

Full Council Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 15th February, 2021 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) prior to the meeting, stating the reason for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in any of the items under consideration at this meeting in accordance with the Town Council's code of conduct.

3. Minutes (Pages 5 - 16)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meetings held on 7 December 2020 and 14 December 2020 and the Extra Ordinary meeting held on 12 January 2021 in accordance with Standing Order 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 15 December 2020 and 1 February 2021, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein:

- a) **Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committee meetings held on 15 December 2020, 5 January 2021 and 26 January 2021.** (Pages 17 - 38)
- b) **Sport and Play Committee meeting held on 11 January 2021** (Pages 39 - 42)
- c) **Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Committee meeting held on 18 January 2021** (Pages 43 - 46)
- d) **Stronger Communities Committee meeting held on 25 January 2021** (Pages 47 - 52)
- e) **Policy, Governance and Finance Committee meeting held on 1 February 2021** (Pages 53 - 58)

8. **Council Revenue Budget: Revised Budget 2020/21 and Estimate 2021/22**

To receive and consider the report of the Town Clerk/RFO along with the draft revised revenue budget for 2020/21 and the estimates for 2021/22 – TO FOLLOW.

9. **To formally declare the Precept for 2021/22**

To receive and consider the report of the Town Clerk/RFO and if appropriate, declare the Precept for 2021/22 – TO FOLLOW.

10. **Corporate Strategic Plan**

To receive a verbal update from the Leader & the Town Clerk concerning the Council's aims and objectives for inclusion in the Corporate Strategic Plan.

11. **Civic Announcements** (Pages 59 - 60)

To receive and consider the report of the Mayor.

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

To receive and consider a vandalism update from the Operations and 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 - 70)

To receive and consider the following correspondence:

- a) Open Letter from the Chair of NALC – Cllr Sue Baxter

16. **Questions to the Leader of the Council**

Questions to the Leader of the Council concerning the business of the Council in accordance w Standing Order 15.

17. **Sealing of Documents**

To **RESOLVE** that the seal of the Council be affixed to any documents arising from decisions taken by this meeting of the Council.



Town Clerk



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**FULL COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 7 December 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	D Temple
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
Others:	No members of the public.	

432 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

433 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

434 **MINUTES**

Members received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2020. There were no matters arising.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair

435 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

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

Cllr Duncan Enright – West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Enright provided an update on the District Council's budget setting process. The Council was beginning some difficult budgetary years as the mid-term plan indicated that there were shortfalls in funding. Most of the savings made by the restructuring process had now been achieved and the pandemic had also impacted the budget.

Cllr Rosa Bolger – West Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Bolger advised that a new Covid-19 test centre was under construction at the Woodford Way car park in town. Officers had been working hard. Residents had expressed concern at the loss of parking and so members had pushed hard for extra signage to signpost the top two levels of Marriott's Walk Car Park. Cllr Bolger also reported that a close eye would be kept on the surrounding residential roads to ensure that people did not park their cars there instead.

RESOLVED: that the updates be noted.

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

Members did not have anything to report for this item.

438 **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES**

- a) CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING MINUTES - 13 OCTOBER, 3 NOVEMBER AND 24 NOVEMBER 2020.

The Chair presented the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committees held on 13 October, 3 November and 24 November 2020 and moved their acceptance. It was noted that for the minutes of 24 November, the response for the Proposed East Witney Development was delegated to officers to complete.

It was also requested that Cllr Enright be added as attending the meetings of the 3 and 24 November 2020.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committee of 13 October, 3 November and 24 November 2020 be received and any recommendations therein approved, with Cllr Enright being added to the list of meeting attendees on the 3 and 24 November.

- b) SPORT & PLAY COMMITTEE - 2 NOVEMBER 2020.

The Chair presented the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2020 and moved their acceptance.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2020 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

c) HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE - 9 NOVEMBER 2020.

The Chair presented the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2020 and moved their acceptance.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2020 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

d) STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE - 16 NOVEMBER 2020.

The Chair presented the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2020 and moved their acceptance.

Matters Arising

The Leader referred to minute SC391 – Christmas Lights - and asked if members would be happy to run a best dressed house competition. Councillors should submit their favourites in their wards to the Communications and Events Officer and a winner would then be chosen from each ward. All agreed that this was a good idea.

RESOLVED:

1. that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2020 be received and any recommendations therein approved;
2. that Councillors facilitate a best dressed Christmas house competition, with a winner to be chosen in each ward.

e) POLICY, GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE - 23 NOVEMBER 2020.

The Chair presented the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2020 and moved their acceptance.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2020 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

439 CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Council received and considered the report of the Mayor's engagements, circulated before the meeting,

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

440 MOTIONS TO COUNCIL

The Council received and considered two motions. The Leader informed the Council that it had come to her attention that as a member of Government, the Rt Hon. Robert Courts could not support private members bills, such as those to be presented to Council. This was confirmed by Cllr Harvey.

The motions were presented as follows:-

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.*

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.

Due to the Leader's update, amendments were proposed as detailed below.

Motion 1 - votes for the amendment: 16 for, 1 abstention; votes for the motion : 16 for, 1 abstention.

Motion 2 – votes for the amendment: 12 for, 5 abstentions; votes for the motion: 11 for, 6 abstentions.

Both motions were therefore carried with the proposed amendments.

RESOLVED: that both motions as presented are passed with the following amendments:

Motion 1 - County Lines and Child Exploitation

Final paragraph to read:

Write to Robert Courts MP asking him to support this motion shall it come to parliament and to reply to Witney Town Council informing what steps both the Government and he himself will be taking to safeguard vulnerable young people affected by county lines, both nationally and locally.

Motion 2 - Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill

Final sentence to read:

We ask the Leader of this Council to write to our MP, asking, that whilst we understand as a member of the Government he is unable to support this private members bill, he replies to Witney Town Council in the light of this with what policies he thinks need to be brought in to address climate change on a scale sooner than 2050, and how to improve on things like the recent Environment Bill to address climate and ecological emergency and engages with his constituents on this bill.

441 **COMMUNITY SUPPORT INITIATIVE - ONLINE PANTOMIME GRANT REQUEST**

The Leader gave an update on the online pantomime. Since the original discussions with the promoters, it had become clear that the Council would not be able to pay for the tickets within the timescale subsequently requested, due to the Council's financial regulations. As the Council was no longer able to support the initiative, it was hoped that an alternative could be found in the new year.

RESOLVED: to delegate to Officers, the Mayor, the Leader and Cllr Duncan to try to arrange something similar in the New Year.

442 **CONCLUSION OF AUDIT FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020**

The Council received and considered the external audit report and certificate 2019/20. The Town Clerk referred to the notes and advised that she was confident that the outstanding items would be done next year. She also advised that the Code of Conduct was not within the control of the Town Council as members signed up to the District Council Code, and therefore there would be no change unless the District changed it or there was a national change. She would take this up with the auditor.

RESOLVED: that the conclusion of audit for the year ending 31 March 2020 be noted.

443 **VANDALISM**

The Committee received and considered an updated schedule of vandalism, prepared by the Operations and Estates Officer.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

444 **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Town Clerk read an update on behalf of the Compliance and Environment Officer, covering Covid safety in the offices and public halls.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and thanks expressed to Officers who have worked hard to keep the Council Covid safe.

445 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

There was no communication from the Leader.

446 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Council received and considered a letter from Robert Courts MP in relation to minute number 339 from the Council meeting on 12 October 2020, and a letter from Witney Oxford Transport, asking for the Mayor's support for its submission to the government's Beeching Reversal fund for a feasibility study. The Mayor alone could not support this but the Council agreed that as a body it would send a letter of support.

RESOLVED: that the correspondence be noted and that Witney Town Council supports Witney Oxford Transport's submission to the government's Beeching Reversal fund for a feasibility study.

447 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

There were no questions to the Leader of the Council.

448 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

The Town Clerk advised that a lease had now been signed for West Oxfordshire District Council to take on the Langdale Hall car park in order to enforce the parking regulations.

RESOLVED: that the seal of the Council be affixed to the document.

The meeting closed at: 7.45 pm

Chair

**MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 14 December 2020

At 7.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne T Ashby D Butterfield O Collins H Eaglestone D Enright V Gwatkin	M Jones J King A McMahon A Prosser R Smith D Temple
Officers:	Sharon Groth Adam Clapton Nicky Cayley John Hickman Angus Whitburn	Town Clerk Office Manager Democratic Services Officer Operations & Estates Officer Compliance and Environment Officer
Others:	1 member of the public.	

449 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R Bolger, L Duncan and D Harvey.

450 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared by members at the meeting.

451 **CORPORATE/STRATEGIC PLAN - INITIAL DISCUSSION**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk concerning the creation of a Corporate Strategic Plan for Witney Town Council.

As a recommendation emanating from the Council's ongoing organisational review, members agreed that the creation of a strategic plan, encompassing its vision and objectives was highly important. Councillors views on top aspirations had been compiled from a survey issued by the Town Clerk and the results included projects such as the Corn Exchange refurbishment, West Witney Sports Ground and improvement to sports facilities.

There was agreement that Committee Chairs and the senior management team of the Council should be involved in the next stage by way of a task and finish group. Each committee could discuss projects for the plan in the next committee cycle and officers could pull together all

existing, planned and budgeted projects for the current year and for 2021/22 as part of this process.

The Town Clerk confirmed that Council objectives had already been agreed earlier in the year and these would be included along with committee terms of reference by the task and finish group.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted and that the Council forms a Task and Finish Group to be made up of Committee Chairs to work with the Senior Management Team in formulating a draft Corporate Strategic Plan; and,
2. That each committee in the forthcoming cycle has this agenda item for consideration so that a draft plan may be presented to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

452 **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.

453 **PROPERTY MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Compliance & Environment Officer and confidential correspondence from the Town Clerk circulated prior to the meeting.

Members thanked officers for the reports and discussed a recent Fire Risk Assessment carried out at West Witney Sports & Social Club. Under health and safety, the committee raised concerns regarding the Council's legal and statutory obligations as the Landlord and landowner. There was also an understanding that residents' council tax and the Clubs own funds should not be spent on the building while its future was uncertain. Although there was a commitment by the Town Council to invest in this site, the timeframes for significant sports re-development funding were unknown at this stage. The Committee agreed it would be sensible to investigate the possibility of temporary structures for sports teams who may use the site while discussions on further development continued.

The Committee agreed that the Council should engage positively with the Club at an early stage to achieve a mutually beneficial outcome for the site in the short term as well as in the future.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted; and,
2. That Witney Town Council, noting the time frame for urgent work to be carried out on high priority items in the recent Fire Risk Assessment, writes to West Witney Sports & Social Club to express serious concern regarding the content and to ask for a constructive meeting to be held with the Council at the earliest opportunity. The meeting to discuss the FRA along with the short, medium and long-term future of the Sports Ground and its facilities; and,

3. That this matter be delegated to the Town Clerk, Cllr Ashbourne, Cllr Butterfield and Cllr Gwatkin; and
4. That a progress update on the above meeting or response be presented to the Sport & Play Committee at its meeting on 11 January 2021; and,
5. That the potential use of temporary toilets and changing rooms be investigated by officers, with a report to the Sport & Play Committee at its meeting on 11 January 2021.

The meeting closed at: 8.11 pm

Chair

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**EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Tuesday, 12 January 2021
At 6.00 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
	D Butterfield	J King
	O Collins	A Prosser
	H Eaglestone	D Temple
	D Enright	

Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
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Others:	no members of the public. Nick Randle (LGRC) Samantha Haywood (LGRC)
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17 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr R Bolger.

18 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

19 **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.

20 **ORGANISATION REVIEW - FINAL REPORT**

The council received a presentation from LGRC Associates and considered the recommendations as presented in the confidential final report.

RESOLVED: that the confidential report of LGRC Associates be noted and the recommendations contained therein agreed.

The meeting closed at: 7.17 pm

Chair

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

Held on Tuesday, 15 December 2020

At 6.15 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
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Angus Whitburn	Compliance and Environment Officer
Others:	0 members of the public.	

P454 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for her absence was received from Cllr Bolger.

P455 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

P456 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

P457 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee received and considered the schedule of planning applications from West Oxfordshire District Council.

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

P458 LICENSING APPLICATION CONSULTATION W/20/00854/PRMA - UNIT R1 MARRIOTTS WALK

The Committee received and considered a licensing application. The Committee was pleased to support a new business and was pleased to support the application.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council supports this application.

P459 **LAKE AND COUNTRY PARK UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Compliance and Environment Officer, along with three quotations.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted and: -

1. that the quote supplied by Frank Lucas for the commission of an enhanced phase 1 survey be accepted;
2. that the Committee agrees that officer attention be focused on the creation of a management statement for the south section of the country park.

P460 **WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL CARBON FOOTPRINT**

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

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted and: -

1. that future Christmas Lighting contract to include timers on all lights that run reduced hours from dusk to midnight to cut emission;
2. that the solar pv panels for The Leys and officers developing the project be approved in principle and that any required quotes are brought back to committee for approval.

P461 **FINANCIAL REPORT - REVISED BUDGET 2020/21 AND ESTIMATES 2021/22**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk/RFO. There followed a lengthy discussion on what members would like to see included in the budget on terms of items connected with the climate emergency.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted and: -

1. that the budget for the Burwell Hall heating be increased from £15,000 already set aside to £30, 000 but using the £10, 000 budgeted for the patio and that an additional supplementary £5, 000 be included;
2. that this is be delegated to officers to look into the best option for the Burwell heating – including air/ground source heat pumps;
3. that it is continued to set aside £5, 000 year on year towards upgrading the Council's fleet of work vehicles to electric;
4. that the Council increases its budget to £15, 000 towards unspecified climate emergency projects;
5. that the Council continues to budget £10, 000 towards the Lake and Country park/Biodiversity;
6. that the £1, 000 budgeted for the Eco/Green pop up event in 2021 be split between this event -£400 - and £600 for a thermal imaging camera.

P462 **CONSULTATION - DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

The Committee received and considered a consultation from West Oxfordshire District Council concerning developer contributions. Members discussed the fact that the document would not be accessible in terms of language and terminology used to a lot of the general public. The Committee also wished to have more autonomy and influence on where and how developer contributions were spent in the town.

RESOLVED: - that the following response be submitted to West Oxfordshire District Council: -

This consultation does not communicate clearly to the public the intentions of how funding from developers will be sought. It is 83 pages long and it does not summarise clearly at the front what will happen. The consultation appears impenetrable and unwieldy and the Town Council is concerned that the public may not understand and be able to engage with this.

The Town Council believe that the whole town is impacted by strategic development and wishes to be able to exercise discretion in where the developer contributions are spent, which is the whole point of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

The Town Council would appreciate much better collaboration between the three tiers of Council in terms of Section 106 contributions, to seek out and find solutions for the spending of Section 106 funds and a more transparent tracking system that allows the Town Council to know what has been allocated to Witney.

The Town Council would also appreciate an “easy read” version that everyone is able to understand.

P463 **A40 BUS LANE AND EYNHAM PARK & RIDE UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered an update from Oxfordshire County Council on the A40 Bus lane and the Park and Ride at Eynsham.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

The meeting closed at: 8.11 pm

Chair

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457- 5 WTC/174/20 Plot Ref :-20/03218/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- MANNING, MR AND MRS M Date Received :- 26/11/2020
Location :- 29 BURFORD ROAD Date Returned :- 16/12/2020
BURFORD ROAD
WITNEY
Proposal : Erection of single storey front porch.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

457- 6 WTC/175/20 Plot Ref :-20/03018/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- ANDREW AND PARTNERS Date Received :- 30/11/2020
Location :- 26 - 28 CORN STREET Date Returned :- 16/12/2020
CORN STREET
WITNEY
Proposal : Conversion of first and second floor office space to a two bedroom flat and to change part of the ground floor estate agents to provide a bike and bin store.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

457- 7 WTC/176/20 Plot Ref :-20/03019/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- ANDREW AND PARTNERS Date Received :- 30/11/2020
Location :- 26 - 28 CORN STREET Date Returned :- 16/12/2020
CORN STREET
WITNEY
Proposal : Internal alterations to convert the first and second floor office space to a two bedroom flat and to change part of the ground floor estate agents to provide a bike and bin store.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

457- 8 WTC/177/20 Plot Ref :-20/03058/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- BROWN, MR AND MRS Date Received :- 30/11/2020
Location :- 2 BURWELL DRIVE Date Returned :- 16/12/2020
BURWELL DRIVE
WITNEY
Proposal : Erection of single storey side and rear extensions.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

457- 9 WTC/179/20 Plot Ref :-20/02962/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- LEE, MS NATALIE Date Received :- 03/12/2020
Location :- 10 BLANKET WAY Date Returned :- 16/12/2020
BLANKET WAY
WITNEY
Proposal : Erection of shed in back garden.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

457- 10 WTC/180/20 Plot Ref :- 20/03329/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- FOGGETT, MR KEIRAN Date Received :- 03/12/2020
Location :- 88 PENCLOSE PENCLOSE WITNEY Date Returned :- 16/12/2020
Proposal : Convert garage to study and erection of first floor side extension above existing garage and utility.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

457- 11 WTC/181/20 Plot Ref :-20/03138/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- GARSED-BRAND, MR AND MRS Date Received :- 03/12/2020
Location :- 14 STANTON HARCOURT ROAD STANTON HARCOURT ROAD WITNEY Date Returned :- 16/12/2020
Proposal : Alterations and erection of single storey rear extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

457- 12 WTC/182/20 Plot Ref :-20/03328/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- SHOWAN, MR MATTHEW Date Received :- 03/12/2020
Location :- 6 WOODLANDS ROAD WOODLANDS ROAD WITNEY Date Returned :- 16/12/2020
Proposal : Erection of first floor side extension above existing garage.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

457- 13 WTC/183/20 Plot Ref :-20/02940/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- SOMAIYA, MR Date Received :- 03/12/2020
Location :- 66 HIGH STREET HIGH STREET WITNEY Date Returned :- 16/12/2020
Proposal : Sub division and part change of use of ground floor retail/commercial unit to form a two-bed flat together with alterations to shop frontage.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

457- 14 WTC/184/20 Plot Ref :-20/03068/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- LIANG, JIANNING DR Date Received :- 04/12/2020
Location :- 141 QUEEN EMMA'S DYKE QUEEN EMMA'S DYKE WITNEY Date Returned :- 16/12/2020
Proposal : New dwelling and associated works.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections but asks the District Council to check if the proposal impacts on any common land.

457- 15 WTC/185/20

Plot Ref :-20/03133/FUL

Type :- FULL

Applicant Name :- LOCI, MR A

Date Received :- 07/12/2020

Location :- 115 BURFORD ROAD
BURFORD ROAD
WITNEY

Date Returned :- 16/12/2020

Proposal : Two storey side extension and subdivision of the existing property to form two separate dwellings.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections to this application subject to the advice of the Assistant Biodiversity Officer being followed.

The Meeting closed at : 8pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

Held on Tuesday, 5 January 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	A McMahon
	L Ashbourne	A Prosser
	M Jones	
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
Others:	0 members of the public.	

P1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for her absence was received from Cllr Gwatkin.

P2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

P3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present.

P4 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning applications received from West Oxfordshire District Council.

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

P5 APPEAL DECISION - APPEAL REF: APP/D3125/X/20/3257288, BIRDLIP CLOSE, WITNEY OX28 5GE

The Committee received an appeal decision for 4 Birdlip Close on the erection of a fence. Members were interested that in fact the appeal appeared to have been upheld on a technicality. Officer advised that this should be noted as such applications were becoming more frequent and there was a notable occasion on which a resident had been instructed to remove a fence on appeal.

RESOLVED: that the appeal decision be noted.

The meeting closed at: 6.40 pm

Chair

Witney Town Council

Planning Minutes - 5 January 2021

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4- 1 WTC/001/21 Plot Ref :-20/03056/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- POWELL, DR TIM Date Received :- 14/12/2020
Location :- 17 WOODGREEN Date Returned :- 06/01/2021
WOODGREEN
WITNEY
Proposal : Erection of a pergola.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application

4- 2 WTC/002/21 Plot Ref :-20/03185/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- SOMAIYA, MR Date Received :- 14/12/2020
Location :- HACKETTS Date Returned :- 06/01/2021
WESLEY WALK
WITNEY
Proposal : Demolition of Existing single storey Side & Rear Extensions. Erection of new Two-Storey Side Extension. Change of use for ground floor from A3 to A1 & to C3 on First & Second Floors with Alteration to existing roof to allow creation of 8 Flats.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objection to the application in principle but would like clarification that the storage area and cycle store is accessible for the flats and not just the retail unit on the ground floor.
Additionally the Town Council does not object subject to a favourable biodiversity report.

4- 3 WTC/003/21 Plot Ref :-R3.0120/20 Type :- COUNTY COU
Applicant Name :- OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL Date Received :- 14/12/2020
Location :- WEST WITNEY COUNTY Date Returned :- 06/01/2021
PRIMARY SCH
EDINGTON SQUARE
WITNEY
Proposal : Details pursuant to condition 9 (Travel Plan) of planning permission 16/03776/PREAPP (R3.0131/16) at West Witney County Primary School Edington Road Witney OX28 5FZ.
Observations : Witney Town Council understands how stretched schools are and the impact that this will have on the headteacher drafting the travel plan. The Town Council asks that the County Council's Active Travel Officers help by taking the work out of school street proposals by drafting them and doing the admin for the school. This would really help to capitalise on the opportunity West Witney County Primary has for safer and greener travel to school at this juncture, despite the pressure of Covid and lockdown.

4- 4 WTC/007/21 Plot Ref :-20/03281/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- ELLIOT, MRS B Date Received :- 21/12/2020
Location :- 87 CORN STREET Date Returned :- 06/01/2021
CORN STREET
WITNEY

Proposal : Demolition of existing workshop and storage units and erection of eight new dwellings.

Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this as it notes the air quality response asking for electric charging points for vehicles and it echoes this request. The Town Council requests the the developers go further with their acknowledgement that green energy should be included and ask that they explore truly green alternatives for the development. Ten cycle racks are also not sufficient for the number of residents. The Town Council does however, approve of development of a brownfield site.

4- 5 WTC006/21 Plot Ref :-20/03256/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- HAU, MS LOUISE Date Received :- 21/12/2020
Location :- 5 APPLGARTH COURT Date Returned :- 06/01/2021
APPLGARTH COURT
WITNEY

Proposal : Construction of wooden summerhouse in the rear garden.

Observations : Witney Town Council cannot comment on this application as there are insufficient plans to consider.

The Meeting closed at : 6.40pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

Held on Tuesday, 26 January 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser	M Jones
	J Aitman	A McMahon
	L Ashbourne	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Angus Whitburn	Compliance and Environment Officer
Others:	1 member of the public.	

P45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Bolger and Cllr V Gwatkin.

P46 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr R Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items 7, 12 and 13 as some of the proposals, in part were near to where she lived.

P47 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public present wished to speak on any item at the meeting.

P48 MINUTES

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committee meetings held on 24 November 2020, 15 December 2020 and 5 January 2021.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committee meetings held on 24 November 2020, 15 December 2020 and 5 January 2021 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

With the express permission of the Chair, agenda items 7, 12 and 13 were grouped together and brought up the agenda so the member of public attending could hear the discussion.

P49 **EAST WITNEY STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT - CYCLE AND FOOTPATH CONNECTIVITY AFFECTING LAND AT ETON CLOSE PLAY AREA, MANOR ROAD/COGGES HILL ROAD, OXLEASE AND THE COUNTRY PARK'**

The committee received and considered correspondence from West Oxfordshire District Council, asking if the Town Council agreed to the use of several areas under its ownership to facilitate new cycle and footpath connectivity from the Witney East Development at Cogges.

Members welcomed this request and discussed the merits of each proposed area while offering several further suggestions for consideration.

RECOMMENDED:

As an enthusiastic advocate of active travel, Witney Town Council supports the addition of better cycle and footpaths from the Witney East Development. It therefore agrees that they may cross land in its ownership, providing the costs are covered by the developer, and the following points are taken into consideration for each of the four areas consulted on;

1. Eton Close Play Area – the Town Council welcomes this proposal and asks that the path be kept near the housing side of the site to avoid infringement onto sports pitches and requests that it is a suitable width to allow shared foot and cycle use. The natural drainage in this area during the winter can be problematic so the Town Council also asks that the surface, while remaining similar to the existing Cogges network, is suitable and the best quality for this environment. The current gate system onto Eton Close would need to be re-modelled for continued access, safety and provide an opening for the cycle users.
2. Manor Road/Cogges Hill Road – the Town Council welcomes this suggestion and considers it to be a sensible continuation of the current connectivity to facilitate safer and greener travel.
3. Country Park – the Town Council supports a scheme across its land here and has lobbied for a controlled crossing at Farm Mill Lane, to facilitate onward travel to Henry Box School and the Leys for some time. The unlabelled dotted line on the proposal map would have less of an impact on the park itself and could also use the newly built bridge near to Farm Mill Lane.

The Town Council would also support a route further south, possibly across the disused railway bridge, to join up and take people to Witney Lake, Station Lane Industrial estates and supermarkets beyond.

4. Wadards Meadow/Oxlease Open Space – The Town Council's welcomes a route here as part of the wider active travel scheme and its preferred option would be to have a cycle/footpath along the existing southern side path from east to west, going around the corner along the tree line and joining the main cycle path behind Blake C of E Primary School, and on towards Cogges Manor Farm.
5. That these comments be passed to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee for agreement on behalf of the Council, and then forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council by way of response to the request.

P50 **CONSULTATION FROM OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - WITNEY ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME**

The Committee received and considered consultation documents from Oxfordshire County Council concerning an active travel corridor route between Tower Hill and Madley Park, Witney.

As enthusiastic supporters of active travel, members welcomed this report and were pleased that previous suggestions and lobbying on this issue had been heard.

Overall, the committee felt the plans could have been more wide-ranging but understood that these were limited, short term measures that had to be implemented relatively quickly due to funding timescales. The proposals encompassed a raft of modifications, including reduced speed limits, shared pavements, extra crossings and new cycle paths along the whole route which, it was agreed would improve safety and make a difference in this part of Witney.

The members discussed at length the varying sections of the corridor and provided comments on each area which forms part of the Council's response below.

RESOLVED:

1. That Witney Town Council welcomes this consultation on an active travel corridor from East to West Witney and acknowledges the timescales involved in implementing the measures. It would like to make the following observations concerning each section.

Tower Hill – Corn Street

The Town Council accepts the positive moves here overall and acknowledges that nothing will be perfect; it is regrettable but likely necessary to lose parking spaces to achieve the cycle lanes. The Town Council supports the measures to reduce traffic into Holloway Road, the addition of a controlled crossing near to Marlborough Lane, the 20mph scheme, the central line in the hope of making vehicle users drive safely, and the cycle and bus lane at the start of Corn Street. After discussion on the merits of the build outs and the way they contribute to pedestrian safety, it agreed that ultimately, there simply needs to be enough space for the scheme here to be successful and safe.

There may be some future merit in extending the one-way system in Corn Street and improving the crossings to assist cyclists at the five ways roundabout.

Corn Street – Langel Common

Witney Town Council supports the proposals in this section of the corridor and accepts they marginally improve what is currently in place. It would however ask that consideration is given to extending the 20mph zones on the approach to the crossing on Witan Way to improve safety and ask that the crossing itself is modified for cyclists, so they do not need to dismount. An improved long-term solution for travel from Witan Way to Corn Street would be welcomed.

Church Lane - Oxford Hill – Madley Park

The Town Council welcomes the inclusion of a toucan crossing at Oxford Hill, the upgrading of gravel tracks to laid foot/cycle paths and the increased lighting in certain stretches of this section.

Consideration should be given to a 20mph zone in the vicinity of King George's Field to Judd's Close as this stretch of road is well-used route for Wood Green School students. The route is likely to become used even further with the development in east Witney. There would also be some benefit in bringing the cycle crossing point to as near as possible to Church Lane it would almost be straight across the road. The Town Council also feels that priority for lighting needs to be by the allotment gardens, between the bridges for night-time security as the footpath away from buildings near the wooded area will not be as safe, even if lit.

2. That these comments be forwarded to Oxfordshire County Council in response to the Witney Active Travel Scheme Consultation.

P51 **OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION – VARIOUS ROADS (WITNEY) PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMIT & ACTIVE TRAVEL MEASURES**

The Committee received and considered consultation documents from Oxfordshire County Council proposing 20mph zones and active travel measures in Witney.

Members welcomed these proposals but noted some obvious absences in the scheme which would have been beneficial. The Committee did, however, understand that the additions were the roads most shared by vehicles and cyclists and the funds for the scheme had to be spent quickly. Members were also mindful that areas such as Bridge Street, Mill Street and Tower Hill were too narrow to have any major works carried out in a short time-frame available, but this should not deter more ambitious future plans. In conclusion it was agreed that vast swathes of the town, including the centre were included in the proposals, which was a large-scale change and improvement on what was already in place.

RESOLVED:

1. That Witney Town Council welcomes the proposals for 20mph speed limits and active travel measures by Oxfordshire County Council. It looks forward to seeing more ambitious plans as the project progresses and asks that further consideration is given to extending the 20mph speed limits into Oxford Hill and Witan Way. This would improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians in those areas and compliment the active travel, east to west corridor.
2. That these comments be forwarded to Oxfordshire County Council in response to the consultation.

Cllr A McMahon left the meeting at 7pm

P52 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning applications received from West Oxfordshire District Council.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the planning decisions and were interested in the decision for WTC/109/20 which appeared to have been refused due to its modern design, contrary to the Town Council's response.

P53 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning applications received from West Oxfordshire District Council.

RESOLVED:

That the comments, as per the attached schedule, be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council.

P54 **CONSULTATION FROM OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL– VARIOUS ROADS (CHERWELL & WEST) AND (OXFORD CITY) PROPOSED DISABLED PERSONS PARKING PLACES**

Members received and considered a consultation from Oxfordshire County Council on proposed disabled persons parking places at Ashcombe Close and Woodgreen, Witney.

RESOLVED:

That Witney Town Council welcomes and supports the proposed disabled persons parking places in Witney.

P55 **COMMUNICATION FROM OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - LOCAL CLIMATE INITIATIVES**

The Committee received and considered a communication from Oxfordshire County Council regarding local climate initiatives.

The Chair noted that Zero Carbon targets were broadly the same as the Town Councils, with a date of 2050 set for the whole of Oxfordshire. The committee discussed initiatives concerning the piloting of community, wind and solar power, as well as a county-wide policy on electric vehicle charging in public car parks. The committee agreed that the Town Council should be considering how best to work collaboratively with the County Council on achieving these aims, possibly allowing use of the car parks in the Council's estate in the future.

RESOLVED: that the communication from Oxfordshire County Council be noted.

P56 **COMMUNITY ORCHARD**

The committee received and considered the report of the Compliance & Environment Officer which was in response to a resident request for the planting of a Community Orchard.

Members agreed that since initial discussions on tree planting in 2019, the Town Council had developed a more measured approach to the positioning of new trees; land at the Country Park was no longer considered appropriate following consultation with the Wychwood Project. There was agreement that this idea should be explored further to determine available and appropriate Council-owned land and funding. Pieces of land at Farmers Close, Cogges and Park Road were suggested as possible locations and there was support from members that if pursued, it should be near to a school so children would be able to learn from the environment as these projects are more successful with involvement from the local community who effectively take ownership of it.

RECOMMENDED:

1. That Witney Town Council supports the provision of a Community Orchard in principle and asks that it be incorporated into the Town Councils Open Spaces Strategy discussions; and following the outcome of these,
2. That the project be referred to the Councils Stronger Communities Committee for consideration as a community initiative, paying particular attention to the siting of trees which is covered by that committee.

P57 **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO 48(A)**

RESOLVED:

That Standing Order 48 (a) be suspended to allow the meeting to continue as it had now passed two hours in length.

P58 **FLOODING**

The committee received a verbal update from the Chair who advised that the flooding which occurred in the town over the Christmas period had shown shortcomings in the response for those affected. The worst hit areas were Central, North and East Witney but surface water from other wards feed directly into the river catchment area, so it was an issue for the whole town.

There was discussion on what had caused the floods, with many facts unknown but climate change and development in the catchment areas had not helped. Members were also concerned that lessons had not been learned following the floods in 2007 and there needed to be a comprehensive report or public enquiry to establish the facts. If this was not forthcoming, the committee agreed that it should be requested by the Town Council.

Once a report was published the Town Council would be in a better position to see if there was anything else it could do or suggest in gaps, engineering or in lobbying the District Council and other authorities on measures and planning policy changes.

As a Town Council, without remit for flooding or water courses and as a consultee on planning applications only, it was difficult to envisage what else could practically be done to help alleviate flood risks other than by scrutinising applications, such as the Witney North development and others. There was agreement that future application observations, particularly in the affected areas should ask for mitigation from the loss of drainage land. The Committee also agreed that it should note strategic features that helped during the flooding and ensure thought is given to emergency vehicle access in the future.

Members also noted that an emergency planning response had been debated by the Stronger Communities Committee and this would help signpost residents in the future.

RESOLVED:

1. That Witney Town Council waits for the West Oxfordshire District Council report into flooding in Witney on 24th and 25th December 2020 before deciding on a practical strategy in relation to flooding; and in the meantime,

2. That Witney Town Council notes the loss of permeable drainage ground in future consultee planning application responses where it considers the need for surface water flooding mitigation is required; and,
3. That the Town Council considers practical local knowledge in relation to future planning applications, such as access for emergency services in the event of flooding; and,
4. That Witney Town Council recognises and notes the key features such as walls in flooded areas which may have helped alleviate its seriousness, and which should be protected from future development.

The meeting closed at: 8.15 pm

Chair

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Proposal : Single storey side extension and re roofing of garage.

Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the loss of permeable drainage and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

P63- 5 WTC/012/21 Plot Ref :-21/00101/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE

Applicant Name :- NEWPORT, MR AND MRS Date Received :- 19/01/2021

Location :- 112 THE CROFTS Date Returned :- 29/01/2021
THE CROFTS
WITNEY

Proposal : Erection of single and two storey rear extension.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

P63- 6 WTC/013/21 Plot Ref :-20/03530/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE

Applicant Name :- DYMOND, MR WES Date Received :- 19/01/2021

Location :- 19 HERON DRIVE Date Returned :- 29/01/2021
HERON DRIVE
WITNEY

Proposal : Single storey side extension

Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the loss of permeable drainage and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

P63- 7 WTC/014/21 Plot Ref :-20/03565/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE

Applicant Name :- DIZIKOWSKI, MR ADRIAN Date Received :- 19/01/2021

Location :- 21 COGGES HILL ROAD Date Returned :- 29/01/2021
COGGES HILL ROAD
WITNEY

Proposal : Two storey front extension.

Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application as a precedent would be set, which would dramatically alter the street scene. The loss of off private car park spaces would also result in on street parking in the road.

The Meeting closed at : 8.15pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

Held on Monday, 11 January 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor D Butterfield (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	L Duncan
	L Ashbourne	A Prosser
	T Ashby	R Smith
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	John Hickman	Operations & Estates Officer
Others:	0 members of the public.	

SP6 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for her absence was received from Cllr Gwatkin.

SP7 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

SP8 **MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2020. There were no matters arising.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

SP9 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

SP10 **CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Committee received a verbal report from the Leader of the Council. This item was a standing item on all committees. The Open Spaces Strategy report would hopefully be completed in April 2021.

The Town Clerk reminded members that there were some items held in abeyance, including the transfer of the Woodgreen football fields (the Council was waiting for the District Council on this), The Leys irrigation using grey water, changing rooms at Burwell and Quarry Road play area and also putting money aside for the replacement of the Splash park.

RESOLVED: that the verbal report from the Leader be noted and the Committee confirms its priorities for 2021/22, 2022/23 and beyond with the Committee's immediate/top priorities being:-

- a) Park Road Play Area – completing the legal work and aspiration to get the play area re-opened by Summer 2021;
- b) West Witney Sports Ground – to find a solution to providing changing rooms, toilets and other facilities – timescales dependant on FA Funding, but temporary solution required immediately;
- c) Skate Park – Ramp Up The Leys, community led fundraising;
- d) Open Spaces Strategy.

SP11 **OPERATIONAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer. Updating members on play areas, football, the bowls green and cricket square irrigation, third party events and the Henry Box field pitches.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

SP12 **LEYS SKATEPARK - UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered a verbal update on progress from the Chair. He had met with a company and had given them an idea of the budget and anticipated income from a fundraising campaign. He was expecting to get a quote back in a few weeks' time. He had also been in touch with some other companies.

The Town Clerk advised that when it came to actually going out to tender the Council would invite expressions of interest and the process would need to be advertised in line with its Financial Regulations and procurement rules.

Cllr Butterfield explained that the summer months would be the best time for the project to happen to minimise the issue with heavy trucks getting across The Leys. The Operations and Estates Officer commented that with the current skatepark, contractors had come in right at the bottom of the field near the depot and there had been no damage – although it had been a very dry summer. Ground protection boards could be hired if necessary.

The Chair reported that there were two young people who were very keen to fundraise and he anticipated reaching out to local businesses for sponsorship of the project to make up some funding. The Town Clerk advised that a proper fundraising campaign would be needed such as the one that had happened at Oxlease park. The Chair thought that he should wait for the quote before any more decisions on fundraising could be taken.

RESOLVED: that the verbal update from the Chair be noted.

SP13 OLD BOWLS BUILDING - THE LEYS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer. A request had been received from Witney Town Bowls Club for the Town Council to set a maintenance budget to keep the old bowls club in good structural repair. It was no longer used and it seemed that the request had been made on more of an aesthetic basis, as the bowls club no longer used the building.

The Town Council had used the building for storage but it was not in a very accessible location.

Members discussed the request and decided that as the Council was currently having an asbestos survey carried out on this building, a decision should be made after the survey results were presented. The Operations and Estates Officer expected this to be in quite quickly.

RESOLVED: that the Council waits for the results of the asbestos survey before considering the request from Witney Town Bowls Club to repair the old bowls pavilion and any alternative options.

SP14 BOWLS GREEN IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer. He advised that he was waiting on exact costs but he would like to see the Council take over the irrigation system before the start of the bowls season. Members discussed the report and agreed that this should go ahead.

RESOLVED: that the Council proceeds to take the bowls green irrigation systems into its control and responsibility, under the guidance of the Operations and Estates Officer.

SP15 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.

SP16 WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND

The Leader gave a verbal update on the meeting held with West Witney Sports and Social Club. Another meeting was scheduled for 15 February.

There followed a lengthy discussion about the initial meeting and on possible ways to move forward. It was clear to the Committee that some new temporary infrastructure was required whilst long term plans were in progress.

RESOLVED:- that the verbal update of the meeting be noted and:-

1. that the Committee reaffirms its previous delegation to Officers for the appointment of a contract administrator[surveyor/architect] to work with the Council in order to obtain the necessary professional advice needed to move this project forward;

2. that the Operations and Estates Officer sources temporary toilet facilities in the first instance – including at least one DDA compliant toilet, but assesses what the exact legal requirements are for the site and its usage;
3. that the Operations and Estates Officer obtains quotations for modular versions of 4 changing rooms (2 male and 2 female), a kitchen/social space;
4. that any procurement is carried out in line with the Council’s financial regulations.

The meeting closed at: 7.10 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 18 January 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor M Jones (Chair)

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

H21 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

H22 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

H23 **MINUTES**

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

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

H24 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

H25 **CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN**

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

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

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

All members agreed with these priorities.

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

H26 **OPERATIONAL REPORT**

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

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

H27 **ALLOTMENTS UPDATE**

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

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

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

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

H28 **CORN EXCHANGE WORKING PARTY MINUTES**

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

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

H29 **PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

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

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

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

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

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and: -

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

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

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

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

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

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

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and: -

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

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

H32 **TOWER HILL CEMETERY - VEHICULAR ACCESS**

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

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and: -

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

The meeting closed at: 6.46 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 25 January 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne J Aitman T Ashby	D Enright D Butterfield H Eaglestone
Officers:	Sharon Groth John Hickman Adam Clapton Polly Inness	Town Clerk Operations & Estates Officer Office Manager Communications & Events Officer
Others:	1 member of the public.	

SC33 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for her absence was received from Cllr Gwatkin.

SC34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

SC35 MINUTES

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2020.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

SC36 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned to receive public participation from Mr Eric Marshall who addressed members on thoughts for a collaborative community summer celebration in 2021 between the Town Council and the Music Festival.

Following his address, the Committee reconvened.

SC37 EVENTS REPORT

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.

Members discussed the proposal for a summer celebration by Witney Music Festival and were generally in favour of the event. The Committee heard that the licensing of Market Square could be an issue, so it was suggested that the Music Festival contact the County and District Councils at the earliest opportunity before proceeding.

There was some concern on the estimated cost of the event and whether this could or should be covered, wholly or in part by the Town Council. There were other sources of funding which the organisers should explore and financial assistance from the Council should be referred for further debate to the Policy, Governance and Finance committee, on the receipt of a grant application form.

The Committee received an update on the Covid-19 Hero Awards and heard that 45 applications had been received. Some applications had been received with no contact details for the nominee, while some were for people with no link to Witney. A roll call of Witney Hero awardees would be published on social media and the website and this may help with missing contact details. Members also agreed that heroes must have been from Witney or been heroic in Witney; letters of thanks should be issued in these cases encouraging those nominating to contact the person's employer or local town or parish council.

An event to celebrate The NHS Social Care and Frontline Workers Day was proposed for 5 July 2021. National suggestions for the event had been received but there was some concern these appeared to be along the lines of Remembrance Day and therefore detached from the key workers the celebration was aimed at. A low-key event, possibly involving videos of local key workers was discussed, with agreement that the Town Council should light up the Corn Exchange and fly the associated flag on the day.

The Communications and Events Officer advised that there had been no further communication on the Carnival for 2021 since the last update, but she asked if members would like some sort of presence if it did go ahead. The Committee felt the Town Council should take part if Covid-19 restrictions were lifted enough for it to take place. There was currently no theme, but this was an issue that could be re-visited in coming months.

The Committee discussed the proposal for a "Zero Waste Roadshow". Members agreed to invite the Youth Council and local eco-friendly organisations and companies such as Waste 0 and Witney Community Fridge to have stands. A budget of £1,000 had previously been agreed for this event but the Climate Biodiversity and Planning Committee had subsequently agreed £600 expenditure on a thermal imaging device to rent out to residents to look at the efficiency of their homes, so £400 remained specifically for the roadshow event.

Members discussed Car Free Day in September and the requirement for road closures. Market Square and High Street were already closed to vehicles and any road closures would involve a cost to the Council. There was an expectation that the Covid road closures would still be in place. The roads were not currently closed to buses but if car free was to be encouraged then bus use should be encouraged so it would be preferable not to close the roads to buses.

RECOMMENDED: that the public participation and report be noted and:

1. that the Council is generally in favour of a Music Festival community event and supports it in principle;

2. that the organisers complete a grant funding application to be completed and submitted to the Council for consideration by the Policy & Governance Committee on 22 March 2021;
3. that the organisers be flexible on the date of the event due to the pandemic as the event must be safe for the public;
4. that the organisers speak to the District Council regarding licensing and capacity, market licensing, and any restrictions;
5. that the organisers feedback to Town Council the responses from the District Council;
6. that the organisers look at what specific items the Town Council could pay for/sponsor as opposed to making a general donation towards the event;
7. that regarding Witney Covid Heroes, applications are only considered for Witney residents and those wishing to nominate people outside the parish be advised to contact the relevant Parish Clerk or nominee's employer;
8. that the Council supports in principle the NHS Social Care and Frontline Workers Day on a small scale so as not to increase transmission of Covid-19 – this would include the lighting up of the Corn Exchange, a flag raising, and a piece on local radio. A video would be made of key workers;
9. that an NHS and Frontline Workers Flag be purchased at a cost of £139.41, the size to be determined by officers;
10. that if the Carnival goes ahead in 2021, the Council has a presence;
11. that a Zero Waste Roadshow be held on Zero Waste week (7 – 10 September 2021);
12. that a Car Free Day is held as per last year, but road closures not applied for subject to Covid-19 road closures still being in place;
13. that the Communications and Events Officer contacts the Windrush Bike Project and Cycling Without Age be invited to participate in car free day.

SC38 CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Committee discussed the aims of the Council's Corporate Strategic Plan as discussed by the Task & Finish Group set up for this purpose.

Rebranding was discussed as only one logo design has been received. There was a capacity issue as it needed to be decided where the new logo will be placed e.g. website, vehicles, correspondence etc. This would be a larger project than originally envisaged.

RESOLVED: that the following proposals be approved and included in Corporate Strategic Plan:

- a) Rebranding;
- b) Christmas Lights Re-Tender, including fitting timers and more environmentally friendly solutions to meet the Council's Climate emergency objectives;

- c) Open Spaces Strategy, including the improvement to flora displays, roundabouts/in-bloom;
- d) Inclusion & Diversity Board.

SC39 **OPERATIONAL REPORT - PROGRESS ON IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

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

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and the tender to be put out for the Christmas Lights Contract to include two trees from Real Christmas Trees – for the duration of the contract.

SC40 **TREES UPDATE**

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

Recommendations had been received following a scheduled tree survey to fell two of the Council's trees and replace them with two new ones. The Operations & Estates Officer advised the committee that felling of trees was understandably never popular with residents so discussion could take place with the local Conservation Officer and Arboriculture Consultants, to see if severe reductions could be made to the trees which would enable them to be retained for now. Replanting of new trees could be done in Autumn 2021 with the aim to allow them to establish before any felling would need to be carried out on the older trees. Any new trees would be planted where they would not pose a future subsidence problem.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and that the Local Conservation Officer be asked for an opinion on what works could be carried out to trees without the need for felling and also for advice on suitable replacement trees should felling be required.

SC41 **STREET FURNITURE AND INFRASTRUCTURE - PLANTERS ON HIGH STREET**

The Town Council had been approached by the District Council to fund the planting and maintenance of a further eight planters to assist with the covid related road closures in the High Street. Members accepted that the Town Council had expertise in planting across the town, but with its limited budgets felt that clarity was needed as to whether the District Council had been given money from the government to make High Streets Covid secure, and if so, why the Town Council was being asked to fund this project which would cost in the region on £3,500 per annum. If clarity was provided and a suitable budget could be found, the committee was in support of the request.

The Office Manager raised a street infrastructure issue concerning the provision on new litter and dog waste bins on the Windrush Place development in West Witney. Officers were discussing the issue with the District Council, the allocation of bins here not being the responsibility of the Town Council.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted and:-

1. that the Committee agrees in principle to fund the planting and maintenance of a further eight planters subject to clarification from the District Council on Covid 19 funding;

2. that the Town Council budget be checked to ensure that funds are available for the planters.

SC42 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications and Events Officer, concerning delivery of the newsletter and the content of the Annual satisfaction survey.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and: -

1. that the quote from Push- Start to print and deliver the newsletter be accepted; in addition to the additional consultation questions regarding access at Tower Hill Cemetery
2. that for the Annual Residents Satisfaction Survey, there should not be a specific focus this year but more general questions should be asked, including topics such as the pandemic and what information residents found difficult to access.

SC43 COMMUNICATIONS IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION

The Committee was asked by the Town Clerk to discuss communications in emergency situations in order to consider if the Council should have a policy document. The Communications Officers suggested a Community Resilience page on the website signposting the public to various agencies and services. Members discussed what it should cover - adverse weather, flooding / sandbags, pandemic, fire, accidents, medical needs such as power to equipment, map of defibrillator locations were suggestions. The Committee was advised that the District Council was preparing a response document on the recent flooding.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the Communications Officer creates a Community Resilience page on the Town Council's website to signpost residents to information and assistance in emergency situations;
2. that better relations are fostered between the Town and District Council in this respect;
3. that the Town Clerk drafts a policy document and emergency plan for presentation to a future Policy, Governance and Finance Committee for adoption;
4. that the Committee wishes to thank members past and present for their assistance during the Christmas flooding.

SC44 RURAL/MARKET TOWN GROUP

The Committee received and considered correspondence received from the Rural Market Town Group inviting the town to become a member. Members were unsure exactly what the benefits would be but were in favour of accepting the free trial period until the end of July 2021 and asking a member of the group to address them to explain the benefits further.

RESOLVED: that the correspondence from the Rural Market Town Group regarding membership be noted and: -

1. the free trial be accepted;
2. that the Rural Market Town Network be invited to attend a meeting to explain the benefits of joining the organisation.

The meeting closed at: 7.32 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 1 February 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor L Ashbourne (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	A D Harvey
	O Collins	M Jones
	H Eaglestone	R Smith
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
Others:	0 members of the public.	

F59 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for her absence was received from Cllr Gwatkin.

F60 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Collins and Eaglestone declared an interest in agenda item 13, Property & Legal Matters, as they both sat on the Witney Town Hall Charity.

F61 MINUTES

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2020.

There were no matters arising.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

F62 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

F63 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:

Cheque No's	In the sum of:	Account
Cheque 101146, DDs and Standing Orders (October 2020)	£11,288.12	General CB 1
Cheques 32839—32883, DDs and Standing Orders (October 2020)	£134,574.56	Imprest CB 2
DD's and Standing Orders (November 2020)	£4,891.74	General CB 1
Cheques 32884-32918, DDs and Standing Orders (November 2020)	£106,009.78	Imprest CB 2
DD's and Standing Orders (December 2020)	£8,066.85	General CB 1
Cheques 32919-32949, DD's and Standing Orders (December 2020)	£131,233.79	Imprest CB 2

F64 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk, containing the recommendations from the spending committees.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and the recommendations of the spending committees as detailed in the report be approved.

F65 **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the Internal Audit Report and were pleased that no matters of concern had been raised.

RESOLVED: that the Internal Report be noted.

F66 **GRANTS AND SUBSIDISED LETTINGS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Democratic Services Officer, along with two grant applications; one from the Citizen's Advice West Oxfordshire and a second from Oxford Play Association. Correspondence in thanks of previous grant awards from Witney Mills Cricket Club and Volunteer Link Up were also received.

There was some discussion on the application from the Citizens Advice Bureau as it had applied for £1,000 but the Council had budgeted £2,000. Members agreed to award the organisation the budgeted amount in recognition of the work done in the Covid 19 pandemic and the possibility that it would need to help those being made redundant and those struggling this year. However, it should be made clear that although the grant is higher than requested, there should be no expectation of a certain funding for the following year.

With regard to the application received from Oxford Play Association the Town Clerk pointed out that the Stronger Communities Committee had in fact agreed to roll over the budget from the current year as the play day couldn't get ahead due to the pandemic.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and that:-

1. Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire be granted the sum of £2, 000; and this grant be awarded under Section 142(2a) of the Local Government Act 1972
2. that Oxford Play Association be granted the sum of £1, 000 [from the 2021/22 budget] for the Play Day scheduled for August; and this grant be awarded under the General Power of Competence.

F67 **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Democratic Services Officer concerning the Annual Town Meeting. With the country in lockdown and no definitive date for the lifting of restrictions members considered how to proceed. The Town Clerk confirmed that whilst last year guidance had been that the meeting did not have to be held, the Government had not set out any guidance for this year.

The Committee agreed that the planned date of 17 March was unrealistic for an in-person meeting and that it would be sensible to move the meeting as late as legally possible – the meeting had to be held by the end of May. The Committee would review exactly how the meeting would be held during the next cycle, in the hope of some clarity and Government guidance being issued.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and: -

1. that the scheduling of the Annual Town Meeting for 17 March 2021 is cancelled and this is advertised on social media;
2. that the Annual Town Meeting is provisionally scheduled for 26 May 2021 and that the Council consider the options for holding it during the next cycle of meetings.

F68 **CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

The Committee received and considered the draft calendar of meetings for 2021/22.

The Town Clerk advised notification had been received from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) that Government legislation to hold virtual meetings would not be extended beyond the 7th May 2021, at this point in time. Members felt the resumption of in-person meetings, given that some councillors and their family members may not have received a full vaccine by that time, was premature.

RESOLVED:

1. that the draft calendar of meetings as presented be approved.
2. That the Town Council writes to the Local MP asking that he presses the Government for an extension to legislation on virtual meetings.

F69 **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.

F70 **DEBTORS REPORT**

The Committee received and considered a report detailing the Council's debtors prepared by the Office Manager.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

F71 **PROPERTY AND LEGAL MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk on property matters which included matters relating to the Town Hall and Madley Park Hall leases, the use of the Council's estates in Witney East for cycling and footpath connectivity, and requests for financial assistance towards rental charges throughout the Covid-19 pandemic from the sports clubs occupying Town Council facilities as tenants

Members discussed each application for financial assistance individually, assessing how the operation of the sports clubs had been affected by the pandemic, and reviewed the financial information supplied.

The report also contained updates on wayleaves and easements, land at Park Road and allotments.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and: -

1. that the Council accepts the revised rent offered by its landlord the Witney Town Hall Charity for the Town Hall at £15,500 per annum back dated to April 2019;
2. that with regard to the Madley Park Hall lease, the Council agrees to negotiate a new lease up to 2023 on similar terms to the previous one, based on the advice of the Council's professional advisor;
3. that the Council supports the Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committee's recommendation that the District Council may use its land for footpath and cycle routes from the Witney East Development;
4. that Witney Town Bowls Club's request to defer its loan repayment for six months be agreed;

5. that Witney Mills Bowls Club be granted the financial support as detailed in its grant application;
6. that Witney Range Users' Committee be granted the financial support as detailed in its grant application;
7. that Witney Lawn tennis Club be granted funding as requested to cover the period that the courts have been closed as detailed in its grant application;
8. that West Witney Sports and Social Club be granted the financial support in respect of rental fees only which were due, as detailed in its grant application and equated to the period that the Club had to close due to Covid-19 but no further financial assistance at this stage.
9. that the Town Clerk reviews the 2021-22 fees and charges when the final budget is presented to the Council.

The Committee adjourned at 7.30pm in order to receive minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee and a verbal report of the meeting held earlier that evening. At this point the Democratic Services Officer and the Office Manager left the meeting

F72 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the confidential minutes of the meetings held on 30 November 2020, 20 January 2021 circulated prior to the meeting, and also a confidential verbal report of the meeting held earlier in the evening.

RESOLVED: that the confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee held on the 30 November 2020, 20 January 2021 and the confidential verbal report of the meeting held earlier in the evening be noted and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

The Policy, Governance and Finance Committee reconvened at 7.38pm.

The meeting closed at: 7.40 pm

Chair

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FULL COUNCIL

Date: 15th February 2021
Title: Mayor's Report
Contact Officer: Democratic Services Officer – Nichola Cayley

DECEMBER 2020 – FEBRUARY 2021

The role of mayor involves chairing the Town Council, sitting as an ex officio voting member on council committees, representing and promoting Witney, organizing key events in the town in partnership with others, raising funds for local charities, and supporting community activities which contribute to the life of the town and the objectives of the Witney Town Council. The Mayor is supported by the Deputy Mayor, whose attendance in place of or alongside the Mayor is noted in the report below. This is a regular report to each full council meeting, detailing the activities of the mayor since the last meeting.

SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

Woodgreen School Christmas Concert
Headteacher retirement assembly – The Batt School
Flood meeting for residents
Attended West Oxfordshire Youth Council
Attended Witney Beavers
Promoting Witney ALBS and delivering work packs
Military Briefing - grant application briefing

REPRESENTING and PROMOTING WITNEY

Interviewed on news & events in Witney by,
Witney Radio
Windrush Radio
BBC World Service

KEY EVENTS AND COUNCIL ACTIVITY

No key events for this period

RAISING FUNDS

Promoting fundraising for Homestart and Guideposts
Promoting Witney Baby Bank

Mayor's Charities 2020-21:

- Homestart
- Got2B
- Guideposts - Witney

Prepared by:

Cllrs Joy Aitman & Liz Duncan

Agenda Item 12

Vandalism 2021

Location	Item	When	Date/Time Reported	Reference	Cost if known
Lake	Life Buoys x 2	Prior to Friday 15 th January 21			£75 per Life Buoy + VAT
Newland Bus Shelter	Graffiti	Reported 9 th February 2021			To be ascertained

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Sent: 12 January 2021 11:08

Subject: Open letter to councillors from Chairman of NALC

Dear Clerks and Councillors,

Please see below an open letter from the Chairman of NALC, Cllr Sue Baxter to all town and parish councillors. I apologise if you have already received it directly from NALC.

Cllr Baxter outlines three pledges and is seeking commitment to making progress on them. I have highlighted the pledges. They are:

- **Rethink relations** – more respect, commit to training, Local Council Award Scheme, better links with principal authorities
- **Rethink ambitions**, work with your community to shape place, Climate Change
- **Rethink engagement**, encourage more people to be councillors and engage more with your community

All of them are eminently worthy but will require time and resources to progress successfully by your council and also by us as your County Association. Resources are limited and we all need to prioritise how they are used to best effect for our communities and for us in supporting our member councils. Food for thought in the new year.

Kind regards

Christine

County Officer



Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils
Town Hall, Market Place, Wallingford, OX10 0EG
Email – info@oalc.org.uk

Your query may be answered by looking at our website www.oalc.org.uk
Telephone – Christine Lalley, County Officer, working days Monday – Friday lunchtime
0774 694 3076

Lucy Dalby, Assistant County Officer, working days Monday, Tuesday afternoon and Thursday
afternoon
0751 936 7709

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From: National Association of Local Councils [<mailto:newsletter@nalc.gov.uk>]

Sent: 12 January 2021 09:30

Subject: 📧 OPEN LETTER TO ALL COUNCILLORS



Make a change to local communities

Looking back to my open letter just twelve months ago, no-one could have foreseen the coronavirus pandemic which has changed our lives and the country in so many ways since.

It was my contention then, that as the first tier of local government, England's 10,000 local (parish and town) councils can be at the centre of a movement of community change. That never before has it been so important for local councils to play our full part in this, to realise our potential to help bring the country and our communities back together after recent challenging years. And that we have a key role to play in the new decade ahead, we must be up for this challenge, and be ambitious for our communities.

Which is why I am immensely proud of how local councils mobilised so quickly to be at the forefront of the initial response to the coronavirus, [stepping up to support our communities](#) and play a vital role in the national effort to tackle the pandemic.

Co-ordinating emergency plans and volunteers to collect and deliver medicines and shopping. Acting as information hubs to provide guidance, advice and support from the

government and other agencies. Helping businesses including publicising their online services. Establishing emergency grant funds such as supporting food banks. Continuing to maintain our never more important green spaces. Holding remote meetings to keep local democracy going which has seen an increase in people attending and watching.

All this cements the already crucial role local councils play as a unit of solidarity and natural focus of community effort in building strong and resilient communities.

My contention, therefore, remains – but is even firmer, and even more resolute.

Yet while 2020 was an undoubtedly the year of the response, recent events mean right now and over the coming weeks and months, our response role must continue or in some cases be stepped back up.

I know many councils are already doing just this and I want to again thank and pay tribute to all councillors, staff and volunteers, plus colleagues at NALC and in county associations, for your efforts. You are real unsung superheroes of local democracy and our communities.

We have reason to be optimistic, however, as the roll-out of the vaccines gives hope that many aspects of our national and community life will soon return. Back albeit different, with new ways of working, a greater appreciation of our immediate locality and the many things we previously took for granted, which I am sure will stick. Better in so many ways.

But our resolutions for 2021 must also look beyond the response, this must also be a year for a reset, a year to rethink the change needed to support the recovery and focus on the rebuilding of our communities. I want to set three rethinks for the year ahead which challenge all of us through a series of pledges to take action on, as we build back stronger, better communities.

Rethink relations

Where local councils work well, this is in no small part down to relationships and partnerships. Good, positive and effective relations, both within and outside the council, are the keys to delivering for our people and places.

Most local councils are well run, with clerks and council staff working as a team with councillors to deliver their ambitions for the community. But all too often we hear about the negative impact behaviour can have, by clerks, councillors and residents. NALC remains committed to promoting and supporting good governance and the highest standards of conduct and behaviour in councils.

I pledge to work with county associations and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) on a civility project aimed at improving conduct and behaviour, as well as with the Local Government Association (LGA) on support and guidance. **I ask you to pledge to take part in training opportunities and the Local Council Award Scheme and consider the new national model code of conduct developed by the LGA which we have contributed to.**

Councils across all tiers are increasingly recognising the added value that greater partnership working brings to services and local people. Strong, enduring partnerships – not just with principal authorities but other agencies such as health, police and voluntary sector – ensure local councils can play their part in tackling the challenges our communities face.

I pledge to work with the LGA to encourage good relations between the tiers, share good practice and develop appropriate guidance. **I ask you to pledge to build positive links with your principal authority plus other partners and to ask yourself how you can help them.**

This awful crisis has demonstrated how important our sector is to local areas, and we will continue to make the case to the government and others that we should be at the heart of building back communities, further devolution and community empowerment. I am particularly keen for us to maintain a focus on forging good relations with Members of Parliament (MPs) and indeed parliament in general.

I pledge that NALC and county associations will be strong voices for the sector, that we will continue to promote [*A prospectus for ultra-localism*](#), speaking up for and championing local councils – your fantastic work as well as the issues you face – to government officials and ministers, political parties, the media and opinion formers. **I ask you to pledge to engage positively and regularly with your MP, tell them what you are doing, invite them to events, but ensure they too know the issues you face and take them up on your behalf. Only by**

doing this together, nationally and locally, will we ensure our sector gets the recognition and support it deserves.

Rethink ambitions

Our relevance as the first tier of local government rests firmly on supporting and improving our communities and being at the heart of local place-shaping. We should rightly be ambitious for our people and places.

This will be increasingly important as the country rebuilds following the pandemic and in tackling the existential threat posed by the climate emergency. Many of the best councils, of all sizes, in both urban as well as rural areas, are already addressing these issues. Such as through neighbourhood plans, supporting the local economy and high streets and town centres, setting up community businesses, working with others to develop climate action plans, promoting health and wellbeing, addressing loneliness and building dementia-friendly communities.

I pledge that NALC and county associations will encourage and support your ambitions, providing the tools you need to make a difference, building on our work to date on our big themes of [health and wellbeing](#), [climate change](#), and our recent guide on [community business](#). Sharing good practice will remain at the heart of what we do through our case study collections such as *Points of Light*, [LCR magazine](#), and our programme of online events aimed to enthuse and inspire you. Young people – who have been particularly impacted by the pandemic – is our next big theme and we will raise awareness of the work of local councils with and for young people. **I ask you to pledge to actively encourage your council to work with residents and your partners to ambitiously shape the future development of your place.** Making full use of the resources and powers you have, including attaining the general power of competence – a power of confidence and innovation – to make it easier for you to make the vital difference your community and the country needs. And to place young people's current and future needs firmly on your agenda.

Rethink engagement

Our 100,000 councillors are the closest democratic representatives to residents. They can

play a key role in restoring faith in democracy and confidence in how our country is governed and decisions which affect our lives. But we cannot simply rely on the ballot box every four years to deliver this.

Communities thrive when people get involved, give up their time and come together to take action on the issues they care about. The pandemic has provided a real boost to this community spirit and my big aspiration for the year ahead is for all councils to build on this newfound civic pride, to find ways to keep new volunteers motivated and actively involved in the wider life of their community as the pandemic recedes.

It is by local councils being ambitious and realising your potential that I am sure more people will come forward as they recognise and appreciate the difference local councils really can make.

I pledge through NALC's [Make a Change campaign](#) to work with county associations to promote local elections, encourage more people to stand, and provide resources and information to assist local councils. **I ask you to pledge to actively seek out and encourage more people to come forward to be a councillor.** If you know someone who cares about where they live, ask them to stand. Make sure your council's activities and processes attract a wide and diverse mix of people of all backgrounds and ages. Provide time and resources to publicise, support and encourage elections and see them as the lifeblood of your democratic credibility.

The best councils continuously communicate with residents of all ages and from all backgrounds; online, in print and in person. They regularly engage with and consult people on key issues such as budget decisions, help residents to get involved through volunteering, provide opportunities to come together through events, and support community hubs and village halls for activities and people to meet when rules allow.

I pledge that NALC, as well as county associations, will communicate regularly with you, providing the information you need to do your job and on what we are doing on your behalf, through our [website](#), social media channels, newsletters, bulletins, and opportunities to come together. **I ask you to pledge to ensure you are engaging and communicating effectively with your residents and to use the flexibility to hold remote meetings to connect people with your important work.**

I have never known a more challenging time for the first tier of local government. Yet it is a time so equally exciting and full of opportunity. A time where I know local councils will continue to be ambitious for our communities and make a change.

I pledge this to a year to help build back stronger, better communities, and I hope you will too.

S J Baxter.



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