

Full Council Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 2nd August, 2021 at 7.00 pm

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

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **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 announcements concerning Covid-19 Pandemic restrictions, numbers of the public will be limited to 20, with priority given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda. 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, hand sanitiser will be available and face masks must be worn when entering and exiting the meeting room.

For further information or clarification regarding the meeting contact the Democratic and Legal Services Officer at democracy@witney-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.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 12)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28 June 2021 in accordance with Standing Order 18 including questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item.

4. **Public Participation**

The meeting will adjourn for this item.

Members of the public may speak for a maximum of **five minutes** each during the period of public participation, in line with Standing Order 42. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

5. **An Update from Witney Oxfordshire County Councillors and West Oxfordshire District Councillors**

To receive a short verbal update from 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 and Sub Committees**

To receive and NOTE the RESOLUTIONS in the minutes of the meetings held between 29 June and 26 July 2021, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein.

- a) **Climate, Biodiversity & Planning - 29 June (attached) & 20 July 2021 (to follow)** (Pages 13 - 22)
- b) **Parks & Recreation Committee - 5 July 2021** (Pages 23 - 28)
- c) **Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments - 12 July 2021** (Pages 29 - 32)
- d) **Stronger Communities Committee - 19 July 2021** (Pages 33 - 38)
- e) **Policy, Governance & Finance Committee - 26 July 2021** (Pages 39 - 44)

8. **Future Meetings of the Council**

To consider the future of Council meetings following the end to national restrictions, amid the continuing Covid-19 pandemic.

9. **Notice of Motion - Community Planning**

To receive the following motion, proposed by Cllr R Smith and seconded by Cllr M Jones:

'Witney Town Council believes planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore, calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to object to and shape individual planning applications.'

10. **Communications Strategy (Pages 45 - 66)**

To receive and consider the Town Council Communications Strategy as recommended for adoption by the Stronger Communities committee on 19th July 2021.

11. **Civic Announcements (Pages 67 - 68)**

To receive the report of the Mayor.

12. **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.

13. **Correspondence**

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

14. **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.

15. **Sealing of Documents**

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

No. 84 Allotment Land Transfer – Engrossment [Allotment land at North Curbridge, Witney – known as Windrush Allotments].

16. **Exclusion of Press & 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.

17. **Corn Exchange - Phase Two Refurbishment Contracts**

Following a meeting of the Corn Exchange Working Party earlier in the day;

- a) To receive the recommendation on the awarding of the Sound & Lighting contract; and,
- b) To provide an update on the agreed tender specification for the retractable seating contract.



Town Clerk

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**MEETING OF
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 28 June 2021

At 7.00 pm in the Main Hall, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor L Duncan (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne T Ashby D Butterfield O Collins D Enright	V Gwatkin M Jones A Prosser R Smith
Officers:	Sharon Groth Adam Clapton Tina Jardine	Town Clerk Deputy Town Clerk Responsible Financial Officer
Others:	1 member of the public.	

306 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J Aitman, R Bolger, H Eaglestone, D Harvey, J King and D Temple.

The committee noted that Cllr King was unable to attend an in-person meeting due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

307 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared by members at this point in the meeting.

308 **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING**

The Chair presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of the Town Council held on 4 May 2021 be received and agreed as a correct record.

309 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation at the meeting.

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

Cllr Enright provided an update from the County Council on discussions with bus companies to provide more frequent services. Members were also advised of a zero emissions initiative in Oxford, changes to the A40 bus lanes and an imminent consultation, 'Access to Witney' regarding the Shore's Green junction.

Cllr Ashbourne provided an update from the District Council, noting a Loyal Free App for local businesses which would be used in Witney, an open consultation on Covid-19 measures in the High Street and the reorganisation of the Council's Section 106 database.

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

There were no updates from Councillors who serve as nominated representatives on outside bodies.

312 **CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING - 20 APRIL, 18 MAY AND 8 JUNE 2021**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

The Deputy Town Clerk noted that in respect of minute no. 213(3) of 20th April, the agreed trail at the Lake & Country Park provided by Rediscover Nature would no longer be taking place.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Advisory Committee meetings held on 20 April, 18 May and 8 June 2021 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

313 **PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE - 17 MAY 2021**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee meeting held on 17 May 2021 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

314 **HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE - 24 MAY 2021**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Advisory Committee meeting held on 24 May 2021 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

315 **STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE - 7 JUNE 2021**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Stronger Communities Advisory Committee meeting held on 7 June 2021 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

316 **POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE - 14 JUNE 2021**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Advisory Committee meeting held on 14 June 2021 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

317 **CORN EXCHANGE WORKING PARTY - 1 JUNE (ATTACHED) & 22 JUNE 2021 (TO FOLLOW)**

The Chair of the Committee presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

The Chair noted that A Stone of Drama by Design was not listed as being in attendance at the meeting held on 22 June.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Corn Exchange Working Party meetings held on 1 and 22 June 2021, with the above amendment be received and any recommendations therein approved.

318 **APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Chair sought nominations for vacancies on three outside organisations which had arisen since the Annual Council Meeting in May.

Resolved:

That the following appointments be made:

1. Lower Windrush Valley Project – Cllr. Ruth Smith to May 2023
2. RAF Brize Norton Local Consultation Group – Cllr. Liz Duncan to May 2023
3. Witney Traffic Advisory Committee – Cllr. Andrew Prosser to May 2023

319 **DESIGNATION OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

Members noted the importance of the Responsible Financial Officer in statute and welcomed Tina Jardine to the role.

Resolved:

That Tina Jardine be officially designated as the Responsible Financial Officer at Witney Town Council.

320 **FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL**

The Committee considered the most appropriate way to hold the next cycle of Council meetings in the absence of legislation on virtual meetings in the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Members agreed as national restrictions had been extended until 19th July, there was no difference from when the decision had been taken to hold virtual Advisory meetings in May. Therefore, it was a sensible and cautious approach to continue holding virtual meetings during the next cycle with an in-person meeting to pass any un-delegated recommendations on 2 August 2021.

Resolved:

That, the forthcoming cycle of Council meetings be held as Advisory Committee Meetings with ratification of decisions, not made under delegated powers, taking place at an in-person Full Council meeting on 2 August 2021.

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

The Town Clerk explained that the AGAR had already been reviewed by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee at its meeting on 14 June 2021 but the Council needed to formally agree and adopt it.

Resolved:

1. that the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2021 be approved, and formally adopted by the Council;
2. that the Statement of Accounts at Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2021 be approved, and formally adopted by the Council;
3. that in light of the above the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2020/21 be formally agreed and adopted by the Council.
4. that the unaudited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 be noted.

322 **NOTICE OF MOTION - CO-OPERATIVE COUNCILS INNOVATION NETWORK**

The Council considered a motion concerning the Town Council joining the Co-operative Council's Innovation Network, the motion being proposed by Cllr D Enright and seconded by Cllr R Smith on the evening.

There was agreement that the network appeared to offer benefits to members, but these might be more suited to principal Councils. The benefits at town and parish Council level were uncertain and if membership was taken there would need to be a review of the interactions from the network to inform debate on the issue in the future.

Resolved:

1. That, Witney Town Council becomes a member of the Co-operative Council's Innovation Network, at a cost of £500.
2. That this be funded from rolling capital
3. That the membership be reviewed during the budget-setting process to confirm the benefits it brings to the Town Council.

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

The Council received a recommendation of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee concerning the Burford Experimental Traffic 7.5 Tonne Regulation Order.

Members agreed that the interim report provided to the Town Council appeared to show that there had been an impact on Witney due to the order. Therefore, the Council should support the Windrush Valley Traffic Action Group in its campaign and ask Oxfordshire County Council to remove the ETRO and investigate alternative solutions to the issue at Burford.

Resolved:

That, Witney Town Council supports the Windrush Valley Traffic Action Group and asks Oxfordshire County Council to remove the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order at Burford Bridge at the earliest opportunity.

324 **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Council received a list of engagements undertaken by the Mayor since the last meeting.

The Chair, Cllr Duncan thanked the Mayor for her continued hard work in what continued to be difficult circumstances.

Resolved:

That the Civic Announcements report be noted.

325 **PROJECT UPDATE**

The Council received and considered the report of the Project Officer regarding projects at; Park Road Play Area, Windrush Place Allotments, Corn Exchange, Burwell Hall and The Leys Recreation Ground.

Members were pleased to see the projects progressing and were advised that the administration of the Windrush Place allotments would be transferred to the Allotment Association on completion of the legal works. All other preparation by the Town Council had been completed apart from the inclusion of a composting toilet; it was disappointing that incorrect information had caused dissatisfaction amongst residents near to the site on the potential handover date.

Resolved:

1. That, the budget for the Park Road Play Area project be increased to £10,000.
2. That, these funds are taken from the Council's rolling capital.

3. That, the delegation of the progress on this project be confirmed to Officers and Cllrs L Ashbourne and L Duncan.

326 **POSITION OF TOWN CRIER**

The Council considered the position of Town Crier for Witney for the forthcoming municipal year.

Members agreed that it had been a difficult year and the incumbent of this position had done a good job in the circumstances. Members agreed that the current arrangements should stay in place for another year, but a volunteer recruitment process should take place for the next.

Resolved:

1. That, the current arrangements for the position of Town Crier of Witney continue for the new municipal year.
2. That, a recruitment process for this position takes place for the year 2022-23.

327 **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Council received a verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk on Health & Safety matters.

Members were advised that the Leys Splash Pad had been commissioned and once Covid-19 social-distancing restrictions were lifted, it would be opened to the public.

It was also confirmed that Witney Carnival had been cancelled by the organisers due to the extension of pandemic restrictions. In response to a member, the Town Clerk confirmed that the funds allocated to this by the Town Council would be returned to the discretionary grants budget.

Resolved:

That the verbal update be noted.

328 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

There was no official communication to share but the Leader thanked Officers of the Council for their work during recent months and during the pandemic.

329 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Deputy Town Clerk shared correspondence from West Oxfordshire District Council on the future of Community Recycling Centres in Witney, following consultation.

Members were disappointed the Town Council's response to this consultation appeared to have been ignored and this should be followed up by the District Councillors who also served on this Council.

There was discussion on what would now happen in these areas and a suggestion was made that these could be parklets. Members agreed that the freed parking spaces would not be in the best location for this scheme.

330 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

There were no questions raised at the meeting.

331 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

There were no documents to seal at the meeting.

332 **EXCLUSION OF THE 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.

333 **ADOPTION OF OPEN SPACES STRATEGY**

With the permission of the Chair this item was moved up the agenda for consideration.

The Council considered the adoption of the Open Spaces Strategy, previously circulated, as a working document outlining the Council's objectives during the forthcoming five years.

Members were in agreement this was a sound, comprehensive document and looked forward to items being implemented through the Committee process.

Resolved:

That, the Open Spaces Strategy as previously circulated to members be agreed and adopted by Witney Town Council.

334 **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

The Council received the confidential report of the Town Clerk concerning Grounds Maintenance.

Resolved:

That, the recommendations contained in the Town Clerk's confidential report be agreed.

The meeting closed at: 8.14 pm

Chair

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

Held on Tuesday, 29 June 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

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

P335 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Owen Collins, Mel Jones and Andy McMahon.

P336 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

P337 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned for this item.

A member of the public addressed the Committee on Application WTC/108/21 at 43 Ducklington Lane, Witney.

The Committee reconvened following public participation.

P338 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

It was noted that two applications had already been responded to due to consultation deadlines and as Witney Town Council was the applicant on another application no response was required.

RESOLVED:

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

P339 PLANNING APPEAL DECISIONS

Notification of planning appeal decisions at 85 Barrington Close and Ash Close, Gloucester Place, Witney were received.

Resolved:

That the planning appeal notification for 85 Barrington Close and Ash Close, Gloucester Place, Witney be noted.

P340 LICENSING APPLICATION W/21/00207/PRMA - 62A HIGH STREET WITNEY OXFORDSHIRE OX28 6HJ

The Committee received and considered an application for a premises licence at 62A High Street, Witney.

Resolved:

That, no objection be raised to the application for a premises licence at 62A High Street, Witney.

P341 APPLICATION FOR VARIATION OF PREMISES LICENCE - CINEWORLD MULTIPLEX MARRIOTTS WALK WITNEY, OXFORDSHIRE OX28 6GW

The Committee received and considered an application for the variation of a premises licence at Cineworld Multiplex, Marriotts Walk, Witney.

Resolved:

That, no objection be raised to the variation of a premises licence at Cineworld Multiplex, Marriotts Walk, Witney.

P342 R3.0079/21 - REQUEST FOR SCOPING OPINION FOR THE PROPOSED 'ACCESS TO WITNEY' SCHEME

The Committee received and considered a consultation document from Oxfordshire County Council regarding a scoping opinion for an Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed 'Access to Witney' scheme.

It was agreed that the document was comprehensive and the main topic areas identified in the report should be supported. However members were of the opinion that reference should be made to the impact on the existing Station Lane junction, that quantitative data on air quality be included from the start of construction and that the views of South Leigh Parish Council regarding the extension of the radius for air quality monitoring be supported.

Resolved:

That, the Committee considers the document to be very comprehensive and supports the topics identified in the document in respect of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

In addition the following observations be forwarded to Oxfordshire County Council for consideration:

1. The impact on the existing Station Lane junction should be assessed, including using receptors if possible, as part of the process;
2. The Council supports the view of South Leigh PC on the issue of Air Quality in that the proposed monitoring up to 200m from the centre of the works is too short a distance and ideally the Air Quality Monitoring (AQM) be extended to a minimum of 0.5km; and
3. In respect of the AQM the Council feels that quantitative data should be collected from the start of construction.

The meeting closed at: 7.15 pm

Chair

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Witney Town Council
Planning Minutes - 29 June 2021

338

338- 1 WTC/093/21 Plot Ref :-21/01418/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 02/06/21
Location :- 9 WOODFORD MILL Date Returned :- 01/07/21
WOODFORD MILL
WITNEY
Proposal : Replacement of existing rear entry door and adjacent windows with French
Doors.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 2 WTC/094/21 Plot Ref :-21/01828/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 02/06/21
Location :- 30 NEW YATT ROAD Date Returned :- 01/07/21
NEW YATT ROAD
Proposal : Rear extension. Addition of bay window at 1st floor to front elevation.
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.
Members ask that the proposal does not harm the use or enjoyment of land and
buildings nearby including living conditions in residential properties - can
Officers pay due regard to ensuring that the development does not cause a
harmful loss of light to neighbouring properties.

338- 3 WTC/095/21 Plot Ref :-21/01836/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 02/06/21
Location :- 250 COLWELL DRIVE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
COLWELL DRIVE
Proposal : Demolition of conservatory and erection of single 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.

338- 4 WTC/096/21 Plot Ref :-21/01652/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 02/06/21
Location :- WELCH WAY Date Returned :- 01/07/21
WELCH WAY
Proposal : Provision of two storage units within a fenced compound.
Observations : Witney Town Council does not object to this application, members welcome the

opportunity for local amenity improvements at this site if more storage is made available by the proposed scheme. Where possible, screening would further improve the visual impact for passers by and neighbouring users.

338- 5 WTC/097/21 Plot Ref :-21/01734/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 02/06/21
Location :- 17 VINER CLOSE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
VINER CLOSE
Proposal : Front single storey extension to garage with enclosed porch. Rear single storey extension. Re-roofing & Re-cladding of existing roof & Box Dormer windows.
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.

338- 6 WTC/098/21 Plot Ref :-21/01931/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 02/06/21
Location :- 121 SCHOFIELD AVENUE Date Returned :- 30/06/21
SCHOFIELD AVENUE
Proposal : First floor extension over garage and a loft conversion.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 7 WTC/099/21 Plot Ref :-21/01868/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 02/06/21
Location :- 1 TIGER MOTH PLACE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
TIGER MOTH PLACE
Proposal : Single storey extension to side and rear.
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.

338- 8 WTC/100/21 Plot Ref :-21/01664/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 07/06/21
Location :- 28 CAMPION WAY Date Returned :- 01/07/21
CAMPION WAY
Proposal : Erection of single storey rear and side extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 9 WTC/101/21 Plot Ref :-21/01886/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 07/06/21
Location :- 43 THE CROFTS Date Returned :- 01/07/21
THE CROFTS
Proposal : Erection of single storey rear extension and re-roofing existing building.

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

338- 10 WTC/102/21 Plot Ref :-21/01710/ADV Type :- ADVERTISIN
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 07/06/21
Location :- 13 HIGH STREET Date Returned :- 01/07/21
HIGH STREET
Proposal : Installation of one fascia sign, one projecting sign and one ATM tablet (all internally illuminated) and the siting of one double sided non-illuminated A Board sign.
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, members share the concerns of the Highways Authority with regard to the placement of the A board. The A board is detrimental to safety for highway users and should be removed from the proposed scheme.

338- 11 WTC/103/21 Plot Ref :-21/01966/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/06/21
Location :- 51 MARKET SQUARE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
MARKET SQUARE
Proposal : Repairs to first floor structural timbers.
Observations : Witney Town Council makes No Comment for this application.

338- 12 WTC/104/21 Plot Ref :-21/01959/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/06/21
Location :- 10 WOODBANK Date Returned :- 01/07/21
WOODBANK
Proposal : Erection of single storey conservatory.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 13 WTC/105/21 Plot Ref :-21/01577/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/06/21
Location :- 34 WILMOT CLOSE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
WILMOT CLOSE
Proposal : Demolition of conservatory. Erection of single storey rear extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 14 WTC/106/21 Plot Ref :-21/01560/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/06/21
Location :- ABBOTT DIABETES CARE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
RANGE ROAD
WINDRUSH IND PARK
Proposal : Erection of side stores extension, Alterations and extension to the existing roadway to allow access around building and provide vehicular turning area.
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it asks that the applicant revisit their drainage plan to ensure that the proposed development does not increase risk of surface water flooding.

338- 15 WTC/107/21 Plot Ref :-21/01565/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/06/21
Location :- 35 TAPHOUSE AVENUE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
WITNEY
Proposal : Sub division of dwelling to form a Large House of Multiple Occupation and a self contained studio flat and associated works (Retrospective).
Observations : Witney Town Council object to this application. The scheme represents over-development of a site and is not in accordance with the General Principles of Policy OS2, the scheme does not form a logical complement to the existing pattern of development and the character of the area, the potential increased occupancy is not compatible with adjoining uses and members expressed concern for the harmful impact on the amenity of existing occupants. Further, the proposed use is not compliant with Policy OS4 with regard to harm to the use or enjoyment of land and buildings nearby including living conditions in residential properties.
Witney Town Council shares the concerns of the Highways Authority, the development does not have adequate parking and the proposal does not address any provision for safe cycle storage. The lack of parking impacts all residents in the cul-de-sac making the proposal anti-social.

338- 16 WTC/108/21 Plot Ref :-21/01882/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/06/21
Location :- 43 DUCKLINGTON LANE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
DUCKLINGTON LANE
Proposal : New 1 no. Bedroom Dwelling.
Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application. The proposal represents over-development in the green corridor on a main route into the Town. A residential property being accessed by the A415 would be out of character on this section of road. The proposed development is not compliant with Policy OS2 since it does not form a logical complement to the existing pattern of development. Further, it does not provide a safe and convenient pedestrian access to supporting services and facilities.
The existing tree lane at the rear of properties provides privacy for existing properties, a barrier to noise and protection from traffic pollutants. The proposal, with an opening in the tree line, would be detrimental to this and represents planning harm for neighbouring properties.
Members have noted the Consultation Comments from ERS and the WODC Drainage Engineer, and ask that Officers fully consider the constraints as identified by the reports.

338- 17 WTC/109/21 Plot Ref :-21/01703/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/06/21
Location :- 3 PAINSWICK CLOSE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
PAINSWICK CLOSE
Proposal : Conversion of garage within a coach house to gain access to garden and install a kitchen.
Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this application, the proposed scheme would change the design/character of the street-scene and disturb the existing pattern of the residential development. Further, parking is a known issue in this area and the garage conversion removes potential parking provision and/or potential

338- 18 WTC/110/21 Plot Ref :-21/01933/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/06/21
Location :- 1 BEECHGATE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
BEECHGATE
Proposal : External alterations to flats 1, 2, 5 and 9 to include the insertion of two external doors and a roof light.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 19 WTC/111/21 Plot Ref :-21/02062/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/06/21
Location :- 1 OLD PLUMBERS YARD Date Returned :- 01/07/21
CRAWLEY ROAD
WITNEY
Proposal : Single Storey Rear Extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 20 WTC/112/21 Plot Ref :-21/01538/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/06/21
Location :- 69 WEST END Date Returned :- 01/07/21
WEST END
Proposal : Replacement of Front door with a new hard wood door.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 21 WTC/113/21 Plot Ref :-21/02048/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 16/06/21
Location :- 1A CORNDELL GARDENS Date Returned :- 01/07/21
CORNDELL GARDENS
Proposal : Replace door and windows.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 22 WTC/114/21 Plot Ref :-21/02107/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 21/06/21
Location :- 35 MANOR ROAD Date Returned :- 07/07/21
MANOR ROAD
Proposal : Two storey side extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council objects 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 close proximity of the extension to trees in its ownership. It therefore requests sufficient space is left for their continued growth. It further asks that every precautionary measure is taken to avoid

damage to these trees during development, should this application be approved.

338- 23 WTC/115/21 Plot Ref :-21/02114/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 21/06/21
Location :- 9 MEADOW VIEW Date Returned :- 01/07/21
MEADOW VIEW
Proposal : Proposed re-design of kitchen, single storey extension as approved under 21/01155/HHD.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 24 WTC/116/21 Plot Ref :-21/02095/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 21/06/21
Location :- 8 BROOK LANE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
BROOK LANE
Proposal : Single storey rear extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

338- 25 WTC/117/21 Plot Ref :-21/02132/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 21/06/21
Location :- 21 HOYLE CLOSE Date Returned :- 01/07/21
HOYLE CLOSE
Proposal : Proposed single storey rear garden room extension. First floor extension over garage and conversion of garage to study.
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.

338- 26 WTC/118/21 Plot Ref :-21/01605/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 21/06/21
Location :- 30 SPRING MEADOW Date Returned :- 01/07/21
SPRING MEADOW
Proposal : New single-storey extension at the rear of the existing property consisting of a flat roof with a roof lantern and bi-fold doors opening on to the existing garden.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

The Meeting closed at : 7:15 pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

Held on Tuesday, 20 July 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser O Collins L Duncan	V Gwatkin M Jones
Officers:	Adam Clapton Claire Green Simon Wright	Deputy Town Clerk Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities Democratic & Legal Services Officer
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 Climate, Biodiversity & Planning 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 2 August 2021.

P382 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joy Aitman and Andy McMahon.

P383 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Collins declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in respect of Application No. WTC/120/21 – 2 French Close, Witney by virtue of knowing the applicant.

Councillors Gwatkin, Prosser and Collins declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 7 - Licensing Application W/21/00507/PRMA - Church Green, Witney by virtue of knowing one of the organisers.

P384 TO ADOPT AND SIGN AS CORRECT THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 & 29 JUNE 2021

Councillor Owen Collins advised that he had declared an interest in applications WTC 80 & 81/21 – 35 – 37 Woodgreen considered at the 8 June meeting by virtue of knowing the applicants.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 8 & 29 June 2021 be approved as a correct record subject to the addition above.

P385 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 8 & 29 JUNE 2021.**

There were no matters arising.

P386 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

Mr D Edwards-Hughes and Councillor Thomas Ashby addressed the Committee in respect of Application No. WTC/135/21 - Land (E) 432925 (N)209696 Downs Road

The Committee reconvened following public participation.

P387 **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.

P388 **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.

P389 **LICENSING APPLICATION W/21/00507/PRMA - CHURCH GREEN, WITNEY**

The Committee received and considered a premises licence application for the Witney Music Festival at Church Green Witney.

It was clarified that permission to hold the event on Church Green was not yet known but the Town Council had supported the event through its Stronger Communities Committee. It was noted that the organisers were looking at a town centre location to encourage people to visit other businesses in the town centre.

The Committee, whilst not objecting to the application, expressed the view that live music could be disruptive to residents near to Church Green and highlighted that any noise levels needed to be appropriate for the location.

Resolved:

That, Witney Town Council support this licensing application for the Witney Music Festival but ask that noise concerns from local residents are considered. Witney Music Festival is proposed at a smaller open space than in previous years, with more residential properties nearby. Volume levels should be actively monitored during the event and any approved noise levels adjusted according to the setting.

The meeting closed at: 7.50 pm

Chair

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Witney Town Council
Planning Minutes - 20th July 2021

387

-
- 387- 1 WTC/119/21 Plot Ref :-21/02096/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 24/06/2021
Location :- 90 RALEGH CRESCENT Date Returned :- 21/07/2021
RALEGH CRESCENT
Proposal : Proposed single and two storey side extensions and single storey rear extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.
-
- 387- 2 WTC/120/21 Plot Ref :-21/02169/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 24/06/2021
Location :- 2 FRENCH CLOSE Date Returned :- 21/07/2021
FRENCH CLOSE
Proposal : Erection of single storey front extension, two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.
-
- 387- 3 WTC/121/21 Plot Ref :-21/02058/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 24/06/2021
Location :- 16 HIGH STREET Date Returned :- 21/07/2021
HIGH STREET
Proposal : External alterations to include the Installation of non-illuminated fascia and hanging signs.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.
-
- 387- 4 WTC/122/21 Plot Ref :-21/02059/ADV Type :- ADVERTISIN
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 24/06/2021
Location :- 16 HIGH STREET Date Returned :- 21/07/2021
HIGH STREET
Proposal : New signage and decoration to shopfront. Internal fit out of existing Mistral retail unit - decoration and new fixtures. No structural alterations.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.
-
- 387- 5 WTC/123/21 Plot Ref :-21/02210/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 28/06/2021
Location :- UNIT 1-5 AVENUE TWO Date Returned :- 21/07/2021
AVENUE TWO
Proposal : Change of use from General Industrial to Builders Merchant along with external alterations to include the demolition of unit 4 to form enlarged storage yard, associated landscaping and means of enclosure with formation of a new access.

Observations : Witney Town Council object to this application. The South West corner of the site is adjacent to the main pedestrian access to Witney Lake and Country Park. This important recreational facility is in constant use and the perimeter of this site neighbours the access point to the Public Footpath right of way for families, children and dog-walkers and is also a pedestrian route for school children. The 'IN' and 'OUT' as marked on the vehicle splays on drawing '14920 - 110K - PROPOSED SITE PLAN - A1' indicate that HGVs would cross the pavement at the 'IN' gates and that vehicles exiting at the 'OUT' gates have extremely limited space to join the highway safely. This highway danger is compounded by Avenue Two being regularly used for roadside parking, which would further limit manoeuvrability for large vehicles. Members request that these points are reviewed by the Highways Authority as well as the careful consideration of the Planning Officer. Based on the proposed layout, Witney Town Council would request that prior to occupation, the applicant submit further plans to be approved by the relevant authority, to improve the access to and allowing safe routes for all to access Witney Lake & Country Park.

Additionally, members noted that the highway adjacent to the site is a frequently used cycle route which links into the cycle network for Witney. Allowing HGVs to access the site on the quiet road on the Western boundary would pose a danger for cyclists using this route.

Witney Town Council does agree in principle to the redevelopment of this site and would rather welcome an application with a revised layout that includes the vehicular access being moved to the North of the site where it would be less of a safety risk for our residents using this important recreational space.

387- 6	WTC/124/21	Plot Ref :-21/02164/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	28/06/2021
	Location :- 3 WOODSTOCK ROAD WOODSTOCK ROAD		Date Returned :-	21/07/2021
	Proposal : Erection of a detached garage.			
	Observations : Witney Town Council objects to the application based on insufficient detail and inconsistent information on the drawings submitted for this application. Drawing 'Location Map' does not show any gap between the host dwelling and the North East boundary. However, drawing '3 Woodstock Road Garage Site Plan' clearly shows a gap between the host dwelling and the North East boundary. It is unclear how the proposed garage will be accessed.			
	Members do not object to the principle of development but are not able to provide a full response without consistent/accurate detail from the applicant.			

387- 7	WTC/125/21	Plot Ref :-21/01360/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	01/07/2021
	Location :- 38 DUCKLINGTON LANE DUCKLINGTON LANE		Date Returned :-	21/07/2021
	Proposal : Erection of a 1.8 metre fence along the side of property, dropping to 1.2 metres by the road.			
	Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, members noted concerns about changes to the streetscene and indicated that soft landscaping could also be considered, which would improve biodiversity.			

387- 8 WTC/126/21 Plot Ref :-21/02231/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 01/07/2021
Location :- 9 WOODLANDS ROAD Date Returned :- 21/07/2021
Proposal : Removal of existing pitched porch roof. Replace with a mono pitched roof.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

387- 9 WTC/127/21 Plot Ref :-21/02248/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 06/07/2021
Location :- GATEWAY HOUSE Date Returned :- 22/07/2021
WINDRUSH PARK ROAD
WINDRUSH INDUSTRIAL PARK
Proposal : Erection of nine industrial units, to include external ancillary service areas, car and cycle parking.
Observations : Witney Town Council object to this application:

1) The plans do not illustrate safe on-site access for pedestrians or to the cycle facilities. West Oxfordshire Local Plan encourages active travel to work through Policy OS2, T1 and T3, members note that the proposed plan fails to make adequate provision of measures to encourage non-car modes of transport.

2) Members note the concerns of Thames Water and request an appropriate sustainable surface water strategy before approval is considered and that this approach be in line with the requirements as outlined in the relevant Planning and flood risk paragraphs of the NPPF. Further, that the identified 'inability of the existing water network to accommodate the needs of this development proposal' be fully assessed and considered.

3) Members note that the ground assessments have shown evidence of asbestos and other harmful contaminants present at the site. Witney Town Council request that to comply with Policy EH8, the report findings be given due consideration by Officers and an Asbestos Management Plan be submitted and approved ahead of works commencing.

4) The proposal locates buildings too close to the site boundary and misses an opportunity for soft landscaping buffers to be introduced.

5) The proposal does not include satisfactory provision towards meeting the needs of the declared climate emergency. Measures could include solar panels and electric vehicle charging points. Members welcome a revised proposal that more closely meets the environmental objectives as set out in the WODC Local Plan overall strategy and in particular, to comply with Policy OS3.

Witney Town Council does agree in principle to the redevelopment of this site and would rather welcome an application with a revised proposal that addresses the concerns outlined above.

387- 10 WTC/128/21 Plot Ref :-21/02305/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 06/07/2021
Location :- 8 EDINGTON ROAD Date Returned :- 22/07/2021
EDINGTON ROAD
Proposal : Conversion of garage loft into bedroom with en-suite annexe.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

387- 11 WTC/129/21 Plot Ref :-21/02278/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 06/07/2021
Location :- 45 MILL STREET Date Returned :- 22/07/2021
MILL STREET
Proposal : Erection of single storey front extension and loft conversion to include rear dormer extension and insertion of front roof lights. Associated works and landscaping.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

387- 12 WTC/130/21 Plot Ref :-21/01840/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/07/2021
Location :- 1 LOWELL PLACE Date Returned :- 22/07/2021
LOWELL PLACE
Proposal : Proposed replacement of existing timber single glazed windows with double glazed timber windows to match existing.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

387- 13 WTC/131/21 Plot Ref :-21/02368/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 08/07/2021
Location :- 31 OXFORD HILL Date Returned :- 22/07/2021
OXFORD HILL
Proposal : Demolition of existing garage and replacement with new garage with office and store above.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

387- 14 WTC/132/21 Plot Ref :-21/02344/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 12/07/2021
Location :- UNIT 14B MARRIOTT'S WALK Date Returned :- 22/07/2021
MARRIOTT'S WALK
Proposal : General refurbishment works to convert existing retail unit into a gelateria, to include a new rear deliveries entrance.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

387- 15 WTC/133/21 Plot Ref :-21/02345/ADV Type :- ADVERTISIN
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 12/07/2021
Location :- UNIT 14B MARRIOTT'S WALK Date Returned :- 22/07/2021
Proposal : Affix various non-illuminated signage.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

387- 16 WTC/134/21 Plot Ref :-21/02061/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 13/07/2021
Location :- 66 CORN STREET Date Returned :- 22/07/2021
CORN STREET
Proposal : Erection of a wooden summer house (Retrospective).
Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this planning application;

1) The proposal as outlined in the drawings, the design and access statement, and in its built form, do not match the description of development 'Erection of a wooden summer house'. The development appears to be a substantial building, separate to the host dwelling, it's design and described use an office/storage space. The current design and use are not akin to what would be expected from an ancillary summer house.

2) The design and materials fail to meet the requirements of Policy OS4 in terms of quality. Further, the site is within Witney and Cogges Conservation Area and in close proximity to a Listed Building, members expressed that consideration should be given to respecting this setting.

3) Members have shown concern for the scale of the proposed development in close proximity to the boundary and neighbouring properties, and ask that Officers pay careful consideration to any harmful impacts. Members discussed the current use of the space, which is unclear, and note the objection from a neighbour.

4) Members note the use of wooden cladding for the exterior and ask that Officers refer this to Building Control to ensure that relevant fire safety checks are conducted.

Proposal : Erection of a wooden summer house (Retrospective).

Observations : Witney Town Council objects to this planning application;

1) The proposal as outlined in the drawings, the design and access statement, and in its built form, do not match the description of development 'Erection of a wooden summer house'. The development appears to be a substantial building, separate to the host dwelling, it's design and described use an office/storage space. The current design and use are not akin to what would be expected from an ancillary summer house.

2) The design and materials fail to meet the requirements of Policy OS4 in terms of quality. Further, the site is within Witney and Cogges Conservation Area and in close proximity to a Listed Building, members expressed that consideration should be given to respecting this setting.

3) Members have shown concern for the scale of the proposed development in close proximity to the boundary and neighbouring properties, and ask that Officers pay careful consideration to any harmful impacts. Members discussed the current use of the space, which is unclear, and note the objection from a neighbour.

4) Members note the use of wooden cladding for the exterior and ask that Officers refer this to Building Control to ensure that relevant fire safety checks are conducted.

The Meeting closed at : 7:50pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

Held on Monday, 5 July 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

Councillors:	D Butterfield L Ashbourne T Ashby	L Duncan D Enright O Collins
Officers:	Adam Clapton Simon Wright Sharon Groth	Deputy Town Clerk Democratic & Legal Services Officer Town Clerk
Others:	0 members of the public.	

With 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 will require ratification at the Full Council meeting held on 2 August 2021.

PR343 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joy Aitman and Andy McMahon.

Councillor Owen Collins attended in place of Councillor Aitman.

PR344 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

PR345 MINUTES

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 May 2021. There were no matters arising.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee held on 17 May 2021 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PR346 **PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no requests to address the committee.

PR347 **COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

The Town Clerk advised that following adoption of the Open Spaces Strategy at the Council meeting on 28 June 2021 work was ongoing to allocate priorities from the Action Plan to various committees who would take ongoing responsibility.

Members would receive a report at each meeting on the priorities for the Parks & Recreation Committee.

Resolved:

That, the update be noted.

PR348 **MADLEY PARK PLAYING FIELD**

The Town Clerk updated members on progress with discussions regarding Madley Park Playing Field. A meeting had been held with Wood Green School and it had been agreed that the agreements currently in place should be reviewed with all interested parties.

The Town Clerk advised that these discussions would be progressed and an update provided to members in due course.

Resolved:

That, the current position be noted.

PR349 **WITNEY TOWN BOWLS CLUB - REQUEST FOR NEW GATES**

The Committee received a request from Witney Bowls Club seeking replacement of the existing access gates to the facility at The Leys.

It was advised that officers had looked at the situation and it was not considered feasible to repair the existing gates. The cost of replacement would not exceed £2,000 and could be fitted by the grounds team. The Town Clerk advised this would need to be funded from the Rolling Capital Fund as the limited revenue budget would not cover this. Clarification was given that the works would not be subject to a full tender process.

It was proposed and seconded that the replacement of the gates be supported with the matter being delegated to officers to conclude. On being put to the vote the proposition was carried.

The Town Clerk clarified that discussion on other issues at The Leys would be subject to a review in the future.

Resolved:

That, the replacement of the gates at a cost not exceeding £2,000 be supported with the matter being delegated to officers to conclude.

PR350 **LEYS SKATE PARK**

Councillor Daniel Butterfield gave a verbal update and advised that 'Ramp up The Leys' had created a Facebook page, were in the process of setting up a bank account and had commenced a survey to establish the views of interested parties.

It was hoped to develop greater awareness of the proposal and it was indicated that the group may need support in developing documents for the tendering process. The Town Clerk indicated that Town Council officers could help where possible and provide assistance on fundraising and accessing grants.

Resolved:

That, the update be noted.

PR351 **WILDFLOWER PLANTING AT RECREATION GROUNDS**

The Chair suggested that extending the wildflower planting, as at King George's field, to other Council owned recreation grounds would be beneficial.

Members noted that this needed to be referred to the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee for consideration and this was agreed by the Committee.

Resolved:

That, the issue be referred to the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee for further discussion.

PR352 **WEST WITNEY DOG/LITTER BINS & SIGNAGE**

The Committee considered the report of the Operations & Estates Advisor regarding the provision of additional bins at West Witney Sports Ground and changes to associated signage.

Members supported the provision of two additional recycling litter bins that could take a range of waste including dog waste. It was further agreed that simplified signage would be beneficial.

Recommended:

That the following be approved:

1. The installation of 2 x recycling litter bins at West Witney and their location;
2. The removal of the existing Dog signage at the site; and
3. The installation and wording of new dog signage

PR353 **WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND - REQUEST TO OPERATE A FOOD VAN**

The Committee received a request for the siting of a food van at West Witney Sports Ground.

The proposed hours of operation, siting of the vehicle and charges to be implemented were discussed.

The Committee expressed their 'in principle' support for the proposal subject to clarification of the siting and the agreement being for an initial six months to enable officers to monitor the van.

Recommended:

That, agreement in principle be given for The Snack Shack to run a food van on the West Witney Sports Ground, subject to the following:

1. A fixed term period of six months 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.

PR354 PARK ROAD PLAY AREA - UPDATE

The Town Clerk reminded members that additional funding for the project had been agreed at the Council meeting on 28 June.

It was explained that quotes had been sought for the safety surfacing under the existing play equipment (slide and horse) in the site. An issue had arisen regarding the stability of the surface under the slide and options were being considered.

In response to a question it was clarified that the works could be undertaken in mid-August but a decision may be required at that point regarding whether to retain the slide.

After discussion the committee agreed that a contractor should be appointed with a mid-August deadline and delegation be given to remove the slide if applicable.

Recommended:

That, a contract for the works be approved for completion in August with a decision on the inclusion of the slide being delegated to officers depending on whether surfacing works are possible.

PR355 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.

PR356 WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on a number of issues at West Witney Sports Ground.

It was reported that the Clubhouse was now fully compliant. In addition the consultants appointed by the Town Council were progressing their work and were talking with various interested parties and site users. She hoped a report would be presented in September on proposals for the site.

It was noted that one current user was looking to change their governance and was interested in being involved in the discussions.

Resolved:

That, the confidential verbal update be noted.

The meeting closed at: 6.40 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 12 July 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor M Jones (Chair)

Councillors:	V Gwatkin J Aitman L Ashbourne	T Ashby O Collins R Smith
Officers:	Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie Simon Wright	Deputy Town Clerk Halls & Green Spaces Administrator Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	0 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 Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments 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 2 August 2021.

H357 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Liz Duncan.

H358 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers at this juncture.

H359 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 May 2021 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee held on 24 May 2021 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

H360 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

H361 **COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk outlining the priorities for the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee from the recently approved Open Spaces Strategy.

Resolved:

That, the priorities be noted.

H362 **TOWER HILL CEMETERY - PEDESTRIAN ACCESS**

The Committee considered the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer regarding options for the introduction of a new pedestrian access at Tower Hill Cemetery. Clarification was given of the proposed location of the access and ownership of surrounding land.

It was emphasised that the proposal would allow a more convenient access for all site users. The committee noted that the new arrangements would not be a cut through and therefore should be used mainly by those accessing the site. It was requested that appropriate measures be put in place to ask people to show respect when using the area.

Recommended:

1. That, the new requested location for the pedestrian access be approved.
2. That, Officers be delegated to requote with contractors for the new path and access point.
3. That, Officers be delegated to agree a communications strategy for the project bearing in mind the negative feedback from the consultation process.

H363 **TOWER HILL CEMETERY - DDI AUDIT ACCESS REQUIREMENTS**

The Committee received the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer regarding a disability access audit that was conducted at Tower Hill Cemetery.

The Committee discussed the recommendations in the report and in particular options around reducing gradients around the site or the use of steps. It was agreed that Health & Safety on the site was paramount.

After discussion it was agreed that the report should be considered further by officers to look at options to meet the recommendations.

Resolved:

That, officers be requested to consider the recommendations of the Audit and provide a list of proposed works at the next meeting.

H364 **WINDRUSH CEMETERY - MEMORIAL GATE REQUEST**

The Committee received the report of the Cemetery, External Contracts & Compliance Officer regarding an application for a memorial gate at Windrush Cemetery.

Councillors indicated that whilst liking the design they were concerned that the gate could give the impression of the site being a memorial area for one person. Members suggested that a bench somewhere on Town Council land would be more appropriate.

Members suggested that elements of the design could be incorporated as part of the bench construction or on a plaque. It was noted that there was an existing policy for benches in cemeteries but no policy was in place for public space and would be part of the Open Spaces Strategy.

It was agreed that the provision of a bench should be supported subject to the requirements of the forthcoming policy on benches in public spaces.

Note: Councillor Thomas Ashby declared a personal non-prejudicial interest at this juncture as his family had an application for a bench pending. Councillor Ashby advised that he would not vote on the proposal.

Recommended:

1. That, the application for a memorial gate is not supported;
2. That, the applicant be advised that the Council gives 'in principle, agreement for a memorial bench at Oxlease;
3. That, a policy on memorial benches be created by Officers and brought back to the next meeting of this Committee;
4. That, Officers discuss what might be available with the applicant, the design of any bespoke bench being subject to the new policy for such installations

H365 WINDRUSH CEMETERY - ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Chair outlined concerns that had been received regarding anti-social behaviour and littering at the site.

It was advised that any issues should be reported to Thames Valley Police (TVP) via 101 and that Council Officers were undertaking regular visits to the site. It was further suggested that if issues involving young people were identified then Got 2 B CIC could be involved. It was further noted that a meeting with TVP was scheduled and this issue would be raised then. An update would be provided to members in due course.

Resolved:

That, it be noted that officers are undertaking regular inspections of the site and that the matter will be raised with Thames Valley Police.

H366 CLOSED CHURCH YARDS - GRASS CUTTING

The report of the Operations & Estates Advisor was received outlining the setting up of a Benefice Environmental group covering the churches of St Mary the Virgin and Holy Trinity Churches that are maintained by Witney Town Council as closed churchyards.

The Committee supported the ambition to achieve Eco Church Status. It was noted that the wild areas would be carefully located and that the project would be communicated to interested parties and residents by both the church and council.

Recommended:

That, the proposal for grass cutting at the closed churchyards be supported.

The meeting closed at: 6.55 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 19 July 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	D Butterfield H Eaglestone	V Gwatkin A Prosser
Officers:	Adam Clapton Claire Green Sharon Groth Simon Wright	Deputy Town Clerk Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities Town Clerk Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	0 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 Stronger Communities 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 2 August 2021.

SC367 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence was received from Councillors Luci Ashbourne. Joy Aitman and Rosa Bolger

SC368 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers at this juncture.

SC369 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 7 June 2021 were received.

An update was sought in respect of 'Car Free Day' and in response it was confirmed that officers were looking at participating in the campaign and would advise members of progress.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Stronger Communities Committee held on 7 June 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

SC370 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

SC371 **COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

The Committee received details of the priorities arising from the recently adopted Open Spaces Strategy that fall within the remit of the Stronger Communities Committee.

Resolved:

That, the priorities be noted.

SC372 **CHRISTMAS LIGHTS DISPLAY TENDER & SWITCH ON**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations & Estates Advisor regarding the Christmas Lights Tender and switch-on.

Clarification was given regarding the additional lighting proposed and confirmation was given that, if approved, the lights would exceed the proposed budget by £755. It was noted that the running costs for the lights would be billed separately. There was support for the proposal but the committee requested that the energy usage be carefully monitored to allow the carbon footprint to be measured.

Recommended:

1. That, the alterations to the suggested displays on Church Green and The Buttercross be approved;
2. That, the operational times for the lights be at the following times 06:00 – 09:00 and 15:30 – 23:00;
3. That, the additional budget for the lights be approved; and
4. That, the Christmas Lights switch on be held on Friday 26th November with switch on at 18:00 with the Rotary Club organising the event as in previous years, subject to any Covid-19 measures in place nearer the timw.

SC373 **ADVENT FAYRE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Venues & Events Officer updating on the annual Advent Fayre hosted by the Town Council.

Recommended:

That, an Advent Fayre be held at the end of November/beginning of December based on the previous formats.

SC374 **CHURCH GREEN – MEMORIAL BENCH REQUEST**

At this juncture the members of the Committee declared a personal non-prejudicial interest by virtue of the applicant being a Witney Town Councillor. The interest did not preclude members from participating in discussion or voting on the matter.

Consideration was given to the report of the Project Officer regarding a request to install a memorial bench on Church Green.

The Committee noted that the bench was of standard design and there was space available on Church Green, and therefore it would not conflict any recommendation from a memorial bench policy being prepared by Officers.

Recommended:

That, agreement be given to the siting and installation of the memorial bench as detailed in the report.

SC375 **BUS STOP - TOWER HILL**

The Committee received the report of the Project Officer regarding the use of Section 106 monies for the installation of a new bus shelter on Tower Hill.

The Committee noted the concerns of residents and the need for the design to address those issues if possible. It was noted that the developer contribution was specific to bus stop provision.

During discussion it was agreed that Option 4 would be the preferred style of bus stop and this design should form the basis of discussions with local residents about the scheme.

Recommended:

1. That, Option 4 be supported as the design for the new bus stop on Tower Hill;
2. That, a conversation be held with residents in the wider vicinity of the shelter with Councillors Collins and Smith visiting those houses immediately behind the site in person;
3. That, the provision of a litter bin at the site be approved

SC376 **BUS SHELTER ADVERTISEMENT REQUEST**

The Committee received a request from West Oxfordshire District Council seeking permission to advertise an App on bus stops in the town.

It was advised that the LoyalFree app was supporting local businesses by enabling them to list offers or discounts on the deals section of the app for free and encourage residents and visitors back to high streets after national lockdowns.

Members expressed support for the proposal but subject to the District Council meeting the costs and the design, specification and locations being agreed with the Town Council. It was further agreed that the advertising should be for an initial six-month period.

Recommended:

That, the request from West Oxfordshire District Council be supported for a period of six months subject to the District Council meeting the costs and the design, specification and locations being agreed with the Town Council.

SC377 COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received an update report from the Communications and Community Engagement Officer updating on a number of issues.

Members gave support to a request for additional software that would help make the Council's output more professional.

In respect of planting for 2022 it was agreed that the Queen's Platinum Jubilee should be the theme. It was agreed that pastel colours such as those that the Queen is frequently dressed in or which represent plants from Royal Estates, for example pale lilacs, lime greens and yellows along with some silver plants to represent platinum should be used. Where possible, flowers should be insect friendly.

It was noted that the issue of roundabout planting referenced in the report would be picked up as part of the Open spaces Strategy. Members further expressed support for the 'Love Your Parks' campaign.

Recommended:

1. That, the procurement of additional IT communications software be approved;
2. That, the concept of a planting scheme for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee be supported with pastel coloured and silver plants being used and a more detailed planting scheme being presented at a future Stronger Communities Committee; and
3. That, Witney Town Council supports 'Love Your Parks' week which runs 26 July – 1 August

SC378 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

The Committee received and considered a draft Communications Strategy prepared by the Communications & Community Engagement Officer. Members were reminded that this was a live document and would be subject to regular review.

Recommended:

That, the Communications Strategy be adopted, subject to Full Council approval.

SC379 YOUTH SERVICES GRANT AWARD 2021

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Town Clerk seeking approval for the scheme to run as it had in the previous year, under the same criteria and timeframe, opening for applications on 1st August 2021.

Members expressed their support for the continuation of the scheme and requested that due to the uncertainty that organisations were still experiencing that some degree of flexibility be possible if priorities changed.

Recommended:

1. That, Opening the Youth Services Grant Award scheme under the same criteria as the previous year on 1st August 2021 be approved; and

2. That, delegation be given to officers to agree a condition regarding the use of funds if the original purpose cannot be achieved due to Covid-19 related issues

SC380 WITNEY COVID-19 HERO AWARDS & COMMEMORATION

The Committee received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk updating on commemorations for those who had lost their lives to Covid-19 and for volunteers who had served the community.

It was noted that discussions with the Rotary Club had continued but no agreement on a joint project had been reached. It was indicated that various sites and types of memorial had been explored and the committee needed to make a decision as to whether they wished to continue a joint approach or commission its own memorial. Discussion ensued around the type of memorial that would be appropriate and examples were shown to the committee. It was noted that the Town Council had control of a small area of land on Church Green which may be suitable for a memorial-type garden.

After detailed discussion it was agreed that the Council would pursue its own memorial with a dual purpose of commemorating those that had died during the pandemic and also recognising the work of volunteers.

It was agreed that the detailed design and siting should be referred to task and finish group to finalise the proposal.

Recommended:

1. That, Witney Town Council commissions its own dual memorial to commemorate those that had died during the pandemic and also recognising the work of volunteers;
2. That, Witney Town Council continues discussion with the Rotary Club of Witney on a memorial on its land, where possible; and
3. That, a task and finish group be constituted to undertake the development of the project.

SC381 WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL - TEA DANCE

Consideration was given to the report of the Venue & Events Officer regarding the reintroduction of a weekly tea dance in the Corn Exchange.

Members expressed their support for the events and considered that a small increase in the ticket price to £2.50 to cover costs was appropriate.

Recommended:

1. That, the reintroduction of the weekly tea dance/community event in the Corn Exchange be approved: and
2. That, the ticket price for the events be set at £2.50.

The meeting closed at: 7.38 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 26 July 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor L Ashbourne (Chair)

Councillors:	R Smith	H Eaglestone
	J Aitman	V Gwatkin
	O Collins	M Jones
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Tina Jardine	Responsible Financial Officer
Others:	None.	

As there was no legislation in place for the Town Council to hold virtual meetings, and because of the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, the Policy, Governance & Finance 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 2 August 2021.

F390 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology of absence was received from Cllr D Harvey.

F391 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared by members at the meeting.

F392 MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2021.

The Deputy Town Clerk drew attention to minute number F300(1) – The amount awarded to 2120 (witney) Squadron Air Cadets by way of a grant should read £994.31.

Resolved:

That, subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

F393 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present to address the committee.

F394 **COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

The Committee received details of the priorities arising from the recently adopted Open Spaces Strategy for the spending committees of the Council. The Town Clerk advised these would be embedded into Officers' work plans.

Resolved:

That, the priorities for the spending committees of the Council be noted.

F395 **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
Cheques 101155-101158, DDs and Standing Orders May	£132,589.23	General CB 1
Cheques **33096-33112, DDs and Standing Orders May	£84,682.38	Imprest CB 2
Cheques 101159-101163, DDs and Standing Orders June	£608,252.17	General CB 1
Cheques 33113-33153, DDs and Standing Orders June	£102,814.69	Imprest CB 2

F396 **FINANCIAL REPORT & ASSOCIATED MATTERS**

The Committee received the joint report of the Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. Members were presented quarterly income and expenditure updates on the Council's budgets and received the recommendations of the spending committees in this cycle of meetings.

The Deputy Town Clerk drew members' attention to the recommendation of the Stronger Communities Committee to launch the Youth Funding Grant Awards, based on the same criteria as 2021 at the beginning of August.

Members were also presented with quotes for replacing the gates at Witney Town Bowls Club and for plotting future grave spaces at Windrush Cemetery, both of which were necessary works on the Council's estate.

In respect of an insurance settlement for damage to pillars at St Mary's churchyard, members were disappointed that the current offer did not cover the full outlay of the Council and costs

paid in good faith were being disputed; the committee accepted that the full costs may not be recovered.

Recommended:

1. That the report be noted, and;
2. That, the recommendations of the spending committees, as detailed, be agreed and;
3. That, the lowest quote for gates at Witney Town Bowls Club, be agreed and;
4. That, the quote for the plotting of grave spaces at Windrush Cemetery be agreed; and
5. That, the insurance settlement offer for the damage to St Mary's pillars be delegated to the Deputy Town Clerk, ensuring the best financial outcome for the Council is achieved.

F397 GRANT APPLICATION - ROTARY COLOUR RUN

The Committee received and considered a grant application request from the Rotary Club of Witney towards a Colour Run event in August.

Members were supportive of the application which would benefit Witney and its residents.

Recommended:

1. That, an award of £500 be approved and;
2. That, this grant be awarded under the General Power of Competence from the Council's discretionary grants budget (4100/407).
3. That the Rotary Club of Witney be asked to acknowledge the Council's financial contribution in its promotional literature.

F398 BABY BONDING PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered an application to provide free Baby bonding sessions for new parents.

Members were supportive of the sessions but felt further information was needed on how those who needed the subsidised support would be referred before the decision could be fully agreed.

Recommended:

1. That, an award of £300 be approved in principle, subject to further information being provided from the applicant on referrals for this service and;
2. That, this grant be awarded under the General Power of Competence from the Council's discretionary grants budget (4100/407) once further information is received.
3. That, the applicant be asked to acknowledge the Council's financial contribution in its promotional literature.

F399 RECORDING EQUIPMENT FOR MEETINGS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Democratic & Legal Services Officer concerning the broadcasting of meetings and the equipment required for this to proceed.

Members were supportive of the proposal and reiterated the need to reach those who could not attend in-person meetings. The equipment would be a good starting point and could be added to if required.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and;
2. That, the Council supports in principle the broadcasting of meetings and;
3. That, a supplementary estimate of £1000 is allocated towards this project and;
4. That, a further report be presented to a future meeting if further government guidance/legislation regarding meeting arrangements is produced.

F400 **PROCUREMENT POLICY**

The committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk concerning a procurement policy for the Council.

Members were supportive of the proposed policy which supplemented the Council's financial regulations. There was agreement that the limit on tendering should be reduced so that the regulations were in sync with other guidance.

The Town Clerk advised the policy, as presented had considered the Council's aspirations on sustainability and the desire for local contractors. Members, while welcoming these additions requested that a Social Values Policy be created to supplement it further.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and;
2. That, the procurement policy as circulated be adopted subject to the creation of, and mention of a Social Values Policy for the Council and;
3. That, the Social Values Policy be brought to the next meeting of the Committee and;
4. That, in the Council's financial regulations, the limit on tendering be reduced to £25,000 to reflect current practice and based on the requirement to publish contracts on the Government Tender/Contracts portal.

F401 **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.

F402 **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICE**

The committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk concerning the future of the Council's Grounds Maintenance Service.

She highlighted concerns that due to staff shortages grass cutting obligations were not being fulfilled, and whilst the Operations & Estates Advisor had suggested offsetting this against the Council's request for more wildflower planting, a rough calculation had revealed that it was not a fair compensation.

Recommended:

1. That, the confidential report be noted and;
2. That, negotiations of the financial implications of the future Grounds Maintenance Service be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of this committee.

F403 **PROPERTY & LEGAL MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the confidential update report of the Town Clerk concerning several areas in the Council's estate.

She particularly drew attention to the suggested nominal rent to the Allotment Association, now she was able to proceed with lease negotiations because the legal transfer of the new allotment site at Windrush Place had completed.

The Town Clerk also explained the history behind the lease negotiations relating to Raleigh Crescent Play Area which the District Council had previously promised to upgrade the basketball and youth shelters but had not done so. Members agreed that unless this intention was fulfilled, they should only be taking on the refurbished play area at this stage.

Recommended:

1. That, the confidential report be noted and;
2. That, the recommendations of the Town Clerk be approved.

F404 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The committee received and considered a verbal report from the Town Clerk from the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held earlier in the evening.

Recommended:

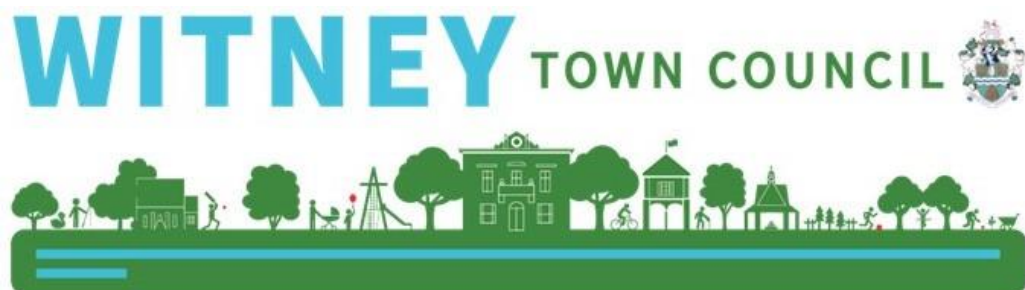
1. That, the confidential verbal report from the Personnel Sub-committee held on 26th July 2021 be noted, and the recommendations contained therein approved.

The meeting closed at: 7.12 pm

Chair

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Witney Town Council Communications Strategy 2021



Prepared, July 2021

1. Foreword

- 1.1 This document looks at the current status of the Town Council's communications, and then outlines a strategy, including recommendations for the council to take forward. The strategy sets out how we will develop the Council's external and internal communications to meet the needs and demands of our customers, staff, members, and partners.

2. Background and Context

- 2.1 Traditionally, a few of the services that the Town Council provides, consistently score on the lower end of the scale in the Annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey. Communication is one of these. There is no blanket method that will reach everyone, but we must try to address the dissatisfaction expressed by survey respondents.

There is an issue with the quality of data as there is some self-selection bias. Those who responded to the mailed-out paper survey have a propensity to do so, being predominately in the age group associated with a preference for paper-based communication (though this assumption cannot be made of every respondent in that age group). There is some apathy too, and surveys tend to get the most responses when things have not gone well and there is a problem. Generally, happy people do not tend to put pen to paper.

- 2.2 It is, though, still useful to look closely at data extracted from the annual residents' satisfaction survey. Focusing purely on the topic of communication, the following summary of comments and opinions are useful starting points from which to steer the formation of a strategy.
- 2.3 Over the time we have been regularly surveying residents we have seen the satisfaction score for communication rise from its lowest at 76% of people expressing satisfaction in 2016, to 87% or above for the last five years. This still means that more than one in ten people who responded are not feeling communicated with adequately and are having a poor experience or hold a poor perception of Witney Town Council.
- 2.4 We have a strong arsenal of communication platforms, and the current ambitious projects and plans of Witney Town Council mean there is no shortage of news to spread. We need to ensure we are not missing opportunities and we should be showcasing our successes at every opportunity, including drawing attention to the hard work that goes on behind the scenes. Events, for example, do not just happen. Even third-party events require considerable work on the

part of Councillors and officers, to ensure that our residents are able to safely enjoy a range of successful events of all sizes. The fact that we meet with organisers on site and check safety certificates, risk assessments, event plans, insurance documents to ensure legal compliance and public safety may sound mundane, but undoubtedly, it is reassuring for the public to know that the Council is diligent and holds their safety and wellbeing as a priority, and therefore newsworthy, and surely worth a small news release rather than not being reported at all.

- 2.5 We should be looking to exercise some bragging rights when we have done good things and lose the timidity with which we have historically approached some less favourable news stories. It is time to throw off the modesty and reticence when things are going well, and to address even the toughest bad news stories with the same openness, integrity and sensitivity with which we impart the good news.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of this communications strategy is to provide a clear direction for the development of external and internal communications across the organisation.
- 3.2 It aims to support the council's policies and plans including the emerging Strategic Plan, our Open Spaces Strategy and Press and Social Media Policies.
- 3.3 This strategy should be viewed as a living document that is reviewed regularly in order to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing communications landscape, and the expectations that come with that.

4. Objectives

- 4.1 To set and maintain a consistently high standard of communication across all the Council's communications channels and departments even when the tone of voice is tailored according to the channel. Communications from Witney Town Council should be instantly recognisable as such. Standardisation of everything from email signatures to forms and templates, will ensure this. And this, in conjunction with re-branding, will have a positive impact on perceptions of the role and functions of Witney Town Council and will help earn trust.
- 4.2 To deliver, with confidence and appropriate pride, a high standard of engaging, interesting, clear, useful, and factual communications, across a range of audiences and media.

- 4.3 To communicate, clearly, the council's role and responsibilities in the community, maintaining and building upon a good reputation and signposting to where help may be found if it is not within our remit.
- 4.4 To organise and modernise our approach, and use innovative ways to deliver news, report information and feedback to our residents.
- 4.5 To engage and consult with our residents and enable them to communicate easily with the council, and for them to be able to expect a timely and appropriate response.
- 4.6 To ensure that all internal and external communications use language that treats people with the respect they deserve, is non-discriminatory and accessible to a wide audience. Plain English should be used at all times with any obscure terms and abbreviations explained.
- 4.7 To ensure that all people, have equal access to information and are not discriminated against or disadvantaged by our actions in any way.
- 4.8 To ensure that all residents feel welcomed and included.
- 4.9 To establish new, and build on existing partnerships with other organisations and community groups.
- 4.10 To ensure web content is relevant and accessible.
- 4.11 To continue to grow the Town Council's reach and expand the demographic spread on its digital channels.
- 4.12 To continue to use, produce and develop, key print publications, maximising the reach and impact of these to help reach a wider audience, particularly those without internet access.
- 4.13 To make better use of graphics and video in the council's digital platforms and explore other emerging technologies with an open mind.
- 4.14 To develop internal communications channels which are tailored to a mobile workforce to meet the needs of the organisation and encourage staff engagement.
- 4.15 To establish measures to monitor and assess impact of communications.
- 4.16 To continue to foster good relationships with the media, being both proactive in output and responsive to incoming enquiries and requests for comment/content.
- 4.17 To aim for digital by default wherever possible to reduce wastage of inks and paper, in line with the Council's ambition to be Carbon Neutral.

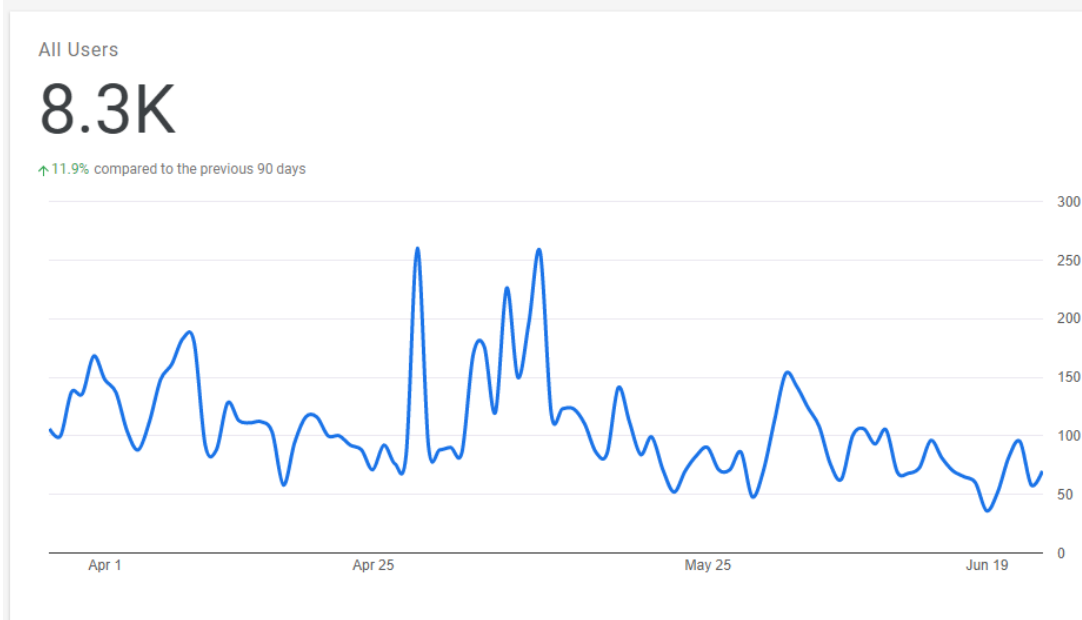
5. Witney Town Council websites

- 5.1 Witney Town Council's website was built in house by the Communications and Engagement Officer, using WordPress, and is hosted by Fasthosts. Fasthosts has been a very satisfactory supplier with an excellent level of service and support. The Corn Exchange website was built by Rumbi. The website content is managed by The Venue and Events officer.
- 5.2 Content on the WTC Council website is currently managed by the Communications and Community Engagement officer, the Deputy Town Clerk and the Stronger Communities and Planning Administrator. Posts often reflect what is posted on social media but sometimes these differ according to audience and relevance. Pages are usually added as an action arising from a Council decision. Our website currently has 43 published pages and sub-pages. These are regularly reviewed, refreshed and removed as necessary. Mod Gov is embedded in the website, and the content for this is managed by the Democratic and Legal Services Officer. The software appears to function well within our site.
- 5.3 Analytics for the web site (a 90-day sample of data) showed that the website had 8.3k visitors

Site Overview

Your Traffic at a Glance

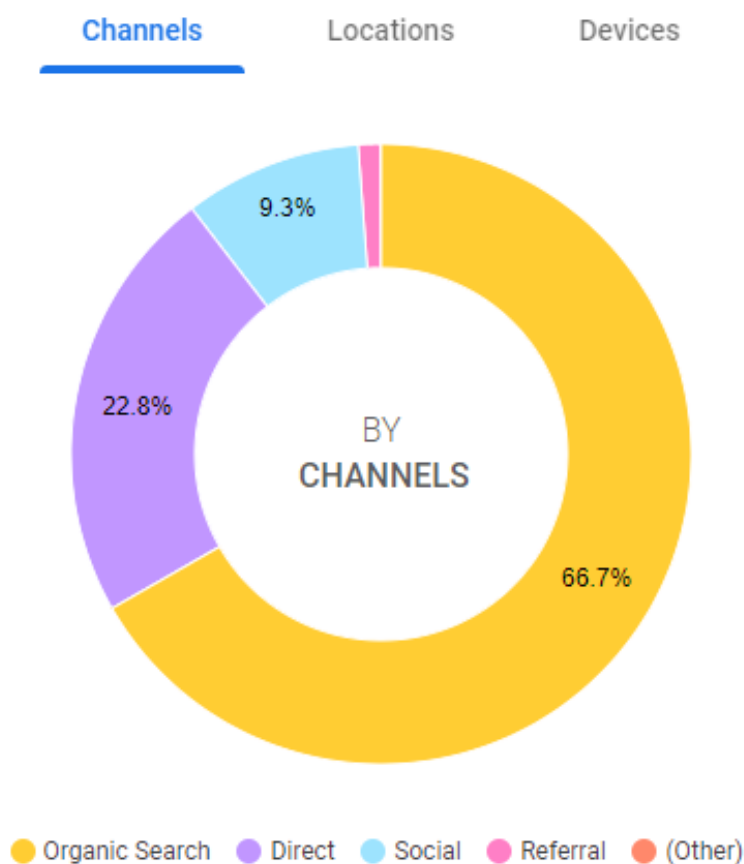
How people found your site



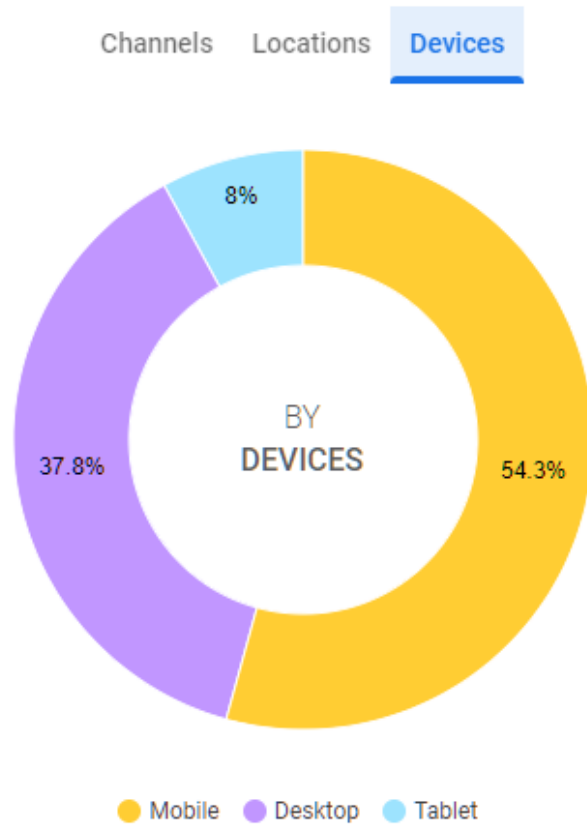
Around 67 per cent of traffic to the Council website was organic, which is a good, result. Organic traffic is driven by Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and arrives at

a website when someone types in a keyword or phrase that displays our page high in the ranking. This percentage of success means that we are consistently creating optimised content and the right keywords for search. There was 22.8% of Direct traffic which is driven to the site by typing in the URL. A rather surprisingly small 9.3% came via our social media platforms. This is reassuring and confirms that there is an audience that does not use social media accounts, but still uses the internet to look at Witney Town Council information. The remainder is traffic that arrives by referral from another website. None of our traffic is the result of paid for advertising. An explanation of the types of traffic is given here:

- **Direct:** Any traffic where the referrer or source is unknown
- **Email:** Traffic from email marketing that has been properly tagged with an email parameter
- **Organic:** Traffic from search engine results that is earned, not paid
- **Paid search:** Traffic from search engine results that is the result of paid advertising via Google AdWords or another paid search platform
- **Referral:** Traffic that occurs when a user finds you through a site other than a major search engine
- **Social:** Traffic from a social network, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, or Instagram



5.4 Around 60 per cent of traffic to the Council website is from mobile devices with around 8% of that, coming from tablets. The rest comes from desktops.



Source: [Analytics](#)

5.5 The search terms that are bringing people to our website are shown in the left-hand side of the following screen capture. Our most popular pages and news posts are shown in the second screen capture. The most popular page is our Home Page and others tend to be slightly influenced by season, so outdoor venues, the Lake and Country Park and Sports and Recreation consistently appear during the summer months.

Top search queries for your site	Clicks	Impressions
1. witney town council	666	1,049
2. west oxfordshire district council	364	16,633
3. wodc	252	8,175
4. ducklington lake and country park	127	830
5. a4095 road closure	84	160
6. west oxfordshire council	71	3,494
7. witney council	70	890
8. witney lake and country park	68	480
9. finstock road closure	60	272
10. witney tiny forest	58	82

Most popular content	Views
1. Official Site of Witney Town Council /	2,758
2. A-Z of Council Services /services/a-z-of-council-services/	1,617
3. Lake & Country Park /services/lake-country-park/	1,182
4. Sports & Recreation /services/sports-recreation/	787
5. News Official Site of Witney Town Council /news/	723
6. Vacancies /council/vacancies/	671
7. Witney's Tiny Forest /witneys-tiny-forest/	584
8. Witney COVID Heroes /witney-covid-19-heroes/	534
9. Contact Us /contact/	467
10. Cemeteries /services/cemeteries/	372

5.6 The Witney Town Council Website displays “Not Secure” in the URL bar. Adding Secure Socket Layer will address this. We do not collect payments, but we are now starting to collect some personal data from the COVID Heroes form, I & D form and potentially from future sign ups for email contact forms, so this is now a necessary action.

ACTIONS

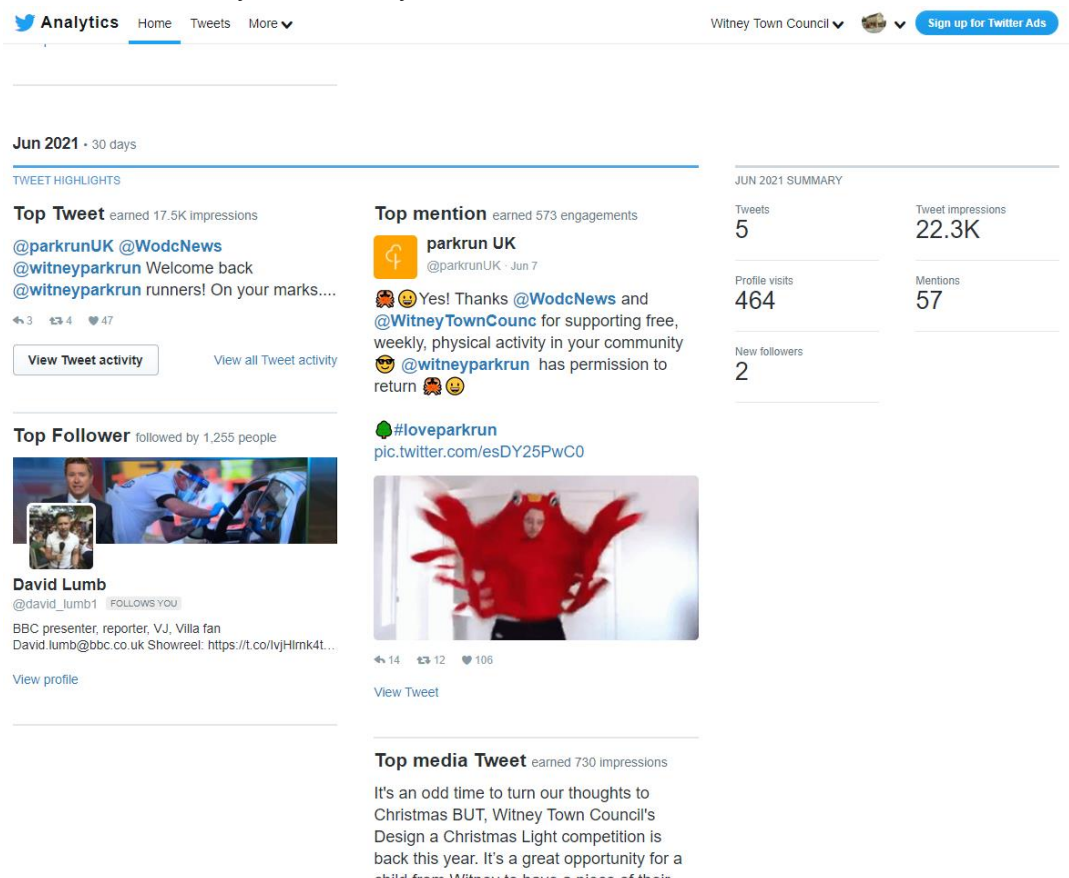
- Add Secure Socket Layer to the website
- Clone and test new theme to fit with rebranding
- Update php to remove need for additional support charge
- Continue to remove old posts, documents and images to guarantee information is current and accurate and website is streamlined, fast and easy to navigate

6. Social Media and Town Council App

- 6.1 The Council has three main corporate social media profiles:
Twitter: @WitneyTownCouncil – 3409 followers (June 2021)
Facebook: @WitneyTownCouncil - 3607followers (June 2021)
And Instagram @witneytc -115 Followers (July 2021)
We also have a You Tube Channel – These are all administered, and content uploaded, in the main by the Communications and Community Engagement Officer, who is now assisted by the Stronger Communities and Planning Administrator.
- 6.2 Corn Exchange accounts consist of:
a Facebook page @cornexchangewitney)- 506 followers
Twitter (@exchange_corn)- 262 followers
And Instagram @cornexchangewitney)- 588 followers.
These are administered by the Receptionist & Bookings Administrator (Facebook and Instagram) and the Venue and Events officer (Twitter)
- 6.3 The Youth Council also has an Instagram account.
- 6.4 There is little historic data available in the analytics dashboard, due to changes in the way the social media platforms provide data, and, or problems with various sites, so it is difficult to judge how audiences have grown since the accounts were set up.
- 6.5 Our Facebook page still has some problems caused by a failed forced upgrade to a business account, and despite submitting the problem to the help desk several times no help has been forthcoming. The page functions well for the most part, but there are some areas that do not perform quite as they, though the issues are mostly just a little inconvenient.

Attempts to create a new page have failed using the current email address registered to the page. Other official Witney Town Council email addresses tried would not permit their use, with the fault message identifying them as being 'grey-listed'. This means that they are blocked from certain actions by Spam Filters.

6.6 Our Twitter account works well. Posts that have the largest reaches tend to have hashtags or lots of other accounts tagged in, so messages about something like Parkrun, for example, which also has a chain of parkrun groups across the country, are widely shared.



6.7 Instagram was set up some time ago, but we were contemplating replacing our Facebook page before linking to it and starting to use it. However, there was a huge untapped channel going to waste and we have begun to use the Instagram channel which feeds automatically to Twitter and Facebook, though it does not do this in a particularly alluring and impactful way!

6.8 The various analytics dashboards do throw up some useful insights into the type of content that performs well. Videos and images generally reach larger audiences than text-only posts and we are using more of these although they can be more time consuming to create. Content that really matters locally and is important to residents can provoke a response and is shared rapidly, reaching a significant number of people. Some examples of hot topics are given in 6.9.

6.9 Facebook's largest reach posts in the last couple of years have borne out the fact that local topics are the big stories. The cancellation of Witney Feast due

to COVID-19 in 2020 logged 27.2k reaches. It was hotly debated, shared, and commented on. Pollution of the town's river and stream with raw sewage stacked up a total reach of 44k across three posts, 21.6k, 11.4k and 11.k respectively. The cessation of adult football on The Leys-15.7k and a good deal of comment again. In contrast, the death of Prince Philip reached just 1.4k. As a national news item people tended to go elsewhere for information and to comment. National awareness days supported by WTC also tend to reach fewer. They have more follows on their own and other closely affiliated sites. These seldom reach 1k on our social media, unless there is a large event in the town as part of the awareness raising.


Post Details

Witney Town Council
19 August 2020 · 🌐

Witney Feast Cancelled

Witney Feast will not take place this year. The difficult decision to cancel was taken by Witney Town Council after much deliberation at an Extraordinary Full Council meeting last night.

Working closely with the organisers, Bob Wilson Funfairs Ltd, in consultation with the Showmen's Guild; and taking advice from other regulatory bodies, concerns remain about the impact the fair could have on the town, given the anticipated size of the crowd and the risk... See more



Performance for your post

27,219 People Reached

749 Reactions, comments & shares 🗨️

253 Like	66 On post	187 On shares
2 Love	0 On post	2 On shares
1 Haha	0 On post	1 On shares
5 Wow	1 On post	4 On shares
168 Sad	48 On post	120 On shares
2 Angry	0 On post	2 On shares
194 Comments	63 On Post	131 On Shares
125 Shares	123 On Post	2 On Shares

4,733 Post Clicks

452 Photo views	0 Link clicks 🗨️	4,281 Other Clicks 🗨️
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NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

7 Hide post	1 Hide all posts
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

6.10 There is the opportunity to boost posts using paid for advertising which increases the reach. However, the reach must be relevant. It seems rather pointless telling people nationally, about our August Playday, for example.

6.11 More useful, is the sharing of some of our content with the Public Halls and

Youth Council social media accounts, and shares by councillors. The use of Hashtags and other tagging, and shared news releases with bigger organisations can substantially increase the number of shares, impressions, clicks and reactions. In this way we are also able to attract new followers.

6.12 Social media has changed the way residents interact with Local Government organisations and makes approaches to councillors outside of formal meetings easier and more commonplace. This also has an impact on the expectations of a more or less instant response.

6.13 The App has become a little stale since its original launch and would benefit from a substantial rebuild as part of the rebranding exercise. Many of the features are somewhat outdated and it lacks much in the way of interactivity or interest to younger residents of the town. What information will people be looking for, what is useful and current? More young persons content, such as information on the Skate Park, details of local sports groups and activities and the Youth Services signposting map, could be worthwhile including.

6.14 Currently the App links to the website and draws news from there. The events tab has become superfluous since it featured mostly what was on in the Corn Exchange. The option for recurring events did not work well with the calendar feature so adding recurring events was onerous as they had to be added singly.

Issues could all be addressed individually so it could be a gradual rebuild rather than a single project.

ACTIONS

- Build social media audiences, particularly for newly launched Instagram and the App once refreshed.
- Update App content and then promote it by Posting about the features on other social media.
- Record current period analytics data for comparison and growth monitoring in the future.
- Raise awareness of Witney Town Council services and activities and also those of other Local Government tiers with a series of posts.
- Develop more engaging social media content using graphics and video to explain, get across key information to customers and stakeholders and grow audiences.
- Include video reporting by councillors on hot topics and issues.
- Apply rebranding across all SM accounts and App.
- Trial live-streaming of events including council meetings on social media.

7 Council Printed Publications and Newsletters

- 7.1 The Council currently has four quarterly newsletters. Three of these are uploaded to the website in pdf format and promoted on social media. The fourth is a printed version sent to every household at the start of the new fiscal year. It contains the annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey with a Freepost return, and details of how the precept has been spent. The problems associated with audience sampling are discussed in 2.1.
- 7.2 There is a considerable cost to the production of this A4 4-sided newsletter. It might be worth researching whether an advertising-based revenue could offset some or all of this cost, making it zero cost to our taxpayers. It might also pay for delivery of other newsletters throughout the year to homes that would prefer this method of getting our news.
- 7.3 We have a Mailchimp account which we can use to build a subscribers list for delivery of an e-newsletter with brief summaries of news and hyperlinks through to the main story. A more pictorial edition, addressing the evidence that media posts with images and videos have more impact and a bigger reach than those with just words. Our last subscribers list "Voice of Witney" was deleted because of the GDPR constraints, so we are starting from scratch with this. Our newsletters are now produced in a Canva template, and this can be integrated with Mail Chimp.
- 7.4 With an audience for printed media and the option to send out the newsletter by email we should look to developing different mailing lists and this could be part of the content of the next printed issue
- 7.5 The Town Council also produces other literature including a burials brochure, which is in need of updating, flyers about the history of Tower Hill cemetery, and the Flora and Fauna in Tower Hill. These originated from an event held in the cemetery and have remained available for download on our website. These could do with updating and modernising to have a little more appeal. These will be subject to the rebranding of printed materials as this takes place.

ACTIONS

- Assess the need for alternative formats. Annual newsletter could ask for this.
- Develop separate mailing lists for e-formats and print versions of newsletter and publications.
- Re-establish "Voice of Witney" contact database for the purpose of surveying and seeking opinions. Ensure this is cross generation and includes contacts that have come through Inclusivity and Diversity contacts.
- Standardise appearance of current publications and brochures to reflect branding.

8 Press and Media

8.1 The following is a list of the main media organisations operating in Witney and beyond, with whom we regularly, or occasionally share press releases and statements about Council activities and business. Also included are other ways in which we get our story out and some new ideas that could be explored.

PRINTED PUBLICATIONS

Witney Gazette
Oxford Mail
The Clerk Magazine
Guides for Brides
Witney Letterbox
Witney Town Guide
Other niche and specialist publications

TV

BBC South
ITV Meridian
Witney TV

RADIO

BBC Radio Oxford
Jack FM
Witney Radio

OTHER WAYS TO SPREAD OUR NEWS

Collaborations on PR with Partner Organisations
Council and Town Meetings
Events
Town Crier
Councillor Surgeries
You Tube videos
Vlogging
Podcasts
Consultations
Surveys

8.2 We are at a point in time when many newspapers and magazines are suffering a reduction in readership and advertising revenues and are moving towards publishing digitally and offering subscription rates.

8.3 As shown in our survey many people still look to traditional media to find out about us and we cannot ignore that, or them, even while we work towards being more efficient digitally.

8.4 The local media still retain a large audience, including those who now follow their social media accounts. They exert a good deal of influence and can greatly affect the perceptions of the Council with what and how they report. It is in our interests to continue to maintain a good working relationship with them and be responsive to requests for comments and information. We are currently good at this, with Councillors getting back with comments in a timely manner and making themselves available for early morning radio interviews!

ACTIONS

- Maintain our relationship with press and media contacts, taking a proactive approach to Council news by providing ready to use copy complete with images or videos and comments from relevant parties
- Respond swiftly to press and media requests and provide comment where possible and relevant. Help them meet deadlines where possible.
- Continue to monitor press as much as possible for potentially damaging reputational issues, addressing these whenever possible.
- Monitor press coverage and record whether stories are positive/neutral or negative.
- Develop relationships with local TV journalists

9 Internal Communications

9.1 An Intranet solution is currently under investigation as a means of ensuring that our internal communication is as efficient as our external communication.

9.2 Effective Content Management will promote engagement with staff across different teams and is suited to a modern, mobile workforce. Its primary purpose is to facilitate equal access to documents and clear communications between departments, no matter where they are based.

9.3 The Council needs to use all its internal communications channels to ensure employees have a clear understanding of its objectives and how their roles and the roles of others fit in with those objectives. This ensures the delivery of the Council's Strategic Plan in the most effective way, and an appreciation and understanding of what other teams and individuals do

9.4 Currently the Council uses the following methods of Internal communication.

- One to one meetings with managers
- Monthly staff meetings (currently by Zoom)
- Some remote teams have WhatsApp groups
- Internal Email and phone

ACTIONS

- Support the delivery of Intranet once key decisions have been taken.
- Content management controls in place to ensure staff can access information, share content, news and views, including remote/mobile teams.
- Develop an Intranet policy.

10. Resources

10.1 The Communications Officer and the Stronger Communities and Planning Administrator have the following current responsibilities:

- Maintaining and managing content on the Council website
- Compiling proactive media releases
- Handling media enquiries
- Producing four issues of Newsletter a year
- Planning proactive communications activity for a number of projects
- Monitoring media coverage
- Being alert to potential reputational issues
- Producing digital content, including video, to support events and projects
- Managing the Council's social media accounts and app
- Rolling out the Council's rebranding
- Will implement the Content Management System and other elements of the Witney Town Council Intranet once installed

10.2 There is a small budget for printing and delivery of Newsletters and other printed media

10.3 Witney TC has the following Communication and publishing software

Microsoft Office including Publisher and PowerPoint

Canva (free account)

Survey Monkey

Mail Chimp

The Communications and Community Engagement Officer is exploring

additional software packages that will assist with creating engaging content and simplify the editing of documents and images. Proposals so far are for a pdf.editor and Photoshop Lite.

The Action Plan Follows

Communications Strategy 2021 Action Plan

Table of the planned actions to achieve desired objectives, including measurement and impact.

Websites					
	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact
	Add Secure Socket Layer to the website	July 2021	Website displays secure URL	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Increased perception of trust, integrity and safety when visiting website. Safer collection of Data
	Clone and test new theme to fit with rebranding	To fit with rebranding schedule	None	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Will enable rebranding and a fresh look to the current WTC website if a suitable new theme can be found.
	Update php to remove need for additional support charge	To fit with rebranding schedule	None	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Reduction in ongoing cost of website, but this is a temporary fix unless we can ditch any PHP based pages as PHP version is regularly updated
	Continue to remove old posts, documents and images to guarantee information is current and accurate and website is streamlined, fast and easy to navigate	Ongoing	Size of website	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Faster responding website with easily found current and relevant information

Social Media					
	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact
	Record current period analytics data for comparison and growth monitoring in the future	Ongoing	Comparison of analytics year on year	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Provides evidence of growth and highlights effective campaigns and messages
	Build Social Media Audiences	Ongoing	Target of 5,000 followers on Twitter and Facebook and 2,000 follows on Instagram by the end of 2021	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Direct communication and key message/information sharing with residents and enhanced reputation, earn trust and engage in two-way conversations
	Create more engaging social media content such as video to explain Council priorities, get across key information to customers and stakeholders	Ongoing	Social media analytics to gauge followers gained and viewing demographics	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Greater impact and engagement with residents regarding Council campaigns, information, key messages
	Update App content	Dec 2021	Number of downloads and users	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Strengthens the Town Council's portfolio of communications and offers something of interest to younger residents
	Raise awareness of Witney Town Council services and activities	Ongoing	Survey feedback demonstrates increased understanding of areas of responsibility	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Residents are better informed about who does what
	Broadcast video reporting by Councillors on hot topics and issues arising from complaints and survey	Ongoing	Customer Feedback and commentary	Communications and Community Engagement Officer and WTC Councillors	Residents have direct response from councillors and become familiar with them and how they work for the town.

	Apply rebranding across all social media accounts and the App	Dec 2021	All accounts are consistent	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Instantly recognisable as the Witney Town Council brand
	Trial live-streaming of events including council meetings on social media.	End of 2021	None	Communications and Community Engagement Officer, Democratic Services Officer, Councillors	Greater attendance at meetings and other streamed events for those who may not otherwise be able to be there

Printed Publications and Newsletters

	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsibility	Impact
	Assess the need for alternative formats. Next annual newsletter to all homes could ask for this.	March 2022	Assessment Produced	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Reaches wider audience and offers best option to reach people without email or internet access.
	Develop separate mailing lists for e-formats and print versions of newsletter and publications.	Ongoing	Database produced	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Offers choices to residents and addresses preferences
	Re-establish "Voice of Witney" contact database	Ongoing	Database produced	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Provides feedback from cross-generation demographic
	Update all current publications and brochures to reflect branding and standardise appearance.	Ongoing	New-look publications produced Positive customer feedback	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Consistent appearance of Town Council Brand earns trust.

Press and Media					
	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsible	Impact
	Maintain our relationship with press and media contacts taking a proactive approach to Council news. Monitor press coverage and record whether stories are positive/neutral or negative.	Ongoing	90 per cent of all press releases used by the media in one year period 95 per cent positive or neutral tone of coverage	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Key messages reaching a wide audience Council's reputation protected and perceptions enhanced
	Respond swiftly to press and media requests and provide comment where possible and relevant	Ongoing	Meet deadlines 90% of the time as a minimum measured over one year period	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Mutually co-operative relationships with key contacts across all press and media
	Continue to monitor the media for potentially damaging reputational issues.	Ongoing	Negative coverage – falls below 5% target, measured over one year period	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Reputation of Council protected Customers can trust what the council says. Misinformation is corrected quickly
	Develop relationships with local TV journalists	Ongoing	More TV coverage target is 3 slots in a one-year period	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Raise the Council's profile further and reach a wider audience

Internal Communications					
	Activity	Date	Measurement	Responsible	Impact
	Support the delivery of Intranet once key decisions have been taken.	As soon as decision is made and ongoing	Usage and feedback	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Engaged staff and improved inter-team communication
	Content management controls in place	Once implemented	Usage and feedback	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Content is relevant, only current versions of documents are accessible and it works across all devices and for all staff wherever based.
	Develop an Intranet policy	Before implemented	Policy produced	Communications and Community Engagement Officer	Best practices are observed, and staff are confident in using the system.

Prepared July 2021 by Communications and Community Engagement Officer
 Proposed review date is 1 year from adoption and thereafter every 1 year

FULL COUNCIL

Date: 2 August 2021

Title: Civic Announcements

Contact Officer: Secretary to the Mayor – Loraine Harwood

JUNE-JULY 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

Good Grief Cafe

Oxfordshire Youth Mental Health Project – Oxfordshire Discovery College – Liz attended as Deputy Mayor along with Georgie Lewis from the Youth Council

Witney Volunteer Forum

Om Shanti with Oxford Hindu Temple Community Centre at Broad Street Meadow, Oxford

Witney in Bloom judging

Cogges Trust 10th Anniversary

REPRESENTING and PROMOTING WITNEY

Bicester Town Council Civic Service Reception

Annual reception – Officers Mess, RAF Brize Norton

KEY EVENTS AND COUNCIL ACTIVITY

RAISING FUNDS

Mayor's Charities 2020-22:

- Homestart
- Got2B
- Guideposts - Witney

Prepared by:

Cllrs Joy Aitman & Liz Duncan