

**SPORT AND PLAY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 22 June 2020

At 6.00 pm in the VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM - Virtual Meeting

Present:

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	L Duncan
	L Ashbourne	A Prosser
	T Ashby	R Smith
	D Butterfield	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
Others:	4 members of the public	

SP146 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

SP147 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

SP148 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED: that Cllr Butterfield be elected as Vice Chair of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

SP149 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Halls & Green Spaces Committee meeting held on 9 March 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

SP150 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned to receive public participation from Punam Owens and Fraser Howard who spoke about Parkrun and its' desire for a "winterproof" hoggin path at West Witney Sports Ground.

Following the Public Participation, the Committee reconvened.

SP151 REQUEST FOR HOGGING PATH FROM WITNEY PARKRUN

With the express permission of the Chair, this item was moved up the agenda so that the members of the public could hear the debate.

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer. A member said that if there was to be groundwork done he would like drainage to be looked into at the same time.

The Chair emphasised that there was little capacity for officer involvement. The Parkrun representatives indicated that they would be happy to approach local firms to donate aggregate for the paths and also even to use volunteers to dig out the path if they could access Town Council Machinery under guidance.

During the presentation the Town Clerk had asked parkrun about funding streams, as there was no funding available in the current years budget for these works. Parkrun said they could point the Council in the direction of funding or would be happy to be involved in making the application but as an organisation parkrun could not make grant applications itself. The Town Clerk reiterated this point and the current capacity issues.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council would facilitate the installation of a path subject to the Operations and Estates officer being satisfied at all stages and on provision that no Town Council funding or labour would be required.

SP152 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Committee received and considered the draft Terms of reference for the Committee. The Chair asked if the word “supervised” in relation to football pitches could be replaced by something else. The Town Clerk would change this. A member commented that she thought third party events should be included. Members agreed that this should be added in. The Town Clerk would ensure this was added from the Stronger Communities Committee.

RESOLVED: that the Terms of Reference as circulated be agreed subject to the word “supervised” (in relation to football pitches) being replaced with something suitable and the addition of third-party events.

SP153 OPERATIONAL REPORT - PROGRESS ON IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer. A member asked a question about football clubs returning and the Chair replied that it was a question of checking if they were insured to play – this was dealt with by the F.A. The Operations and Estates Officer was trying to ascertain what the situation was.

The Chair asked if Woodgreen would be ready for the Spartans. The Town Clerk advised that it had been delayed as District Council Officers had been redeployed dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic.

A member asked about recycling water from the splash park to water the cricket pitch at The Leys. The Town Clerk replied that a limited amount of water was already retained in a tank but it only held a certain amount of water. Water recycling units had been looked into but were very expensive. This could be something for the Council to look into as a bigger project in the future.

The Committee briefly discussed the possibility that the water pressure had been turned down and whether a question could be asked about it.

The Chair asked why the Town Council had not reopened public toilets on The Leys when the District Council had reopened its toilets. The Town Clerk explained that it was a logistical/social distancing issue, whilst the District Council's public toilet was one unit with clear accessibility, the Town Council's facilities were accessed via a narrow walkway with no visibility to enable social distancing, however Officers were actively looking for a solution.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

SP154 **WITNEY SPORTS FACILITIES - OPTIONS PAPER**

The Committee received and considered the Witney Sports Facilities Options Paper as previously circulated.

There was a discussion about some of the data in the report particularly the Town's predicted expansion and the fact that using data for the whole of West Oxfordshire had skewed some of the assumptions. Some of the smaller sports sites had been missed out, including school facilities.

There was also discussion about the 4G pitch and whether the Town Council should wait for West Oxfordshire District Council to engage or whether to push ahead with things that the Town Council could do independently. Following a member's question, the Town Clerk confirmed that S106 developer funding was due to be received via the District Council for West Witney Sports Ground (£259,349) and the Corn Exchange (£103,740) imminently – this equated to three quarters of the funding due.

A member felt that it was really important for the Town Council to set out its vision. Other Committee members agreed. The Chair commented that it was important to sort the leases out on the West Witney site so that the sports clubs could access grants.

RECOMMENDED: that the consultant be requested to assist the Council with putting together a vision for its sports facilities.

The meeting closed at: 7.00 pm

Chair