

Parks & Recreation

Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council

Monday, 7th September, 2026 at 6.00 pm



To members of the Parks & Recreation Committee - J Aitman, S Simpson, J Treloar, R Crouch, D Edwards-Hughes, D Temple, R Smith and J Doughty (and all other Town Councillors for information).

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

Admission to Meetings

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

Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk in advance. Priority will be given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda.

Commitment to Civility and Respect

This meeting will be conducted in accordance with Witney Town Council's commitment to the Civility and Respect Pledge. Councillors, officers and members of the public are expected to treat one another with courtesy, dignity, and respect, ensuring that debate remains professional, objective and focused on the business being discussed. Personal criticism, intimidation, or behaviour that could undermine the wellbeing of those present is inconsistent with the standards expected of the Council.

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 Privacy Notice

To view the meeting please follow this link [Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting 07.09.2026](#)

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 4 - 9)

a) To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee held on 1 June 2026;

b) Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda (Questions on the progress on any item).

4. **Participation of the Public**

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. **Finance Report** (Pages 10 - 20)

To receive and consider the report of the R.F.O concerning the financial position of items under the remit of this Committee.

Recreation

6. **Sports Pitches** (Pages 21 - 30)

To receive and consider the report of the Head of Estates & Operations.

7. **Major Projects**

a) **West Witney Projects** (Pages 31 - 33)

To receive and consider the report of the Project Officer.

b) **Raleigh Crescent MUGA/MUSA**

To receive a verbal update from Officers.

8. **Exclusion of Press & Public**

To consider and if appropriate, to pass the following resolution: That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions 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

9. **West Witney Projects - Part 2** (Pages 34 - 36)

To receive and consider the confidential update of the Project Officer on these projects.



Town Clerk

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

Held on Monday, 1 June 2026

At 6.02 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	S Simpson	D Edwards-Hughes
	J Treloar	R Smith
	R Crouch	T Ashby (In place of J Doughty)
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
	Adam Cook	Project Officer
Others:	None	

PR262 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J Doughty, Councillor T Ashby attended as a substitute.

PR263 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

PR264 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Committee.

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor S Simpson be elected. There being no other nominations it was:

Resolved:

That, Councillor Sandra Simpson be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2026/27 municipal year.

PR265 MINUTES

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 9 March 2025 were received.

PR125 – Members heard there was no further update on the Raleigh Crescent MUGA/MUSA owing to other projects utilising Officer resources.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 9 March 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

PR266 **PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC**

There was no public participation.

PR267 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee considered whether any changes were needed to the current Terms of Reference.

Recommended:

1. That, no amendments be made to the Terms of Reference and;
2. That, the Terms of Reference be recommended for approval by the Full Council at the meeting of 13 July 2026.

PR268 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received the written and verbal report of the Responsible Financial Officer detailing income and expenditure for budgets which were the responsibility of the committee.

It was noted that the year-end process had been completed, with the AGAR to be presented to Council on 30 June within the required statutory timescales. Members were advised that income and expenditure had been aligned to the correct financial year to ensure accurate budget reporting.

Members raised questions regarding reduced football income at The Leys and professional fees associated with the Courtside project. Officers confirmed that reduced income reflected fewer games played, and that legal costs related to lease arrangements and the overall protection of Council assets.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the management accounts of the Committee for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 be approved.

The Responsible Financial Officer left the meeting at 6:13pm.

PR269 **ANNUAL RESIDENTS SURVEY RESULTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the results of the resident's annual satisfaction survey which was held at the beginning of the year.

The survey had received a relatively small number of responses, with the majority of respondents being older residents. It was further noted that many of the issues and comments raised were already in the process of being actioned by officers.

A Member requested that additional analysis be undertaken to determine the percentage of satisfactory or above responses from those under 30. It was also reported by the DTC that officers were exploring the possibility of amendments to future surveys in order to obtain more meaningful and representative feedback from residents.

A suggestion was made that a survey could be carried out at the Witney Carnival to increase engagement and reach a greater audience. It was agreed that this proposal would be raised at the Stronger Communities meeting on 15 June 2026.

A specific request was made for Raleigh Crescent play area to be considered for the inclusion of picnic benches, with a suggestion that the Witney Shed may be able to assist.

It was also suggested that the Witney Past, Present and Future Committee could explore the idea of organising a community "Big Lunch".

Recommended:

1. That the report and verbal update be noted and;
2. That officers undertake further analysis of survey data to identify the percentage of younger respondents reporting satisfaction levels of "satisfactory" or above; and;
3. That the above additional engagement suggestions be referred to the relevant Committees for consideration.

PR270 LEYS SPLASH PARK - SUMMER SEASON

The Committee received a verbal report from the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the splash park operating arrangements for the summer period based on a briefing document from the Head of Estates & Operations which was circulated at the meeting.

Members held a detailed and constructive discussion exploring the most appropriate operating hours, recognising the need to accommodate both pre-school children and families earlier in the day, as well as school-aged children accessing the facility after school.

It was acknowledged that the level of demand would clearly be influenced by weather conditions, which remained uncertain however, members were mindful of the potential additional financial implications of water usage.

Officers advised that, where possible, grey water from the splash park was reused to water areas close to The Leys, although extending this further presented logistical and operational challenges.

A proposal was made by Cllr R Smith, seconded by Cllr R Crouch, to extend operating hours to 10:00am to 5:00pm, with Officers preparing a report for Full Council on 13 July detailing the impact of these extended opening hours on water usage including overall water consumption, the extent of grey water reuse, and the potential offset where grey water replaced freshwater use.

A counter proposal was put forward by Cllr D Edwards-Hughes, seconded by Cllr J Treloar, to amend the operating hours to 10:00am to 6:00pm.

Following a vote, 4 Members voted in favour of the proposal by Cllr Smith and 3 Members in favour of the counter proposal. With five members of the Policy, Governance & finance Committee being present it was further agreed that rather than have to wait for ratification at a future meeting that the changes be applied with immediate effect.

It was therefore:

Resolved:

1. That, the update be noted and;
2. That, splash park operating hours be amended to 10:00am to 5:00pm with immediate effect and;
3. That, an update on water usage and associated costs against budget be presented to the Full Council meeting on 13 July in order that the Council can review the position and make any necessary adjustments.
4. That, given the quorum of the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee Members present, the revised operating hours be implemented with immediate effect rather than awaiting formal ratification.

PR271 SPORTS PITCHES

The Committee received the report of the Head of Estates and Operations along with a verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk (DTC).

Members heard that the bowls green had received positive feedback from visiting clubs regarding its appearance.

The Committee was advised that the first few games of Witney Swifts Cricket Club had been relocated away from West Witney, as the facility was not ready for use. It was confirmed that the cost of this relocation had been met by the building contractor and therefore had no financial impact on the Council.

In response to a question from a Member, the DTC confirmed that quarterly football liaison meetings were scheduled; however, engagement from clubs at the most recent meeting had been limited.

Regarding the playing pitches located at Windrush Pavilion, it was reported that a further review of grass coverage and condition was expected to take place within the next 2 to 3 weeks, with any potential budget implications for remedial works by the town council to be presented to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee on 22 June if appropriate.

A Member requested information on the cost of maintaining the cricket square at The Leys. Following discussion, it was unanimously agreed that a final approach be made to local clubs to determine whether there was interest in re-establishing cricket use at The Leys. Should no interest be received, it was suggested that the area be returned to a grass playing pitch and utilised for football, where there was a known demand.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and;
2. That, a final expression of interest be sought from clubs regarding cricket use at The Leys, with the area reverting to grass football provision should no interest be received and;
3. That, potential budget implications be prepared in respect of football pitch maintenance at Windrush Place pitches and presented to the meeting of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee on 22 June 2026.

PR272 WEST WITNEY PROJECTS

The Committee received the Project Officer's update on the West Witney projects.

Members welcomed the completion of the new Works Depot and expressed their satisfaction at this milestone.

An update was provided regarding the electricity installation, which had unfortunately been delayed due to the actions of the electricity utility company. Members noted the delay with disappointment. Whilst Members shared in officers' disappointment, regarding the delay to the refurbishment of the clubhouse, they noted that contractual penalties would be applied to and recovered from the contractor. It was further confirmed that there would be no additional cost to the Council arising from the extended hire of temporary toilet facilities required as a result of the delay in the delivery of the clubhouse refurbishment.

The Committee welcomed that a full breakdown of project costs would be presented to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee on 22 June.

Resolved:

That the update be noted.

PR273 THE LEYS REDEVELOPMENT

The Committee received the report of the Project officer on the Courtside Hub redevelopment.

Members were pleased to note the target opening date provided by Courtside. Members also noted that the remaining contribution from the Council would only be made upon full completion and satisfactory demonstration that the original specification and requirements had been achieved.

The Committee received an update on the progression of a Traffic Regulation Order at The Leys, noting that work was ongoing and that enforcement would be supported by Oxfordshire County Council.

A Member raised ongoing concerns regarding parking demand and suggested that the neighbouring housing association be approached for potential weekend use of their car park, when it was understood to be underutilised. The Deputy Town Clerk (DTC) advised that discussions had previously taken place; however, the arrangement had proved complex due to shared tenancy of the car park, requiring a joint agreement which it was understood would be unachievable.

Members considered proposals for cycle storage as well as additional bins and seating at recreation ground, and it was unanimously agreed that these works be fully funded by the Council to a cost up to £5,600, to be met from the Infrastructure Earmarked Reserve.

It was further agreed that the fencing surrounding the skatepark should be reviewed to ensure it was sufficiently robust and provided appropriate safety, height, and protection for all users of both the skatepark and the new Courtside Hub.

Resolved:

1. That, the update be noted;
2. That, up to £5,600 be allocated from the Infrastructure Earmarked Reserve for cycle storage, bins and seating at the Leys recreation ground and;
3. That, the fencing around the skatepark be reviewed to ensure appropriate safety and robustness with quotes being presented to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee later in the month.

Cllr R Smith left the meeting at 7:15pm, just prior to its conclusion.

The meeting closed at: 7.18 pm

Chair

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Finance Report

Meeting Date: Monday 7 September 2026

Contact Officer: Responsible Financial Officer

Should Members have any queries about this report advance notice would be appreciated, in writing, by 10am on the day of the meeting to allow for a full response at the meeting.
E-mail nigel.warner@witney-tc.gov.uk

Background

Detailed income and expenditure statements for budgets which are the responsibility of this committee are enclosed; these are the management accounts for this committee. The period to which this report relates is 1 April 2026 to 31 July 2026, the first four months of the financial year.

For the Parks and Recreation Committee the following cost centres are in place. Cost centres, comprising three digits, typically represent a discrete service entity, to which income and expenditure is allocated against previously agreed revenue budgets.

Cost centre	Service
201	Splash Park at the Leys Recreation Ground
202	The Leys Recreation Ground
203	West Witney Sports Ground
204	Burwell (Queen Elizabeth 2) Sports Ground
205	King George V/ Newland Recreation Ground
207	Moorland Road Play Area
208	Woodgreen/ Play Area
209	Eton Close Play Area
210	Oxlease Play Area
211	Fieldmere Play Area
212	Quarry Road Play Area
213	Raleigh Crescent Play Area/ Deer Park pitches
214	Park Road Play Area
215	Cedar Drive Play Area
216	Unterhaching Play Area
217	Waterford Lane Play Area
218	Windrush Place
230	Play Areas (holding budget)

Within each cost centre income and expenditure is then allocated to a four-digit nominal ledger code; these codes are common across the cost centres. Nominal ledger codes further

define the costs associated with the cost centre and correspond to a specific type of account, such as materials or staffing costs. Codes commencing with “1” are income codes; codes commencing with “4” are expenditure codes.

A report is submitted to every ordinary meeting of the standing committees and previous reports are available on the relevant committee section of the website.

Current Situation

Members may wish to note the following matters in relation to the management accounts:

1. Income. As is the Council’s practice, invoices in relation to codes 1043/202, 1044/203 and 1045/203 (green fees) are raised in September 2026 so will not as yet show in the accounts.
2. Income - note the seasonal nature of the income in relation to sports facilities, with cricket skewed to the April – September period when income from football is much lower.
3. Code 4110/202 Subsidised lettings the Leys. The expenditure of £6,060 in the year to date is in relation to the use of the Leys in relation to the Witney Pride and Witney Music Festival and Witney Carnival. The income code 1055 – ground hire – not charged/grant, is credited with the same amount.
4. All codes 4047 – play equipment maintenance. As previously advised the Council no longer holds budgets against individual play areas but instead there is a play area holding budget at cost centre 230, amounting to £15,320 for 2026/27. The total spend to date on play equipment maintenance is £2,061 and funds will be vired over to the individual sites from the holding budget a budget to cover this expenditure.
5. There are a number of cost centres relating to facilities which are in the process of being transferred. The largest is Windrush Place where a revenue budget has been set of £45,760 but no expenditure to date.
6. I have not provided any detailed commentary on individual budget lines; this will be done as part of the budget process so if Members have any queries please e-mail as per the above.

Note also the following comments relating to the management accounts across the Council:

1. There will always be an inevitable “lag” between expenditure being incurred and being shown in the accounts.
2. Expenditure is not necessarily incurred evenly over the course of the year. For example most expenditure in relation to nominal ledger code 4025 (insurance) is incurred when the annual premium is paid in April. The Splashpark expenditure (cost centre 201) is concentrated in the summer months. There are also similar patterns on the income as noted for football and cricket fees paid and for some annual charges for rentals etc.
3. Overhead recharges have been processed for the four months to 31 July 2026 . The outside staff and depot recharges are based on timesheets and so there is always some variation against budget depending on activities undertaken. The cost centres

from which the recharges are made are the responsibility of the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee and will be included in the report for that Committee.

The summary for the period is:

	Budget	Months 1 to 3 actual
Expenditure	£560,722	£166,107
Income	(£69,079)	(£12,968)
Net expenditure	£491,643	£153,139 (31.1%)

Subject and based to the above there are no matters of significant variance which I would draw to the attention of Members.

REVENUE BUDGET 2027-28 AND CAPITAL & SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS 2027-28 AND BEYOND

In line with normal Council procedures, the RFO will shortly be commencing the annual review of all the Committees to prepare the budget estimates for 2027-28.

Draft budgets are prepared based upon current activities and patterns of income and expenditure. Any additional revenue expenditure is considered separately as Revenue Growth Items.

It is also normal practice that during the budget cycle the Council considers the Capital and Special Revenue budget to identify which projects or schemes are to be implemented and undertaken during the next financial year.

In drafting budgets your officers will have due regard to the draft Strategic Plan and the medium term-financial strategy.

Members are requested to consider items to be included in next year's budget and any other adjustments in the context of the Council's existing and upcoming service commitments. This will enable Officers to obtain costings and the RFO to draft as accurate budget estimates as possible.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

1. A Forward Looking Town Council

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 – whilst a sufficient budget is necessary for the Council to meet its obligations and objectives, there are no implications directly resulting from this report.
- b) Biodiversity – whilst a sufficient budget is necessary for the Council to meet its obligations and objectives, there are no implications directly resulting from this report.
- c) Crime & Disorder – whilst a sufficient budget is necessary for the Council to meet its obligations and objectives, there are no implications directly resulting from this report.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – whilst a sufficient budget is necessary for the Council to meet its obligations and objectives, there are no implications directly resulting from this report.

Risk

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

The provision of regular financial reports is part of the Council's risk management system.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. Social value is not quantified in the financial reports but clearly the creation of social value is dependent on setting adequate budgets to meet the Council's objectives.

Financial implications

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

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and

1. Approve the report and the management accounts of the Parks & Recreation Committee for the period 1 April to 30 July 2026.
2. Consider items to be included in next year's revenue and capital/special revenue item budgets, noting that approval of such items will be for the Council to consider in the budget cycle of meetings.

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2026

Month No: 4

Parks and Recreation Committee: Draft management accounts 1 April to 31 July 2026

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>Parks & Recreation</u>								
<u>201 SPLASHPARK</u>								
4012 WATER RATES	14,823	133	15,000	14,867		14,867	0.9%	
4016 CLEANING MATERIALS	197	92	300	208		208	30.6%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	1,733	935	3,500	2,565		2,565	26.7%	
4038 OTHER MAINTENANCE	0	425	0	(425)		(425)	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	0	0	510	510		510	0.0%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	72	75	0	(75)		(75)	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	2,951	3,285	8,358	5,073		5,073	39.3%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	208	281	494	213		213	56.8%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	602	640	1,239	599		599	51.6%	
SPLASHPARK :- Indirect Expenditure	20,586	5,865	29,401	23,536	0	23,536	19.9%	0
Net Expenditure	(20,586)	(5,865)	(29,401)	(23,536)				
<u>202 THE LEYS RECREATION GROUND</u>								
1020 SPORTS - FOOTBALL	1,596	382	2,810	2,429			13.6%	
1043 GREEN FEES - WTBC	5,550	0	5,760	5,760			0.0%	
1051 GROUND HIRE	12,138	3,238	12,247	9,009			26.4%	
1052 EXPENSES RECOVERED	455	0	171	171			0.0%	
1054 EASEMENTS/WAYLEAVES	0	0	6	6			0.0%	
1055 GROUND HIRE - NOT CHARGD/GRANT	5,820	6,010	6,010	0			100.0%	
1058 WATER RECOVERED	0	0	202	202			0.0%	
1170 GRANTS RECEIVED	1,236	0	0	0			0.0%	
THE LEYS RECREATION GROUND :- Income	26,794	9,630	27,206	17,577			35.4%	0
4012 WATER RATES	3,918	(48)	0	48		48	0.0%	
4014 ELECTRICITY	3,769	829	3,737	2,908		2,908	22.2%	
4017 CONTRACT CLEAN/WASTE	841	0	665	665		665	0.0%	
4024 SUBSCRIPTIONS	430	447	446	(1)		(1)	100.2%	
4025 INSURANCE	0	0	150	150		150	0.0%	
4028 I.T.	13	62	0	(62)		(62)	0.0%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	4,286	539	6,000	5,461		5,461	9.0%	
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	6,517	3,386	8,000	4,614	48	4,567	42.9%	
4041 EQUIPMENT HIRE	0	75	0	(75)		(75)	0.0%	
4046 SPORTS EQUIPMENT	1,833	0	3,500	3,500	115	3,385	3.3%	
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	3,341	187	0	(187)	53	(239)	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	940	1,040	1,100	60		60	94.6%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	199	145	(54)		(54)	137.4%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0	21	(21)	0.0%	

14:43

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2026

Month No: 4

Parks and Recreation Committee: Draft management accounts 1 April to 31 July 2026

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4110 LETTINGS - NO CHARGE/SUBSID'D	5,820	6,010	5,980	(30)		(30)	100.5%	
4215 IN BLOOM - INC SCHOOLS CHALLENGE	0	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	74,941	18,390	89,149	70,759		70,759	20.6%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	4,975	1,318	5,268	3,950		3,950	25.0%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	16,800	2,530	20,319	17,789		17,789	12.5%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	4,736	793	5,817	5,024		5,024	13.6%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	12,944	4,353	13,215	8,862		8,862	32.9%	
THE LEYS RECREATION GROUND :- Indirect Expenditure	146,293	40,110	165,491	125,381	237	125,144	24.4%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(119,499)	(30,480)	(138,285)	(107,805)				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	1,875	0	0	0				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(117,624)	(30,480)	(138,285)	(107,805)				
203 WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND								
1020 SPORTS - FOOTBALL	10,907	1,229	10,300	9,071			11.9%	
1021 SPORTS - CRICKET	1,939	820	2,000	1,181			41.0%	
1023 SPORTS - TENNIS	10,725	0	0	0			0.0%	
1044 GREEN FEES - WMBC	3,350	0	3,450	3,450			0.0%	
1045 GREEN FEES - WWBC	3,325	0	3,450	3,450			0.0%	
1054 EASEMENTS/WAYLEAVES	0	6	6	0			100.0%	
1060 INSURANCE RECOVERED	0	0	472	472			0.0%	
1170 GRANTS RECEIVED	6,986	0	0	0			0.0%	
WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND :- Income	37,232	2,055	19,678	17,624			10.4%	0
4024 SUBSCRIPTIONS	430	447	445	(2)		(2)	100.4%	
4025 INSURANCE	704	0	950	950		950	0.0%	
4028 I.T.	47	106	0	(106)		(106)	0.0%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	1,744	6	3,000	2,994		2,994	0.2%	
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	13,425	3,791	11,400	7,609	61	7,547	33.8%	
4046 SPORTS EQUIPMENT	665	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	376	0	390	390		390	0.0%	
4059 OTHER PROF FEES	0	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%	
4062 SPORTS PITCH MATERIALS	0	0	1,200	1,200		1,200	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	55,782	23,434	78,005	54,571		54,571	30.0%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	3,806	1,499	4,609	3,110		3,110	32.5%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	1,922	2,530	0	(2,530)		(2,530)	0.0%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	619	793	0	(793)		(793)	0.0%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	9,319	5,567	11,563	5,996		5,996	48.1%	
WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND :- Indirect Expenditure	88,838	38,174	114,062	75,888	61	75,827	33.5%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(51,607)	(36,119)	(94,384)	(58,265)				

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2026

Month No: 4

Parks and Recreation Committee: Draft management accounts 1 April to 31 July 2026

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
204 BURWELL (QE2) SPORTS GROUND								
1020 SPORTS - FOOTBALL	5,610	885	7,280	6,395			12.2%	
BURWELL (QE2) SPORTS GROUND :- Income	5,610	885	7,280	6,395			12.2%	0
4024 SUBSCRIPTIONS	215	223	220	(3)		(3)	101.5%	
4028 I.T.	36	25	0	(25)		(25)	0.0%	
4036 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	728	0	1,038	1,038		1,038	0.0%	
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	10,609	3,033	10,328	7,295		7,295	29.4%	
4046 SPORTS EQUIPMENT	1,334	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	135	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	1,200	630	1,245	615		615	50.6%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	39,386	12,941	39,003	26,062		26,062	33.2%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	2,712	906	2,305	1,399		1,399	39.3%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	641	843	0	(843)		(843)	0.0%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	206	265	0	(265)		(265)	0.0%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	6,716	2,945	5,782	2,837		2,837	50.9%	
BURWELL (QE2) SPORTS GROUND :- Indirect Expenditure	64,106	21,812	60,996	39,184	0	39,184	35.8%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(58,496)	(20,927)	(53,716)	(32,789)				
205 KING GEORGE V / NEWLAND								
1020 SPORTS - FOOTBALL	1,596	399	1,665	1,266			24.0%	
KING GEORGE V / NEWLAND :- Income	1,596	399	1,665	1,266			24.0%	0
4028 I.T.	8	6	0	(6)		(6)	0.0%	
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	2,895	1,528	5,917	4,389		4,389	25.8%	
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	33	108	0	(108)		(108)	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	496	520	515	(5)		(5)	101.0%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4100 GRANTS GENERAL	0	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	14,188	6,284	22,287	16,003		16,003	28.2%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	1,005	434	1,317	883		883	32.9%	
4892 C/S STAFF RCHG	641	843	0	(843)		(843)	0.0%	
4893 C/S O'HEAD RCHG	206	265	0	(265)		(265)	0.0%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	2,263	1,432	3,304	1,872		1,872	43.3%	
KING GEORGE V / NEWLAND :- Indirect Expenditure	21,922	11,419	33,915	22,496	0	22,496	33.7%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(20,326)	(11,020)	(32,250)	(21,230)				

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2026

Month No: 4

Parks and Recreation Committee: Draft management accounts 1 April to 31 July 2026

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
207 MOORLAND ROAD PLAY AREA								
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	449	108	0	(108)		(108)	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	313	329	325	(4)		(4)	101.1%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	5,606	2,885	7,801	4,916		4,916	37.0%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	384	216	461	245		245	46.8%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	955	632	1,156	524		524	54.6%	
MOORLAND ROAD PLAY AREA :- Indirect Expenditure	7,896	4,169	9,818	5,649	0	5,649	42.5%	0
Net Expenditure	(7,896)	(4,169)	(9,818)	(5,649)				
208 WOOD GREEN/PLAY AREA								
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	0	297	0	(297)		(297)	0.0%	
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	63	108	0	(108)		(108)	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	313	329	325	(4)		(4)	101.1%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	6,464	4,733	5,572	839		839	84.9%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	450	348	329	(19)		(19)	105.7%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	1,083	1,040	826	(214)		(214)	126.0%	
WOOD GREEN/PLAY AREA :- Indirect Expenditure	8,561	6,854	7,127	273	0	273	96.2%	0
Net Expenditure	(8,561)	(6,854)	(7,127)	(273)				
209 ETON CLOSE PLAY AREA								
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	9	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	209	219	213	(6)		(6)	102.8%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4222 TINY FOREST EXPENSES	0	0	150	150		150	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	5,002	4,090	6,686	2,596		2,596	61.2%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	350	278	395	117		117	70.4%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	813	930	991	61		61	93.8%	
ETON CLOSE PLAY AREA :- Indirect Expenditure	6,570	5,517	8,510	2,993	0	2,993	64.8%	0
Net Expenditure	(6,570)	(5,517)	(8,510)	(2,993)				

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/07/2026

Month No: 4

Parks and Recreation Committee: Draft management accounts 1 April to 31 July 2026

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
210 OXLEASE PLAY AREA								
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	1,768	180	0	(180)		(180)	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	524	685	659	(26)		(26)	103.9%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	9,963	5,401	7,801	2,400		2,400	69.2%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	678	372	461	89		89	80.7%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	1,698	1,214	1,156	(58)		(58)	105.0%	
OXLEASE PLAY AREA :- Indirect Expenditure	14,820	7,852	10,152	2,300	0	2,300	77.3%	0
Net Expenditure	(14,820)	(7,852)	(10,152)	(2,300)				
211 FIELDMERE PLAY AREA								
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	1,482	108	0	(108)		(108)	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	313	329	317	(12)		(12)	103.6%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	5,110	2,709	4,457	1,748		1,748	60.8%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	339	192	263	71		71	73.1%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	915	601	661	60		60	90.9%	
FIELDMERE PLAY AREA :- Indirect Expenditure	8,347	3,939	5,773	1,834	0	1,834	68.2%	0
Net Expenditure	(8,347)	(3,939)	(5,773)	(1,834)				
212 QUARRY ROAD PLAY AREA								
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	91	108	0	(108)		(108)	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	339	356	260	(96)		(96)	136.9%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	1,396	3,175	4,457	1,282		1,282	71.2%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	43	218	263	45		45	82.8%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	262	672	661	(11)		(11)	101.7%	
QUARRY ROAD PLAY AREA :- Indirect Expenditure	2,319	4,529	5,716	1,187	0	1,187	79.2%	0
Net Expenditure	(2,319)	(4,529)	(5,716)	(1,187)				
213 RALEGH CRES.PLAY/DEER PK PITCH								
4013 RENT PAID	0	0	5	5		5	0.0%	
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	0	0	9,602	9,602		9,602	0.0%	
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	77	16	0	(16)	53	(69)	0.0%	

14:43

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Month No: 4

Parks and Recreation Committee: Draft management accounts 1 April to 31 July 2026

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	0	0	519	519		519	0.0%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	78	78		78	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	4,711	5,195	22,287	17,092		17,092	23.3%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	328	411	1,317	906		906	31.2%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	777	1,138	3,304	2,166		2,166	34.4%	
RALEGH CRES.PLAY/DEER PK PITCH :- Indirect Expenditure	6,082	6,760	37,112	30,352	53	30,300	18.4%	0
Net Expenditure	(6,082)	(6,760)	(37,112)	(30,352)				
214 PARK ROAD PLAY AREA								
4013 RENT PAID	0	0	125	125		125	0.0%	
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	9	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	0	0	285	285		285	0.0%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	4,999	2,623	4,184	1,561		1,561	62.7%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	420	187	247	60		60	75.8%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	749	568	620	52		52	91.7%	
PARK ROAD PLAY AREA :- Indirect Expenditure	6,365	3,378	5,536	2,158	0	2,158	61.0%	0
Net Expenditure	(6,365)	(3,378)	(5,536)	(2,158)				
215 CEDAR DRIVE PLAY AREA								
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	0	0	519	519		519	0.0%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	0	0	104	104		104	0.0%	
CEDAR DRIVE PLAY AREA :- Indirect Expenditure	0	0	623	623	0	623	0.0%	0
Net Expenditure	0	0	(623)	(623)				
216 UNTERHACHING PLAY AREA								
4014 ELECTRICITY	891	186	1,500	1,314		1,314	12.4%	
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	25	2,061	0	(2,061)		(2,061)	0.0%	
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VARIABLE)	0	0	519	519		519	0.0%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	147	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4099 MISCELLANEOUS	41	0	0	0		0	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	1,208	2,697	2,221	(476)		(476)	121.4%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	82	189	131	(58)		(58)	144.1%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	235	597	329	(268)		(268)	181.4%	
UNTERHACHING PLAY AREA :- Indirect Expenditure	2,630	5,729	4,775	(954)	0	(954)	120.0%	0
Net Expenditure	(2,630)	(5,729)	(4,775)	954				

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Month No: 4

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217 WATERFORD LANE PLAY AREA								
4048 ENG.INSPEC.(VATABLE)	0	0	529	529		529	0.0%	
4049 PLAY RISK ASSESSMENT	0	0	106	106		106	0.0%	
WATERFORD LANE PLAY AREA :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>635</u>	<u>635</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>635</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(635)</u>	<u>(635)</u>				
218 WINDRUSH PLACE								
1050 RENT RECEIVED	0	0	4,000	4,000			0.0%	
1052 EXPENSES RECOVERED	0	0	9,250	9,250			0.0%	
WINDRUSH PLACE :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>13,250</u>	<u>13,250</u>			<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
4037 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	0	0	18,852	18,852		18,852	0.0%	
4888 O/S STAFF RECHARGE	0	0	22,287	22,287		22,287	0.0%	
4890 O/S O'HEAD RECHARGE	0	0	1,317	1,317		1,317	0.0%	
4899 DEPOT REALLOCATION	0	0	3,304	3,304		3,304	0.0%	
WINDRUSH PLACE :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>45,760</u>	<u>45,760</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>45,760</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(32,510)</u>	<u>(32,510)</u>				
230 PLAY AREAS HOLDING BUDGET								
4047 PLAY EQUIP MAINTENCE	0	0	15,320	15,320		15,320	0.0%	
PLAY AREAS HOLDING BUDGET :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>15,320</u>	<u>15,320</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>15,320</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(15,320)</u>	<u>(15,320)</u>				
Parks & Recreation :- Income	71,232	12,968	69,079	56,111			18.8%	
Expenditure	405,333	166,107	560,722	394,615	351	394,264	29.7%	
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(334,102)</u>	<u>(153,139)</u>	<u>(491,643)</u>	<u>(338,504)</u>				
plus Transfer from EMR	1,875	0	0	0				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(332,227)</u>	<u>(153,139)</u>	<u>(491,643)</u>	<u>(338,504)</u>				
Grand Totals:- Income	71,232	12,968	69,079	56,111			18.8%	
Expenditure	405,333	166,107	560,722	394,615	351	394,264	29.7%	
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(334,102)</u>	<u>(153,139)</u>	<u>(491,643)</u>	<u>(338,504)</u>				
plus Transfer from EMR	1,875	0	0	0				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(332,227)</u>	<u>(153,139)</u>	<u>(491,643)</u>	<u>(338,504)</u>				

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE



Agenda Item:	Sports Pitches
Meeting Date:	Monday, 7 September 2026
Contact Officer:	Operations Manager

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the Town Council's sports pitches, including their current condition, maintenance programmes and projects relating to sports facilities owned and maintained by the Council.

Current Situation

Football Pitch Maintenance

Annual maintenance of the Council's sports pitches has progressed as planned across The Leys, Burwell, West Witney and King George V sports grounds.

Following a prolonged period of hot and dry weather, the Council's pitches experienced some drought stress, including browning of the sward and some areas of thinning grass cover. Recent rainfall has resulted in a noticeable improvement in colour and growth, with the pitches responding positively and recovering for the football season.

Although the pitches remain suitable for use, Officers will use the forthcoming Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) inspection to assess any longer-term effects of the dry conditions and consider the resilience and future maintenance requirements of the pitches.

The STRI inspection is scheduled for 23 September 2026, slightly later than usual due to the exceptionally dry ground conditions experienced during the summer. The inspection will provide an independent assessment of pitch condition and recommendations for future maintenance and renovation programmes.

Windrush Place Sports Pitches

A pitch assessment commissioned by the consortium, following a request from Witney Town Council, found the Windrush Place pitches to be in good condition and fit for purpose. When the results were assessed against Sport England guidance, both pitches were found to meet all relevant Performance Quality Standards.

However, Officers raised concerns regarding thinning and patchy areas observed during a subsequent site visit. Following discussions, the consortium's maintenance contractor agreed to undertake the following programme of works:

1. Regular cutting: Continue regular cutting of the pitches until the end of November, using a combination of cut-and-collect and cut-and-drop methods.
2. Fertiliser applications: Supply and apply fertiliser through three applications. Two applications will cover the period from September to the end of November, with each application expected to remain effective for approximately six weeks. The third application will be more nitrogen-based, with the aim of promoting healthy, green and resilient turf ahead of handover.
3. Overseeding: Overseed both pitches when weather and ground conditions are conducive to strong seed germination and establishment, particularly following the drought conditions experienced during the summer.
4. Aeration: Undertake appropriate aeration to support stronger seed germination and encourage the development of the existing root system. This could include verti-draining or shock-waving.
5. Brushing and scarifying: Brush and/or scarify the surface to reduce the build-up of thatch and dead grass currently present within the upper profile of the pitches.
6. Detox grid drainage: Jet wash the drainage system beneath the detox grid to ensure that the drains have not been compromised.
7. Pitch line marking: Prior to handover, Kestrel will line mark both pitches so that they are ready for use.

Witney Town Council has also recommended, and is awaiting approval for, the following additional measures:

8. Irrigation and watering: Given the drought conditions experienced, a clear requirement should be included for irrigation to support the germination and establishment of the overseeding. Watering should be undertaken as required, taking account of weather and soil conditions rather than relying solely on rainfall. This will be particularly important immediately following overseeding.
9. Overseeding follow-up: The maintenance programme should include a follow-up assessment of seed germination and establishment. Any areas where seed has failed to establish should be reseeded before handover, or an agreed programme should be put in place for this work to continue following handover.

Football Season Meeting August 2026

All football clubs using the Council's facilities are invited to attend quarterly meetings to discuss successes, challenges, potential solutions and future opportunities. Two football clubs were represented at the August meeting. While Officers would welcome greater attendance, the meeting was nevertheless considered valuable and provided a useful opportunity to engage directly with clubs.

Overall feedback on the 2025/26 season was very positive, particularly in relation to pitch quality. The weekly pitch inspection system, including photographs and direct communication with clubs, was well received and will continue. Clubs considered pitch cancellations to have been reasonable and proportionate.

Two major events at The Leys will affect pitch availability during September:

- Circus: 2–6 September, affecting Pitch 4.
- Witney Feast: 13–15 September, with additional measures being implemented to minimise the risk of vehicle damage to the pitches.

The adult pitch at The Leys will not be available before 19 September and may not be playable until October, depending on the condition of the pitch following the events.

Further details of the meeting are included in **Appendix A**. The principal matters discussed are summarised below.

Pitch Configuration: With Spartan Rangers no longer requiring Newland, there may be an opportunity to create additional smaller pitches, subject to demand. Woodgreen School changing rooms may continue to be required, although parking and toilet provision remain areas requiring consideration.

Pitch Maintenance: An annual STRI inspection is planned for September to assess areas including compaction, weeds and root depth. The findings will help inform future maintenance requirements and programmes.

The Leys Changing Rooms: The refurbished changing rooms are being handed over to Witney Town Council, with bookings to be managed through the council's booking Service. Public toilets are also available. There are some concerns remain regarding reliable access to Courtside storage; however, the stated 8.00am opening time should assist clubs on match days.

Bookings: Spartan Rangers will continue to use King George V until the adult pitch at The Leys becomes available.

Vikings can continue with their existing block booking arrangements at The Leys but will review whether the current pitch configuration continues to meet their requirements. The Council is in the final stages of exploring online booking options.

Future Facilities and Development

Windrush Place: Two adult football pitches and a smaller enclosed training/play area are planned. Clubs have raised concerns regarding fair and transparent access under the

proposed trust arrangements. The Council's proposed oversight structure is intended to ensure appropriate community access to the facilities.

West Witney Clubhouse: Completion of the West Witney clubhouse is targeted for autumn 2026. There have been quality and contractor performance issues during the project; however, the project remains within budget.

The Leys Cricket Square: Consultation is continuing regarding the potential return of cricket to The Leys. If sufficient interest cannot be established, consideration could be given to converting the area into additional football pitches. This could provide greater flexibility for pitch rotation and maintenance.

Future 3G Pitch: Witney Town Council is scoping the planning requirements for a potential floodlit 3G artificial pitch at West Witney. While this would reduce some grass pitch provision, it would provide a year-round sporting facility. Specification and funding arrangements are currently being researched, including the requirement for a significant long-term maintenance fund.

Cricket & Football Seasons

The local football season runs from 1 September to 30 April, while the cricket season generally runs from 1 May to the first weekend of September.

The overlap between the end of the cricket season and the start of the football season continues to require careful management. Following Swifts Cricket Club's final home fixture on 5 September 2026, responsibility for management of the cricket square will revert to the Town Council.

Officers have worked closely with both Swifts Cricket Club and Tower Hill FC to coordinate the transition between the two seasons. This has included discussions regarding football pitch line marking and match-day arrangements to ensure both sports can be accommodated successfully.

Both clubs have been supportive of the proposed arrangements and have worked collaboratively to minimise potential conflicts.

Bowls Greens

Officers have worked closely with the three bowls clubs to support continuous improvement in the maintenance and renovation of the Council's bowls greens.

Maintenance schedules have been carefully coordinated to ensure sufficient time is available for green maintenance while minimising disruption to clubs' fixture programmes. Equipment and training requirements are also being kept under review to ensure that Council and club standards continue to be met.

Feedback from the clubs regarding the condition of the greens has been very positive, with particular appreciation expressed for the increased level of communication and the standard and performance of the greens.

Operatives who have played a key role in maintaining the Witney Town Bowls Club green at The Leys have been invited to attend the club's end-of-season social evening, providing members with an opportunity to express their sincere appreciation for their skilled, dedicated and hard-working efforts throughout the season.

Cricket Pitches

Although it was hoped that The Leys cricket wicket would be used during the 2026 season, no users have come forward to date. Officers have continued to engage with potential users and local cricket stakeholders regarding the future use of the facility. While discussions have taken place, no formal commitment has yet been received.

The cricket square is therefore currently being maintained at a reduced level, with the maintenance regime capable of being enhanced should a club or other user be identified in the future.

Officers are conducting their final review of the long-term future of The Leys cricket square, including how the facility can best support community use and contribute to the Council's wider sports pitch provision.

The start of the cricket season presented some challenges due to the refurbishment works at the West Witney clubhouse. Officers worked closely with the cricket club to identify practical solutions, including arranging and securing alternative venues for the club's first two fixtures.

As the season draws to a close, feedback received from Swifts Cricket Club has been very positive. The club has expressed its appreciation for the support provided by Council Officers and the grounds maintenance team throughout the season, particularly the helpful and collaborative approach taken when addressing ground maintenance and operational matters.

Basketball Courts

As part of the budget-setting process, the Council agreed to support improvements to basketball provision in Witney.

Officers have met with Witney Wolves Basketball Club (WWBC) to discuss its requirements for the hard court at King George's Field, as well as the club's longer-term aspirations for the court adjacent to Windrush Leisure Centre, which it has asked the Council to focus on.

Officers subsequently met with an Operational Manager from Oxfordshire County Council at the court adjacent to Windrush Leisure Centre. Further information has been requested and is awaited to clarify:

- Ownership and Council responsibility
- Licence or lease arrangements
- Funding and improvement works
- Maintenance and operational responsibilities
- Insurance, liability and safeguarding
- Long-term partnership and governance

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

2. An Engaged & Supported Community

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 - Maintaining and operating good quality sports pitches has a positive effect by promoting inclusive access to recreation, physical activity and community participation for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.
- b) Biodiversity - Good quality sports pitches have both positive and manageable biodiversity impacts. Well-managed green spaces contribute to urban green infrastructure, support soil health, and assist with surface water drainage.
- c) Crime & Disorder – Has a positive impact on crime and disorder by providing safe, accessible and structured recreational opportunities for residents, particularly young people.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - Green open spaces contribute to carbon capture, urban cooling and natural drainage, while supporting healthier local environments and encouraging outdoor physical activity.

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.

Failure to maintain and operate good quality sports pitches could result in deteriorating facilities, increased health and safety risks, reduced participation in sport and physical activity, and reputational damage to the Council. Poor quality or unavailable pitches may limit opportunities for local clubs and residents, negatively impacting community wellbeing and inclusion. Inadequate maintenance could also lead to higher long-term repair costs, loss of external funding opportunities, reduced income generation and increased complaints from users and stakeholders.

Social Value

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

The maintenance and operation of good quality sports pitches deliver social value by supporting community health, wellbeing and social cohesion. Accessible and well-maintained facilities provide opportunities for residents of all ages and backgrounds to participate in sport, recreation and organised community activities, helping to encourage active lifestyles, reduce social isolation and strengthen community engagement.

Financial implications

- The work on maintenance is funded from pre-defined budgets.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and updates.

2026/27 Football Season Meeting Notes**Date:** 18th August 2026**Time:** 6:00pm**Location:** The Corn Exchange Gallery Room, Market Square, Witney, OX28 6AB**Councillors:**

Cllr Ruth Smith (Chair)

Cllr Joy Aitman, Chair of the Parks & Recreation Committee

Witney Town Council Staff Members:

Mark Lewis, Head of Estates and Operations

Hollie Battson, Reception & Bookings Administrator

Nicholas Brown, Operations Manager: apologies for absence

Football Teams Representatives:

Vikings FC: Mike Witcombe, Vice Chair

Tower Hill FC: DNA

Spartan Rangers FC: Alfie Saunders, Club Secretary

Royals: DNA

FC Mills: DNA

Meeting Opened: 6pm

Cllr Joy Aitman entered the room at 18:01

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting opened with introductions of the attendees. Alfie Saunders noted his 40-year tenure as the Club Secretary for Spartan Rangers Football Club, and Mike Witcombe introduced himself as representing the Vikings with 15 years of experience. Mark Lewis, the Head of Estates and Operations, Hollie, Receptionist & Bookings Administrator. Followed by introductions from Cllr Ruth Smith, and Cllr Joy Aitman, the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Mark noted that the new Operations Manager, Nick Brown, was currently on holiday but would be building relationships with the clubs upon his return. He succeeds Angus Whitburn in the role of Operations Manager.

2. Notes from the Last Meeting – 4th November 2025

Nothing to note.

3. Updates of the last season 2025/26

Despite the wet conditions, there was good feedback overall. Mark shared positive feedback regarding pitch conditions from the previous season, specifically noting that a member of staff who plays for one of the local men's teams, considered Burwell Pitch the best in their league. The council's revised approach, initiated last year, involved weekly pitch inspections, with photos and assessments shared directly with club representatives. Rather than blanket cancellations due to inclement weather, this fostered a collaborative

and flexible process; coaches and managers were empowered to make nuanced decisions balancing play with pitch preservation. This system, credited for improving relations and match quality, is set to continue.

Alfie of Spartans commented to say that any cancellations that were made, were considered reasonable, and Mike used an example whereby there may be frost or ice late at night, that thaws quite quickly on a morning and wouldn't necessarily prevent a game from going ahead.

4. Updates for 2026/27

Mark commenced with the fact that two major events at The Leys are to take place in September and that this will affect pitch availability. A circus will occupy a corner near the Splash Pad on September 5th, taking out pitch four. The following weekend: Saturday 12th September, will see Witney Feast return for its annual visit. Mark expressed concerns about their vehicles encroaching on the football pitches and damaging the ground, as happened last year. However, to mitigate this, the council will use pigtail stakes and orange fencing to mark boundaries for the event organizers (the Wilsons). A damage deposit is in place, and pre- and post-event photos will be taken to ensure the grounds are respected.

The earliest the adult pitch at The Leys is expected to be playable from September 19th, depending on post-event conditions.

Mark proceeded to show the group a slide of the current pitch configuration at the Leys and did so for each ground at different points during the meeting.

With Spartans no longer needing to use Newland, it's possible that a couple of smaller pitches could be created instead. However, this will depend on the demand. Woodgreen School will still need to be contacted for changing room facilities. It was noted that whilst the school remains accommodating, the parking, and the lack of discrete toilet facilities near the pitch remain a minor issue.

5. Pitch conditions and maintenance update

An annual STRI inspection is scheduled for September to assess soil compaction, weed coverage, and root depth. This will help refine the maintenance plan going forward. It has not been possible to undertake this prior to the season commencing, due to the ongoing warm and dry conditions.

6. Completion of Leys Changing Rooms refurbishment

The WTC changing rooms at Courtside are being handed over to the council this month. Bookings for these new changing rooms are to be made through Hollie, as with the Burwell changing rooms. Public toilets are open to the public within the new building.

Storage Access: A concern was raised regarding the storage room at Courtside. It was reported by clubs that Courtside is providing storage as a favour, and access is currently restricted to when specific staff are present. Clubs reported they currently rely on a short-term favour-based system by Courtside, but access is inconsistent due to restricted opening hours and staff/keyholder availability. It was noted that published opening hours indicate access from 8am. This should help to mitigate any risk of equipment inaccessibility, especially on match days.

7. Bookings and Allocations, including the Leys Changing Rooms (online booking system)?

Alfie asks about the adult pitch at the Leys and was informed that availability, could be possible from 19th September. However, this will depend on the pitch condition after the Feast. So potentially, it could be an October start. The King George ground will be kept available from September for Spartan Rangers until they can go to the Leys.

Vikings will be able to continue to block book the rest of the Leys, as per last season. Mike to check with Steve Bott of Vikings, as to whether the current pitch configurations are sufficient, or whether any tweaks need to be made.

Online booking options are still being explored.

8. Communications

Mike of Vikings raised a query regarding Windrush Place. Ruth confirmed that it has not yet been handed over to Witney Town Council from West Oxfordshire District Council.

This development will include x2 adult pitches, and a play zone. Clubs voiced concern about fair access and transparency under new trust-based arrangements. The council recognized the importance of the community benefit and pledged oversight (with Joy to be on the trust board) to ensure openness and prevent facilities being monopolized. The remarkable growth of the Vikings and commitment to inclusive access for youth teams were acknowledged; the club's lack of a permanent base was noted, but hope remains as new facilities come online. Historic relations between clubs were acknowledged but it was agreed that future collaboration will be vital to maximise use of all town resources.

West Witney Clubhouse:

Completion is now targeted for this autumn however this is subject to the performance of the contractor. The project has faced quality issues and performance challenges with the contractor which is being managed by officers and consultants aligned with the formal contract in place.

Leys Cricket Square:

Consultation is ongoing regarding the return of cricket. If no interest is registered, the square may be reconfigured into additional football pitches. Mike notes that this would allow for better rotation if other pitches needed a rest.

Future Development and 3G Pitch Planning:

The council will be managing and delivering a 3G artificial turf pitch project at West Witney. Mark emphasised that while this will sacrifice some grass area, it will provide a year-round, floodlit facility. The team is currently researching specifications and building a fund for long-term maintenance costs, which are expected to be in the hundreds of thousands of pounds.

9. Next Steps and Actions

The participants agreed that meeting twice a season is the ideal frequency. The next meeting will be scheduled for January to address any mid-winter weather issues and to plan for the second half of the season in time for the Spring. Mark reiterated that the council wants active feedback throughout the season, not just during these formal meetings.

Meeting closed: 19:07

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: West Witney Capital Projects Update

Meeting Date: 7th September 2026

Contact Officer: Project Officer

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update regarding the major capital project that is currently in flight.

Background

As you are aware, Witney Town Council's Open Spaces Strategy cited 5x themes to deliver improvements for our community: Parks, Sport, Leisure, Infrastructure & Effectiveness.

This report aims to provide you with an update on the major capital projects linked to Parks and Recreation, which is the 'West Witney Project'

West Witney Project

New Depot



West Witney Clubhouse



Current Situation

- The West Witney Project combines the construction of a new Works Depot alongside the refurbishment of the existing Clubhouse.
- Construction of the New Depot is complete, and the operations team continue to settle into their new facility and work to organise the depot to improve efficiency is ongoing.
- Installation and connection of the new electricity cable serving both the Works Depot and Clubhouse remains outstanding. Officers have successfully secured the necessary wayleave agreements with SSEN and the neighbouring landowner. However, during excavation works, the contractor identified several previously unknown utility services within the proposed cable route. As these services are critical to the landowner's operational and fire safety systems, officers and contractors are working with stakeholders to identify a suitable installation solution that minimises risk and disruption to business operations. To ensure continuity of service and meet the electrical demands of both facilities, the Council has implemented a temporary generator solution pending completion of the permanent cable installation by SSEN.
- Principle contractor performance continues to be an issue with continued delays to the programme and a failure to achieve the outcomes in previously agreed delivery plans. As a result, the council has reviewed its contractual obligations. The confidential Part 2 Report on this can be found at **Agenda Item 9**.
- Officers continue to engage and work closely with sports team users to minimise the impact of project delays. In particular, officers have sought to ensure that Swifts Cricket Team did not miss any scheduled fixtures. The football teams that use West Witney have also been engaged to ensure the impact on their fixtures is minimised should the clubhouse not be ready in time.

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 – n/a
- b) Biodiversity – In accordance with planning conditions the new depot satisfies the required uplift in BNG rating.
- c) Crime & Disorder – security of both buildings have been specified in the tender to ensure the building remains safe and potential thieves are deterred. This includes required ratings of locks, doors, and windows together with window bars, external lighting, and CCTV.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – building construction consists of environmentally friendly materials, which will also improve thermal efficiency. PV roof panels and air sourced heat pumps have also been included in specification to reduce energy consumption.

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.

- To reduce the risks typically associated with construction projects, the council is working in partnership with Berry's, a specialist construction consultancy. This collaboration provides assurance that the project will deliver value for money, meet the required specifications and be completed within the agreed timeframes
- The council's rigorous procurement protocols and use of financial regulations significantly reduces the risk of engaging substandard contractors, thereby safeguarding public funds from corrective costs and legal disputes.

Social Value

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

- New depot will improve the team's ability to maintain and enhance the valuable services they provide the town. This improves the appearance of the town and its green spaces, making it a cleaner, neater, and more pleasant environment for our residents.
- A refurbished, DDA compliant Clubhouse will provide the community with a new modern building to socialise and rent function rooms. It will also provide the community with refurbished changing rooms facilities for sports teams and eliminates the current safeguarding issue restricting its use for youngsters.

Financial implications

- The financial implications have been documented comprehensively in our RFO's Full Council Report dated 23rd June 2025 and any further details will be presented to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

Document is Restricted