

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

Held on Monday, 16 January 2023

At 6.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor M Jones (Chair)

Councillors:	D Enright D Butterfield	O Collins J Aitman (In place of L Duncan)
Officers:	Adam Clapton Sharon Groth Derek Mackenzie	Deputy Town Clerk Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	None.	

H26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Hiles, L Duncan, V Gwatkin and T Ashby.

H27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

H28 MINUTES

The minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 7 November 2022 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 7 November 2022 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

H29 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

H30 FINANCE REPORT

The Committee received and considered the financial report of the Responsible Financial Officer.

Members had no questions.

Resolved:

That, the report be noted.

18:12pm Councillor J Aitman arrived during Agenda Item 6 - Public Halls Report

H31 **PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue & Events Officer.

The report concerned hall usage numbers, further refurbishment updates on the Gallery Room carpet and on the purchase of a projection equipment. Members also reviewed subsidised hire for a line dancing group held in conjunction with the Council's tea dance and agreed to remove the subsidy due to the small number of attendees. If the current organiser wished to continue it would be chargeable under a one-hour hire fee.

Members were pleased to see the extensive list of events proposed and thanked the Venue & Events Officer and his team for striding forward with these now that the improvements were complete.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the subsidised hire for Line Dancing ceases and the Venue & Events Officer agrees a new hire fee if required.

H32 **LANGDALE HALL - WITNEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY SIGN REQUEST**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer.

Members had no concerns with the erection of a new noticeboard on Langdale Hall as the ICE Centre supported the plan, so were unanimous in their support.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, agreement to the placing of a noticeboard by Witney Horticultural Society as proposed be given.

H33 **HOLY TRINITY CHURCHYARD TREE WORKS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operation Manager.

Members discussed the removal of three trees outlined in the report which currently fell outside the Council's tree policy and were all reluctant to remove healthy trees. However, Members could see the importance of their removal to ensure that future potential costly removal was not incurred and agreed it would be a great shame to see damage to a gravestone if this could be prevented. The planting of tree saplings to replace the trees in a more appropriate area should be considered. The Committee believed it important to communicate the removal effectively so that the church and community understood the decision taken and

that further works would only be taken when they were physically required in line with regular maintenance.

The members agreed that the responsibility for preventing wildlife entering the church lied with the church.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, removal of the three trees as identified in the report and any additional work identified by the 2023 tree report be carried out and,
3. That, the Council confirms to Holy Trinity Church that protecting the building from wildlife was their responsibility and,
4. That, Holy Trinity Church be asked to replace the removed trees with saplings.

H34 **ALLOTMENT GATES**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operation Manager.

Members were in favour of the replacement gates in order to improve the security of the allotments, however they were concerned that the gate, replaced in 2020, at Hailey Road was proposed to be again replaced and if this was good use of council funds. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the existing gate would be repurposed at Burwell playing fields where a gate was required but members also asked that officers confirm with the Allotment Association the gate required so this didn't occur again in the future.

Members were also pleased to hear via a verbal update from the Committee Clerk that the inclusive allotment plots at Windrush Allotments, offered to both the ICE Centre and Windrush School had been taken up.

Resolved:

1. That, the report, and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the gates are replaced as recommended by the Operations Manager and,
3. That, the selection of contractor be delegated to the Operation Manager.

H35 **NEWLAND ALLOTMENTS - ADJACENT PATH LIGHTS REQUEST**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operation Manager.

A member gave a verbal report on the issue to say that the plan was to install three or four solar lights at ground level to provide a small amount of light, similar to that which is used in sport facilities to light pathways. Though the cost was unknown to him, he expected it to be in the minimal and would come from his councillor priority funding.

Officers advised, that on an agreement in principle, the Witney Allotment Association should be consulted out of courtesy to see what impact this may incur.

Members raised a concern but were assured by the Member that any ongoing maintenance and responsibility would lie with Oxfordshire County Council.

It was also highlighted that this path had come up as an issue in both the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Thames Valley & District Council's Safer Streets' reviews.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Allotment Association should be approached to seek their agreement to the installation.

The meeting closed at: 6.45 pm

Chair