

Parks & Recreation

Advisory Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 5th July, 2021 at 6.00 pm

To members of the Parks & Recreation Committee - V Gwatkin, D Butterfield, J Aitman, L Ashbourne, T Ashby, L Duncan, D Enright and A McMahon (and all other Town Councillors for information).

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

Admission to Meetings

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

As an Advisory Committee of the Council this meeting will take place virtually via Zoom. All decisions of this meeting will be recommendations to Full Council.

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

Recording of Meetings

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 the council's public meetings may be recorded, which includes filming, audio-recording as well as photography.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Town Clerk or Democratic Services Officer know before the start of the meeting.

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence

To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

Committee Members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Democratic Services & Legal Services Officer (democracy@witney-tc.gov.uk) prior to the meeting, stating the reason for absence.

Standing Order 30(a)(v) permits the appointment of substitute Councillors to a Committee whose role is to replace ordinary Councillors at a meeting of a Committee if ordinary Councillors of the Committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer before the meeting that they are unable to attend.

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 3 - 8)

a) To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee held on 17 May 2021;

b) Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda (Questions on the progress on any item).

4. **Participation of the Public**

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. **Committee Work Plan**

To discuss the Committee priorities following adoption of the Open Spaces Strategy at the Full Council meeting held on 28th June.

6. **Madley Park Playing Field**

To receive a verbal update from the Town Clerk.

7. **Witney Town Bowls Club - Request for New Gates** (Pages 9 - 14)

To receive and consider correspondence from Witney Town Bowls Club requesting new gates for the Bowls Club at The Leys.

8. **Leys Skate Park**

To receive a verbal update.

9. **Wildflower Planting at Recreation Grounds**

To receive a verbal update from the Chair. Members should note that initiatives such as this should be referred to the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee for further discussion and agreement, if the Committee is in favour.

10. **West Witney dog/litter bins/signage** (Pages 15 - 20)

To consider the report of the Operations & Estates Advisor.

11. **West Witney Sports Ground - Request to Operate a Food Van** (Pages 21 - 22)

To receive and consider an application to operate a food van at West Witney Sports Ground.

12. **Park Road Play Area - Update**

To receive the report of the Project Officer (to Follow)

13. **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.

14. **West Witney Sports Ground**

To receive a verbal update from the Town Clerk



Town Clerk

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Mrs Sharon Groth
FSLCC fCMgr
Town Clerk

Cllr Joy Aitman
Mayor of Witney



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

Held on Monday, 17 May 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

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

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

PR239 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

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

PR240 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

PR241 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

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

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

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

PR242 **MINUTES**

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

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

PR243 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

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

The Committee reconvened following public participation.

Note: Councillor Temple left the meeting at this juncture.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PR246 PARK ROAD PLAY AREA - UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Projects Officer.

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

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

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

Resolved:

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

PR247 SKATE PARK - UPDATE

The report of the Project Officer was received and considered.

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

Resolved: That, the update report be noted.

Note: Councillor Aitman joined the meeting at this juncture.

PR248 LEYS RECREATION GROUND - REQUEST TO RUN A DOUGHNUT STALL

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

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

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

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

Recommended:

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

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

PR249 LEYS RECREATION GROUND - SPLASH PAD RE-OPENING

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

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

The committee expressed support for re-opening the facility.

Resolved:

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

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

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

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

Resolved:

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

PR251 WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND - CYCLING SPEED AWARENESS

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

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

Resolved:

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

PR252 WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND - COMPLIANCE & PROJECT UPDATE

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

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

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

Resolved:

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

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

The meeting closed at: 7.20 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 7

From: Alan Scholan
Sent: 07 June 2021 16:52
To: Sharon Groth
Subject: Re: Directional sign for Witney Town Bowls Club

..... Can I now turn to the issue of the entrance gates..... I've attached photos of the double and single entrance gates to the bowls club and, for comparison, the same combination of gates into the tennis courts; the difference in standard is very obvious. Could you make the point to the Leisure and Parks committee that the bowls gates are not only a bad advert for the Council but look anything but secure. May we ask please that the bowls gates are upgraded to the same specification as the tennis courts gates. Happy to provide any more information or to attend the relevant committee meeting.

Kind regards.

Alan Scholan.

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PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 5 July 2021

Title: West Witney dog/litter bins/signage

Contact Officer: Operations & Estates Advisor - John Hickman

Background

Officers have received several complaints from users of West Witney Sports Ground about the amount of litter and dog faeces on the pitches/vicinity. The Sports & Social club has or did have 2 x litter bins to the edge of the patio area near the steps for club users to use. However, the club is requesting that Council install additional dog/litter bins for people to dispose of their rubbish, given the increase usage.

Current Situation

The teams booking pitches/wickets/training are all agreed on their terms and conditions -that the playing area, changing room, and surrounding area, be left in a clean and tidy condition; any damage to Council property will be charged for.

The terms and conditions state that whilst the Town Council endeavours to maintain the ground/pitches in a safe condition free of rubbish, debris, potholes etc., due to the nature of the siting of pitches, the hirer will take appropriate steps to ensure the pitch is safe before any use transpires. We strongly advise you to check the playing surface for sharp objects and animal faeces.

The Grounds Contractors as part of the grounds contract specification on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and before each cut litter pick the site. They also on the last working day prior to the match and on the day for mid-week matches check the pitches for glass, animal faeces and other harmful debris which will be removed and fill any depressions.

There are two signs stating that, **"In the interests of health and hygiene do not exercise dogs in these grounds"**. These are positioned on the side of the clubhouse and the side of the rifle range. These signs are clearly ignored and are not practical to enforce especially as there is a dog bin existing onsite.

There are two dog bins already one just inside the vehicular entrance to West Witney and one in the Deer Park wood between the accesses from and to West Witney Field.

Currently council is installing recycling bins in replacement for all its existing litter bins, there is a small stock of approx. 5 recycling bins currently at the Leys Depot, 2 of these bins could

be installed in suitable location on the site, dog faeces can be placed in the litter side of these bins so there would be no requirement for additional dog bins and could be installed quickly as they are available. The most suitable locations would need to be decided avoiding areas of the field subject to water logging in order that the bins can be emptied throughout the year.

Council would need to allow a sum to cover the cost of the concrete bases and also for the two bins so they can be replaced in the Litter Recycling Bin Replacement Budget. Council would also need to agree the additional cost onto the grounds contract for emptying these two bins.

Council might want to consider removing the two signs about not exercising dogs in these grounds, as it is clear these are ignored and replacing them with more simple, **“Please Pick Up After Your Dog”** signs in A4 size in 5 locations - one at each entrance top of field, one at vehicle entrance and two on rear of club house. Council would need to agree a budget for the purchase of these signs, posts and materials as required.

Environmental impact

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

Increasing bin provision would have the positive benefit of increasing users ability to recycle and reduced risk to public health from dog faeces.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability. Increasing bin provision would reduce the risk to public health from dog faeces.

Financial implications

Associated costs for litter bins, litter bin emptying and signage on separate sheet.

Recommendations

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

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.
3. The instillation and wording of any new dog signage.



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Associated Costs for Recycling Bins and Dog Signage.

Cost per recycling litter bin = £379 x 2 = £758

Cost to empty Monday Wednesday and Fridays increasing to 7 days per week between May 1st and August 31st £165.20 per annum per bin x 2 = £330.40

Suggested budget for 5 x A4 3mm aluminium pick up behind your dog signs, required posts and materials £300.

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From: John Galpin
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2021 11:07:03 PM
To: Angus Whitburn
Subject: WWSSC - Food Van - Intro to The Snack Shack

Hi Angus,

As discussed on Monday, WWSSC don't wish to invest in kitchen facilities or provide hot food to members. The costs and burden are simply too great for us to manage at this stage but will no doubt be something we can look to achieve much further down the line.

Instead, we'd like to invite a local company to pitch a food van unit adjacent to the club building. The intentions of the initiative is to provide members with hot food options, our affiliate clubs/teams with post-game food and hopefully in time this will also attract more residents to West Witney and the facilities on offer by all clubs.

Please can you advise if it is acceptable to move forward with this plan on the following basis:

- The food van is pitched on the concrete area to left of our double gates and directly in front of our fence
- The food van will not be on the car park grounds
- The food van will not restrict vehicle access - more notably emergency vehicle access to the fields
- The food van will be powered on electrical feed from club as opposed to a noisy generator
- WWSSC will not sub-let area used for food van

If you're happy with the above, we plan to use a local Witney-based company called 'The Snack Shack' who is ready to begin operating as soon as this Sunday. WWSSC do not plan to charge for pitching the food van at this location, nor charge for the use of electricity since [they have] kindly offered to subsidise post-game food offered to our affiliate sports teams. The electrical feed will be installed by a qualified electrician and included in future fixed wire tests.

If you would like any more information on the above proposed arrangement, then please let me know. If you would like more information on 'The Snack Shack' please let [them] know.

I think that's it for now but hopefully this meets with your approval. Another step towards making West Witney Sports Field the best place in town.

Kind regards,

John Galpin

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