

Public Document Pack

Witney Town Council

Mrs Sharon Groth FSLCC fCMgr
Town Clerk

Cllr Duncan Enright
Mayor of Witney



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3 December 2019

To: All members of the Witney Town Council

You are hereby summonsed to a Meeting of the **Town Council** to be held in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney on **Monday, 9th December, 2019 at 7.00 pm** for the transaction of the business stated below.

RECORDING OF MEETINGS

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 the council's public meetings may be recorded, which includes filming, audio-recording as well as photography. As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Town Clerk or Democratic Services Officer know before the start of the meeting.

AGENDA

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

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

Committee Members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Democratic Services Officer (nicky.cayley@witney-tc.gov.uk) prior to the meeting, stating the reason for absence.

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 - 12)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 7 October 2019 (enclosed), in accordance with Standing Order 18 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 42. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

5. **WITNEY COMMUNITY POLICING ISSUES**

To receive an update from the Witney Neighbourhood Police Team.

6. **AN UPDATE FROM WITNEY OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLORS AND WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

To receive a short verbal update from Witney Oxfordshire County Councillors 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** (Pages 13 - 48)

To receive and NOTE the RESOLUTIONS in the minutes of the meetings held between 14 October and 25 November 2019, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein:

A) PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	15 OCTOBER, 5 NOVEMBER AND 16 NOVEMBER 2019
B) HALLS & GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE	9 SEPTEMBER 2019
C) STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE	16 SEPTEMBER 2019
D) POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE	23 SEPTEMBER 2019 (To follow)

9. **APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES: LOWER WINDRUSH VALLEY PROJECT** (Pages 49 - 68)

To appoint a Council representative to the Lower Windrush Valley Project – correspondence enclosed

10. **MOTION**

To receive and consider the below motion in accordance with standing order 13.

That the Town Council:

1. Writes to Thames Water and the Environment Agency to express its deep concern and disquiet that sewage is being released and pumped into our local rivers and water courses, including, the river Windrush and Colwell Brook.

2. Expresses that not only is this damaging to the health of the rivers themselves, but it is also a serious health risk to our citizens and their pets, who may use, and come into contact with these rivers and water courses.

3. That Thames Water and The Environment Agency take urgent steps and provide a clear and credible response and action plan to prevent this situation occurring again.

Proposer: Andrew Prosser

Seconder: Ruth Smith

11. **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS** (Pages 69 - 72)

To receive the report of the Mayor (to follow)

12. **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.

13. **URGENT MATTERS - REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK**

To receive and consider the report of the Town Clerk (to follow)

14. **CORRESPONDENCE**

To receive correspondence from the Town Clerk for information (if applicable)

15. **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 15

16. **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

Date	Seal No.	Details
05 October 2019	81	Lease to Kenmare Estates Ltd Cemetery Lodge, Tower Hill Cemetery



Town Clerk

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**MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 7 October 2019

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

Present:

Councillor D Enright (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	V Gwatkin
	L Ashbourne	A D Harvey
	T Ashby	M Jones
	R Bolger	J King
	D Butterfield	A McMahon
	O Collins	A Prosser
	L Duncan	R Smith
	H Eaglestone	D Temple
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
Others:	0 members of the public.	

393 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

394 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

395 **MINUTES**

The Council received and considered the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 29 July 2019.

- a) **RESOLVED:** to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2019 with the amendment on page 2, minute 371 b) to state that the Chair of Halls and Green Spaces was in attendance.
- b) **MATTERS ARISING:** there were no matters arising from the minutes to be discussed at the meeting.

396 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present for this item.

397 **PRESENTATION FROM HOME START**

The Chair welcomed Katherine Barber who gave a presentation on the work of Home Start. She explained that the organisation was very keen to have a Home Start Champion as an ambassador from the Town Council, and it was hoped that the Town Council may be able to help with funding directly and also indirectly by putting the organisation in touch with other available funding in the district.

Members thanked Ms Barber for a very informative presentation.

RESOLVED: that the presentation from Home Start be noted and that Cllrs Aitman and Smith share the role of "Home Start Champion". Financial assistance could be considered at a future meeting.

Katherine Barber left the meeting at this point.

398 **WITNEY COMMUNITY POLICING ISSUES**

The Town Clerk advised that PC Cochrane had now been relocated and it had not been possible to arrange for another member of the force to attend the meeting.

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

Cllr Jane Doughty – Vice Chair of West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Doughty gave an update of her work on the District Council. Of particular note was the tarmac resurfacing at the Burwell shops. The County Council had sorted the wall out and now WODC had renewed the tarmac. The white lining would be done soon and the pathways would be the next thing to be addressed. Disappointing news was that the Burwell Community garden apple tree had been completely stripped of fruit.

Cllr Doughty stated that residents were asking for a bus shelter where one had been removed. The Town Clerk advised that two would be put in – one at Abbey Road and one by the shops, but Officers were currently trying to source an anti-vandal option, as the one at the shops had been removed due to constant vandalism.

Cllr David Harvey – West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Harvey reported that he had been appointed Climate Change Portfolio holder for West Oxfordshire. Work had already started and the Council was committed to reducing carbon emissions both now and in the future. The Council had been interviewing for a Climate Change Manager who would work directly for it rather than Publica or Ubico, and should be appointed in the next few days.

There had already been an initial meeting with another to follow in which they would be looking at Zero Carbon Estates. WODC would be holding a second Water Day for multi agencies and the public.

Cllr Rosa Bolger- West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Bolger reported that she had been looking at moving finances away from investments connected with fossil fuels. She had also been speaking to the Town Clerk to ensure that the Town Council's investments were ethical.

Cllr Joy Aitman – West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Aitman reported that she had attended meetings about children with special needs.

Cllr Luci Ashbourne – West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Ashbourne reported that a paper had been presented to members on how the Council was preparing for a "No Deal" Brexit. A risk assessment had been sent to councillors.

The Town Clerk advised that she had received apologies from Cllr Laura Price from Oxfordshire County Council, who was unable to attend the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the verbal updates be noted.

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

Cllr Bolger reported that she had been to an Oxfordshire Association of Local Council's (OALC) meeting.

RESOLVED: that the update from Cllr Bolger be noted.

401 **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES**

a) PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 13 AUGUST, 3 SEPTEMBER, 24 SEPTEMBER 2019

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

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee of 13 August, 3 September and 24 September 2019 be received and any recommendations therein be approved.

b) HALLS AND GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE – 9 SEPTEMBER 2019

The Chair presented these minutes to the Council and moved their acceptance. A member queried if a budget had been set for the Corn Exchange Working Party. The Town Clerk explained that this had been approved via the Policy, Governance and Resources Committee and had been minuted.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Halls and Green Spaces Committee of 9 September 2019 be received and any recommendations therein be approved.

c) STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 16 SEPTEMBER 2019

The Chair of the Committee presented these minutes to Council and moved their acceptance. A member queried resolution 2 under minute number C371 and stated that they had thought that a draft policy on pesticide use had been requested. The Town Clerk advised that due to the crossover in the nature of this issue, it had also been dealt with by the Halls and Green Spaces Committee. STRI had been commissioned to write a report which would encompass this and would go back to that Committee.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee of 16 September 2019 be received and the recommendations therein be approved.

d) POLICY, GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE – 22 SEPTEMBER 2019

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

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee of 22 September 2019 be received and the recommendations therein be approved.

e) CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING PARTY – 11 SEPTEMBER 2019

The Chair of the Working Party presented these minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Members thought that a recommendation had been made to write to WODC about improving the carbon footprint of their existing housing stock, but could not see this reflected in the minutes of the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Climate Change Working Party held on 11 September 2019 be received and any recommendations therein be approved, and that the Council writes to WODC about the existing housing stock in terms of carbon footprint.

402 COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND MEMBERSHIP

The Council received and considered the report of the DSO.

RESOLVED:

1. that the recommendation of the Climate Working Party: *to combine the Climate and Nature and Wildlife Working Parties into the "Climate and Biodiversity Sub Committee"* be agreed;
2. that the membership of the Climate and Biodiversity Sub Committee be as follows:

J Aitman	R Bolger	D Enright	L Duncan
A D Harvey	A Prosser	R Smith	D Temple
3. that Cllr Collins replaces Mr License for the Stronger Communities Committee and Cllr Gwatkin replaces Mr License for the Planning and Development Committee;

4. that Cllr Butterfield replaces Mr License on the Disciplinary and Grievance Sub Committee;
5. that Cllr Ashbourne replaces Mr License on the Traffic Advisory Committee;
6. that Cllr Aitman be appointed the representative for West Oxfordshire Community Transport.

403 **MOTIONS**

The Council received and considered two motions as follows:

1. **Start Times of Meetings**

In line with Standing Order 23, we the undersigned request that the resolution arising from minute no. 181 of the Annual Council meeting held on 15 May 2019 be overturned *“that the timetable of meetings as circulated be approved subject to the start times of meetings being changed to 7pm.”*

And that the following **Special Motion** be accepted:

This Council notes:

- a) That since May 2019, committee and sub-committee meetings have been moved from their previous start time of 6pm to their new time of 7pm.
- b) That this change has had a considerable detriment on the officers and staff of the Council, negatively affecting both their work-life balance and, as a result, their ability to carry out their duties to maximum efficiency (as per reports at the last Policy, Governance and Finance Committee and Personnel Sub-Committee).

This Council resolves:

- a) That staff welfare and wellbeing should be of paramount priority when setting the times for meetings of committees, sub-committees, and working parties.
- b) That therefore, with immediate effect for the next cycle of meetings, timings shall be moved from 7pm back to their original start time of 6pm (with the exceptions of Full Council and Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.)

Proposed: Cllr O Collins

Seconded: Cllrs L Ashbourne, M. Jones, D. Enright

2. **Flag Flying**

This Council notes that:

a) With Brexit at the top of the political agenda, dominating the headlines and with the government in disarray after years of trying to negotiate a deal with the European Union, our political system is leaving many to feel powerless and excluded from the key decisions that affect them;

b) There is a real possibility that the UK may crash out of the EU without a deal on the 31st October 2019, or on a date soon after, this council recognises that this uncertainty is damaging to our economy both locally and nationally;

c) The relationships with our European twin towns, Unterhaching and Le Touquet are ones we are proud of and we value their continued comradeship;

d) Our town of Witney and our residents will be hugely affected by whatever deal or no deal is reached and as the town council our moral obligation is to do everything in our power to bring unity and a sense of being to our community;

In light of the above, this Council therefore resolves to:

1. Commit to continuing our proud, strong and comradely relationships with our European twin towns, Unterhaching and Le Touquet
2. As a show of solidarity to our twin towns, fly the flags of Unterhaching and Le Touquet from the Witney Town Hall on 31st October 2019, or whatever day the UK leaves in European Union
3. Invite our residents to celebrate the relationship we all have with our twin towns at this time of uncertainty

Proposed: Cllr R Bolger

Seconded: Cllr J Aitman

RESOLVED:

1. that motion one, as presented by Cllr Collins, be passed with 16 members in favour and one against;
2. that the second motion, as presented by Cllr Bolger, be passed with the following amendments:
 - "Government" in a) is changed to parliament
 - "Witney" is inserted between Unterhaching and Le Touquet in c)
 - "at this time of uncertainty" is removed from the final sentence.

404 **CONSULTATIONS**

The Council received and considered the Oxfordshire Growth Board Survey and the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey.

RESOLVED: that the Oxfordshire Growth Board Survey be completed personally by members and that Cllr Smith responds to the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey in conjunction with the Town Clerk on behalf of the Council.

405 **CONCLUSION OF AUDIT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019**

The Committee received and considered the notice of the conclusion of audit for the year ended 31 March 2019.

RESOLVED: that the Council notes that the Council's External Auditor – Moore Stephens – has completed the review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability

Return for year ended 31 March 2019, and in their opinion the information is in accordance with the Proper Practices (external Audit Report and Certificate 2018/19).

406 **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Council received and considered the report by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

The Deputy Mayor added that the In-Bloom results had come in and Witney had achieved a silver award for the Town and a gold for The Leys. She commended the work of Officers and also the contractors.

RESOLVED: that the Civic Announcements be noted.

407 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

There was no communication from the Leader.

408 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence for consideration.

409 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

Cllr Prosser asked what had happened to the mission statement as he thought it was being considered that evening. The Town Clerk advised that she had not been passed the strategic plan by the Council's Leadership, but it would be put on a suitable agenda as soon as she received it.

410 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: 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.

411 **PROPERTY MATTERS**

The Town Clerk gave a confidential verbal update on some property matters.

RESOLVED: that the confidential verbal update from the Town Clerk be noted.

412 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

The Mayor reported that he had with the Town Clerk, sealed a new lease of the Cemetery Lodge to Kenmar Estates that morning.

RESOLVED: that the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to the lease of the Cemetery Lodge to Kenmar Estates.

The meeting closed at: 8.35 pm

Chair

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

Held on Tuesday, 15 October 2019

At 6.00 pm in the Lobby, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	M Jones
	L Ashbourne	A McMahon
	T Ashby	V Gwatkin
Officer:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
Others:	0 members of the public.	

P413 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

AN apology for his absence was received from Cllr Prosser.

P414 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

P415 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present for this item.

P416 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee received and considered the schedule of planning applications circulated prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the schedule, as circulated, be noted.

P417 ROAD CLOSURE APPLICATION - WITNEY WONDERLAND

The Committee received and considered correspondence from West Oxfordshire District Council concerning an application for a road closure for Witney Wonderland on 29 and 30 November, and 6 December 2019. The Town Council noted that the applicant had indicated that the Town Council had been consulted, when in fact it was the WODC Officer who had noticed that the Town Council did not appear to have been consulted.

The Committee had no formal objection but did wish Station Lane to remain open and had concerns about how the school might be impacted.

RESOLVED: Witney Town Council understands that the road closure will be directly in front of the Church and has no objection as long as it does not impact on Henry Box School or those living in Station Lane. The Town Council would have liked formal notification from the applicant as indicated on the form, rather than from West Oxfordshire District Council Officers.

The meeting closed at: 6.55 pm

Chair

Witney Town Council

Planning Minutes - 15 October 2019

416

416- 1 WTC/178/19 Plot Ref :-19/02662/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- SOWERBY, MR ANDREW Date Received :- 19/09/2019
Location :- 54 ABBEY ROAD Date Returned :- 15/10/2019
ABBEY ROAD
WITNEY
Proposal : Single storey front extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

416- 2 WTC/179/19 Plot Ref :-19/022517/S73 Type :- NON COMPLY
Applicant Name :- WEBB, MR LUKE Date Received :- 19/09/2019
Location :- LAND NORTH OF BURFORD Date Returned :- 15/10/2019
ROAD
BURFORD ROAD
WITNEY
Proposal : Non compliance with condition 2 of planning permission 17/03338/RES to allow plot substitution to relocate affordable housing (whilst still incorporating all changes as approved under 18/01684/S73).
Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application as the new location has no approved flood strategy as pointed out by Oxfordshire County Council in its comments. The Town Council also considers that a redesign of the drainage for the properties is required and it does not approve of the re siting of these properties.

416- 3 WTC/180/19 Plot Ref :-19/02699/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- BRAZIER, MR ALEX Date Received :- 08/10/2019
Location :- 206 FARMERS CLOSE Date Returned :- 15/10/2019
FARMERS CLOSE
WITNEY
Proposal : Single storey front extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

416- 4 WTC/181/19 Plot Ref :-19/02739/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- KERR, MR NEIL Date Received :- 02/10/2019
Location :- DAMSON COTTAGES 65 Date Returned :- 15/10/2019
OXFORD HILL
OXFORD HILL
WITNEY
Proposal : Erection of a single storey extension to garage. (Part retrospective).

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

416- 5 WTC/182/19 Plot Ref :-19/02728/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- CATT, MR AND MRS Date Received :- 02/10/2019
Location :- 164 BURWELL DRIVE Date Returned :- 15/10/2019
BURWELL DRIVE
WITNEY

Proposal : Erection of single storey rear extension.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

416- 6 WTC/183/19 Plot Ref :-19/02732/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- TURNER, MR AND MRS JOE Date Received :- 08/10/2019
Location :- 8 STANWAY CLOSE Date Returned :- 15/10/2019
STANWAY CLOSE
WITNEY

Proposal : Single storey rear extension and porch extension to front. Link garage to house with loft conversion and dormer windows to front. (Amendments to 16/02805/HHD).

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

416- 7 WTC/184/19 Plot Ref :-19/02591/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- MOHAMMED, MR Date Received :- 07/10/2019
Location :- RAZZI HOUSE, 31 MOORLAND Date Returned :- 15/10/2019
CLOSE
MOORLAND CLOSE
WITNEY

Proposal : Amendments to approved plans under application 18/00077/HHD to allow increase height to annex, external paving and alterations and additional windows. To regularise works. (Part retrospective)

Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this proposal as it results in a loss of privacy to the neighbours and also results in the loss of the ability to maintain the fence belonging to 31 Moorland Close.

The Meeting closed at : 6.55pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

Witney Town Council

Planning Minutes - 5 November 2019

427

427- 1 WTC/185/19 Plot Ref :-19/02708/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- BRODRICK, MR AND MRS Date Received :- 10/10/19
Location :- 80 TOWER HILL Date Returned :- 05/11/19
TOWER HILL
WITNEY
Proposal : Alterations and erection of a single story rear extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

427- 2 WTC/186/19 Plot Ref :-19/02649/S73 Type :- VARIATION
Applicant Name :- RUBIN, MR DANIEL Date Received :- 10/10/19
Location :- STANLEY COURT, RICHARD Date Returned :- 05/11/19
JONES R
RICHARD JONES ROAD
WITNEY
Proposal : Removal of condition 4 of planning permission 19/00787/S73 to allow flexibility of use.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

427- 3 WTC/187/19 Plot Ref :-19/02595/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- BUTLER, MISS LIANNE Date Received :- 15/10/19
Location :- 27 CRAWLEY ROAD Date Returned :- 05/11/19
CRAWLEY ROAD
WITNEY
Proposal : Drop kerb.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

427- 4 WTC/188/19 Plot Ref :-19/02953/RES Type :- RESERVED
Applicant Name :- DAVIES, MR MARK Date Received :- 23/10/19
Location :- LAND AT WEST WITNEY Date Returned :- 05/11/19
DOWNS ROAD
DOWNS ROAD
Proposal : Reserved matters application for approval of all remaining landscaping areas on site pursuant to outline permission 12/0081/P/OP.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objection to this application in principal, but would like to comment that the proposed hoggin path is not durable and not appropriate for children riding cycles, and for pushing buggies. The Town Council also has some concern that the pathways may not be wide enough for mobility scooters. The Town Council would also like to be reassured that the pathway network connects to schools and work areas. The Town Council would

also like the developer to use non chemical pest and weed control.

427- 5 WTC/189/19 Plot Ref :-19/02718/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- ABBOTT DIABETES CARE Date Received :- 24/10/19
Location :- RANGE ROAD Date Returned :- 05/11/19
RANGE ROAD
WITNEY

Proposal : Erection of first floor extension and balcony to enlarge existing canteen space together with fire exit external staircase.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objection to this application but would like to see replacement planting for any that is lost.

427- 6 WTC/190/19 Plot Ref :-19/02782/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- HILL, MS Date Received :- 30/10/19
Location :- 15 OXLEASE Date Returned :- 05/11/19
OXLEASE
OX28 3QZ

Proposal : Single storey rear extension.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

The Meeting closed at : 6.45pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

Witney Town Council

Planning Minutes - 5 November 2019

427

427- 1 WTC/185/19 Plot Ref :-19/02708/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- BRODRICK, MR AND MRS Date Received :- 10/10/19
Location :- 80 TOWER HILL Date Returned :- 05/11/19
TOWER HILL
WITNEY

Proposal : Alterations and erection of a single story rear extension.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

427- 2 WTC/186/19 Plot Ref :-19/02649/S73 Type :- VARIATION
Applicant Name :- RUBIN, MR DANIEL Date Received :- 10/10/19
Location :- STANLEY COURT, RICHARD Date Returned :- 05/11/19
JONES R
RICHARD JONES ROAD
WITNEY

Proposal : Removal of condition 4 of planning permission 19/00787/S73 to allow flexibility of use.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

427- 3 WTC/187/19 Plot Ref :-19/02595/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- BUTLER, MISS LIANNE Date Received :- 15/10/19
Location :- 27 CRAWLEY ROAD Date Returned :- 05/11/19
CRAWLEY ROAD
WITNEY

Proposal : Drop kerb.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

427- 4 WTC/188/19 Plot Ref :-19/02953/RES Type :- RESERVED
Applicant Name :- DAVIES, MR MARK Date Received :- 23/10/19
Location :- LAND AT WEST WITNEY Date Returned :- 05/11/19
DOWNS ROAD
DOWNS ROAD

Proposal : Reserved matters application for approval of all remaining landscaping areas on site pursuant to outline permission 12/0081/P/OP.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objection to this application in principal, but would like to comment that the proposed hoggin path is not durable and not appropriate for children riding cycles, and for pushing buggies. The Town Council also has some concern that the pathways may not be wide enough for mobility scooters. The Town Council would also like to be reassured that the pathway network connects to schools and work areas. The Town Council would

also like the developer to use non chemical pest and weed control.

427- 5 WTC/189/19 Plot Ref :-19/02718/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- ABBOTT DIABETES CARE Date Received :- 24/10/19
Location :- RANGE ROAD Date Returned :- 05/11/19
RANGE ROAD
WITNEY
Proposal : Erection of first floor extension and balcony to enlarge existing canteen space together with fire exit external staircase.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objection to this application but would like to see replacement planting for any that is lost.

427- 6 WTC/190/19 Plot Ref :-19/02782/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- HILL, MS Date Received :- 30/10/19
Location :- 15 OXLEASE Date Returned :- 05/11/19
OXLEASE
OX28 3QZ
Proposal : Single storey rear extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

The Meeting closed at : 6.45pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

Held on Tuesday, 26 November 2019

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

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	V Gwatkin
	T Ashby	M Jones
	O Collins	A Prosser
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
Others:	0 members of the public.	

P482 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs Ashbourne and McMahon.

P483 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

P484 MINUTES

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meetings held on 24 September, 15 October and 5 November 2019.

RESOLVED: that the above minutes be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

P485 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present for this item.

P486 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee received and considered a list of planning applications.

RESOLVED: that the comments, as per the attached schedule, be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council.

P487 PLANNING DECISIONS

The Committee received and considered the schedule of planning decisions as circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED: that the schedule as circulated, be noted.

P488 **APPEAL DECISION - 100 EASTFIELD ROAD**

The Committee received and considered the appeal decision in respect of 100 Eastfield Road, which had been permitted and the development allowed.

RESOLVED: that the appeal decision be noted.

The meeting closed at: 7.00 pm

Chair

486- 4 WTC/194/19 Plot Ref :-19/02848/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- BROOKES, MR NIGEL Date Received :- 05/11/2019
Location :- 45 CORN STREET Date Returned :- 27/11/2019
CORN STREET
WITNEY
Proposal : Demolition of existing outbuildings and construction of ground floor, one bed flat. Conversion of existing flat over shop to create two, one bedroom flats, including first floor rear extension and bedrooms on existing second floor. Provision of storage facilities within existing courtyard.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objection to this proposal and is pleased to note that there is cycle storage provision for these properties.

486- 5 WTC/195/19 Plot Ref :-19/02849/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- BROOKES, MR NIGEL Date Received :- 05/11/2019
Location :- 45 CORN STREET Date Returned :- 27/11/2019
CORN STREET
WITNEY
Proposal : Internal and external alterations to include demolition of existing outbuildings and construction of ground floor, one bed flat. Conversion of existing flat over shop to create two, one bedroom flats, including first floor rear extension and bedrooms on existing second floor. Provision of storage facilities within existing courtyard.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objection to this proposal and is pleased to note that there is cycle storage provision for these properties.

486- 6 WTC/196/19 Plot Ref :-19/03054/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- STRUTT, MR NIGEL Date Received :- 05/11/2019
Location :- 10 SOUTH LAWN Date Returned :- 27/11/2019
SOUTH LAWN
WITNEY
Proposal : Two storey rear extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

486- 7 WTC/197/19 Plot Ref :-19/02819/FU: Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- n/a Date Received :- 11/11/2019
Location :- UNIT 3 - 4 WOOLGATE CENTRE Date Returned :- 27/11/2019
WOOLGATE SHOPPING CENTRE
WITNEY
Proposal : Two storey rear extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objection to this proposal, but concurs with the County Council's comment that there needs to be a robust drainage scheme as there are known drainage issues in this area.

486- 8 WTC/198/19 Plot Ref :-19/03148/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- RAPLEY, MRS JILL Date Received :- 11/11/2019
Location :- 36A NEW YATT ROAD Date Returned :- 27/11/2019
NEW YATT ROAD
WITNEY
Proposal : Single storey front extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

486- 9 WTC/199/19 Plot Ref :-19/03005/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- DICKSON, MR BEN Date Received :- 18/11/2019
Location :- 127 COLWELL DRIVE Date Returned :- 27/11/2019
COLWELL DRIVE
WITNEY
Proposal : Erection of two storey side extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

The Meeting closed at : 7pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

Held on Monday, 11 November 2019

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

Present:

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

Councillors:	L Duncan	D Enright
	D Butterfield	M Jones
	O Collins	H Eaglestone
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	John Hickman	Operations & Estates Officer
Others:	0 members of the public.	

H438 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs Ashby, Bolger and King.

H439 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

H440 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned so that Mr Terry Powell could address the committee about lighting systems in the Corn Exchange.

After this address, the Committee reconvened.

H441 MINUTES

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2019.

Matters Arising

The Town Clerk referred to minute H364 (1) and advised that Cottsway had offered a 10-year lease of Park Road Play area for £125 per annum, as they were asserting that neither they or the Town Council could prove ownership. They were potentially interested in putting affordable housing on the site. The Town Clerk would explore options for proving ownership with the solicitor, and would report back to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee or Full Council.

H442 **OFFICER'S WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

H443 **OPERATIONAL REPORT - PROGRESS ON IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS SINCE LAST MEETING**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer updating on various items and areas across the estate.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

H444 **PUBLIC HALLS**

a) Corn Exchange Working Party Minutes – 4 November 2019

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Corn Exchange Working Party held on 4 November 2019.

b) Corn Exchange Phase 2 Priorities

The Committee received and considered the report of the Office Manager, further to a working party meeting and meetings with various consultants. A quick fix would be to enable the doors to open wide enough to allow more people to leave the building in a short space of time which would enable the capacity to be increased in terms of fire regulations. Members agreed that this should be done by the works staff.

Members were more cautious about committing to lighting and audio systems as they did not want to have to rectify something that may not work for the building when the vision had been developed further. It was agreed that it would be better for a consultant to look at these items as part of an overall plan for the building and to employ the services of Oxford Art Consultants above others to undertake this work due to their previous experience of the building.

RESOLVED:

a) that the minutes of the Corn Exchange Working Party held on 4 November 2019 be noted and the recommendations contained therein approved;

b) that in terms of phase two priorities, the fire exit doors be adjusted to allow more people to exit the building and therefore increase the capacity; and that Oxford Arts Consultants be employed to develop a plan for the Corn Exchange.

H445 **CEMETERIES, WAR MEMORIALS AND CLOSED CHURCH YARDS**

a) War Memorial

The Committee received and considered correspondence from Mrs J Dolby regarding casualties of WW1 who she believed were not recorded on the war memorial. She had decided to contact

the Town Council after hearing that the name of Lucy Harris was to be added to the War Memorial.

Members noted that some of the names listed may be on memorials in surrounding villages and Cllr Jones offered to ask Mr Clements (who had made the request to add Lucy Harris to the War Memorial) to carry out some research on the names and see if they were recorded somewhere else.

b) Windrush Cemetery – Wildflower Meadow

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer about wildflowers on the meadow burial area at Windrush Cemetery. The area that had been trialled as a cultivated wildflower area had been extremely successful but it would be very expensive to maintain this annually.

Working with the Land Army and Toby Swift from the Wychwood Project, the Operations and Estates Officer suggested that it may be better to sow with yellow rattle which was self-seeding and would cost far less. Members discussed this and it was agreed that this was a good option, especially as the ground would then be prepared for any other seeding that may be done. The Operations and Estates Officer proposed that families with members buried in this area could be offered the chance to purchase seed bombs to sow on the graves. This should then create both an attractive display and wildflower area which would hopefully self-seed. This was agreed to be a good idea and Cllr Jones said that she would raise this at the next Friends of the Cemeteries meeting and ask if anyone would like to donate money to purchase a seed bomb. The Town Clerk advised contacting Earthwatch as it was running a Naturehood project which was handing out seeds.

RESOLVED:

a) that the correspondence from J Dolby be noted and that Cllr Jones ask Mr Clements to carry out further research into the names suggested to ensure that they were not recorded on any other war memorials in neighbouring villages;

b) that the report be noted and that the meadow burial area of the Windrush Cemetery be cultivated with yellow rattle and that the possibility of using seed bombs on individual graves is explored. Officers should make contact with Earthwatch to see if they could help in this respect.

H446 **SPORTS AND RECREATION GROUNDS**

a) Buttercross Lane Footpath

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer and quotes for the path to be constructed.

b) Leys Recreation Ground – Pitch Renovations

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer. Members discussed the fact that that the area containing pitch 1 could not host both sports and events. Quotes had been obtained to put the pitch back into operation but members agreed that it would be better to leave this side of The Leys purely for events, although some basic maintenance and decompaction would be required for the public's ad hoc use, as it was still ultimately a recreation ground for public use.

The Committee discussed the recommendations made by the Operations and Estates Officer but agreed to defer these as there were meetings with WODC (with the possibility of new pitches) and Wood Green School coming up. Members also felt that they needed to discuss options further with the Spartans before making firm decisions.

c) Witney Swifts Cricket Club

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer and correspondence from The Club, regarding the relocation to West Witney Sports Ground.

d) West Witney Bowls Club Footpath

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer, concerning the resurfacing of the footpath at the Club.

e) Sports Pitches, Bowls Maintenance Specification & Pesticide Policy

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer and the STRI report on Grounds Maintenance and a pesticide policy for sports pitches.

f) West Witney Sports and Social Club

Cllr Gwatkin provided a verbal update on the status of West Witney Sports and Social Club.

g) Sports Strategy

The Town Clerk gave a verbal report on the sports strategy explaining that a piece of work that was done in 2012 was being updated and would be brought back to the Committee when ready.

RECOMMENDED:

a) that the report be noted and that the work be carried out to the Buttercross Path by G Ayres at a cost of £2,388.00 plus VAT;

b) to defer consideration of the Operations and Estates Officer's recommendations relating to the Leys Recreation Ground and maintenance of football pitch 1 until meetings had been held with WODC, the Spartans and Wood Green School;

c) that the report regarding the Witney Swifts Cricket Club be noted and :-

- i. the Swifts Cricket Club be given permission to use the Cricket Pavilion at West Witney Sports Ground and to carry out works to the kitchen etc and the decoration;
- ii. that provision for the requirement of additional tables and chairs in the pavilion be made from the Town Council's storage;
- iii. that permission be given for a 10' x 8' or 8' shipping container to be sited for the Swifts at West Witney Sports Ground;
- iv. that permission be given for the storage of cricket covers etc over winter in the old Grounds Contractors depot;
- v. that permission be given for portable cricket practice nets and that the additional costs for the provision of a practice wicket be added to the Grounds Maintenance Contract;

- vi. that permission be given to place a cricket score box/shed at West Witney Sports Ground in a suitable area for cricket that does not affect other sports at the site;
- vii. that the Witney Swifts Cricket Club be given permission to carry out additional match rolling/marketing etc;
- viii. that Cllr Gwatkin speaks to the Club about any requirements they may have for match funding.

d) that the report in respect of West Witney Bowls Club be noted and: -

- i. West Witney Bowls Club be informed that there is a requirement for the irrigation cabling to be either sheathed or buried deeper to a depth of 18" in order to protect the cable from damages and that if this is not done a written undertaking must be given stating that Witney Town Council or its contractors will not be held responsible for any damage to the cable in the future;
- ii. that G Ayres is employed to undertake the footpath works at a cost of £3,180.00 plus VAT, and that the Operations and Estates Officer tries to negotiate a discount as the contractor will be carrying out multiple works for the Town Council.

e) that the report on sports pitches, bowls maintenance specification and pesticide policy be noted and: -

- i. that the new Sports pitch Pesticide Policy be agreed;
- ii. that the increased Sports Pitches and Bowls Greens Specification be agreed;
- iii. that the additional cost on the Grounds Maintenance Contract for the updated specification be agreed;

f) that the verbal update from Cllr Gwatkin on the status of West Witney Sports & Social Club be noted;

g) that the verbal update from the Town Clerk in respect of the Council's Sports Strategy be noted.

H447 PLAY AREAS - LEYS RECREATION GROUND - SPLASH PAD

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer and correspondence from a resident who was asking for the splash pad to be turned on for a day if it was unseasonably warm after it had been shut down for the season. It was explained that it was a long process to get the splash pad up and running again and that it took several days so it was not possible to be instantly reactive.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and the resident be advised as above.

H448 AMENITY AREAS - FARMERS CLOSE SCREENING WORKS T&B MOTORS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer providing an update on the situation at Farmers Close following last year's fire at T and B Motors. Complaints had been received about the unsightly boundary that was defined by temporary steel hoarding on the Town Council's land. The Enforcement Officer at WODC was not planning to take action at this point in time and T and B Motors had reported that they estimated a 6 – 12-month period before the boundary was replaced as they needed to determine what the best course of action would be.

RESOLVED: that the report and correspondence be noted and that the Town Clerk writes back to the Enforcement Officer asking for action to be taken and asking for the 6 – 12 months estimated time to be reduced to a more reasonable timescale.

H449 **FINANCIAL REPORTS - REVISED BUDGET 2019/20 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2020/21**

a) Revised Revenue Budget 2019/20 and Base Revenue Budget for 2020/21

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk.

b) Schedule of Proposed Burial Fees and Charges

The Committee received and considered the proposed schedules of charges and the report of the Cemeteries Officer. The report explained new legislation, The Children's Funeral Fund, making any fees payable surrounding the burial of a child up to the age of 18 to be provided free at the point of need with reimbursement claimed by the burial authority. It was noted that foetal remains pre 24 weeks gestation, were not covered and Members considered these cases should be exempt from payment to the Town Council for parents.

c) Schedule of Proposed Hall Hire Fees and Charges 2020/21

The Committee received and considered the proposed schedule of fees and charges for Hall Hire for the forthcoming fiscal year.

d) Schedule of Proposed Recreation Fees and Charges 2020/21

The Committee received and considered the proposed schedule of fees and charges for Recreation for the forthcoming fiscal year.

e) Revised Capital and Special Revenue Projects programme 2019/20

Unfortunately, due to time constraints the Town Clerk had not been able to provide an update report on this year's capital and special revenue projects programme for which she apologised.

f) Revised Growth items and Capital/Special Revenue Projects Programme 2020/21 and Beyond

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk and was asked if there were any other items that it would like to see added in.

RECOMMENDED:

a) that the report on the revised revenue budget 2019/20 and base revenue budget for 2020/21 be noted;

b) that the report be noted and: -

- i. that new fees associated with burial, Exclusive Rights of Burial and for the right to erect an approved memorial or ashes tablet for children under 18 in line with the current charges for interments for persons over 16 years be introduced,
- ii. that new fees associated with burial, Exclusive Rights of Burial and for the right to erect an approved memorial or ashes tablet for children under 18 be introduced as specified in the report,

- iii. that the Council continues to provide burials free of charge for any miscarriage or foetal matter pre 24 weeks gestation and that no charge is made for the Exclusive Rights of Burial,
 - iv. that the remaining charges are increased by 2% as outlined in the circulated report.
- c) that the proposed increase of 2% in Public Hall hire charges as circulated be agreed rounded up where necessary;
- d) that the proposed increase of 2% relating to the recreational charges for cricket, bowls, changing rooms, and football be agreed and a 5% increase for clubs and commercial use be agreed as circulated;
- e) that the Town Clerk provides an update report on this year's capital and special revenue projects programme to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee if possible;
- f) that the revenue growth items and capital/special revenue projects programme 2020/21 and beyond be noted.

The meeting closed at: 7.50 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 18 November 2019

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

Present:

Councillor L Ashbourne (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman O Collins D Enright	V Gwatkin R Smith
Officers:	Nicky Cayley Sharon Groth John Hickman Polly Inness Angus Whitburn	Democratic Services Officer Town Clerk Operations & Estates Officer Communications & Events Officer Compliance and Environment Officer
Others:	4 members of the public.	

SC450 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs Bolger and King.

SC451 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Ashbourne declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 8 as she was a volunteer for West Oxfordshire Community Transport; Cllr Enright declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 8 as he was a member of West Oxfordshire Community Transport and Cllr Aitman declared an interest in the same item as she was the Town Council representative for West Oxfordshire Community Transport.

SC452 **MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on the 16 September 2019.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair with the following amendments:

Cllr J Aitman to be added to list of attendees;

Minute 371, Resolution 2: the addition of “and a pesticides policy should be written”.

SC453 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned so that Members of the Youth Council and Margaret Burden, on behalf of West Oxfordshire Community Transport (WOCT), could address the Committee.

The Committee reconvened after the public participation.

SC454 **WEST OXFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**

This item was moved up the agenda with the express permission from the Chair, so that Margaret Burden could hear the discussion. The Town Clerk explained that any grant given for a period of years would give the bus service security, but would also assist the Town Council in its budget setting.

RECOMMENDED: that the Town Council increases its annual grant to West Oxfordshire Community Transport to £21,000 per annum for a period of three years commencing in 2020/21.

SC455 **OFFICER'S WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received and considered the Officers' Schedule of Work. The Town Clerk was pleased to advise that some items were now complete.

A member asked where the bus shelter that was moving from Marriott's Walk to Market Square would be sited. The Operations and Estates Officer explained that unfortunately it was not in a condition to withstand moving.

Another member asked for an update on the bus shelter art. The Communications and Events Officer replied that it was ready but she had not had time to action it yet.

Another member asked about the possibility of additional grit bins and the Land Army being able to help regarding snow clearance. The Town Clerk said that she would speak to the relevant County Council officer.

A member asked what was happening with the bench at Oxlease following the resident's request. The Operations and Estates Officer advised that Cottsway who owned the land had agreed in principle but wanted to know what the Town Council would do to deter anti-social behaviour (ASB). It was highly likely that ASB would occur due to the location. Members discussed this and agreed that Cottsway should be written to and have it explained that if the bench did cause any problems, it would be removed.

RESOLVED:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the bench at Blakes Avenue be sited in the agreed location and that Cottsway informed that if there were incidences of ASB, the bench could be removed.

SC456 **OPERATIONAL REPORT - PROGRESS SINCE LAST MEETING**

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

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

SC457 **STREET FURNITURE AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Chair and Cllrs Collins, Enright and Aitman gave a verbal update on the art project relating to the Street Piano, which was recently undertaken in conjunction with students from Abingdon & Witney College.

Members discussed the proposed designs from the college students - which had been reduced to four final options - and agreed to proceed with the “planets and flowers design”. They discussed potential sites for the piano and it was suggested that the SOTA Gallery might be a suitable place.

RESOLVED:

1. that the verbal report be noted;
2. that the Mayor approaches the SOTA Gallery to ask if they would be happy to have the Community Piano outside their shop and if they would store it overnight;
3. that a trolley be purchased (preferably second hand) up to a maximum budget of £200;
4. that the Mayor informs the College of the winning designs – planets and flowers;
5. that the Mayor also asks the SOTA Gallery if it would display the artwork of the finalists.

SC458 **ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND VANDALISM**

a) Vandalism Report – Operations and Estates Officer

Members received and considered an updated vandalism report from the Operations and Estates Officer.

b) Youth Have Your Say 2020

The Committee received and considered a verbal report from the Town Clerk, in which she explained the history behind the Youth Have Your Say events, run by Thames Valley Police and the Community Safety Partnership. There was a desire to hold one in 2020 and the Town Council had the opportunity to support this by offering free use of the Corn Exchange.

c) Anti-social Behaviour in the Town

The Town Clerk provided a verbal update, including that she had been to a multi-agency meeting on 22 October 2019. The Police had produced a report outlining things that could happen to tackle this. Hopefully a mobile CCTV camera would be stationed at The Leys soon. Although the ASB was a seasonal problem, the Council needed to prepare for next year when the weather improved and the nights were lighter. There would be a follow up meeting in December.

The Chair commented that whilst the original intent had been to have a public meeting on ASB, she proposed that the Annual Town meeting could have this as its focus. All members felt this was a good idea, as the police would be in attendance too.

RECOMMENDED:

- a) that the report on vandalism from the Operations and Estates Officer be noted;

- b) that the Town Clerk's verbal report be noted and that Town Council supports the Youth Have Your Say 2020 event by granting TVP/Community Safety Partnership free use of the Corn Exchange on 13 March 2020;
- c) that the verbal update from the Town Clerk be noted and that rather than hosting a meeting about ASB, this is made the focus of the Annual Town Meeting on 11 March 2020 and Aspire and Guideposts should be invited.

SC459 **GROUNDNS MAINTENANCE - TREES, FLORAL DISPLAYS AND PESTICIDE POLICY**

a) Trees

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer, in which he reported that the Council's Tree Surgeon had advised that it was not possible to reduce the canopy of trees to get better air flow to the West Witney Bowls Green. There followed a discussion on why trees needed to be removed and agreed that whilst three trees would be removed, six trees would be replanted elsewhere. The other items of work were agreed.

b) Church Green and Welch Way Commemorative Bed – Planting Scheme

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer, concerning a change to the make-up of planting and the condition of the raised bed at Welch Way.

c) Pesticide Policy

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer, with a policy for sports pitches. The policy for the whole town would be brought to the next meeting.

RECOMMENDED:

- a)
 - i) that the report of the Operations and Estates Officer be noted and that an additional sum of £3,995 be added to the arboriculture budget to deal with the major deadwood etc. within the tree belt at West Witney;
 - ii) that three trees to the southern side of West Witney Bowls Green be removed with 6 trees to be planted elsewhere as a replacement.
- b)
 - i) that the report be noted;
 - ii) that a supplementary estimate of £5,210.35 be provided from the general reserve to re-construct the raised bed on Welch Way;
 - iii) that an annual sum of £2,000 for 5 years be set aside for the future reconstruction of this bed in stone, with the Operations and Estates Officer obtaining quotes for this work;
 - iv) that the planting of the beds on Church Green be changed to 50% perennial and 50% shrubs.
- c) that the report of the Operations and Estates Officer be noted and that the full pesticides policy for non-sporting areas is brought to the next meeting.

SC460 **COMMUNITY CLEAN UP**

The Committee received and considered communication from West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) concerning a grant from Central Government for cleaning up the community. Whilst examples of what the money could be spent on included items such as litter pickers and high visibility jackets, a member had spoken to a number of volunteer groups who confirmed that they already had such items. The Town Clerk agreed to speak to WODC to see what else the money could be spent on – e.g. pressure washers.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk seeks clarification from WODC to ascertain exactly what the grant could be spent on.

SC461 **COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered an updated report of press coverage and the report of the Communications and Events Officer on web accessibility.

RESOLVED: that the reports be noted.

SC462 **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO 48 A)**

RESOLVED: that Standing Orders be suspended in order to allow the meeting to continue as it had now lasted for two hours.

SC463 **EVENTS REPORT**

a) Third Party Events

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer concerning third party events on The Leys.

b) Civic and Community Events

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications and Events officer containing ideas for civic and community events.

c) Community Christmas Meal

Cllr Smith provided members with a verbal update on the plans for the Community Christmas Meal and asked if the Council would support the initiative by offering free use of the Corn Exchange.

RECOMMENDED:

a) that the Operations & Estates Officer's report on third party events be noted;

b) i) that the report of the Communications & Events Officer be noted;

ii) that the Communications and Events Officer circulates three possible dates to members for a Lake and Country Park Trail and Story Telling Day;

- iii) that a Climate Emergency Update Meeting is not needed as public were attending the Working Party meetings;
 - iv) that the Youth Council are supported by the Town Council and Councillors for their Climate Change Event on Church Green;
 - v) that the Communications and Events Officers undertakes research into successful car free days in order to ascertain whether road closures would be necessary;
 - vi) that a £1, 000 budget is set up for Car Free Day 2020;
 - vii) that a budget of £250 be set up for a Secular Festive Event for 2020;
 - viii) that the Town Council advertises for a Community Group to facilitate/run a Big Lunch on 6 – 7 June 2020;
- c) that the update on the Community Christmas meal from Cllr Smith be noted and that free use of the Corn Exchange for the event be agreed.

SC464 ONE WITNEY VISION: RESIDENTS SURVEY

The Committee received and considered the draft strategic plan produced by Cllrs Gwatkin and Ashbourne. The Town Clerk commented she had some concerns about the wording in its current form, particularly as it encompassed things that were outside the remit of the Town Council. It was agreed that she would work on rewording some sections with Cllrs Ashbourne and Gwatkin. Once this has been done the Communications and Events Officer would translate it into an online survey and issue a press release.

RESOLVED:

1. that the Draft Strategic Plan 2019 -2023 be noted;
2. that Cllrs Ashbourne and Gwatkin work with the Town Clerk to reword some sections of the plan;
3. that the Communications and Events Officer translates the strategic plan into a Survey Monkey survey and issues a press release to launch this.

SC465 TOWN CENTRE SHOPS

The Committee discussed the state of the high street in terms of local businesses as several shops had closed and more were expected. The Chair advised that this item had been put onto the agenda because District Councillor Andrew Coles had asked the Town Council to support a Small Business Saturday. The Town Clerk pointed out that the District Council employed a Business Development Officer. As business development was not under the Town Council's remit or control, it was agreed to write to the District Council's Business Development Officer asking that the District Council supports small businesses as much as possible.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council writes a letter to WODC's Business Development Officer explaining that the Town Council would like to see the District Council supporting the town's independent businesses more.

SC466 **CHRISTMAS SUB COMMITTEE**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Christmas Sub Committee held on 21 October 2019.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Christmas Sub Committee be noted, and the recommendations contained therein be provided with the following amendment to minute X421, recommendation 2:

Add in "and solar powered options" after "timers".

SC467 **CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Climate and Biodiversity Sub Committee held on 6 November 2019.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted, and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

SC468 **TWINNING MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Witney & District Twinning Association held on 2 October 2019 and a request for a grant towards their Anniversary Celebrations in 2020.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting be noted and that a grant of £1,000 plus free use of the Corn Exchange is given towards the Anniversary Celebrations in 2020.

SC469 **FINANCE REPORT - REVISED BUDGET 2019/20 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2020/21**

a) Revised revenue budget 2019/20 and base revenue budget for 2020/21

The Town Clerk circulated her report on the revised revenue budget for the current year and the first draft of the budget proposed for 2020/21 at the meeting. She explained that the adoption of this year's budget was regrettably having to be put back due to time constraints and for personal reasons.

b) Revised Capital & Special Revenue Projects Programme 2019/20

The Town Clerk circulated a schedule of the position relating to the current years capital and special revenue projects for this committee.

c) Revenue Growth Items and Capital/Special Revenue Projects Programme 2020/21 and beyond

The Town Clerk circulated a schedule of projects put forward for this committee's consideration, although some had not been costed out. She invited Members to let her know of any other projects which should be included.

RESOLVED:

1. that the revised budget for 2019/20 and the first draft of the proposed budget for 2020/21 be noted;
2. that the progress of the revised capital and special revenue projects programme for 2019/20 be noted;
3. that items for the capital and special revenue projects programme for 2020/21 and beyond be noted.

The meeting closed at: 9.00 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 25 November 2019

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

Present:

Councillor R Bolger (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne	D Enright
	O Collins	V Gwatkin
	L Duncan	R Smith
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
Others:	4 members of the public.	

F470 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for his absence was received from Cllr David Harvey.

F471 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

F472 MINUTES

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2019.

- a) **RESOLVED:** to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2019 to be signed by the Chair.
- b) **RESOLVED:** there were no matters arising from the minutes to be discussed at the meeting.

F473 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned so that Mr Eric Marshall could address the Committee on behalf of Witney Music Festival and Faye Carrick could address the Committee on behalf of LibFest.

F474 GRANTS AND SUBSIDISED LETTINGS

- a) This item was moved up the agenda with the express permission of the Chair so that the members of the public could hear the discussion.

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk on annual grants and subsidised lettings. These were separate from the other pots of grant funding.

Members agreed that both the Witney Music Festival and LibFest should have the rental of The Leys fully subsidised for their events in June 2020.

The Committee discussed Homestart who had given a presentation earlier in the year and who had been unsuccessful in applying for a grant previously. It was felt strongly that they offered a vital service to members of the community and families and that a budget should be set. As there had been no formal grant application at this point, it was suggested that a provisional sum be built into next year's budget. Members then discussed funding for youth work and it was agreed that rather than separating these two items, one budget covering Children and Youth should be included at a level of £30,000.

Members also wanted to increase the annual grant CAB to £2,000. The grant for the Carnival to cover the toilets was discussed and members felt that it was reasonable for it to stay at the same level.

- b) Members received and considered the report of the Democratic Services Officer including letters of thanks, and the grant applications.

RECOMMENDED:

- a) i) that the report be noted;
- ii) that in respect of subsidised lettings - Witney Music Festival be granted the full cost for its hire of the Leys - £2,880, and LibFest be granted the full cost for its hire of The Leys - £1,400, for their events in June 2020;
- iii) that the following items be put into the 2020/21 budget

Organisation	Amount	Code/Notes
West Oxon CAB	£2,000	4101/407
Witney & District Twinning	£500	4160/407 – for admin
Witney & District Twinning	£65	4161/407 -5 uses of Gallery Rm for meetings
Witney & District Twinning	£1,000 + 2 free uses of C/Ex	Towards Anniversary celebrations – April 2020
Volunteer Link-Up	£500	4162/407
Carnival	£2,000	4104/407 – xmas lights switch on
Carnival	£1,100	4104/407 – toilets for Carnival
Witney Town Band	£500	4100/407 – in return for them playing at 3 WTC events
Witney Dementia Alliance	£1,000	4107/407 – Witney in Blue

		Day
Oxfordshire Play Association	£1,000	4108/407 – Play Day in Witney
WOCT – West Oxon Community Transport	£21,000	4167/407 – Town Centre Bus Service
Children & Youth	£30,000	Towards the provision of children and youth services

- iv) that the budget for general grant dispersal for 2020/21 be set at £10,000;
- b) i) that the report and correspondence be noted;
- ii) that the following grants be made under the General Power of Competence, and that recipients are requested to acknowledge the Council's contribution on all relevant publicity:-

Witney Music Society	£50	Towards artists fees
Lower Windrush Valley Choral Society	£190	To hire professionals
Dance Creative	£500	To run fall prevention classes
Lunch Time Recitals	£250	For fees of visiting soloists
Witney Photo Group	£235	Subsidised hire of the Corn Exchange for 20 June 2020

- iii) that the Witney Model and Collectors Club be offered in house training by the Town Council and if this is not accepted, then the grant should be resubmitted at the next meeting with a quotation from a reputable training company.
- iv) that the application from Witney New Life Church be turned down on the grounds that there are so few members and that the Town Council's grant terms do not permit grants to religious organisations.

F475 OFFICER'S WORK PROGRAMME

Members received and considered the report of the Town Clerk.

In response to a Members question she advised there were some complications with the ownership of Woodgreen due to the unadopted road at Little Green and that Unterhaching Park was being dealt with by the solicitor.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

F476 **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the following schedule of payments be approved:

Cheque No's	In the sum of:	Account
Cheque 101115, DDRs and Standing Orders (Sept 2019)	£85,930.84	General Cashbook 1
Cheques 32360-32387 and DDs (Sept 2019)	£59,617.87	Imprest Cashbook 2
Cheque 101116-18, DDRs and Standing Orders (Oct 2019)	£59,980.55	General Cashbook 1
Cheques 32388-32428 and DDs (Oct 2019)	£72,690.84	Imprest Cashbook 2

F477 **INTERNAL AUDIT - FIRST INTERIM REPORT FOR 2019/20**

The Committee received and considered the First Interim Report of the Internal Auditor. A member congratulated the Town Clerk on receiving such a good audit report.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

F478 **FINANCIAL REPORTS - REVISED BUDGET 2019/20 AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2020/21**

- a) Revised revenue budget 2019/20 and base revenue budget for 2020/21

Unfortunately, the report for this item was not available due to constraints on the Town Clerk's time. She explained that, in consultation with the Chairs of Committees, she had agreed an extension with the District Council on the submission of the Precept demand and it was her intention to make a full presentation of the draft budget to the whole Council at the meeting scheduled for 16 December 2019.

- b) Schedule of proposed Burial Fees and Charges 2020/21

Members received and considered a schedule of updated Burial charges for the forthcoming financial year. This had taken into account the new legislation of The Children's Funeral Fund in which the Council would reclaim charges. There would be no costs payable for parents.

c) Schedule of proposed Hall Hire Fees and Charges 2020/21

Members received and considered an updated schedule of Hall hire fees and charges for 2020/21. The Town Clerk explained that the new Venue Manager was also working on charges for sundry items such as refreshments etc and this would be brought back to a future meeting of the Halls & Greens Spaces Committee.

d) Schedule of proposed Recreation Fees and Charges 2020/21

The Town Clerk explained that these charges also included the fees to the Clubs, and had been agreed by the Halls & Green Spaces Committee.

e) Revised Capital & Special Revenue Projects Programme 2019/20

Members received and considered the revised Capital and Special Revenue Projects Programme 2019/20 which had been tabled by the Town Clerk prior to the meeting. She explained that this was the current years projects, and the current position of the ones progressed to date.

f) Revenue Growth Items and Capital/Special Revenue Projects Programme 2020/21 and beyond

The Town Clerk had circulated a schedule of projects so far for inclusion in the Council's budget for 2020/21 and beyond. The Chair asked if the Committee would agree to setting a budget for the Climate and Biodiversity Sub Committee. A discussion followed and it was felt that whilst setting a budget was necessary, it did not need to be too substantial as a lot of the work would be lobbying and influencing others. It was agreed to set a provisional budget of £10,000 for 2020/21.

The Town Clerk also brought to Members attention the paper from Cllr Prosser on the provision of a 5K Health Route in the Town, which she had circulated ahead of the meeting. Members were unsure about rushing into a Health Route for the Town at this point as there were many questions that needed answering. These may include the possibility of painting blue lines in a conservation area and what would happen if work was needed under the pavement which had been painted, particularly as he was requested a budget of £17,000. It was agreed to refer this to the Halls and Green Spaces Committee for further discussion.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Town Clerk would work towards making a presentation on the draft budget to the Extraordinary Full Council on 16 December 2019;
- b) that the updated Burials charges be agreed;
- c) that the updates Halls charges be agreed;
- d) that the updated Recreation charges be agreed;
- e) that the revised Capital and Special Revenue Projects Programme 2019/20 be noted and;

- f) that the Revenue Growth Items and Special Revenue Projects Programme 2020/21 and beyond be noted; that £10,000 be added to the budget for the Climate and Biodiversity Sub Committee and that Cllr Prosser's proposal for a 5K health route be referred to the Halls and Green Spaces Committee for further investigation/debate.

F479 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: 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.

F480 **PROPERTY MATTERS**

The Town Clerk gave the committee a confidential verbal update on situation relating to the lease of Langdale Hall to the ICE Centre.

RESOLVED: that the confidential verbal report from the Town Clerk be noted.

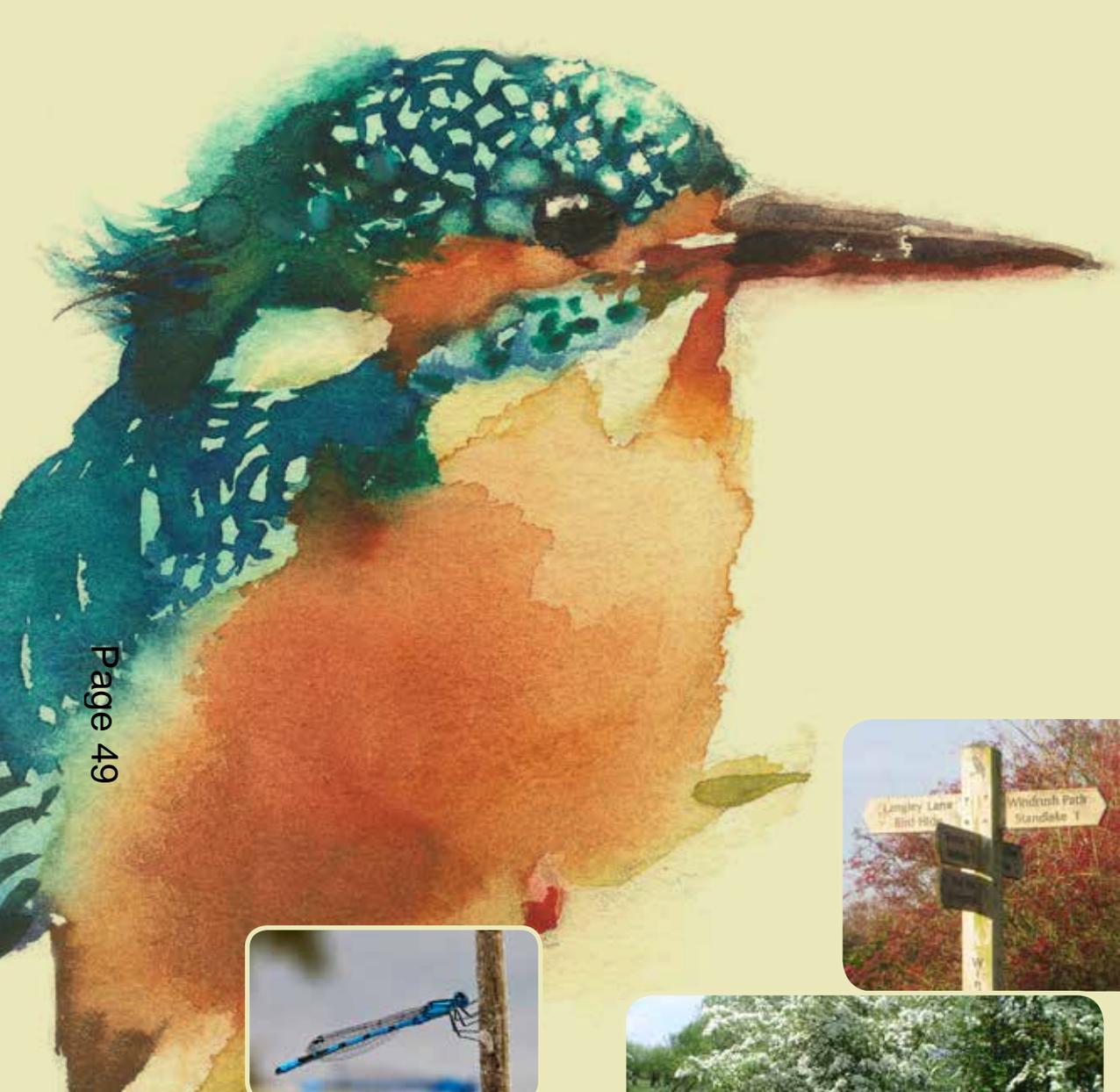
F481 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the verbal report of the Personnel Sub-Committee held earlier that evening.

RESOLVED: that the confidential verbal report be noted and the recommendations contained therein approved.

The meeting closed at: 8.20 pm

Chair



LOWER WINDRUSH VALLEY PROJECT

Strategic Plan
2015-2025

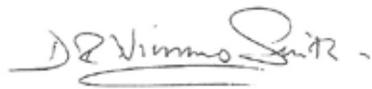


Foreword

The Lower Windrush Valley, in West Oxfordshire, is a very special and unusual place. Throughout history it has supported a wide variety of species as revealed by fossils and preserved bones including those of prehistoric mammoths and lions. Today, although the wildlife sights are much smaller in scale, they are exciting in their own way; the kingfisher flashing downstream or a field full of snake's head fritillaries bring great joy to many people.

In recent times the valley has been a valuable supplier of the sands and gravels that are essential for modern day life, resulting in enormous changes in the landscape. In recognition of these changes the Lower Windrush Valley Project (LWVP) was set up, and hosted by, Oxfordshire County Council in 2001, together with West Oxfordshire District Council. Over the years the project has successfully worked with mineral operators, landowners and the local community to deliver a wide range of improvements to the landscape, nature conservation and public access.

Oxfordshire County Council greatly values the work of the LWVP and is very pleased to support the project with its ambitions for the future.



Councillor David Nimmo-Smith
Cabinet Member for Environment



The Windrush Path created through planning consents with gravel extraction companies and landowners

The Lower Windrush Valley is no stranger to upheaval and change due to gravel extraction but there is still a strong sense of the traditional landscape and undisturbed areas where wildlife flourishes. West Oxfordshire is undergoing a period of rapid growth in towns and villages that will have a significant impact on the valley as there will be more people looking for places to visit in the countryside. So, one of the many questions for the future will be how to improve access to the Lower Windrush Valley whilst still maintaining the sense of tranquillity and remoteness that is the big attraction in this beautiful part of the world.

We have spoken with local people, businesses, community representatives and visitors and it is clear that there is a strong desire for the work of the LWVP to continue and develop. The message was that we should...

**“Be bolder....
Be more ambitious.”**

This strategy sets out a refreshed vision for the LWVP; not only to continue its well-established and valuable work, but also to create a broader remit that will expand the potential for education, build mutually beneficial links with businesses and help communities adapt to change. This will enable the LWVP to deliver the benefits that local people want for many years ahead.

Our vision for the Lower Windrush Valley

*“To be a brilliant place
for people and wildlife.”*

BENEFITS FOR THE VALLEY

High quality landscapes
and wildlife habitats

Healthy people and
active communities

New opportunities for
lifelong learning

New economic
opportunities

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Work with us to combine nature
conservation with public access

Volunteer on research and
conservation projects

Local businesses: sponsor what
we do to increase the health and
wellbeing of staff and contribute
to the local community

Help us guide and plan the
future of this bold and
ambitious project

What makes the Windrush Valley so special?

The River Windrush flows through the Lower Windrush Valley for 7 miles, from Witney to its confluence with the River Thames at Newbridge. The valley has been shaped by melt waters from successive glaciations that deposited the river terrace gravels that are now being excavated for the sand and gravel essential for modern life. Excavations have revealed prehistoric remains of mammoths and other large animals from 200,000 years ago and evidence of human occupation for at least 10,000 years. The restoration of the Devil's Quoits stone circle is a striking reminder of the importance of the area for people for more than 6,000 years.

The valley is now an area with quiet rural parishes and attractive historic villages with a strong sense of community and identification with the River Windrush. Over the last 60 years the mainly pastoral character of the valley has been transformed by intensive mineral extraction and processing with the result that considerable areas of the valley are now occupied by large lakes.

Many of the lakes support a vibrant leisure and tourism industry with fishing, watersports and camping and caravanning attracting many visitors to the area.

Research by the Freshwater Habitats Trust (FHT) shows that many of the lakes and ponds in the valley are of outstanding quality with a rich diversity of aquatic plants and invertebrates.

It may feel as if most of the valley is covered in water but in reality half of the valley is grassland. Two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) protect small areas of

rare, species-rich lowland meadow habitat. Ducklington Mead, renowned for its snake's head fritillaries, is open to the public on Fritillary Sunday once a year. The Langley's Lane SSSI protects declining lowland meadow species such as green winged orchids.

Rushy Common and Standlake Common Nature Reserves were created by gravel extraction and are now managed by the LWVP. There is a strong focus on habitat management for birds but these reserves also provide a wide range of habitats where animal species, from invertebrates to mammals, thrive in the hedgerows, grassland, wildflower meadows and ponds.

Tar Lakes, next door to Rushy Common Nature Reserve, was designed as a place where families with young children and people with restricted mobility can easily access the tranquil views across the lakes. For the more mobile there is an easy link into the network of footpaths and bridleways that crosses the whole of the valley.



A valley of hidden gems with glimpses of water through hedgerows and trees.

The River Windrush is an attractive and interesting river even though its course has been altered by people over many centuries. Some sections of the Windrush Path run alongside the river giving delightful views and lucky walkers may get an occasional glimpse of a kingfisher or water vole.

The valley in the 1960s



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The valley in 2015 with the LWVP boundary



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About the Project

The LWVP has a steering group of representatives from the local community and partner organisations and is managed on a day to day basis by a project manager. The LWVP coordinates action designed to generate benefit from the legacy of mineral extraction, focusing on:

- **NATURE CONSERVATION**
- **ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE**
- **LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS**

Over the past 14 years the LWVP has delivered a significant number of achievements including:

Advice on habitat management to minerals operators, landowners and fisheries.

New nature reserves at Rushy Common and Standlake Common created through mineral extraction and now managed by the LWVP.

Bird hide key scheme that enables safe access to three bird hides at the nature reserves.

Improved access including two sections of a long distance footpath along the River Windrush.

Community walks, talks, events and a regular group of conservation volunteers.

Educational opportunities for schools, colleges and universities.

Research projects with environmental organisations such as the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) and Freshwater Habitats Trust (FHT).

Work in partnership with national and local environmental organisations such as RSPB and BBOWT.



Challenges Ahead

SCALING UP THE PROJECT

A broader vision requires a wider range of skills and more people to deliver it.

FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT

Traditional funding streams are under increasing pressure so new sources of funding are required.

CONTINUING GRAVEL EXTRACTION

More mineral extraction will be taking place over the next twenty years.

PRESSURE ON THE COUNTRYSIDE

Increasing numbers of people due to housing developments across Oxfordshire.

CLIMATE CHANGE

There is an uncertain future for the small, isolated fragments of valuable wildlife habitat and the water resources in the valley.

DEMAND FOR PUBLIC ACCESS

How to create more walks, especially by lakes and rivers and improve access across the valley for those with health and mobility difficulties.

LONG TERM MANAGEMENT OF KEY SITES

When long term management agreements come to an end the rights to public access and to manage the sites for nature conservation may be withdrawn by the landowners.

Some key features of the Lower Windrush Valley

1

Witney is a lovely old market town that is attracting much inward investment and development. Witney Lake and Country Park are right on the edge of town so are very easily accessible. Witney Lake is one of the oldest and most established of the lakes created by gravel extraction in the valley. With a varied wildlife interest, fishing and an easy walk round, it is a very popular attraction. In contrast the Country Park has rough paths giving wide views over open meadow land. Nearby at Cogges Manor Farm there is a thriving museum with a wide variety of activities in the summer.

2

The area from Ducklington to Rushy Common has a traditional pastoral landscape that is being transformed by gravel extraction. In addition to the fishing lakes, this has resulted in a new nature reserve and new stretches of footpath and bridleway that are greatly increasing the pleasure of walkers and cyclists in this area. Of particular note is the path round Tar Lake that is surfaced to make the delightful, wide open, lakeside views easily accessible for families with young children and people with restricted mobility. Ducklington Mead is a SSSI renowned for its display of snake's head fritillaries every spring. There are further gravel extraction operations planned for this area over the next 20 years which will result in the creation of new nature conservation habitats including a 60ha reedbed and wet woodland; together with new recreational areas and another 11km of footpaths and bridleways.



3

The Windrush Path is intended to run, off-road, for an 11km route from Witney to Newbridge of which there currently two sections completed. The northern section, from Witney to Hardwick, runs beside the western arm of the river for much of its route; kingfishers and water voles might be seen along this stretch. The southern section from Standlake to Newbridge passes close by some of the lakes and re-joins the river just before Newbridge in a delightful meadow that is largely untouched. Hopefully, we will be able to join the two sections up one day.

5

The River Thames floodplain around Northmoor was extensively settled in Iron Age times, indicated by the designation of a large area as a scheduled ancient monument, although there is now nothing to be seen above ground. It is now a tranquil area of meadows that feels as if it is miles away from anywhere rather than just a few miles from Witney and the city of Oxford. There will be disturbance for several years to come once gravel extraction operations start at Stonehenge Farm but, as is seen in other areas of the valley, peace and tranquillity will return once it is all completed.

4

The Devil's Quoits stone circle is a hidden gem of the valley. Located by the Dix Pit landfill site it has largely been overshadowed by the landfill operations and is not easy to access. This restored ancient monument lies next to the Dix Pit lake which is a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) designated for the numbers of gulls and waterfowl found here. As the landfill operation is now closed there is a great potential to review the management of the site to increase its value for wildlife and for people, especially those from the local villages of Stanton Harcourt and Sutton. An unusual result from the gravel extraction is the collection of remains of mammoth, lion and other animals from prehistoric times. These remains show that the area was once warmer than today and illustrate a period of time known as the 'Stanton Harcourt interglacial'.

6

Over 50 lakes with approximately 400 ha of open water provide a very unusual landscape and a wide variety of habitats. Many of the lakes are used for various types of recreational fishing and watersports, with two specifically restored as nature reserves; one at Rushy Common and one at Standlake Common.

The water quality is generally good and the lakes hold a very rich and diverse range of aquatic macro-invertebrates and plants that are regularly surveyed by The Freshwater Habitats Trust. The lakes are also well renowned for their populations of resident and visiting birds.

What you said...What we will do

"I often bring my visitors to walk round Witney Lake but it isn't very clear where else we can go to."

Improve signage across the valley to link up special places.



"There is so much to discover in the area and a lot of us are interested in helping to find out more."

Develop further research with universities and partner agencies and expand 'citizen science' projects that will help to inform future management plans.

"Working with the volunteer group on Thursdays has made me feel I am really helping to conserve local places—oh and I am getting fitter too."

Develop a wider range of volunteering opportunities in site based practical work and behind the scenes in project support.



"We really like walking along the river but we want a longer walk. When will the sections of the Windrush Path be joined up?"

Complete the Windrush Path as an off-road route between Witney and Newbridge linking to the Thames Path.

“OOOH it’s all sticky and gooey, I want to touch it.”

(pond dipping at Tar Lakes)



Develop outdoor learning opportunities, linked to the curriculum, for schools, colleges and universities.



“I helped on the dig at Dix Pit and found a mammoth tusk.”

Find ways to make the remains from archaeological and paleontological excavations more visible and accessible e.g. a local museum and web based information.

“We didn’t know that this nature reserve (Rushy Common) was here so close to our home in Witney.”



Improve information about special habitats and encourage people to become more knowledgeable about, and involved in, nature conservation.

“There are so many different places to go to, with lots of different things to see. It would be good if they were more joined up.”



Work with landowners and partner agencies to link up site management across the whole of the valley to benefit wildlife and public access.

Our Vision for The Lower Windrush Valley

COMMUNITY BENEFIT

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Relaxing views across fields, **lakes and rivers** made more accessible

Better information about walking, cycling and horse riding routes through the countryside and villages for better **physical and mental health**

Improved access to outdoor space for people with restricted mobility

Volunteering out in the field or with general project work to create a **sense of belonging**



LIFELONG LEARNING

Information available for all to gain a **better understanding** of the history, special features and natural assets of the valley

Events for all ages to enjoy and **learn together** about historic and scientific sites and features

Good sites for **outdoor education** for schools, colleges and universities

Learn new skills through volunteering

Themes for Action

***Community engagement • Lifelong learning
Public access • Communications***

Our Vision for The Lower Windrush Valley

LANDSCAPE AND NATURE CONSERVATION

LANDSCAPE

Lowland meadows conserved and extended

Traditional management practices continued e.g. **hedges laid, willows pollarded** to maintain their vigour and their appearance in the landscape

Tree planting in small copses or individual specimens e.g. **native black poplars**

Remnants of industrial work removed or **screened by sensitive planting**

Rivers well managed to provide good quality wildlife habitat and relaxing places for people to visit



HABITATS AND SPECIES

Nature reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest with thriving populations of animals and plants

Lakes, ponds and rivers with thriving communities of **aquatic animals and plants**

New habitats created e.g. ponds, hedges and copses

Improving populations of **threatened species** e.g. water vole

Research to gather evidence to ensure best management practice

Themes for Action

Land management • Information and research
Working in partnership • Conservation programmes

Our Vision for The Lower Windrush Valley

ECONOMIC BENEFIT

BENEFITS TO BUSINESSES

Promotion of this unusual and attractive area that will help to attract **top quality staff** and **more customers**

Good information about the **natural assets** of the valley that will encourage businesses to locate and grow here

Develop **projects mutually beneficial** to the LWVP and businesses
e.g. tree planting or creation of publicity resources

Positive image of collaboration with a **successful environmental organisation** to promote to customers



BENEFITS TO THE VALLEY

Improved footpath and bridleway network centred on **pubs and shops** for local people and to encourage more visitors

Access to **grants** and other **funds** for specific projects

Employee volunteering schemes delivering additional **practical conservation work**

More projects that will bring benefits to **local people, wildlife and the landscape**

Themes for Action

Communications • Joint initiatives with business partners
Engagement with funders • Development of visitor attractions

Future LWVP actions

COMMUNITY

Community Engagement

Develop opportunities for community involvement and creating partnerships across the whole range of project activities.
Create and promote a variety of events throughout the year that contribute to and publicise the work of the project.

Public Access

Complete the Windrush Path as a safe off-road footpath from Witney to Newbridge.
Extend the length of footpath and bridleway available to people with restricted mobility and improve facilities to make access more appealing for all.

Lifelong learning

Develop partnerships with education providers and other specialists to create resources and learning opportunities.
Develop informal learning events for people of all ages e.g. U3A and local interest groups.

Communications

Create a lively and effective communications strategy that will include web based resources and printed documents to be available through local outlets e.g. pubs.

NATURE

Land management

Ensure our conservation work, at Standlake Common and Rushy Common nature reserves, follows best practice guidelines.
Work with partners e.g. the Windrush Catchment Partnership where joint projects at a larger scale will be more cost effective and beneficial to the environment.

Working in partnership

Work with landowners, partner agencies and special interest groups to protect the landscape, natural habitats and species in the valley.
Secure new funding to implement development and improvement projects.

Information and research

Review and monitor biodiversity and landscape character and develop plans to make the valley more biologically diverse and of higher landscape value.
Identify new areas for research and seek partner funding to enhance knowledge of this unique area for a wider audience.

Conservation programmes

Extend local priority habitats e.g. lowland meadow and protect threatened species e.g. water vole and native black poplar.

ECONOMY

Communications

Create a communications strategy specifically for developing links with businesses for mutual benefit.

Engagement with funders

Seek active involvement with local businesses to secure additional revenue for specific projects that will benefit people and wildlife.
Demonstrate that the LWVP delivers top quality results for funding partners.

Joint initiatives with business partners

Develop an understanding of the needs and interests of local businesses and what the LWVP can do to assist their development.
Demonstrate that the LWVP is a valuable asset to the economic development of the area.

Work with mineral companies to gain maximum environmental and conservation value from on-going or future operations.

Development of visitor attractions

Help to plan for and develop visitor attractions that showcase the natural and historical assets of the valley with improved provision of facilities for visitors and better use of existing resources from, for example, parking at pubs to more ambitious projects such as a paleo-history museum.

How we will develop the Lower Windrush Valley Project in a sustainable way in partnership with local people

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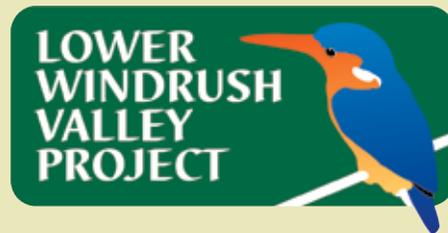


NEXT YEAR	NEXT 5 YEARS	BEYOND
Continue to manage our nature reserve assets and work with local landowners to increase their value for wildlife and enhance the landscape.	Identify more areas that have the potential to add value for wildlife and landscape and design schemes that will deliver greater benefits in collaboration with landowners and partner organisations.	Work with landowners and partner agencies to deliver conservation gains of regional and national importance.
Continue to improve public access with a focus on circular routes.	Upgrade access to key locations for people with restricted mobility.	A comprehensive action plan in place to ensure continuing improvements for public access.
Review all information and data currently available in the LWVP about the natural environment and the history of the valley.	Establish joint work with universities, colleges and schools to improve information about the valley and available resources and to deliver locally based education opportunities for all age groups.	Create an education centre displaying the mammoth remains; together with the history of changes in the landscape and the special features of the valley today.
Continue our programme of volunteering and events for all ages	Develop a comprehensive programme of events that will increasingly be run by the community with support from the LWVP.	Events and volunteering programme in place run by the community with technical support from the LWVP.
Develop new, small scale, projects sourcing external funding as required.	Identify a programme of more ambitious projects that will be ready to put into action as new funding becomes available.	The LWVP is well-resourced and able to take on larger scale projects as opportunities arise.
Draw on existing finite resources to fund staff.	Identify and develop sustainable sources of funding to enable the staff team and scope of the LWVP to grow.	The LWVP is not reliant on minerals operators or public sector funding.
Continue to develop links with the local community.	Work in partnership with the local community to expand opportunities for involvement in all aspects of the running of the LWVP.	The LWVP to provide a source of knowledge and expertise to underpin and promote the community led work.
Review existing channels of communication.	Establish a comprehensive information gathering and communications strategy.	A vibrant communications strategy making best use of modern technology as it evolves.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact
The Lower Windrush Valley Project office
Tel: 01865 815426
or email: lwvp@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Photos © LWVP, Graham Lenton,
Chris Hughes, Matthew Jellings, Paul Martin

IN CONCLUSION

THE LOWER WINDRUSH VALLEY HAS..

an amazing landscape, rich in wildlife and human heritage which offers significant opportunities to deliver wider benefits for biodiversity, public access and environmental services, such as water management, in the future. Within this area of farmland, rivers and a mosaic of lakes and wetlands the potential to work together to conserve and develop this special area is an exciting challenge for the years ahead.

WHO WILL HELP TO DELIVER THIS VISION?

- Local people
- Landowners
- Businesses
- Parish, district and county councils
- Volunteers
- Environmental agencies
- Education providers



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Lower Windrush Valley Project
c/o Oxfordshire County Council
Ron Groves House
23 Oxford Road
Kidlington
OX5 2BP

1st October 2019

Dear Sharon,

I am writing on behalf of the Lower Windrush Valley Project (LWVP) to request a nominated representative from Witney Town Council to sit on the LWVP Steering Group.

I have attached a copy of the LWVP Steering Group Terms of Reference and the LWVP Strategic Plan for your information. The Terms of Reference document gives a brief project background and describes the purpose of the Steering Group and Steering Group member's responsibilities. The Strategic Plan gives a more detailed description of the project and our objectives.

The Steering Group meets twice a year in March and September and the nominated representative would attend these meetings to represent Witney Town Council and the residents of Witney.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rachel Crookes'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachel Crookes
Lower Windrush Valley Project Officer

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Lower Windrush Valley Project Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Background

The Lower Windrush Valley covers 28 square kilometres of West Oxfordshire, incorporating the floodplain of the River Windrush from Witney to where it joins the River Thames at Newbridge. Over the last 60 years the landscape character of the valley has been transformed by mineral extraction with large areas of the riverside pasture transformed into a mosaic of open water.

With mineral extraction set to continue for years to come the Lower Windrush Valley Project (LWVP) was created by Oxfordshire County Council to create and implement an environmental strategy for this area.

Since 2001, the LWVP has employed one Project Officer who works with many environmental organisations, mineral operators, landowners and the local community to co-ordinate, deliver and help manage a wide range of initiatives that aim to:

- Strengthen and develop the evolving landscape of the valley
- Protect and enhance the biodiversity it supports
- Improve opportunities for people to access and enjoy the countryside
- Raise awareness, understanding and involvement in the diverse issues that influence the environment in the valley

The Lower Windrush Valley Project is currently funded and supported by Oxfordshire County Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, and Smith & Sons (Bletchington) Ltd.

Purpose of the LWVP Steering Group

In 2016 the LWVP Steering Group accepted a proposal put forward by the Project Manager to make changes to the Steering Group and create a Technical Advisory Group. These Terms of Reference relate to the Steering Group as of September 2016.

The purpose of the Steering Group is to oversee project activities and resources, and to provide guidance to the Project Manager in delivering the LWVP Strategy.

Role of the LWVP Steering Group

The role of the LWVP Steering Group is to:

- Set project priorities
- Monitor project activities against the strategy
- Be responsible for monitoring the use of project resources
- Link project work to developments, issues and opportunities in the Lower Windrush Valley area and wider world
- Be a key part of the decision making process. As opportunities come forward they will be channelled through the Steering Group for a focused approach to gathering and shaping views

- If necessary, provide guidance to Oxfordshire County Council on continuing feasibility of LWVP and staffing

Role of LWVP Steering Group members

LWVP Steering Group members will:

- Represent the interests of one or more project stakeholders
- Be an advocate for the project's outcomes
- Consider ideas and issues raised
- Review the progress of the project
- Provide guidance to the Project Manager
- Use their skills and knowledge to benefit the work of the project
- Participate in LWVP Steering Group Meetings

Membership

The LWVP Steering Group will be comprised of stakeholders who are able to represent the interests of the wider community and individuals who are able to provide advice on the long term management of the project. Initially members will be drawn from the existing Steering Group and new members will be accepted by majority agreement.

Membership will normally last for three years at which point members are eligible for reappointment.

The meeting chair will be nominated by Oxfordshire County Council and secretariat will be provided by the LWVP Project Manager.

Agenda Items

All LWVP Steering Group agenda items must be forwarded to the Project Manager at least 10 working days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

The LWVP Steering Group agenda, with attached meeting papers will be distributed at least 3 working days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

Minutes & Meeting Papers

The minutes of each LWVP Steering Group meeting will be prepared by the Project Manager.

Full copies of the Minutes shall be provided to all LWVP Steering Group members no later than 15 working days following each meeting.

Frequency of Meetings

The LWVP Steering Group shall meet twice per year in March and September.

Review Timetable

The LWVP Steering Group role and membership should be reviewed annually in March to ensure continuing effectiveness.

FULL COUNCIL

Date:	9 December 2019
Title:	Mayor's Report
Contact Officer:	Democratic Services Officer – Nichola Cayley

OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2019

The role of mayor involves chairing the Town Council, sitting as an ex officio voting member on council committees, representing and promoting Witney, organizing 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.

This is a regular report to each full council meeting, detailing the activities of the mayor since the last meeting.

SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

5 Oct	Witney In Pink (mostly Deputy)	Various, Witney
10 Oct	Mind the Music (with Deputy)	Richmond Village, Witney
13 Oct	Oxford Half Marathon for Elmore Community Services	Oxford
22 Oct	Cogges Produce Show Judging	The Methodist Church
26 Oct	African Drumming Workshop	The Methodist Church
9 Nov	Twinning Dinner	The Plough, Witney
10 Nov	Voicebox and Town Band Concert	Corn Exchange, Witney
14 Nov	Community Fridge Launch	Moorland Road, Witney
6 Dec	Elderly Person's Christmas Lunch	Smith's Estate, Witney
7 Dec	Small Business Saturday	Witney

REPRESENTING AND PROMOTING WITNEY

9 Oct	Witney Community Primary School Visit	Witney Community Primary
15 Oct	High Sheriff's Law Lecture & Court Sermon	Oxford Examination School
17 Oct	Centenary of Witney Labour Party (with Deputy)	Burwell Hall
22 Oct	OCC Tea Party (Deputy)	County Hall, Oxford
25 Oct	Chair of WODC's Pie & Mash Evening (Deputy)	The Blanket Hall
31 Oct	Wychwood Brewery Halloween Event	Wychwood Brewery
19 Nov	Elmore Community Services 30 th Anniversary	MoMA, Oxford
22 Nov	Wood Green School Awards	Wood Green School, Witney
26 Nov	KLQ UK Regional Heat (Deputy)	Cokethorpe School, Witney
29 Nov	Christmas Lights Switch On	Witney
29 Nov	Opening of Winter Wonderland	St. Mary's Church, Witney
6 Dec	Witney Winter Wonderland Ball	St. Mary's Church, Witney

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Please note that as a member of the West Oxfordshire District Planning Committee, I am not allowed to attend Witney Town Council Planning and Development Committee when it is considering individual planning applications (but discussing wider planning and development issues such as a town plan or responses to district and county consultations is fine).

7 Oct	Full Council Meeting	Corn Exchange, Witney
11 Nov	Halls & Green Spaces	Corn Exchange, Witney
18 Nov	Stronger Communities	Corn Exchange, Witney
25 Nov	Policy, Governance and Finance	Corn Exchange, Witney

KEY EVENTS AND COUNCIL ACTIVITY

19 Oct	Witney Civic Service	St Mary's Church
1 Nov	Poppy Launch	Corn Exchange
1 Nov	2 Sqn RAF Standard Blessing	St. Mary's Church
8 Nov	Piano decorating feedback (with Deputy & Cllr Collins)	Witney College
10 Nov	Remembrance Sunday	Various, Witney
11 Nov	Remembrance Event	War Memorial, Witney
14 Nov	Meeting with FA	Town Hall
15 Nov	Piano decorating judging (with Deputy & Cllr Collins)	Witney College
17 Nov	Volkstrauertag	Unterhaching
29 Nov	Piano decorating winner (with Deputy)	Witney College
1 Dec	Advent Fayre	Corn Exchange, Witney

RAISING FUNDS

13 Oct Hedgehog Day (with Deputy) Corn Exchange, Witney
Thanks to all councillors who contributed to this excellent event, which raised significant funds and was a highly enjoyable family event attended by hundreds of people from across the area.

Mayor's Charities 2019-20:

- Friends of Springfield School
- Oxfordshire Mind (Moorland Road, Witney)
- The Wychwood Project with Witney Woodland Volunteers

Events in discussion at the moment:

- Mayor's Leap Party, February 29 2020, the main fundraising dinner dance at Corn Exchange
- One other event at the Corn Exchange
- Mayor's Karaoke, Fat Lil's (TBC)
- Mayor's Silver Service
- Small Business Saturday, 7 Dec
- Mayor's Barista Marathon, making a drink in every café in town, TBA

Some of these events will generate publicity for local businesses, and generate raffle prizes for the Leap Party or other opportunities.

Prepared by:

Cllrs Duncan Enright & Joy Aitman

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