

Full Council

Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 28th June, 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

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Main Hall, The Corn Exchange, Witney** 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.

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 14 June concerning Covid-19 Pandemic restrictions, numbers of the public will be limited, with priority given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda. The maximum number of attendees for the meeting is 26 (6 Members of the public). Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the Democratic and Legal Services Officer in advance to reserve a seat.

We will continue to observe social distancing and face masks must be worn at all times other than when speaking during the meeting.

For further information or clarification regarding the meeting contact the Democratic and Legal Services Officer at democracy@witneytown-tc.gov.uk Tel: 01993 226071

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 Simon Wright the Democratic & Legal Services Officer (democracy@witney-tc.gov.uk) **prior to the meeting**, stating the reason for absence.

To also consider special dispensation for Members unable to attend this in-person meeting, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

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 of the Annual Council Meeting** (Pages 7 - 14)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 4 May 2021 in accordance with Standing Order No. 18 including questions on the minutes as to the progress on 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 Oxfordshire County Councillors representing Witney Wards 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 & Sub-Committees**

To receive and NOTE the RESOLUTIONS in the minutes of the meetings held between 1 April and 22 June 2021, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein.

- a) Climate, Biodiversity & Planning - 20 April, 18 May and 8 June 2021 (Pages 15 - 44)
- b) Parks & Recreation Committee - 17 May 2021 (Pages 45 - 50)
- c) Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - 24 May 2021 (Pages 51 - 54)
- d) Stronger Communities Committee - 7 June 2021 (Pages 55 - 58)
- e) Policy, Governance & Finance - 14 June 2021 (Pages 59 - 62)
- f) Corn Exchange Working Party - 1 June (attached) & 22 June 2021 (to follow) (Pages 63 - 66)

8. **Appointment to Outside Bodies** (Pages 67 - 68)

To consider the report of the Democratic & Legal Services Officer seeking appointments to serve on the Lower Windrush Valley Project, RAF Brize Norton Local Consultation Group and Witney Traffic Advisory Committee.

9. Designation of the Responsible Financial Officer

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that every Local Authority in England and Wales should “make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their Officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs.”

Following the recent restructure of the Council’s staff, Mrs Tina Jardine was appointed to the role of Responsible Financial Officer and started employment on 24 May 2021. The Council is therefore requested to formally note that this appointment, subject to the usual terms and conditions of employment.

10. Future Meetings of the Council

- a) To consider the format of the forthcoming Council cycle of meetings given the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Members are reminded that virtual or hybrid meetings are not currently lawful. Options include:
 - Holding in-person meetings in the Corn Exchange Main Hall under social distancing measures;
 - Holding the next cycle of meetings as Advisory Committee meetings – ratification of recommendations to take place at the Full Council meeting on 2nd August, with accompanying urgent delegations to the Town Clerk as set out in the Annual Meeting of 4th May 2021 (Minute no. 227 refers).
- b) To consider special dispensation for members not to attend if in-person meetings take place. Written requests for dispensation are to be made to the Town Clerk.

11. Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 - Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21 (Pages 69 - 112)

Following the review by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee at its meeting on 14 June. To receive and consider the report of the Town Clerk to agree the Annual Governance statement along with the Final Internal Audit Report.

In line with The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 - To receive and consider the Annual Governance & Accountability Return – and formally agree and adopt.

To note the Unaudited Financial Statements for the year ending 31 March 2021.

12. Notice of Motion - Co-operative Councils Innovation Network (Pages 113 - 114)

To consider the following motion proposed by Cllr Rosa Bolger and seconded by Cllr Duncan Enright.

‘Witney Town Council notes the Co-operative Council’s Innovation Network, a network of local authorities committed to reforming the way they work through building an equal partnership with local people. The network is open to all UK councils regardless of political affiliation who can demonstrate innovation and a willingness to drive forward the cooperative council agenda.

Therefore Witney Town Council agrees to affiliate to the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network, associate membership being at a cost of £500 per year, for which a range of benefits are available.’

13. **Burford Experimental Traffic 7.5 Tonne Regulation Order**

To receive the recommendation of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee held on 8th June 2021, concerning support for this group and the future of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order on the 7.5tonne limit at Burford Bridge, based on the interim report:

1. That, Council be recommended to give the support of Witney Town Council to WIVTAG;
2. That, Oxfordshire County Council be recommended to remove the ETRO at the earliest opportunity and be encouraged to adhere to the Local Transport Plan to ensure the management of HGV movements on a county basis.

14. **Civic Announcements** (Pages 115 - 116)

To receive the report of the Mayor.

15. **Project Update** (Pages 117 - 120)

To receive and consider the report of the Project Officer.

16. **Position of Town Crier**

To consider continuing the current arrangement with the Town Crier, J Postlethwaite-Dixon for a further municipal year. (Minute no. 229, Full Council 27th July 2020 refers).

17. **Health and Safety**

To receive a verbal update.

18. **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.

19. **Correspondence**

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

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

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

21. **Sealing of Documents**

To authorise the sealing of documents arising from Council resolutions.

22. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To consider and if appropriate, to pass the following resolution:

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.

23. **Grounds Maintenance** (Pages 121 - 126)

To receive the confidential report of the Town Clerk.

24. **Adoption of Open Spaces Strategy**

To consider the adoption of the Open Spaces Strategy (previously circulated).



Town Clerk

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**ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING OF
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Tuesday, 4 May 2021

At 7.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne	V Gwatkin
	T Ashby	M Jones
	R Bolger	J King
	D Butterfield	A McMahon
	O Collins	A Prosser
	L Duncan	R Smith
	H Eaglestone	
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Simon Wright	Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	3 members of the public.	

219 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR 2021/22

The retiring Mayor, Cllr Aitman invited nominations for the position of Town Mayor for the ensuing municipal year. Cllr Aitman was nominated and was duly elected Mayor by the Council.

RESOLVED:

that Cllr Joy Aitman be elected Town Mayor for the ensuing municipal year.

The Town Clerk advised that the Declaration of Acceptance of Office would be signed following the meeting.

220 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR 2021/22

Cllr Aitman invited nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor for the ensuing municipal year. Cllr Duncan was nominated and elected by the Council.

RESOLVED:

that Cllr Liz Duncan be elected Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing municipal year.

The Town Clerk advised that the Declaration of Acceptance of Office would be signed following the meeting.

221 **ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL 2021/22**

The Chair invited nominations for the position of Leader of the Town Council. Cllr.Ashbourne was nominated and elected by the Council.

RESOLVED:

that Cllr Luci Ashbourne be elected as the Leader of the Town Council for the ensuing municipal year.

222 **ELECTION OF DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL 2021/22**

The Chair invited nominations for the Deputy Leader of the Council. Cllr Gwatkin was nominated and duly elected as Deputy Leader by the Council.

RESOLVED:

that Cllr Vicky Gwatkin be elected as Deputy Leader of the Council for the ensuing municipal year.

223 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. David Harvey and Dean Temple.

224 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

225 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 12 April 2021 were received and considered.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 12 April 2021 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

226 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

227 **FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL**

The Council received and considered the report of the Town Clerk outlining options for Council meetings as a consequence of the recent court decision that confirmed the cessation of 'virtual' meetings.

The Town Clerk highlighted that decision would be needed on the Open Space Strategy in due course and sought delegation to extend the current grounds contract for a further year to allow a decision to be made and options to be fully considered. In response to a query regarding timescales it was clarified that the strategy had just been received and it would be made available to members at the earliest opportunity ahead of the June Council meeting.

It was proposed and seconded that Option B in the report which recommended changing the current standing committees to advisory meetings that would then make recommendations to Council at the 28 June meeting. It was noted that this would allow virtual meetings to continue and delegations to the Town Clerk would facilitate urgent decisions if needed.

The timetable of meetings for 2021/2022 were proposed and seconded.

On being put to the vote the propositions were carried.

Resolved:

1. That, Committees of the Town Council become 'Advisory' Committees, still meet virtually per the scheduled calendar of meetings, and make Recommendations (not Resolutions) to full Council which will be ratified at the physical Council meeting scheduled for 28th June (if restrictions allow);
2. That, urgent decisions, could be enacted, under the delegations to the Town Clerk, if necessary;
3. That the timetable of meetings for 2021/2022 be agreed; and
4. Delegation be given to the Town Clerk to extend the current grounds contract for one year to allow the new Open Spaces Strategy to be considered.

228 APPOINTMENT OF ANY NEW COMMITTEES IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 30

Cllr. Gwatkin, as Chair of the Sport & Play Committee, proposed that the committee be retitled Parks & Recreation Committee as this better reflected their remit. The proposal was seconded.

Council noted that the Stronger Communities Committee resolved on 15 March 2021 [Minute no SC139 refers] to appoint a Task & Finish Group for the Queens Platinum Jubilee celebrations in 2022.

Resolved:

That, the Sport & Play Committee be renamed Parks & Recreation Committee.

229 REVIEW [OR REQUEST THE TOWN CLERK TO REVIEW] ANY OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES

There were no changes to the current Terms of Reference for Committees.

230 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO STANDING COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES, AND THE ELECTION OF CHAIRS

Members considered the appointment of standing committees, sub committees and working parties and proposed the following:

Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee

Cllr J Aitman	Cllr O Collins	Cllr L Duncan
Cllr V Gwatkin	Cllr M Jones	Cllr A McMahon
Cllr A Prosser	Cllr R Smith	

Chair of Committee Cllr R Smith

Parks and Recreation Committee

Cllr T Ashby	Cllr J Aitman	Cllr L Ashbourne
Cllr D Butterfield	Cllr L Duncan	Cllr D Enright
Cllr V Gwatkin	Cllr A McMahon	

Chair of Committee Cllr V Gwatkin

Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee

Cllr T Ashby	Cllr J Aitman	Cllr L Ashbourne
Cllr O Collins	Cllr L Duncan	Cllr V Gwatkin
Cllr M Jones	Cllr R Smith	

Chair of Committee Cllr M Jones

Stronger Communities Committee

Cllr J Aitman	Cllr L Ashbourne	Cllr R Bolger
Cllr D Butterfield	Cllr O Collins	Cllr H Eaglestone
Cllr V Gwatkin	Cllr A Prosser	

Chair of Committee Cllr O Collins

Policy, Governance & Finance Committee

Cllr J Aitman	Cllr L Ashbourne	Cllr O Collins
Cllr H Eaglestone	Cllr V Gwatkin	Cllr D Harvey
Cllr M Jones	Cllr R Smith	

Chair of Committee Cllr L Ashbourne

Personnel Sub-Committee

Cllr J Aitman	Cllr L Ashbourne	Cllr O Collins
Cllr V Gwatkin	Cllr M Jones	Cllr R Smith

Chair of Sub-Committee Cllr L Ashbourne

Corn Exchange Working Party

Cllr J Aitman	Cllr L Ashbourne	Cllr O Collins
Cllr L Duncan	Cllr D Harvey	Cllr J King

Chair of Working Party Cllr O Collins

Platinum Jubilee Working Party

Cllr. J Aitman	Cllr D Enright	Cllr M Jones
Cllr O Collins	Cllr H Eaglestone	Cllr D Harvey

RESOLVED:

That the membership of the standing committees, sub committees and working parties and their Chairs be agreed as detailed above.

231 **APPOINTMENT TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND EXTERNAL BODIES/OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

The Chair sought nominations for vacancies on three outside organisations all for a four-year term of office.

Resolved:

That the following appointments be made:

1. Witney Town Hall Charity – Cllr. Harry Eaglestone to June 2025
2. Witney Educational Foundation – Cllr. Liz Duncan to May 2025
3. Witney Town Charity – Cllr. Joy Aitman to June 2025

232 **WINDRUSH VALLEY TRAFFIC ACTION GROUP**

Consideration was given to a document from Witney Valley Traffic Action Group (WIVTAG) seeking support for their campaign regarding the impact on surrounding communities of the Burford Bridge 7.5t Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). It was noted that a presentation from WIVTAG had been received at the Traffic Advisory Committee.

During discussion Councillors acknowledged the impact on some of the parishes close to Burford of HGV movements. Members indicated they supported the aims of the group 'in principle. However in respect of Witney it was considered that it may be premature to offer support at this stage until data was available from Oxfordshire County Council on the impact of the TRO on HGV traffic in Witney.

Resolved:

That, Witney Town Council, whilst supporting the wider aims of the group, does not commit support at this stage until data on the trial traffic order has been considered and the impact, if any, on Witney has been established.

233 **AMENITY LAND SALE POLICY**

The recommendation of the Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committee regarding the introduction of a policy that would deny any requests from residents to purchase Town Council land to extend their household area.

Members supported the introduction of the policy and indicated that it would meet the Council's aim in respect of Climate Change and protecting the environment as areas of green space were important for biodiversity. It was also considered that the policy would provide clarity about the issue.

Resolved:

1. That Witney Town Council values all open spaces and amenity lands in its ownership across Witney. These areas, regardless of size or location contribute to the visible, recreational, and biodiverse landscape across the town. Grass areas in particular aid drainage and help mitigate against surface water flooding.
2. Therefore, the Town Council resolves to deny any requests from residents to purchase Town Council land, to extend their household area.

234 **BANKING ARRANGEMENTS**

The recommendation of the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee (Minute F155/PGF) from the meeting held on 22 March 2021 was received and considered.

Resolved:

1. that having formed the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee the Council agrees the Members be designated as authorised cheque signatories on the Council's banking mandates (currently Barclays Bank and CCLA). For the purposes of the minutes these are named as: Cllrs Luci Ashbourne, Joy Aitman, Owen Collins, Harry Eaglestone, Vicky Gwatkin, Anthony (David) Harvey, Mel Jones, and Ruth Smith.
2. that if necessary two Members be named from the above resolution be appointed to act on behalf of the Council in the absence of the Town Clerk/CEO should the need arise;
3. that the Town Clerk/CEO, Mrs Sharon Groth, be listed on all the Council's bank mandates – particularly the Barclays Bank General and Business Premium Account and able to deal with transfers between accounts as well as setting up direct debits; and
4. that having revised the Council's Financial Regulations and adopted at the Council meeting held on 12 April 2021, that the implementation of on-line banking with the Council's current banking provider, Barclays Bank Plc, be agreed.

235 **NALC - LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME**

The report of the Deputy Town Clerk seeking approval for the Town Council to apply for the NALC Local Council Award Scheme was received and considered.

Councillors expressed their support for applying and considered it would be beneficial for the Council.

Resolved:

1. that the report is noted;
2. that the Town Council resolves that it has the necessary documents, policies and procedures as set out above and publishes them online where appropriate in order to apply for an award; and
3. that the status is reviewed annually to confirm eligibility

236 **COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE REGISTER 2020/21**

A report showing Councillor attendance at meetings in 2020/2021 was received.

Resolved:

That, the Councillor Attendance Register 2020/2021 be noted.

237 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS & 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.

238 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting were received.

Resolved:

That, the confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 26 April 2021, and the recommendations contained therein, be approved.

The meeting closed at: 7.43 pm

Chair

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

Held on Tuesday, 20 April 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser	M Jones
	J Aitman	L Duncan (In place of L Ashbourne)
	V Gwatkin	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Angus Whitburn	Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer
	Claire Green	Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
Others:	None.	

P204 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs L Ashbourne, R Bolger and A McMahon.

P205 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared by members at the meeting.

P206 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of public present at the meeting.

P207 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.

P208 LAND PURCHASE REQUEST - 25 VANNER ROAD

The Committee received and considered a resident request to purchase land at the rear of 25 Vanner Road, Witney.

The request was to purchase land which was a mix of grass/shrubland and hardstanding and while members were understanding of the request, similar requests had already been declined in other areas. The Council had declared a climate emergency and wanted to see any green areas maintained for their green, biodiverse and aesthetic value.

All amenity land was created for a purpose, be it those listed above or simply for recreational value and the Council had no obligation to sell them as disappointing as this may be to residents. It was agreed that any request to purchase amenity land under the Town Council's ownership in the future should be denied for these reasons.

RESOLVED:

1. That the request by a resident to purchase land at the rear of 25 Vanner Road be declined for the reasons listed above.

RECOMMENDED:

2. That Witney Town Council values all open spaces and amenity lands in its ownership across Witney. These areas, regardless of size or location contribute to the visible, recreational, and biodiverse landscape across the town. Grass areas in particular aid drainage and help mitigate against surface water flooding.

Therefore, the Town Council resolves to deny any requests from residents to purchase Town- Council land, to extend their household area in the future.

P209 **APPLICATION FOR PREMISES LICENCE - TTD20 LTD, 33 STANLEY COURT, RICHARD JONES ROAD, WITNEY**

The Committee received and considered an application for a Premises Licence at TTD20 Ltd, 33 Stanley Court, Richard Jones Road, Witney.

Members were concerned at the prospect of 24-hour alcohol delivery and were disappointed that the information provided did not provide clarity on what the applicants business model was.

RESOLVED:

That Witney Town Council is concerned about 24-hour local deliveries and would suggest a condition is added to the licence on timings.

P210 **APPLICATION FOR PREMISES LICENCE - USA FRIED CHICKEN**

With the express permission of the Chair, the Committee received an additional premises licence application for U.S.A Fried Chicken, Corn Street, Witney.

RESOLVED:

That Witney Town Council has no objections to this application.

P211 **PLANNING APPEAL NOTIFICATION APP/D3125/D/21/3268933 - 21 COGGES HILL ROAD, WITNEY**

The Committee received notification of Planning Appeal APP/D3125/D/21/13268933 concerning 21 Cogges Hill Road, Witney.

RESOLVED:

That Planning Appeal Notification be noted.

P212 **PAVEMENT LICENCE - THE FLEECE, CHURCH GREEN, WITNEY**

The Committee received a pavement licence consultation concerning The Fleece, Church Green, Witney.

It was noted that due to the statutory District Council consultation period, the licence had been granted. Members were concerned about the extension of the outdoor seating area in front of a neighbouring property and were hopeful that the neighbours views had been sought during the consultation.

RESOLVED:

That the pavement licence application for The Fleece, Church Green be noted.

a) **PAVEMENT LICENCE CONSULTATIONS**

The Committee were advised by the Deputy Town Clerk that the District Council's seven-day consultation for Pavement Licence applications did not fit with the Town Council's three-weekly cycle of meetings, and an alternative method of consulting members should be sought.

To ensure the Town Council's responses would be heard members agreed that these consultations should be circulated by electronic means and a response formulated by Officers, in conjunction with the Chair.

RESOLVED:

That future Pavement Licence Consultations from West Oxfordshire District Council be circulated to Committee members by email. An official Town Council response being formulated by Officers, in conjunction with the Chair.

P213 **CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer, providing updates concerning the Lake & Country Park.

Members welcomed news that new signage, provided by the Lower Windrush Valley Project would be installed imminently and progress had been made on a vegetation survey of the Lake. The Committee agreed the recommendation from Facilitating Nature to use a grappling hook to help compile a species list of the vegetation.

There was further agreement on Rediscover Nature offering an additional activity to provide a temporary self-guided walk in the Country Park. Members were also made aware of a fairy door walk which had been created for children before Easter. Regrettably, the way these had been attached to trees could cause long-term harm; the creator had been asked to contact the Town Council in the hope officers could work with them in finding a more suitable way of running the activity.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report and verbal update by the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer be noted; and,
2. That the aquatics survey offer from Facilitating Nature for the South section of the Lake be agreed; and,
3. That Rediscover Nature be allowed to use the Lake & Country Park for self-guided walks on a temporary basis.

P214 CAR-FREE DAY 2021

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications and Community Engagement Officer regarding Car Free Day 2021.

The Council's Stronger Communities Committee had already agreed this event, but as the Committee most concerned with active travel, suggestions on what the event should comprise of were being sought.

Members noted that Car Free Day fell on a school day and it would be difficult to encourage parents not to use cars during the morning school run, the event could include activities for children at the end of the school day. These could include chalk pavement selfies as suggested by officers and others from external providers.

The Windrush Bike Project may be able to offer guided cycle rides from and to Market Square and the 1863 bar at the Corn Exchange and other businesses might want to be involved. Safe cycle routes to and from school could also be added to the Council's mobile phone App and promoted.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That as Car Free Day 2021 falls on a school day, that all activities aimed at children be scheduled for 14.00 – 17.00pm as they are leaving school; and,
3. That the activities planned during the day could include cycle tours (routes to and from schools), guided cycle rides and chalk activities; and,
4. That the Town Council takes the opportunity to promote no motor idling in Witney Town Centre and the Market Square.

P215 20'S PLENTY FOR OXFORDSHIRE

The Committee received a verbal update on the 20's Plenty for Oxfordshire campaign from the Chair, Cllr Smith and Cllr Duncan.

The proposed outcome of the campaign was to introduce a blanket 20mph speed limit across Oxfordshire on roads largely shared by cycles and cars – it would result in safer travel but also reduce emissions and improve air quality. So far introduction of 20mph limits had been piecemeal across towns and villages and had been mainly funded by parish and town Councils. Oxfordshire County Council, constrained by budgets had only offered limited support so far and might pay for some scoping and set up fees, but the majority of funds would need to be borne by the Town Council.

It was suggested the Town Council should write to the County Council, offering its support to the campaign and asking for consideration of 20mph limits included in the new east to west active travel corridor to be expanded.

Members agreed that information on costs for implementing a blanket 20mph scheme and details on speeding would be beneficial in progressing this issue if officers could source this information, any external assistance should also be utilised.

RESOLVED:

1. That Witney Town Council supports the 20's Plenty for Oxfordshire Campaign to reduce the speed limit to 20mph across Witney and Oxfordshire; and,
2. Writes to Oxfordshire County Council as the Highways Authority in May 2020 to advise of its support and to ask that monitoring and review takes place on the 20mph schemes incorporated as part of the East to West Active Travel Corridor, adding further comments that additional areas should have been included in this scheme.

P216 NO MOW MAY

The Committee discussed the merits of supporting Plantlife's 'No Mow May' Campaign to promote wildflower planting and sustain biodiversity.

Members agreed that the Town Council should support the campaign through its Social Media outlets, protecting and enhancing biodiversity was a key aim of the Committee and the Council. There was hope that further action could be taken this summer and planned for future years.

Officers advised that many of the town's verges were under the remit of the County Council and a wildflower planting project in those areas appeared to have stalled. However, the Town Council's Grounds contractors had identified several grass banks which were difficult to cut and were prepared to plant these wildflowers. Members agreed this would be advantageous and timely in terms of promoting this campaign, officers advising signs could be placed to further promote No Mow May.

The Committee went further and asked if a further category in the Britain in Bloom could be entered with these wild editions. A new competition, 'Wild Witney' was recommended to encourage residents to leave areas of their lawns/gardens uncut to promote wildflowers and resurgence of insect and bee populations. A prize could be given for the best wild area along the lines of previous Christmas lights competitions.

RESOLVED:

1. That Witney Town Council supports and promotes Plantlife's 'No Mow May' campaign through its Social Media Outlets; and,
2. That Witney Town Council does not mow the following areas of grassland throughout May and the summer, with the Grounds Contractors sowing wildflower seeds in these areas: Quarry Road, Thorney Leys, Manor Road and Tower Hill Cemetery; and,
3. That signs are displayed in these areas to highlight the 'No Mow May Campaign'; and,
4. That further wildflower planting is considered as part of the Town Council's Open Spaces Strategy.

RECOMMENDED:

5. That Witney Town Council further promotes wildflower planting by creating a 'Wild Witney' competition for Witney residents. This would be for households to leave an area in the garden for wildflower planting; and,
6. That officers research the possibility of entering further categories of the Britain in Bloom competition, covering wildflower planting.

P217 **WALK TO SCHOOL WEEK**

The Committee were advised of the Living Streets, Walk to School Week campaign, 17 – 21 May 2021.

The Town Council was an enthusiastic supporter of active travel and members agreed that the scheme should be promoted on the Town Council's media outlets to make residents aware of it.

RESOLVED:

That Witney Town Council supports Walk to School Week in May 2021 by promotion through its Social Media outlets.

a) **SCHOOL STREETS**

The Committee received a briefing note from Oxfordshire County Council concerning Phase 1b of the School Streets Initiative.

Members were pleased to see that proposals included School Streets for Henry Box and Tower Hill Schools and looked forward to them developing in the coming months.

RESOLVED:

That the briefing note received from Oxfordshire County Council concerning phase 1b of the School Streets Project be noted.

P218 **WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL - CLIMATE ACTION UPDATE**

The Committee was advised that West Oxfordshire District Council had issued a Climate Bulletin which contained latest news and promoted climate initiatives.

Members were encouraged to sign up to this e-bulletin through the Council's website and think about how and where the Town Council could work more with the District Council in bringing about changes in the town.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Climate bulletin outlining West Oxfordshire District Council's climate initiatives be noted; and,
2. That members sign up to receive the bulletin and think about how the Town Council could work more collaboratively to achieve aims of both authorities.

The meeting closed at: 7.44 pm

Chair

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Planning Minutes - 20 April 2021

P207- 1	WTC/046/21	Plot Ref :-21/00628/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	30/03/2021
	Location :-	30 PINE RISE PINE RISE WITNEY	Date Returned :-	21/04/2021
	Proposal :	Loft conversion to form bedroom and bathroom including box dormer with flat rooflight and 2 velux rooflights into roof slopes (rear and side).		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections to this application.		

P207- 2	WTC/047/21	Plot Ref :-21/00705/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	01/04/2021
	Location :-	1 CURBRIDGE ROAD CURBRIDGE ROAD WITNEY	Date Returned :-	21/04/2021
	Proposal :	Erection of a two storey rear extension and porch to side elevation. Insertion of a front dormer window and the addition of a pitched roof to the existing rear dormer wiondow.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections to this application		

P207- 3	WTC/048/21	Plot Ref :-21/01110/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-		01/04/2021
Location :- 43A THE CROFTS THE CROFTS WITNEY		Date Returned :-		21/04/2021
<p>Proposal : Removal of existing detached garage and erection of a single storey side extension.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The Town Council notes the response from the Highways Authority, it is aware of parking issues in this area, so would ask that consideration be given to Local Plan Policy T4.</p>				

P207- 4	WTC/049/21	Plot Ref :-21/00697/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	06/04/2021
	Location :-	21-23 HIGH STREET HIGH STREET WITNEY	Date Returned :-	21/04/2021
	Proposal :	Reroofing of pitched roof.		

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

Held on Tuesday, 18 May 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser	V Gwatkin
	J Aitman	M Jones
	O Collins	A McMahon
	L Duncan	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Claire Green	Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
Others:	no members of the public.	

As there was no legislation in place for the Town Council to hold virtual meetings, and because of the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, the Parks & Recreation Committee formed virtually as an Advisory Committee. Any recommendations outside of the current work's programme, budget or policy would require ratification at the Full Council meeting held on 28th June 2021.

P253 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

P254 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest from Members.

P255 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Committee.

It was proposed and seconded that Cllr Andrew Prosser be elected Vice-Chair. There being no other nominations it was:

Resolved:

That, Councillor Andrew Prosser be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2021/2022 municipal year.

P256 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

P257 **WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Committee received the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee meeting held on 23 March 2021.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Witney Traffic advisory Committee meeting held on 23rd March 2021 be noted.

P258 **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.

P259 **LICENSING APPLICATION W/21/00258/PRMA - BAR IN THE BOX, 12 STANLEY COURT, RICHARD JONES ROAD, WITNEY**

The Committee received and considered an application for a premises licence at 12 Stanley Court, Richard Jones Road, Witney.

In considering the application the committee expressed the view that the application form was unclear in respect of the business model proposed, hours that alcohol would be available and lack of clarity around local deliveries.

The Committee suggested that this should be communicated to the District Council and that concerns around when alcohol would be available and age verification should be raised for consideration.

At the suggestion of officers it was agreed that contact should be made with West Oxfordshire District Council to see if the relevant officers could provide some information about the licensing process and issues that can be considered by the licensing authority.

Resolved:

The Committee, having considered the application, were unable to make an informed decision as the information contained in the application form did not fully explain the extent of the application.

The Committee raised a number of concerns or points of clarification as follows:

- A) Does the retailer website require age verification to enter the website?
- B) That the licensed hours may include late night deliveries, members were unclear what the timings of doorstep deliveries could be and if this was uncontrolled could be potentially disruptive. The form does not make it clear whether deliveries will be via

a national daytime type of courier or is this a Deliveroo style 'anytime of night' local service. The Committee requests that the licensing authority takes the nature of the service and operating hours into account when considering appropriate conditions for a licence; and

- C) Under section 18 of the form, point 'e', it states 'Children under the age of 16 will not have access to the premises without adult supervision'. Members questioned whether this should be that anybody under the age of 18 should not have access to the premises.

P260 PLANNING APPEAL - APP/D3125/D/21/3269962 - 85 BARRINGTON CLOSE, WITNEY

Notification of a planning appeal at 85 Barrington Close, Witney was received.

Resolved:

That the planning appeal notification for 85 Barrington Close, Witney be noted.

P261 SALT CROSS GARDEN VILLAGE AREA ACTION PLAN EXAMINATION

The Committee received notification from West Oxfordshire District Council on the Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP) Examination.

Members noted that the deadline for addressing the Inspector had passed but there was still an opportunity to make a written submission. It was clarified that any input had to reflect anything that had been previously submitted.

The Committee considered that transport issues such as improvements to the A40, protection of a rail corridor and improvements at Hanborough Station were important. In addition, the changes in political control at Oxfordshire County Council needed to be borne in mind and as the new Transport Portfolio Holder was a Witney Councillor then contact should be made with them.

After further discussion it was agreed that the Chair and Vice Chair, in consultation with Officers, be delegated to consider what further written representations, if any, should be submitted to the inquiry by the deadline.

Resolved:

That, delegation be given to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, in consultation with officers, to consider if the Town Council wishes to make any further written submissions to the Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP) Examination.

P262 OXFORDSHIRE PLAN 2050

The Committee received a copy of the response submitted by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

Resolved:

That, the response by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) on The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 be noted.

The meeting closed at: 7.30 pm

Chair

Witney Town Council
Planning Minutes - 18 May 2021

P258 Planning Applications

P258- 1	WTC/052/21	Plot Ref :-21/00825/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	19/04/2021
	Location :-	2 - 4 MARKET SQUARE MARKET SQUARE WITNEY	Date Returned :-	19/05/2021
	Proposal :	Alterations to include change of use of ground floor and part first floor from restaurant to public house with remainder of first floor and second floor to be used as separate shared office space. Installation of fan unit to existing roof to serve proposed pizza oven		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P258- 2	WTC/053/21	Plot Ref :-21/00826/LBC	Type :-	LISTED BUI
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	19/04/2021
	Location :-	2 - 4 MARKET SQUARE MARKET SQUARE WITNEY	Date Returned :-	19/05/2021
	Proposal :	Internal and external alterations to convert the ground floor and part first floor from restaurant to public house with remainder of first floor and second floor to be used as separate shared office space with changes to internal layout and installation of fan unit to existing roof to serve proposed pizza oven.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P258- 3	WTC/055/21	Plot Ref :-21/00890/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	26/04/2021
	Location :-	85 COLWELL DRIVE COLWELL DRIVE WITNEY	Date Returned :-	19/05/2021
	Proposal :	Conversion of an existing storm porch to make an enclosed porch and to convert the garage behind into a small shed/bike store, a utility room, downstairs toilet and extra room/office.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P258- 5	WTC/058/21	Plot Ref :-21/00652/S73	Type :-	DISCHARGE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	28/04/2021
	Location :-	LAND AT WEST WITNEY WEST WITNEY WITNEY	Date Returned :-	20/05/2021
	Proposal :	Removal of condition 5 of planning permission 17/01238/RES so that no additional tree planting is required in gardens to plots 62-72 of phase D.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council consider the planting of trees on new development to be of high importance and view tree planting as a critical measure against climate change, and of great value to local bio-diversity. Whilst there is no approved planting plan to refer to, the Council would appreciate that the Developer provide an overview of the number, specimen type and age of trees that would have been proposed for plots 62-72 and that these trees or this tree planting is offered to a Community Group operating within the West Witney development, or if such groups are not yet established that the trees or tree planting is offered to a Community Group within Witney.		

P258- 7	WTC/060/21	Plot Ref :-21/00974/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	10/05/2021
	Location :-	ABINGDON & WITNEY COLLEGE HOLLOWAY ROAD WITNEY	Date Returned :-	20/05/2021
	Proposal :	Refurbishment of the Buttercross Building including works to walls, roof and windows. Addition of new external fire escape stairways.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P258- 8	WTC/061/21	Plot Ref :-21/01315/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	10/05/2021
	Location :-	9 APPLEGARTH COURT APPLEGARTH COURT WITNEY	Date Returned :-	20/05/2021
	Proposal :	Single storey rear extension.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P258- 9	WTC/062/21	Plot Ref :-21/01143/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	07/05/2021
	Location :-	22 COTSWOLD MEADOW COTSWOLD MEADOW WITNEY	Date Returned :-	20/05/2021
	Proposal :	Part single-storey / part two-storey rear 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.		

P258- 10	WTC/063/21	Plot Ref :-21/01261/FUL	Type :-	FULL
Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-		11/05/2021
Location :-		Date Returned :-		18/05/2021
UNIT 32 BRIDGE STREET MILLS IN BRIDGE STREET MILLS IND EST WITNEY				
Proposal : Erection of five apartments at second floor level with associated stair and lift access, demolition of existing metal roof structure.				
Observations : Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of the proposal to provide accommodation in the form of flats. The proposal would be an improvement to local visual amenity and The Council support the proposed design and materials. The Council would like the following observations to be noted:				
a) The living space for each unit appears to be limited. It is unclear whether the calculated floor space includes the use of the terrace. The application should be reviewed against the nationally described space standard.				
b) That due consideration be given to the impacts of neighbour amenity, especially soundproofing. Noise levels and business operations with late opening times could prove disruptive in a proposed development with mixed uses.				
c) That an assessment on the ground floor area, including the provision of adequate parking spaces, safe and secure cycle storage and flood risk in terms of the elevator be undertaken.				

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

Held on Tuesday, 8 June 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser	L Duncan
	J Aitman	V Gwatkin
	O Collins	M Jones
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Claire Green	Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
	Simon Wright	Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	1 member of the public.	

As there was no legislation in place for the Town Council to hold virtual meetings, and because of the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, the Parks & Recreation Committee formed virtually as an Advisory Committee. Any recommendations outside of the current work's programme, budget or policy would require ratification at the Full Council meeting held on 28th June 2021.

P280 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

P281 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr M Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest for agenda item 5.13 as the applicant was known to her.

Cllrs J Aitman, V Gwatkin and R Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5.11 & 5.12 as the applicant was known to them.

P282 TO ADOPT AND SIGN AS CORRECT THE MINUTES OF 30 MARCH, 20 APRIL & 18 MAY 2021

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 30 March, 20 April & 18 May 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

P283 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 30 MARCH, 20 APRIL & 18 MAY 2021.

Min No. P261 Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan Examination

An update was requested as to whether a further written submission had been made. The Chair undertook to look into the issue and advise accordingly.

P284 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

Mr M McCappin addressed the Committee on Agenda Item 11, Burford Experimental Traffic 7.5T Regulation Order.

The Committee reconvened following public participation.

P285 **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.

P285a **20/03281/FUL - 87 CORN STREET - AMENDED PLANS**

The Committee received a report seeking comments on amended plans for an application at 87 Corn Street, Witney.

Resolved:

That, Witney Town Council welcome the improvements to cycle storage provision and electric vehicle charging points reflected in the revised plans. While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, it notes neighbour concern with regard to overlooking and ask that Officers consider any mitigation measures that might be implemented to protect residential amenity for neighbouring properties.

P286 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

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

Resolved:

That the list circulated advising of District Council planning decisions be noted.

P287 **LICENSING APPLICATION W/21/00319/PRMA - FREEBRIGHTS LTD T/A HUFFKINS, UNIT 2, PARKSIDE, AVENUE TWO, WITNEY, OX28 4YX**

The Committee received and considered an application for a Premises Licence at Unit 2, Parkside, Avenue Two, Witney.

It was noted that the application sought to allow the applicant to add alcohol drinks to hampers they provided online.

Resolved:

That, no objection be raised in respect of Licensing Application W/21/00319/PRMA

P288 **LICENSING APPLICATION W/21/00322/PRMA - PART AND PARCEL (DODO PUBS LTD), 2 - 4 MARKET SQUARE, WITNEY, OX28 6AN**

The Committee received and considered an application for a premises licence at 2-4 Market Square, Witney.

The Committee considered the hours to accord with those expected for a licensed premises.

Resolved:

That, no objection be raised in respect of Licensing Application W/21/00322/PRMA

P289 **PLANNING APPEAL - APP/D3125/W/21/3274682 - 2 SPRINGFIELD PARK, WITNEY**

The Committee received details of a planning appeal submitted in respect of 2 Springfield Road, Witney.

Resolved:

That the planning appeal notification for 2 Springfield Park, Witney be noted.

P290 **WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTRES - CONSULTATION**

The Committee received details of a consultation regarding the closure of Community Recycling Centres in Witney and other parts of the district.

Members expressed their disappointment at the closures and considered the consultation process to have been inadequate with both statutory organisations and the public and that the response deadline was very short. The Committee questioned whether the areas where the facilities were withdrawn could be replaced with cycle parking or amenity land.

A member highlighted discussions at the District Council Scrutiny Committee and suggested the consultation did not reflect the requests made at that meeting.

Members were advised that there was no budgetary provision available for the Town Council to take on the operation of the service.

The Committee concluded, whilst acknowledging the issues with flytipping and the service not being statutory, that an objection should be lodged with the District Council.

Resolved:

1. That, Witney Town Council considers the consultation process on this matter to be inadequate;

2. That, the District Council be requested to ensure an environmental impact assessment is carried out and that the proposals are publicly communicated with a full consultation process amongst local residents. before any further decisions are made.

P291 **BURFORD EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC 7.5 TONNE REGULATION ORDER**

The Committee received an interim monitoring report showing traffic data collected as part of the monitoring of the scheme.

Members noted the apparent impact on Witney of increased HGV movements with three of the four largest increases being in the town. It was suggested that, whilst understanding the concerns in Burford, there needed to be a countywide approach in accordance with the Local Transport Plan to ensure that HGV movements were equitably distributed.

Concern was raised regarding the cumulative impact on the existing Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Witney. It was noted that the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee had considered the matter earlier in the day and had supported the immediate removal of the ETRO. Members agreed that this would be beneficial.

It was noted that whilst the lorry size was smaller the number of HGV's going through Burford had not actually reduced significantly. Discussion ensued regarding the exemptions for hauliers close to Burford and the advantage it gave them over other operators.

After further discussion it was:

Resolved:

1. That, Council be recommended to give the support of Witney Town Council to WIVTAG;
2. That, Oxfordshire County Council be recommended to remove the ETRO at the earliest opportunity and be encouraged to adhere to the Local Transport Plan to ensure the management of HGV movements on a county basis; and
3. That, concerns be raised about the impact of additional HGV movements on the Air Quality Management Area and road safety in Bridge Street, Witney.

P292 **EXPERIMENTAL TRO - VARIOUS ROADS (WITNEY) - EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL STREETS SCHEMES (PHASE 1B)**

The Committee received details of the recently introduced School Street Scheme in Witney.

Resolved:

That, the implementation of the Experimental School Streets Scheme be noted.

The meeting closed at: 8.45 pm

Chair

Planning Minutes - 8 June 2021

P285

P285- 1	WTC/070/21	Plot Ref :-21/00990/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	12/05/21
	Location :-	44 BROADWAY CLOSE BROADWAY CLOSE	Date Returned :-	09/06/21
	Proposal :	New small conservatory.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P285- 2	WTC/071/21	Plot Ref :-21/01285/FUL	Type :-	FULL
Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-		13/05/21
Location :-		Date Returned :-		09/06/21
PHASE 3B LAND AT WEST WITNEY DOWNS ROAD WITNEY				
Proposal : A residential development comprising 34 dwellings (use Class C3). New road infrastructure, landscaping and other associated infrastructure works.				
Observations : Whilst Witney Town Council do not object to the principle of development outlined in Phase B, members hold strong views with regard to practical matters and ask that this Phase B take a more considered approach for the success of the development. Earlier phases are sub-optimal and members would like to make representations that can improve quality and that these issues be controlled by 'prior to first occupation' conditions.				
Connectivity and application of West Oxfordshire Local Plan Policies T1 and T3 - Connectivity through and to the site should ensure that residents can easily access footpaths, cycle routes and bus stops, facilitating sustainable travel and sensible routes for accessing Downs Road, Range Road and through the estate to Curbridge Road. That developers take the opportunity to work with the relevant authorities to implement a 20mph speed limit through the estate. That adequate cycle storage be provided in line with Oxfordshire County Council recommendations.				
Thames Water Consultee Comments - The LPA should refuse to give consent until the proper consultations are sought and that Thames Water be given adequate time to ensure that Foul Water and Surface Water infrastructure needs can be adequately met. A holding response by way of condition is not an acceptable approach.				
Affordable Housing Type and Mix - Members seek assurance that the proposal is compliant with West Oxfordshire Plan Policy H3 with regard to affordable housing provision. Local Plan documents indicate a proportion of 35% of the affordable units be three and four bedroom homes, members ask that this allocation of much needed family size homes is met.				
Section 106 Obligations - Members note that a community centre or community hall for the West Witney development has not been provided for and ask that S106 funding be considered for this community resource.				

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.

P285- 9	WTC/078/21	Plot Ref :-21/01151/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	19/05/21
	Location :- 2 COTSWOLD MEADOW		Date Returned :-	09/06/21
	COTSWOLD MEADOW			
	Proposal :	Erection of first floor extension above existing garage.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P285- 10	WTC/079/21	Plot Ref :-21/01552/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	19/05/21
	Location :- 59 SNOWSHILL DRIVE		Date Returned :-	09/06/21
	SNOWSHILL DRIVE			
	Proposal :	Remove conservatory to rear elevation, erection of single storey extension to rear.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P285- 11	WTC/080/21	Plot Ref :-21/01612/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	20/05/21
	Location :- 35 - 37 WOODGREEN		Date Returned :-	09/06/21
	WOODGREEN			
	Proposal :	Single storey rear extension.		
	Observations :	While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, members have shown concern for the scale of the proposed development in contrast to the host dwelling in its present form. Members ask that Officers ensure compliance with the General Principles of policy OS2 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 in terms of the proposed development being of a proportionate and appropriate scale to its context and form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development.		
		Witney Town Council 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.		
		A discussion was had about the amount of glazing in the proposal, members seek assurance that the building materials are appropriate for development in the Conservation Area and appropriate to the Listed Building status of the host dwelling.		

P285- 12	WTC/081/21	Plot Ref :-21/01613/LBC	Type :-	LISTED BUI
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	20/05/21
	Location :- 35 - 37 WOODGREEN		Date Returned :-	09/06/21
	WOODGREEN			
	Proposal :	Single storey rear extension.		
	Observations :	While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, members have shown concern for the scale of the proposed development in contrast to the		

host dwelling in its present form. Members ask that Officers ensure compliance with the General Principles of policy OS2 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 in terms of the proposed development being of a proportionate and appropriate scale to its context and form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development.

Witney Town Council 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.

A discussion was had about the amount of glazing in the proposal, members seek assurance that the building materials are appropriate for development in the Conservation Area and appropriate to the Listed Building status of the host dwelling.

P285- 13	WTC/082/21	Plot Ref :-21/01536/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	20/05/21
	Location :- 60 COLWELL DRIVE		Date Returned :-	09/06/21
	COLWELL DRIVE			
	Proposal :	Single storey front extension. Single storey rear extension.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P285- 14	WTC/083/21	Plot Ref :-21/01349/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	21/05/21
	Location :- 27 NEW YATT ROAD		Date Returned :-	09/06/21
	NEW YATT ROAD			
	Proposal :	Alterations, extension and conservatory to the existing dwelling.		
	Observations :	While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, members have shown concern for the scale of the proposed development in contrast to the host dwelling in its present form. Members ask that Officers ensure compliance with the General Principles of policy OS2 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 in terms of the proposed development being of a proportionate and appropriate scale to its context and form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development.		
		Witney Town Council 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.		

P285- 15	WTC/084/21	Plot Ref :-21/01662/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	24/05/21
	Location :- 12 EARLY ROAD		Date Returned :-	09/06/21
	EARLY ROAD			
	Proposal :	Ground floor rear extension to the kitchen to the existing rear edge of the house and first floor rear extension (revised scheme).		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P285- 16 WTC/085/21 Plot Ref :-21/01639/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 24/05/21
 Location :- 1 KESTREL CRESCENT Date Returned :- 09/06/21
 KESTREL CRESCENT
 Proposal : Proposed rear conservatory.
 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 sensitive area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

P285- 17 WTC/086/21 Plot Ref :-21/01527/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 24/05/21
 Location :- 70 WOODSTOCK ROAD Date Returned :- 09/06/21
 WOODSTOCK ROAD
 Proposal : Alterations to roof of garage and erection of front and rear single-storey extensions.
 Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

P285- 18 WTC/087/21 Plot Ref :-21/01413/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 24/05/21
 Location :- 95 PENCLOSE Date Returned :- 09/06/21
 PENCLOSE
 Proposal : Removal of Rear Conservatory, replace with Rear Extension, Replace 2no Window, Install Door to Side of Property, Internal Alterations with New Fitted Kitchen and Wiring.
 Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

P285- 19 WTC/088/21 Plot Ref :-21/01199/FUL Type :- FULL
 Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 24/05/21
 Location :- LAND TO THE REAR OF 96 HIGH Date Returned :- 10/06/21
 ST
 HIGH STREET
 WITNEY
 Proposal : Erection of a new dwelling and garage.
 Observations : Witney Town Council object to this planning application.

Members noted that the application form refers to a precedent set by approvals for earlier schemes. However, members felt strongly that current Local Plan Policy approach to flood risk and recent flooding events negate and override any expired consents previously issued by the Local Planning Authority. Paragraph 163 of the NPPF states that 'When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment.' Members do not accept that the submitted flood risk assessment is a full assessment, it is not up-to-date with recent flood events and is a generic report. This area has been badly affected by river flooding and surface water flooding as recently as December 2020.

The proposed development site is subject to other constraints that have not been fully addressed by the application or its supporting documents, members

are concerned about the impact of the proposals to biodiversity in the immediate area. The site is within a SSSI zone and very close to a main river. Witney Town Council request that Officers pay due regard to environmental impacts of the proposal.

Further, the proposed development is harmful to neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light and over-shadowing.

P285- 20	WTC/089/21	Plot Ref :-21/01692/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	25/05/21
	Location :- 7 BIBURY CLOSE		Date Returned :-	09/06/21
	BIBURY CLOSE			
	Proposal :	Demolish existing conservatory and base. Erection of orangery with base.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P285- 21	WTC/090/21	Plot Ref :-21/01648/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	25/05/21
	Location :- 69 VANNER ROAD		Date Returned :-	10/06/21
	VANNER ROAD			
	Proposal :	Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of single storey side extension.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

P285- 22	WTC/091/21	Plot Ref :-21/01511/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	25/05/21
	Location :- 8 LANGDALE COURT		Date Returned :-	10/06/21
	LANGDALE COURT			
	Proposal :	Erection of an extension.		
	Observations :	While Witney Town Council does not object to the principle of this application, it notes that the development may have already been constructed and that this is possibly a retrospective application.		
		Discussions were had regarding the integrity of the structure and members expressed concerns about the safety aspects of the proposal. Whilst not a planning issue, Witney Town Council request that the Officer and Applicant seek advice or referral to Building Control before considering granting consent. Further to satisfactory safety assurances, Witney Town Council would not object to the development.		

The Meeting closed at : 8.40pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

**PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 17 May 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	O Collins
	T Ashby	R Smith
	D Butterfield	D Temple
	L Duncan	
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
Others:	2 members of the public.	

As there was no legislation in place for the Town Council to hold virtual meetings, and because of the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, the Parks & Recreation Committee formed virtually as an Advisory Committee. Any recommendations outside of the current work's programme, budget or policy would require ratification at the Full Council meeting held on 28th June 2021.

PR239 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Luci Ashbourne and Duncan Enright.

Councillor Owen Collins attended in place of Cllr Ashbourne and Councillor Ruth Smith attended for Councillor Enright.

PR240 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

PR241 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Committee.

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Daniel Butterfield be elected. There being no other nominations it was:

Resolved: That, Councillor Daniel Butterfield be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for 2021/2022 municipal year.

PR242 **MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting of the Sport & Play Committee, the predecessor committee, held on 1 March 2021. There were no matters arising.

Resolved: That the minutes of the Sport and Play Committee held on 1 March 2021 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PR243 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

Mr Bloomfield addressed the committee regarding signage for Witney Town Bowls Club
Mr Gentles addressed the committee regarding the application for a doughnut stall on The Leys.

The Committee reconvened following public participation.

Note: Councillor Temple left the meeting at this juncture.

PR244 **OXLEASE PLAY AREA - MEMORIAL PICNIC BENCH**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer.

Clarification was given on the type of bench to be installed and the proposed location. Councillors expressed their support for the proposal.

It was noted that there were no financial implications as it would be funded by the applicant, so the Town Clerk, under her delegations would implement the recommendation accordingly.

Resolved: That the report be noted and the request for a memorial picnic bench in memory of Stephanie Ormonde be supported.

PR245 **MADLEY PARK PLAYING FIELDS & PLAY AREA**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Town Clerk. An update was given on discussions that had been held regarding the freehold of the area and legal agreements that are in place. It was emphasised that further legal advice was needed.

Issues regarding the use of the sports pitches and associated changing facilities were outlined. Councillors considered the freehold purchase of the area in the future for leisure use. It was advised that drainage works had been undertaken in the area and so the Council needed to be cognisant of such issues during future discussions.

It was proposed that the matter be delegated to the Town Clerk to seek further advice and clarify issues with other parties involved.

Resolved: That, delegation be given to the Town Clerk to continue discussions with relevant parties, and obtain further legal advice, to establish details around the possible transfer of the Madley Park Playing Field to the Town Council. The transfer of the Play Area would be considered at a later date, when appropriate.

PR246 PARK ROAD PLAY AREA - UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Projects Officer.

Clarification was given on the ownership of the land and discussions had been held regarding the implementation of a lease with Cottsway Housing including break clauses. The possibility of residents being able to apply for grant funding for equipment was highlighted.

The Committee considered the provision of bins at the site and at the Splash Pad and emphasised that enough bins were required.

The Town Clerk clarified that equipment was available at the depot and whilst some equipment could be refurbished new equipment may be needed. The issue of local residents raising funds for the play area was highlighted. It was noted that the agreed budget was sufficient to open the park and any additional facilities would follow on subject to funds being available. Discussion ensued regarding landscaping of the site and the need to be aware of community safety issues such as anti-social behaviour.

Resolved:

1. That, new swings be installed, replacing the old, non-compliant set;
2. That, the bear bin from the Leys be moved to Park Road Play area and the Town Clerk be delegated to finalise bin provision at the Splash Pad;
3. That, in view of the short time frame for project completion, the decision of which company to proceed with is delegated to Officers, in consultation with the local ward Councillors – these being Cllrs Ashbourne, Duncan and Smith with the main deciding factor being price; and.
4. That, delegation be given to Officers, in consultation with the local ward Councillors to engage with local residents in respect of future funding and grant opportunities for further development of the play area in the future.

PR247 SKATE PARK - UPDATE

The report of the Project Officer was received and considered.

Councillor Butterfield updated the committee and explained that the group had now agreed a constitution and setting up of a bank account. It was now hoped to drive the project forward through social media. There would be a need for power on site which the council would need to consider in the future.

Resolved: That, the update report be noted.

Note: Councillor Aitman joined the meeting at this juncture.

PR248 LEYS RECREATION GROUND - REQUEST TO RUN A DOUGHNUT STALL

The report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer was received and considered.

In response to a question, it was clarified that the generator unit ran on recycled cooking oil and not diesel and emissions were reduced, and the doughnuts were cooked on a gas unit. During the daytime, the generator was not required as it just powered the unit lights. It was confirmed that only cold drinks were sold from the unit and not tea and coffee. The type of unit was outlined.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential impact on the Coffee Shed and previous concerns about pressure selling from traders on The Leys. It was noted that the applicant had been positive in not selling hot drinks and it was not the role of the council to prevent competition. The possible location for the unit was discussed as there were concerns about those suggested. Clarification was given that the unit could be placed on the hardstanding near the entrance to The Leys. After further discussion it was agreed that delegation should be given to agree a location.

It was noted that the application was for Saturday and Sunday only and it would be sensible to limit additional traders to those days.

Recommended:

That, agreement in principle be given for Bakers Sweet to run a doughnut stall on the Leys Recreation Ground, subject to the following:

1. A fixed term period for operating along with clear terms and conditions which will be reviewed and monitored by officers;
2. Delegation be given to the Officers to agree the location of the stall; and
3. Delegation to officers to handle all the legalities and charges associated.

PR249 LEYS RECREATION GROUND - SPLASH PAD RE-OPENING

The Committee was advised that the facility needed to be professionally commissioned, which will cost in the region of £2,400 and depending on their availability could be open when the roadmap dictates (21 June). The Committee was requested to decide whether this facility should reopen, and close in line with current Council policy when Witney Feast fair arrives on site at the beginning of September. The contractor could do the commissioning on 15 June.

The current restrictions were explained and that due to the potential number of people it was difficult to monitor as there was unhindered access.

The committee expressed support for re-opening the facility.

Resolved:

That, the facility should reopen, consistent with the relaxation of Covid restrictions, and close in line with current Council policy when Witney Feast fair arrives on site at the beginning of September.

PR250 LEYS RECREATION GROUND - WITNEY TOWN BOWLS CLUB REQUEST TO ERECT A SIGN

The committee gave consideration to a request from Witney Town Bowls Club to erect new signage for the facility. In addition, it was reported that Oxfordshire County Council had advised that new directional signage was to be provided on Station Lane.

Councillors expressed their support for new signage, and it was acknowledged that details such as location needed further clarification. It was proposed that the matter be delegated for approval subject to a site visit and details of the signage being agreed.

Resolved:

1. That Officers be delegated, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to undertake a site visit and approve the type of signage and agree a location on Town council land; and
2. That the current position with regard to signage on Station Lane, to be provided by Oxfordshire County Council, be noted.

PR251 WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND - CYCLING SPEED AWARENESS

The Committee received the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer.

There was support for the proposal, but concerns remained about vehicles adhering to the speed limit. The cycle crossing sign was also considered to be a positive step. Discussion ensued about the positive impact of signage, and it was up to the council to ensure that it had met its responsibility as landowner and from a health & safety perspective.

Resolved:

1. To approve the purchase and installation of two “5mph” signs and posts.
2. To approve the additional installation of a warning sign for “Cycle Route Ahead”; and
3. To Delegate to officers the responsibility of assessing and possibly removing part of the hedge to the right side of the junction exiting West Witney.

PR252 WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND - COMPLIANCE & PROJECT UPDATE

The Town Clerk advised that officers had been working towards compliance by 17 May to allow public access. The Council had undertaken the works it had agreed to undertake. A meeting to check compliance of works undertaken by the sports and social club had also been arranged but was cancelled. When the meeting was held paperwork was not compliant and a list of works was provided to the club for them to undertake. At present the building was not compliant and therefore should not be opening to the public. Council Officers had sought to engage with the sports club committee on the issues.

The Committee expressed their concern at the situation and questioned what powers the council had to ensure the club did not open until compliance was achieved. The Town Clerk explained the role of the various authorities and action which would be taken. However, she pointed out that the Council’s insurance could be invalidated, and this was being clarified the insurers. It was suggested that contact be made with the HSE.

In respect of the lease, it was not possible to simply cancel it and a process was in place if the situation changed in the future. Concern was expressed that if there was an incident the Town Council could be held liable, particularly as the sports & social club had been premature in announcing the re-opening.

Resolved:

1. That, delegation be given to the Town Clerk to explore options with the HSE to see what action can be taken with regard to the building being compliant; and

2. To note that consultants Knight Kavanagh and Page (KKP) have been appointed to undertake the feasibility study of the Sports Ground and assist with the master planning of new facilities.

The meeting closed at: 7.20 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 24 May 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor M Jones (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	L Duncan
	L Ashbourne	R Smith
	T Ashby	V Gwatkin
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Simon Wright	Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	1 member of the public.	

As there was no legislation in place for the Town Council to hold virtual meetings, and because of the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, the Parks & Recreation Committee formed virtually as an Advisory Committee. Any recommendations outside of the current work's programme, budget or policy would require ratification at the Full Council meeting held on 28th June 2021.

H263 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Owen Collins

H264 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

H265 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

The Chair sought nominations for the position of Vice-Chair for the municipal year.

Resolved:

That, Councillor Vicky Gwatkin be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2021/2022 municipal year.

H266 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 March 2021 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee held on 8 March 2021 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

H267 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

Mr Hopkins addressed the Committee in respect of a memorial gate at Windrush Cemetery.

The Committee reconvened following public participation.

H268 **PUBLIC HALLS UPDATE**

The Deputy Town Clerk gave a verbal update and reported that the bar had reopened at the Corn Exchange and, mainly due to the weather, takings had been variable. The Corn Exchange Working Party, at its forthcoming meeting, would be considering future staffing at the venue.

In addition, the Working Party would be looking at the next phase of the redevelopment and making recommendations to Council in due course.

It was reported that bookings at the council venues were gradually increasing but it was requested that delegation be given to allow officers to negotiate appropriate discounts to encourage bookings of the facilities, particularly bar driven functions. The Committee agreed to this and expressed their thanks to officers who had been involved in getting the venues operating again.

Resolved:

That, delegation be given to officers to negotiate discounts, as appropriate, to encourage bookings at The Corn Exchange and Burwell Hall over the next three months.

H269 **CEMETERIES UPDATE**

The Committee considered the report of the Compliance, External Contracts & Cemeteries Officer updating on a number of cemetery matters.

The Chair gave her condolences to Mr Hopkins, who had spoken in the public participation, and his family and members associated themselves with the Chair's comments. The Committee considered the installation of a memorial gate and sought clarification of the cost, proposed materials and the council's own regulations. Discussion ensued on alternative options and locations for a memorial and potential ongoing costs, such as maintenance.

The Committee expressed support for a memorial of some kind but agreed that further information was required before a decision could be made. It was proposed and agreed that the matter be deferred to allow outstanding issues to be clarified.

A summary of the responses to a consultation regarding an additional access at Tower Hill Cemetery was considered. It was noted that there were differing views and the committee highlighted accessibility of the site as a priority and the issue of crime prevention and safety was considered.

After further discussion it was agreed that the responses needed further analysis and other issues clarified before a decision could be made. It was proposed and agreed that the matter be delegated and a small group of members be appointed to look at the outstanding issues.

As a result of the decision to further consider the access it was agreed to defer consideration of the appointment of a contractor for any associated works.

Resolved:

1. That, a decision on the installation of a memorial gate at Windrush Cemetery be deferred to the next meeting to allow the following to be clarified:

The cost of procuring a memorial gate at Windrush Cemetery and ongoing maintenance costs;

Officers looking at alternative options for a memorial such as a bench at other areas under the Town Councils control: and

Consultation being undertaken with the Friends of Windrush Cemetery about the introduction of a new gate.

2. That, delegation be given to the Deputy Town Clerk, in conjunction with a member task and finish group to fully analyse the responses to the consultation in respect of an additional access at Tower Hill Cemetery and make recommendations.

That, Cllrs Joy Aitman, Thomas Ashby and Mel Jones be appointed to serve on the task and finish group.

3. That, consideration of the selection of contractors for footpath and wall works be deferred in light of the decision at 2. above.

H270 ALLOTMENTS UPDATE

The Committee received the report of the Operations & Estates Advisor updating on issues with the allotments owned by the Council.

The Deputy Town Clerk gave a verbal update on the fencing for Hailey Road Allotments and reported that further quote had been received from a contractor together with an 'in house' bid. The Committee considered the bids and were of the opinion that further clarification was needed on the content of the submissions to ensure that value for money was met and that timescales could be adhered to. It was proposed and agreed that the matter be delegated to the Town Clerk to award the contract subject to clarification of the content of the bids.

The Committee considered issues with flooding at the Lakeside allotments and the request to carry out a survey to establish works that may be needed. It was indicated that the topographical information would be important when considering if any works would be feasible. It was agreed that the survey should be undertaken.

Resolved:

1. That, a topographical survey around Lakeside allotments to determine the extent of a bund required to prevent flooding to the allotments be approved at the cost identified in the report; and
2. That, a decision on the boundary fencing works at Hailey Road allotments be delegated to the Town Clerk to approve a contractor subject to clarification of the 'in house' bid.

The meeting closed at: 6.55 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 7 June 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne J Aitman D Butterfield H Eaglestone	V Gwatkin A Prosser R Smith
Officers:	Sharon Groth Simon Wright	Town Clerk Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	no members of the public.	

As there was no legislation in place for the Town Council to hold virtual meetings, and because of the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, the Parks & Recreation Committee formed virtually as an Advisory Committee. Any recommendations outside of the current work's programme, budget or policy would require ratification at the Full Council meeting held on 28th June 2021.

SC271 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr R Bolger who was being substituted by Cllr R Smith.

SC272 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members.

SC273 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

It was proposed and seconded that Cllr Luci Ashbourne be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee. There being no other nominations it was:

Resolved:

That, Councillor Luci Ashbourne be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2021/2022 municipal year.

SC274 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2021.

In response to a query regarding Min No. SC137 it was advised that there was no update in respect of trees at Pensclose but further information would be sought from the Operations & Estates Advisor.

A member sought clarification regarding a policy for the provision of bins (Min No. SC138 refers). In response it was explained that any policy would be included as part of the developing Open Space Strategy.

It was noted that a meeting of the Platinum Jubilee Working Party would be convened to start work on the project.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 15 March 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

SC275 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

SC276 **COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

The Committee considered the report of the Communications and Community Engagement Officer updating on a number of projects.

Consideration was given to a recommendation from the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee to implement a 'Wild Witney' competition. Members agreed it was important to build on the success of 'No Mow May'.

Discussion ensued and it was agreed that residents would be asked to submit photographs of their 'wild gardens' which could then be shown and promoted through social media channels. It was decided that winners would be selected in each electoral ward with an overall winner being chosen after that.

In respect of prizes it was noted that there no budgetary provision and it was suggested that the Council's grounds contractor be contacted to see if they could provide some seeds as prizes. In respect of the overall winner it was suggested that the Wychwood Project be approached to see if they could provide a woodland visit.

Consideration was given to the results of the resident survey that had been circulated to members and how that information could be used by the council.

It was agreed that the main outcomes could be used in an information leaflet as had been the case in previous years. It was noted that some of the feedback was useful in helping to inform the draft strategies that were being developed.

There was a consensus that the Council needed to promote what it does and respond to issues raised in the survey. It was suggested that this could be done through social media channels and video clips. Councillors agreed that it would be good if they did direct video responses to concerns and also show what the Town Council is doing.

In respect of the survey it was noted that the responses were mainly from older residents and, whilst it was challenging, there was a need to gain the views of younger people. It was suggested that maybe offering the opportunity to 'shadow' officers could help in raising awareness.

Members noted that there was still some confusion about the responsibilities of the three tiers of local government in Oxfordshire and it was important that residents were aware of what each one did.

Resolved:

1. That, a 'Wild Witney' competition be supported with residents being requested to submit photographs of their wild gardens with winners being chosen in each Town Council Ward and an overall winner being selected thereafter;
2. That, in respect of the resident survey delegation be given to officers to assess the data further and produce an information document as in previous years;
3. That, the resolution above be supported by a campaign to promote what the council does via media channels including video responses, by Councillors, to issues raised in the survey; and
4. That, a document be produced outlining the responsibilities of the various tiers of local government in Oxfordshire.

SC277 EVENTS REPORT

The Committee was advised that the replacement event for Witney Carnival was progressing and the grant funding would be forwarded to the organisers soon. It was noted that the event may involve some machinery accessing The Leys so there was an element of a damage deposit in the funding.

Resolved:

That, the report be noted.

SC278 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS UPDATE

The Committee received the report of the Operations & Estates Adviser advising of the outcome of the tender process for the Christmas lights.

It was noted that meetings were ongoing with the contractor and members were pleased that LED lights were to be used. It was advised that the contract was within the agreed budget.

Resolved:

That, the report be noted.

SC279 BUS SHELTERS UPDATE

The Committee received the report of the Project Officer, including an exempt appendix, outlining options for the replacement of a bus shelter at the Burwell shops.

Consideration was given to the three designs including the proposed seating options. Members expressed a preference for Option 3 and in particular because it used a sedum roof but asked

that the contractor be contacted to see if bench seating could be provided instead of the perch seats. The budgetary provision was also clarified.

It was resolved that, subject to clarification on the seating, delegation be given to officers in consultation with the Chair to approve Option 3.

Resolved:

That, delegation be given to officers, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to approve option 3 as outlined in the report for the replacement of a bus shelter outside the Burwell shops subject to clarification as to whether bench seating can be provided.

The meeting closed at: 7.12 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 14 June 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor L Ashbourne (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	V Gwatkin
	O Collins	M Jones
	H Eaglestone	R Smith
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Simon Wright	Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	No members of the public.	

As there was no legislation in place for the Town Council to hold virtual meetings, and because of the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, the Parks & Recreation Committee formed virtually as an Advisory Committee. Any recommendations outside of the current work's programme, budget or policy would require ratification at the Full Council meeting held on 28th June 2021.

F293 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Harvey who was on Council business.

F294 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

F295 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Ruth Smith be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee. There being no other nominations it was:

Resolved:

That Councillor Ruth Smith be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2021/2022 municipal year.

F296 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2021.

There were no matters arising.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

F297 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no applications from members of the public to address the committee.

F298 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Committee received the joint report of the Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer outlining payment schedules, bank statements and bank reconciliations which are brought to the Policy, Governance & Finance committee as part of the Council's due diligence.

Recommended:

Members noted the report, the bank reconciliations and agreed the following schedule of payments be approved:

Cheque No's	In the sum of:	Account
DDs and Standing Orders February	£3,359.52	General CB 1
Cheques 32975-33012, DDs and Standing Orders February	£119,014.66	Imprest CB 2
DDs and Standing Orders March	£52,577.40	General CB 1
Cheques 33013-33070, DDs and Standing Orders March	£122,367.01	Imprest CB 2
DDs and Standing Orders April	£2819.21	General CB 1
Cheques 33071-33095, DDs and Standing Orders April	£146,203.97	Imprest CB 2

F299 DISCRETIONARY GRANT AWARD POLICY

The Committee reviewed the current Council policy on discretionary grant awards.

It was suggested that section 5.1 of the policy that set a £500 limit should be removed to allow greater flexibility when considering applications. In addition members considered whether grant applications should be determined bi-annually.

A member suggested that sections 4.3 and 4.4 could be amended. With regard to 4.3 it was considered that building and equipment costs were an issue for organisations and the flexibility to award in such circumstances should be available. In respect of 4.4 it was agreed that this should just read hospitality so that applicants such as foodbanks were not precluded.

Recommended:

1. That, the Discretionary Grant Award Policy be amended by the deletion of sections 4.3 and 5.1 and 4.4 being amended to hospitality only;

2. That, consideration of grants be undertaken twice a year at the March and September meetings of the committee; and
3. The, revised process be reviewed after six months operation.

F300 GRANTS AND SUBSIDISED LETTINGS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning discretionary grant applications from 2120 (Witney) Squadron and Jewins Women2Women Ltd together with a subsidised lettings application from the Royal British Legion.

Members expressed support for the application from 2120 (Witney) Squadron subject to the recommendation regarding changes to the policy being approved at Council.

In respect of Jewins Women2Women members expressed their support for the work being undertaken but felt unable to support a grant based on the information submitted. The Committee suggested that the applicants, in being informed of the decision, be advised that the council would welcome a new application with more information about direct support to clients in Witney.

The Committee supported the subsidised letting request from the Royal British Legion.

Recommended:

1. That, an award of £949.31 to 2120 (Witney) Squadron be approved subject to the adoption of the revised Grants Policy;
2. That, no award be made to Jewins Women2Women at this time but the applicant be asked to provide further information and submit a future application if they wish;
3. That, a Subsidised Lettings Grant of £165 be awarded to the Royal British Legion (Witney Branch);
4. That these grants be awarded under the General Power of Competence; and
5. That, correspondence from Oxfordshire Association for the Blind and Life Education be noted.

F301 INTERNAL AUDIT - FINAL REPORT 2020/2021

The Committee received and considered the final Internal Audit report for 2020/2021. Members thanked officers for their hard work in respect of the audit and welcomed the positive assurances in each relevant area.

Recommended:

That, the final Internal Audit Report for 2020/2021 be received and noted

F302 ACCOUNTS & AUDIT (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2015 - ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2020/21

The Committee received the report of the Town Clerk in respect of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21.

It was noted that the document would be presented at the forthcoming Council meeting for ratification as required under the Accounts & Audit Regulations.

Recommended:

The Council is invited to note this report and

1. That, the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2021 where questions 1 to 9 were answered yes, be approved;
2. That, the Statement of Accounts at Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2021 be approved; and
3. That, the unaudited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 be noted

F303 **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.

F304 **PROPERTY MATTERS**

The Committee received a confidential verbal update from the Town Clerk in respect of a number of property matters.

During discussion it was noted that there was a large amount of furniture and other equipment in council buildings and this would need to be stored to allow conversion to additional office space. Members concurred that this should be done and that some items could be disposed of subject to valuation following a future report to this Committee.

Recommended:

That, the confidential update be noted and the Town Clerk be delegated to find a suitable storage facility for the excess furniture in the council facilities for a period of six months and that a valuation for some items is sought with a view to disposal.

F305 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 7 June 2021.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 7 June 2021, and recommendations therein be agreed.

The meeting closed at: 7.03 pm

Chair

**CORN EXCHANGE WORKING PARTY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Tuesday, 1 June 2021

At 5.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne	A D Harvey
	J Aitman	J King
	L Duncan	
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Project Officer
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Simon Wright	Democratic & Legal Services Officer
	Tomas Smith	Venue & Events Officer
Others:	No members of the public.	

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Nominations were sought for the position of Chair of the Corn Exchange Working Party. It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Owen Collins be elected.

There being no other nominations it was:

Resolved:

That, Councillor Owen Collins be elected Chair of the Working Party for the 2021/2022 municipal year.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

4 MINUTES

In response to a query it was clarified that capacity for the main hall was set at 166, including performers.

It was further advised that the consultation process in respect of options for the refurbishment would be discussed during the meeting.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Corn Exchange Working Party held on 1 March 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

6 **CORN EXCHANGE PHASE TWO REFURBISHMENT**

In introducing the report the Chair advised the Working Party that Andrew Stone (Drama by Design) who had prepared the proposal was present to answer member questions. In addition Terry Powell who had been involved in the project was also present.

Some members expressed disappointment that members had not been aware before the meeting that Drama by Design would be represented at the meeting. It was also suggested that the documents were difficult to read online and hard copies would be beneficial. It was agreed that these could be provided on request.

It was suggested that the report be considered as tabled and the Working Party could then determine the decision making process and timing of those decisions accordingly.

In response to a query it was clarified that the refurbishment of the changing areas would be part of Phase 3 and was not for consideration at this stage.

The Project Officer introduced the report and sought members' views regarding the extent of consultation in respect of the proposals. It was suggested and agreed that any consultation be undertaken with the users previously identified.

The Working Party then gave detailed consideration to the document that had been submitted by Drama by Design. Issues discussed/clarified included:

- Confirmation that the budget proposed was adequate to deliver the works/equipment identified in the report.
- That the budget included training for staff on the operation of the system and that more than one person should be trained.
- That the current projection room would be suitable for housing the equipment but would be a bit cramped with sound equipment there as well.
- Additional lighting could be added as needed with extra sockets being available.
- The additional cost/requirements for providing the necessary infrastructure for cinema events. Whilst the current proposal was suitable for broadcasting of live events it would not be applicable for showing films.
- The necessary structural requirements for the lights and curtain mechanism.
- Options for seating, impact on the available space in the hall and the possibility of additional seating being provided.
- Confirmation that the Community Facilities Grant required that development commences by September 2021 although the District Council could be approached about an extension if necessary.

After further discussion it was agreed that the works could be two separate tenders. The Working Party expressed support for the tender process for the Audio Visual and lighting equipment could be commenced subject to a satisfactory roof structural report being received.

In respect of the preferred seating option it was agreed that a consultation meeting be arranged with user representatives and the outcome be fed back to members a future meeting of the Working Party.

Recommended:

1. That, subject to a satisfactory report from the structural engineer concerning the roof, the tender process in respect of the audio visual equipment and lighting be commenced;
2. That, the relevant stakeholders be consulted in respect of options for seating to help inform the tender process; and
3. That, an additional meeting of the Working Party be held to make recommendations to the Council meeting on 28 June 2021.

7 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS & 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.

8 PUBLIC HALL & 1863 CAFÉ BAR OPERATIONS

Consideration was given to the report of the Venue & Events Officer outlining the current trading position of the Café Bar, opening hours and seeking recommendations on staffing.

Recommended:

1. That, the closure of the Café/Bar on a Saturday, except when there are events at the Corn Exchange, until the staffing situation has been clarified be supported;
2. That, the opening of the Café/Bar on a Monday to Friday be approved and reviewed as necessary; and
3. That, the Personnel Sub-Committee be recommended to support the appointment of additional staff for the Café/Bar.

The meeting closed at: 6.56 pm

Chair

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FULL COUNCIL

Date:	Monday, 28 June 2021
Title:	Appointment to Advisory Committees & Outside Bodies
Contact Officer:	Democratic & Legal Services Officer - Simon Wright

Background

The Town Council appoints representatives to a number of Advisory Committees/Outside Bodies, and at the Council meeting held on 8 June 2020 appointments were made to these bodies for a period up to 2023.

Current Situation

The Council has been advised by Councillors Bolger and Enright that they are no longer able to continue serving on the following bodies:

Cllr Bolger - Lower Windrush Valley Project and RAF Brize Norton Local Consultation Group

Cllr Enright – Witney Traffic Advisory Committee

The Council is therefore requested to consider making alternative appointments to the three outside bodies.

Environmental impact

There is no environmental impact.

Risk

None

Financial implications

There are no financial implications.

Recommendations

1. The Council is requested to appoint members to serve on the Lower Windrush Valley Project, RAF Brize Norton Local Consultation Group and Witney Traffic Advisory Committee for a period until the Annual Council Meeting following the next ordinary election of Councillors in 2023.

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FULL COUNCIL

Date: Monday 28th June 2021

Title: Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21

Contact Officer: Town Clerk/RFO – Sharon Groth

Background

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 require relevant bodies of our size to complete an Annual Return which is attached at Appendix A. The Annual Return must be submitted to the external auditors by the 30 June having been approved by full council scheduled for 28 June.

Annual Governance Statement

It is a statutory requirement that the Members take responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control and give answers to nine questions in 'Section 1 – Annual governance statement'.

The Town Clerk has prepared the following notes to assist Council's consideration of the Annual Governance Statement. Council is required to answer 'Yes' or 'No' to each of the statements 1 to 9 below. In the event of a 'No' response, explanations must be provided to the external auditor together with a description of the action that is being taken to address the weakness identified.

- 1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.**

[yes means....prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations]

[A] The Statement of Accounts has been produced and certified by the Council's contract Accountants DCK Beavers and the Internal Auditor (Annual internal audit report).

- 2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.**

[yes means....made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge]

[A] The Council's system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level.

As Members you are all monitoring the Council's Internal Control mechanisms by attending Committee and Council meetings when regular provision of management and financial information is provided, covering:

- *Service delivery and project performance;*
- *Financial reports measuring actual expenditure against budgets;*
- *Comprehensive budget cycle.*
-

Key elements of the internal control environment include:

- *Internal Audit is independent and outsourced to Auditing Solutions Ltd.*
- *The Council adopted the revised 'Model Code of Conduct' at its Annual Meeting held on 9 May 2007, and all new Members following ordinary and by-elections have signed up to this.*
- *Standing Orders & Financial Regulations in place and reviewed.*
- *The Council adopted an Annual Investment Strategy for 2004/05 on 5 May 2004 (minute 170/04 refers), which has been reviewed annually since. The last review being for 2020/21 on 23 November 2020.*
- *The Council invested in the software programme 'Local Council Risk System' during 2004/05 in order to monitor its Risk Assessments, and continues to use it for the Council's Corporate Risk Assessment.*
- *This Committee adopted a formal Risk Management Policy and programme for 2005/06 on 4 April 2005 (minute F142 refers), which has been regularly reviewed, and presented annually to Council for approval. The last review being for 2020/21 on 22 March 2021.*
- *Operational Risk Assessments have been presented to Council as and when they arise. The Corporate Risk Assessments and Risk Register was presented and adopted by full Council 22 March 2021.*
- *The Council's book-keeping is currently outsourced to DCK Beavers Ltd incorporating a further level of segregation of duties. However, during the staff restructure it was identified to appoint a separate RFO and Accounts Administrator for greater control an up to date reporting internally to support a council the size of Witney.*

- 3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.**

[yes means....has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so]

[A] *The Town Clerk and Internal Auditor constantly review legislative processes to ensure compliance and take action to overcome identified areas of non-compliance. Standing orders and Financial Regulations are established and referred to as appropriate.*

The Council has the Power of General Competence (March 2016) which was reaffirmed at the Annual Council meeting on 15 May 2019 following the ordinary elections.

4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

[yes means....during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts]

[A] *Compliance with year-end statutory requirements is prompted and monitored by the external auditors. Annual Reports including Financial Statements are available for inspection throughout the year. Financial information is also available on the Council's website.*

5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.

[yes means....considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly]

[A] *A local council risk system is used to identify and prioritise risks facing the council. Reports detailing actions taken and persons responsible are reviewed annually by council. The Internal Auditor also independently reviews the effectiveness of actions and controls.*

6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems.

[yes means....arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority]

[A] *The internal auditor is appointed by council every five years. He attends at least three times a year with the resultant internal audit report reviewed by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee.*

7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.

[yes means....responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit]

[A] *Management responses and actions taken are recorded as part of the annual audit reports from internal and external auditors which are reviewed by council.*

8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.

[yes means....disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant]

[A] *The Town Clerk reviews and accrues for any material known or contingent liabilities at the year-end.*

9. Trust funds (including charitable) – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we have discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.

[A] *Not applicable.*

Annual Return 2020/21 & unaudited Financial Statements

As 'Section 2 of the Annual Return – Accounting Statements' gives only a summary of the Council's financial operations, therefore supplementary unaudited Financial Statements are produced which presents in more detail the financial position of Witney Town Council and its income and expenditure for the year. This is attached as Appendix B.

Annual Internal Audit Report

Throughout the year Auditing Solutions Ltd, the Council's independent Internal Auditors have carried out a number of remote visits to scrutinise internal procedures and accounting transactions. The Internal Auditor has submitted his final audit report which was presented to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee at the meeting on 14 June 2021 along with page 3 of the AGAR as the final audit report.

The full Internal Audit Report is attached to this item for information for all Councillors as part of the overall due diligence and assurances in collectively agreeing the Annual Governance Report and in so doing the Mayor and Chair of the Council signing it off.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Recommendations

The Council is invited to note this report and

- 1) that the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2021 where questions 1 to 9 were answered yes, be approved;

- 2) that the Statement of Accounts at Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2021 be approved.
- 3) that the unaudited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 be noted.

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Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21 Part 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** must be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** must be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2021**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2021**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2021
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2021 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2020/21**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2020/21**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2021 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. If the AGAR contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2021.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, **you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2020) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2021).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2021**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been published?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2021 been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

* *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

www.witney-tc.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2021, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2020/21 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2019/20, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2019/20 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. If the authority has an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000, it publishes information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the Transparency code for smaller authorities.			✓
M. The authority, during the previous year (2019-20) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2019/20 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

11/12/2020

26/03/2021

09/06/2021

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Adrian Shepherd-Roberts

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

09/06/2021

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2020 £	31 March 2021 £	
			<i>Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.</i>
1. Balances brought forward	1,638,270	1,936,914	<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,435,067	1,628,699	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts	322,525	235,022	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs	-607,537	-652,203	<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments	-851,411	-910,062	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward	1,936,914	2,238,370	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	2,267,293	2,956,883	<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	6,543,664	6,617,679	<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings	0	0	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i>
			<i>N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2021 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YY

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2020/21

In respect of

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>.

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

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2021; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2020/21

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2020/21

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2021.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YY

Witney Town Council

Unaudited Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Witney Town Council

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31 March 2021

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Witney Town Council

Council Information

31 March 2021

(Information current at 28th June 2021)

Town Mayor

Cllr J. Aitman

Councillors

Cllr L. Duncan (Deputy Town Mayor)

Cllr L. Ashbourne

Cllr T. Ashby

Cllr R. Bolger

Cllr D. Butterfield

Cllr O. Collins

Cllr H. B. Eaglestone

Cllr D. S. T. Enright

Cllr V. Gwatkin

Cllr A. D. Harvey

Cllr M. Jones

Cllr J. S. King

Cllr A. McMahon

Cllr A. Prosser

Cllr R. Smith

Cllr D. Temple

Town Clerk

Mrs Sharon Groth PSLCC FCMgr

Responsible Financial Officer (R.F.O.)

Tina Jardine

Auditors

Moore Stephens (East Midlands)
Rutland House, Minerva Business Park
Lynch Wood, Peterborough, PE2 6PZ

Internal Auditors

Auditing Solutions Limited
Clackerbrook Farm, 46 The Common
Bromham, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 2JJ

Witney Town Council
Statement of Responsibilities
31 March 2021

The Council's Responsibilities

The council is required:

- to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs
- to secure that one of its officers (R.F.O.) has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. At this council that officer is the Finance Officer, and
- to manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.

The Responsible Financial Officer's Responsibilities

The R.F.O. is responsible for the preparation of the council's Unaudited Financial Statements in accordance with Part 4 of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners Guide (England) (as amended)" (the guide), so far as is applicable to this council, to present a true and fair view of the financial position of the council at 31 March 2021 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.

In preparing the Unaudited Financial Statements, the R.F.O. has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent, and
- complied with the guide.

The R.F.O. has also:

- kept proper accounting records, which were up to date, and
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Responsible Financial Officer's Certificate

I further certify that the Unaudited Financial Statements present a true and fair view of the financial position of Witney Town Council at 31 March 2021, and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Signed:

Tina Jardine- Finance Officer

Date:

Witney Town Council
Statement of Accounting Policies
31 March 2021

Auditors

The name and address of the External Auditors is provided for information only.

These Statements are not subject to audit and the External Auditors have no responsibility for them.

Accounting Convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008) (FRSSE) issued by the Accounting Standards Board, as applied to Local Councils by part 4 of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners Guide (England) (the guide). Comparative figures have been restated to conform to the revised formats where appropriate. Certain requirements have been omitted for clarity and simplicity as these statements are not subject to audit. They are produced in support of the council's audited Statement of Accounts contained within the Annual Return Statement of Accounts.

These accounts have been prepared having regard to the fundamental accounting concepts of: Going Concern, Prudence, Accruals, Relevance, Consistency, Reliability, Comparability, Understandability and Materiality.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Fixed Assets

All expenditure in excess of £1000 (on any one item or group of similar items) on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of fixed assets is capitalised on an accruals basis in the accounts. Expenditure on fixed assets is capitalised, provided that the fixed asset yields benefits to the authority and the services it provides, for a period of more than one year. Fixed assets are valued on the basis recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and in accordance with the statements of asset valuation principles and guidance notes issued by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The closing balances are stated on the following basis:

land and buildings are included in the balance sheet at Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC). The DRC basis of valuation requires an estimate of the value of the land in its existing use, together with the current replacement cost of the building and its external works, from which appropriate deductions have been made to reflect the age, condition, economic, functional and environmental obsolescence and other locational factors which might result in the existing building being worth less than a new replacement building,

all other assets are included in the balance sheet at the lower of cost (estimated where not known) or estimated realisable value, except that,

certain community assets are the subject of restrictive covenants as to their use and/or future disposal. Such assets are therefore considered to have no appreciable realisable value and are included at nominal value only.

The surplus or deficit arising on periodic revaluations of fixed assets has been credited or debited to the Revaluation Reserve. Subsequent revaluations of fixed assets are planned at five yearly intervals, although material changes to asset valuations will be adjusted in the interim period, should they occur.

In accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 15, depreciation is provided on all operational buildings (but not land), as well as other assets.

Witney Town Council
Statement of Accounting Policies
31 March 2021

Depreciation Policy

Buildings and leasehold land are depreciated over the shorter of 50 years or the anticipated remaining useful lives on a straight line basis.

Freehold land is not depreciated.

Non Operational Assets (including Investment Properties) are not depreciated.

Vehicles, plant, equipment and furniture are depreciated over 5 to 20 years on a straight line basis.

Play equipment is depreciated over 15 years at 6.67% per annum straight line.

Infrastructure assets are depreciated over 20 years at 5% per annum straight line.

Community assets are not depreciated, because they are of either intrinsic or purely nominal value.

Depreciation is accounted for as a Balance Sheet movement only, not through the Income and Expenditure Account.

Grants or Contributions from Government or Related Bodies

Capital Grants

Where a fixed asset has been acquired or improved with the financing either wholly or in part by a grant or contribution from government or a related body, e.g. Sports Council, the amount of the grant has been credited to Deferred Grants Account and carried forward. Grants so credited are released back to revenue over the life of the asset to match, and thereby offset wholly or in part, depreciation charged.

Revenue Grants

Revenue grants are credited to income when conditions attached thereto have been fulfilled and/or equivalent expenditure has been incurred. Grants received in respect of which the conditions have not been fulfilled, or expenditure incurred, are carried forward as deferred revenue grants.

Investments

Investments are included in the balance sheet at historic cost and realised gains or losses are taken into the income and expenditure account as realised. Details are given at notes 13 and 15.

Debtors and Creditors

The revenue accounts of the council are maintained on an accruals basis in accordance with the regulations. That is sums due to or from the council during the year are included whether or not the cash has actually been received or paid in the year. Exceptions to this are payment of regular quarterly and other accounts (e.g. telephones, electricity). This policy is applied consistently each year. Therefore, it will not have a material effect on the year's accounts or on the council's annual budget.

The council reviews the level of its commercial debtors on a regular basis and provisions are made, as required, where the likelihood of amounts proving ultimately collectable is in doubt.

Value Added Tax

Income and Expenditure excludes any amounts related to VAT, as all VAT suffered/collected is recoverable from or payable to HM Revenue and Customs. Any amounts not so recoverable are treated as a separate expense.

Witney Town Council
Statement of Accounting Policies
31 March 2021

External Loan Repayments

The council has no long term borrowing. Consequently, there were no external loan repayments made in the year.

Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to revenue on an accruals basis. Details of the council's obligations under operating leases are shown at note 17.

Reserves

The council maintains certain reserves to meet general and specific future expenditure. The purpose of the council's reserves is explained in notes 19 to 20.

Certain reserves are maintained to manage the accounting processes for tangible fixed assets, available for sale investments and retirement benefits. They do not represent usable resources for the council:

Capital Financing Account – represent the council's investment of resources in such assets already made.

Interest Income

All interest receipts are credited initially to general funds.

Cost of Support Services

The costs of management and administration have been apportioned to services on an appropriate and consistent basis.

Pensions

The pension costs that are charged against precept in the council's accounts, in respect of its employees, are equal to the contributions paid to the funded pension scheme for those employees.

These contributions are determined by the fund's actuary on a triennial basis and are set to meet 100% of the liabilities of the pension fund, in accordance with relevant government regulations.

The next actuarial valuation is due at 31st March 2022 and any change in contribution rates as a result of that valuation will take effect from 1st April 2023.

Witney Town Council
Income and Expenditure Account
31 March 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Income			
Precept on Principal Authority		1,628,699	1,435,067
Grants Receivable		31,364	29,763
Rents Receivable, Interest & Investment Income		5,010	11,827
Charges made for Services		166,986	250,754
Other Income		20,100	21,376
Total Income		1,852,159	1,748,787
Expenditure			
Direct Service Costs:			
Salaries & Wages		(128,301)	(142,206)
Grant-aid Expenditure		(33,833)	(12,231)
Other Costs	1	(557,482)	(605,116)
Democratic, Management & Civic Costs:			
Salaries & Wages		(523,902)	(465,331)
Other Costs	1	(242,917)	(186,327)
Total Expenditure		(1,486,435)	(1,411,211)
Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year.		365,724	337,576
Exceptional Items			
(Loss) on the disposal of fixed assets		-	(1,288)
Net Operating Surplus for Year		365,724	336,288
STATUTORY CHARGES & REVERSALS			
Capital Expenditure charged to revenue	11	(64,268)	(42,532)
Reverse profit on asset disposals		-	1,288
Transfer (to) Earmarked Reserves	20	(142,438)	(279,877)
Surplus for the Year to General Fund		159,018	15,167
Net Surplus for the Year		301,456	295,044
The above Surplus for the Year has been applied for the Year to as follows:			
Transfer (to) Earmarked Reserves	20	142,438	279,877
Surplus for the Year to General Fund		159,018	15,167
		301,456	295,044

The council had no other recognisable gains and/or losses during the year.

The notes on pages 12 to 21 form part of these unaudited statements.

Witney Town Council
Statement of Movement in Reserves
31 March 2021

Reserve	Purpose of Reserve	Notes	2021 £	Net Movement in Year £	2020 £
Capital Financing Account	Store of capital resources set aside to purchase fixed assets	19	3,679,616	(43,584)	3,723,200
Earmarked Reserves	Amounts set aside from revenue to meet general and specific future expenditure	20	1,607,920	142,438	1,465,482
General Fund	Resources available to meet future running costs		694,519	159,018	535,501
Total			5,982,055	257,872	5,724,183

The notes on pages 12 to 21 form part of these unaudited statements.

Witney Town Council

Balance Sheet

31 March 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed Assets				
Tangible Fixed Assets	10		4,643,700	4,725,686
Long Term Assets				
Investments Other Than Loans	13		60,469	60,469
Long Term Debtors			3,600	3,600
Current Assets				
Debtors and prepayments	14	281,415		246,402
Investments	15	1,043,235		1,041,173
Cash at bank and in hand		1,913,648		1,226,120
		3,238,298		2,513,695
Current Liabilities				
Creditors and income in advance	16	(170,683)		(99,063)
Net Current Assets			3,067,615	2,414,632
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities			7,775,384	7,204,387
Deferred Grants	18		(1,793,329)	(1,480,204)
Total Assets Less Liabilities			5,982,055	5,724,183
Capital and Reserves				
Capital Financing Reserve	19		3,679,616	3,723,200
Earmarked Reserves	20		1,607,920	1,465,482
General Reserve			694,519	535,501
			5,982,055	5,724,183

The Unaudited Financial Statements represent a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2021, and of its Income and Expenditure for the year.

These accounts were approved by the Council on 28th June 2021 .

Signed:
Cllr J. Aitman	Tina Jardine
Town Mayor	Responsible Financial Officer

Date:
-------------	-------

The notes on pages 12 to 21 form part of these unaudited statements.

Witney Town Council

Cash Flow Statement

31 March 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £
REVENUE ACTIVITIES				
<i>Cash outflows</i>				
Paid to and on behalf of employees		(629,111)		(626,231)
Other operating payments		(809,728)		(795,514)
			(1,438,839)	(1,421,745)
<i>Cash inflows</i>				
Precept on Principal Authority		1,628,699		1,435,067
Cash received for services		176,041		318,567
Revenue grants received		31,364		29,763
			1,836,104	1,783,397
Net cash inflow from Revenue Activities	23		397,265	361,652
SERVICING OF FINANCE				
<i>Cash inflows</i>				
Interest received		5,066		11,840
Net cash inflow from Servicing of Finance			5,066	11,840
CAPITAL ACTIVITIES				
<i>Cash outflows</i>				
Purchase of fixed assets		(75,830)		(67,435)
<i>Cash inflows</i>				
Capital grant received		363,089		8,500
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from Capital Activities			287,259	(58,935)
Net cash inflow before Financing			689,590	314,557
FINANCING AND LIQUID RESOURCES				
(Increase) in money on call			(2,062)	(7,636)
Loan repayments received			-	3,600
Net cash (outflow) from financing and liquid resources			(2,062)	(4,036)
Increase in cash	24		687,528	310,521

The notes on pages 12 to 21 form part of these unaudited statements.

Witney Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2021

1 Other Costs Analysis

Other Costs reported in the council's Income and Expenditure Account comprise the following:

Direct Service Costs

	2021	2020
	£	£
Public Halls	56,249	50,733
Parks & Recreation Grounds & Play Areas	390,394	443,929
Allotments	5	4,222
Cemeteries & Closed Churchyards	37,911	19,943
Closed Churchyards	12,411	356
Community Support	52,916	64,241
Community Infrastructure	41,429	33,923
Less: Grant-aid Expenditure	(33,833)	(12,231)
Total	557,482	605,116

Democratic, Management & Civic Costs

	2021	2020
	£	£
Corporate Management	194,494	144,633
Democratic Representation & Management	18,640	39,121
Civic Expenses	29,783	930
Mayors Allowance	-	1,643
Total	242,917	186,327

As reported in the Statement of Accounting Policies, apportionment of central costs is not reflected in the above analysis.

2 Interest and Investment Income

	2021	2020
	£	£
Interest Income - General Funds	5,010	11,827
	5,010	11,827

Witney Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2021

3 Related Party Transactions

The council is required to disclose material transactions with related parties – bodies that have the potential to control or influence the council or to be controlled or influenced by the council. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the council might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's freedom to bargain with the council at arms length.

Related parties include:

Central Government

The council's operations are controlled by statutes passed by Central Government. All transactions with Central Government arise as a result of some of those statutes but do not, in the opinion of the council, require to be disclosed here.

Principal Authorities

The District Council collects this council's Precept and remits the same to the council under statutory provisions. The Precept is disclosed separately elsewhere in these accounts.

The County Council administers the Pension Fund of which certain of the council's staff are members. Details of amounts payable to the fund are disclosed at note 9.

Members of the council

Members have direct control over the council's financial and operating policies. During the year no members have undertaken any declarable, material transactions with the council, nor the council with any member. Details of such transactions (if any) are recorded in the Register of Members' Interests, open to public inspection at the council's offices.

Members represent the council on various organisations. Appointments are reviewed annually, unless a specific termination date applies to the term of office. None of these appointments places a Member in a position to exert undue influence or control.

Officers of the Council

Other than their contracts of employment, no material transactions have been made during the year between the council and any officer.

Other Organisations

The council awards grants to support a number of voluntary or charitable bodies. It does not attempt to exert control or influence as a result of such grants.

Witney Town Hall Charity has 5 Trustees, 2 of whom are members of the town council.

The council had the following transactions with Witney Town Hall Charity:

	2020	2019
	£	£
Payments Rent paid for Town Hall, Town House and the Buttercross	<u>15500</u>	<u>13,750</u>

4 General Power of Competence

With effect from 23rd March 2016 Witney Town Council acquired the right to exercise the General Power of Competence extended to Town and Parish Councils under the Localism Act 2011 by S.I. 2012 No 965 (The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012). Therefore, with effect from 23rd March 2016 the council no longer exercises the powers conveyed by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Witney Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2021

5 Audit Fees

The council is required to report and disclose the cost of services provided by its external auditors.

These may be summarised as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Fees for statutory audit services	2,000	2,000
Total fees	2,000	2,000

6 Members' Allowances

	2021	2020
	£	£
Members of Council have been paid the following allowances for the year:		
Mayors Allowance	-	1,643
	-	1,643

The council has resolved that, other than the Town Mayor, no members allowances will be paid.

7 Employees

The average weekly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2021	2020
	Number	Number
Full-time	16	16
Part-time	8	5
Temporary	-	-
	24	21

All staff are paid in accordance with nationally agreed pay scales.

8 Trust Funds

The council acts as sole trustee for the Mayors Charity Fund, the transactions of which do not represent activities of the council, and are not included in these accounts.

9 Pension Costs

The council participates in the Oxfordshire County Council Pension Fund. The Oxfordshire County Council Pension Fund is a defined benefit scheme, but the council is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities because all town and parish councils in the scheme pay a common contribution rate.

The cost to the council for the year ended 31 March 2021 was £104,669 (31 March 2020 - £94,925).

The most recent actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31st March 2019, and the council's contribution rate is confirmed as being 21.70% of employees' pensionable pay with effect from 1st April 2021 (year ended 31 March 2021 – 21.70%).

Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS17): "Retirement Benefits" sets out accounting requirements for pension costs. For schemes such as Oxfordshire County Council Pension Fund, paragraph 9(b) of FRS17 requires the council to account for pension costs on the basis of contributions actually payable to the scheme during the year.

Witney Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2021

10 Tangible Fixed Assets

	Operational Freehold Land and Buildings	Vehicles and Equipment	Infra-structure Assets	Community Assets	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£	£
At 31 March 2020	4,423,595	1,089,005	732,249	234,747	6,479,596
Additions	11,562	59,309	4,959	-	75,830
Disposals	-	(1,816)	-	-	(1,816)
Reclassification					
At 31 March 2021	4,435,157	1,146,498	737,208	234,747	6,553,610
Depreciation					
At 31 March 2020	(645,600)	(803,084)	(305,226)	-	(1,753,910)
Charged for the year	(70,682)	(50,216)	(36,918)	-	(157,816)
Eliminated on disposal	-	1,816	-	-	1,816
At 31 March 2021	(716,282)	(851,484)	(342,144)	-	(1,909,910)
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2021	3,718,875	295,014	395,064	234,747	4,643,700
At 31 March 2020	3,777,995	285,921	427,023	234,747	4,725,686

Although classified as capital expenditure, certain minor equipment purchases are not included in the above as they are not material in overall value.

Fixed Asset Valuation

The freehold and leasehold properties that comprise the council's properties have been valued as at 31st March 2009 by external independent valuers, Messrs Wilsons Commercial, Incorporated Valuers. Valuations have been made on the basis set out in the Statement of Accounting Policies, except that not all properties were inspected. This was neither practical nor considered by the valuer to be necessary for the purpose of valuation. Plant and machinery that form fixtures to the building are included in the valuation of the building.

Witney Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2021

11 Financing of Capital Expenditure

	2021	2020
	£	£
The following capital expenditure during the year:		
Fixed Assets Purchased	75,830	47,737
	<u>75,830</u>	<u>47,737</u>
was financed by:		
Capital Grants	11,562	5,205
Revenue:		
Capital Projects Reserve	37,802	36,357
Equipment Replacement Reserve	1,816	-
Precept and Revenue Income	24,650	6,175
	<u>75,830</u>	<u>47,737</u>

12 Information on Assets Held

Fixed assets owned by the council include the following:

Operational Land and Buildings

The Corn Exchange
Langdale Hall
Burwell Hall
Madley Park Community Centre
West Witney Sports Ground
The Leys Recreation Ground
Allotment Sites – 3
Cemetery Lodge
Windrush Cemetery

Vehicles and Equipment

Light Vans – 4
Playground Equipment
Sundry works department equipment
Sundry public halls and office furniture and equipment

Infrastructure Assets

Car park
Footpaths and footpath lighting
Bus shelters
Other street furniture
The Leys Splashpark

Witney Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2021

12 Information on Assets Held (cont'd)

Community Assets

Lake and Country Park
Cemeteries – 2
War Memorials - 2
Various play and amenity areas
Childrens' play areas
Council regalia and artefacts

13 Investments

	Investments Other Than Loans
Cost	£
At 01 April 2020	60,469
At 31 March 2021	<u>60,469</u>
Amounts Written Off	
At 31 March 2021	<u>-</u>
Net Book Value	
At 31 March 2021	60,469
Deferred Debtors - Loans	<u>3,600</u>
	<u>64,069</u>
At 01 April 2020	60,469
Deferred Debtors - Loans	<u>3,600</u>
	<u>64,069</u>

At 31 March 2021 the investments included above at a cost of £60,469 had a market value of £61,054 (31 March 2020 - £61,493).

Witney Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2021

14 Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Debtors - General	46,903	30,056
Debtors - Bookings	1,017	12,249
Provision for Doubtful Debts	-	(536)
Trade Debtors	47,920	41,769
VAT Recoverable	44,362	42,808
Prepayments	39,227	17,265
Accrued Income	5,402	-
Accrued Interest Income	620	676
Capital Grant Debtors	143,884	143,884
	281,415	246,402

15 Current Asset Investments

	2021	2020
	£	£
Public Sector Deposit Fund (CCLA)	1,043,235	1,041,173
	1,043,235	1,041,173

16 Creditors and Accrued Expenses

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade Creditors	106,994	65,231
Superannuation Payable	11,590	-
Payroll Taxes and Social Security	11,505	-
Accruals	25,588	19,334
Income in Advance	15,006	14,498
	170,683	99,063

Witney Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2021

17 Financial Commitments under Operating Leases

The council had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases of property as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Obligations expiring within one year	-	-
Obligations expiring between two and five years	-	-
Obligations expiring after five years	15,500	13,750
	<u>15,500</u>	<u>16,545</u>

The council had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases of equipment as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Obligations expiring within one year	6,782	2,795
Obligations expiring between two and five years	1,557	5,120
Obligations expiring after five years	-	-
	<u>8,339</u>	<u>7,915</u>

18 Deferred Grants

	2021	2020
	£	£
Capital Grants Unapplied		
At 01 April	477,718	474,423
Grants received in the year	363,089	8,500
Applied to finance capital investment	(11,562)	(5,205)
At 31 March	<u>829,245</u>	<u>477,718</u>
Capital Grants Applied		
At 01 April	1,002,486	1,047,486
Grants Applied in the year	11,562	5,205
Released to offset depreciation	(49,964)	(50,205)
At 31 March	<u>964,084</u>	<u>1,002,486</u>
Total Deferred Grants		
At 31 March	<u>1,793,329</u>	<u>1,480,204</u>
At 01 April	<u>1,480,204</u>	<u>1,521,909</u>

Capital Grants are accounted for on an accruals basis and grants received have been credited to Deferred Grants Account. Amounts are released from the Deferred Grants Account to offset any provision for depreciation charged to revenue accounts in respect of assets that were originally acquired with the assistance of such grants.

Witney Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2021

19 Capital Financing Account

	2021	2020
	£	£
Balance at 01 April	3,723,200	3,787,198
Financing capital expenditure in the year		
Additions - using revenue balances	64,268	42,532
Disposal of fixed assets	(1,816)	(6,456)
Depreciation eliminated on disposals	1,816	5,168
Reversal of depreciation	(157,816)	(155,447)
Deferred grants released	49,964	50,205
Balance at 31 March	3,679,616	3,723,200

The Capital Financing Account represents revenue and capital resources applied to finance capital expenditure or for the repayment of external loans. It also includes the reversal of depreciation to ensure it does not impact upon the amount to be met from precept. It does not represent a reserve that the council can use to support future expenditure.

20 Earmarked Reserves

	Balance at	Contribution	Contribution	Balance at
	01/04/2020	to reserve	from reserve	31/03/2021
	£	£	£	£
Capital Projects Reserves	806,009	3,500	(44,302)	765,207
Asset Renewal Reserves	128,843	7,171	(1,816)	134,198
Other Earmarked Reserves	530,630	308,435	(130,550)	708,515
Total Earmarked Reserves	1,465,482	319,106	(176,668)	1,607,920

The Capital Projects Reserves are credited with amounts set aside from revenue to part finance specific projects which are part of the council's capital programme.

The Other Earmarked Reserves are credited with amounts set aside from revenue to fund specific known commitments of the council.

The Other Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2021 are set out in detail at Appendix A.

21 Capital Commitments

The council had no other capital commitments at 31 March 2021 not otherwise provided for in these accounts.

22 Contingent Liabilities

The council is not aware of any contingent liabilities at the date of these accounts.

Witney Town Council

Notes to the Accounts

31 March 2021

23 Reconciliation of Revenue Cash Flow

	2021	2020
	£	£
Net Operating Surplus for the year	365,724	337,576
Add/(Deduct)		
Interest and Investment Income	(5,066)	(11,840)
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors	(35,013)	72,399
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	71,620	(36,483)
Revenue activities net cash inflow	<u>397,265</u>	<u>361,652</u>

24 Movement in Cash

	2021	2020
	£	£
Balances at 01 April		
Cash with accounting officers	585	545
Cash at bank	<u>1,225,535</u>	<u>915,054</u>
	<u>1,226,120</u>	<u>915,599</u>
Balances at 31 March		
Cash with accounting officers	615	585
Cash at bank	<u>1,913,033</u>	<u>1,225,535</u>
	<u>1,913,648</u>	<u>1,226,120</u>
Net cash inflow	<u>687,528</u>	<u>310,521</u>

25 Post Balance Sheet Events

There are no significant Post Balance Sheet events since the preparation of these accounts, up to the date of their final adoption (on 28th June 2021), which would have a material impact on the amounts and results reported herein.

Witney Town Council

Appendices

31 March 2021

Appendix A

Schedule of F earmarked Reserves

	<u>Balance at</u> <u>01/04/2020</u> £	<u>Contribution</u> <u>to reserve</u> £	<u>Contribution</u> <u>from reserve</u> £	<u>Balance at</u> <u>31/03/2021</u> £
<u>Capital Projects Reserves</u>				
Sports & Recreation	168,416		(9,185)	159,231
Cemetery Access Road	68,853			68,853
Rolling Capital Fund	568,740	3,500	(35,117)	537,123
	<u>806,009</u>	<u>3,500</u>	<u>(44,302)</u>	<u>765,207</u>
<u>Asset Replacement Reserves</u>				
Renewals Fund	128,843	7,171	(1,816)	134,198
	<u>128,843</u>	<u>7,171</u>	<u>(1,816)</u>	<u>134,198</u>
<u>Other F earmarked Reserves</u>				
Memorial Maintenance	26,301	4,000		30,301
Town Hall Maintenance	31,799			31,799
Amenity Lands	60,469			60,469
Building Repairs (General)	12,997			12,997
Election Fund	4,791			4,791
Deferred Projects	57,031			57,031
Committed Funds	105,900	114,640	(105,900)	114,640
Public Halls	73,389	12,900	(24,650)	61,639
Madley Park	14,480	6,500		20,980
Spashpark	90,000	40,000		130,000
Towerhill Cemetery Chapel	13,000	5,000		18,000
Corn Exchange Lift	40,000	10,000		50,000
Youth Council	473			473
Play Equipment Renewals		13,800		13,800
Climate/Biodiversity		13,050		13,050
Leys Pavilom		7,900		7,900
Infrastructure		9,600		9,600
Electric Vehicles		4,200		4,200
OSS Contingency		66,845		66,845
	<u>530,630</u>	<u>308,435</u>	<u>(130,550)</u>	<u>708,515</u>
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES	<u>1,465,482</u>	<u>319,106</u>	<u>(176,668)</u>	<u>1,607,920</u>

Witney Town Council

31 March 2021

Annual Report Tables

Table. 1 – Budget & Actual Comparison

	Budget £	Actual £
Net Expenditure		
Public Halls	207,926	140,939
Parks & Recreation Grounds	353,056	271,404
Allotments	10,119	4,531
Cemeteries & Closed Churchyards	254,346	206,883
Community Support	174,498	102,485
Planning & Development (including Markets)	20,004	20,066
Town Centre & Highways	298,354	241,832
Community Transport	21,000	-
Council Tax Benefit Support Grant	(30,454)	(30,454)
Net Direct Services Costs	1,308,849	957,686
Corporate Management	173,873	163,231
Democratic & Civic	138,396	147,068
Net Democratic, Management and Civic Costs	312,269	310,299
Interest & Investment Income	(8,000)	(5,010)
Capital Expenditure	132,000	64,268
Transfers to/(from) other reserves	(55,900)	142,438
(Deficit from)/Surplus to General Reserve	(60,519)	159,018
Precept on Principal Authority	1,628,699	1,628,699

Witney Town Council

31 March 2021

Annual Report Tables

Table. 2 – Service Income & Expenditure

Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £
	Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
CULTURAL & RELATED SERVICES				
Public Halls}	179,842	(38,903)	140,939	79,100
Parks & Recreation Grounds	306,617	(35,213)	271,404	289,211
Allotments	4,531	-	4,531	10,803
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES				
Cemeteries & Closed Churchyards	298,382	(91,499)	206,883	148,576
Community Support	102,485	-	102,485	108,631
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES				
Planning & Development	20,066	-	20,066	18,433
HIGHWAYS, ROADS & TRANSPORT SERVICES				
Town Centre & Highways	243,703	(1,871)	241,832	246,682
OTHER SERVICES				
Council Tax Benefit Support Grant	-	(30,454)	(30,454)	(29,327)
CENTRAL SERVICES				
Corporate Management	183,741	(20,510)	163,231	100,914
Democratic & Civic	88,018	-	88,018	106,732
Civic Expenses	59,050	-	59,050	29,563
Net Cost of Services	1,486,435	(218,450)	1,267,985	1,109,318

Witney Town Council

Internal Audit Report 2020-21: Final update

Adrian Shepherd-Roberts

*For and on behalf of
Auditing Solutions Ltd*

Background

All town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Return. Auditing Solutions Ltd has provided this service to Witney Town Council since 2003.

This report sets out the work undertaken in relation to the 2020-21 financial year which was completed by 11th December 2020 and 26th March and 9th June 2021. Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have again undertaken our reviews for the year remotely: we wish to thank the Clerk and the Responsible Finance Officer & HR Officer in assisting the process, providing all necessary documentation in electronic format to facilitate completion of our review for the year to date. We have, in the circumstances, reduced, in some areas, the volume of transactions examined, whilst still ensuring governance and financial controls remain effective.

Internal Audit Approach

In undertaking our reviews for the year, we have had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the year-end Statement of Accounts/Annual Return. We have employed a combination of selective sampling techniques (where appropriate) and 100% detailed checks in a number of key areas in order to gain sufficient assurance that the Council's financial and regulatory systems and controls are appropriate and fit for the purposes intended.

Our programme of cover has been designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council's financial systems are robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the Council's Annual Return, which requires independent assurance over a number of internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

We have concluded that, on the basis of the programme of work we have undertaken, the Council has maintained adequate and effective internal control arrangements during the year.

We are also pleased to record that, in the areas examined, no major issues or concerns have been identified and that we consider the Clerk and her staff continue to operate generally effective control procedures in each relevant area. We ask that members consider the content of this report and acknowledge that the report has been reviewed by Council.

We have completed and signed the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the year's Annual Governance and Accountability Return, having concluded that, in all significant respects, the control objectives set out in that report were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council.

This report has been prepared for the sole use of Witney Town Council. To the fullest extent permitted by law, no responsibility or liability is accepted by Auditing Solutions Ltd to any third party who purports to use or rely, for any reason whatsoever, on this report, its contents or conclusions.

Detailed Report

Review of Accounting Arrangements & Bank Reconciliations

The Council maintains its accounting records using Omega software and continues to operate three bank accounts with Barclays, the Current account being used for the receipt of income and processing of high value payments, with the second Imprest account used for all routine payments and the third for retention of surplus funds and to provide funding for the former two accounts.

Our objective here is to ensure that the accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. To that end, we have:

- Ensured that the ledger remains in balance at the current date;
- Verified the opening trial balance detail with that reported in the 2019-20 Accounts and Annual Return;
- Checked and agreed transactions in the three bank account cashbooks to the relevant bank statements for April and September and October 2020 and January and March 2021 noting that these records continue to be maintained in a timely and accurate manner;
- Checked and agreed all inter account “sweep” transactions between the Imprest and premium accounts, to retain a daily balance on the former of £1,000, for the same months; and
- Checked detail on bank reconciliations as at 30th April and 30th September 2020 and 31st January and 31st March 2021 for each account to ensure that no long-standing uncleared cheques or other potentially anomalous balancing entries exist.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have been identified from work completed in this area for the financial year.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has robust corporate governance arrangements in place; that Council and Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders and that, as far as we are able to ascertain, no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been or are being considered for implementation. We: -

- Noted previously that the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were reviewed and formally approved at the Full Annual Council meeting in March and September 2016;
- Noted previously that General Powers of Competence were adopted at the May 2019 Full Council meeting; and
- Have continued our review of the Council’s minutes and consideration of other governance issues for the year to identify whether or not any issues exist that may have

an adverse effect, through litigation or other causes, on the Council's future financial stability.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have been identified from work currently in this area. We have, however, noted with the Clerk the requirement to review the Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations in conjunction with the latest model documents issued by NALC. We will undertake further work at our final year end audit. We note that the review of these documents may be undertaken later in this financial year, however due to the current COVID situation this may be deferred.

Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate records, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available;
- An official order has been raised for the acquisition of goods or service delivery, where one would be anticipated;
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount;
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed; and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

We completed our testing in this area, examining a sample of payments to 31st January 2021.

We also note that VAT returns continue to be completed in a timely and accurate manner, with electronic "on-line" submission now in place, in line with HMRC requirements. We have examined the quarterly reclaims to March 2021 confirming that the detail correlates to that in the Omega VAT control account.

Conclusions

No matters arise in this area warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks identified in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

We note that the LCRS based risk assessment documentation was formally re-adopted by Council in 2020-21.

We have also examined the Council's insurance policy schedule for 2020-21, with cover again provided by Zurich Municipal, noting that Fidelity Guarantee cover is in place at £5 million, Public Liability at £15 million & Employer's Liability at £10 million.

Conclusions

No issues arise in this area warranting formal comment or recommendation.

Precept Determination and Budgetary Control

We aim in this area of our work to ensure that the Council has appropriate procedures in place to determine its future financial requirements leading to the adoption of an approved budget and formal determination of the amount of the precept placed on the District Council, that effective arrangements are in place to monitor budgetary performance throughout the financial year and that the Council has identified and retains appropriate reserve funds to meet future spending plans.

We note from draft minutes that the precept of £1,691,877 for 2021-22 was approved by Full Council at its meeting on 15th February 2021.

We also note that members continue to receive regular budget monitoring reports with over/under-spends and the level of earmarked reserves the subject of regular review.

Conclusions

There are no matters requiring formal comment or recommendation in this area of our review process.

Review of Income

The Council receives income from a plethora of sources in addition to the annual precept including allotments, cemeteries, sports pitches and the Corn Exchange. We have previously agreed a five-year strategic plan of cover of these areas with the Town Clerk and Council, which is subject to ongoing review and update, where necessary, following any changes in service provision. We have: -

- Noted that the burial fees were approved for 2020-21 and in conjunction with this detail we have;
- Examined the controls in place over the identification and recovery of income due to the Council from the two cemeteries together with the invoicing, tracing detail from the source documents and the burial records to the subsequent receipt and banking of the fees.
- We also note from the Committee minutes that fees have been reviewed and approved for 2021-2022 in respect of burials and halls.

- Also reviewed the unpaid invoices relating to the sales ledgers and we are satisfied that a significant amount of work has been undertaken to reduce the outstanding debtor position. The sales ledger reflects this significant amount of work and we consider that the debtor position is being controlled and monitored to a very satisfactory standard.

Conclusions

There are no matters requiring recommendation in this area of our review process.

Petty Cash Account

Our aim in this area is to ensure that appropriate controls are in place; that all expenditure incurred is adequately supported by trade invoices or till receipts; that the expenditure is appropriate for the Council's requirements; that VAT has been separately identified for periodic recovery and that cheque encashments from the main cashbooks are properly recorded.

We have not physically checked the cash but have reviewed the holding from the information that we have been provided. As we are working remotely, we suggest that where possible an independent check is undertaken to confirm that the cash has been checked and the account balances. This should be minuted accordingly.

At the interim update review we completed, as part of our "Review of Expenditure" a sample payments made through use of Fuel Cards referencing the entry in the nominal ledger.

Conclusions

There are no matters requiring formal comment or recommendation in this area of our review process.

Salaries and Wages

In examining the Council's payroll function, we aim to confirm that extant legislation is being appropriately observed as regards adherence to the Employee Rights Act 1998 and the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) legislation as regards the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions, together with meeting the requirements of the local government pension scheme, as further revised from 1st April 2018 in relation to employee percentage bandings. To meet that objective, we have checked detail of payroll transactions in September 2020, ensuring that: -

- Gross salaries are paid in accord with the approved NJC scale points;
- The correct PAYE codes and NIC tables were being applied;
- Appropriate rates of superannuation deductions are being applied;
- Timesheets are prepared, signed by the employee and certified as correct for payment by their supervising officer; and
- Net salary payments, via the BACS banking process, were in accord with staff payslips for the month.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have been identified in this area of our review.

Fixed Asset Registers

The Governance and Accountability Manual requires all councils to maintain a record of all assets owned. We have checked and agreed the principles used in the detail, as recorded in the Council's Asset Register following the review by DCK Accounting Solutions Limited (DCK), noting that it is prepared using purchase cost values or where that value is unknown at the previous year's return level or uplifted or decreased to reflect the acquisition or disposal of assets or a proxy cost as detailed in the Governance and Accountability Manual (March 2020)

Conclusion

No issues require formal comment or recommendation.

Investments and Loans

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is "investing" surplus funds, be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis in appropriate banking and investment institutions, that an appropriate investment policy is in place, that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on any such investments made, that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records. We also aim to ensure that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with appropriate loan agreements.

The Council has two specific investments with CCLA Investment Management Limited, a deposit account and a long-term investment in the CCLA Property Fund, with the remaining surplus funds being held in the Barclays Business Premium account.

We note from the Policy Governance & Finance Committee minutes that an Investment Strategy was approved in November 2020 for this financial year.

We also note that the Council have provided a loan to the Witney Town Bowls Club repayable over a ten-year term.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area of our review.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return

The Accounts and Audit Regulations required that all Councils prepare a detailed Statement of Accounts, together with supporting statements identifying other aspects of the Council's financial affairs.

As part of our year-end review we have checked the March 2021 cash books and nominal ledgers.

We have also examined the Council's procedures in relation to the preparation of the year-end detailed Annual Governance and Accountability Return data, also reviewing the accounts for the identification of year-end debtors and creditors with no issues arising.

Conclusions

No issues have arisen in this review area and, on the basis of work undertaken during the year, we have duly signed off the Internal Audit Report of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, assigning positive assurances in each relevant area.



What is CCIN?

<https://www.councils.coop/>

A network of local authorities committed to reforming the way they work through building an equal partnership with local people.

The network is open to all UK councils regardless of political affiliation who can demonstrate innovation and a willingness to drive forward the cooperative council agenda. We also welcome affiliate members from professional bodies, policy groups and other associations.

CCIN work together to learn, share and develop innovative new approaches to turning co-operative principles into local practice that makes a tangible difference across our communities.

What are the benefits for Witney Town Council?

By becoming part of the network we will:

- access the latest ideas and thinking about putting Cooperative principles into practice
- position your council as an innovator
- help to influence policy thinking at national level
- share examples of projects and initiatives and learn from others about what works
- co-produce tools and techniques to support the development of cooperative approaches
- be invited to Cooperative Conferences around the country where you can meet and work with peers
- join an officer network who are leading the development of new approaches
- have access to a cadre of ambitious political leaders who are trying to bring change to their communities
- access a growing body of resources on the CCIN website
- join the debate on our active social media platforms
- access our multi-supplier Dynamic Purchasing System of specialist organisations to help you develop policy, implement prototypes and build capacity when you need to move quickly and flexibly
- profile your council's achievements nationally.

Other members

Larger councils that are members include those of a range of political colours such as Oxford, Milton Keynes, Southampton, Hull, Plymouth, Torbay and Preston. Other town councils who are associates are also of all political colours and include Billingham, Halewood, Winsford and Seaton Valley.

How can Witney Town Council join?

We are eligible for Associate Membership at a cost of £500 per year. In return we would receive the following specific services.

Member benefit	Associate
Mailings inc Monthly eNewsletter	Yes, 10 email addresses
Access to Peer Review	No
Access to Officers' Network	Yes
Access to Procurement Framework	Yes
Access to Members' Forum	Yes
Access to 'Membership Category' WhatsApp Group	Yes
Able to apply for Policy Lab & Policy Prototype funding	Yes
Submit Case Studies for the website	Yes
Submit Case Studies for the Case Studies printed pack	Yes
Submit a blog post ⁷	Yes
Annual conference and AGM attendance	1 free place, others at 50% discount
Invitations to CCIN events	Yes
Printed publications on request	Yes
Access to bespoke Induction Programme	Yes
Eligible to stand for EOC	Yes
Eligible to vote for EOC members	Yes
Eligible to stand for V&P Board	Yes
Eligible to vote for V&P Board members	Yes

In particular the following are of particular value to Witney:

- Advice on service improvement and community involvement
- Training for councillors and officers
- Access to expertise in innovation
- A way to promote the needs of market towns as well as meeting our own
- Grant funding and expertise for innovation projects with other members – recent examples include a tablet loan scheme for unemployed people, an economic development community programme led by Oxford
- Support for promoting new cooperatives in Witney

FULL COUNCIL

Date: 28 June 2021

Title: Civic Announcements

Contact Officer: Secretary to the Mayor – Loraine Harwood

APRIL 2021 – JUNE 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

Tower Hill School – ‘School Streets’
Brize Norton briefing
101st birthday tea with resident
Witney Pride March

REPRESENTING and PROMOTING WITNEY

Global Safety Week – Moshon Data invitation to partake in live safety demonstration

KEY EVENTS AND COUNCIL ACTIVITY

High Sheriff’s Swearing in Ceremony – virtual
Reserve Forces and Cadets Association passing out parade - virtual

RAISING FUNDS

Windrush Radio virtual Music Festival opening – raising money for Guideposts for wheelchair access

Mayor's Charities 2020-22:

- Homestart
- Got2B
- Guideposts - Witney

Prepared by:

Cllrs Joy Aitman & Liz Duncan

FULL COUNCIL COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 28 June 2021

Title: Project Update

Contact Officer: Project Officer - Nicky Cayley

Background

The purpose of this report is to update the Council on the current status of projects falling under the remit of the Project Officer.

Current Situation

Park Road

- Priority project
- Town Clerk and Councillors have held meetings with neighbours to reassure them of any concerns.
- Rocking horse and slide have been refurbished by the Works Team and will be re installed – the horse will be fixed for health and safety reasons
- Members have selected a contractor to install new equipment.
- The space net will also be installed – away from neighbouring houses.
- The equipment will be complimented by a bench and a hopscotch area will be painted onto some existing hardstanding.
- There will be space for residents to add to the park in future – whether this is play equipment or other items such as raised beds or sensory items.
- The Park should be ready to open in the summer holidays.

Risk

1. The budget of £20, 000 is not sufficient enough to fill the park with enough equipment to alleviate residents' concerns that the park will be used for football. To alleviate this risk, members are invited to consider increasing the budget by £5, 000. The extra equipment will "fill" the open space further, providing obstacle to minimise ball games. It will also provide a rich and high-quality play experience for the town's younger residents, whilst ensuring that there is still room for residents to add to the space at a later date.

Windrush Place Allotments

- The Works Team have now completed all jobs on this site with the exception of the disabled composting toilet.
- There are still some outstanding issues to be addressed by the developers before they are issued with a practical completion certificate – Officers are pushing hard for these to be done.
- Officers expect to be in a position to handover the site to the Allotment Association by the end of June or first week in July subject to legal issues being resolved.
- Just before the site is handed over, the Council's Works Team will flail the plots to cut down the wild flowers, weeds and grass that has accumulated on them.
- The Community Hub will be delivered after the site is open but this will not unduly affect the plot holders.

Risk

- That the developer fails to rectify snagging issues in a timely manner – this could be mitigated by the Council retaining a portion of the payment for these works and completing the jobs in house. Due to pressures on the Works Team this is not the preferred option.

Memorial Bench

- Rotary has not responded to emails arising if it wishes to go ahead with the commemorative Covid-19 bench.

Corn Exchange

- Phase 2 is progressing well, with the tender for lighting and sound expected to be signed off by the Working Party on 22 June. The tender can then be sent out.
- A consultation has been held with user groups and a design layout for theatrical seating has now been selected. A tender will now be drawn up for this.
- The Project Officer continued to research possible funding streams, including smaller grant funders, for a screen and projector suitable for live streaming NT productions; as previously advised, funding is severely limited due to the pandemic and is focusing on enabling existing venues to re-open rather than encouraging new start-ups. Whilst there is no positive news on this, research will continue into all possibilities.

Risk

- That no funding stream can be identified for the screen and projector.

Leys Recreation Ground – Bowling Green Sewers/Splash Park Grey Water

- Officers have not yet had the opportunity to begin working on this project, but will ensure that sufficient financial information is available to inform the budget setting process towards the end of this year.

Burwell Hall – Renewable Energy Heating System

- The heating system at Burwell Hall has reached the end of its life with replacement parts not being available.
- This affords the Council the opportunity to replace gas with a renewable energy source – preferably an air or ground source heat pump.
- The Project Officer has arranged meetings with relevant contractors for herself and the Maintenance and Environmental Services Officer in the next couple of weeks to begin the process.

Risk

- None currently identified.

Skatepark

- Zoom meetings have been held with Cllr Butterfield and Mr Pockett.
- Mr Pockett has set up a constituted group “Ramp Up The Leys” and will set up a bank account in order to begin fundraising.
- The Communications Officer has organised a Survey Monkey Survey to be distributed by the group.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability. There are no areas of environmental concern in the current project list and there is the opportunity to make a positive improvement in terms of the heating at Burwell Hall.

Financial implications

- Park Road play area requires additional funding as described in the report.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. to increase the budget for Park Road Play area by £5,000 (to come from rolling capital) in order to provide obstacles to minimise ball games and provide a rich and high-quality play experience for the town's younger residents, ensuring that there is still room for residents to add to the space at a later date;
2. as the final design is dependent upon budget, that this is delegated to Officers and Councillors Ashbourne and Duncan.

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