

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

Held on Monday, 18 January 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor M Jones (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne T Ashby	O Collins L Duncan
Officers:	Nicky Cayley Adam Clapton Sharon Groth John Hickman Tomas Smith Angus Whitburn	Democratic Services Officer Office Manager Town Clerk Operations & Estates Officer Venue Manager Compliance and Environment Officer
Others:	0 members of the public.	

H21 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs Aitman and Gwatkin.

H22 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

H23 **MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2020. There were no matters arising.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2020 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record

H24 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

H25 **CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Committee was required to set its aims and objectives for inclusion in the Council's Corporate Strategic Plan and to agree its priorities for 2021/22, 2022/23 and beyond.

This Committee's immediate/top priorities had been identified by the Task and Finish Group as being: -

- a) Corn Exchange – Phase 2 – seating, lighting and sound
- b) Open Spaces Strategy – report due April 2021
- c) Windrush Place – new allotments
- d) Cemeteries – review accessibility

All members agreed with these priorities.

RESOLVED: that the Committee agreed with the priorities as listed.

H26 **OPERATIONAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer on progress and repairs since the last meeting, including coloured light installation in the Corn exchange, work at Tower Hill Cemetery, PAT testing, works at 51 Market Square and an asbestos survey at 51, 51a and 51b Market Square,

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

H27 **ALLOTMENTS UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer, covering Newland, Hailey Road and Lakeside sites. He advised the Committee that the composters had now arrived but he had been told by the new members of the Allotment Association that they were now not wanted. He suggested they be installed at the new allotments at Windrush Place.

Regarding Windrush Place, there had been a request for a composting toilet but the new members of the Allotment Association Committee had changed this to a fully plumbed toilet. However, the main sewer was some distance away and the cost to connect to this or a cesspit/septic tank would be prohibitive. Once this had been explained the Association Committee had agreed to a composting toilet.

Members also considered the provision of a 3 bay composting area but decided that it would be better to offer a composter to each individual plot at Windrush Place instead.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted and that the Council offers to purchase an individual composter for each plot on Windrush Place. The Committee would be updated on the Association's response at the next meeting.

H28 **CORN EXCHANGE WORKING PARTY MINUTES**

Members received and considered the minutes of the Corn Exchange Working Parties held on 7 December 2020 and 11 January 2021.

RECOMMENDED: that the minutes of the Corn Exchange Working Parties held on 7 December 2020 and 11 January 2021 and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

H29 **PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Office Manager on the public halls which were currently closed due to national restrictions. The Committee was advised that the Oxford Arts Consultants had decided they could no longer take on the project and therefore Officers were looking for a new consultant. A meeting had been set up with Drama By Design for the following day.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

H30 **CEMETERY REGULATIONS - REVIEW OF MEMORIALS, GARDENS AND TRIBUTES**

The Committee received and considered the comprehensive report of the Operations and Estates Officer. Members decided more information was required and asked for a further report on certain items.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and: -

1. that the Operations and Estates Officer brings back a report to the next meeting on kerb sets, memorial crosses, handbooks and the upcoming grave clearances.

H31 **TOWER HILL CEMETERY - NEW PUBLIC/PEDESTRIAN ACCESS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer on the possibility of a new pedestrian entrance at Tower Hill Cemetery.

One member felt that it was not really necessary and that it would encourage parking in the surrounding residential areas. He also wanted to be reassured that public consultation would be meaningful.

The Chair advised that the main consultation could be done via an insert in the newsletter and she believed that it would be meaningful.

Members also voted on recommendations to consult with Exclusive Right of Burial holders in the area that would be affected, and also the owner of a bench in close proximity. 4 members were in favour of the recommendations, with one abstention.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and: -

1. that the Council consults with the existing Exclusive Right of Burial Holders on Sections 13 and 9 regarding the proposed new pedestrian access;
2. that the owner of the memorial bench affected by the installation of this footpath should be consulted;
3. that an insert is considered for the newsletter/annual satisfaction survey to gauge local residents' opinion on the proposal as per resolution 2 on 14 September 2020 minute H275 – *that once the issues of permission was resolved, if it was possible to go ahead, thought be given on how to gauge residents' opinion on the proposal;*
4. that Officers establish if a faculty from the Diocese of Oxford is required;

5. that quotes be refreshed given the time lapse and two further quotes be sought in line with the Council's financial regulations.

H32 **TOWER HILL CEMETERY - VEHICULAR ACCESS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Compliance and Environment Officer. However, members decided that the first step should be to commission a disability consultant to give an overview as vehicular accessibility and disabled accessibility were quite different things.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and: -

1. that a disability consultant be employed to give advice on Tower Hill Cemetery. This would be delegated to officers;
2. that the bin be repositioned as soon as possible.

The meeting closed at: 6.46 pm

Chair