

**HALLS & GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday, 3 June 2019**

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

**Present:**

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

Councillors:	L Duncan T Ashby R Bolger D Butterfield	M Jones J King J Aitman (Sub D Enright)
Officers:	Sharon Groth John Hickman Adam Clapton Nicky Cayley	Town Clerk Operations & Estates Officer Office Manager Democratic Services Officer
Others:	2 members of the public.	

**H202 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllr Enright.

**H203 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

**H204 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR**

Cllr Duncan was proposed and seconded as Vice Chairman. All members were in agreement.

**RESOLVED:** that Cllr Duncan be elected Vice Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.

**H205 MINUTES**

- a) **RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Estates Management Committee meeting held on 4 March 2019 and the minutes of the Sport and Recreation Committee meeting held on 11 March 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- b) **MATTERS ARISING:** there were no matters arising from the minutes to be discussed at the meeting.

H206 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned so that Mrs Anna Gattrell addressed the Committee on the subject of the increase in hire charges for her "Over 30's Disco" event held on the Corn Exchange.

H207 **PUBLIC HALLS - OPERATIONAL & USAGE REPORT**

This item was moved up the agenda with the express permission of the Chairman. The Committee received and considered section 8.1.6 of the report of the Public Halls Officer. There followed a discussion and members noted that the current price charged had been an introductory price and agreed that there should be a fair price for everyone, whilst having sympathy with Mrs Gattrell's concerns about the increase in hire charges reducing her profit.

A member proposed that the hire charges should be kept the same for a period of 6 months and could then be reviewed as there could be changes made to the hired space that might increase the income to Mrs Gattrell. All members agreed to this.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that that the hire charges for the Over 30's Disco remain the same and be reviewed again in six months' time.

H208 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned so that Melanie Jones could address the Committee on behalf of the Friends of the Cemeteries Committee.

The Committee noted her concerns and asked for officers to bring a report back on the issues raised to the next meeting.

H209 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, VISION & OBJECTIVES FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Members received and considered the report of the Town Clerk as circulated with the agenda.

The following changes were suggested to the terms of reference:

- a) "operate" be replaced by "oversee" and Madley Park Hall and Langdale Hall be removed and the halls itemised as separate entities to be overseen;
- f) "and supervise" be removed;

The Committee also requested that a "risk" section be added into officer reports in future.

With these changes included, members approved the terms of reference for the Committee.

The Committee also received and considered the schedule of earmarked reserves and the capital and special revenue programme for 2019/20. Members felt that at this point it would be helpful to keep this on the agenda in terms of a Committee vision and objectives for the municipal year.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the Committee Terms of Reference as presented be approved with the changes requested;
3. that the Committee Vision and Objectives for the municipal year be kept on the agenda for the next meeting.

H210 **OPERATIONAL REPORT - PROGRESS ON IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted.

H211 **PUBLIC HALLS**

1. Operational and Usage Reports

The Committee received and considered the report of Public Halls Officer as circulated with the agenda.

2. Corn Exchange Working Party

The Committee received and considered the report of the Office Manager. The Chairman invited Mr Terry Powell who was present to become a member of the Working Party due to his considerable experience in the sector. Mr Powell accepted the invitation.

The Town Clerk advised that it was normal for the Chairman of a Working Party – in this case Cllr Collins – to sit on the parent committee. Members agreed that this was sensible and agreed to co-opt Cllr Collins as a full member, therefore increasing the membership of Halls and Green Spaces Committee to 9 members.

3. Langdale Hall and Madley Park Hall – Compliance

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer. Members were particularly concerned at the lack of an electrical certificate for Madley Park Hall, which the Operations and Estates Officer had been chasing. He suggested that another option would be for the Council's electrician to do the work and then recharge this to Madley Park Hall Trust. Members felt that this was a good option.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the reports be noted;
2. that Mr Terry Powell be invited to join the working party due to his expertise in the sector;
3. that Cllr Collins, as Chairman of the Corn Exchange Working Party, be co-opted onto the Halls and Green Spaces Committee as a full voting member, therefore extending the Committee membership to 9 councillors.

4. that the Town Council's electrical contractor be employed to carry out the electrical work at Madley Park Hall and the cost be re charged to the Madley Park Hall Trust.

**H212 CEMETERIES & CLOSED CHURCHYARDS**

The Committee received and considered correspondence concerning a memorial application for an inscription on a headstone. The lady was appealing against a previous decision made by the Council that she could not have a specific quote by Spike Milligan on the headstone, which was her mother's last wish.

The Committee discussed this at length and decided that the Reverend Toby Wright be contacted for his views. Members felt rather than writing to the lady with a response, it would be better to talk through the issues with her before a decision was made. There was also a request to check out any copy right issues.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that Rev'd Toby Wright be asked for his opinion;
3. that any copy right issues be investigated;
4. that 2 members meet with the lady to discuss issues before a decision be made.

**H213 OPEN SPACES AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE: HEDGE REDUCTION WORKS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer as circulated with the agenda.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the reduction of the Thorney Leys/Curbridge Road hedge to 8", leaving strands of trees where possible and stripping ivy to the base of the remaining trees allowing inspection of the trees at the base be agreed;
3. that Manor Road areas 19, 19Y and 19O be reduced to 6' along the entire length of the hedge.

**H214 OPEN SPACES & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE: PARKING ON BURWELL COMMUNITY GARDEN/THORNEY LEYS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer as circulated with the agenda.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted:

2. that an official letter be sent from the Council to residents in this area regarding parking/driving on the amenity grass area.

H215 **SPORTS, RECREATION GROUNDS & PARKS**

A. Witney Town Bowls Club – Problem with pressure sewer

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer. Members expressed concern about the sewage but also had concerns about if the Bowls Club could afford to pay for the repairs which were its responsibility.

B. Update on Play Areas

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer which was circulated with the agenda. It particularly updated Members on the situation with regard to the newly refurbished Raleigh Crescent Play Area, and the progress made on finding a suitable location for the Teqball table on the Leys Recreation Ground.

C. Update on Sports and Recreation Grounds

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer, which covered requests from Parkrun for a dog waste bin and signage at West Witney, the Sports & Social Club were also requesting a baby changing unit. The report also highlighted the ongoing issues with the bowls clubs at West Witney and their irrigation unit which had failed.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the Town Council relays the pipe and charges the Bowls Club for the work, or the Bowls Club should reinstate the cess pit, negating the need for a new pipe. The Town Clerk is to be given delegated authority to proceed with these works as a matter of urgency;
3. that WODC's request for access ramps to the bunds at Raleigh Crescent Play area be agreed;
4. that a Teqball table be installed at The Leys outside the tennis courts and skate park, and the shortfall in budget be funded from the Council's General Fund.
5. that consideration be given to siting an additional dog waste bin along the hedge line at West Witney Sports Ground in consultation with Parkrun and that the content of signage be discussed with Parkrun;
6. that the request to install a baby change unit for West Witney Sports and Social Club be agreed;
7. that the Vikings Football team's request for an additional pitch at The Leys be agreed;
8. that the Operations and Estates Officer should look at trying to resolve the Sports Club storage issues at The Leys;

9. that Cllrs Gwatkin and Bolger meet with Witney Town Bowls Club to discuss the sewage pipe issue, the supply of grey water from the splash park to the bowls club irrigation system and other matters;

10. that the request from West Witney Bowls Club for repairs to be undertaken on the footpath on 3 sides of the Bowls Green be put on hold until the issue with the irrigation system is resolved;

11. that the situation regarding the failure of West Witney Bowls Club's irrigation system is noted and Officers ensure the matter is progressed as soon as possible.

H216 **LAKE & COUNTRY PARK**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer and also a request from Continental Crayfish Ltd to carry out crayfish removal in the river and the lake.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that Continental Crayfish Ltd be permitted to remove crayfish in the lake but not the river as there was another fisherman currently doing this;
3. that costs of permits for removal of crayfish be investigated.

H217 **ALLOTMENTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer, which included details of the provision of new allotments at Windrush Place, as well as a request from the Witney Allotment Association for additional skips.

There was a lengthy discussion on the request for additional skips and Members felt that allotment holders should be encouraged to compost and recycle. It would be cost effective if the Council installed a large composter.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the installation of fencing at Lakeside allotment be carried out on a design and install basis by suitable local contractors, funded from the Allotment Earmarked Reserve;
3. that the request from the Allotment Association for an additional skip at Lakeside allotment site be refused and instead the Officers work with the association to find a suitable location for a large composter to be provided by the Council.
4. that the proposal from the developers to provide the following at the allotment site at Windrush Place be agreed:
  - 1.4m wide paved path through site,
  - Pathways to separate allotments,

- Electric and water supplies,
- Hard standing for green waste composting,
- Two disabled allotments.

H218 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk, which included information about the municipal bowling rink at Witney Town Bowls Club. Members felt that the best way forward would be for members to go and speak to the bowls club before proceeding to make any decision.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report and accounts be noted;
2. that members speak to the Witney Town Bowls Club about the use of the 6th rink (as part of their discussions reference minute number H215(9) above)

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The meeting closed at: 8.45 pm

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Chair