

## Full Council Meeting of Witney Town Council

**Monday, 20th June, 2022 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, A McMahon, A Prosser, R Smith, D Temple and P Hiles (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.

Numbers of the public will be limited, 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 ( [democracy@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@witney-tc.gov.uk) ) in advance to reserve a seat.

For further information or clarification regarding the meeting contact the Democratic and Legal Services Officer at [democracy@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto: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 & Legal 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 & Legal Services Officer ( [democracy@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto: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 of the Annual Council Meeting (Pages 5 - 10)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 11 May 2022 in accordance with Standing Order No. 18 including questions on the minutes as to the progress on any item.

4. **Public Participation**

The meeting will adjourn for this item.

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

5. **Witney Community Policing Issues**

To receive an update from the Witney Police Team (if appropriate).

6. **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.

7. **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.

8. **Minutes of Committees and Sub Committees**

To receive and NOTE the RESOLUTIONS in the minutes of the meetings held between 1 April 2022 and 6 June 2022, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein.

a) **Climate, Biodiversity & Planning - 19 April, 10 & 31 May 2022** (Pages 11 - 30)

b) **Parks & Recreation Committee - 16 May 2022** (Pages 31 - 34)

c) **Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - 23 May 2022** (Pages 35 - 40)

d) **Stronger Communities Committee - 30 May 2022** (Pages 41 - 48)

e) **Policy, Governance & Finance Committee - 6 June 2022** (Pages 49 - 56)

9. **Annual Town Meeting - 25 April 2022** (Pages 57 - 60)

To receive the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 25 April 2022.

10. **Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 - Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2021/22** (Pages 61 - 104)

To receive and consider the report of the Town Clerk/RFO to agree the Annual Governance statement along with the Final Internal Audit Report.

In line with The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 - To receive and consider the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for 2021/22 – and formally agree and adopt.

To note the Unaudited Financial Statements for the year ending 31 March 2022.

11. **Appointment to Outside Bodies - Witney Town Charity** (Pages 105 - 108)

To receive the report of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding appointments to the Witney Town Charity.

12. **Civic Announcements (Pages 109 - 110)**

To receive the report of the Mayor.

13. **Compliments & Complaints (Pages 111 - 116)**

To consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

14. **Health & Safety and Vandalism Report**

To receive an update from the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer (If appropriate)

15. **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.

16. **Correspondence**

To receive any correspondence received (if applicable).

a) **Standards in Public Life - Review of Local Government Ethical Standards (2019)** (Pages 117 - 118)

To note correspondence from Robert Courts MP in response to the Council's request that he supports the Early Day Motion on this issue. Minute number 182, 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022 refers.

17. **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.

18. **Sealing of Documents**

To receive details of documents sealed by the Council (If applicable).

19. **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.

20. **National Protocol (Pages 119 - 120)**

To consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk



Town Clerk

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**ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Wednesday, 11 May 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne	V Gwatkin
	T Ashby	M Jones
	D Butterfield	A Prosser
	O Collins	R Smith
	L Duncan	Hiles
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Simon Wright	Democratic & Legal Services Officer
	Polly Inness	Communications & Community Engagement Officer
Others:	2 members of the public.	

**199     ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR 2022/23**

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

**Resolved:**

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

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

**200     ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR 2022/23**

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

**Resolved:**

That Cllr Owen Collins be elected Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing municipal year.

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

201 **ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL 2022/23**

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

**Resolved:**

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

202 **ELECTION OF DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL 2022/23**

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

**Resolved:**

That Cllr Joy Aitman be elected as Deputy Leader of the Council for the ensuing municipal year.

203 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bolger, Eaglestone, Enright and Harvey.

204 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

205 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 April 2022 were received and considered.

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 April 2022 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

206 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

207 **FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL**

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the future format for meetings of the Council,

It was suggested that scheduled committees should return to in person meetings with the exception of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee where the environmental meeting and full planning would be combined and held in person with other meetings being online. It was clarified that Working Party and Task & Finish Group meeting would remain online.

**Resolved:**

1. That scheduled committees be held in person with the exception of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee where the environmental meeting and full planning be combined and held in person with other meetings being online; and
2. That Working Party and Task & Finish Group meetings continue to be held online.

208 **ADOPTION OF MEETINGS CALENDAR**

Members received the Calendar of Meetings for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

**Resolved:**

That the Calendar of Meetings for 2022/2023 be adopted.

209 **APPOINTMENT OF ANY NEW COMMITTEES IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 30**

There were no new committees to be appointed.

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

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

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

Members considered the appointment of standing committees, sub committees, working parties and task & Finish groups and proposed the following:

**Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee**

Cllr J Aitman	Cllr T Ashby	Cllr R Bolger
Cllr L Duncan	Cllr V Gwatkin	Cllr P Hiles
Cllr A Prosser	Cllr R Smith	

Chair of Committee Cllr R Smith

**Parks and Recreation Committee**

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

Chair of Committee Cllr V Gwatkin

**Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee**

Cllr T Ashby	Cllr D Butterfield	Cllr O Collins
Cllr L Duncan	Cllr D Enright	Cllr V Gwatkin
Cllr P Hiles	Cllr M Jones	

Chair of Committee Cllr M Jones

**Stronger Communities Committee**

Cllr J Aitman	Cllr L Ashbourne	Cllr O Collins
Cllr L Duncan	Cllr H Eaglestone	Cllr V Gwatkin
Cllr A Prosser	Cllr R Smith	

Chair of Committee Cllr O Collins

**Policy, Governance & Finance Committee**

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

Chair of Committee Cllr J Aitman

**Personnel Sub-Committee**

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

Chair of Sub-Committee Cllr R Smith

**Corn Exchange Working Party**

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

Chair of Working Party Cllr O Collins

**Platinum Jubilee Working Party**

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

Chair of the Working Party Cllr J Aitman

**20mph Working Party**

Cllr J Aitman	Cllr T Ashby	Cllr A Coles (WODC)
Cllr L Duncan	Cllr A Prosser	Cllr R Smith

Chair of the Working Party Cllr L Duncan

**Disciplinary & Grievance Panel**

Cllr D Butterfield	Cllr D Enright	Cllr A Prosser
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**Inclusivity & Diversity Task & Finish Group**

All Committee Chairs

**Rebranding Task & Finish Group**

Cllr L Ashbourne	Cllr O Collins	Cllr V Gwatkin
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**In Bloom Task & Finish Group**

Cllr J Aitman	Cllr L Duncan	Cllr R Smith
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**Covid Memorial Task & Finish Group**

Cllr J Aitman

Cllr O Collins

Cllr L Duncan

**Resolved:**

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

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

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

Members noted that appointments to Witney Town Charity would be made once details were received regarding the appointment of non-town council representatives.

**Resolved:**

That the following appointments be made:

1. Witney Town Hall Charity – Mrs L Semaine, Cllr L Duncan and Mrs R Crouch
2. Witney Educational Foundation – Mr. C Woodward

213 **REVIEW OF COUNCIL POLICIES**

Consideration was given to a number of Council policies.

It was noted that a review of Standing Orders was being undertaken and would be presented at a future meeting for consideration.

In respect of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Civility and Respect Project members agreed to the adoption of the bullying and harassment statement for councillors and staff. Confirmation was also given that a revised code of conduct for members would be presented at a future meeting.

The Council received and endorsed a user group service level agreement with Wild Witney for the management and maintenance of land at the Country Park.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the review of Standing Orders be noted;
2. That, the NALC Civility & Respect Projects Bullying and Harassment statement be adopted by the Council; and
3. That the Service Level Agreement with Wild Witney in respect of land at the Country Park be ratified.

214 **NALC - LOCAL AWARD SCHEME**

The report of the Democratic & Legal Services Officer seeking approval of policies for submission as part of the NALC Local Council Award Scheme was received and considered.

**Resolved:**

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

215 **COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE REGISTER**

A report showing Councillor attendance at meetings in 2021/2022 was received.

**Resolved:**

That, the Councillor Attendance Register 2021/2022 be noted.

216 **POSITION OF TOWN CRIER**

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the position of Town Crier.

Members agreed that the current Town Crier should remain in place for the municipal year as there were a number of events already arranged. However it was considered that the situation be reviewed at the end of this period.

**Resolved:**

1. That the position of Town Crier and incumbent be confirmed for a further year until the new Council administration in May 2023; and
2. That the appointment be reviewed at the end of the 2022/2023 municipal year.

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The meeting closed at: 7.30 pm

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Chair

# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 8a

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

**Held on Tuesday, 19 April 2022**

**At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

### **Present:**

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser	V Gwatkin
	J Aitman	M Jones
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Claire Green	Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
	Simon Wright	Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	No members of the public.	

### **P186 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Collins, Duncan & McMahon

### **P187 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Jones declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Application No. 22/00925/HHD – 317 Manor Road, Witney by virtue of knowing the applicant.

### **P188 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

### **P189 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.

P190 **EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (ETRO) FOR DOUBLE YELLOW LINE SECTION, CORN STREET**

The committee considered the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) that had been introduced in Corn Street in December 2021.

Members noted the location of the restrictions, concerns around the loss of parking and the need for safe provision for cyclists and pedestrians.

After discussion it was agreed that no comments be made at this stage but that Oxfordshire County Council be requested to look at a wider strategic plan for the whole of Corn Street to try and balance the requirements of all road users.

**Recommended:**

That Oxfordshire County Council be requested to look at a wider strategic plan for the whole of Corn Street to try and balance the requirements of all road users.

P191 **APPLICATION TO VARY A PREMISES LICENCE. W/22/00350/PRMV - LANGDALE HALL, MARKET SQUARE**

The committee received an application for amendments to the existing premises licence.

It was noted that the application sought to extend the opening hours, times for serving alcohol and for playing music. Members considered the location of the building and impact of the night-time economy in Witney.

After discussion it was agreed that no objection be raised.

**Resolved:**

That, no objection be raised to the application.

P192 **ROAD CLOSURE APPLICATION - WITNEY PRIDE FESTIVAL DAY PARADE**

Members considered an application for road closure under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847.

The committee expressed support for the closure and noted it was for a limited amount of time and that public transport operators had been advised of the proposal.

**Resolved:**

That, no objection be raised to the proposed temporary closure.

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The meeting closed at: 6.58 pm

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Chair





The development cannot impede the use of the footpath. Providing the above concerns are considered and mitigated Witney Town Council would support a temporary consent for this development.

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189- 4	WTC/043/22	Plot Ref :-22/00626/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	05/04/2022
	Location :- NORTHFIELD FARM HOUSE WOODBANK		Date Returned :-	20/04/2022
	Proposal :	Construction of single storey building to be used as private gymnasium.		
	Observations :	While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, it notes the comments from a neighbour with regard to on-site parking. Members ask that any consent stipulates that adequate car parking for users of the gym be provided within the development site. Users of the proposed development should not cause vehicular overspill to on-street parking that is harmful to access for neighbouring properties or obstructs the public highway.		

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189- 5	WTC/044/22	Plot Ref :-22/00746/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	05/04/2022
	Location :- PRIORY HOUSE CHURCH LANE		Date Returned :-	20/04/2022
	Proposal :	Erection of single storey side extension.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council note the comments from technical consultees Historic England, Oxfordshire Architectural & Historical Society and OCC Archaeological Services. All responses indicate that further information and technical detail is required before this application can be properly considered. Members support the principle of the development and welcome an opportunity to be consulted again when the required supporting documents and further development details are submitted.		

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189- 6	WTC/045/22	Plot Ref :-22/00747/LBC	Type :-	LISTED BUI
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	05/04/2022
	Location :- PRIORY HOUSE CHURCH LANE		Date Returned :-	20/04/2022
	Proposal :	Internal and external alterations to include erection of single storey side extension and replacement of windows.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council note the comments from technical consultees Historic England, Oxfordshire Architectural & Historical Society and OCC Archaeological Services. All responses indicate that further information and technical detail is required before this application can be properly considered. Members support the principle of the development and welcome an opportunity to be consulted again when the required supporting documents and further development details are submitted.		

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189- 7	WTC/046/22	Plot Ref :-22/00704/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	05/04/2022
	Location :- ABBOTT DIABETES CARE RANGE ROAD		Date Returned :-	20/04/2022
	Proposal :	Alterations to extend existing car parks.		
	Observations :	While Witney Town Council support the business growth of Abbott Diabetes Care, Members object to the proposed development in its current form.		

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1. The plans indicate a significant increase in tarmac area, this will drain into Colwell Brook. There is no mention of a surface water strategy to deal with the additional run-off. A surface water drainage strategy should accompany this application.

2. Members acknowledge the stated existing car share, cycle and public transport initiatives but note that this isn't evidenced.

3. The proposed development includes the removal of trees and landscaping, the replacement of which is noted in the planning statement, although no plans are submitted to account for the loss or net gain. Members expect that this would be formalised by either a submission of a planting scheme for consideration, or a planning condition that requires later approval by the local planning authority.

4. The plans do not illustrate any provision for safe cycle storage.

5. The provision of electric car charging points is inadequate and should reflect a future-proof vision of increased private ownership of electric vehicles.

If the applicant is able to address these concerns a revised application would be welcomed and Witney Town Council support and encourage the continued business growth of this valued Witney employer.

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189- 8	WTC/047/22	Plot Ref :-22/00812/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	06/04/2022
	Location :- 109 ETON CLOSE		Date Returned :-	20/04/2022
	ETON CLOSE			
	Proposal :	Flat Roof Extension with Lantern Skylight to Side of property.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

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189- 9	WTC/048/22	Plot Ref :-22/00903/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	06/04/2022
	Location :- 317 MANOR ROAD		Date Returned :-	20/04/2022
	MANOR ROAD			
	Proposal :	Two storey side extension.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

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189- 10	WTC/049/22	Plot Ref :-22/00925/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	06/04/2022
	Location :- 17 SAXON WAY		Date Returned :-	20/04/2022
	SAXON WAY			
	Proposal :	Single and two storey side extensions.		
	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.		

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189- 11 WTC/050/22

Plot Ref :-22/00792/HHD

Type :- HOUSEHOLDE

Applicant Name :- .

Date Received :- 11/04/2022

Location :- 59 BURFORD ROAD  
BURFORD ROAD

Date Returned :- 20/04/2022

Proposal : Erection of an outbuilding.

Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, members discussed concern for the height of the proposed development. 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.

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The Meeting closed at : 7pm

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman Date: \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

# Public Document Pack

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

**Held on Tuesday, 10 May 2022**

**At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

### **Present:**

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman 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:	Six members of the public.	

### **P193 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors McMahon and Prosser.

### **P194 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

### **P195 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

Mrs Lesley Morris addressed the committee in respect of Application No. 22/01003/FUL – Mulberry House, 9 Church Green.

*The Committee reconvened following public participation.*

### **P196 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.

Councillor Collins left the meeting at 6.45pm and Councillor Aitman left the meeting at 6.50pm.

P197 **PLANNING ENFORCEMENT APPEAL - 17 ASHCOMBE CLOSE, WITNEY**

The committee received details of an appeal that had been lodged against a planning enforcement notice at 17 Ashcombe Close, Witney.

**Resolved:**

That the appeal be noted.

P198 **TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE APPLICATIONS - QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE**

Members considered two applications for road closures for Guild Close and South Lawn, Witney under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847.

**Resolved:**

That, no objection be raised to the proposed road closures.

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The meeting closed at: 6.55 pm

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Chair



Proposal : Internal and external alterations to erect a commercial kitchen extension.

Observations :

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196- 5	WTC/055/22	Plot Ref :-22/00970/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	21/04/22
	Location :- 33 COTSWOLD MEADOW COTSWOLD MEADOW		Date Returned :-	11/05/22
	Proposal : Conversion of garage to home office and store. Includes for window and two doors.			
	Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.			

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196- 6	WTC/056/22	Plot Ref :-22/01027/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	25/04/22
	Location :- 111 BURWELL DRIVE BURWELL DRIVE WITNEY		Date Returned :-	11/05/22
	Proposal : Proposed 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.			
	Further, Members discussed the scale of the extension and subsequent loss of green space. Any measures that mitigate the loss of garden wildlife habitat should be encouraged.			

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196- 7	WTC/057/22	Plot Ref :-22/01003/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	26/04/22
	Location :- MULBERRY HOUSE, 9 CHURCH GREEN CHURH GREEN WITNEY		Date Returned :-	23/05/22
	Proposal : A proposed new dwelling.			
	Observations : Witney Town Council object to this application, the proposed development is not compliant with policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.			
	1. The development proposal does not conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the historic environment. Members are of the opinion that this green space has historic significance to Witney that needs protecting. The current undeveloped green space provides a natural buffer between modern development at Langdale Gate and the historic development of Church Green. Development of this space would have a detrimental impact on wildlife, for example bats and woodpeckers are sighted in this area. The proposed development is not in accordance with policies EH9 and EH10.			
	2. Members discussed concerns about access arrangements for the proposed development, both during the construction phase and once any development is completed. The proposed development does not have adequate access for emergency services, this is deemed a particular problem and a potential risk to life should the fire service need to attend.			
	3. The proposed development does not include any parking provision and is in a			

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location where on-street parking is already under strain. The likelihood of residents and their visitors needing to park will be an issue, an additional property of this size will exacerbate the existing parking problems on Church Green. The proposed development is not in accordance with policy T4.

4. Plan Policy OS2 states that all development should form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development and/or the character of the area. Further, that development should be compatible with adjoining uses and not have a harmful impact on the amenity of existing occupants. Members object to the siting of the proposed development - It is sited far away from Mulberry House and too close to properties at Langdale Gate. The location of the proposed dwelling maximises distance from Mulberry House which then makes the siting harmful to the amenity of residents at Langdale Gate.

5. Members are aware of existing problems with surface water drainage and flooding on the Eastern side of Church Green, both on the path and on the grass areas. This has created problems with mud being washed up to the door of properties, including at the Nursery. Taking away any permeable drainage in this location will worsen surface water issues in this area.

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196- 8	WTC/058/22	Plot Ref :-22/01145/FUL	Type :-	LISTED BUI
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	26/04/22
	Location :- WITNEY HOUSE, 17 WEST END WEST END WITNEY		Date Returned :-	11/05/22
	Proposal : Internal and external alterations to demolish existing sunroom, erection of new garden room extension (to allow revised rear glazed screen and fascia).			
	Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.			

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196- 9	WTC/059/22	Plot Ref :-22/00704/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	28/04/22
	Location :- ABBOTT DIABETES CARE RANGE ROAD WITNEY		Date Returned :-	11/05/22
	Proposal : Alterations to extend existing car parks.			
	Observations : Members are grateful for the additional information that has been supplied in response to concerns that were raised at an earlier meeting of this committee. The commitment towards existing and future provision of EV charging points at the site is impressive and the continued expansion of secure cycle parking is welcomed.			
	Members note the additional flood risk comments from the drainage consultee and request that, should consent be granted, a condition is added that requires a full surface water drainage scheme be submitted to and approved by WODC. Further, a planting scheme and biodiversity mitigation strategy be required by condition.			
	If these requirements can be met, Witney Town Council have no objections to this proposal.			

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# Public Document Pack

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

**Held on Tuesday, 31 May 2022**

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

### **Present:**

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser	L Duncan
	T Ashby	V Gwatkin
	J Aitman	P Hiles
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Claire Green	Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
Others:	No members of the public.	

### **P266 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **P267 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Aitman and Smith declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 10 – Planning Appeal 35-37 Woodgreen, Witney by virtue of knowing the appellant.

### **P268 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

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

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

#### **Resolved:**

That, Councillor Andrew Prosser be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

### **P269 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of the committee held on 29 March, 19 April & 10 May 2022 were adopted as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

P270 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

P271 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee considered whether any changes were needed to the current Terms of Reference.

**Resolved:**

That, no amendments be made to the Terms of Reference.

P272 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

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

**Resolved:**

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

P273 **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.

P274 **PLANNING APPEAL - LAND EAST OF WITNEY ROAD, DUCKLINGTON**

The Committee received details of a planning appeal for Land East of Witney Road, Ducklington - 21/03405/OUT.

Members welcomed the opportunity from the Planning Inspectorate to add further representation to the Town Council's objections and agreed that as these were still valid and pressing concerns, they should be reinforced with the following addition.

**Resolved:**

That, Witney Town Council value the open green space and echo the concerns of Ducklington Parish Council. The current open space provides a natural separation between Witney and Ducklington and in accordance with the general principles of West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2031, Policy OS2, All development should avoid the coalescence and loss of identity of separate settlements. Further, in terms of the local landscape, the site, which neighbours the Lake & Country Park, makes a valued and important contribution of greenspace to residents of Ducklington and Witney – OS2 requires that all development should **NOT** involve the loss of an area of open space or any other feature that makes an important contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

The moor is an established wildlife habitat providing a large natural catchment for excesses of surface water, if any flood mitigation measures fail, Colwell Brook and Emma's Dyke could be overwhelmed with sewage water. The Witney sewage treatment facility and current sewer network is not able to cope with the existing demand and Witney continues to see untreated sewage pumped into the River Windrush and Witney's watercourses. Approval of this application would see an additional 120 homes feeding into the existing poor network, without any commitment to sewage system upgrades. Any new development is under threat of it being flooded with sewage water from Colwell Brook and Emma's Dyke.

**P275 PLANNING APPEAL - 35 - 37 WOODGREEN**

The Committee received notification of two Planning Appeals - APP/D3125/W/21/3288456 and APP/D3125/Y/21/3288457 in respect of 35 – 37 Woodgreen, Witney.

**Resolved:**

That the notification of the Planning Appeal be noted.

**P276 A40 ACCESS TO WITNEY SHORES GREEN - PLANNING REFERENCE R3.0039/22**

The committee considered a consultation document from Oxfordshire County Council in respect of an application for works associated with the construction of the A40 Shores Green Junction.

**Resolved:**

That, Witney Town Council welcomes the application and looks forward to swift commencement of the scheme, once approved which will bring better, less congested, and safer access to the town. The plans appear to be well laid out and the Council is pleased to see the peripheral areas included, such as the shared cycle path which runs parallel to the slip road linking to Eton Close area and beyond; it is imperative this additional infrastructure is delivered with the development.

**P277 APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE - THE EDGE EATERY, 1 WESLEY WALK, HIGH STREET**

The committee received an application for a premises licence.

**Resolved:**

That, whilst Witney Town Council do not object to the licence application, members expressed concerns about safety and security for customers and staff when leaving the premises at late hours. Members ask that consideration is given for the provision of adequate outside lighting and the provision of CCTV. Additionally, members would encourage the applicant to join the local Pubwatch scheme.

**P278 OPEN SPACES STRATEGY, COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Consideration was given to the report of the Town Clerk.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

P279 **FINANCE REPORT**

Consideration was given to the current position of the budgets allocated to the committee.

**Resolved:**

That, the current financial position be noted.

P280 **20MPH WORKING PARTY MINUTES**

A progress update was given by the Deputy Town Clerk. A discussion was held on the agreed 20mph zones, buffer limits and the inclusion of new residential developments.

**Resolved:**

That, the Deputy Town Clerk would ask the Oxfordshire County Council Officer if the agreed areas and signage could be represented on a map prepared by the County Council, and

That, the Deputy Town Clerk would report back to the Oxfordshire County Council with clarification on speed limits for specific sections and areas.

P281 **WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 22 March 2022.

**Resolved:**

That the minutes circulated be noted.

P282 **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.

P283 **WITNEY LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLANS (LCWIP)**

The minutes of the LCWIP meeting held on 26 April 2022 were received.

**Resolved:**

That the minutes be noted.

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The meeting closed at: 7.58 pm

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Chair



272- 4	WTC/065/22	Plot Ref :-22/01206/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	09/05/2022
	Location :- WITNEY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL WELCH WAY		Date Returned :-	01/06/2022
	Proposal :	Additional portakabin type external storage units for clinical storage.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council support the proposal for Witney Community Hospital to improve on-site storage. However, given that this area is already prone to surface water flooding, members expressed concerns about the impact of development and the potential loss of permeable drainage. Members were unclear about the technical detail of the building installation and whether elevated buildings benefit from keeping porous surface qualities in the ground-space. Members ask that the Planning Officer pay regard to this concern and would ask that if necessary, 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.		
272- 5	WTC/066/22	Plot Ref :-22/00998/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	18/05/2022
	Location :- 41 CURBRIDGE ROAD CURBRIDGE ROAD		Date Returned :-	01/06/2022
	Proposal :	Construction of attached 3 bed dwelling together with associated works and formation of new vehicular access.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		
272- 6	WTC/067/22	Plot Ref :-22/01181/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	18/05/2022
	Location :- 117 ETON CLOSE ETON CLOSE		Date Returned :-	01/06/2022
	Proposal :	Single storey rear extension to replace existing conservatory.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		
272- 7	WTC/068/22	Plot Ref :-22/01240/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	24/05/2022
	Location :- 16 CAMPION WAY CAMPION WAY		Date Returned :-	01/06/2022
	Proposal :	Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		
272- 8	WTC/069/22	Plot Ref :-22/01236/S73	Type :-	VARIATION
	Applicant Name :- .		Date Received :-	24/05/2022
	Location :- LAND AT WEST WITNEY DOWNS ROAD CURBRIDGE		Date Returned :-	01/06/2022
	Proposal :	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 18/03206/RES to allow substitution of approved house type for Plot 871, from house type SH238 (2 bed, 2 storey house) to a 'Flanders' house type (2 bed, single storey bungalow).		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application. Members welcome the inclusion of a single storey bungalow at this development.		



272- 9 WTC/070/22 Plot Ref :-22/01302/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 24/05/2022  
Location :- 316 THORNEY LEYS Date Returned :- 01/06/2022  
THORNEY LEYS  
Proposal : Demolition of detached side garage and erection of single storey attached side extension to form garden room.  
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

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272- 10 WTC/071/22 Plot Ref :-22/01320/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 24/05/2022  
Location :- FIELD VIEW Date Returned :- 01/06/2022  
WOODGREEN  
Proposal : Replacement roof slating and alterations to a rear extension.  
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

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The Meeting closed at : 8:00pm

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, 16 May 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman T Ashby	L Duncan D Enright
Officers:	Adam Clapton Sharon Groth Simon Wright	Deputy Town Clerk Town Clerk Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	One member of the public.	

**PR217 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashbourne and Butterfield.

**PR218 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**PR219 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 the 2022/2023 municipal year.

**PR220 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2022 were considered.

PR103 – The Leys Traffic Calming Scheme - The Deputy Town Clerk advised that officers had passed on residents feedback on the scheme to Oxfordshire County Council who would progress the scheme.

**PR221 PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

Mr. Jeff Hunter representing Courtside CIC who operate facilities at The Leys Recreation Ground addressed the committee in respect of the Open Spaces Strategy.

*The Committee reconvened following public participation, Mr Hunter left the meeting*

**PR222 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee considered whether any changes were needed to the current Terms of Reference.

**Resolved:**

That, no amendments be made to the Terms of Reference

**PR223 COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES/WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk/RFO. An update was given on the projects outlined in the report and the financial and staffing resources available.

After discussion it was agreed that the Burwell Sports Changing Rooms should be a priority and would need to be progressed in conjunction with the renewal of other infrastructure at the site which was under the remit of the Hall, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee.

In respect of the pitches at Woodgreen it was advised that the matter was with West Oxfordshire District Council to draft the Heads of Terms.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted; and
2. That, the Burwell Sports Changing Rooms be the top priority.

**PR224 OPEN SPACES STRATEGY - PART A**

Consideration was given to the report of the Town Clerk/CEO.

It was reported that a Head of Operations had been appointed to oversee bringing the grounds maintenance service in house, as well as other duties .

**Resolved:**

That, the report be noted.

**PR225 FINANCE REPORT**

Consideration was given to the current position of the budgets allocated to the committee.

The Deputy Town Clerk updated on the position with the current food operator at West Witney Sports Ground. Members emphasised the need to be cognisant of the potential impact of inflation on council spending.

**Resolved:**

That, the current financial position be noted.

**PR226 QUARRY ROAD PLAY AREA - ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT**

The Committee received the report of the Project Officer outlining options for the provision of equipment at the Quarry Road Play Area.

Members noted the financial allocation for the project and expressed support for Option 1a as shown in the report.

**Resolved:**

That, Option 1a as outlined in the report be approved.

**PR227 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.

**PR228 OPEN SPACES STRATEGY - PART B**

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk/RFO in respect of the Action Plan from the Open Spaces Strategy document and Major Capital Projects agreed as part of the budget setting cycle earlier in the year.

Members discussed the project for the Burwell Changing Rooms and considered the fee proposal for professional services to progress the plans. It was agreed that the company mentioned in the report be appointed. The Chair asked if this could be progressed swiftly as it had been identified earlier as a priority project for this Committee.

The Committee considered details, together with the information provided by Courtside CIC, regarding a masterplan for the Ley Recreation Ground. Discussion ensued regarding options for the redevelopment, financial implications and consultation. Members agreed that the project should be progressed and suggested that the Council appoints a Working Party to oversee the plans.

The Town Clerk updated members on a site visit that had been held with West Oxfordshire District Council to look at options for the provision of 3G pitch. It was noted that it was difficult to accommodate at West Witney Sports Ground so other options were being considered and a report would be brought back to members.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the fee proposal from Ridge & Partners for the design/plans for additional changing rooms extending Burwell Hall be approved;
2. That, the recommendations from Courtside CIC regarding a masterplan for the Leys Recreation Ground be progressed with a Working Party being appointed at Full Council to oversee the project; and
3. That it is RECOMMENDED to Policy, Governance & Finance that the budgets set aside for the Skate park and the Leys Recreation Ground Sewerage/other works be included in the financial plan as match funding towards any grant applications if applicable;
4. That, the update on the 3G pitch and west Witney Sports Ground be noted.

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The meeting closed at: 6.42 pm

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Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 23 May 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor M Jones (Chair)

Councillors:	V Gwatkin T Ashby O Collins	L Duncan P Hiles J Aitman
Officers:	Adam Clapton Simon Wright	Deputy Town Clerk Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	One member of the public.	

**H229 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Butterfield and Enright.

Councillor Aitman attended for Councillor Enright.

**H230 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**H231 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 Duncan Enright be elected. There being no other nominations it was:

**Resolved:**

That, Councillor Duncan Enright be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

**H232 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 14 March 2022 were received.

H115 – Corn Exchange Decoration and Damp Works

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the works had been completed and had come in under budget.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee held on 14 March 2022 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair

H233 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

Mr Barry Jessel representing Witney Allotment Association addressed the committee in respect of Agenda Item No. 16 – Allotments and Schools

*The Committee reconvened following public participation*

At the request of the Chair the Committee agreed to take Agenda Item No. 16 - Allotments and Schools before Agenda Item No. 6

H234 **ALLOTMENTS AND SCHOOLS**

The Committee considered details of a project to helping younger people in particular, and schools, get involved more in growing, understanding, and eating healthy, local foods as outlined by Mr Jessel under public participation.

Members expressed their support in principle for the initiative and welcomed the ambition to work with schools and encourage careers in horticulture. The Committee emphasised that as landowner of the allotments they did not have any direct input but could support the project by promoting on social media and through the Town Council generally.

**Resolved:**

That, the details of the project be noted, and the Town Council support it in principle.

H235 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee considered whether any changes were needed to the current Terms of Reference.

**Resolved:**

That, no amendments be made to the Terms of Reference

H236 **OPEN SPACES STRATEGY, COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk/CEO. An update was given on the projects outlined in the report and the financial and staffing resources available.

Members discussed priority items and agreed that works to the Corn Exchange, Heating at Burwell Hall and repairs to the St Mary's Churchyard wall were highest priority. In respect of the Children's Memorial Garden at the Windrush Cemetery it was noted that options needed to be considered and could therefore be considered at a later date.

**Resolved:**

That, works to the Corn Exchange, Heating at Burwell Hall and repairs to the St Mary's Churchyard should be the priority items.



H237 **FINANCE REPORT**

Consideration was given to the current position of the budgets allocated to the committee.

**Resolved:**

That, the current financial position be noted.

H238 **BURWELL HALL - HEATING SYSTEM**

The committee received the report of the Project Officer in respect of a replacement heating system at Burwell Hall.

Members thanked the Project Officer for such a detailed report and considered the options outlined. The committee expressed a preference for a Fuel Cell CHP Boiler as it offered best value for money and would require less works at the hall. It was noted that it was a relatively new technology and requested that delegation be given to finalise the scheme subject to a satisfactory case study being received.

The committee noted that the Parks & Recreation Committee had agreed the refurbishment of the changing rooms on the site and both projects would need to run concurrently.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the Fuel Cell CHP Boiler option be approved: and
2. That, the decision be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and Leader of the Council subject to a satisfactory case study and the feasibility study for the changing room works.

H239 **CORN EXCHANGE MAIN HALL & 1863 CAFE BAR OPERATIONS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Venues & Events Officer.

Members considered the recommendations in the report and noted that there was no loss of floor space when the new seating was in place. Therefore there should be no reduction in hire charges for non-performance hirers.

The committee noted the improved income and level of bookings. Discussion ensued regarding opening hours and it was agreed that the Café Bar should close on Bank Holidays as footfall was low on those days. In respect of later opening on a Friday members supported this at the discretion of the Venue & Events Officer and subject to other bookings.

**Resolved:**

1. That, there is no reduction of Main Hall hire charges for non-performance hirers; and
2. That, the continued opening of 1863 for longer hours on a Friday be supported at the discretion of the Venue & Events Officer.

H240 **CORN EXCHANGE WORKING PARTY**

The Committee received the minutes of the Corn Exchange Working Party together with a confidential report updating on issues that had arisen.

Members considered the options for additional works, legislative requirements, financial implications, contractual responsibilities and reputational risk. After discussion it was agreed that the works should comply with BS8300, although not a legal requirement, and revise the layout accordingly with the additional costs being approved. Members requested that the consultant fees be reviewed regarding additional fees.

The committee thanked officers for their work on the project.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the works should comply with BS8300, although not a legal requirement, and revise the layout accordingly;
2. That, the additional expenditure of £2,895.00 be approved for the works; and
3. That, the additional consultant fees of £700 plus VAT be reviewed and not paid at this stage.

H241 **TOWER HILL NEW FAMILY ASHES SECTION**

The committee considered the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer.

Members thanked the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer for the report and the proactive approach that was being recommended. Members considered the proposals and supported the reduction in ashes plot sizes together with changes to the exclusive rights. In respect of Windrush Cemetery it was agreed that this should be looked at as well to ensure consistency.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the plot size be reduced to 1.8m x 1.2m for Section 3 of Tower Hill Cemetery;
2. That, the new period of exclusive rights of burial at Tower Hill to 30 years be approved to help extend the useability of the cemetery; and
3. That, officers be delegated to research if similar alterations at Windrush cemetery are needed and report back to Councillors.

H242 **ST MARY'S CHURCH BOUNDARY WALL**

Consideration was given to the report of the Operations & Estates Advisor.

The committee noted the extensive works that were required, the permissions that were required and the financial implications.

After discussion it was agreed to progress the high priority works and remove vegetation. In respect of appointing a contractor it was suggested that this be delegated to officers in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and Leader of Council.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the Priority 1 Short Term works be approved;
2. That, the selection of a contractor be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and the Leader of Council; and
3. That, removal of existing tree growth from wall and Biochemical/Herbicide for treatment of tree stumps and vegetative growth from the wall prior to commencement of works be supported

**H243 WINDRUSH CEMETERY ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Operations & Estates Advisor.

The committee considered options for the site together with the history of the site and purchase of the land in question. The financial implications were considered and it was noted that before any works could be undertaken then an archaeological study would be needed.

It was agreed that the area should be retained as present whilst options were considered.

**Resolved:**

1. That, other possible uses for the area be researched; and
2. That, in the meantime the area be left as at present including the maintenance regime

**H244 TOWER HILL CEMETERY 'WISHING TREE'**

Members considered a request to erect a plaque marking the tree at Tower Hill Cemetery from existing budgets.

The committee agreed to the request and noted that if the tree was removed for any reason a replacement would be provided.

**Resolved:**

That, the request to erect a plaque marking the wishing tree at Tower Hill Cemetery from existing budgets.

**H245 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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.

**H246 MAJOR PROJECTS**

Members received the confidential report of the Town Clerk/CEO updating on major projects within the remit of the committee.

Consideration was given to the options for the premises identified in the report and the financial implications including alternative funding options. The committee acknowledged the possibilities for developing the premises but agreed that the project should not be progressed at this stage unless other funding options were available.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the update on Major Projects be noted; and
2. That, the project for the premises identified in the report should not be progressed at this stage unless other funding options were available.

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The meeting closed at: 7.45 pm

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Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 30 May 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	V Gwatkin
	L Ashbourne	A Prosser
	L Duncan	R Smith
	H Eaglestone	
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
Others:	No members of the public.	

**SC247 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

All members were present at the meeting.

**SC248 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**SC249 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 Luci Ashbourne be elected. There being no other nominations it was:

**Resolved:**

That, Councillor Luci Ashbourne be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

**SC250 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 21 March 2022 were received.

SC131 – Happy to Chat Benches

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that no reply had been received from the group who originally requested this project in 2020. It was agreed that if no response was received by 10 June, that the Council progresses the project.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Stronger Committee held on 21 March 2022 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

SC251 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

SC252 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee considered whether any changes were needed to the current Terms of Reference.

**Resolved:**

1. That, 'in town council ownership' be inserted into point (b) concerning maintaining infrastructure and;
2. That, point (g) be omitted as it duplicated point (a)

SC253 **OPEN SPACES STRATEGY, COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk/C.E.O concerning the Open Spaces Strategy (OSS) and programme of works for the year.

Members were advised that most of the OSS actions were underway, most were time sensitive and crossed over with other committees' priorities. Some of these capital projects may be later than planned due to external delays while there were reports on others on the agenda for this meeting.

In response to a member query, it was agreed that £10,000 be ring-fenced towards water safety education.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, there was no one priority above all others, they would be achieved through a natural cycle withing the year.

SC254 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk and were advised the financial position of items within its remit were in a good position.

**Resolved:**

That, the report of the Town Clerk be noted.

*Councillor L Ashbourne joined the meeting at 6.08pm*

**SC255 YOUTH SERVICES GRANT REVIEW**

The committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the Youth Services Grant for 2022.

Members were pleased to hear the County Council had re-introduced youth crisis funding, that a new Youth Work team was working in West Oxfordshire and they had made contact with town council officers. The aims and work of this team were as yet unknown and would develop over the coming months. It did give the town council the opportunity to extend the remit of its youth services grant, totalling £40,000 for the current year.

The Committee discussed the merits of using some of the fund towards 'free' hire of premises but heard that the Corn Exchange and Burwell Hall didn't meet the requirements of at least one group which offered outreach work in the town. There was further discussion on whether part of the fund could be earmarked towards a new, permanent youth facility, potentially at The Leys, as part of a future and wider re-development.

Members agreed that the funds could be used for and publicised as such, for hire costs of any facility to hold youth evenings/events and for funds towards a permanent youth structure.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Youth Services Grant criteria be amended to add and highlight that funding may be used towards facility hire costs and towards a permanent youth structure.

**SC256 COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer concerning the annual resident's satisfaction survey results, the town council App, and championing local.

Members were pleased to see several hundred survey responses had been received from residents. They noted there was still confusion over Local Government tiers, and which Council provided services and therefore, the results may be skewed because of this misunderstanding. There were positive comments which were welcome and negative ones which should be addressed, either by the town council through feeding into strategies, or by forwarding onto the relevant authority.

The Committee also considered the relevance of the Town Council App which figures showed was not being utilised in a meaningful way. There was a small number of residents who used it but nothing had been submitted through it for some time and the same news and information was available via the Website, which was largely mobile-friendly. There were seemingly no other town or parish council's who were using an app and there was no transactional or interactive functionality which could generate further interest.

The report also included suggestions on improving community engagement by championing local sports clubs and organisations, initially through social media but then officially through the committee process.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, comments from the survey concerning town council services are addressed directly or by being incorporated into existing strategies and,
3. That, 'You Said, We Did' video shorts with members are published in response to the comments and
4. That, comments concerning County & District Council's are filtered and forwarded to the Leader of those Council's and Members with Cabinet responsibility for those issues and,
5. That, the Town Council App be discontinued at this time and,
6. That, as part of the Communications Strategy Review, the website is reviewed to improve access and functionality and,
7. That, the Town Council highlights and congratulates local sports clubs and organisations through the use of social media and,
8. That, these achievements be recognised at Full Council under Communications from the Leader and,
9. That, the possibility of recognising sporting achievements be considered when the Civic Reception/Citizen of the Year Awards are reviewed and,
10. That, the Press Coverage report and Witney Forum minutes be noted.

**SC257 TOWN HALL WINDOW - COMMUNITY USE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the Town Hall windows.

Members were advised re-branding of the Town Council was nearing completion and once that was done, the windows would be utilised more to advertised Council services and the events at the Corn Exchange. There was one window which could be offered to local community groups or organisations and members were supportive of the suggested policy on how this could be implemented. Confirmation was given that the intent was this should be free of charge.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the Town Council welcomes community groups to use one window for advertising and;
2. That, the policy on such displays is formulated from the suggestions in the report; namely:
  - a. It is for free community use only, open to charities, groups or community organisations operating in Witney or the promotion of free services. Advertising for paid services would not be permitted.
  - b. It is let for one month at a time on a first-come, first-serve basis
  - c. There is no cost for this service
  - d. It is booked through the Council's Bookings Office
  - e. Groups are responsible for setting up and clearing the space
  - f. Any display must adhere to health and safety rules i.e. no lighting etc.
3. That, a back up display be developed for when not in use.



SC258 **THIRD PARTY/ LARGE EVENTS**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk.

Members were advised that Witney Pride appeared to have been a successful event at the Leys and the organisation of future upcoming events were in hand with the Venue & Events Officer. Paperwork had been received and reviewed for most and there currently didn't appear to be any issues the committee needed to be aware of.

The Chair stated he was pleased the Witney Pride event had gone so well and the organisers should be complimented on the organisation and execution of the event.

**Resolved:**

That, the verbal update of the Deputy Town Clerk be noted.

SC259 **PLATINUM JUBILEE WORKING PARTY MINUTES**

The Committee received the minutes of the Platinum Jubilee Working Party held on 28 April 2022.

The Chair of the Stronger Communities Committee thanked the Working Party for its work in planning a programme of events for the weekend which everyone was looking forward to.

**Recommended:**

That, the minutes of the Platinum Jubilee Working Party held on 28 April 2022 be received and the recommendations therein be approved.

SC260 **OXFORD PLAYHOUSE - PARTICIPATION EVENT AT THE LEYS RECREATION GROUND**

The committee received and considered correspondence from Oxford Playhouse concerning their 'Playhouse Plays Out Tent Tour.'

Members were supportive of the initiative which could be held on The Leys Recreation Ground, but the funds needed to facilitate were regrettably not available in the current year. A discussion could be had with the District Council to enquire whether Covid-19 recovery funds could go towards it, but it was essentially too late to prepare and advertise for June.

**Resolved:**

That, the Town Council could not accommodate the Playhouse Plays Out Tent Tour in 2022 but would consider an early request for 2023 dates.

SC261 **COMMUNITY SUPPORT - UKRAINIAN FAMILIES**

The Committee received a verbal update from members and heard that more Ukrainian families were coming in and the scheme locally appeared to be working well. School and Surgery places had been found and administration of support via Cogges Church was helping all concerned.

At the moment, there was nothing further directly required from the town council, but the subsidised use of the Corn Exchange had been welcomed, and that may be needed in the future for information dissemination.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the verbal update be noted and;
2. That, further subsidised use of the Corn Exchange may be requested.

**SC262 TOWER HILL TREE RE-INSPECTION**

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

Members supported the need to undertake a re-inspection of mature trees at Tower Hill Cemetery following storms earlier in the year. Officers confirmed the cost would be allocated from an underspend in the arboriculture budget from 2021-22.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, a tree re-inspection is commissioned for Tower Hill Cemetery at a cost of £785.00 and,
3. That, two static load tests are commissioned on beech trees T442 & T310 at a cost of £2,523.00.

**SC263 LITTER AND DOG WASTE BINS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

Members were advised the District Council had completed its bin replacement programme in Witney and all those which remained in place had been upgraded to dual use bins, while a number of bins had been removed and not replaced. It was understood that there was no intention to install single use dog waste bins anymore or any dual use bins in residential areas by the District Council; its adopted policy was to encourage dog owners walking in these areas to take the waste home with them to dispose of.

The Committee agreed this appeared to be counter-productive in trying to reduce littering, but the District Council had based its decisions on evidence indicating the majority of residents would act responsibly and not litter. The education of the public, publication of the scheme and policy change had clearly not been satisfactory.

Members heard that the automatic response from the District Council, that all new bin and additional bin requests must be made by town and parish council's, had resulted in complaints and requests being received for several areas due to bin removal. A review of the response had been promised by the District Council, but the requests left the Town Council in a difficult position of wanting to help residents, but not having the funds to pay for continued emptying of litter and dog waste bins previously paid for by the District Council.

It was agreed the Town Council should collect dog waste from any remaining single use dog waste bins on its land with immediate effect.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, bin emptying on town council land is taken over in its entirety by Witney Town Council and,
3. That, the Town Council considers requests for new or additional litter and dog waste bins on its land, differentiation made on each with separate bins as appropriate and,
4. That, requests for any bins on West Oxfordshire District Council land are forwarded to them to deal with, the town council declining such requests and,
5. That, requests for bins in other areas are not the responsibility of the Town Council and in line with the District Council's policy on bins in residential areas, will be declined and,
6. That, the above be reviewed in the next Council year to ascertain the current position.

**SC264 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.

**SC265 CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV)**

The Committee received the confidential report of the Town Clerk/C.E.O concerning contributions towards CCTV provision.

Members welcomed a response from West Oxfordshire District Council updating on the current provision but were conscious a proposed upgrade had not materialised in recent years. There was agreement that funds should be released but that further funding for 2023 was not guaranteed and would only be considered on receipt of a further update report at that time.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the confidential report and correspondence from WODC be noted and,
2. That, it be recommended to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee that the contribution towards the CCTV scheme be released for 2022 and,
3. That, a letter is issued outlining the town council's position for 2023.

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The meeting closed at: 7.49 pm

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Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 6 June 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	O Collins	A D Harvey
	L Duncan	M Jones
	H Eaglestone	R Smith
	V Gwatkin	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Simon Wright	Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	Two members of the public.	

**F284 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**F285 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**F286 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 Ruth Smith be elected. There being no other nominations it was:

**Resolved:**

That, Councillor Ruth Smith be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

**F287 MINUTES**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2022.

Minute F140 – The Town Clerk confirmed that a letter had been sent to West Oxfordshire District Council regarding CCTV. A response had been received and considered by the Stronger Communities Committee and it recommended to this committee the £10k funding be released.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**F288 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

Mr. William Wareing representing Witney Flood Mitigation Group addressed the committee in respect of Agenda Item No. 13 – Emergency Plan

*The Committee reconvened following public participation.*

The Committee, at the request of the Chair, agreed to take Agenda Item No. 13 before Agenda Item No. 6.

**F289 EMERGENCY PLAN**

Consideration was given to the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer.

Members welcomed the report and emphasised the need for local authorities to work together and share information. It was noted that the Town Council was not the lead authority for emergency planning but could have a role in providing accommodation during emergencies, maintaining land owned by the Council, staff resources in working hours and grant aid.

The committee considered and supported the main recommendations in the report, and it was noted that recommendation 4 would need to be resolved in exempt session.

**Resolved:**

1. That, Witney Town Council maintenance staff assisting in an emergency in contracted working hours be included in the emergency plan;
2. That, making Town Council facilities available as places of safety in an emergency be incorporated into the plan; and
3. That, officers be designated to work with Witney Flood Mitigation Group on a grant bid for flood prevention equipment.

**F290 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee considered whether any changes were needed to the current Terms of Reference.

**Resolved:**

That, no amendments be made to the Terms of Reference.

**F291 OPEN SPACES STRATEGY, COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The committee considered the report of the Town Clerk/CEO.

The Town Clerk brought to Members attention OSS Objective EE14, which had been deferred from the Personnel Sub-Committee, and asked what the Council's expectations were around weekend working practices and service delivery. She needed this information to be able to establish what resources were needed in the future.

The Members agreed that the Council wanted a visible presence 7 days per week, and in particular considered Operatives would be checking pitches, preparing the splash pad, dealing with emergencies, ad hoc requests for internments in special circumstances – and general maintenance.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted; and
2. That, a visible presence over 7 days per week be provided as outlined above be supported.

**F292 INTERNAL AUDIT - FINAL REPORT 2021/2022**

The Committee received and considered the final Internal Audit report for 2021/2022. Members thanked officers for their hard work in respect of the audit and welcomed the positive assurances in each relevant area.

**Resolved:**

That, the final Internal Audit Report for 2021/2022 be received and noted

**F293 ACCOUNTS & AUDIT (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2015 - ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2021/22**

The Committee noted that due to the delay in the production of the AGAR & Financial Statements by the Council's Contract Accountants this item would be deferred to Full Council on 20th June 2022.

**F294 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

It was noted that identified charges included in the report related to transactions associated with the card payment machines used by the Council.

**Resolved:**

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

<b>Cheques No's</b>	<b>In the sum of</b>	<b>Account</b>
Cheques 101178 & 101181*, DDs, and Standing Orders March 2022	£95,905.05	General CB 1
Cheques 33462-33518, DDs, and Standing Orders March 2022	£172,825.78	Imprest CB 2
Cheques 101182-101183, DDs, and Standing Orders April 2022	£73,910.56	General CB 1
Cheques 33519-33539, DDs, and Standing Orders April 2022	£118,918.95	Imprest CB 2

**F295 FINANCIAL REPORT & ASSOCIATED MATTERS**

The report of the Town Clerk/CEO was considered.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that following the Stronger Communities Committee meeting, Oxford Playhouse had submitted an updated proposal for an event on The Leys in late June at the cost of £1k for two days. Members considered the timescale and publicity for the event and noted that a budget was available. The committee agreed to support the event and noted that it could be accommodated at the same time as the circus on The Leys.

An update was given on works at St Mary's Churchyard and it was resolved to delegate officers to agree the contractor for the works.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the recommendations of the spending committees as detailed in the report be approved;
2. That, £1k be allocated from the Subsidised Lettings Budget for the Oxford Playhouse - Playhouse Plays Out Tent Tour on The Leys with delegation to officers to finalise the details; and
3. That, delegation be given to the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer to agree a contractor for works at St Mary's Churchyard.

**F296 GRANTS AND SUBSIDISED LETTINGS**

The committee considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk outlining applications and confidential financial information for Discretionary Grants, Subsidised Lettings and Additional Finance Requests.

Discretionary Grant Applications

Witney Town Band – Members noted that the application was higher than previous years to reflect an increase in costs. The committee supported the request for £660 and that this should be agreed for future years and included in the annual budget accordingly.

Witney Congregational Church – Members noted legislation that precluded providing funds for churches and ecclesiastical charities and that further government guidance was still awaited. The committee discussed the community benefits and suggested that the Witney Town Hall charity may be able to assist.

After discussion it was resolved not to make an award of funding.

Oxfordshire Foster Care Association – The committee noted that the association covered a wider area than Witney, but it did support residents of the town. Members discussed the financial information provided and after discussion agreed to support the application but that it be on a percentage basis to reflect the number of Witney residents being supported. It was proposed and agreed that a grant of £500 be awarded.

Witney Museum & Historical Society – Members expressed support for the museum and the need for increased promotion. It was suggested and agreed that an ongoing grant would also be beneficial. It was proposed that a grant of £500 be awarded and this would be ongoing for future years with the minutes of the society AGM being presented to Council for information. The Council could also assist in advertising the Museum at its offices and at the Corn Exchange.



### Subsidised Lettings

Mayor of Witney – The committee supported the request for £510 to hold up to three fundraising events at the Corn Exchange for mayoral charities.

Carry on Dancing Club – The Deputy Town Clerk clarified that the matter had been discussed by the Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Committee and this had generated the application for consideration. The committee supported the application.

### Additional Financial Requests & Matters

Madley Park Hall Trust – The committee noted that the request was the third and final tranche of funding previously agreed for the hall and was set aside in an earmarked reserve. The request for £5k was agreed.

Rotary Club of Witney – The postponement of the Colour Run Event until later in the year was noted.

### **Resolved:**

1. That, in respect of Discretionary Grants witney Town Band be awarded £660 and that this be included at the same rate in the budget for future years;
2. That, no award be made to Witney Congregational Church;
3. That, Oxfordshire Foster Care Association be awarded £500 to reflect the percentage of Witney residents being supported by the organisation;
4. That, Witney Museum & Historical Society be awarded £500 and that this be included at the same rate in the budget for future years with the minutes of the society AGM being presented to the Council for information;
5. That, subsidised lettings be approved for the Mayor of Witney and Carry-on Dancing Club as detailed in the report;
6. That these grants be awarded under the General Power of Competence and that the recipients be asked to acknowledge the Council's financial contribution in their promotional literature;
7. That, the allocation of £5k to Madley Park Hall Trust be approved; and
8. That, the postponement of the Witney Colour Run until later in the year be noted.

### **F297 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.

**F298    EMERGENCY PLAN**

The committee considered the confidential appendix to the report.

Members agreed that a more structured out of hours service was required. Discussion ensued regarding financial implications, current staff contracts and options for a new service.

**Resolved:**

That, a revised emergency call-out and out of hours arrangements be supported and delegated to the Head of Operations to agree a workable procedure and bring back to a future meeting for consideration.

**F299    MAJOR & SPECIAL PROJECTS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Town Clerk/CEO updating on a number of projects.

The committee considered proposals for The Leys Recreation Ground and whether previously allocated funding should be put towards a wider redevelopment scheme whilst retaining the vision for the new Skate Park. The financial implications, links to the Open Spaces Strategy and other funding options were discussed. Members supported the reallocation of funds to assist with match-funding requests.

Members noted an update in respect of West Witney Sports Ground and that discussions were ongoing with West Oxfordshire District Council regarding leisure provision in the town.

Consideration was given to the recommendation of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee in respect of the potential purchase of the building. Members considered the financial implications and the longer-term vision for the site and, after discussion, ratified the recommendation that the purchase should not be pursued.

Members noted the update in respect of the Grounds Maintenance Contract and Burwell Hall Changing Rooms.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the inclusion of the funds set aside for the skate park and pavilion/sewage and other works identified be reallocated to the funding applications for matched funding towards the Masterplan for the Leys Recreation Ground with the existing plans for the Skate Park being retained;
2. That, the recommendation from the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee not to progress the freehold purchase identified in the report be endorsed; and
3. That, the update in respect of other projects be noted.

**F300    PROPERTY & LEGAL MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk concerning property and legal matters.

Members received details of rent negotiations for the Town Hall, Town House and Buttercross together with updates on play areas, playing fields, leases and other land interests.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the rent increase as identified in the report in respect of the Town Hall, Town House and Buttercross be approved;
2. That, the heads of terms in respect of the freehold transfer of the Waterford Road Play Area in the report be approved; and
3. That, the updates on other property and legal matters be noted.

F301 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meetings held on 9 & 25 May 2022.

A Member raised an incident with an employee that had occurred at one of the recent Jubilee events and was disappointed by the behaviour of elected Members who had been present. There was a discussion on a course of action which the Town Clerk agreed she would look into in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

**Resolved:**

That, the confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 9 & 25 May 2022 be noted, and the recommendations contained therein approved.

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The meeting closed at: 7.56 pm

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Chair

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**ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday, 25 April 2022**

**At 7.30 pm in the Main Hall, The Corn Exchange, Witney**

**Present:**

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	T Ashby	D Enright
	D Butterfield	V Gwatkin
	O Collins	A Prosser
	L Duncan	R Smith
	H Eaglestone	D Temple
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Angus Whitburn	Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer
	Polly Inness	Communications & Community Engagement Officer
Others:	16 members of the public.	

**1     INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR OF WITNEY, CLLR JOY AITMAN**

The Town Mayor, Cllr Joy Aitman, welcomed the public to the meeting and introduced herself and the Deputy Mayor, Liz Duncan, officers of the Town Council and representatives of Thames Valley Police.

**2     OFFICIAL NOTING OF THE TOWN COUNCILLOR APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Witney Town Councillors L Ashbourne, R Bolger, D Harvey, M Jones, and A McMahon.

**3     TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF 11 MARCH 2020**

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting meeting held on 11 March 2020, copies of which were available at the meeting, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**4     THAMES VALLEY POLICE**

The Mayor welcomed Inspector Chris Ball to the meeting who introduced himself and his colleague PC Chris Cochrane who was part of the Witney policing team.

Attendees were advised there had been a number of successes in recent months on crime and the police were actively working with young people to build a respectful and educated community.

There had however been 23 burglaries, 2 robberies, and 41 bicycle thefts. The figures were low compared to those nationally, but they were still too high. In response to a question from the floor, Officers confirmed they did have tactics in place to tackle the high rate of bicycle thefts, and there were hot spots, mainly in secluded areas which included the Leisure Centre. The most beneficial advice to the public was to not be so trusting and to make it less attractive to potential thieves.

Cllr Jane Doughty, West Oxfordshire District Council, raised concerns about antisocial behaviour at Tungsten Park in West Witney. Residents were frustrated the police appeared to be doing little about car meet ups late at night which were disturbing families in this part of the town. It was advised that Officers were speaking with those involved and trying to make it less attractive to the drivers. Police resources were stretched and being put towards targeted events when they were known about with a tactic of disperse and displace. They stressed the more the police were told about these kinds of events, the more they could do.

A final question concerned the illegal use of e-scooters and the lack of a police presence on the streets. It was confirmed the police were recruiting more staff, but the number was below where it needed to be and PCSO's were being drawn into police work. With regard to e-scooters, warning letters were issued and, if after that they were still being used by individuals they were confiscated. Bike thefts were currently the top priority.

**5 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM EACH OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S STANDING COMMITTEE**

The Mayor gave an update on her two years as Mayor and invited the Town Council's Committee Chairs to give brief updates on their Committees' responsibilities and an overview of what they had been working on throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

As the Leader and Chair of Policy, Governance and Finance Committee was unable to attend, Cllr O Collins gave an overview of the work of that the Committee had been doing on her behalf.

Following this, Cllrs Smith, Gwatkin, and Collins introduced themselves as Chairs of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee, Parks & Recreation Committee, and Stronger Communities Committee respectively. Cllr Aitman provided an update on the work of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee in that Chair's absence.

**6 OPEN FORUM TO DISCUSS MATTERS RAISED BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC AT THE MEETING**

Further to the updates from Committee Chairs, the Mayor opened the floor to questions from the public.

**Q1. Is anything being done to address the problems around the new cycle lanes in Corn Street? They are not currently safe, and buses cannot pass each other safely.**

The Mayor thanked the member of public for the question and referred to fellow councillors R Smith and D Enright.

It was confirmed that feedback and questions had been passed on by the Town Council at the consultation stage for this project, which was part of an active travel package delivered by the

County Council. There had regrettably, been a short time frame on consultation due to time constraints in spending the funds and the result was narrower, and not necessarily safer lanes.

There was agreement this was a work in progress, and unfortunately not everything is right first time. The County Council was currently creating a Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which would attempt to produce a plan. There would also be further consultation when additional funding became available.

**Q2. 20mph Speed Limits. People do not know Corn Street has a 20mph limit – what can be done? Drivers might take more notice if signs are on the road**

The Mayor advised this information would be fed back to Oxfordshire County Council who were responsible for implementing the scheme. As a wider issue, it was advised that lots of footpaths and cycle paths were overgrown so there was work needed on the ground to clear these. Police representatives suggested the Police Community Payback Scheme may be able to assist with this.

**Q3. What is the Town Council role in assisting vulnerable people and riparian ownership of land in conjunction with flooding?**

The Mayor advised the Town Council's Planning Committee, members recognised and commented on new developments, large and small where ground is tarmacked over. Thankfully, these comments were being listened to increasingly at District Council. Everyone was beginning to recognise the sewerage problem which tied into this issue.

Cllr Andrew Coles, West Oxfordshire District Council commented that there were a number of reasons why flooding happens. Government thinking was that not enough properties flood and therefore no funding is provided to invest in defences and mitigations. What was being done was a sticking plaster approach. The floods two years ago highlighted many failures, it was the worst time for affected residents and community agencies were not ready. Therefore, much more needed to be done.

**Q4. What is happening to our 500-year-old Market town? Is it becoming a suburb of Oxford?**

There was agreement that shopping habits had changes as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic and further investment was needed in the town centre. Members advised there would be an opportunity to come together and talk about the future of the High Street during the coming months.

**Q5. Are you disappointed with the turnout for this evening's meeting?**

The Mayor advised it was disappointing only a small number of the public had attended but the meeting had been advertised in all the usual ways, Witney Gazette, website, poster, and social media. In response to an attended, the Mayor said the Town Council could look into the communications in the future.

7

**TOWN MAYOR'S CLOSING REMARKS AND THANKS**

The Mayor thanked the public for attending the meeting and invited them to stay on now that the formal business was concluded to speak to the Councillors informally.

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The meeting closed at: 8.45 pm

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Chair



## FULL COUNCIL

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**Date:** Monday 20 June 2022

**Title:** Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2021/22

**Contact Officer:** Town Clerk/RFO – Sharon Groth

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### Background

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

### Annual Governance Statement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Key elements of the internal control environment include:*

- *Internal Audit is independent and outsourced to Auditing Solutions Ltd, and was re-tendered in 2021.*
- *The Council adopted the revised 'Model Code of Conduct' at its Annual Meeting held on 9 May 2007, and all new Members following ordinary and by-elections have signed up to this.*
- *Standing Orders & Financial Regulations in place and reviewed.*
- *The Council adopted an Annual Investment Strategy for 2004/05 on 5 May 2004 (minute 170/04 refers), which has been reviewed annually since. The last review being for 2021/22 on 22 November 2021 (minute F589).*
- *The Council invested in the software programme 'Local Council Risk System' during 2004/05 in order to monitor its Risk Assessments, and continues to use it for the Council's Corporate Risk Assessment.*
- *This Committee adopted a formal Risk Management Policy and programme for 2005/06 on 4 April 2005 (minute F142 refers), which has been regularly reviewed, and presented annually to Council for approval. The last review being for 2021/22 on 28 March 2022 (minute F142).*
- *Operational Risk Assessments have been presented to Council as and when they arise. The Corporate Risk Assessments and Risk Register was presented and adopted by full Council 28 March 2022.*
- *The Council's book-keeping is currently outsourced to DCK Beavers Ltd incorporating a further level of segregation of duties. However, during the staff restructure it was identified to appoint a separate RFO and Accounts Administrator for greater control and up to date reporting internally to support a council the size of Witney. Whilst we have successfully appointed the Accounts Administrator, the position of RFO remains unfilled and being covered by the Town Clerk/CEO.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[A] *The internal auditor is appointed by council every five years. He attends at least three times a year with the resultant internal audit report reviewed by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee. The contract was re-tendered in the Summer of 2021 and a report presented to PGF on 27 September 2021 (minute F504 refers).*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[A] *Not applicable.*

#### Annual Return 2021/22 & unaudited Financial Statements

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

#### Annual Internal Audit Report

Throughout the year Auditing Solutions Ltd, the Council's independent Internal Auditors have carried out a number of remote visits to scrutinise internal procedures and accounting. The Internal Auditor has carried out the final audit remotely and has therefore completed page 3 of the Annual Return signed off by Adrian Shepherd-Roberts. The full Internal Audit Report was considered by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee at its meeting on 6 June 2022, and is attached for information at Appendix C.

#### Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

#### **Recommendations**

The Council is invited to note this report and

- 1) that the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2022 where questions 1 to 9 were answered yes, be approved and adopted;
- 2) that the Statement of Accounts at Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2022 be approved and adopted;
- 3) that the unaudited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 be noted.



# Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22 Form 3

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

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

## Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:
  - The Annual Internal Audit Report **must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
  - **Sections 1 and 2** **must** be completed and approved by the authority.
  - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2022**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2022**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
  - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
  - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2022
  - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
  - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
  - Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22

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

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

## Publication Requirements

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

Before 1 July 2022 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2021/22**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2021/22**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2022 authorities **must** publish:

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

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

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

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



## Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2021/22

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide\** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. If the AGAR contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2022.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, **you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman; and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide\**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2021) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2022).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2022**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including <b>the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights</b> , been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at <b>31 March 2022</b> been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? <b>NB:</b> do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

*\*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk) or from [www.ada.org.uk](http://www.ada.org.uk)



# Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22

Witney TOWN COUNCIL

www.witney-tc.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2022, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2021/22 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2020/21, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2020/21 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with any relevant transparency code requirements	✓		
M. The authority, during the previous year (2020-21) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2020/21 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

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

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

14/02/2022

31/05/2022

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Adrian Shepherd-Roberts

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

31/05/2022

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

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



## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

We acknowledge as the members of:

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022, that:

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

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

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

20/06/2022

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chairman

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

WWW.WITNEY-TC.GOV.UK

PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS



## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22 for

### WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2022 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1,936,914	2,238,370	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,628,699	1,691,877	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	235,022	551,745	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	-652,203	-769,779	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	-910,062	-1,250,438	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	2,238,370	2,461,775	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	2,956,883	2,959,000	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	6,617,679	6,848,765	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	N/A
			✓
			The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
			N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2022 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

13/06/2022

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

20/06/2022

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED



## Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2021/22

In respect of

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

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

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

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

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2022; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

### 2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2021/22

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

### 3 External auditor certificate 2021/22

We certify/do not certify\* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

\*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YY

**Witney Town Council**

**Unaudited Financial Statements**

**For the year ended 31 March 2022**

**Witney Town Council**

**Table of Contents**

**31 March 2022**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Table of Contents.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Council Information.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Statement of Responsibilities.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Statement of Accounting Policies.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Income and Expenditure Account.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Statement of Movement in Reserves.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Balance Sheet.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Cash Flow Statement.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Notes to the Accounts.....</b>	<b>12</b>
1 Other Costs Analysis.....	12
2 Interest and Investment Income.....	12
3 Related Party Transactions.....	13
4 General Power of Competence.....	13
5 Audit Fees.....	14
6 Members' Allowances.....	14
7 Employees.....	14
8 Trust Funds.....	14
9 Pension Costs.....	14
10 Tangible Fixed Assets.....	15
11 Financing of Capital Expenditure.....	16
12 Information on Assets Held.....	16
12 Information on Assets Held (cont'd).....	17
13 Investments.....	17
14 Debtors.....	17
15 Current Asset Investments.....	18
16 Creditors and Accrued Expenses.....	18
17 Financial Commitments under Operating Leases.....	18
18 Deferred Grants.....	19
19 Capital Financing Account.....	19
20 Earmarked Reserves.....	20
21 Capital Commitments.....	20
22 Contingent Liabilities.....	20
23 Reconciliation of Revenue Cash Flow.....	20
24 Movement in Cash.....	21
25 Post Balance Sheet Events.....	21
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>22</b>

**Witney Town Council**

**Council Information**

**31 March 2022**

**( Information current at 13th June 2022 )**

**Town Mayor**

Cllr L. Duncan

**Councillors**

Cllr O. Collins (Deputy Town Mayor)

Cllr J. Aitman

Cllr L. Ashbourne

Cllr T. Ashby

Cllr R. Bolger

Cllr D. Butterfield

Cllr H. B. Eaglestone

Cllr D. S. T. Enright

Cllr V. Gwatin

Cllr A. D. Harvey

Cllr P. Hiles

Cllr M. Jones

Cllr A. McMahon

Cllr A. Prosser

Cllr R. Smith

Cllr D. Temple

**Town Clerk**

Mrs Sharon Groth PSLCC FCMgr

**Auditors**

Moore Stephens (East Midlands)

Rutland House

Minerva Business Park

Lynch Wood

Peterborough

PE2 6PZ

**Internal Auditors**

Auditing Solutions Limited

Clackerbrook Farm

46 The Common

Bromham

Chippenham

Wiltshire

SN15 2JJ

**Witney Town Council**  
**Statement of Responsibilities**  
**31 March 2022**

**The Council's Responsibilities**

The council is required:

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

**The Responsible Financial Officer's Responsibilities**

The R.F.O. is responsible for the preparation of the council's Unaudited Financial Statements in accordance with Part 4 of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners Guide (England) (as amended)" (the guide), so far as is applicable to this council, to present a true and fair view of the financial position of the council at 31 March 2022 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.

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

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

The R.F.O. has also:

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

**Responsible Financial Officer's Certificate**

I further certify that the Unaudited Financial Statements present a true and fair view of the financial position of Witney Town Council at 31 March 2022, and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Signed: .....

Mrs Sharon Groth PSLCC FCMgr- Finance Officer

Date: .....

**Witney Town Council**  
**Statement of Accounting Policies**  
**31 March 2022**

**Auditors**

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

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

**Accounting Convention**

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

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

**Fixed Assets**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Witney Town Council**  
**Statement of Accounting Policies**  
**31 March 2022**

**Depreciation Policy**

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

Freehold land is not depreciated.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Grants or Contributions from Government or Related Bodies**

**Capital Grants**

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

**Revenue Grants**

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

**Investments**

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

**Stocks and Work in Progress**

Stocks held for resale, where significant (generally in excess of £1,000), are valued at the lower of cost or net realisable value. Consumable stocks have been treated as an expense when purchased because their value was not material.

**Debtors and Creditors**

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

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



**Witney Town Council**  
**Statement of Accounting Policies**  
**31 March 2022**

**Value Added Tax**

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

**External Loan Repayments**

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

**Leases**

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

**Reserves**

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

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

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

**Interest Income**

All interest receipts are credited initially to general funds.

**Cost of Support Services**

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

**Pensions**

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

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

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

**Witney Town Council**  
**Income and Expenditure Account**  
**31 March 2022**

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Income</b>			
Precept on Principal Authority		1,691,877	1,628,699
Grants Receivable		24,391	31,364
Rents Receivable, Interest & Investment Income		3,101	5,010
Charges made for Services		255,048	166,986
Other Income		20,382	20,100
Total Income		1,994,799	1,852,159
<b>Expenditure</b>			
<b>Direct Service Costs:</b>			
Salaries & Wages		(117,126)	(128,301)
Grant-aid Expenditure		(49,068)	(33,833)
Other Costs	1	(636,038)	(557,482)
<b>Democratic, Management &amp; Civic Costs:</b>			
Salaries & Wages		(652,653)	(523,902)
Other Costs	1	(263,745)	(242,917)
Total Expenditure		1,718,630	(1,486,435)
<b>Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year.</b>		<b>276,169</b>	<b>365,724</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus for Year</b>		<b>276,169</b>	<b>365,724</b>
<b>STATUTORY CHARGES &amp; REVERSALS</b>			
Capital Expenditure charged to revenue	11	(56,364)	(64,268)
Transfer (to) Earmarked Reserves	20	(329,112)	(142,438)
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus for the Year (from)/to General Fund</b>		<b>(109,307)</b>	<b>159,018</b>
<b>Net Surplus for the Year</b>		<b>219,805</b>	<b>301,456</b>
The above Surplus for the Year has been applied for the Year to as follows:			
Transfer (to) Earmarked Reserves	20	329,112	142,438
(Deficit)/Surplus for the Year (from)/to General Fund		(109,307)	159,018
		<b>219,805</b>	<b>301,456</b>

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

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

**Witney Town Council**  
**Statement of Movement in Reserves**  
**31 March 2022**

<b>Reserve</b>	<b>Purpose of Reserve</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>2022 £</b>	<b>Net Movement in Year £</b>	<b>2021 £</b>
Capital Financing Account	Store of capital resources set aside to purchase fixed assets	19	3,607,859	(71,757)	3,679,616
Earmarked Reserves	Amounts set aside from revenue to meet general and specific future expenditure	20	1,937,032	329,112	1,607,920
General Fund	Resources available to meet future running costs		585,212	(109,307)	694,519
Total			6,130,103	148,048	5,982,055

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

**Witney Town Council**

**Balance Sheet**

**31 March 2022**

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Tangible Fixed Assets	10		4,763,719	4,643,700
<b>Long Term Assets</b>				
Investments Other Than Loans	13		60,469	60,469
Long Term Debtors			-	3,600
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Stock		1,888		-
Debtors and prepayments	14	335,840		281,415
Investments	15	1,043,962		1,043,235
Cash at bank and in hand		1,915,038		1,913,648
		<u>3,296,728</u>		<u>3,238,298</u>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>				
Creditors and income in advance	16	(217,979)		(170,683)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>			3,078,749	3,067,615
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>			7,902,937	7,775,384
Deferred Grants	18		(1,772,834)	(1,793,329)
<b>Total Assets Less Liabilities</b>			<u>6,130,103</u>	<u>5,982,055</u>
<b>Capital and Reserves</b>				
Capital Financing Reserve	19		3,607,859	3,679,616
Earmarked Reserves	20		1,937,032	1,607,920
General Reserve			585,212	694,519
			<u>6,130,103</u>	<u>5,982,055</u>

The Unaudited Financial Statements represent a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2022, and of its Income and Expenditure for the year.

These accounts were approved by the Council on 13th June 2022 .

Signed: .....	.....
Cllr L. Duncan	Mrs Sharon Groth PSLCC FCMgr
Town Mayor	Responsible Financial Officer

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

**Witney Town Council**

**Cash Flow Statement**

**31 March 2022**

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £
<b>REVENUE ACTIVITIES</b>				
<i>Cash outflows</i>				
Paid to and on behalf of employees		(762,608)		(629,111)
Other operating payments		(920,340)		(809,728)
			(1,682,948)	(1,438,839)
<i>Cash inflows</i>				
Precept on Principal Authority		1,691,877		1,628,699
Cash received for services		256,781		176,041
Revenue grants received		1,990		31,364
			1,950,648	1,836,104
<b>Net cash inflow from Revenue Activities</b>	23		267,700	397,265
<b>SERVICING OF FINANCE</b>				
<i>Cash inflows</i>				
Interest received		3,141		5,066
<b>Net cash inflow from Servicing of Finance</b>			3,141	5,066
<b>CAPITAL ACTIVITIES</b>				
<i>Cash outflows</i>				
Purchase of fixed assets		(272,324)		(75,830)
<i>Cash inflows</i>				
Capital grant received		-		363,089
<b>Net cash (outflow)/inflow from Capital Activities</b>			(272,324)	287,259
<b>Net cash inflow before Financing</b>			(1,483)	689,590
<b>FINANCING AND LIQUID RESOURCES</b>				
(Increase) in money on call			(727)	(2,062)
Loan repayments received			3,600	-
<b>Net cash (outflow) from financing and liquid resources</b>			2,873	(2,062)
<b>Increase in cash</b>	24		<b>1,390</b>	<b>687,528</b>

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

**Witney Town Council**

**Notes to the Accounts**

**31 March 2022**

**1 Other Costs Analysis**

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

**Direct Service Costs**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Public Halls	67,832	56,249
Parks & Recreation Grounds & Play Areas	465,410	390,394
Allotments	956	5
Cemeteries & Closed Churchyards	22,804	37,911
Closed Churchyards	157	12,411
Community Support	86,891	52,916
Community Infrastructure	41,056	41,429
Less: Grant-aid Expenditure	(49,068)	(33,833)
<b>Total</b>	<b>636,038</b>	<b>557,482</b>

**Democratic, Management & Civic Costs**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Corporate Management	206,708	194,494
Democratic Representation & Management	20,370	18,640
Civic Expenses	36,422	29,783
Mayors Allowance	245	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>263,745</b>	<b>242,917</b>

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

**2 Interest and Investment Income**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Interest Income - General Funds	3,101	5,010
	<b>3,101</b>	<b>5,010</b>

## **Witney Town Council**

### **Notes to the Accounts**

**31 March 2022**

#### **3 Related Party Transactions**

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

Related parties include:

##### **Central Government**

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

##### **Principal Authorities**

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

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

##### **Members of the council**

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

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

##### **Officers of the Council**

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

##### **Other Organisations**

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

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

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

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Payments      Rent paid for Town Hall, Town House and the Buttercross	<u>15500</u>	<u>17250</u>

#### **4 General Power of Competence**

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

## **Witney Town Council**

### **Notes to the Accounts**

**31 March 2022**

#### **5 Audit Fees**

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

These may be summarised as follows:

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fees for statutory audit services	2,400	2,000
Total fees	2,400	2,000

#### **6 Members' Allowances**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Members of Council have been paid the following allowances for the year:		
Mayors Allowance	245	-
	245	-

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

#### **7 Employees**

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

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Number</b>
Full-time	13	16
Part-time	10	8
Temporary	4	-
	27	24

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

#### **8 Trust Funds**

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

#### **9 Pension Costs**

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

The cost to the council for the year ended 31 March 2022 was £119,884 (31 March 2021 - £104,669).

The most recent actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31st March 2019, and the council's contribution rate is confirmed as being 21.70% of employees' pensionable pay with effect from 1st April 2022 (year ended 31 March 2022 – 21.70%).

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



**Witney Town Council**

**Notes to the Accounts**

**31 March 2022**

**10 Tangible Fixed Assets**

	<b>Operational Freehold Land and Buildings</b>	<b>Vehicles and Equipment</b>	<b>Infra-structure Assets</b>	<b>Community Assets</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
At 31 March 2021	4,435,157	1,146,498	737,208	234,747	6,553,610
Additions	132,205	152,290	17,092	-	301,587
Disposals	-	(66,901)	-	-	(66,901)
Reclassification					
At 31 March 2022	4,567,362	1,231,887	754,300	234,747	6,788,296
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At 31 March 2021	(716,282)	(851,484)	(342,144)	-	(1,909,910)
Charged for the year	(71,575)	(72,236)	(37,757)	-	(181,568)
Eliminated on disposal	-	66,901	-	-	66,901
At 31 March 2022	(787,857)	(856,819)	(379,901)	-	(2,024,577)
<b>Net Book Value</b>					
At 31 March 2022	3,779,505	375,068	374,399	234,747	4,763,719
At 31 March 2021	3,718,875	295,014	395,064	234,747	4,643,700

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

**Fixed Asset Valuation**

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

**Witney Town Council**

**Notes to the Accounts**

**31 March 2022**

**11 Financing of Capital Expenditure**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
The following capital expenditure during the year:		
Fixed Assets Purchased	301,587	75,830
	<u>301,587</u>	<u>75,830</u>
was financed by:		
Capital Grants	245,223	11,562
Revenue:		
Capital Projects Reserve	26,350	37,802
Equipment Replacement Reserve	7,082	1,816
Precept and Revenue Income	22,932	24,650
	<u>301,587</u>	<u>75,830</u>

**12 Information on Assets Held**

Fixed assets owned by the council include the following:

**Operational Land and Buildings**

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

**Vehicles and Equipment**

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

**Infrastructure Assets**

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

**Witney Town Council**

**Notes to the Accounts**

**31 March 2022**

**12 Information on Assets Held (cont'd)**

**Community Assets**

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

**13 Investments**

	<b>Investments Other Than Loans £</b>
<b>Cost</b>	
At 01 April 2021	60,469
At 31 March 2022	<u>60,469</u>
<b>Amounts Written Off</b>	
At 31 March 2022	<u>-</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>	
At 31 March 2022	<u>60,469</u>
	<u>60,469</u>
At 01 April 2021	60,469
Deferred Debtors - Loans	<u>3,600</u>
	<u>64,069</u>

At 31 March 2022 the investments included above at a cost of £60,469 had a market value of £71,771 (31 March 2021 - £61,054 ).

**14 Debtors**

	<b>2022 £</b>	<b>2021 £</b>
Debtors - General	61,044	46,903
Debtors - Bookings	11,684	1,017
Trade Debtors	<u>72,728</u>	<u>47,920</u>
VAT Recoverable	50,262	44,362
Revenue Grant Debtors	22,401	-
Prepayments	12,229	39,227
Accrued Income	804	5,402
Accrued Interest Income	580	620
Capital Grant Debtors	<u>176,836</u>	<u>143,884</u>
	<u>335,840</u>	<u>281,415</u>

**Witney Town Council**

**Notes to the Accounts**

**31 March 2022**

**15 Current Asset Investments**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Public Sector Deposit Fund (CCLA)	1,043,962	1,043,235
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,043,962	1,043,235
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**16 Creditors and Accrued Expenses**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade Creditors	121,839	106,994
Other Creditors	1,028	-
Superannuation Payable	14,566	11,590
Payroll Taxes and Social Security	15,699	11,505
Accruals	19,017	25,588
Income in Advance	16,567	15,006
Capital Creditors	29,263	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	217,979	170,683
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**17 Financial Commitments under Operating Leases**

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

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Obligations expiring within one year	-	-
Obligations expiring between two and five years	-	-
Obligations expiring after five years	15,500	15,500
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	15,500	22,282
	<hr/>	<hr/>

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

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Obligations expiring within one year	6,782	6,782
Obligations expiring between two and five years	1,557	1,557
Obligations expiring after five years	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	8,339	8,339
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**Witney Town Council**

**Notes to the Accounts**

**31 March 2022**

**18 Deferred Grants**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Capital Grants Unapplied</b>		
At 01 April	829,245	477,718
Grants received in the year	32,952	363,089
Applied to finance capital investment	(245,223)	(11,562)
At 31 March	616,974	829,245
<b>Capital Grants Applied</b>		
At 01 April	964,084	1,002,486
Grants Applied in the year	245,223	11,562
Released to offset depreciation	(53,447)	(49,964)
At 31 March	1,155,860	964,084
<b>Total Deferred Grants</b>		
At 31 March	1,772,834	1,793,329
At 01 April	1,793,329	1,480,204

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

**19 Capital Financing Account**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance at 01 April	3,679,616	3,723,200
Financing capital expenditure in the year		
Additions - using revenue balances	56,364	64,268
Disposal of fixed assets	(66,901)	(1,816)
Depreciation eliminated on disposals	66,901	1,816
Reversal of depreciation	(181,568)	(157,816)
Deferred grants released	53,447	49,964
Balance at 31 March	3,607,859	3,679,616

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

**Witney Town Council**

**Notes to the Accounts**

**31 March 2022**

**20 Earmarked Reserves**

	<b>Balance at 01/04/2021</b>	<b>Contribution to reserve</b>	<b>Contribution from reserve</b>	<b>Balance at 31/03/2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Capital Projects Reserves	765,207	25,000	(37,569)	752,638
Asset Renewal Reserves	134,198	8,169	(7,082)	135,285
Other Earmarked Reserves	708,515	467,884	(127,290)	1,049,109
Total Earmarked Reserves	1,607,920	501,053	(171,941)	1,937,032

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

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

The Other Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2022 are set out in detail at Appendix A.

**21 Capital Commitments**

The council had no capital commitments at 31 March 2022 not otherwise provided for in these accounts.

**22 Contingent Liabilities**

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

**23 Reconciliation of Revenue Cash Flow**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Net Operating Surplus for the year	276,170	365,724
Add/(Deduct)		
Interest and Investment Income	(3,141)	(5,066)
(Increase) in stock held	(1,888)	-
(Increase) in debtors	(21,473)	(35,013)
Increase in creditors	18,032	71,620
Revenue activities net cash inflow	267,700	397,265

**Witney Town Council**

**Notes to the Accounts**

**31 March 2022**

**24 Movement in Cash**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Balances at 01 April</b>		
Cash with accounting officers	615	585
Cash at bank	1,913,033	1,225,535
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,913,648	1,226,120
<b>Balances at 31 March</b>		
Cash with accounting officers	665	615
Cash at bank	1,914,373	1,913,033
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,915,038	1,913,648
<b>Net cash inflow</b>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,390	687,528

**25 Post Balance Sheet Events**

There are no significant Post Balance Sheet events since the preparation of these accounts, up to the date of their final adoption (on 13th June 2022 ), which would have a material impact on the amounts and results reported herein.

## Witney Town Council

### Appendices

31 March 2022

#### Appendix A

#### Schedule of Earmarked Reserves

	<u>Balance at</u> <u>01/04/2021</u> £	<u>Contribution</u> <u>to reserve</u> £	<u>Contribution</u> <u>from reserve</u> £	<u>Balance at</u> <u>31/03/2022</u> £
<u>Capital Projects Reserves</u>				
Sports & Recreation	159,231		(11,219)	148,012
Cemetery Access Road	68,853	25,000		93,853
Rolling Capital Fund	537,123		(26,350)	510,773
	<u>765,207</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>(37,569)</u>	<u>752,638</u>
<u>Asset Replacement Reserves</u>				
Renewals Fund	134,198	8,169	(7,082)	135,285
	<u>134,198</u>	<u>8,169</u>	<u>(7,082)</u>	<u>135,285</u>
<u>Other Earmarked Reserves</u>				
Memorial Maintenance	30,301	4,000		34,301
Town Hall Maintenance	31,799	40,000		71,799
Amenity Lands	60,469			60,469
Building Repairs (General)	12,997			12,997
Election Fund	4,791	4,500		9,291
Buttercross	57,031	17,969		75,000
Committed Funds	114,640	88,695	(114,640)	88,695
Public Halls	61,639	3,000	(7,180)	57,459
Madley Park	20,980			20,980
Spashpark	130,000	27,000		157,000
Towerhill Cemetery Chapel	18,000	3,500		21,500
Corn Exchange Lift	50,000			50,000
Youth Council	473			473
Play Equipment Renewals	13,800	13,000		26,800
Climate/Biodiversity	13,050	35,000		48,050
Leys Pavilium	7,900	25,000		32,900
Burwell Changing Rooms		50,000		50,000
Infrastructure	9,600	19,200	(5,470)	23,330
Electric Vehicles	4,200	10,000		14,200
OSS Contingency	66,845	14,020		80,865
Burwell Hall		33,000		33,000
Leys Traffic Calming		5,000		5,000
Skate Park		40,000		40,000
CCTV Leys & Burwell		10,000		10,000
St Mary's Church Wall		25,000		25,000
	<u>708,515</u>	<u>467,884</u>	<u>(127,290)</u>	<u>1,049,109</u>
<b>TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES</b>	<b><u>1,607,920</u></b>	<b><u>501,053</u></b>	<b><u>(171,941)</u></b>	<b><u>1,937,032</u></b>



**Witney Town Council**

**31 March 2022**

**Annual Report Tables**

**Table. 1 – Budget & Actual Comparison**

	<b>Budget £</b>	<b>Actual £</b>
Net Expenditure		
Public Halls	185,809	122,711
Parks & Recreation Grounds	389,238	306,328
Allotments	5,781	26,033
Cemeteries & Closed Churchyards	278,740	188,322
Community Support	195,768	159,595
Planning & Development (including Markets)	19,948	24,992
Town Centre & Highways	345,003	262,569
Community Transport	21,000	-
Net Direct Services Costs	1,441,287	1,090,550
Corporate Management	141,672	166,482
Democratic & Civic	135,574	161,776
Net Democratic, Management and Civic Costs	277,246	328,258
Interest & Investment Income	(4,500)	(3,101)
Capital Expenditure	142,292	56,364
Transfers to/(from) other reserves	(106,240)	329,113
(Deficit from) General Reserve	(58,208)	(109,307)
<b>Precept on Principal Authority</b>	<b>1,691,877</b>	<b>1,691,877</b>

**Witney Town Council**

**31 March 2022**

**Annual Report Tables**

**Table. 2 – Service Income & Expenditure**

Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £
	Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure	Net Expenditure
<b>CULTURAL &amp; RELATED SERVICES</b>				
Public Halls}	233,451	(110,740)	122,711	140,939
Parks & Recreation Grounds	373,670	(67,342)	306,328	271,404
Allotments	26,175	(142)	26,033	4,531
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>				
Cemeteries & Closed Churchyards	261,190	(72,868)	188,322	206,883
Community Support	159,595	-	159,595	102,485
<b>PLANNING &amp; DEVELOPMENT SERVICES</b>				
Planning & Development	24,992	-	24,992	20,066
<b>HIGHWAYS, ROADS &amp; TRANSPORT SERVICES</b>				
Town Centre & Highways	268,515	(5,946)	262,569	241,832
<b>OTHER SERVICES</b>				
Council Tax Benefit Support Grant	-	-	-	(30,454)
<b>CENTRAL SERVICES</b>				
Corporate Management	209,265	(42,783)	166,482	163,231
Democratic & Civic	88,757	-	88,757	88,018
Civic Expenses	73,019	-	73,019	59,050
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>1,718,629</b>	<b>(299,821)</b>	<b>1,418,808</b>	<b>1,267,985</b>

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## **Witney Town Council**

*Internal Audit Report 2021-22: Final*

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*Adrian Shepherd-Roberts*

*For and on behalf of  
Auditing Solutions Ltd*

## Background

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

This report sets out the work undertaken in relation to the 2021-22 financial year which was completed by 14th February and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022. We have again undertaken our final review for the year remotely: we wish to thank the Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk in assisting the process, providing all necessary documentation in electronic format to facilitate completion of our review for the year to date. We have, in the circumstances, reduced, in some areas, the volume of transactions examined, whilst still ensuring governance and financial controls remain effective.

## Internal Audit Approach

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

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

## Overall Conclusion

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

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

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

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

# Detailed Report

## Review of Accounting Arrangements & Bank Reconciliations

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

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

- Ensured that the ledger remains in balance at the current date;
- Verified the opening trial balance detail with that reported in the 2020-21 Accounts and Annual Return;
- Checked and agreed transactions in the three bank account cashbooks to the relevant bank statements for April and December 2021 and March 2022 noting that these records continue to be maintained in a timely and accurate manner;
- Checked and agreed all inter account “sweep” transactions between the Imprest and premium accounts, to retain a daily balance on the former of £1,000, for the same months; and
- Checked detail on bank reconciliations as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 for each account to ensure that no long-standing uncleared cheques or other potentially anomalous balancing entries exist.

### Conclusions

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

## Review of Corporate Governance

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

- Noted previously that the Financial Regulations were reviewed and formally approved at the Full Annual Council meeting in April 2021. The Standing Orders were approved in 2016 and should be reviewed and subsequently approved by Full Council;
- Noted previously that General Powers of Competence were adopted at the May 2019 Full Council meeting; and
- Have undertaken our review of the Council’s minutes and consideration of other governance issues for the year to identify whether or not any issues exist that may have

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

### ***Conclusions***

***We are pleased to record that no issues have been identified from work currently undertaken in this area. We have, however, previously noted with the Clerk the requirement to review the Standing Orders in conjunction with the latest model documents issued by NALC.***

## **Review of Expenditure**

Our aim here is to ensure that: -

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

We have completed our testing in this area, examining a sample of payments.

We also note that VAT returns continue to be completed in a timely and accurate manner, with electronic "on-line" submission now in place, in line with HMRC requirements. We have examined the quarterly reclaims to March 2022 confirming that the detail correlates to that in the Omega VAT control account.

### ***Conclusions***

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

## **Assessment and Management of Risk**

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

We note that the LCRS based risk assessment documentation was formally re-adopted by Council in 2021-22 financial year.

We have also examined the Council's insurance policy schedule for 2021-22, with cover again provided by Zurich Municipal, noting that Fidelity Guarantee cover is in place at £5 million (previously £2million), Public Liability at £15 million & Employer's Liability at £10 million.

### ***Conclusions***

***We have reviewed the insurance policy and note that Fidelity Guarantee cover has now been reviewed and increased to £5million for 2022-23***

## **Precept Determination and Budgetary Control**

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

We note from draft minutes that the precept of £1,829,398 for 2022-23 was approved by Full Council at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

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

### ***Conclusions***

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

## **Review of Income**

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

- Examined the controls in place over the identification and recovery of income due to the Council from the two cemeteries together with the invoicing, tracing detail from the source documents and the burial records to the subsequent receipt and banking of the fees.
- Examined the controls in place over the identification and recovery of income due to the Council from the Corn Exchange together with the invoicing, tracing detail from the Invoices to the subsequent receipt and banking of the fees.

Also reviewed the unpaid invoices relating to the sales ledgers and we are satisfied that a significant amount of work was undertaken to reduce this debtor position. Following discussions with the Town Clerk we have been advised that work has been undertaken, post the year end, to reduce the outstanding debt.

## **Conclusions**

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

## **Petty Cash Account**

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

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

We have also reviewed the fuel Card account and consider that the controls regarding its use are satisfactory.

## **Conclusions**

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

## **Salaries and Wages**

In examining the Council's payroll function, we aim to confirm that extant legislation is being appropriately observed as regards adherence to the Employee Rights Act 1998 and the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) legislation as regards the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions, together with meeting the requirements of the local government pension scheme, as further revised from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 in relation to employee percentage bandings. To meet that objective, we have checked detail of payroll transactions in December 2021, ensuring that: -

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

## **Conclusions**

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



## Fixed Asset Registers

The Governance and Accountability Manual requires all councils to maintain a record of all assets owned. We have checked and agreed the principles used in the detail, as recorded in the Council's Asset Register following the review by DCK Accounting Solutions Limited (DCK), noting that it is prepared using purchase cost values or where that value is unknown at the previous year's return level or uplifted or decreased to reflect the acquisition or disposal of assets or a proxy cost as detailed in the Governance and Accountability Manual (March 2022)

### *Conclusion*

*No issues require formal comment or recommendation.*

## Investments and Loans

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

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

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

### *Conclusions*

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

## Annual Governance and Accountability Return

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

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

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

### *Conclusions*


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

Smaller authority name: WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

# NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION OF UNAUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 26 and 27  
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

NOTICE	NOTES
<p>1. Date of announcement <u>TUESDAY 21 JUNE 2022</u> (a)</p> <p>2. Each year the smaller authority's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be reviewed by an external auditor appointed by Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd. The unaudited AGAR has been published with this notice. As it has yet to be reviewed by the appointed auditor, it is subject to change as a result of that review.</p> <p>Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2022, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:</p> <p>(b) Mrs Sharon Groth, Town Clerk &amp; Responsible Financial Officer Witney Town Council, Town Hall, Market Square, Witney, OX28 6AG E-Mail: <a href="mailto:sharon.groth@witney-tc.gov.uk">sharon.groth@witney-tc.gov.uk</a> Tel: (01993) 704379</p> <p>commencing on (c) <u>WEDNESDAY 22 JUNE 2022</u></p> <p>and ending on (d) <u>TUESDAY 2 AUGUST 2022</u> [the 30th working day after (c) above]</p> <p>3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and</li> <li>The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the smaller authority.</li> </ul> <p>The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.</p> <p>4. The smaller authority's AGAR is subject to review by the appointed auditor under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the NAO's Code of Audit Practice 2015. The appointed auditor is:</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div> <p><b>MOORE</b></p> </div> </div> <p>Moore (Ref RD/hd) Rutland House, Minerva Business Park, Lynch Wood, Peterborough PE2 6PZ</p> <p>5. This announcement is made by (e) Mrs S Groth Town Clerk/RFO</p>	<p>(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and address/telephone number/ email address, as appropriate, of the Clerk or other person to which any person may apply to inspect the accounts</p> <p>(c) Insert date, which must be at least 1 day after the date of announcement in (a) above and extends for a single period of 30 working days (inclusive) ending on the date appointed in (d) below</p> <p>(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must also include the first 10 working days of July.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority</p>

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS: A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS**

**Please note that this summary applies to all relevant smaller authorities, including local councils, internal drainage boards and 'other' smaller authorities.**

### **The basic position**

By law, any interested person has the right to inspect the accounting records of smaller authorities. If you are a local government elector or registered to vote in the local councils' elections, then you are able to ask questions about the accounts and object to them.

### **The right to inspect the accounting records**

When your council has finalised its accounts for the previous financial year, they must advertise that they are available for people to inspect. You must then provide the council with reasonable notice of your intentions. Following this, by arrangement you will then have 30 working days to inspect and make copies of the accounting records and supporting documents. You may be required to pay a copying charge.

### **The right to ask the auditor questions about the accounting records**

If you have any questions regarding the accounting records, you should first ask your smaller authority. This must be done during the 30-day period for the exercise of public rights. You may also ask the appointed auditor questions about an item in the accounting records. However, the auditor can only answer 'what' questions, not 'why' questions so is limited with their response. To avoid any confusion, it is advised that you put your questions in writing.

### **The right to make objections**

Should you view something as unlawful or believe there are matters of wider concern in the accounts, you may wish to object. If you are a local government elector, you have the right to ask the external auditor to apply to the courts for a declaration that an item is contrary to the law and should be reported as a matter of public interest. This must be done by telling the appointed auditor which specific item in the accounts you object to and why you believe it to be unlawful or think a public interest report should be made about it. You must provide clear evidence to support your objection, and this should be done in writing and the copied to the council.

You should not use the 'right to object' to make a personal complaint or claim against your smaller authority. Complaints of this nature should be taken to your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or to your solicitor.

### **A final word**

Smaller authorities, and so local taxpayers, meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections. In deciding whether to take your objection forward, the auditor must consider the cost that will be involved. They will only continue with the objection if it is in the public interest to do so. If you appeal to the courts against an auditor's decision, you may have to pay for the action yourself.

## FULL COUNCIL

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**Date:** Monday, 20 June 2022

**Title:** Appointment to Outside Bodies – Witney Town Charity

**Contact Officer:** Deputy Town Clerk – Adam Clapton

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### Background

Members will recall there are current Town Council Trustee vacancies on the Witney Town Charity. The decision on appointments was deferred from the Annual Council Meeting while further information was awaited.

The charitable objectives of the Witney Town Charity are:

1. The provision and maintenance of Almshouses for poor persons
2. The relief of poor persons in conditions of need, hardship, or distress.

It operates 18 Almshouses and also provides grants for those in need.

Within its constitution it allows for 6 Witney Town Councillors to be on the Trust as nominated Trustees.

### Current Situation

The current nominated trustees from Witney Town Council are as follows:

Cllr A McMahon	<i>Expired</i>
Cllr L Ashbourne	<i>Expired</i>
Mr J King	<i>Expiring October 2022</i>
Cllr M Jones	June 2024
Cllr J Aitman	June 2025
Mr C Woodward	February 2026

Members will be aware there was a Council nominated trustee position upon the expiration of Cllr McMahon's term in November 2021. Cllr Ashbourne has since resigned her position and Mr J King's position expires in October.

The Charity has sent correspondence which is attached to the report which may help members resolve who should fill these positions on behalf of the Council. The Charity is keen for trustees to have experience in or a willingness to be involved in projects covering; Social Housing & Homelessness, Issues affecting young people aged 11-25, and Poverty.

**Environmental impact**

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

**Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

**Financial implications**

There are no financial implications relevant to the contents of this report

**Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and;

1. Consider filling the three Council trustee vacancies for (and due in) the current municipal year.

# *Witney Town Charity*

Registered Charity No. 202996

Clerk to the Trustees  
Mark Baker

Email:  
[witneytowncharity@gmail.com](mailto:witneytowncharity@gmail.com)

10 June 2022

Dear Sirs

## **Re - Appointment of two Nominative Trustees from Witney Town Council**

Further to the email and telephone exchange between the Deputy Town Clerk (Adam Clapton) of Witney Town Council and the Chair (Ashley Farmer) and the Clerk (Mark Baker) of Witney Town Charity, we write to clarify and ask for some changes to the appointment of Nominative Trustees from Witney Town Council.

You will be aware that there are currently 2 vacancies for Nominative Trustees. The Board of Trustees of the Charity, comprises 14 Trustees, made up of 8 Cooptative Trustees appointed by Witney Town Charity and who serve a 5 year term, together with 6 Nominative Trustees appointed by Witney Town Council, and who serve a four-year term.

The Trustees of the Charity are being proactive in the way the Charity operates and attempting to widen its scope of being able to provide assistance to the poor, disadvantaged and needy population of Witney and its environs, and particularly in respect of providing Assisted Living facilities and more assistance to young adults., To this end, the Charity would like to build a team focusing on the projects it has underway or is planning and is happy to accept recommendations on those who can help.

In particular the Charity is focusing on:

- 1 Social Housing and Homelessness
- 2 Issues affecting young people particularly aged 11 to 25
- 3 Poverty

In order to guide the Trustees on future activities in these areas the Charity is looking to enlist Trustees who have appropriate experience in these areas, or are interested and willing to learn.

Witney Town Charity is asking Witney Town Council to consider the following:

- The Charity is quite happy for the Town Council to retain 6 Nominative Trustees as set out in the constitution of the Charity.



- The Council Nominees may be serving Town Councillors or non-Town Councillors
- This will enable the Charity to build a team focusing on its projects and is happy to accept recommendations on those who can help. It may well be that there are Town Councillors who have the suggested experience/skills, which is welcome. The Charity is giving consideration to suitable non-Town councillors, with a view to putting these forward to the Council for consideration.
- The decision on the appointment of Nominative Trustees still remains with Witney Town Council.

Witney Town Council has already been very helpful in allowing the reappointment of former Town Councillor and Mayor, Chris Woodward, who has the specialism in Health and Safety, which is required by the Charity.

These proposals are not intended to water down the involvement of Witney Town Council, but are intended to enable the Charity to have a stronger base and to provide additional supportive services within the Town.

The Clerk will be pleased to provide any further information that you may require.

Yours faithfully

*Mark G Baker*

Mark G Baker  
Clerk to the Trustees

The Clerk to Witney Town Council  
Town Hall  
Market Square  
Witney, Oxon  
OX28 6AG



## FULL COUNCIL

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**Date:** 20 June 2022

**Title:** Civic Announcements

**Contact Officer:** Secretary to the Mayor – Loraine Harwood

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### APRIL 22 TO JUNE 22

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

Receiving Buttercross quilt from Buttercross Quilters  
Attend lessons and discussed importance of learning a foreign language – Witney Community primary school  
Tour of sewage works with Thames Water  
Got2B awards launch afternoon tea party  
Family Fun Day competition judging – Queen Emma’s School Witney  
Older persons’ day – Corn Exchange  
Official opening of Witney Man Shed – Ceewood Hall  
Introductory meeting with Rev Toby Wright, St Mary’s Church  
OPA play day – Burwell  
Chatterbox Age UK event – Corn Exchange  
Witney Fire Station open day – also attended by Deputy Mayor  
Voicebox Jubilee concert – Corn Exchange. Also attended by Deputy Mayor  
Beer Festival VIP event  
Family fun event – Corn Exchange  
Beer Festival for Queen’s Jubilee – attended by Deputy Mayor  
Meeting Witney & Woodstock Bells  
West Oxfordshire Community Transport fundraising event – Corn Exchange

### REPRESENTING and PROMOTING WITNEY

Adventure+ Witney to Westminster canoe challenge send off – Cokethorpe School Boathouse  
Twin Town challenge – Blenheim Palace  
Witney Pride Event – attended with Dep Mayor Owen Jenkins  
Jubilee Beacon Lighting at The Leys also attended by Deputy Mayor

Queen's Jubilee service of celebration – Christchurch Cathedral Oxford  
Opening Witney Music Festival

#### **KEY EVENTS AND COUNCIL ACTIVITY**

Mayor's Civic reception  
Meeting Station Commander Emily Flynn at Brize Norton  
Banbury Town Mayoral inauguration  
Celebratory reception for election to Lord Mayor – Oxford Town Hall  
Civic Service – St Mary's Church

#### **RAISING FUNDS**

Mayor's Charities 2022-23:

Volunteer Link Up  
Windrush Bike Project

Prepared by:

***Cllrs Joy Aitman & Liz Duncan***

***The events in this report span the term of office for both Mayor Cllr Aitman and Mayor Cllr Duncan***

## FULL COUNCIL

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**Date:** Monday, 20 June 2022

**Title:** Compliments & Complaints

**Contact Officer:** Deputy Town Clerk - Adam Clapton

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### Background

Witney Town Council welcomes all comments, compliments, and complaints as they help identify how it is performing and how services it provides can be improved.

### Current Situation

A list of compliments and complaints, compiled by the PA to the Town Clerk & Mayor, between December 2021 and June 2022 is attached for information. The list encompasses comments either made explicitly as or interpreted as a complaint in line with the Council's Complaints Procedure.

There have been 30 compliments and 36 complaints and of these, all but the most recent have been resolved. Most interactions continue to be by verbal and written (email) means with the Council's social media acting as an information page only.

The compliments received continue to be directed at good customer service and the visible community services provided by the Council i.e., tiny forest, cemeteries, maintenance of tennis courts and Platinum Jubilee events. The complaints mainly focus on grounds maintenance and Council facilities.

Reinforcing the results of the Council's annual satisfaction survey, several complaints are borne from decisions made by other authorities such as the bin replacement programme by the District Council.

It is good practice for the Council to review these complaints, and compliments bi-annually to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to provide excellent customer service and governance.

### Environmental impact

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

### Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

**Financial implications**

There are no financial implications pertaining to this report.

**Recommendations**

Member are invited to note the report and accompanying compliments/complaints list.

**Compliments and Complaints:  
1 December 2021 to 6 June 2022**

	Written/Verbal Compliments Received	No	Written/Verbal Complaints Received	No
Witney Town Council	<b><u>Parks &amp; Recreation</u></b>		<b><u>Parks &amp; Recreation</u></b>	
	Compliment from resident re communication and attention re her report re rotting tree	1	Uneven footpath at the Leys caused by tree roots	1
	Compliment to staff re Park Road play area	1	Burwell parade of shops trees maintenance	1
	Compliment from Tennis club for colour-coating tennis courts	1	Overgrown trees on Burwell	1
			Reduction in height of hedge in Manor Road	1
			Request for garden waste to be collection after residents cut back our shrubbery without permission	1
			Contractor mowing near bench whilst in use	1
	<b><u>Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments</u></b>		<b><u>Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments</u></b>	
			Complaint re lack of change, delay at bar and rudeness	1
			Public using Burwell Hall toilets whilst private booking taking place	1
			Chairs at Burwell messy from dog training class	1
			Corn Exchange seating concerns	1
			Non removal of dead flowers on adjoining grave	1
			Complaint re burial bookings by undertakers	1
			Weeds in Windrush Cemetery path	1
			Damage to foundation slab of headstone	1
	<b><u>Stronger Communities</u></b>		<b><u>Stronger Communities</u></b>	1
	Compliment re Christmas lighting	1	Scaled down Remembrance Day arrangements	1
	Compliment to Admin team re support for Dance Mania	1	Tea Dance charges	1
	Compliment from Town Band for support	1	Bare windows in Admin office windows	1
	Compliment to staff for help given to Guideposts	1	Barriers for work at Corn Exchange and lack of signs for businesses still operating	1
	<b><u>Policy, Governance &amp; Finance</u></b>		<b><u>Policy, Governance &amp; Finance</u></b>	
	Compliment re Christmas tree and lighting	1		
	Compliment to works team for work on courtyard at Town Hall	1		
	Compliment to works team re maintenance at Town Hill and polite helpful staff	1		
	Compliment for service by staff at family interment	1		
	Compliment for well cared for churchyard	1		
	Compliment re service from Admin team re ashes	1		

	<b><u>Climate, Biodiversity &amp; Planning</u></b> Compliment for advice to another council re Tiny Forest	1	<b><u>Climate, Biodiversity &amp; Planning</u></b> Grass cutting on Quarry Road not including hill area Plastic pollution in country park Complaint from edible gardens team re parking in Langdale Court	1 1 1
<b>West Oxfordshire District Council</b>			<b>WODC</b> – complaint re removal of waste bins <b>WODC</b> – complaint re removal of waste bins and person sent to WTC by WODC to deal <b>WODC</b> – complaint re changing bins /querying labelling and person sent to us by WODC <b>WODC</b> – complaints x 2 re Raleigh Crescent play area	1 1 1 1 2
<b>Oxfordshire County Council</b>			<b>OCC</b> - refusal to comply with High Street ban <b>OCC</b> – complaint re pot holes	1 2
<b>OTHER</b>			<b>OTHERS -</b>	
	<b>Compliments via social media</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Complaints via social media</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>WTC Twitter</b>	<b><u>Parks &amp; Recreation</u></b>  <b><u>Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments</u></b>  <b><u>Stronger Communities</u></b>  <b><u>Policy, Governance &amp; Finance</u></b>  <b><u>Climate, Biodiversity &amp; Planning</u></b>		<b><u>Parks &amp; Recreation</u></b>  <b><u>Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments</u></b>  <b><u>Stronger Communities</u></b>  <b><u>Policy, Governance &amp; Finance</u></b>  <b><u>Climate, Biodiversity &amp; Planning</u></b>	
<b>WTC Facebook</b>	<b><u>Parks &amp; Recreation</u></b> Compliment from Park Run re tree removal Compliment re OPA play day and seeing Burwell being used  <b><u>Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments</u></b>	1 1	<b><u>Parks &amp; Recreation</u></b>      <b><u>Halls, Cemeteries &amp; Allotments</u></b>	

	<p><b><u>Stronger Communities</u></b></p> <p>Compliment re Corn Exchange being used for community events</p> <p>Compliment re beacon lighting for planning and involvement</p> <p>Thanks from Park Run for being invited to flag run</p> <p>Compliment re ROSPA water safety advice being shared</p> <p>Compliments re cycle repair stands</p> <p>Compliment re Wild Witney competition and congrats re all being done to help nature recover</p> <p>Compliment re WW2 pillboxes at Langel</p> <p><b><u>Policy, Governance &amp; Finance</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Climate, Biodiversity &amp; Planning</u></b></p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>8</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Complaint re money wasted on memorial stability testing at St Mary's church</p> <p><b><u>Stronger Communities</u></b></p> <p>Complaint re PA system lacking at jubilee lighting</p> <p>Complaint re waste of money cycle repair stands</p> <p><b><u>Policy, Governance &amp; Finance</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Climate, Biodiversity &amp; Planning</u></b></p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>4</p>  
Totals		30		36

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## HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

robert@robertcourts.co.uk

Sharon Groth  
Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer  
Witney Town Council  
Town Hall  
Market Square  
Witney OX28 6AG

Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022  
Ref: rd/RC48964

Dear Sharon,

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the conduct of councillors towards town and parish council clerks, and for encouraging me to sign Early Day Motion (EDM) 691.

I must point out from the outset that from the moment I was elected to Parliament I made the choice, like a growing number of MPs on a cross-party basis, to never sign any EDMs, which are ineffective and a waste of taxpayers' money. They have, for very good reason, been described as 'Parliamentary graffiti' and you can read my full explainer on the matter here: [robertcourts.co.uk/early-day-motions](http://robertcourts.co.uk/early-day-motions).

With that said, I am grateful to you for raising this important issue and I of course agree with you about the importance of ensuring there is a robust system in place to deal with local councillors who have been found guilty of bullying and harassment following an independent investigation.

I have therefore written to the responsible Minister at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to raise your concerns and to request the Minister's up to date position on the points raised in your letter. I will be back in touch as soon as I receive a response.

Many thanks again for taking the time to write to me.

Yours,

Robert Courts MP

P.S. Thank you  
for raising this  
important matter.  
Writing to the minister  
is more effective than  
an EDM.

From the Member of Parliament for the constituency of Witney in West Oxfordshire  
including Bampton, Burford, Carterton, Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Witney and Woodstock.

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