defective.

Employees provided with personal protective equipment will receive training and information on the use, maintenance and purpose of the equipment. Any concerns in relation to PPE should be raised with your manager immediately.

2.25.1 Safety footwear – office

Witney Town Council understands that footwear can play an important part in preventing slips, trips and falls and that there is a need to get the right balance between footwear that creates the right image but also provides some form of protection for higher risk tasks. This policy provides guidance on what footwear the council considers to be suitable for the office environment and when undertaking manual tasks. Employees are required to choose shoes that fit well, have sensible heels and stay on the feet.

Heels should not be worn when using access equipment and when required to lift or move heavy or bulky loads. In some cases, it might be appropriate to have a second pair of shoes for some tasks.

Employees should wear safety shoes where a risk assessment has identified the need. This will be communicated by your line manager.

2.27.0 Security

Sites must be made secure at the end of the working day. All ladders must be removed, or boarded over, and tools and equipment removed or locked away.

2.28.0 Sharps

- Only trained and competent employees should use blades for packing and unpacking
- Blades must be correctly fitted and checked prior to use and not used if defective
- When using blades cut away from the body and position the gripping hand so that it is not at risk

- Blades must be suitably stored when not in use
- Exposed staples in packaging must be removed prior to handling

2.29.0 Smoking

Witney Town Council operates a 'No Smoking Policy' and smoking is not permitted within any of the buildings. Smokers must only smoke in the external designated area. Smoking is not permitted in any of the Company vehicles, or on clients' premises. This Smoking policy is to include e-cigarettes, and smokers of these devices will be treated the same as tobacco smoked products.

Combustible materials must never be stored or allowed to accumulate in designated smoking areas.

Smoke free policy

This policy has been developed to protect all employees, service users, customers and visitors from exposure to second-hand smoke and vapour clouds and to assist compliance with the Health Act 2006 and the Smoke-free (Vehicle Operators and Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007.

Exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other serious illnesses. Ventilation or separating smokers and non-smokers within the same airspace does not completely stop potentially dangerous exposure.

It is our policy that all our workplaces are smoke-free, and all employees have a right to work in a smoke-free environment. Smoking is prohibited in all enclosed and substantially enclosed premises in the workplace. This includes Council owned vehicles. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, consultants, contractors, customers or members of the public and visitors.

Implementation

Overall responsibility for policy implementation and review rests with the Town Clerk, however, all staff are obliged to adhere to and support the implementation of the policy.

All new personnel are given a copy of the policy on recruitment/induction. Appropriate 'no-smoking' signs will be clearly displayed at the entrances to and within the premises, and in all smoke-free vehicles.

Non-compliance

Local disciplinary procedures will be followed if a member of staff does not comply with this policy. Those who do not comply with the smoke-free law may also be liable to a fixed penalty fine and possible criminal prosecution.

2.29.1 Help to stop smoking

The NHS offers a range of free services to help smokers give up. Visit www.nhs.uk/smokefree/ or call the NHS Smoking Helpline on **0300 123 1044** for details.

2.30.0 Stress

Stress is the adverse reaction people may have to being put under excessive pressure, which can in extreme circumstances lead to mental or physical illness, such as depression and heart disease. Stress is a growing issue in modern life. We acknowledge our role in assisting employees to manage their personal stress levels effectively. We will:

- Conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress.

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- Ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, that appropriate selections are made for jobs at the recruitment stage and that staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Operate an 'open door' policy whereby staff can raise concerns with Senior Management, regarding excessive or conflicting work demands.
- Maintain commitment to effective Equality and Diversity and Harassment policies, including the promotion of a culture, which has a zero-tolerance approach towards bullying and harassment and other unacceptable behaviours.

All employees are encouraged to approach their manager should a stress issue arise so that a successful conclusion can be achieved at the earliest opportunity. If the issue is of a personal nature which would be more appropriately discussed with an alternative colleague, a senior member of staff can be contacted in confidence. In particular, where stress is believed to be work-related, it is important to raise the issue so that the problem can be addressed. All information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.

2.31.0 Temporary Workers

Temporary workers must undergo a workplace induction to include induction training, passing on risk assessment information, site safety rules, communication arrangements, the need for special occupational qualifications or skills the worker should have to perform safely e.g. fork lift truck license, any health surveillance that is required, any personal protective equipment that is required. Training certification should be checked to ensure the temporary worker is competent.

Records of training for temporary staff should be maintained.

2.32.0 Tools & Equipment

- Tools equipment and machinery are only to be used if in good working order and by qualified and authorised personnel. Defective tools equipment and machinery must be reported to the employee's immediate supervisor and/or the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Protective guards and safety devices must be properly fitted and used where appropriate when using tools equipment and machinery. Clothing, jewellery or long hair that might pose a risk to safety when using tools equipment and machinery must not be worn.
- Employees must not use any tools equipment and machinery for any purpose other than what the tools equipment and machinery are designed for.
- Hand tools should be restricted to 110V when working on client sites unless confirmed otherwise by the main contractor.

2.33.0 Training

Health and safety training is essential for all effective work procedures. All workers will be trained in safe working practices and procedures relevant to their duties. Training will include advice on the use and maintenance of personal protective equipment, where applicable. Training sessions will be held as often as is deemed necessary and will take a variety of formats. Despite training sessions, employees can raise concerns regarding health and safety at any time with their immediate supervisor or directly to the Safety Training Officer.

2.34.0 Vehicles, Plant & Machinery

- Only authorised and, if applicable, certificated, drivers and operators may use any vehicles, plant or machinery.
- Users of any vehicles, plant and machinery must ensure that equipment is in good working order and well maintained. Defects must be brought to the attention of the Health & Safety Coordinator or other suitable person immediately.

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- Regular inspections appropriate to each vehicle, plant or machine must be made and any defects brought to the attention of the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Unsafe, faulty or unsuitable vehicles, plant or machinery must not be used and should be immobilised until made safe.
- Official notices or instructions on vehicles, plant and machinery must be obeyed.
- Vehicles, plant or machinery must not be left running whilst unattended and if unattended must be left in a safe place and condition, with keys removed.
- All guards must be kept in position at all times whilst machinery is being operated.
- No equipment must be used beyond the marked safe working load, except for the purpose of testing, which must be supervised by a competent person.
- All loading gates must be kept closed, except where loading or off-loading is in progress.
- On the completion of work for the day all practical steps must be taken to secure all vehicles, plant and machinery.
- It is forbidden for any person to ride on hoists not constructed for the carriage of passengers.
- It is forbidden for any person other than the driver to ride on dumpers not constructed for the carriage of passengers.
- Anything carried in/on a dumper must be contained within its skip.
- The driver of any Council owned vehicle must ensure that clear access required to reverse a vehicle is given by ensuring that no people are obstructing that access before reversal and by making use of rear-view mirrors and by using the guidance of experienced lookouts if required.

2.35.0 Work Equipment

Witney Town Council will comply with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (as amended) and will try at all times to ensure that all equipment used in the workplace is safe and suitable for the purpose for which it is used. Employees will be provided with adequate information and training to enable them to use relevant equipment safely and equipment must only be used by authorised and trained employees.

Work equipment must be maintained in good working order and repair. Employees must report defective work equipment to their immediate supervisor or Health & Safety Coordinator as soon as it is found to be defective. Where applicable, employees will be provided with protection from the hazards associated with the use of work equipment and work equipment will be clearly marked with relevant health and safety warnings

Part 3 - Grounds and Building Maintenance Health & Safety Arrangement

3.0 Risk assessments

Risk assessments will be undertaken prior to commencement of any works. The findings of which will then be recorded and any actions required to remove / control the risk will be implemented immediately. This implementation will then be assessed to ensure appropriate actions have been made to remove / reduce the risks identified.

3.1 Safe Plant and Equipment

Witney Town Council will identify all equipment and plant that requires maintenance, ensuring effective maintenance procedures are in place for each item of equipment in use.

Any problems identified with equipment or plant will be reported immediately to your Line Manager or the Health & Safety Coordinator.

Witney Town Council will be responsible for ensuring all equipment and plant is checked and meets current health and safety standards. New equipment will be CE marked and will be checked to ensure it meets health and safety standards before purchase.

Equipment noise shall be kept to a minimum at all times and within current environmental guidelines. Witney Town Council will ensure responsibility for identifying all substances, which need a COSHH assessment. All identified actions from assessment will be implemented and recorded. All relevant employees will also be informed of the COSHH assessment, its findings and subsequent actions to be taken.

Employees carrying out pesticide treatment will comply with and be competent in pesticide use. All hazardous substances are stored in a safe manner according to COSHH regulations. Disposal of hazardous substances is carried out in accordance with COSHH and Hazardous Waste Regulations.

3.2 Information, Instruction and Supervision

All employees of Witney Town Council receive a full induction prior to commencing employment, this contains our health and safety policy, a copy of the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) leaflet. Witney Town Council employees receive full training on the use of all equipment and materials concerned with their work tasks.

Training of all employees is identified, arranged and monitored and job specific training will be put in place where required. Witney Town Council will comply with the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (as amended).

This requires that all employees who may be exposed to a risk to their health and safety whilst at work will be provided with properly fitting, suitable and effective personal protective equipment or clothing.

3.3 Undertaking Specialist Tasks

Witney Town Council undertakes a range of highly technical and skilled activities as part of its building and grounds maintenance. Each area of activity has a specialist training and induction program where new staff are trained under a probationary period before they are deemed as competent.

- Never undertake any tasks that you are not trained and competent to do so
- Never use specialist equipment unless you are trained and authorised to do so
- Only enter restricted access areas if you have full approval to do so
- If you have any doubts about the tasks and equipment you are authorised to use, please discuss this with your line manager in the first instance.

3.4 Ladders

(See ref 2.19.0)

3.5 Sharp Objects

(see ref 2.28.0)

3.6 Off-Site Working

(See ref 2.6.1)

3.7 Method Statements

The Council's risk assessments cover hazards most commonly associated with the tasks we undertake and the precautions and measures that Witney Town Councils has developed to help minimise these risks.

When special techniques or more varied work is being carried out by the Council will provide a health and safety method statement specific to a particular project detailing manpower and plant involved, as well as any special techniques that will be used and how this work will be carried out safely.

3.8 Permits to Work

Any permit to work systems approved by the Council are to be followed at all times. The deliberate, or unauthorised contravention of a permit by an employee, may lead to disciplinary procedures.

3.9 Vehicles, Plant & Machinery in General

(See ref 2.34.0)

3.10 Working Outdoors

- Wear weather protective PPE and sunscreen appropriate to the condition
- Employees working outdoors are encouraged to take regular breaks
- Facilities for taking breaks from the sun/warming up will be provided where it is practicable to do so.

3.11 Working by Traffic

- Before working close to traffic routes an appropriate risk assessment should be carried out with extra attention paid to lone workers.
- Wear Hi-Visibility clothing.
- Carry out operations facing traffic
- Use warning signs when working within 3m of traffic routes
- Establish an adequate safety zone
- Be aware of kerbs and trip hazards

3.12 Working by Water

- Before working close to open water an appropriate risk assessment should be carried out with extra attention paid to lone workers.
- Employees must work safety and should not take risks.
- Employees should wear a life vest if within 3 meters of the bank.
- Employees must know how to use rescue equipment such as pole and life hook and ring buoy.
- Employees must report any missing or damaged rescue equipment to their Line Manager.

3.13 Working Under Trees

- Trees will be frequently inspected and treated by a competent person and records kept.
- Employees must report any defects in tress, possible damage, accidents or near misses.
- Where trees are deemed high risk employee/public exposure will be managed by closure, cordoning off the area, path diversions, information or signage as appropriate.

- A safe working area must be established when undertaking tree surgery and this should be carried out only by a competent person.

3.14 Asbestos

(See ref 2.4.0)

3.15 Pesticides

Only qualified employees are permitted to use pesticides and a safe system of work must be followed.

- Use correct PPE
- Ensure that pesticides are locked away when not in use.
- Never apply pesticides in strong winds.
- Wash your hands after using pesticides and before eating, drinking or smoking.
- Report any health concerns.

3.16 Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease)

Weil's disease is contracted from 'rats' urine either from direct contact or through contact with contaminated water/sewage.

Strict precautions should be taken with regard to personal protective equipment when working in areas where contamination is likely. Impervious rubber gloves should be used along with waterproof footwear and overalls.

Persons at risk include those who are undertaking work in ditches, excavations or manholes.

Reducing the risk of Weil's disease:

- Ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to prevent rats entering the work area
- Report the presence of rats to your Line Manager or the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Never touch alive or dead rat with unprotected hands
- Cover all cuts and broken skin with waterproof plasters before and during work
- Always wear appropriate P.P.E.
- Wash your hands after working in an area where rats may be present
- Always wash your hands before eating, drinking or smoking.
- Report any health concerns.

Legionnaires' Disease

Witney Town Council will comply with its duty under health and safety law to consider the risks from legionella that may affect employees or members of the public and will take suitable precautions to control the risks.

3.17 Security

Premises and sites must be made secure at the end of the working day. All ladders must be removed, or boarded over, and tools and equipment removed or locked away.

3.18 Reducing Fire Risk Off-site

Prevention is better than cure when it comes to fire safety and one of the most important areas of fire prevention is to minimise and/or isolate combustible materials as follows:

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- Smokers working both directly and indirectly for Witney Town Council must not smoke whilst at Council premises or sites.
- Adequate means of escape and access for emergency vehicles must be maintained at all Council premises or sites.
- Temporary electrical systems must comply with legal standards.
- Inflammable liquids/materials used on site must be kept to a minimum and securely stored in appropriate closed containers well away from sources of ignition.
- The detection of a gas leak must be reported immediately. All equipment with gas taps including gas bottles not in use should be constantly checked to ascertain that the gas taps are turned off and not leaking.
- Any waste such as paper waste and other waste such as oily rags must not be allowed to accumulate and must be disposed of in appropriate containers.
- Faulty electrical equipment is a common source of a fire, therefore, electrical equipment not in use must be switched off and any observable defect of electrical equipment must be reported to your Line Manager or the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Each Witney Town Council vehicle is supplied with a small handheld fire extinguisher.
- Hot working procedures must be strictly adhered to.

3.19 Tools Equipment and Machinery

(See ref 2.32.0)

3.20 Personal Protective Equipment Regulations

Witney Town Council will comply with the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (as amended).

This requires that all employees who may be exposed to a risk to their health and safety while at work will be provided with properly fitting, suitable, and effective personal protective equipment or clothing.

All personal protective equipment or clothing provided by Witney Town Council will be maintained in good working order and all employees provided with such protective equipment or clothing must wear or use such protective equipment properly. Equipment will be subject to regular recorded checks. Employees must report defective personal protective equipment or clothing to their Line Manager or Health & Safety Coordinator as soon as it is found to be defective.

Employees provided with personal protective equipment will receive training and information on the use, maintenance and purpose of the equipment.

Safety Helmets

If applicable, safety helmets will be provided and are to be worn unless instructed to the contrary.

Safety Footwear

If applicable, safety boots or shoes will be issued to employees working under the Council's control. These are to be worn as directed.

Eye Protection

If applicable, suitable eye protection will be provided and employees have a duty to wear the protection when there is a foreseeable risk.

Ear Protection

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If applicable, suitable ear protection will be provided and employees have a duty to wear the protection when there is a foreseeable risk.

The Council will supply, maintain and replace as necessary ear protection as required and all employees have a duty to wear such protection when noise levels reach or exceed 85Db (A), as required under the noise at work regulations.

As a rule of thumb, if you are having difficulty having a normal conversation at 1m there is a noise problem in the workplace and you should wear ear defenders.

Hand/Finger Protection

- If applicable suitable industrial gloves will be provided that must be worn when handling abrasive materials or chemicals, which could harm the skin.
- Witney Town Council will endeavour to minimise the use of tools or equipment whose mode of operation causes excessive vibration.
- Employees must wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment and should take regular breaks.
- Employees are encouraged to report any potential symptoms to their line manager as soon as possible, so that appropriate action can be taken.

Body Protection

Protective clothing will be provided as necessary.

Respiratory Protection

- Dust is a health hazard and suitable masks will be provided where required. These must be worn when conditions dictate.
- Approved respirators must be worn where a COSHH risk assessment identifies the requirement.
- Ensure adequate ventilation when using hazardous chemicals/pesticides.

3.21 Working at height

Working at height is one of the highest causes of serious workplace accidents and is the subject of recent regulations. The definition of working at height is carrying out any task where there is a risk of falling.

- Where practical to do so avoid working at height.
- If you are working at height always ensure that the access equipment is suitable for the intended task.
- When working at height ensure that a colleague is available to assist in an emergency.
- Never work at height if there is a medical reason why you should not.
- A suitable ladder should be used for safe access to excavations.
- As well as safe access equipment, consider the use of fall arrest systems and appropriate personal protective equipment

3.22 Hot Work

Hot Work (e.g. Welding) is to be undertaken by trained personnel only.

Precautions for the safety of people, plant, equipment and machinery must be taken before any hot work is undertaken and a "Hot Work" permit to work may be required for a particular operation.

A fire extinguisher must be to hand when hot work is in progress and the work should be completed at least 30 minutes before leaving site for cooling down period.

Suitable Personal protective equipment should be worn.

3.23 Gas

- All calor, propane or similar gas bottles must not be used or stored inside any unauthorised hut, store or vehicle. When not in use they should be stored under lock and key.
- If a smell of gas is detected, open all doors and windows immediately call the National Gas Emergency Service immediately on 0800 111 999 and report the occurrence to the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- If a gas leak can be stopped by turning off a known source by means of a gas tap – turn off the source.
- DO NOT USE A NAKED FLAME
- Do not enter a confined space where dangerous/explosive gases may be present until proved safe to do so. If in doubt, consult the Health & Safety Coordinator.

3.24 Live Services

- Employees must ensure that they are aware of the location of live services and must keep 0.5m away from their location when digging, strimming or mowing.
- Employees must report any damage to live services to their Line Manager immediately.

3.25 Safe Access/Egress

- Roads, gangways, passageways, staircases and working platforms must be kept free from obstruction and, where necessary, adequately lit.
- Work areas must be kept tidy and materials stored safely.

3.26 Lone Working when Visiting Public Buildings/Working in Public Places

Employees will receive training in lone working procedures when working in public building: and public places and must:

- Leave diary details of who you are visiting including contact name, address and telephone number.
- Ensure regular contact with your Line Manager or other designated person and maintain appropriate reporting in systems.
- Be aware that certain areas have a higher risk of violence as does working early in the morning and late at night.
- Do not go into a situation if you feel threatened.
- Regularly assess the situation you are in and the risks to which you are exposed.
- Adopt an early warning policy to alert colleagues about any problem areas.
- Carry a means of communication with you or ensure that you have access to a phone.
- If you feel threatened, make your excuses and leave. Be aware of your surroundings and make sure you can leave the premises/area quickly if you need to.
- Follow the signing in and out procedures operating at buildings you visit.
- Make yourself familiar with evacuation and first aid arrangements at buildings you visit.
- Follow safety rules in operation at locations, such as no access areas and the use of personal protective equipment.
- Raise any safety concerns with the Council's Health and Safety Officer in the first instance.
- All accidents and near misses must be reported the employees Line Manager and Health & Safety Coordinator.

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- Where possible employees should avoid situation where they are working alone. Where this is unavoidable follow the lone working procedure and never put yourself in a position where you are exposed to a high level of risk.
- Ensure that you take regular breaks and avoid excessively long hours.
- Make sure your car is parked in a public, well-lit area, which is easily accessible.
- Avoid remote routes.
- Have your car keys in your hand to avoid searching for them next to your locked car.
- In order to maintain appropriate records of incidents it is essential that all incidents where you feel threatened or unsafe are reported to your Line Manager.

Avoiding Confrontation

If a colleague or member of the public becomes unreasonable or aggressive with, their behaviour:

- Behave appropriately - never meet aggression with aggression, be confident and professional but not arrogant and be aware of non-verbal communication.
- Respect the views of others and the importance of good customer care.
- Be polite
- Use communication and assertiveness to try to defuse the situation.
- If the situation is becoming difficult to handle, seek assistance from a colleague.

If the situation deteriorates further:

- Ensure that the aggressor does not block your escape route.
- If you are threatened and you are at risk, move away from the person facing you at all times.
- In the unlikely event that you are attacked protect yourself and consider using reasonable force to defend yourself.
- If you need to defend yourself, do it quickly. Aim for an area that will incapacitate the aggressor, get away and report the incident to the Police as soon as possible.
- Make a detailed note of the incident and the circumstances leading up to the incident together with details of any witnesses.
- Report all incidents

3.27 General Procedures

All personnel must follow the rules and procedures contained in this policy.

- All personnel must immediately report any unsafe practices or conditions in the workplace to their Line Manager or the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Personnel under the influence of alcohol or drugs are prohibited from the workplace.
- Any act, including horseplay, which might endanger the health and safety of others is strictly prohibited.
- An employee who is unfit due to injury, illness or fatigue will not be allowed to work if the impairment might put at risk the health and safety of that employee or other persons.
- Employees must not modify, adjust, move or tamper with any electrical equipment or machinery outside the scope of their duties, unless instructed by a senior member of the Council.
- Waste materials, particularly combustible materials and oily rags must be disposed of carefully, and in such a way that they do not constitute a fire hazard or other hazards.
- Employees should not undertake a task, which appears to be unsafe to him or her or other personnel.

Appendix 2

- Employees should not undertake tasks that require safety training without receiving such training.
- All injuries must be reported to your Line Manager and the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Protective guards and safety devices must be properly fitted and used where appropriate. Defects in such guards and safety devices must be reported to the employee's Line Manager and/or the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Only authorised employees are permitted to use chemicals in the workplace.
- Employees must wear suitable clothing and footwear at all times, and personal protective equipment must be worn where appropriate.

3.28 Monitoring

Witney Town Council will ensure all health and safety policies are monitored effectively and routinely by means of:

- Regular on-site spot checks
- Induction training and on-going employee supervision
- Training implementation on equipment
- Training implementation on work activities
- Risk assessments to be carried out routinely at each site
- Investigation of all accidents and ill health and implementation of action points.

Part 4 - Council Run Events

Detailed pre-planning, consultation with key parties and inspections before, during and after Council run events will be undertaken to ensure that the event is safe and successful to include:

- an event specific risk assessment involving a careful examination of each attraction and activity
- a realistic assessment of likely number of event attendees and a crowd control plan
- a suitable and sufficient emergency plan
- putting Witney Town Council's health and safety policy into practice
- organising an effective management structure and arrangements for delivery of the event which may include the use of external consultants to review all event documentation and overall event safety.
- a pre-opening check to include routes, siting, signage, vehicles, structures, barriers, stewards, lighting, public information and medical cover.
- an after the event inspection to include site safety, damage, security and accidents.
- monitoring health and safety performance.
- auditing and reviewing performance.

This Event Management Plan is designed to bring together all of the individual arrangements involved in the event into one document to provide a complete integrated event plan.

Its main objectives are:

- to facilitate the running of a safe and enjoyable event
- to consider and plan for problems that may happen
- to define trigger points at which other plans may be implemented

The plan will be subject to annual review to ensure it is current, reflects best practice and is fit for purpose.

Part 5 - Managing Contractors

Employees with responsibility for managing Contractors must:

- provide the task specifications and requirements to contractors before the tender to help them decide if they can do the job
- use appropriate selection criteria to ensure competent contractors are engaged
- assess any risks to contractors and employees and the public prior to, and during the activity
- ensure compliance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- inform contractors of workplace hazards, including special requirements e.g. permit to work systems or requirements for 'hot' work
- give information on emergency procedures, site rules and welfare facilities
- co-ordinate and control the work and ensure all parties are aware of their responsibilities
- maintain regular communication with all parties to ensure everyone has up-to-date information
- make Council employees aware of hazards created by contract activity
- monitor Health and Safety performance
- investigate all injuries, near misses and cases of ill health
- maintain records of the contract activity
- when the contract ends, review the activity with all parties, discuss what went well and what areas could be improved
- Inform all contractors of site safety rules prior to commencing work on site.
- Contractors' operations should be included in all safety briefings audits/inspections, paying special attention to access and egress
- Employees, residents and others in the vicinity should be advised where contractors are working in their particular area, identifying any overlaps which may adversely affect health and safety.
- Employees must report unsafe practices to their Line Manager and/or the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Misuse of equipment or facilities should never be allowed. Similarly, hazardous substances should be used safely.

Responsibilities of Contractors

- It is the responsibility of the contractors to be aware of and to comply with the obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (as amended), the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended), the Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1996-building work (as amended), the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (as amended) and other supporting legislation concerning Health and Safety relevant to their business operations.
- All Contractors will be expected to comply with the Council Health & Safety Policy and must ensure that their own Council policy is made available on-site whilst work is carried out.
- All Contractors will be provided with a copy of the Council Health & Safety Policy and will be required to sign a declaration confirming they have read, understood and agree to comply with this Policy.
- All Contractors are to provide evidence (including proof of payment – to demonstrate validity) of a minimum of £5 million cover for employers liability insurance and £5-£10 Million (based on contractor activity) cover for public liability insurance and a minimum of £2m for

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professional indemnity insurance for the duration of any contract. This evidence must also be produced for any other sub-contractor required to fulfil the contracted work.

- All work must be carried out in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions and take into account the safety of others on the site, and the general public.
- Scaffolding used by the Contractors' employees (even where scaffold has been erected for other contractors) must be inspected by their employer or a competent person appointed by their employer to ensure that it is erected and maintained in accordance with the Regulations and Codes of Practice.
- Contractors' employees are not permitted to alter any scaffold provided for their use, or use or interfere with any plant or equipment on the site, unless authorised.
- All plant or equipment brought on to site by the sub-contractor must be safe and in good working condition, fitted with any necessary guards and safety devices, and with any necessary certificates available for checking.
- All transformers, generators, extension leads, plugs and sockets must be to latest British Standards for Industrial use, and in good condition. All portable electrical appliances should be tested, identified and recorded in a register, which must be available for inspection.
- Any injury sustained or damage caused by Contractors' employees must be reported immediately to the Health & Safety Coordinator.
- Contractors' employees must comply with any safety instructions given by the Council representatives.
- Contractors informed of any hazards or defects noted during inspections will be expected to take immediate action
- Suitable PPE and first aid equipment in accordance with the Health & Safety Regulations must be provided by Contractors for their employees.
- Any material or substance brought on site, which has health, fire or explosion risks must be used and stored in accordance with Health & Safety Regulations and current recommendations, and that information (e.g. COSHH Assessments) must be provided to any other person who may be affected on-site.
- Contractors are particularly asked to note that workplaces must be kept tidy and all debris, waste materials etc. cleared as work proceeds.
- The Sub-contractor shall not permit the consumption or presence of any intoxicating alcoholic liquor or drugs on any of the Council sites at any time.
- The Sub-contractor shall not permit anyone employed by the contractor or sub- contractor to be present on the site if such person is judged to be under the influence of any intoxicating liquor or drugs.

Contractors Declaration

I/We acknowledge receipt of the Witney Town Council's Health and Safety Policy.
I/We have read, understood and will ensure compliance with it at all times whilst working for or on their behalf.

I/We also understand fully our legal obligations to carry out all work within the scope of Statutory Requirements, relevant Regulations and Codes of Practice, and will ensure that these are complied with in every respect.

I/We guarantee that copies of Witney Town Council's Health & Safety Policy will be available to all contractors/Contractor's supervisory personnel at all times and that they will be brought to the attention of all personnel in their respective occupations.

Name of Contractor/Council: _____

Address of Contractor/Council: _____

Name & Title/Position of Representative: _____

Part 6 – Environmental Policy

The Company recognises the importance of sustainable environmental protection and is proactive in complying with environmental regulations, legislation and approved codes of practice.

Our environmental objectives are delivered through:

- Ensuring that every employee is aware of the importance of their individual role in protecting the environment
- Actively encouraging feedback from our team on ways we can further improve our environmental performance
- Ensuring our suppliers and contractors must meet our environmental standards
- Listening and responding to the feedback provided by our customers on environmental issues
- Adhering to all relevant regulations concerning waste and environmental well-being
- Minimising the production of waste, continually seeking new opportunities to reduce the use of any packaging material, re-using where practical to do so and recycling waste
- Reducing and/or limiting the production of pollutants to water, land and air
- Taking reasonable and practical steps to control noise emissions from our operations
- Responsibly and legally disposing of any waste product
- We shall undertake a critical review of our environmental management system at least annually

This Policy is communicated to all of our employees, suppliers, and contractors and is made available to our customers.

APPENDIX 1

HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY COMMITTEE AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES

Union Appointed Health & Safety Representatives

Witney Town Council recognises that Health and Safety Representatives play an important part in increasing health and safety awareness and in the communication process.

The Council will comply with legislation covering the appointment and training of such representatives, and will encourage a co-operative and efficient relationship between the representatives and management. The number and identity of Health and Safety Representatives will be agreed in correspondence with the relevant trade unions.

Joint Consultation – Employee Safety Representatives

The Council will consult with Safety Representatives with a view to the making and maintenance of arrangements which will enable the representatives and employers to co-operate in promoting and developing measures to ensure Health and Safety at Work and in the checking of the effectiveness of such measures.

Each Safety Representative shall have the following functions: -

- To investigate complaints by any employee he/she represents relating to that employee's health, safety and welfare at work.
- To make representations to the Council on matters relating to employee's health, safety and welfare at work.
- To represent the employees, he/she was appointed to represent in consultations at the workplace with inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive and of any other enforcing authority and to receive such information from the inspectors as necessary.
- To attend meetings of the Health, Welfare and Safety Committee where he/she attends in his/her capacity as a Safety Representative in connection with any of the above.

Information to be provided by Employer

The Safety Representative and Health, Welfare and Safety Committee require employers to make information within their knowledge available to Safety Representatives as necessary to enable them to fulfil their functions. Such information should include:

1. Plans of proposed changes in organisation insofar as they affect the health and safety at work of the employees.
2. Technical information relating to plant, material, substance hazards and the precautions deemed necessary to eliminate or minimise them.
3. Details of accident/injury statistics including dangerous occurrences and notifiable diseases.
4. Details of any surveys which have been carried out affecting health and safety of employees.

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The Council is not obliged to provide information relating to national security, information likely to damage the organisation or anything related to an individual without prior consent or information concerning pending legal proceeding.

Joint Health, Welfare and Safety Committee – Objectives

The main objectives of the committee shall be to promote co-operation between employees and employers in instigating, developing and carrying out measures to ensure the health, welfare and safety at work, of employees of the Council and of other persons who may be affected by its activities.

Health, Welfare and Safety Committee - Functions

The committee have the function of keeping under review measures taken to ensure Health and Safety at Work of employees. In particular the Committee will include in their activities:

1. The study of accident and notifiable diseases statistics and trends, so that reports can be made to management on unsafe and unhealthy conditions and practices, together with recommendations for corrective action.
2. Examination of safety audit reports on a similar basis.
3. Consideration of reports and factual information provided by inspectors of The Health and Safety Executive.
4. Consideration of reports which Safety Representatives may wish to submit.
5. Assistance in the development of safety rules and safe systems of work.
6. To monitor the adequacy of safety and health communication and publicity in the workplace.
7. The provisions of a link with the appropriate inspectorates of the enforcing authority.
8. To consider the strategy for safety and accident prevention within the Council.

Informal Consultation

All employees are encouraged to report and discuss, on a day-to-day basis, health and safety matters appertaining to their work or workplaces with their Supervisor/Foreman and Line Manager.

Health and Safety Information

Information on health and safety developments, legislation etc will be provided at key workplace locations, other information will be provided through joint consultation channels; Council's notice boards, and day-to-day communication between Management, Supervisors/Foreman and Employees.

Vandalism/Anti-Social Behaviour

17/02/2026 - 13/04/2026

Date	Item/Location	Date/Time/Who Reported	Materials Cost	Staffing Costs	Action	Police Reference
16/02	Valence Crescent/Broadway Close Bus Stop damaged by Tree Surgeon Van	Public – With report and images	TBA	N/A	Insurers Informed	43260080452
16/02	Defecation on Windrush Cemetery Entrance Road	Works Team	None	N/A	Twice removed by Team	None
16/02	Pallets thrown into New Depot compound	Project Officer	None	N/A	Individual came forward – no action taken.	BOS-9312-26-0143-04
01/03	Grass turf pulled up and dumped around Burwell Playground	Public	£5	£20	Tidied up and reseeded to take place	
02/03	Skip at Windrush filled with Wood – 5 or 6 occasions have had Toilets and kitchen waste	Works Team	£250		Additional costs of disposal of skip due to the contamination.	Reported as Fly tipping to WODC.
31/03	ASB Skatepark	Works Team	£1,000		Significant vandalism overnight which resulted in 12 fence panels being damaged or destroyed, significant trespassing and damage of chairs from neighbouring courtside facilities.	DP-7466-26-4343-00
01/04	Fires at Country Park	Green Spaces		£70 officer time	Burnt material removed	

Cost can include replacement purchase or an approximation of additional staffing costs.

FULL COUNCIL



Agenda Item: Civility & Respect – Councillor Statement of Assurance

Meeting Date: Monday, 13 April 2026

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is to inform Members about the Civility and Respect Councillors' Statement of Assurance. It also seeks a decision from the Council on whether to adopt the Statement and require all Councillors to sign the pledge, to make signing the pledge a matter of individual choice, or to take no further action.

Background

Members will recall that, at the meeting held on 16 February, the Council received information regarding the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Civility and Respect project (minute no. 107 refers).

The Council has previously demonstrated its support for this initiative by adopting the NALC Civility and Respect Bullying and Harassment Statement in May 2022 and by signing the Civility and Respect Pledge in October 2022. Further information about the pledge is available here [Civility and Respect Pledge](#)

Current Situation

As advised at the last meeting 'The NALC Improvement and Development Board has introduced the Councillor's Statement of Assurance. This initiative strengthens their commitment to creating positive, supportive, and respectful parish and town council environments.

While parish and town councils can demonstrate their organisational commitment by signing the Civility and Respect Pledge, councillors themselves must also personally commit to upholding these values in their daily work and interactions.

Councillors who lead with civility and respect set the tone for their council and help ensure that council meetings and decision-making are effective, inclusive, and fair.

The statement is not a legal document or contractual obligation. It is a public affirmation of personal values and conduct.

Together, the Councillor's Statement of Assurance and the Civility and Respect Pledge give parish and town councils and councillors the tools to create a positive and professional culture.'

The Statement of Assurance is attached as **Appendix A**.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – no direct impact
- b) Biodiversity – no direct impact
- c) Crime & Disorder – no direct impact
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – no direct impact

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.

Agreeing that Councillors should sign the NALC Civility and Respect Councillor Statement of Assurance may be seen to strengthen standards of behaviour and promote a respectful working environment. However, it may also be viewed as unnecessary, particularly where existing codes of conduct are considered sufficient, which could lead to resistance or reputational risk if individuals choose not to sign. There is also a risk that expectations of behaviour and enforcement increase, and if not consistently applied, this could result in criticism.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

By agreeing that Councillors should sign up to the NALC Civility and Respect Councillor Statement of Assurance, positive social value may be achieved by promoting a culture of respect, inclusion, and professionalism within the Council. This can foster better relationships between Councillors, staff, and the community. It also signals a clear commitment to tackling bullying and harassment, which can help create a safer and more welcoming environment for diverse voices to participate in local democracy.

On the other hand, there may be some negative social implications if the requirement is perceived as symbolic rather than meaningful, or if it is not consistently upheld in practice. This could lead to cynicism among the public, undermining trust rather than strengthening it.

Financial implications

- There are no cost implications pertaining to this report.

Recommendations

Member are invited to note the report and,

1. Consider on how to progress on this issue as outlined at the beginning of the report.



Civility & Respect

IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVW, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

Councillor's Statement of Assurance

I confirm that I have read the council's Code of Conduct, including the principles of public life, and understand my obligations and the behaviour expected of me whenever I am acting as a councillor.

Understanding my duties as a councillor, I will adopt the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. I will also:

- Behave respectfully towards others, including those I disagree with.
- Uphold the values identified in my council's Code of Conduct.
- Attend training required by the council as part of my role as a councillor.

Signed _____

Name _____

Date _____

From: Oxfordshire County Council

Sent: 10 March 2026 16:00

To: Town Clerk <townclerk@witney-tc.gov.uk>

Subject: Notice of Definitive Map and Statement Legal Event Modification Order 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

The County Council has just made a Legal Event Modification Order (LEMO) to update the Definitive Map and Statement (DMS). This is essentially an administrative exercise and is not subject to objection. Most Public Path Orders that the County Council makes also have the effect of modifying the DMS at the same time but some Orders and Agreements, including any made by District Councils, do not legally modify the DMS and require this additional procedure. This is an annual housekeeping exercise and this Order includes all those legal events which have either come into operation or came to our attention between 1 January 2025 and 31 December 2025 inclusive.

Attached is a list of the legal events contained within the Order for your information together with an extract from the LEMO showing the changes to the Definitive Statement relevant to your parish. I would emphasise that all the changes included have already taken place on the ground, after the relevant Diversion Orders / Creation Agreements were confirmed / signed / certified as required. Since you should have already received any information about these changes at the time that the relevant Order was made, I am not including a copy of these Order plans. However, please do contact me if you wish to see a copy of any of these Orders or have any queries.

Yours faithfully,

Countryside Access Legal

Environment & Heritage | Oxfordshire County Council | County Hall, New Road, Oxford.

Following the making of the Order, the definitive statement will read as follows:

Path Number	Status	Description	Width	Conditions & Limitations	Remarks (not forming part of the Definitive Statement)
Witney 43	FP	From Witney FP4 N of Northfield Farm, leading generally NE, continuing NE, as diverted, along the N side of Madley Way, then generally NE to Jubilee Way.	1) Minimum 3 m. between SP 369 106 and SP 371 107. 2) Diversion Order confirmed 16.8.2004 provided 1.5m minimum over diverted section. 3) S.38 Agreement 23.7.2008 provided width of 2m from SP 3720 1097 to SP 3720 1099.	-	1) Formerly part of South Leigh FP25 West Oxfordshire (Parishes) Order 2000. 2) Diversion Order confirmed & came into effect 26.04.2002 (when numbered as South Leigh FP25). 3) Diversion Order confirmed 16.08.2004 (when numbered as South Leigh FP25). 4) Part superseded by all-purpose highway -HA1980 s.38 Agreement dated 18.4.2008; came into effect 23.7.2008. 5) Part renumbered as Witney FP55 following division by Jubilee Way s.38 adoption.
Witney 55	FP	From South Leigh FP25 at the parish boundary running SSW to Jubilee Way.	S.38 Agreement 23.7.2008 provided width of 2m.	-	1) Formerly part of Witney FP43. Renumbered following division by Jubilee Way s.38 adoption, effective 23.07.2008.

Appendix

Legal Events included in the 2026 Definitive Map Legal Event Modification Order

Parish	Parish ref.	Path no.	Map sheet no.	District	Order Title	Legislation	Date of confirmation	Date came into effect
Banbury	120	FP 60	SP 44 SE	Cherwell	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Banbury	120	FP 120	SP 44 SE	Cherwell	Public Path Creation Agreement relating to Footpath between Banbury Site A and Public Footpath 120/7 Banbury, Oxfordshire	HA 1980 s.25	20.07.2020	20.07.2020
Bicester	129	FP 15	SP 52 SE	Cherwell	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Blackbird Leys	320B	FP 6	SP 50 SE	City	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Blewbury	135	FP 36	SU 58 NW	Vale	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Chalgrove	155	FP 3	SU 69 NW	South	SODC Public Path Diversion Order 2020, Public Footpath Chalgrove Footpath No. 3 (Land west of Marley Lane)	TCPA 1990 s.257	26.03.2021	19.06.2025
Cumnor	184	FP 24	SP 40 SE	Vale	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Didcot	189	RB 24	SU 59 SW	South	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Dorchester	190	FP 7	SU 59 SE	South	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Dorchester	190	FP 16	SU 59 SE	South	Public Path Creation Agreement relating to the width of Dorchester Footpath 16, Oxfordshire	HA 1980 s.25	20.01.2025	20.01.2025
Dorchester	190	FP 22	SU 59 SE	South	Public Path Creation Agreement relating to (and extending the width of) Dorchester Footpath 22, Oxfordshire	HA 1980 s.25	20.01.2025	20.01.2025
Dorchester	190	FP 32	SU 59 SE	South	Public Path Creation Agreement relating to Footpath between Footpath No. 16 and Footpath No. 22, Parish of Dorchester, Oxfordshire	HA 1980 s.25	20.01.2025	20.01.2025

Legal Events included in the 2025 Definitive Map Legal Event Modification Order



Parish	Parish ref.	Path no.	Map sheet no.	District	Order Title	Legislation	Date of confirmation	Date came into effect
Ducklington	194	FP 2	SP 30 NE	West	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Harwell	243	FP11	SU 48 NE	Vale	Rights of Way, The Stopping up of Highways (County of Berks) (No. 3) Order 1959	TCPA 1947(a) s.49	26.06.1959	26.06.1959
Harwell	243	FP 11	SU 48 NE	Vale	Royal County of Berkshire (Footpath No. 11 Harwell) Public Path Diversion Order 1971	TCPA 1968 s.94	06.08.1971	12.08.1971
Harwell	243	FP 11	SU 48 NE	Vale	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Henley-on-Thames	245	FP 38	SU 78 SE	South	SODC Order to stop up footpath, Land adjacent to 23 Haywards Close Henley-on-Thames	TCPA 1990 s.257	04.10.2013	23.06.2025
Horton-cum-Studley	257	FP 9	SP 61 SW	Cherwell	Boarstall Footpath No. 18 (part) & Horton-cum-Studley Footpath No. 9 (part), Public Path Diversion Order 2025	HA 1980 s.119	21.07.2025	20.10.2025
Letcombe Regis	275	FP 12	SU 38 NE	Vale	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Little Wittenham	283	FP 6	SU 59 SE	South	Public Path Creation Agreement relating to Footpath on land between Sires Hill and Public Footpath No. 6, Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire	HA 1980 s.25	10.12.2025	10.12.2025
Radley	326	FP 17	SU 59 NW	Vale	Public Path Creation Agreement relating to land at Abbey Stream, Abingdon	HA 1980 s.25	05.07.1985	05.07.1985
Shirburn	344	FP 4	SU 79 SW	South	SODC Public Path (Lewknor Nos. 23 & 20 and Shirburn No. 4) Diversion Order 1987	HA 1980 s.119	13.04.1988	08.06.1988
Steeple Barton	365	BR 11	SP 42 NW	West	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			

Legal Events included in the 2025 Definitive Map Legal Event Modification Order

Parish	Parish ref.	Path no.	Map sheet no.	District	Order Title	Legislation	Date of confirmation	Date came into effect
Steeple Barton	365	FP 13	SP 42 NW	West	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Steeple Barton	365	FP 15	SP 42 NW	West	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Uffington	387	FP 13	SU 38 NW	Vale	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Wantage	390	FP 30	SU 38 NE	Vale	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Witney	410	FP 43	SP 31 SE	West	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Wootton (Abingdon)	415	FP 15	SP 40 SE	Vale	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			
Wootton (Abingdon)	415	FP 32	SP 40 SE	Vale	(Superseded by all-purpose highway)			

From: neighbourhoodplan@northleighparishcouncil.gov.uk

<neighbourhoodplan@northleighparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2026 5:41 AM

To: neighbourhoodplan@northleighparishcouncil.gov.uk

Subject: North Leigh Neighbourhood Plan - Pre-submission Consultation

Good morning,

Under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), North Leigh Parish Council is required to consult those whose interests the qualifying body considers may be affected by the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan. This email seeks your views in pursuance of that requirement.

Attached please find a copy of the Plan, which is also available on the North Leigh Parish website together with its supporting documents which can be found here [Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission Consultation 2026 – North Leigh Parish](#).

Please submit your representations using one of the following methods:

- a) Complete the response form online at [Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission Consultation 2026 Questionnaire – North Leigh Parish](#)

Or

- b) Print the attached response form and complete it in black pen. Then either post it to the Parish Clerk at [REDACTED] or scan and email it to neighbourhoodplan@northleighparishcouncil.gov.uk.

On the questionnaire, we do ask for personal details. Should you supply them, these will not be published in any way. Representations submitted by businesses or organisations will be published in full and may include contact details. All personal details will be treated in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and our privacy policy, which can be found on our website at [NLPC-Privacy-Notice-adopted-8th-May-2025.pdf](#)

The deadline for comments is the 8th May 2026.

Best regards

Allison Leigh

Clerk, North Leigh Parish Council



North Leigh Neighbourhood Development Plan – Public Consultation

North Leigh Parish Council invites comments on their Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. This is a formal public consultation being run in accordance with Regulation 14 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

THE CONSULTATION PERIOD RUNS UNTIL midnight Friday 8th May 2026

What is this consultation about?

We are consulting on the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan and associated appendices. We want to gather the views of all stakeholders, particularly those who live, work, or do business in North Leigh.

Your views may relate to the proposed policies, the content and wording of the Plan, whether the Plan is missing anything, or anything else you would like to bring to our attention. Once these views have been gathered, the Plan will be amended as necessary before being submitted West Oxfordshire District Council for examination.

How can you view the Neighbourhood Development Plan?

- The Neighbourhood Plan and its associated documents are available at:
<https://northleighparishcouncil.gov.uk/parish-council/neighbourhood-plan/>
- The Neighbourhood Plan and its associated documents are available to physically consult at North Leigh Memorial Hall from 9 a.m. Friday 27th March until 5 p.m. Friday 8th May.

How we will process your comments

Responses must be received prior to the end of the consultation period, which is midnight on Friday 8th May.

Responses must include a name, address and (if relevant) the organisation you are representing.

By responding to the consultation survey, you are consenting for your response data to be held by North Leigh Parish Council. Your data will be processed by NLPC in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (2018). You can read NLPC's Privacy Policy at: <https://northleighparishcouncil.gov.uk/privacy-policy/>

Comments received by individuals will be included in a publicly available consultation report – **names and other contact details will not be published**. Comments submitted by statutory consultees, businesses, or organisations will be published with the name of the organisation.

Where do I send my consultation comments?

Please email your consultation response form to neighbourhoodplan@northleighparishcouncil.gov.uk or send by post to: [REDACTED]

You can also deposit your consultation response form in the box at North Leigh Memorial Hall

PLEASE RETURN YOUR CONSULTATION FORM BY MIDNIGHT ON 8th May 2026

PART 1 – YOUR DETAILS

Comments received by individuals will be included in a publicly available consultation report – **names and other contact details will not be published**. Comments submitted by statutory consultees, businesses, or organisations will be published with the name of the organisation.

1. Are you completing this form as an: (please circle)

- Individual
- Community organisation or group
- Business
- Other - *tell us here:*

2. Please add your contact details below:

- Name:
- Organisation/ business you are representing (if relevant):
- Address:
- Email:
- Phone number:

PLEASE TURN OVER TO MAKE YOUR COMMENTS

PART 2 – YOUR COMMENTS ON THE NORTH LEIGH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

A: The Plan

Please tell us if you support or object to the plan by ticking one of the boxes. . If you object, please give the page, section, paragraph number and line of the text you would like to change, along with the replacement text you'd like to see. Please append a separate sheet if you have more comments.

Do you support the North Leigh Neighbourhood Plan?

Mark only one

I support the Neighbourhood Plan

I don't support the Neighbourhood Plan

B: The Policies

Please add comments if you would like to. If you object, please give the page, section, paragraph number and line of the text you would like to change, along with the replacement text you'd like to see. Please append a separate sheet if you have more comments

Policy HD1: New Housing Development

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy HD1: New Housing Development

Policy HD2: Housing Mix

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy HD2 – Housing Mix

Policy HD3: Infill Housing

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy HD3: Infill Housing

Policy HD4: Coalescence

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy HD4: Coalescence

Policy HD5: Cultural, historic and natural heritage

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy HD5: Cultural, historic and natural heritage

Policy RS1 – Character and Design

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on RS1 – Character and Design

Policy RS2 – Key Local Views

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy RS2 – Key Local Views

Policy RS3 - Heritage Assets

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy RS3 - Heritage Assets

Policies N1 to N3 – Biodiversity, Nature, and Climate

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policies N1 to N3 – Biodiversity, Nature, and Climate

Policy N4 – Local Green Spaces

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy N4 – Local Green Spaces

Policy T1 – Sustainable Transport and Active Travel

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy T1 – Sustainable Transport and Active Travel

Policy IF1: Community infrastructure and facilities

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy IF1: Community infrastructure and facilities

Policy IF2: Building a strong, sustainable economy

Mark only one

I support this policy

I object to this policy

Comments on Policy IF2: Building a strong, sustainable economy

Part C: Any other comments

Please let us know of any other comments you may have.

Please return this questionnaire to the North Leigh Memorial Hall by 5pm on 8th May 2026. If you have any questions and/or need us to collect the form from you, please feel free to contact Allison Leigh, the Parish Council Clerk, at neighbourhoodplan@northleighparishcouncil.gov.uk.