

## Full Council

# Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



**Monday, 7th December, 2020 at 7.00 pm**

To members of the Full Council Committee - J Aitman, L Duncan, L Ashbourne, T Ashby, R Bolger, D Butterfield, O Collins, H Eaglestone, D Enright, V Gwatkin, A D Harvey, M Jones, J King, A McMahon, A Prosser, R Smith and D Temple (and all other Town Councillors for information).

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom** for the transaction of the business stated in the agenda below.

### Admission to Meetings

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

Admission to this meeting will be online by virtue of The Local Authorities & Police & Crime Panels (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authority & Police & Crime Panels Meetings)(England & Wales) Regulations 2020.

Zoom login details of this meeting will be published on the Council's website prior to the meeting.

### 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

#### 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](mailto: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 7 - 12)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 October 2020 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. **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.

6. **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.

7. **Minutes of Committees and Sub Committees**

To receive and NOTE the RESOLUTIONS in the minutes of the meetings held between 13 October 2020 and 24 November 2020, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein:

a) **Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Minutes - 13 October, 3 November and 24 November 2020.** (Pages 13 - 32)

*\*Please note that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2020 are incomplete whilst officers formulate the response to 20/02654/OUT.*

b) **Sport & Play Committee - 2 November 2020.** (Pages 33 - 38)

c) **Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - 9 November 2020.** (Pages 39 - 44)

d) **Stronger Communities Committee - 16 November 2020.** (Pages 45 - 52)

e) **Policy, Governance and Finance Committee - 23 November 2020.** (Pages 53 - 58)

8. **Civic Announcements**

To receive the report of the Mayor.

9. **Motions to Council**

To receive and consider the following motions:-

1. County Lines and Child Exploitation

*Witney Town Council notes that:*

- *We are only too aware of the issues in Oxfordshire of the County Lines and Child Criminal Exploitation, through our partnerships with WODC, TVP and other key organisations.*
- *We are equally aware of the damage that this criminal behaviour can wreak in communities like ours, and the potentially lifelong consequences it can have for vulnerable young people.*
- *We also note that County Lines and Child Criminal Exploitation is the subject of a current Early Day Motion in the House of Commons, which has been supported by MPs from across the political spectrum.*

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/57477/county-lines-and-child-criminal-exploitation>

*Therefore this council resolves to:*

- *Write to Robert Courts MP, asking him to add his signature to the motion, and to encourage*

as many of his Parliamentary colleagues to do the same.

**Proposed by Cllr Ashbourne, seconded by Cllr Collins.**

2. Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill

*Witney Town Council declared a Climate Emergency at the Council meeting on 26th June 2019 and followed up with a Public Meeting in July 2019 enabling everyone to share ideas and visions for change. These included engagement with Central Government, West Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, relevant stake holders and other organisations to initiate local action on climate change.*

*On September 20th 2020, an Early Day Motion entitled the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill was tabled in the House of Commons. The Government's recent Ten Point Plan goes a long way towards tackling the UK's carbon emissions, but this Bill recognises that our carbon footprint extends beyond the UK's borders. The Bill calls for:*

- the UK to make and enact a serious plan to combat climate change. This means dealing with our real fair share of emissions so that we don't go over critical global rises in temperature*
- our entire carbon footprint be taken into account (in the UK and overseas)*
- the protection and conservation of nature here and overseas along supply chains, recognising the damage we cause through the goods we consume*
- those in power not to depend on technology to save the day, which is used as an excuse to carry on polluting as usual*
- people to have a real say on the way forward in a citizens' assembly with bite*

*This Council agrees with the principles of this Bill and supports Oxfordshire residents in their efforts to see it come into law. We ask the Leader of this Council to write to our MP, asking them to support their constituents by voting for this Bill when it comes to the House of Commons.*

**Proposed by Cllr Prosser, seconded by Cllr Smith.**

10. **Community Support Initiative - Online Pantomime Grant Request**

In addition to the minutes, members are asked to consider granting the sum of £368.60 from the general grants fund (4100/402) towards 23 tickets for the online pantomime of Sleeping Beauty being promoted by the Council. The donation, if agreed under the General Power of Competence, along with that provided by County Councillor Laura Price from her Councillor Priority Fund would allow disadvantaged children, as designated by local schools to be able to see a pantomime over this festive period.

11. **Conclusion of Audit for Year Ending 31 March 2020** (Pages 59 - 60)

To note that the Council's External Auditor – Moore Stephens – have completed the review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year ended 31 March 2020, and in their opinion the information is in accordance with Proper Practices (External Audit Report and Certificate 2019/20 enclosed).

12. **Vandalism** (Pages 61 - 62)

To receive an update on vandalism in the town from the Operations & Estates Officer.

13. **Health and Safety**

To receive and note the Officer's verbal update on Health & Safety and COVID-19 matters if appropriate

14. **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.

15. **Correspondence** (Pages 63 - 66)

To receive the following correspondence:-

a) a response from Robert Courts MP in relation to minute number 339 from the Council meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020;

b) letter to the Mayor from Witney Oxford Transport.

16. **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.

17. **Sealing of Documents**

To authorise the sealing of documents arising from Council resolutions and to note the sealing of:

19 November 2020	Seal no. 83	Lease for Langdale Hall Car Park between Witney Town Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.
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Town Clerk

**MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday, 12 October 2020**

**At 7.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

**Present:**

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	L Duncan	V Gwatkin
	L Ashbourne	A D Harvey
	T Ashby	M Jones
	R Bolger	J King
	D Butterfield	A McMahon
	O Collins	A Prosser
	H Eaglestone	R Smith
	D Enright	
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
Others:	3 members of the public.	

**325     APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for his absence was received from Cllr McMahon.

**326     DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Harvey declared an interest in the agenda item on tree planting as he was a member of the district council which supported the Wychwood Project.

**327     MINUTES**

Members received and considered the minutes of the meetings held on 27 July and 18 August 2020.

**Matters Arising**

**27 July 2020**

A member asked if there was any news on the rebranding and the Officer Manager replied that it had been put on hold until after the staffing review was completed.

18 August 2020

A member pointed out that Cllr Bolger had not been present at the meeting and therefore she should be removed from the vote and that the numbers of those voting should be adjusted.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July and 18 August 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair with the following amendment to minute 247 (18 August 2020):

Remove "Cllr Bolger - for" and change "15" to "14".

328 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Toby Swift from the Wychwood Project addressed the Council on a project to plant trees in the town and a request for financial support.

329 **TREE PLANTING REQUEST FROM THE WYCHWOOD PROJECT**

This item was moved up the agenda with the express permission of the Chair.  
Members were in favour of supporting the initiative to plant trees.

**RESOLVED:** that the Council would support the tree planting initiative from the Wychwood Project and would provide funding of £500 subject to the completion of a grant funding application by the Wychwood Project. The exact tree specimens and locations would be agreed with the Operations and Estates Officer.

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

Cllr David Harvey – West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Harvey informed the Council that the District Council had made great steps forward in terms of climate issues. He also updated members on the Garden Village plans. The District Council was also dealing with retro fitting homes in fuel poverty and supporting the local electricity bill.

Cllr Duncan Enright – West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Enright informed the Council that the WODC Cabinet Advisory Group on Covid recovery had been meeting – this covered environment, community, economy and council finances.

Cllr Owen Collins – West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Collins gave an update on the Environment Overview Scrutiny Committee which had met for the first time in a long time which had been presented with a proposal to abolish roadside bottle banks across the district but the Committee had not supported this.

**RESOLVED:** that the updates from the District Councillors be noted.

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

Cllr Ruth Smith

Cllr Smith reported that the Town Band was moving towards meeting and playing in person rather than virtually.

Cllr Liz Duncan

Cllr Duncan had been in regular contact with Witney and District Museum which whilst still shut, was using the time to do a lot of maintenance work. They were hoping to open in April 2021.

**RESOLVED:** that the updates from members be noted.

332 **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES**

a) **CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES - 11 AUGUST, 1 SEPTEMBER AND 22 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Chair presented the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committees held on 11 August, 1 September and 22 September 2020 and moved their acceptance.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committee of 11 August, 1 September and 22 September 2020 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

b) **SPORT AND PLAY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 7 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Chair presented the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 and moved their acceptance.

Members asked for some amendments to the minutes of the meeting.

The Office Manager advised that the toilets at The Leys were now open again.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 be received and any recommendation therein approved.

The Council also wished the following alteration to be made to these minutes:-

Minute SP262, (4) – addition of “fields such as” in front of King George V Field;

Confidential appendix – that a fire risk assessment and structural safety survey should be added to the list of requirements for West Witney Sports ground.

c) **HALLS, CEMETERIES AND ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MINUTES - 14 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Chair presented the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Committee held on 14 September 2020, and moved their acceptance.

A member queried the green energy supply as the Council had already dealt with this. The Office Manager advised that in fact this item referred to the gas supply – previously members had dealt with the electricity supply.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2020 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

d) STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE - 21 SEPTEMBER 2020

The Chair presented the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee held on 21 September 2020 and moved their acceptance.

Members requested two changes to the minutes.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2020 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

Cllr Collins asked for the minute SC283 to be changed to reflect that he declared an interest as he also knew Punam Owens in a personal capacity and she ran Parkrun.

Cllr Gwatkin asked for minute SC289 to be changed to clarify that it was her “mother’s friend’s” house and that “other complaints had been made” be added after “light” as she did not want it to appear as though she was asking for preferential treatment.

e) POLICY, GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES - 28 SEPTEMBER 2020

The Chair presented the minutes of the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee held on 28 September 2020 and moved their acceptance.

Cllr Gwatkin who had offered to pay for the lighting in the Corn Exchange asked that the minutes be changed as she did not want her offer to be conditional on lighting up the building annually for Libfest.

The Office Manager asked members to decide on a lighting up period for Remembrance Day. After discussion members agreed on two 24-hour periods, from 8 – 9 November and 11 – 12 November. The Office Manager advised that having two lighting up periods for the same event may create issues with other people requesting this in the future. Members felt that as it was an extraordinary situation this year due to Covid they were confident there would not be any issues arising.

A member noted the item on budget parameters and cautioned the Council to not burden residents when setting next year’s budget as with increasing Covid restrictions people may find themselves in hard situations.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2020 be received and any recommendations therein approved

Members requested that minute F318 (4) be changed to read:



*That Cllr Gwatkin's offer to fund the purchase of the lights be accepted and that the Corn Exchange be lit up annually for Libfest.*

333 **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Council received and considered the report of the Mayor's engagements, most of which had been virtual due to Covid-19.

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

334 **HEALTH & SAFETY AND COVID-19 UPDATE**

The Office Manager presented a verbal update for members. West Witney Sports and Social Club had completed a fire risk assessment but there were outstanding items to be dealt with. Langdale Hall was due for its annual safety check which would take place next week. Covid-19 issues surrounding the offices and council workplaces were reviewed regularly.

A member asked if the Corn exchange Café could now be opened. The Leader explained that the furniture had been ordered and as soon as this arrived the café would open for takeaways and outside service.

Another member complained that the disabled parking outside Boots had been taken away. Another member replied that it had been replaced by spaces where the taxi rank was. The first member said that taxis were still parking there. He was advised to contact the Head of Paid Service at Publica.

The Town Council had been approached by the District Council to ask if it would pay for the planting and maintenance of planters at either end of the High Street road closures. The cost would be in the region of £2, 000. After some discussion, members supported this.

**RESOLVED:** that the verbal updates be noted and that the request from WODC to plant and maintain 6 planters to be used as road closure points (removing the unsightly red barriers currently in place at the top of Market Square and High Street) be agreed at a cost of around £2, 500 to be met from existing budget 4215/402.

335 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

The Leader noted how tough everything felt at the moment for officers and members and how even though many councillors worked full time, they were still able to, as volunteers, support their community.

336 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

337 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

A member asked the Leader when the staffing review would be presented. She replied that she believed that the first stage report would be available imminently and from this the Council would hopefully be able to budget for staffing costs when reviewed in November.

338 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

There were no documents to be sealed.

339 **MOTION - LOCAL ELECTRICITY BILL**

Cllr Smith presented the following motion, supported by Cllr Ashbourne:-

*That Witney Town Council*

*(i) notes that the Local Electricity Bill*

- aims to address the current situation, whereby the very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so,*
- if made law, would make these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation and empower councils, together with their communities, to sell locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations, and*
- would result in revenues received by councils or community organisations that chose to set up local renewable electricity companies, which could be used to help fund local greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures and to help improve local services and facilities;*

*(ii) accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, supported by a cross-party group of 187 MPs; and*

*(iii) further resolves to write to the local MP asking them to support the Bill in Parliament and to the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, Power for People, (at 8 Delancey Passage, Camden, London NW1 7NN or [info@powerforpeople.org.uk](mailto:info@powerforpeople.org.uk)) expressing its support.*

**RESOLVED:** that the motion is adopted by Witney Town Council. Cllr Harvey abstained from the vote as he had already had discussions with the M.P for Witney.

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The meeting closed at: 8.22 pm

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Chair

**CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Tuesday, 13 October 2020**

**At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

**Present:**

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	M Jones
	L Ashbourne	A McMahon
	V Gwatkin	A Prosser
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Angus Whitburn	Compliance and Environment Officer
Others:	3 members of the public.	

**P340 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for her absence was received from Cllr Bolger.

**P341 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs Ashbourne and Prosser declared an interest in planning application WTC/143/20 as they knew one of the applicants.

**P342 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned in line with Standing Order 42, in order to receive public participation.

Mr Guy addressed the Committee on his request to purchase Town Council owned amenity land adjacent to 10A Burwell Close, Witney.

Mr Nellist addressed the Committee on his Planning Application for Ash Close (WTC/143/20).

Following these addresses, the Committee reconvened.

**P343 REQUEST TO PURCHASE LAND**

This item was moved up the agenda with the express permission of the Chair, in order that Mr Guy could hear the debate.

The Committee received and considered the report of the Office Manager and the documentation supplied by Mr Guy.

Whilst the recent precedent of the Council had been not to sell amenity land, Mr Guy made a compelling argument and some members favoured selling the land as he had said that he would maintain it as part of his garden and would include a vegetable patch.

Some members were concerned about the fact that this would effectively enclose a narrow footpath and that the area in question currently provided a useful passing place – especially during social distancing.

Members also discussed the fact that if the land was sold, it would need to have a condition that it could not be built on imposed.

After further discussion members decided that they needed to understand what implications any sale may have on other areas of amenity land near to housing.

Members also wanted to look at the planning conditions associated with 10A as this house had been built in the grounds of number 10 Burwell Close.

Once this had been done the request could be reconsidered at the next meeting, and if provisional agreement on the sale was reached, officers would need to undertake further work to present this to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the request be noted and:-

- i) that the Committee looks at the pieces of land owned by the Town Council to assess what the impact would be if the land was sold and other requests were then forthcoming;
- ii) that the Planning application is checked for any covenants;
- iii) that the request is revisited at the meeting of this committee on 3 November. A site visit by the Chair and Vice Chair may be appropriate.

**P344 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Members received and considered the schedule of Planning Applications from West Oxfordshire District Council. Application WTC/143/20 was considered first in order for Mr Nellist to hear the discussion.

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

**P345 APPEAL NOTIFICATION -4 BIRDLIP CLOSE**

Members received and considered an appeal notification for 4 Birdlip Close.

**RESOLVED:** that the appeal be noted.

**P346 LAKE AND COUNTRY PARK UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Compliance and Environment Officer.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and:-

1. that the Compliance and Environment Officer obtains further background information on the Lake and Country park and commissions a company to carry out a phase 1 ecology survey for the lake and country park;
2. that £5, 000 be added to the budget for the eventuality of the formal design process of the river bank's at the lake and country park.

P347 **MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT - CONSULTATION ON PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE.**

This item had been deferred from the previous Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committee as members were not sure what response should be made. In the interim period between meetings, Cllr Aitman had shared the response made by the District Council to this consultation. The Chair and Vice Chair had agreed that as this was a robust response, the Town Council did not need to make one of its own.

**RESOLVED:** that the Committee does not wish to make a response to this consultation as the response given by the District Council was adequate.

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The meeting closed at: 7.15 pm

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Chair

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## 344

344- 6	WTC/140/20	Plot Ref :-20/02258/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-	SUTTON, MRS KATE	Date Received :-	24/09/2020
	Location :-	36 SPRINGFIELD OVAL SPRINGFIELD OVAL WITNEY	Date Returned :-	13/10/2020
	Proposal :	Erection of first floor extension above existing kitchen.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application		

344- 8	WTC/143/20	Plot Ref :-20/02282/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :-	BERESFORD S & NELLIST, J	Date Received :-	01/10/2020
	Location :-	ASH CLOSE GLOUCESTER CLOSE WITNEY	Date Returned :-	13/10/2020
	Proposal :	Construction of detached dwelling and carport.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objection to this application and commends the surveys on ecology and the efforts by the applicant to follow them and applauds the inclusion of electric vehicle points.		

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council



**CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Tuesday, 3 November 2020**

**At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

**Present:**

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman V Gwatkin	A Prosser
Officers:	Nicky Cayley Adam Clapton	Democratic Services Officer Office Manager
Others:	0 members of the public.	

**P363 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

**P364 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs Aitman and Smith declared interests in application WTC/144/20 as they lived closed to the proposed development. Cllr Prosser declared an interest in application WTC/151/20 as he knew the applicant.

**P365 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

**P366 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee received and considered the schedule of planning applications from West Oxfordshire District Council. After some discussion, it was agreed to seek further information and advice on application WTC/144/20 and to prepare a formal response at the meeting to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

Application WTC/157/20 no longer required consideration at the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** that the comments, as per the attached schedule, be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council and that the Committee reconsiders application WTC/144/20 at the meeting to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

P367 **APPEAL REF: APP/D3125/D/20/3249929 - APPEAL DECISION FOR 34 WOODFORD MILL, MILL STREET, WITNEY, OXFORDSHIRE OX28 6DE**

The Committee received and considered the appeal decision for 34 Woodford Mill, Witney, which had been dismissed.

**RESOLVED:** that the appeal decision be noted.

P368 **LICENSING APPLICATION CONSULTATION W/20/00690/PRMMV - CINEWORLD, WITNEY**

The Committee received and considered a licencing application for Cineworld, Witney. Members had no objection to the proposal.

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Council has no objections to this application.

P369 **VILLAGE GREEN - CORAL SPRINGS**

The Committee received and considered correspondence from Oxfordshire County Council informing them that Corals Springs had now been registered as a village green.

**RESOLVED:** that the registration of the village green be noted.

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The meeting closed at: 7.30 pm

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Chair



366- 4	WTC/148/20	Plot Ref :-20/02734/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-	SMITH, MR G	Date Received :-	13/10/20
	Location :-	43 IDBURY CLOSE IDBURY CLOSE WITNEY	Date Returned :-	04/11/20
	Proposal :	Erection of first floor rear extension above existing living room.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application		

366- 5	WTC/149/20	Plot Ref :-20/02685/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-	GOUDLIN, MR D	Date Received :-	14/10/20
	Location :-	9A WEST END WEST END WITNEY	Date Returned :-	04/11/20
	Proposal :	Erection of conservatory.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application		

366- 6	WTC/150/20	Plot Ref :-20/02505/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-	SPROWELL, MR AND MRS	Date Received :-	15/10/20
	Location :-	17 THE WILLOWS THE WILLOWS WITNEY	Date Returned :-	04/11/20
	Proposal :	Alterations and erection of front porch and extension of existing raised patio to rear.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application		

366- 7	WTC/151/20	Plot Ref :-20/02391/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :-	OWEN MUMFORD LTD	Date Received :-	19/10/20
	Location :-	LAND SOUTH OF BURFORD ROAD BURFORD ROAD WITNEY	Date Returned :-	04/11/20
	Proposal :	Development of a new purpose-built facility comprising B1, B2 and B8 class uses together with landscaping, access road, car parking and other associated works.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council supports this application but would like to see the inclusion of solar pv on the roof space and good access for cyclists.		

366- 8	WTC/152/20	Plot Ref :-20/02460/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- HOLIDAY, MR A		Date Received :-	19/10/20
	Location :- 3 APPLGARTH COURT APPLGARTH COURT WITNEY		Date Returned :-	04/11/20
	Proposal : Enclose existing carport to form garage.			
	Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application as condition 17 of the original planning permission 17/00924/FUL states: The carport(s) shall not be altered or			

enclosed and shall be used for the parking of vehicles ancillary to the residential occupation of the dwelling(s) and for no other purposes.

REASON: In the interest of road safety and convenience and safeguarding the character and appearance of the area.

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366- 9	WTC/153/20	Plot Ref :-20/02468/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-	WILLIAMS, MR & MRS L	Date Received :-	19/10/20
	Location :-	31 CURBRIDGE ROAD CURBRIDGE ROAD WITNEY	Date Returned :-	04/11/20
	Proposal :	Construction of first floor side extension, conversion of existing garage to living space, replacement porch and fenestration alterations. Erection of a detached garage with associated works including formation of new vehicular access and new dropped kerb.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objection to this application but would like the vision play from Farifield Drive to be checked to ensure that the proposal does not restrict drivers/cyclists sight.		

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366- 10	WTC/154/20	Plot Ref :-20/02538/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-	THIELE, MR & MRS ANDY AND KATI	Date Received :-	20/10/20
	Location :-	170 MANOR ROAD MANOR ROAD WITNEY	Date Returned :-	04/11/20
	Proposal :	Erection of two storey rear extension.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application		

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366- 11	WTC/155/20	Plot Ref :-20/02455/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-	WHITEAR, SUSAN	Date Received :-	22/10/20
	Location :-	CLOSE COTTAGE, 9G WEST END WEST END WITNEY	Date Returned :-	04/11/20
	Proposal :	Extension to existing detached garage to create car port and office rooms in roof space.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objection to this application as long as the office accommodation remains for domestic use only.		

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366- 12	WTC/156/20	Plot Ref :-20/02456/LBC	Type :-	LISTED BUI
	Applicant Name :-	WHITEAR, SUSAN	Date Received :-	22/10/20
	Location :-	CLOSE COTTAGE, 9G WEST END WEST END WITNEY	Date Returned :-	04/11/20
	Proposal :	Extension to existing detached garage to create car port and office rooms in roof space.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objection to this application as long as the office accommodation remains for domestic use only.		

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The Meeting closed at : 7.30pm

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman Date: \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

**CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Tuesday, 24 November 2020**

**At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

**Present:**

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	M Jones
	L Ashbourne	A McMahon
	V Gwatkin	A Prosser
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
Others:	2 members of the public.	

**P422 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**P423 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Smith declared an interest in the item on the East Witney development as she lived in close proximity to one of the two sites.

**P424 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee ajiuned in line with standing order 42 to receive public paticipation.

Mr Jim Clemence addressed the Council on WTC/169/20 – East Plot of Land at Book End.

Mr Mark Utting was present to answer the Committee’s questions on 20/02654/OUT – Land South East of Oxford Hill.

Following this the Committee reconvened.

**P425 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The applications were moved up the agenda with the express permission of the Chair so that the member of the public could hear the debate.

Members discussed the application for the Land South East of Oxford Hill, at length and in making their response delegated the technical specification for paths and cycleways to Officer to write in and also delegated the exact wording for S106 money to the Chair, Vice Chair and Officers. The response is attached separately to the planning schedule.

**RESOLVED:** that the comments, as per the attached schedule, be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council where relevant.

P426 **MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meetings held on 22 September, 13 October and 3 November 2020.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meetings held on 22 September, 13 October and 3 November 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair with Cllr Gwatkin's apologies being added to the latter.

P427 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

The Committee received and considered the schedule of planning decisions taken by West Oxfordshire District Council.

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

P428 **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

**RESOLVED:** to suspend Standing Order 48(a) to allow the meeting to continue for a further 10 minutes.

P429 **CONSULTATION – CORN STREET AND NEWLAND (WITNEY) - PROPOSED BUS STOP KERBED BUILD-OUTS**

The Committee received and considered a consultation from Oxfordshire County Council concerning alterations to bus stops in the town.

The Democratic Services Officer explained that she had taken a telephone call from a couple with accessibility issues at the Newland Stop, which had been taken up with County Councillor Suzanne Bartington. Members agreed that this would be a welcome improvement.

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Council supports the proposed alterations to bus stops on Corn Street and Newland.

P430 **TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Traffic Advisory Committee held on 29 September 2020.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes be noted.

P431 **LICENSING APPLICATION CONSULTATION W/20/00773/PRMA - 89 CORN STREET**

The Committee received and considered an application for a licence to sell alcohol by a grocery shop in Corn Street.

**RESOLVED:** that Witney Town Council supports this application.



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The meeting closed at: 8.06 pm

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Chair

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## Planning Minutes - 24 November 2020

425- 1	WTC/158/20	Plot Ref :-R3.0106/20	Type :-	VARIATION
	Applicant Name :-	OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	Date Received :-	02/11/2020
	Location :-	WEST WITNEY PRIMARY SCHOOL EDINGTON ROAD WITNEY	Date Returned :-	24/11/2020
	Proposal :	Section 73 application to continue the development of the erection of a two storey extension to provide four KS2 classrooms, toilets, cloakrooms and plant room. Demolition of redundant toilets and cloakrooms and erection of a single storey extension to provide a kitchen. Associated external works comprising, relocation of hard play area, relocation of vehicular gate and removal of trees permitted by planning permission R3.0131/16, without complying with condition 1 (approved plans and documents) and condition 7 (External lighting details) in order the vary the approved plans and documents to allow for the introduction of 2 louvred vents, the omission of: i) rooflights; ii) photovoltaic panels and iii) 4 windows and to provide external lighting details at West Witney County Primary School Edington Road Witney OX28 5FZ		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council fully supports this application.		

425- 2	WTC/159/20	Plot Ref :-20/02639/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- GARGAN, MR & MRS		Date Received :-	02/11/2020
	Location :- 16 MADLEY BROOK LANE MADLEY BROOK LANE WITNEY		Date Returned :-	24/11/2020
	Proposal : Erection of single storey rear extension.			
	Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application			

425- 3	WTC/160/20	Plot Ref :-R3.0079/20	Type :-	VARIATION
Applicant Name :-		OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	Date Received :-	02/11/2020
Location :-		WEST WITNEY COUNTY PRIMARY SCH EDINGTON ROAD WITNEY	Date Returned :-	24/11/2020
<p>Proposal : Section 73 application to continue the development of the temporary installation of a Portakabin classroom building for a period of 52 weeks whilst a traditional extension is constructed (permitted by permission 18/01806/CC3REG (R3.0066/18) and continued by permission 19/00556/CC3REG (R3.0009/19)), without complying with condition 2, in order to vary the removal date of the portakabin classroom building by 52 weeks from the original expiration date of 18 September 2020 to 18 September 2021 at West Witney Primary School, Edington Road, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 5FZ</p>				
<p>Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application</p>				

425- 4 WTC/161/20 Plot Ref :-20/02664/FUL Type :- FULL  
 Applicant Name :- JOHNSON, MR MARTIN Date Received :- 02/11/2020  
 Location :- LAND KNOWN AS 120 Date Returned :- 24/11/2020  
 WOODSTOCK RD  
 WOODSTOCK ROAD  
 WITNEY

Proposal : Erection of a detached dwelling and associated works.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objection to this application subject to a method statement for ecology being submitted,

425- 5 WTC/162/20 Plot Ref :-20/03028/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
 Applicant Name :- SANGHERA, MRS LAKWHINDER Date Received :- 09/11/2020  
 Location :- 25 MOORLAND ROAD Date Returned :- 24/11/2020  
 MOORLAND ROAD  
 WITNEY

Proposal : Alterations to enclose existing front entrance porch and provide a bathroom for disabled person with new pitched roof over.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

425- 6 WTC/163/20 Plot Ref :-MW.0093/20 Type :- VARIATION  
 Applicant Name :- SMITH AND SONS LTD Date Received :- 12/11/2020  
 Location :- ENSLOW Date Returned :- 24/11/2020  
 KIDLINGTON  
 OXON

Proposal : Section 73 application to continue the extraction of sand, gravel and clay as an extension to the existing Gill Mill site with the retention of processing plant, offices with welfare accommodation, weighbridge, sheeting bay, maintenance and storage facilities, vehicle parking areas, fuel storage, conveyor and haul road system, and existing site access, with the crushing, screening, washing, grading and blending of products for sale, retention and extension of existing water management provision including clean water lagoons and silt ponds, retention and extension of stockpiling areas, merchenting of imported aggregates, a concrete products factory, aggregate bagging plant, installation of wheel wash, erection of concrete batching plant and erection of recycled aggregate plant and the import of inert materials for recycling and nonrecyclable waste materials for restoration of worked out mineral voids and the manufacture and sale of soils from site and imported materials. Restoration to a combination of nature conservation, including reed bed, meadows and woodland areas, with ecotourism development and recreational uses including retention of existing office complex building and new footpath and bridleway links with the retention and adaptation of the farm buildings of the Beef Unit Farmstead to provide ancillary development for the management of the restored land as a management centre including offices, stores, educational facilities and provision for a small scale bio mass energy plant primarily for biomass arising on site at Gill Mill Quarry, Standlake Road, Ducklington, Witney, OX29 7PP permitted by planning permission 13/0530/P/CM (MW.0050/13), without complying with condition 5 in order to

allow  
 clay extraction up to 10 metres below the base of the sand and gravel reserve  
 within  
 phases 4, 6 and 7 to ensure that there is sufficient clay available for the  
 engineering  
 works required to carry out the approved site restoration at Gill Mill Quarry,  
 Standlake Road, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 7PP

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

425- 7 WTC/164/20 Plot Ref :-20/02802/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE

Applicant Name :- JAMES, MR TONY Date Received :- 13/11/2020

Location :- 11 APPLGARTH COURT Date Returned :- 24/11/2020  
 APPLGARTH COURT  
 WITNEY

Proposal : Single storey rear extension.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

425- 8 WTC/165/20 Plot Ref :-20/02720/FUL Type :- FULL

Applicant Name :- BLENHEIM INDUSTRIAL LTD Date Received :- 13/11/2020

Location :- BUILDING 2 & 3 Date Returned :- 24/11/2020  
 WINDRUSH PARK ROAD  
 WINDRUSH INDUSTRIAL PARK

Proposal : Demolition of existing redundant asbestos clad industrial building (building 2 and part of building 3F) to provide new car parking for 135 cars together with associated works.

Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application as the applicants need to provide a drainage strategy with proper SUDS consideration and more information on what the parking is for.

425- 9 WTC/166/20 Plot Ref :-20/02778/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE

Applicant Name :- COULSON, MR DAN Date Received :- 16/11/2020

Location :- 12 EARLY ROAD Date Returned :- 24/11/2020  
 EARLY ROAD  
 WITNEY

Proposal : Erection of a two storey rear extension.

Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application in its current form as it appears to be an imposing design over 3 floors and neighbours have raised legitimate concerns about it regarding lack of light. It would also overlook neighbouring properties in an intrusive manner,

425- 10 WTC/167/20 Plot Ref :-20/02741/FUL Type :- FULL

Applicant Name :- SHAHZAD Date Received :- 16/11/2020

Location :- 22A HIGH STREET Date Returned :- 24/11/2020  
 HIGH STREET  
 WITNEY

Proposal : To replace and reposition the shop front. To install a ramp. To display a fascia sign and hanging sign.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

**Held on Monday, 2 November 2020**

**At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

**Present:**

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	L Duncan
	L Ashbourne	A Prosser
	T Ashby	R Smith
	D Butterfield	
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	John Hickman	Operations & Estates Officer
Others:	1 member of the public.	

**SP348 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**SP349 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**SP350 MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020. Members raised some points in the minutes that they wished to be changed and the Town Clerk explained that she had listened back to the recording of the meeting and that the minutes were an accurate record of what had been discussed. If members wished to change a recommendation or a resolution, it could be revisited in six months' time as per the Council's standing orders.

With reference to minute SP262, the Chair asked if the Operations and estates Officer had been in touch with Henry Box about their pitches. He confirmed that he had but was still awaiting a reply. The Chair asked him to chase this up. The Chair also asked for an update on the situation with the Wood Green football pitches. The Town Clerk replied that she had written to the Chief Executive of WODC and had been told that the Leisure Manager would be dealing with it.

The Town Clerk also drew attention to minute SP263 and advised members that the Town Council could not move forward with the Windrush Place Destination play area until the District

Council had completed an underground utility survey. If this delay continued she would again take this up with the Chief Executive.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**SP351 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned to receive public participation from Mr Oliver Pockett who wished to address the Committee about the Leys Skatepark.

Following his address, the Committee reconvened.

**SP352 LEYS SKATEPARK**

This item was moved up the agenda with the express permission of the Chair so that the member of the public present could hear the debate.

The Chair provided some background information to the skatepark and how Mr Pockett had expressed an interest in it. She was keen to utilise his enthusiasm for the project. Cllr Butterfield explained that he had been very involved with a skate group and had even spoken to some companies about designs. In his opinion it was crucial to get more funding as most designers needed a budget to work to. The Town Clerk advised that most companies would give a brief design and indicate pricing for free initially. The project would need to go out to tender and adhere to the Council's financial regulations. If the Committee wished to form a working party, the Town Clerk asked that the Officers be kept informed so that members did not act ultra vires by not going through due process.

The Town Clerk also pointed to the "Liven Up the Leys" campaign which had been successful – community involvement was essential. The group had set up a bank account, for example. She cautioned that this could be a lengthy process.

Members decided to delegate moving the project forward – finding out what was wanted and fundraising initiatives – to Cllr Butterfield, the Town Clerk and the Operations and Estates Officer.

**RECOMMENDED:** that progression on this item be delegated to Cllr Butterfield, the Town Clerk and the Operations and Estates Officer.

**SP353 OPERATIONAL REPORT**

Members received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer as circulated with the agenda, which provided an update on repairs and maintenance since the last meeting.

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

**SP354 SPORT PITCHES**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer, concerning irrigation for the Leys Cricket Square and bowls irrigation systems.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and:-



1. that the Operations and Estates Officer looks into a grey water system for the Leys cricket square;
2. that subject to a verbal update from the Operations and Estates Officer from a meeting with the bowls club, the bowls green irrigation systems be transferred into the control and responsibility of the Council.

SP355 **THIRD PARTY EVENTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer along with correspondence from the County Council's Director of Public Health and the Safety Advisory Group (SAG).

**RESOLVED:** that the report and the SAG guidance be noted.

SP356 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered financial reports from the Town Clerk/RFO.

a) **REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21 AND BASE REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2021/22**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk/RFO on the revised revenue budget 2020/21 and base revenue budget for 2021/22.

The Town Clerk explained in her report that there was still many unknown factors which she needed clarity on before the final budget could be presented to Council – this therefore was her best estimate at this point in time.

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

1. that a grant be paid to Witney Mills Cricket Club in the current financial year and in 2021;
2. that the revised base revenue budget for 2020/21 and the estimated base revenue budgets for 2021/22, as detailed in the draft estimates be approved, subject to any further adjustments necessary.

b) **SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED RECREATION FEES AND CHARGES 2021/22**

The Committee received and considered the schedule of proposed fees and charges for the Council's Recreation facilities for 2021/22, and the Town Clerk pointed out that increases had been limited to an inflationary increase of 1½% as agreed by Council.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the proposed fees and charges, be agreed, as presented.

c) **REVISED CAPITAL & SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS PROGRAMME 2020/21**

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

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and that projects should be prioritised at the forthcoming Policy, Governance and Finance Committee on 23

November 2020.

d) REVENUE GROWTH ITEMS AND CAPITAL/SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS PROGRAMME 2021/22 AND BEYOND

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk/RFO and discussed some items that they would like to see in the next financial year.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and that a piece of play equipment for Quarry Road and a path for behind the MUGA at King George V Field be included in the budget for the forthcoming year.

SP357 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.

SP358 WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND

Before moving on to the substantive report the Town Clerk pointed out that the Chair had deferred the confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020, as she wished to raise a question on the content. In answer to a question the Town Clerk advised that the purpose of the minutes was in fact to record recommendations and a brief outline of the content of the discussion.

**RESOLVED:** that the confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Operations and Estates Officer, which included communication from the Sports & Social Club advising that they were withdrawing the use of the changing rooms once the government guidance on restricted use was lifted. The Operations and Estates Officer had pointed out in that Tower Hill FC had erected a sign on the side of the building without the Council's permission.

There was a discussion on the changing room situation and the implications for the Council, the fire risk assessment and continued public safety.

**RESOLVED:** that the confidential report and communication be noted, and

1. a meeting with the club representatives be arranged;
2. the Council arranges its own Fire Risk Assessment of the Clubhouse;
3. that Officers proceed with any action as deemed necessary as a result of the above two recommendations, subject to professional advice.

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The meeting closed at: 7.20 pm

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Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 9 November 2020**

**At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

**Present:**

Councillor M Jones (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	L Duncan
	L Ashbourne	V Gwatkin
	T Ashby	J King
	O Collins	
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	John Hickman	Operations & Estates Officer
	Tomas Smith	Venue Manager
	Angus Whitburn	Compliance and Environment Officer
Others:	1 member of the public.	

**H370 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**H371 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**H372 MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2020. Cllr King advised that he had given apologies for that meeting.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2020 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**H373 OPERATIONAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report on the Operations and Estates Officer, covering hall maintenance and repairs to 51a Market Square.

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

H374 **PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue Manager, covering the current Covid-19 lockdown implications.

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

H375 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Although this item was initially to be taken after the minutes but as the member of the public – Mr John Richards - who had put the request in for the cinema was now present, the Committee agreed to allow him the opportunity to address the committee. The Committee adjourned for this item.

Following Mr Richard's address, the Committee reconvened.

*Mr Richards left the meeting at this point, the time being 18.20.*

H376 **REQUEST TO RUN A CINEMA IN THE CORN EXCHANGE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue Manager on the proposal to run a cinema in the Corn Exchange. Mr Richards had proposed that he would hire the films and provide the equipment and the Town Council would run everything else including ticket sales. The profits would be split 50/50 after Mr Richards had paid for the hire of the film – around £150- £190. The Venue Manager felt that all the risk would be for the Town Council as it would be a Town Council event. Officers would need to work out capacity and a price point.

Members expressed some concern as there had been plans for the Corn Exchange to run cinema events independently as part of its programme.

**RESOLVED:** that the report be noted and that the proposal from Mr Richards be referred to the next meeting of the Corn Exchange Working Party on 7 December 2020.

H377 **CEMETERIES & CLOSED CHURCHYARDS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer. This covered Closed Churchyards including topple testing work to be done, Tower Hill Cemetery and the Windrush Cemetery. A report on the Windrush Cemetery access that had been to the last Climate, Planning and Biodiversity Committee was included.

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

H378 **REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CEMETERY REGULATIONS**

The Committee had been previously circulated with the current rules and regulations relating to the Council's cemeteries.

Due to a recent request for a Saturday interment of ashes, the Chair suggested she wanted to review the times of opening Tower Hill Cemetery, to be able to offer this service, if possible. The Town Clerk advised that this should be taken to the Personnel Sub-Committee for consideration as there would be implications on staffing and advice would be needed on employment law.

Members discussed this suggestion and felt that perhaps Saturday interments/burials could be done for special circumstances and subject to the Town Clerk's discretion. The Town Clerk suggested that this could be by request and not as an advertised service. Fees would also need to be increased from the weekday charges.

The Chair raised the issue of access and the Operations and Estates Officer explained that the cemetery was always open during daylight hours in the week and that the bollard that prevented cars entering the top of the cemetery was removed at weekends. The main gates were locked at weekends but anyone wishing to enter could apply to the Friends of the Cemetery for the code to open the gates. The Chair said that she wanted the bollard to be removed completely so that there could be car access at all times to that area and added that some people struggled to open the main gates. At the request of a member, the Operations and Estates Officer provided some background history to the bollard being introduced, which had involved cars damaging graves and memorials and near misses involving cars almost hitting pedestrians and on one occasion a member of staff.

A member proposed that Officers should risk assess the roads and access to the cemetery and bring back recommendations, that the additional gate should be progressed and that officers should see what could be done to make the bottom gates easier to open.

The Committee also discussed personal possessions being left on graves, the types of alternative memorials permitted, particularly those that could not afford headstones, and the general grounds maintenance of the cemeteries, as there had been several complaints over the past few months.

Another member proposed that a booklet for those burying or interring people in the cemeteries be composed that would provide a "bit of a hug from the Town Council". She acknowledged that there was already a booklet but wanted something a little nicer.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the opening hours of the Cemeteries be reviewed, particularly being able to offer interment of ashes on Saturdays, be referred to the Personnel Sub-Committee to look at the implications on staffing and legal issues;
2. that the Operations and Estates Officer and the Compliance and Environment Officer carry out a risk assessment on the permanent removal of the bollard, which prevents car access to the top end of Tower Hill Cemetery and the whole vehicular and pedestrian access to that cemetery;
3. that Officers continue to look at an additional pedestrian entrance at Tower Hill Cemetery;
4. that the Operations and Estates Officer brings a report back to the next meeting on the specific issues raised;
5. that a new handbook for the cemetery be designed with the emphasis being on compassion for the bereaved.

H379 **ALLOTMENTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer. There followed a discussion about sheds on the new Windrush Place Allotments, which would be brand new and should be maintained by the Allotment Association. Officers felt that in providing sheds they would look more uniform in colour and size to the surrounding houses.

Another member wanted it to be clear that sheds were for the storage of gardening items only. The Operations and Estates Officer believed that it would be covered in the legal work.

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

H380 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered financial reports from the Town Clerk/RFO.

a) **REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21 AND BASE REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2021/22**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk/RFO which had been circulated prior to the meeting. She had written a comprehensive report in order to try and explain each individual cost centre and budget line. She advised that there were still several unknown factors at this stage and therefore it was the first draft budget for the Committee and would be presented to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee on 23 November. If the information on the tax base was received by that point from the District Council, she hoped that the Council would be in a position to agree the budget on 14 December.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and that the revised base revenue budget for 2020/21 and the draft estimated base revenue budgets for 2021/22 as presented, be agreed in principal, subject to any further adjustments, as necessary.

b) **SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2021/22**

The Committee received and considered the proposed schedule of fees and charges for 2021/22 in respect of the Council's Cemeteries and Halls as circulated with the agenda. The Town Clerk advised that the increases were in line with the budget parameters agreed by full Council with an inflationary increase of 1½%.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the fees and charges in respect of the burials and hall hire, as presented, be agreed.

c) **REVISED CAPITAL AND SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS PROGRAMME 2020/21**

The Committee had received a schedule listing the up to date financial position on the current year's capital and special revenue projects programme.

A member queried the projects listed as abandoned or deferred in the report and the Town Clerk/RFO explained that she had been trying to make savings in



the current year due to COVID-19 and that members should look at the list and see which projects could be deferred to the following year or the year after

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

d) REVENUE GROWTH ITEMS AND CAPITAL/SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS PROGRAMME 2021/22 AND BEYOND

The Town Clerk explained that this schedule covered projects for 2021/22. The projects that were listed as deferred under the previous agenda item could be put back in and then reviewed to see if they could be afforded. This would also be looked at the next Policy, Governance and Finance Committee. Members requested that the pedestrian gate at Tower Hill and provision for a cinema at the Corn Exchange be considered.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and that a pedestrian gate at Tower Hill and equipment for a cinema at the Corn Exchange be added to the budget – which the Venue Manager would look into costings for the next meeting.

H381 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.

H382 REQUEST TO SUB-LET LANGDALE HALL

The Committee received and considered correspondence from the Managing Director of the ICE Centre, concerning a request to sub-let a top floor room. The Town Clerk advised that the lease did not allow any part of the building to be sub-let so if the Committee decided to permit it, it would need to go through a legal process.

Members thought the idea was good but there was some concern it could set a precedent. The Town Clerk advised that it could be stipulated that it was only permitted to be sub-let to that specified in the correspondence.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Council agrees in principle to The ICE Centre sub-letting a top floor room to that specified in the confidential correspondence providing that all necessary legal work was completed and at the expense of the ICE Centre.

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The meeting closed at: 7.54 pm

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Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 16 November 2020**

**At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

**Present:**

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne	D Butterfield
	J Aitman	H Eaglestone
	T Ashby	L Duncan
	D Enright	
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	John Hickman	Operations & Estates Officer
	Polly Inness	Communications & Events Officer
Others:	2 members of the public.	

**SC383 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for her absence was received from Cllr Gwatkin.

**SC384 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Collins declared an interest in the final item as he worked for West Oxfordshire Community Transport.

**SC385 MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2020.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

b) Matters Arising

Minute SC289 - The Chair asked for an update relating to the trees at King George V field. The Operations and Estates Officer confirmed that he had asked for quotes.

**SC386 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned in line with Standing Order 42, in order to receive public participation.

Mr Adrian Phillips addressed the Council about an on-line pantomime.

Ms Katy Jennison addressed the Council about WW2 Pill Boxes.

Following these addresses the Committee reconvened.

**SC387 COMMUNITY SUPPORT INITIATIVE - ONLINE PANTO GIFT**

The Committee received and considered correspondence from Mr Phillips who had spoken under public participation.

There followed a discussion about how this might work and a member estimated that in order to give free access to the pantomime to all children in receipt of free school meals, the Council would be looking at funding for around 150/160 families. The cost to the Council would be wholesale prices.

Members felt it was a good idea whilst acknowledging that there were some financial issues that needed to be tidied up with the Town Clerk/RFO.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. to accept the proposal from Mr Phillips;
2. that the Town Clerk/RFO discusses the financial issues in terms of not making a profit with Mr Phillips;
3. that Cllr Duncan contacts all of the primary schools in the town to discuss the proposal with them.

**SC388 WITNEY'S WW2 PILLBOXES**

This item was moved up the agenda with the express permission of the Chair so that the member of the public had spoken about it under public participation could hear the debate.

Members discussed the issues that needed to be tackled if the pill box on Langel Common was to be planted up, the largest of these being that it was not on Town Council land but belonged to the Church. The Operations and Estates Officer advised that the Church would need to be contacted.

The Council might also need planning permission and listed building consent. Cllr Smith was happy to continue to pursue these issues. The Town Clerk asked that she copied in herself and the Operations and Estates Officer to these communications to ensure that the process went through the correct channels.

A member suggested that this should be put onto the strategic plan.

As it was the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a bomb being dropped on Church Green on Sunday, the Committee agreed that a social media post should be put out with possibly a video message from the Mayor.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that Officers are tasked with looking into planning issues and listed building consent;
2. that Cllr Smith continues to liaise with Historic England, and copies Officers into these communications;
3. that Officers look into planting schemes;
4. that this item is put onto the Strategic Plan;
5. that a social media post commemorating the bombing of Witney in WW2 is delegated to the Communications and Events Officer, the Chair and the Mayor.

**SC389 OPERATIONAL REPORT - PROGRESS SINCE LAST MEETING**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer, which included a request for a memorial bench in the town.

**RESOLVED:** that the report be noted and that the resident's request for a memorial bench be granted and this is sited at King George V Field.

**SC390 FLORAL DISPLAYS AND TREES**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer, which included a recommendation on the cracked willows at Queen Emma's Dyke which the Tree Surgeon had advised were at the end of their lifespan, in terms of management.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and that Tree no's T277, T280 and T281 be felled and replaced with something more suitable.

**SC391 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer which advised that the switch on would be a little different to previously advised. Due to the lockdown in force the actual switch on would now take place a day before the residents had been invited to switch on lights at home in order to avoid any possibility of people forming a crowd to watch the lights being turned on in the town centre.

The Communications and Events Officer confirmed that people would be encouraged to post photos of their houses and tag them with #witneymagic.

A member asked when the Council would go out to tender for the next Christmas Lights contract. The Operations and Estates Officer replied that it would be January.

**RESOLVED:** that the report be noted and:-

1. that the Christmas Lights be switched on on the evening of 26 November to avoid the possibility of crowds gathering unofficially;
2. that the Mayor be filmed "switching on" the lights on 26 November;

3. that the social media campaign to get residents to switch their own lights on at 6pm on 27 November goes ahead, with residents being encouraged to post pictures.

SC392 **STREET FURNITURE AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

a) **TOWER HILL BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS**

The Committee received the report of the Office Manager, updating members on the Tower Hill bus stop improvements. He advised that Oxfordshire County Council had verbally stated it could source additional funding above and beyond that which was allocated for this project, but written confirmation had not been received. Members discussed how to progress this item and agreed that removing the RTI displays would reduce the cost and not be detrimental to the project as this route was not as well served as others in the centre.

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

1. that the Town Council agrees to the Tower Hill Bus Stop improvement proposal submitted by Oxfordshire County Council, without the inclusion of the Real Time Bus Information, providing the additional funding can be sought from other developer funding;
2. that the purchase of the bus shelter should be through a Town Council procurement process;
3. that provision and installation of cycle racks be agreed and funded from the existing budgets/developer funding;
4. that a provisional budget of £1,800 from the Bus Shelter maintenance budget 4035/402 be allocated and that the use of this budget to be delegated to the Town Clerk/Office Manager if deemed necessary to complete this project;
5. that a consultation with residents who lived between Burford Road and Park Road on both sides of the hill to ascertain their thoughts on the bus stop. This should be in the form of a letter with a freepost return envelope.

b) **PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Office Manager and the draft Public Transport Infrastructure Strategy. Members agreed that it should be adopted with some amendments.

The Office Manager explained that Oxfordshire County Council were trying to realign some of its designated section 106 developer funding to where it was most needed, if possible. Therefore he was looking for agreement and input from Members with knowledge in their wards.

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

1. that the strategy as presented be adopted with the following amendments and reallocations:
  - that the allocation of funds for Curbridge Road be swapped to Windrush Place;
  - that the allocation for timetables be utilised for the Community Bus timetable cases;
  - that the bus stop on Woodstock Road be included.

**SC393 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications and Events Officer.

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

**SC394 CIVIC EVENTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications and Events Officer. Members gave thanks to the Officer for her work on the virtual Remembrance Day and also Mr Woodward who had done the filming.

Members agreed to proceed with an online advent calendar with members and officers contributing to it.

Members also decided to defer the Covid Heroes awards and leave it to the task and finish group to progress.

The Committee supported the idea of an Eco/Green pop up event – the Communications and Events Officer advised that she hoped it could be covered by the existing Events budget.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and:-

1. thanks be given to James Woodward who filmed and edited a video for Remembrance Day;
2. that the online Advent Calendar be agreed – this could be extended to others in the community (e.g. from the Church if some members/staff did not wish to participate);
3. that the Task and Finish group meets again to decide when the Covid-19 heroes awards would be given out;
4. that the Eco Green Pop Up event be agreed with suggested budget of £1,000 from existing budgets.

SC395 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

a) **REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21 AND BASE REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2021/22**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk on the revised revenue budget 2020/21 and base revenue budget for 2021/22.

The Town Clerk explained that this was the first attempt at the budget for the year but there were still several unknowns that was making it difficult to finalise a cohesive budget. She had provided a comprehensive report detailing the budget lines this Committee were responsible for.

A discussion took place on the budget allocated to Blue Plaques and for Alice Batt. A Member provided an update on the progression of the Blue Plaque and members agreed to allocate £500 towards this, which was likely to come to fruition in 2022.

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

1. that the Council supports Alice Batt's blue plaque with a donation of £500;
2. that the Council confirms that it still wishes to support the following events by way of grant funding in 2021/22 financial year:
  - a. Witney Carnival & Christmas Lights Switch-on Event 2021 – grant to Rotary Club of Witney for £3,100;
  - b. Witney Dementia Alliance – continue to support Witney in Blue with a grant of up to £1,000;
  - c. Free Play Day for the Community on 5 August 2021 – in partnership with OPA by providing a grant of £1,000;
3. that the Town Council agrees in principal that the revised base revenue budget for 2020/21 and the estimated base revenue budgets for 2021/22, as detailed in the draft estimates be approved – subject to any further adjustments necessary.

b) **REVISED CAPITAL AND SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS PROGRAMME 2020/21**

The Committee received and considered the report on the revised capital and special revenue projects programme 2021/22.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the revised Capital and Special Revenue Projects Programme 2021/22 and beyond be noted and referred to the meeting of the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee for approval.

c) **REVENUE GROWTH ITEMS AND CAPITAL/SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS PROGRAMME 2021/22 AND BEYOND**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk on the Revenue Growth Items and Capital/Special Revenue Projects Programme 2021/22 and



beyond.

The Town Clerk brought to Members attention the request of the Witney & District Twinning Association for additional funding by way of a grant application form, which the Committee fully discussed. Some of the items listed in the application were expenses the Council could not fund through its grant criteria. It agreed that it should continue to provide the grant to support the administration of the association.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and:-

1. the planting of the community piano and the rebranding of the Council be included;
2. that £500 be granted to the Witney & District Twinning Association – the Council's usual support for the administration.

SC396 **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.

SC397 **WITNEY BUS SERVICES**

The Committee received and considered a confidential report on Witney's bus services.

**RESOLVED:** that the confidential report, as circulated be noted and the report be passed to the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee for consideration.

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The meeting closed at: 8.00 pm

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Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 23 November 2020**

**At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

**Present:**

Councillor L Ashbourne (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	V Gwatkin
	O Collins	M Jones
	H Eaglestone	R Smith
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
Others:	1 member of the public.	

**F403 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for his absence was received from Cllr Harvey.

**F404 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Eaglestone and Collins declared interests in the item on property matters as they both sat on the Witney Town Hall Charity.

**F405 MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2020.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**F406 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The member of the public present did not wish to participate in the meeting.

**F407 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Office Manager, together with bank reconciliations and statements and a schedule of payments.

**RESOLVED:**

1. that the report be noted;

2. that the bank reconciliations and bank statements be noted;
3. that the following schedules of payments be approved:

<b>Cheque No's</b>	<b>In the sum of:</b>	<b>Account</b>
Cheque 101145, Bank Transfer, DDRs and Standing Orders (September 2020)	£1,046,842.00	General CB 1
Cheques 32814-32838 and DDs (September 2020)	£83,259.51	Imprest CB 2

**F408 ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2020-21**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk/RFO. She advised that the strategy was standard for the sector.

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

1. that the current investment in secure banks and the Town Clerk/RFO continues to monitor interest rates to ensure that the Council receives the most advantageous interest rates be approved;
2. that the attached appendix being the Annual Investment Strategy 2020/21 be formally approved by the Committee, and subsequently full Council on 7 December 2020.

**F409 GRANTS AND SUBSIDISED LETTINGS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the DSO and the grant application from Volunteer Link Up.

**RESOLVED:** that the report be noted and that Volunteer Link Up be granted £500 under the General Power of Competence.

**F410 MARKING COMMUNITY AND NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS VIA LIGHTING UP OF THE CORN EXCHANGE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Office Manager. The Chair commented that LibFest would be purple in colour and that the building could still be lit up even if the event itself did not take place. She suggested that annual events should include International Women's Day (8 March – green, purple and white), World Environment Day (5 June – green), and the NHS Birthday (5 June – blue).

There followed a discussion on what/how many events should be lit up and whether they needed to be included in the annual calendar.

**RESOLVED:** that the annual calendar for lighting up the Corn Exchange be delegated to the Leader, Mayor, Town Clerk and Office Manager to agree and that International Women's Day (8 March), World Environment Day (5 June) and the NHS Birthday (5 July) be added to this.

F411 **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk/RFO, the financial report and recommendations made by spending Committees through the current cycle of meetings.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and that the recommendations from spending committees be approved.

a) **REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2020-21 AND BASE REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2021-22**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk/RFO, which was circulated prior to the meeting. She explained that she had not yet received the tax base information from the District Council that was needed to finalise the budget and therefore the Council would not be able to set its budget and declare the precept at the meeting scheduled for 14 December. Equally there was some further information from the organisation review that was required. However, it had been recommended by the Council's consultants, LGRC that the Council should undertake a Strategic Plan and she and the Leader were therefore recommending that that date be reserved for a meeting to start this process.

Members discussed the general grants budget as due to Covid-19 not much had been spent. Members agreed to roll the underspend over to the next financial year.

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

1. that the meeting on 14 December is a strategy meeting for a Strategic Plan;
2. that the budget for the Grants – General (4100/407) for 2020/21 be rolled over into the next fiscal year;
3. that the revised base revenue budget for 2020/21 and the estimated base revenue budgets for 2021/22, as detailed in the draft estimates be approved in principle—subject to any further adjustments necessary – particularly when unknown factors have been confirmed.

b) **SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2021-22**

The Committee received and considered the revised schedule of charges for recreation, burials and hall hire, which had been recommended by the appropriate committees.

**RESOLVED:** that the Fees and charges as presented, be approved.

c) **REVISED CAPITAL & SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS PROGRAMME 2020-21**

This item would be informed by the Strategic Plan and was therefore referred to that meeting on 14 December.

**RESOLVED:** that this item be referred to the Strategic Plan meeting on 14 December 2020.

d) REVENUE GROWTH ITEMS AND CAPITAL/SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS PROGRAMME 2021-22 AND BEYOND

This was item would be informed by the Strategic Plan and was therefore referred to that meeting on 14 December.

**RESOLVED:** that this item be referred to the Strategic Plan meeting on 14 December 2020.

*The member of the public left the meeting at this point.*

F412 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.

F413 DEBTOR REPORT

The Committee received and considered an updated report from the office Manager on debtors.

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

F414 NATIONAL PROTOCOL

Members received and considered the report of the Office Manager, which had been revised due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the updated protocol in the light of covid be noted and approved and with any lighting up of the Corn Exchange in relevance to this taking precedence over any other event.

F415 PROPERTY & LEGAL MATTERS

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk, circulated prior to the meeting, which included an update on the situation relating to the rent review of the Town Council's rent for the Town Hall, Town House and Buttercross, and also the letting of the retail unit at 51 Market Square.

The confidential report also contained information relating to a licence agreed in 2016 for a property in Vanner Road to have an access off of Council owned amenity land, and the fact that the property had now changed hands, the new owner was requesting the same permissions. She had sought legal advice from the Council's professional advisors which she relayed.

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on the recommendation the Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Committee had made in respect of a request from its tenant in Langdale Hall to sub-let a room. She also elaborated on the planning application the Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committee had been considering for Witney East and the possible alternative access for Windrush Cemetery. She suggested additional budget needed to be made in order to fund the internal road layout.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and:-

1. that the rent negotiations for the Town Hall, Town House and Buttercross be delegated to the Town Clerk - and for her to put forward an annual rent of £1,000 more than currently paid in the first instance for consideration by the Trust along with inflationary increases thereafter;
2. that 51 Market Square be retained in the medium term for public facing offices for the Council's own purposes, whilst the economic market picks up, subject to agreement by the Landlord;
3. that the licence granted in 2016 for the property in Vanner Road be brought to an end and the former resident reinstates the wall as detailed in the licence. That no further licences for this arrangement are considered;
4. that the Council sets aside £25,000 for future internal roadways and car park in the Windrush Cemetery in the 2021/22 budget.

**F416 OPEN SPACES STRATEGY & REVIEW OF GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

Following the recommendation at the last meeting (minute F320), the Town Clerk had sought fee proposals from suitably qualified consultants to undertake a review of the Council's Grounds Maintenance Contract and provide an Open Spaces Strategy. The Committee considered the confidential report, along with four fee proposals all of which had been circulated with the agenda.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the confidential report be noted and that Council proceeds with option D.

**F417 STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee held on 11 November 2020 as circulated prior to the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** that the confidential minutes be noted and the recommendations contained therein be agreed.

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The meeting closed at: 7.15 pm

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Chair

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In respect of

Witney Town Council

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2020; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

### 2 External auditor report 2019/20

(~~Except for the matter reported below~~)\* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with the Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

(\*delete as appropriate)

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

The council has not reviewed Financial Regulations or Standing Orders during the year and has not reviewed the Code of Conduct for several years. The JPAG Practitioners' Guide Section 1.14 states these should be reviewed frequently which is often considered to be on an Annual Basis for an authority of this size. In particular, whilst the Code of Conduct is based on a model set that has not been updated since last adopted by the Council, this should nonetheless still be reviewed to consider whether it remains appropriate to this authority.

As indicated in the Annual Internal Audit Report and on the Annual Governance Statement, the Council did not perform a full risk assessment during the year. We note this was in part due to unique circumstances in the period under review and also that measures have already been taken to complete the review and avoid a recurrence in the future.

### 3 External auditor certificate 2019/20

We certify/ ~~do not certify~~\* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2020.

\*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name



External Auditor Signature

*Moore*

Date

19/11/2020

\*Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website ([www.nao.org.uk](http://www.nao.org.uk))

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## Vandalism 2020

Date	Item/Location	When	Date/Time Reported	Reference	Cost if known
14.2.2020	West Witney Drop Down Bollards	During Week commencing 10.2.20			£298 plus works team time to fit 2 hrs £50
2.3.2020	Buttercross roof space hatch locking system and smashed fluorescent tubes.	? Reported by Steve Fletcher Clock repair man			£97.98 for parts 3 x hrs works team repairing refitting cleaning up.
9.6.2020	Memorial bench Dedicated to father & Son – Witney Lake	8/06/2020	9/06/2020	Crime reference 43200171104	
14.9.2020	Town Hall Notice Board glass smashed over weekend.	11 <sup>th</sup> Sept-14 <sup>th</sup> Sept	14 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2020 at 08.53	Crime ref 43200287901	Approx. cost £115 including works team time.
28.10.2020	Goal posts taken out of ground and net hoops ripped out	17/18.10.2020	28.10.2020	Crime Ref INC-20201028-1158	£91.00 Per pair & VAT & Delivery Works Team £50.00 Repair & re-errect Total cost £141.00 Plus VAT & Delivery
10/11/2020	Leys- Youths kicked the gate off the wall between Leys Toilets & Changing rooms		10/11/2020	Crime Ref INC-2020110-1071	2 x hrs works team. £50






## HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

robert@robertcourts.co.uk

Mrs Sharon Groth  
Clerk, Witney Town Council  
Town Hall  
Market Square  
Witney  
Oxon OX28 6AG

Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020  
Ref: aw/RC33006

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Town Council regarding the Local Electricity Bill.

I believe distributed generation may have a role to play a part in a smarter, more efficient energy system and small scale low-carbon technologies should have a level playing field as the market for smarter services evolves.

Community energy is a key part of clean growth and can de-carbonise energy in local areas while bringing other economic or social benefits. That is why I welcome the introduction of the Local Energy Programme which supports local actors, community groups, local authorities and combined authorities to develop their own energy strategies and deliver their own energy programmes.

Since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 the previous Feed-in Tariff scheme has been replaced with the Smart Export Guarantee, which gives small-scale low-carbon electricity generators, such as homes with solar panels, the right to be paid by certain electricity suppliers for the renewable electricity they export to the grid.

This new scheme could create a whole new market, encouraging suppliers to competitively bid for this electricity, giving exporters the best market price while providing the local grid with more clean, green energy, unlocking greater choice and control for solar households over buying and selling their electricity. It reflects the Government's continued commitment to ensuring that low carbon electricity is central to the transition to the smart and flexible energy systems of the future.

Regarding the Bill itself. The Local Electricity Bill, introduced by Peter Aldous MP, has had its First Reading in the House of Commons. Its Second Reading is scheduled for 11 September.

Whilst changing the licensing framework to suit business models identified in the Bill may appear to be a potential fix to address a specific problem, it risks creating wider distortions elsewhere in the energy system. These are issues which require careful consideration which this Bill does not offer. Instead it is better to make our current regulatory regime more flexible and seek to equip it to meet the challenges of a changing energy system. Both Government and Ofgem are actively responding and will continue to rise to this challenge.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

**Robert Courts MP**

*From the Member of Parliament for the constituency of Witney in West Oxfordshire  
including Bampton, Burford, Carterton, Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Witney and Woodstock.*

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Councillor Joy Aitman

Mayor of Witney

Dear Joy Aitman

I had not realised when I asked Duncan for a letter of support that he had surrendered his chain to you months ago. My apologies. Will you do the necessary, please? A short statement on appropriate letterhead is all that is required.

You will know that Oxfordshire County Council debated Charles Mathew's (Tory) motion below two weeks ago. Tim Bearder (LibDem) added the text in red to focus on rail.

*Council asks Cabinet to review the plans presently being offered and adopt a long-term strategy that will meet the public's needs for the next twenty years at least and as part of this work will undertake a feasibility study, should funding be confirmed, in the next financial year, to look at a rail link from Carterton, Witney and Eynsham to Oxford.*

The motion passed with none against and just one abstention. Much pleasant was said about the efforts of WOT (Witney Oxford Transport) over many years to bring the possibilities of rail to public attention. Our next step will be a submission to the government's Beeching Reversal fund for a feasibility study, which must be made soon. The fund requires the explicit support of local MPs and other worthies, of which you are one. At the moment, we have support from Layla Moran (and a five-page letter from Courts arguing that a railway would only attract more people and so more housing), the mayor of Carterton and the Lord Mayor of Oxford. May we have yours as Mayor of Witney as well?

Best wishes

Stuart Macdonald

Visiting professor, School of Management, University of Leicester

General editor, *Prometheus*