

## Full Council Meeting of Witney Town Council



**Monday, 1st August, 2022 at 7.00 pm**

To members of the Full Council Committee - J Aitman, L Duncan, L Ashbourne, T Ashby, 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 Deputy Town Clerk ([adam.clapton@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:adam.clapton@witney-tc.gov.uk)) in advance to reserve a seat.

### 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 Deputy Town Clerk ([adam.clapton@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:adam.clapton@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.

#### a) Request for Dispensation (Pages 5 - 6)

To receive and consider a dispensation request from Cllr A D Harvey.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

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

#### 3. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 20 June 2022 in accordance with

Standing Order 18 including questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item.

4. **Public Participation**

The meeting will adjourn for this item.

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

5. **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 21 June 2022 and 18 July 2022, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein.

- a) Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee - 21 June & 12 July 2022 (Pages 13 - 26)
- b) Parks & Recreation Committee - 27 June 2022 (Pages 27 - 30)
- c) Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - 4 July 2022 (Pages 31 - 34)
- d) Stronger Communities Committee - 11 July 2022 (Pages 35 - 42)
- e) Policy, Governance & Finance Committee - 18 July 2022 (Pages 43 - 48)

9. **East Witney Ward - Potential By-election**

At its meeting held on 16 March 2022, the Council agreed to purchase poll cards for a by-election in the West Ward (minute no. 122).

To be consistent, and due to time constraints, the Town Clerk has agreed that poll cards should be issued if a by-election is contested. Members are asked to note this decision.

10. **Standing Orders & Code of Conduct** (Pages 49 - 64)

Standing Order Review

Due to time constraints, this item has been deferred until the Council meeting on 10 October 2022.

Code of Conduct Review

An updated Code of Conduct for Councillors has been adopted by the District and County Councils

(attached).

Members are asked to review the document and consider attending training, which is due to be held on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September, before adoption at the Council Meeting scheduled for 10 October 2022.

11. **Appointment to Outside Bodies - Witney Town Charity** (Pages 65 - 68)

To receive correspondence from Witney Town Charity concerning the Town Council's nominated trustees.

12. **Witney Town Council Rebranding** (Pages 69 - 72)

To consider the recommendation of the Stronger Communities Committee held on 11 July 2022, minute number SC361. **That, the Town Council adopts the new logo for administrative and livery purposes.**

13. **Witney High Street**

Oxfordshire County Council has been awarded £1.9m from a central government fund called Active Travel Tranche 3 for a public realm scheme to improve High Street and Market Square now that the traffic restriction has been confirmed as permanent, to embed active travel principles and increase footfall.

The Town Council should consider how it can assist the County Council in achieving these objectives and in engaging with the public.

14. **Civic Announcements** (Pages 73 - 74)

To receive the report of the Mayor & Mayor's Secretary.

15. **Health, Safety & Vandalism** (Pages 75 - 76)

To receive an update on health and safety items (if applicable) and a spreadsheet showing the latest vandalism to Council property.

16. **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.

17. **Correspondence**

To receive any correspondence received (if applicable).

a) **20mph Witney Proposals** (Pages 77 - 80)

To receive correspondence from Oxfordshire County Council concerning reduced speed restrictions in Witney.

b) **Witney Chamber of Commerce** (Pages 81 - 82)

To receive correspondence from Witney Chamber of Commerce concerning Witney High Street.

18. **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.

19. **Sealing of Documents**

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



Town Clerk

Document is Restricted

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**MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday, 20 June 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor L Duncan (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne	V Gwatkin
	T Ashby	M Jones
	D Butterfield	A Prosser
	O Collins	R Smith
	H Eaglestone	P Hiles
	D Enright	
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
Others:	None	

302 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Aitman and D Harvey.

303 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

304 **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING**

The minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 11 May 2022 were approved and adopted.

In relation to minute number 207, Members confirmed they were content to continue with the format of meetings as agreed.

305 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

306 **WITNEY COMMUNITY POLICING ISSUES**

Members were advised Inspector C Ball of Thames Valley Police had submitted apologies for the meeting, but he had provided an update which was presented by the Deputy Town Clerk.

There was little to report, crime remained low although there had been a slight increase in cycle thefts which the police were working to address. The Platinum Jubilee celebrations and Witney Pride events had gone well and without incident.

**Resolved:**

That, the verbal update be noted.

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

**Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)**

Councillor Enright advised OCC had received a good response to its recent consultation on the Local Transport & Connectivity Plan. Further discussions were taking place, but a strong policy had emerged which although would be challenging to deliver, would benefit the County for many years.

Councillor Enright also advised that progress had been made on A40 widening and improvements, especially on the approach to Oxford from the west. Planning was well advanced on the rest of the A40 scheme between Witney and Oxford, including discussions on bus lanes and the Eynsham Park & Ride Scheme.

**West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)**

Councillor Enright updated Members on land at Langel Common. He confirmed funds had been raised by residents, to their credit, to purchase the land. The transfer to ensure it's future as a public space, administered by WODC, would be completed shortly.

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

There were no updates from Councillors on external bodies.

309 **CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING - 19 APRIL, 10 & 31 MAY 2022**

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

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee meetings held on 19 April, 10 May and 31 May 2022 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

310 **PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE - 16 MAY 2022**

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

Cllr Gwatkin drew attention to minute number PR228 regarding a Leys Masterplan Task and Finish Group and proposed the membership as Cllrs V Gwatkin, M Jones, and D Butterfield. This was duly agreed by members.



**Resolved:**

1. That the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 16 May 2022 be received and any recommendations therein approved and,
2. That, the Council membership of the Leys Masterplan Task & Finish Group be confirmed as Cllrs V Gwatkin, M Jones, and D Butterfield.

311 **HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE - 23 MAY 2022**

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

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 23 May 2022 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

311A **STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE - 30 MAY 2022**

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

Minute number SC250. The Deputy Town Clerk advised no further communication had been received on the Happy to Chat Bench so this would now be progressed by the Council.

Minute number SC260. In response to a Member, the Deputy Town Clerk advised the recommendation had been superseded by a later one by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee. The organisers of the event had liaised with the Venue & Events Officer and preparations/advertising had taken place, including at local primary schools. The event was a pilot which would help the Council decide if it wanted to proceed with future annual events with the Oxford Playhouse.

Minute number SC257. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that, after further discussion the community use of the Town Hall windows should not be open to political Organisations and the final decision on requests would be at the discretion of the Town Council.

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee meeting held on 30 May 2022 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

312 **POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE - 6 JUNE 2022**

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

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 6 June 2022 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

313 **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING - 25 APRIL 2022**

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

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Annual Town meeting held on 25 April 2022 be received and be adopted as a true record.

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

The Council received the report of the Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer concerning the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) 2021/22 under its obligations of the Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015.

In her report the Town Clerk pointed out that Members take a collective responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of internal control and in order to agree Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement she had provided explanations on how the Council achieved this.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2022 be approved, and formally adopted by the Council and,
3. That, the Statement of Accounts at Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2022 be approved, and formally adopted by the Council and,
4. That, in light of the above the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2021/22 be formally agreed and adopted by the Council and,
5. That, the unaudited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 be noted.

315 **APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES - WITNEY TOWN CHARITY**

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

Members were grateful for the confirmation provided by Witney Town Charity concerning Town Council nominated Trustees. There was discussion on who may be suitable to fill the outstanding positions and as the Charity required specifically experience, it was suggested the nominations could be opened to service groups and their users.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Town Council contacts targeted local groups and organisations to see if they may be able to put forward nominees for the positions.

316 **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The report of the Town Mayor was received.

Cllr Duncan advised it had been a busy start to her term, which had included several Platinum Jubilee events. The Mayor expressed her thanks to staff, and in particular the Communications & Community Engagement Officer, for managing a range of events over the weekend. She had personally received lots of good feedback.

**Resolved:**

That, the report be noted.

317 **COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS**

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

Members welcomed the feedback which provided an idea of how projects and issues were being perceived by residents. It was confirmed that compliments regarding staff members were passed on to those concerned.

A member also passed on thanks which had been provided to her from the organisers of the Witney Music Festival.

**Resolved:**

That, the report be noted.

318 **HEALTH & SAFETY AND VANDALISM REPORT**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer had indicated there were no health & safety or vandalism issues to report.

319 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

There were no communications to be reported.

320 **STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE - REVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS (2019)**

Under correspondence, Members received a response from Robert Courts MP on Early Day Motion 691 concerning Standards in Public Life following a request from the Council that he supported the initiative.

**Resolved:**

That, the correspondence be noted.

321 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

There were no questions submitted.

322 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

There were no documents sealed.

323 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC**

**Resolved:**

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

324 **NATIONAL PROTOCOL**

The Council received the confidential report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

**Resolved:**

That, the confidential report be noted.

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The meeting closed at: 7.28 pm

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Chair

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

**Held on Tuesday, 21 June 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser T Ashby	L Duncan V Gwatkin
Officers:	Adam Clapton Claire Green Simon Wright	Deputy Town Clerk Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	none.	

**P325 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors J Aitman and P Hiles.

**P326 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members.

The Administrative Support Assistant, Stronger Communities & Planning advised she had been involved with the planning decisions on application prior to her current role so referred members to the Deputy Town Clerk for any planning consultee guidance.

**P327 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**P328 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.

P329 **WITNEY PROPOSED 20MPH & OTHER SPEED LIMITS - CONSULTATION**

The Committee considered the consultation on reduced speed limits across Witney, being run by Oxfordshire County Council.

**Resolved:**

That, the following response be submitted in response to the consultation,

Witney Town Council welcomes this consultation which proposes reduced speed limits across Witney.

To ensure clarity and accuracy, the Town Council would like to draw attention to the 'Oxfordshire County Council (Witney Area) (Speed Limits) Order 20\*\*' and that on point 2. Station Road should read 'Station Lane' and point 3. Jubilee Road should read 'Jubilee Way'.

The Town Council also notes disparity between the maps and the attached Schedules of the Order. Windrush Place and Centenary Way are included on the map but not in the schedule, alongside other new residential developments including Guild Close and Kingfisher Meadows. It is imperative for uniformity and simplicity that all residential estates are included within the scheme and the Town Council hopes the opening paragraph for Schedule 1 covers these additional areas.

As all other speed limits will be reduced as part of this town-wide scheme, the Town Council would also like to suggest the speed limit in Range Road is reduced to 30mph and its service roads are reduced to 20mph. Range Road provides connectivity between Deer park Road and Downs Road, both of which are proposed 30mph speed limits and the service roads off would effectively mirror the speed limit restrictions on the Avenue Service roads from Station Lane, which also contain industrial units.

Finally, the Town Council notes specific mention to Avenue One in Schedule 1 of the Order, but Avenue Two is a strategic route encompassing a pedestrian and cycle route to Witney Lake & Country Park and beyond. It would like assurances this vulnerable route is also included in a 20mph zone for the safety of users.

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The meeting closed at: 6.55 pm

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Chair



328- 6 WTC/077/22 Plot Ref :-22/01405/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 09/06/22  
Location :- 36 BROADWAY CLOSE Date Returned :- 22/06/22  
BROADWAY CLOSE  
Proposal : Erection of new single storey rear extension, block up side door to kitchen and form new side window to new WC.  
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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328- 7 WTC/078/22 Plot Ref :-22/01400/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 09/06/22  
Location :- 16 BUTTERCROSS LANE Date Returned :- 22/06/22  
BUTTERCROSS LANE  
Proposal : Alterations to include erection of single story rear extension and installation of additional rear rooflight.  
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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328- 8 WTC/079/22 Plot Ref :-22/01375/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 13/06/22  
Location :- 4 CHESTNUT CLOSE Date Returned :- 22/06/22  
CHESTNUT CLOSE  
Proposal : Erection of single storey rear and front extensions, and two storey side extension.  
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, members discussed the size, character and materials of existing properties on Chestnut Close. Members ask that Officers ensure the development includes the use of materials matching neighbouring properties and that the development is sympathetic in scale. 'Forming a logical complement to the existing pattern of development and character of the area' – as per the general principles of OS2 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

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328- 9 WTC/080/22 Plot Ref :-22/01386/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 13/06/22  
Location :- 13 WILLOWBANK Date Returned :- 22/06/22  
WILLOWBANK  
Proposal : Erection of a detached summerhouse and shed in rear garden. (Retrospective).  
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, members expressed concern over the size and scale of the outbuildings in relation to the host dwelling. Members noted that the buildings dominate the view from the stream and ask that Planning Officers assess the application carefully against the general principles of Policy OS2 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031. Specifically, that the development should be of a proportionate and appropriate scale to its context, and that the development should form a logical complement to the existing scale and pattern of development and the character

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of the area.

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The Meeting closed at : 7:00pm

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

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

**Held on Tuesday, 12 July 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser T Ashby	L Duncan P Hiles
Officers:	Adam Clapton Claire Green	Deputy Town Clerk Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
Others:	None	

**P370 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor V Gwatkin.

**P371 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**P372 MINUTES**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meetings held on 31 May and 21 June 2022.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the meetings of the committee held on 31 May & 21 June 2022 were adopted as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**P373 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*The Committee adjourned for this item.*

Gavin Hyatt addressed the Committee on agenda item 5.3 – a planning application for T Robins Building, Avenue Three, Witney. West Oxfordshire District Council application reference 22/01068/FUL. Questions followed from Committee members.

*The meeting reconvened for planning applications to be considered.*

P374 **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.

P375 **OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING R3.0073/22 - MOORLAND ROAD, WITNEY**

The Committee received and considered Oxfordshire County Council planning application R3.0073/22 at Moorland Road, Witney.

**Resolved:**

That, Witney Town Council has no objection to this application.

P376 **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.

P377 **NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING APPEAL - 141 QUEEN EMMA'S DYKE**

The Committee received notice of Planning Appeal APP/ D3125/W/22/3293742 for 141 Queen Emma's Dyke, Witney.

**Resolved:**

That, the Planning Appeal be noted.

P378 **WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 7 JUNE 2022**

The Committee received the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 7 June 2022.

**Resolved:**

That the minutes, as circulated, be noted.

P379 **LOCAL CYCLING & WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (LCWIP)**

The Committee received a presentation from the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) meeting held on 23 June 2022.

Members were advised that the outcomes of this project were by no means confirmed and would not conflict with more advance plans due to be funded from Section 106 contributions. The proposed improvements in the document were examples and suggestions and the final plans would be developed in future meetings.

**Resolved:**

That, the update on the LCWIP be noted.

P380 **CLIMATE INITIATIVES UPDATE**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided the committee with a verbal update on initiatives across the Council estate which crossed over with the climate aspirations of this committee and where further reports had not yet been presented.

Members were advised that a Fuel Cell CHP Boiler had been agreed at Burwell Hall by the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee. There was some concern this solution was not as environmentally friendly as other options, but the Council was constrained by the cost of these. It would provide a greener option and would work well with the development of changing rooms at the Hall.

Changes had been made to Council's facilities and operations including procurement of plastic free sanitary equipment and the impending tendering for a more environmentally friendly printing contract and an electric works vehicle. It was advised that officers were exploring purchasing more electric work items, but this was proving problematic as some alternatives didn't exist.

Regarding other buildings and the estate, although funds had been allocated to these for climate initiatives, several were tied up with long-term projects and plans had not yet been finalised. The Chair advised there had been approach from a group of residents regarding solar panels at Madley Park Hall and they would be contacting the Council regarding their proposals in due course. At the Country Park, the Environment Agency had begun clearing debris from the river through the section owned by the Council.

In response to a Member, it was advised that a Carbon Footprint document for the Council's Estate and forward plan, while started, had not been completed due to resourcing issues but it was essential to deliver the Councils Climate Objectives.

In terms of encouraging active travel, the committee heard that Car Free Day would be held on 22 September, 20mph speed restriction proposals were with the County Council for a decision, and the vandalised bike repair stands at the Leys and in Market Square were proving costly to repair. On the latter, members suggested contacting Active Oxfordshire to see if further funding was available.

**Resolved:**

That, the updates be noted.

*Cllr T Ashby left the meeting at 7.33pm*

P381 **WILDFLOWER PLANTING**

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

Members were pleased with what had been achieved this summer but there was some concern that the sowing of annual wildflower seed beds was more akin to regular planting. A more bio-diverse approach had been utilised in other areas, such as Windrush Cemetery so there was a need for both kinds of approach. In terms of increasing biodiversity, the wildflower seed beds should be scaled up with bee friendly flowers; these extended areas contributing towards a biodiverse corridor in the town.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That the extension of the wildflower areas at Oxlease and the Cemeteries be supported under the current wildflower seed bed scheme in these areas to create a wildlife corridor and,
3. That, Wild Witney be asked to carry out wildflower planting at the Lake & Country Park along the yellow rattle long-term approach and,
4. That, Witney Land Army be approached to see if they would like to carry out wildflower seed planting this autumn.

P382 **THERMAL IMAGING CAMERA**

The Committee received the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer concerning a thermal imaging camera purchased by the Council

Members agreed it was an excellent time to launch this initiative given the cost-of-living crisis and need for residents to identify home insulation issues ahead of the winter.

It was suggested by a member there was a group in Witney who may be willing to facilitate the use of the camera to residents. A disclaimer/terms of reference and crib sheet on how to use the camera would be required.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the thermal imaging camera be loaned to the local Eco Forum Group to help residents identify home insulation issues.

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The meeting closed at: 7.57 pm

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Chair

**Witney Town Council**  
**Planning Minutes - 12th July 2022**

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374- 1 WTC/081/22 Plot Ref :-22/01498/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 15/06/2022  
Location :- 77 HIGH STREET Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
HIGH STREET  
Proposal : Internal and external alterations to convert existing 2 flats into single family home.  
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

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374- 2 WTC/082/22 Plot Ref :-22/01462/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 23/06/2022  
Location :- WEAVERS COTTAGE Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
WEST END  
WEST END  
Proposal : Re-roof rear section of building, replacing existing stone slates with cardinal slates. (Retrospective).  
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

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374- 3 WTC/083/22 Plot Ref :-22/01068/FUL Type :- FULL  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 23/06/2022  
Location :- T ROBINS BUILDING Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
AVENUE THREE  
Proposal : Change of use from current mixed/warehouse to Sui Generis to allow the premises to be used as a live music and entertainment venue along with a bar serving alcohol, hot and cold food. Single storey extension to the front aspect to provide new ladies toilets and disabled toilets with access and fire escapes. Change to the front of Unit 5 (in service yard) to create venue entrance. and addition of window for box office.  
Observations : Witney Town Council welcome this application for a live music venue for the town, and have no objection to this application.

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374- 4 WTC/084/22 Plot Ref :-22/01526/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 23/06/2022  
Location :- 101 MIRFIELD ROAD Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
MIRFIELD ROAD  
Proposal : Erection of single storey front, single storey and two storey side and two storey rear extensions together with associated works.  
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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374- 5 WTC/085/22 Plot Ref :-22/01479/S73 Type :- VARIATION  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 23/06/2022  
Location :- WITNEY SERVICE STATION Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
WELCH WAY  
Proposal : Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 21/03115/FUL to allow the addition of flat roof over jet wash bays.  
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

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374- 6 WTC/086/22 Plot Ref :-22/01578/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 23/06/2022  
Location :- 1 MOORLAND CLOSE Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
MOORLAND CLOSE  
Proposal : Alterations to enclose existing porch to incorporate into dwelling and create new side entrance and porch.  
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

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374- 7 WTC/087/22 Plot Ref :-22/01584/FUL Type :- FULL  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 23/06/2022  
Location :- STAPLE COURT Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
BRIDGE STREET  
Proposal : General maintenance and refurbishment works to residential block comprising of 4 Maisonettes and 4 flats, to include replacement cladding, repair works and new, extended window cills.  
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

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374- 8 WTC/088/22 Plot Ref :-22/01591/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 23/06/2022  
Location :- 127 FARMERS CLOSE Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
FARMERS CLOSE  
Proposal : Remove existing rear timber gate and border fencing and replace with new single and double timber gates.  
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

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374- 9 WTC/089/22 Plot Ref :-22/01601/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 23/06/2022  
Location :- 16 EARLY ROAD Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
EARLY ROAD  
Proposal : Alterations to include construction of entrance porch, erection of single storey rear extension and garage conversion with new roof above. Associated external works to create additional off-street parking and widening of dropped kerb.  
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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374- 10 WTC/090/22 Plot Ref :-22/01630/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 29/06/2022  
Location :- 38 LANGDALE GATE Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
LANGDALE GATE  
Proposal : Two storey side extension and alterations to enlarge the existing ground floor,  
and create a first floor bedroom.  
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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374- 11 WTC/091/22 Plot Ref :-22/01712/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 05/07/2022  
Location :- 46 PARK ROAD Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
PARK ROAD  
Proposal : 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.

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374- 12 WTC/092/22 Plot Ref :-21/04097/S73 Type :- VARIATION  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 05/07/2022  
Location :- 37 CORN STREET Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
CORN STREET  
Proposal : Variation of condition 2 of permission 19/01164/FUL to allow an increase to the  
ridge height of the former stable building and external alterations (plots 3 and 4)  
and to add six PV panels to the east facing roof of plots 1 and 2.  
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

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374- 13 WTC/093/22 Plot Ref :-22/01650/FUL Type :- FULL  
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 21/06/2022  
Location :- 43 - 45 MARKET SQUARE Date Returned :- 13/07/2022  
MARKET SQUARE  
Proposal : Installation of air conditioning unit.  
Observations : Witney Town Council support the principle of air conditioning for the premises,  
but members expressed concerns about the negative effect of this development  
on a prominently visible building in the Conservation Area of the town.  
Members ask that the Conservation Officer is consulted and conducts a site  
visit. And if deemed necessary, the applicant considers a smaller, slimline unit  
that has minimal visual impact.

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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, 27 June 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor D Butterfield (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	L Duncan
	L Ashbourne	O Collins (In place of V Gwatkin)
	T Ashby	
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
Others:	None	

**PR330 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors V Gwatkin, D Enright and A McMahon.

**PR331 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**PR332 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2022 were considered.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee held on 16 May 2022 were received as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**PR333 PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC**

There was no public participation.

**PR334 FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the financial report showing figures for aspects under its remit for the last Quarter, provided by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer.

In response to a member, Officers advised the fallout of higher energy costs had yet to be seen within the Council's finances, but it would as the year went on. The Council had entered into a 1-year fixed rate for the current year.

**Resolved:**

That, the finance report be noted.

**PR335 SPORTS PITCHES**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer concerning Madley Park Playing Fields, Windrush Place grass pitches and the cricket wicket at West Witney Sports Ground.

With regard to Madley Park playing fields, she explained there was a complex dual user agreement in place which the District Council's legal team were considering along with some draft Heads of Terms for the possible lease to WTC. A question on the maintenance of these pitches had been raised prior to the meeting as it appeared they were not being sufficiently maintained as pitches. This detail had been passed to the District Council to investigate further.

On Windrush Place grass pitches, the Town Clerk advised were still under the control of the developers because they had to be maintained for a two-year period before they could be utilised. The Town Clerk advised she had been approached by the development consortium to see if the Council would be prepared to take them on. There appeared to be a misunderstanding as the site Section 106 was managed by the District Council, she was waiting to have a meeting with the District Council Officers to understand what the problems were.

Members also heard that, on the advice of the English Cricket Board, a cricket boundary assessment had been commissioned at West Witney Sports Ground. The findings of the report suggested the tennis courts were a sufficient distance away from the pitches without the need for mitigation.

With the express permission of the Chair, the Town Clerk also provided an update on Unterhaching Park and Raleigh Crescent play areas.

The transfer of Unterhaching Park had been delayed while works of the safety surfacing were being procured by the District Council and appeared to be some way off. However, the Town Clerk was hopeful that a licence to use the land for a Platinum Jubilee Legacy Project, at the cost of the District Council, would be granted.

Members also heard that Heads of Terms for the freehold transfer of Raleigh Crescent Play Area were still being drafted by the District Council and a review of the offsite S106 contribution towards the upgrading of the basketball area.

**Resolved:**

That, the verbal update on sports pitches and play areas be noted.

**PR336 SUMMER YOUTH ACTIVITIES**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue & Events Officer concerning proposed summer youth activities by Got2b on the Town Council's land, and a request to use adjoining halls if required.

Members agreed that all event requests should be treated fairly, so documentation would need to be supplied, but were supportive of the Council covering costs from existing subsidised hire budgets.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the request for use of town council land be approved and,
3. That, the incurred cost be covered from existing subsidised hire budgets.

**PR337 THE LEYS SKATEPARK**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Project Officer concerning the proposed refurbishment of the Leys Skate Park.

Members were grateful for the report which was comprehensive and appeared to cover all aspects previously discussed on the project. The inclusivity of girls and need to increase the scope of the area to include other wheeled sports were welcomed by the Committee.

The funds allocated towards the project were included with those for further development of The Leys so it was agreed the project should be referred to the Leys Masterplan task and finish group to progress. It was confirmed that this part of the redevelopment would be project managed by the Town Council

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the scope of the project and draft tender documents be agreed and,
3. That, the project be referred to the Leys masterplan task and finish group to progress.

**PR338 BURWELL CHANGING ROOMS**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer.

Members were advised that Ridge & Partners had been appointed to draw up plans for the extension to the sports changing rooms. They had other preliminary works to do, such as producing new CAD drawings and plans of the existing, so designs were still awaited.

**Resolved:**

That, the verbal update be noted.

**PR339 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC**

**Resolved:**

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

PR340 **LAKESIDE ALLOTMENTS ACCESS**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided a confidential verbal update on the gate which had been installed by the Town Council following a decision taken by this committee to ensure continued access via a private road to Lakeside Allotments.

The issue had been referred to this committee as the road was included in a planning application for the adjacent field and was used by pedestrians to access the Lake & Country Park, despite it being a private road in the ownership of a third party with signs to this effect.

**Resolved:**

That, the confidential verbal update be noted, and the gate remains in place to ensure ongoing access to the Council's facility.

PR341 **WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND**

The Committee received a confidential verbal update from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer.

Members were advised a meeting had taken place with a representative of West Witney Sports & Social Club to discuss a list of outstanding matters. Further information was awaited following the meeting.

The Committee were also advised of an ongoing issue with a third party at the Sports Ground and were in agreement that correspondence should be issued affirming the Town Council's position.

In respect of the future of the site, the Town Clerk advised the Council's consultants had developed a further option for consideration which would be presented to the Council later in the week.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the verbal update be noted and,
2. That, correspondence is issued to the third-party at the Sports Ground affirming the Council's position in relation to an ongoing issue.

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The meeting closed at: 6.44 pm

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Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 4 July 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor M Jones (Chair)

Councillors:	D Enright T Ashby D Butterfield	L Duncan V Gwatkin P Hiles
Officers:	Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie Angus Whitburn David Zimmer	Deputy Town Clerk Halls & Green Spaces Administrator Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer Head of Operations
Others:	None	

**H342 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor O Collins.

**H343 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**H344 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 23 May 2022 were received.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee held on 23 May 2022 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

**H345 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**H346 FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the financial report showing figures for items under its remit for the last Quarter, provided by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer.

**Resolved:**

That, the current financial position be noted.

H347 **PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

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

Members noted the current position and heard that Café 1863 had made a small loss during the previous two months. The Venue & Events Officer had assured the committee that future large events in both the Corn Exchange and Burwell Hall would help towards establishing a profit in the coming months.

**Resolved:**

That, the report of the Venue & Events Officer be noted.

H348 **BURWELL HALL - HEATING SYSTEM**

The Committee received the report of the Project Officer concerning case studies for Fuel CHP boilers at Burwell Hall.

In response to a representation from another Member the committee discussed the merits of Fuel CHP heating system. The committee had previously resolved to proceed with this new and untested technology at its meeting on 23 May 2022.

Although there were some reservations members agreed that the decision should not be altered due to the significantly higher cost of alternative solutions. To delay could impede the Burwell Hall changing rooms project and suggested funding support from the Government decarbonisation scheme was not guaranteed.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the documents, and links provided be noted and,
2. That, the council progressing with the installation of Fuel CHP boiler at Burwell Hall.

H349 **ILLUMINATION OF CORN EXCHANGE & FLAG FLYING**

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

Members asked for clarification from the Deputy Town Clerk as to which days were to be affected by the change to flag flying. It was confirmed that the new policy only affected the extended royal family birthdays and that such days as Remembrance Day and the opening of parliament would still be included.

With regards to illumination of the Corn Exchange, the committee agreed that any requests must be from a Witney resident or organisation based in Witney. Any further requests would be forwarded to the Leader and Mayor per the policy for agreement to proceed.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report be noted and,



2. That, the Union flag flying days as notified by the Government be noted and,
3. That, requests to illuminate the Corn Exchange must be made a Witney resident or organisation based in Witney.

**H350 CORN EXCHANGE REFURBISHMENT**

The committee received a verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk on the refurbishment of the Corn Exchange.

Members were advised that process had stalled however the Project Officer was in active discussion with the structural engineers and other associated parties.

**Resolved:**

That, the verbal update be noted.

**H351 CEMETERY REGULATIONS**

The committee received a report from the Maintenance & Environmental Officer in respect of the new draft cemetery regulations document.

Members were assured that the main reason for the draft was to update the previous document which was produced in 2011 and to formalise procedures that have changed since that time.

The main points and changes were outlined, and the Committee welcomed the introduction of a simpler and cheaper proposal for burials in the Woodland section, as well as a cheaper alternative for families to use wooden crosses in place of more costly stone memorials.

There was discussion on the introduction of Kerbing sets, and it was advised their introduction would result in additional grounds maintenance work in terms of labour and cost. There was agreement the increased cost would have to be borne by all cemetery users which they believed would be unfair.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Cemetery Regulations be amended and presented to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee for adoption and,
3. That, officers review new burial charges and,
4. That, kerb sets on grave spaces is not introduced into the cemeteries and,
5. That, weekend burials are only to be allowed in exceptional circumstances and should be charged to cover the cost to the Council.

**H352 CEMETERY OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2022**

The committee received a verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk regarding entry into Cemetery of the Year Awards 2022.

Members were supportive of entering the competition as they felt it would help improve and promote the appearance of the cemeteries within Witney and offer advice to inform its future management. Entry would also support the Witney in Bloom entry of which the Town Council were already regular entrants.

It was confirmed by the Deputy Town Clerk that funds of £310 were available from existing budget to sign up to the ICCM charter of bereaved, a potential condition of entering the competition.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the Town Council proceeds with entry into the Cemetery of the Year Awards 2022.

H353 **ALLOTMENTS - WAITING LIST**

The committee received a report from the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer concerning the Allotment waiting list.

The committee heard that the Witney Allotment Association (WAA) had over 200 names on the waiting list and had sought the Town Councils advice on whether to close the waiting list for a period of time.

Though members understood the request of WAA they felt that the closure of the waiting list would lead to disappointment by residents as there would be no hope of being allocated an allotment in the future. The consequence would likely be a negative towards the Council and would invoke further administrative enquiries, which was why the allotments had been previously outsourced.

Members felt that residents already on the waiting list were not being updated on the progress of their applications and so it was thought that this should be discussed with WAA to improve this communication with residents.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Town Council request WAA to continue to add residents to the allotment waiting list and ,
3. That, WAA communicate with residents on the list on an annual basis to update on the progress of their application and if they want to remain on the list.

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The meeting closed at: 6.50 pm

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Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 11 July 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman L Ashbourne	L Duncan R Smith
Officers:	Sharon Groth Adam Clapton	Town Clerk Deputy Town Clerk
Others:	None	

**SC354 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors V Gwatkin, H Eaglestone and A Prosser.

**SC355 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**SC356 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 30 May 2022 were received.

**SC256 – Communications & Community Engagement Report**

In response to a Member, the Deputy Town Clerk advised that ‘You Said, We Did’ videos with members had yet to take place in response to the customer satisfaction survey. A letter outlining comments on services in the remit of the County Council had been issued to its Chief Executive, Leader, and other members of that Authority.

**SC257 - Town Hall Window Community Use**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported this had been promoted at the Witney Forum of local groups and there had been keen interest in using this space.

**SC260 – Oxford Playhouse**

The Chair drew attention to this item and advised this recommendation had been overturned at the Policy, Governance & Finance meeting on 6 June. The decision was in response to further correspondence which was considered at the meeting.

**SC263 – Litter & Dog Waste Bins**

A member advised they had spoken on behalf of the Town Council at the District Council's Environmental Scrutiny meeting to raise issues with its policy and communication.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Stronger Committee held on 30 May 2022 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

SC357 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

SC358 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the financial report showing figures for aspects under its remit for the last Quarter, provided by the Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer.

In response to a Member, the Town Clerk explained the committee had higher costs than others due to the nature of its work, and not many ways of generating income. The movement to/from the general reserve related to the budgets which had been rolled over from the previous years.

**Resolved:**

That, the finance report be noted.

*Cllr L Ashbourne joined the meeting at 6.15pm*

SC359 **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer concerning community engagement projects.

Members were advised on the plans for the national 'In-Bloom' and the local 'Schools In Bloom' projects which were coming to fruition by the end of July. In addition, it was agreed the Council should support Love Your Parks week as it had previously and could promote recent litter-picking equipment purchased by the Council for community use.

There was discussion on Car Free Day, which this year fell on Thursday 22 September. As a Market Day, Market Square would not be useable but the areas outside the Corn Exchange and the Town Hall might be available if the County Council was agreeable to the request. Members agreed with officer suggestions on a Charabanc and asked that WOCT also be asked if they would like to be involved. A discount offer at the Corn Exchange 1863 bar could also be promoted via QR code on the main footpath and cycle path approaches into the town centre.

Further updates were provided on Championing Local and Christmas engagement with members noting the launch of the annual Christmas competitions and agreeing that the Rotary Club of Witney should be approached to see if they would like to manage the Christmas Lights Switch-on event. This would run as it had previously on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November at 6pm with a grant provided to the Club from the Town Council. The Committee also agreed that sponsorship should be sought for a second Christmas tree in Market Square.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Town Council supports Love Your Parks Week, 29 July – 5 August, as it had in 2021 with the addition of promoting community litter picking equipment and,
3. That, Oxfordshire County Council is approached to see if the highway outside the Town Hall could be used as a base for activities in respect of Car Free Day and,
4. That, a Charabanc is requested from the Oxford Bus Museum for Car Free Day and,
5. That, West Oxfordshire Community Transport are asked if they would like to be involved with Car Free Day and,
6. That, the Communications & Community Engagement and Venue & Events Officers develop a discount scheme for 1863 on Car Free Day to promote active travel and,
7. That, the updates on Championing Local and Christmas competitions be noted and,
8. That, sponsorship is sought for the second Christmas tree in Market Square and,
9. That, the Rotary Club of Witney be approached to see if they would like to run the 2022 Christmas Lights Switch-on event on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November at 6pm on the same terms as in previous years, to include a grant from the Council.

SC360 **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT & COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY REVIEW**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications and Community Engagement Officer concerning communications and strategy review.

Members welcomed the review and noted the updates and suggestions provided. It was pleasing to see that so many actions were either completed or in development.

With regard to the Website, members noted that the current website was suitable and for what was required but recognised the benefit of outsourcing the hosting to an external provider. This would help facilitate a transfer to a Gov.uk template and free up officer time while also retaining some editorial control to update pages and news items. It was agreed that officers should obtain quotes for this project to present at the September meeting and in the meantime the streamlining of the Website should continue with an 'Our Partners' page added so this could be migrated as and when required.

Members also noted the Press & Media Coverage attachment and thanked officers for recent social media posts which were eye-catching and promoting the positive work of the Council.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the additions to the Communications Strategy (as circulated), be incorporated into the updated document and,
3. That, officers seek quotations for outsourcing the website in time for the next meeting of the Committee and,
4. That, the current website continues to be streamlined and an 'Our Partners' page added and,
5. That, the Press and Media Coverage be noted.

SC361 **TOWN COUNCIL REBRANDING**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer concerning the Town Council's rebranding.

Members were advised the process had been delayed due to other commitments and the brief for the project had changed but the Task and Finish Group had agreed on the logo, as presented. It was intended to be solely an organisational and administrative logo and the town crest would remain the official heraldic 'town' arms for legislative purposes.

The Committee welcomed the proposed logo and recognised the sentiment behind it, including the colours which represented a traditional Witney three-point blanket. It was modern and represented a distinct change and direction of the Town Council.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Town Council adopts the new logo for administrative and livery purposes.

SC362 **YOUTH SERVICES GRANT 2022**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the Youth Services Grant criteria and timeframe for the awarding of funds.

Members agreed the timetable and looked forward to receiving applications when the scheme opened at the beginning of August.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the Youth Services Grant award timetable be agreed.

SC363 **WITNEY VOICE BOX CHOIR GRANT REQUEST**

The Committee received and considered a grant request from Witney Voice Box Choir towards funds for a free concert in the Langdale Hall, Witney.

Members were aware that a Platinum Jubilee concert was hugely oversubscribed, and this performance would provide a further free event, which could be accessed by many more residents in the community. Although the committee was not responsible for the financial management of the Council, it welcomed the application.

**Recommended:**

1. That, Witney Voice Box Choir be awarded £100 from the Town Council's grant budget and,
2. That, this recommendation be forwarded to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee.

SC364 **HAPPY TO CHAT BENCH**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Project Officer concerning the Happy to Chat Bench.

The Town Council would be project managing this matter as the parties who had shown interest in the project had not been able to pursue it themselves. Members were pleased the local Methodist Church had shown an interest in helping those at the bench but felt that a timetable for representatives was not needed at this time. Likewise, the District Council was about to embark on a project with the Samaritans so their contact details would be placed elsewhere.

A concerted effort would be needed not to deter the use of the bench for rest so no plaque should be attached, and attention should only be drawn by painting the bench through the use of colour.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, that the bench be painted in the colours of the newly adopted Town Council logo and the words 'Happy to Chat Bench' are painted on the wooden slats.

SC365 **QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE - LEGACY PROJECT**

The Committee considered potential wording for a plaque to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Project in Unterhaching Park, which now seemed possible following the District Council's indication a licence could be granted.

Members agreed on a simple dedication for the plaque on the sundial, 'Installed by Witney Town Council to honour the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, 2022'.

**Resolved:**

That, the wording as above be incorporated onto a plaque for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee sundial at Unterhaching Park.

SC366 **AUTUMN & WINTER PLANTING**

The Committee received a verbal update on Autumn and Winter planting, as provided by the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer.

Members were advised that plants had already been ordered directly by the Council based on a previous resolution to adhere to what had been done before, but there was still a chance to vary a colour scheme.

Approval was also sought to remove concrete planting troughs along the top of The Leys Recreation Ground and to change Burwell Hall bedding to perennial shrub planting as the flowers were regularly disturbed and taken out by the public. There was agreement that the troughs needed to be replaced but there was hope a budget could be included for their replacement in the new year. It was disappointing that plants outside Burwell Hall were being treated poorly so it was a sensible approach to plant something hardy in this area.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the planting scheme match the colours of the newly adopted Town Council logo and,

3. That, the planters at The Leys recreation Ground be removed. A replacement to be sought in time for the Spring/Summer planting 2023 and,
4. That, bedding planting outside Burwell Hall be replaced with hardy perennial shrubs.

SC367 **THIRD PARTY & LARGE EVENTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue & Events Officer concerning third party and large events.

The Chair started by thanking all organisers of the events held so far in the year. They had all been most welcomed and were a credit to all who had contributed to their success.

The Committee were pleased to learn that LibFest would be returning to the Leys in 2023 and acknowledged that the schedule of events would need to be refined to accommodate all events in that year. With a tight summer schedule, any further requests would need to be considered on their scale on a case-to-case basis.

The Town Clerk suggested that many of these larger events had received funds from the Town Council but this wasn't knowingly promoted during the event so the committee agreed that banners stating, 'Supported by Witney Town Council' should be purchased and provided.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the events who have shown an interest in returning in 2023 be accommodated where possible and,
3. That, the request from BBOWT to hold a free pop-up education stand at the Leys Recreation Ground during the summer be granted and,
4. That, the Town Council purchases banners to be loaned to event organisers stating, Supported by Witney Town Council, where funds have been provided and,
5. That, the feedback from OPA and Oxford Playhouse be noted.

SC368 **REMEMBRANCE**

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

Feedback had been received following last year's event, the first run by the Town Council with Covid-19 circulating so this year presented a new challenge. After discussion on potential arrangements, it was agreed information should be sought from other local Parish & Town Council's on their events. Following that, a final decision on how to proceed could be established via a small task and finish group.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Town Clerk contacts other local town councils to understand their plans for the service of remembrance and,
3. That, this information be passed to a small task and finish group of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Leader to formulate a plan for the day and,



4. That, once finalised, the running order and arrangements be communicated to all relevant groups and parties at the earliest opportunity and,
5. That, 1000 service sheets are printed in 2022 and that recycling points are advertised at the end of the service and,
6. That, the purchase of 30 crowd control barriers be agreed and,
7. That, local event traffic management training for town council staff be agreed.

SC369 **ADVENT FAYRE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue & Events Officer concerning the annual Advent Fayre.

Members supported the continuation of the event as in previous years on the last Sunday in November. This year, more than ever, the Town Council should be hosting this free event for children in the run up to Christmas. There was a suggestion the Fayre could be advertised in local schools and the budget should be stretched to include as many events as possible.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Advent Fayre is held on the last Sunday in November based on the same format as previous years with Father Christmas in attendance in a grotto and,
3. That, Witney Model Club be granted permission to use an area of the hall during the event and,
4. That, The Town Crier be invited to take part in the event and,
5. That, schools are advised of the event and,
6. That, Winter Wonderland be invited to take part.

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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, 18 July 2022**

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

**Present:**

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	O Collins L Duncan H Eaglestone	V Gwatkin R Smith
Officers:	Sharon Groth Adam Clapton	Town Clerk Deputy Town Clerk
Others:	None	

The Policy, Governance & Finance Committee formed virtually as an Advisory Committee. Any recommendations outside of the current work programme, budget or policy would require ratification at the Full Council meeting held on 1 August 2022.

**F383 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Harvey & M Jones.

**F384 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

**F385 MINUTES**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2022.

Minute no. F289 – Emergency Plan. The Deputy Town Clerk advised a multi-agency meeting had taken place in the hope of developing a structured and coherent approach to future flooding events. The Council was awaiting further information from other parties to proceed.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**F386 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

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

**F387 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk with accompanying payment schedules, bank statements and reconciliations.

**Resolved:**

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

<b>Cheque No's</b>	<b>In the sum of:</b>	<b>Account</b>
Cheques 101184, DDs, and Standing Orders May 2022	£1,005,121.61	General CB 1
Cheques 33540-33581, DDs, BACS, and Standing Orders May 2022	£127,743.67	Imprest CB 2

**F388 BANK MANDATE & CHEQUE SIGNATORIES**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer concerning the Council's bank mandate and authorised cheque signatories.

Members were advised there had been a delay to enacting the above as Councillors struggled to verify their ID in the branch given the limited opening hours. Although now nearly complete, the former resolution had become outdated.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the authorised cheque signatories of the Town Council should be Cllrs J Aitman, V Gwatkin, R Smith, O Collins, and L Ashbourne.

**F389 CEMETERY REGULATIONS**

The Committee received draft Cemetery and Burial regulations, as amended following recommended adoption by the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee at its meeting on 4 July 2022.

**Recommended:**

That, the Cemetery & Burial Regulations as presented, be formally adopted by the Town Council.

**F390 FINANCIAL REPORT & ASSOCIATED MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the joint report of the Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer and Deputy Town Clerk.

Members noted the Council's Annual Governance & Accountability Return and additional documentation had been submitted to the external auditor; and were advised the figures provided on Council budgets were as expected at this time.

The Committee considered the confidential appendix on a Council debtor and agreed that officers should monitor expected payments before agreeing any further payment plan.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the recommendations of the spending committees as detailed in the report be approved and,
3. That, the debtor outlined in the confidential appendix to the report be monitored to see what further payments are received.

**F391 GRANTS & SUBSIDISED LETTINGS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning grant and subsidised letting requests.

Members acknowledged recommendations of the Parks & Recreation and Stronger Communities Committees regarding a subsidised letting agreement for Got2b CIC and grant for Witney Voice Box Choir.

The Committee, while understanding of a retrospective application for a subsidised let at the Corn Exchange to help a national charity appeal, had no choice but to reject this as it was late, and the organisation was a church, and the Council cannot financially assist ecclesiastical organisations under statute.

A final request from Oxfordshire Music & Arts Trust (OXMAT) to draw on the remaining funds of their Youth Grant Award 2021 was received. Members were supportive of releasing the amount of £3,834 towards a winter festival, which was a change from their original application, and subsidised use of the Corn Exchange from these funds.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the grant of £100 towards Witney Voice Box Choir be noted and,
3. That, the subsidised letting award of £368.80 to Got2b CIC be noted and,
4. 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 and,
5. That, the subsidised letting application from White Feather Spiritualist Church be declined and,
6. That, the Grants Policy be amended to advise that retrospective applications will not be considered and,
7. That, the remaining Youth Grant Award 2021 of £3,834 be released to OXMAT (to include a hire charge of the Corn Exchange).

**F392 PRINTING & PHOTOCOPYING CONTRACT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning a printing contract for the Council.

Members were advised four quotes had been sought for the contract which reflected the Council's needs and aspirations. The Committee was particularly interested in greener and more

sustainable options provided by the tenderers to help meet its climate emergency obligations and agreed this should be more of a priority than cost.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the decision on which contract to go with be delegated to the Deputy Town Clerk, based on the Committees criteria.

**F393 PURCHASE OF A WORKS VEHICLE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer concerning the purchase of a new works vehicle.

Members were advised what the vehicle would be used for and the range it would be travelling so were supportive of this being the first electric vehicle for the Council. The final decision on which of the options to procure should be a decision for officers based on professional information but should be led by a long-term plan for the Council's vehicle fleet.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the decision on which electric vehicle to purchase be delegated to the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer in consultation with the Head of Operations, based on the best information and recommendation available.

**F394 SPORTS PITCH BOOKINGS SYSTEM**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer concerning a new electronic Sports Pitch Booking System for the Council.

Members recognised that the current system was not intuitive and cost a considerable amount in time for sports clubs and Council staff. The systems presented provided what was required and were used by other local Councils who were satisfied with their performance.

There was, however, no agreed budget for this project within the current fiscal year and the committee were made aware that other IT functions of the Council were being evaluated to offer a more holistic approach to administration, rather than a piecemeal one.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Council agrees that a new system is required in principle and,
3. That, officers continue to explore a more holistic approach to an IT solution to be integrated in the next year.

**F395 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.

**F396 CHANGE PROGRAMME - CONFIDENTIAL UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Head of Operations (Interim) concerning a planned programme of change for the Council's ground and facilities operation.

Members were supportive of the report and agreed that Option 2 of the recommendations provided the long-term solution to deliver the operations the Council aspired to. It was confirmed that there was little time to facilitate this option, so Option 3 would be beneficial in the interim.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the confidential report be noted and,
2. That, Option 2 of the report be agreed for the long-term delivery of Operations, but Option 3 would be sufficient until such time as this was completed.

**F397 MAJOR CAPITAL & REVENUE PROJECTS**

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk & Chief Executive Officer concerning major and special projects.

Members noted the updates provided in the report including the potential development and loan required for improvements at West Witney Sports Ground. There was also an update on the latest position of the Corn Exchange refurbishment by the Deputy Town Clerk.

The Committee agreed that the redevelopment at West Witney was a key Council objective, and as well as seeking a contribution from the District Council, a loan would potentially have to be taken to deliver the project.

It was advised that a core drill survey would be required to confirm the integrity of the floor in the Main Hall of the Corn Exchange at a cost of £1,950.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the confidential report be noted and,
2. That, the Council agrees in principle to applying to the Public Works Loan Board for a loan to deliver the improvements at West Witney Sports Ground and,
3. That, the additional cost of £1,950 for the core drill survey at the Corn Exchange be approved.

**F398 PROPERTY & LEGAL MATTERS**

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

Members were advised a number of assets, due to be transferred to the Town Council from the District Council, were being delayed due to a lack of District Council resources.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the confidential report be noted and,
2. That, the Town Council corresponds with the Chief Executive of the District Council regarding the situation with legal transfers.

*Cllr H Eaglestone left the meeting at 7.19pm*

F399 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received the confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee meetings held on 22 June and 6 July 2022, which had been circulated ahead of the meeting.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meetings held on 22 June and 6 July 2022 be noted and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

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The meeting closed at: 7.21 pm

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Chair



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## 6A: Member Code of Conduct

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### 1.0 Introduction

The Council has a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the Council, and formally adopt a code of conduct, in accordance with the *Localism Act 2011*.

### 2.0 Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a Councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow Councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all Councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of the Councillor and in Local Government.

### 3.0 Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “Councillor” means a member or co-opted member of the local authority. A “co-opted member” is defined in the *Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4)* as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- 3.1 is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- 3.2 is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub- committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

### 4.0 General Principles of Councillor Conduct

Everyone in public office and all who serve the public or deliver public services, including Councillors and local authority officers, should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles, (see Appendix A).

Building on these principles of selflessness, objectivity, accountability,

openness, honesty and integrity and leadership, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of Councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in Councillors, on all occasions a Councillor shall:

- act with integrity and honesty
- act lawfully
- treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of Councillor.
- impartially exercise their responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- avoid conflicts of interest
- exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with the local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

These general principles have been incorporated into the obligations of the Code of Conduct as set out below.

## **5.0 Application of the Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of Councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a Councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a Councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a Councillor
- Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a Councillor;

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including at face-to-face meetings, at online or telephone meetings, in written communication, in verbal communication, in non-verbal communication and in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct.

Town and parish Councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

## **6.0 Standards of Councillor Conduct**

This section sets out the obligations (in bold below), which are the minimum standards of conduct required of a Councillor. Should a Councillor's conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against them, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is also included below each obligation to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

## **6.1 Respect**

### **A Councillor:**

**6.1.1 Shall treat everyone, including other Councillors and members of the public with respect.**

**6.1.2 Shall treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.**

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a Councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in Councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from everyone. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the relevant social media provider and/or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor- officer protocol.

## **6.2 Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination**

### **A Councillor:**

**6.2.1 Shall not bully any person.**

**6.2.2 Shall not harass any person.**

**6.2.3 Shall promote equalities and not discriminate against any person.** Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure

the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Legislation places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

### **6.3 Impartiality of Officers of the Council**

A Councillor:

#### **6.3.1 Shall not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.**

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral, (other than political assistants where applicable). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. A Councillor may question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, a Councillor must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

### **6.4 Confidentiality and access to information**

A Councillor:

#### **6.4.1 Shall not disclose information either given to them in confidence by anyone or acquired by them which they believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**

- i. They have received the consent of a person authorised to give it; or**
- ii. They are required by law to do so; or**

- iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
- iv. the disclosure is reasonable and in the public interest; and also made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority and consultation with the Monitoring Officer has taken place prior to its release.

**6.4.2** Shall not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of their role as a Councillor for the advancement of themselves, their friends, family members, employer or business interests.

**6.4.3** Shall not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

**6.4.4** When making decisions on behalf of, or as part of, the Council shall have due regard to any professional advice provided by the Council's Officers.

## **6.5 Disrepute**

A Councillor:

**6.5.1** Shall not bring their role or local authority into disrepute.

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other Councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in your or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions.

## **6.6 Use of position**

A Councillor:

**6.6.1** Shall not use, or attempt to use, their position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of anyone.

A Councillor should not take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and privileges to further their own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

## **6.7 Local authority Resources and Facilities**

A Councillor:

**6.7.1 Shall not misuse council resources.**

**6.7.2 Shall, when using the resources of the local authority or authorising their use by others, act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which they have been elected or appointed.**

A Councillor may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist them in carrying out their duties as a Councillor. Examples may include office support, stationery, equipment such as phones, computers and transport and access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

## **6.8 Compliance with the Code of Conduct**

A Councillor:

**6.8.1 Shall undertake Code of Conduct training as required by the local authority.**

**6.8.2 Shall cooperate with any Code of Conduct assessment, investigation, hearing and/or determination.**

**6.8.3 Shall not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.**

**6.8.4 Shall comply with any sanction imposed on them following a finding that they have breached the Code of Conduct.**

It is extremely important for a Councillor to demonstrate high standards, to have your actions open to scrutiny and not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with the Monitoring Officer.

## **7.0 Registering and Declaring Interests**

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted

when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

## **7.1 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

A Councillor must, within 28 days of taking office as a member or co-opted member, notify the Council's Monitoring Officer of any disclosable pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State (see Appendix B), where the pecuniary interest is yours, your spouse's or civil partner's, or is the pecuniary interest of somebody with whom you are living with as a husband or wife, or as if you were civil partners. Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority.

You must disclose the interest at any meeting of the Council at which you are present, where you have a disclosable interest in any matter being considered and where the matter is not a 'sensitive interest'. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you must disclose the fact that you have an interest but do not have to disclose the nature of it. (A sensitive interest is an interest which, in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer, if disclosed, could lead to the Councillor, or a person connected with them, being subjected to violence or intimidation.) You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting.

Following any disclosure of an interest not on the Council's register, or the subject of pending notification, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days beginning with the date of disclosure.

Unless dispensation has been granted, by the Monitoring Officer, you may not participate in any discussion of, or vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest. You must withdraw from the room or chamber when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter.

Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up to date and within 28

days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in Appendix B is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

## **7.2 Other Registerable Interests**

You must also register your other registerable interests with the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of taking office and ensure these are kept up to date by notifying any changes within 28 days.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***directly relates*** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in Appendix C), you must disclose the interest. Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person's quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where you have an Other Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

## **7.3 Non-Registerable Interests**

Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***directly relates*** to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests at 7.1 above), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a sensitive interest you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***affects*** your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registerable Interests as set out at 7.2 above and appendix C you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:



- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where you have a Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

## **8.0 Gifts and Hospitality**

A Councillor:

- 8.1 Shall not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**
- 8.2 Shall register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**
- 8.3 Shall register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that they have been offered but have refused to accept.**

The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality but there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered.

You do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a Councillor.

It is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a Councillor.

## **Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life**

The principles are:

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

### **Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## Appendix B: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

**"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest"** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in the table below.

**"Partner"** means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation</b>	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
<b>Sponsorship</b>	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses.  This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

<p><b>Contracts</b></p>	<p>Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council —</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p> <p>(c)</p>
<p><b>Land and Property</b></p>	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p>
<p><b>Licenses</b></p>	<p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.</p>

<p><b>Corporate tenancies</b></p>	<p>Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the council; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.</p>
<p><b>Securities</b></p>	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issues share capital of that class.</p>

\* 'Director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\* 'Securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

## Appendix C: Disclosure of Other Registrable Interests

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

- a) any unpaid directorships
- b) any Body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- c) any Body
  - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
  - (ii)** directed to charitable purposes or
  - (iii)** one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management



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Dear Adam

Witney Town Charity have two potential Nominative Trustees for consideration by Witney Town Council.

They are Rev'd Jacky Cole and Former Mayor Mrs Jeanette Baker.

I attach their CVs, and they have both indicated that they will be able to use their knowledge and experience to research the homelessness and poverty areas that the Charity is investigating to see if it can help in those areas.

If you need further information please let me know.

Kind regards

*Mark*

Mark G. Baker  
Clerk to the *Witney Town Charity*  
Registered Charity No. 202996

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

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# Witney Town Charity

Registered Charity No. 202996

Clerk to the Trustees  
Mark Baker

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

14 July 2022

Adam Clapton Esq  
Deputy Town Clerk  
Witney Town Council  
Town Hall  
Market Square  
Witney, Oxon  
OX28 6AG

Dear Mr Clapton

## **Re-Appointment of Nominative Trustees to Witney Town Charity**

Former Witney Town Councillor, Mr Jim King, is a Nominative Trustee to the Witney Town Charity, appointed in October 2018, and whose term comes to an end on 26 October 2022.

He has asked the Charity to let Witney Town Council know that he is interested in remaining as a Nominative Trustee, appointed by Witney Town Council, when his term ends in October.

I will be grateful if you will advise the Town Council of his request and let me have their decision in due course.

Yours sincerely

*Mark G Baker*

Mark G Baker  
Clerk to the Trustees

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## FULL COUNCIL

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**Date:** Monday, 1 August 2022

**Title:** Civic Announcements

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

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### **JUNE 22 TO JULY 22**

The role of Mayor involves chairing the Town Council, sitting as an ex officio voting member on council committees, representing and promoting Witney, organising 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**

Jubilee canvas presentation – Kings School  
NAPE Oxfordshire festival of voices Dorchester Abbey – attended by Dep Mayor  
Volunteer Link Up summer social  
Jubilee canvas presentation - Our Lady of Lourdes School  
Jubilee canvas presentation – Blake School  
Jubilee canvas presentation – West Witney Primary  
Jubilee canvas presentation – Madley Brook Primary  
Visiting Home Start Witney  
Meeting Barry Beadle Volunteer Link Up  
Our Lady of Lourdes summer fair – attended by Dep Mayor  
Yellow Submarine charity café awards – attended by Dep Mayor  
Witney Horticultural Society presentation of prizes  
Attendance at Isobel Spencer Bursary Awards – Henry Box School.  
Jubilee canvas presentation – Batt School  
Attendance at Voice Box concert  
Visiting Windrush Bike Project  
Cloud Kubed office opening  
Jubilee canvas presentation – Madley Park House care home  
Fund raising event for flood protection at Riverside Gardens

### **REPRESENTING and PROMOTING WITNEY**

Formal reception invite from Station Commander Gp Capt. Emily Flynn – RAF Brize Norton  
Meeting Mayor's Army Cadet at parade evening  
Witney Carnival judging floats plus meet and greet with organisations/charities attending at the Leys  
Attendance at Chris Holliday's funeral  
Witney in Bloom judging

**KEY EVENTS AND COUNCIL ACTIVITY**

Flag raising for Armed Forces Day  
Judging Christmas Light competition entries

**RAISING FUNDS**

Mayor's Charities 2022-23:

Volunteer Link Up  
Windrush Bike Project

Prepared by:

***Cllr Liz Duncan and Loraine Harwood***

**Vandalism (from May 2022)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Item/Location</b>	<b>Date/Time Reported</b>	<b>Cost if known</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Police Reference</b>
04/07/22	Moped being driven through Tower Hill Cemetery from the new access point			Reported to Police	
04/07/22	Graffiti over Buttercross			Removed	
08/07/22	Graffiti over the new Tower Hill cemetery gate			Removed	
25/07/22	Campfire at the lake and country park			Ash and burnt material removed	
27/07/22	Campfire at the lake and country park			Ash and burnt material removed	
	Graffiti over Burwell Bus Stop				

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**From:** Oxfordshire County Council

**Subject:** Media release: Oxfordshire town brings in widespread 20mph speed limits

## Witney brings in widespread 20mph speed limits

- **Town becomes first to take advantage of council's £8 million programme**

Read the story on the Oxfordshire County Council [website](#) or below:

Just over a week after Wales voted to make 20mph the default speed limit in residential areas to create safer, healthier, and quieter streets, an Oxfordshire town is following suit and implementing new 20mph restrictions.

Plans for dozens of 30mph roads in Witney to have their speed limits lowered to 20mph have been approved. It becomes the first town wide location in the county to make the change as a direct result of Oxfordshire County Council's 20mph policy change and associated programme which was announced earlier this year.

Councillor Liz Leffman, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, approved the measures at a meeting on Thursday [21 July]. The changes are expected to be implemented and new signage installed later this year.

**Councillor Andrew Gant, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways Management, said:** "This is a landmark moment for our ambitious 20mph policy, which we are spending up to £8 million on over a three year period. Witney is the first and the biggest project we are undertaking in this phase of the programme and we believe these changes will make the town a safer, quieter, and less polluted place and will encourage more people to cycle and walk – reducing the county's carbon footprint."

**Councillor Liz Duncan, Mayor of Witney and Chair of a Town Council Working Party set up to develop the scheme, said:** "It is exciting to see this comprehensive 20mph scheme coming to our town, bringing improved road safety for residential streets, reducing the risks of death and injury. We have received many requests from residents for the reduced speed limit and this whole town approach will bring huge benefits.

"As well as safer streets, other similar schemes have seen reductions in traffic noise, better air quality and increased physical activity because with roads feeling safer, people are happier to leave the car at home and walk or cycle instead."

The county council has been inundated with requests from towns and villages to bring in 20mph zones since it [launched the policy](#) in February. The first two phases of the project are now fully booked, although communities can still apply to be part of the third delivery phase which takes place in 2024 - 25.

Cllr Gant added: “Witney is just the start, and more than 70 other towns and villages will be benefiting from reduced speeds in the next financial year – followed by hundreds more in the next two years.

“The recent decision in Wales shows that 20mph is becoming the accepted speed limit for residential areas, and Oxfordshire County Council is at the forefront of bringing about that change. It is well-known that the survival rate for people involved in accidents increases as speeds are reduced.”

There is a clear link between the speed of traffic and the likelihood of accidents happening in which people are killed or injured. You are seven times more likely to survive if you are hit by a car driving at 20mph than if you are hit at 30mph.

The scheme is free to town and parish councils, with the county council funding sign-only changes for areas wishing to be part of the changes as long as locations meet the agreed criteria for 20mph restrictions.

Town and parish councils will be expected to fund any traffic calming measures or speed-activated signs that may be required to support the new limit in their areas.

Applications for 20mph streets and roads need to be supported by the parish or town council and by the relevant local county councillor. More information, including a timetable of where and when forthcoming projects are taking place, is available on [Oxfordshire County Council's website](#).

Oxfordshire County Council has already implemented five 20mph pilot sites to test the impact of the policy in Cuxham, Long Wittenham, Wallingford Central, Wallingford North, and Kirtlington. Early data has shown these measures have had a positive impact on reducing speeds.

While the council has been working alongside Thames Valley Police – who did not object to the 20mph proposals for Witney – the emphasis is on drivers adhering to the new limits through a change of mindset, rather than enforcement. It is hoped that as 20mph areas become more common, breaking the limit will become socially unacceptable for drivers.

The council is also committed to working with key stakeholders including bus, taxi, and haulage companies, as well as major businesses, throughout the process. Officers will work with the bus companies to ensure that the impact on services is minimal.

The changes, which had the backing of West Oxfordshire District Council as well as Witney Town Council, will also involve the reduction of some speed limits from 50mph to 40mph and from 40mph to 30mph around the town.

County council officers have said they will look to minimise potential street clutter by making sure only the legally required amount of signage is placed around the town.

The 20mph programme also fits in with the council's [vision zero](#) policy, which aims to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries from Oxfordshire's roads by 2050.

**Ends**

**For more information about this release contact Oxfordshire County Council's communications team on 01865 323870 or email [press.office@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@oxfordshire.gov.uk)**

Marc Evans  
Communications and Media Officer  
Oxfordshire County Council

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Witney Chamber of Commerce  
c/o Great Experience Travel  
Waterloo Walk  
High Street  
Witney, OX28 6EU

Mrs Liz Leffman  
Leader  
Oxfordshire County Council  
County Hall  
New Road  
Oxford, OX1 1ND

Dear Mrs Leffman

**Re: Witney High Street, road closure**

I write in my capacity as the recently appointed Chairman of the Witney Chamber of Commerce.

We held our last meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> June when I invited Cllr Duncan Enright to give a short presentation to the attendees in respect of the current and future plans for Witney's High Street. Based on the discussion held at our earlier meeting in April when I was asked to take on the chairmanship of the Chamber there seemed to be considerable confusion as to whether a final decision had been taken on the current road restrictions and/or if there was an opportunity for the High Street to be reopened to two-way traffic. As this was the first meeting of Chamber members since before Covid, and of course, before the High Street access was restricted on the then perfectly understandable public health grounds, considerable concern was expressed about the apparent lack of any direct consultation with local businesses which could be adversely-affected by a potential reduction in footfall associated with the traffic restrictions.

At the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> June, Duncan explained that a decision had been taken by the Council at the end of December which effectively envisaged making permanent the current restrictions, and this was in line with the results of the consultation that had taken place. A number of those who attended the meeting felt strongly that the methodology of the consultation process left much to be desired, especially as it did not appear that there was any economic impact assessment undertaken with the local businesses. The view of the meeting, strongly expressed to Duncan, was that what had been introduced as a perfectly legitimate public health response to Covid was now being used as a pretext to maintain traffic restrictions to the High Street for other reasons that had not been clearly explained or justified, especially to the local businesses.

One of my first acts as Chairman of the Chamber was to undertake a survey of Chamber Members to ascertain their views on the plans. Various unofficial surveys had previously been undertaken amongst the High Street retailers, but this survey was intended to gauge a much wider view from the membership which could then be represented to the relevant authorities. The result of this survey, which was backed up by a vote at the Chamber Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> June was that the membership was overwhelmingly opposed to the current arrangements and wanted to see an immediate return to two-way traffic flows along the High Street.

A number of businesses stated that their turnover and footfall had seen a dramatic reduction since the introduction of the measures, together with considerable logistical difficulties caused in planning deliveries etc. Other members commented on the apparent current lack of policing of the measures which mean that many vehicles continue to use the restricted section of the High Street as a 'rat run' often at considerable speed and this was leading to major safety concerns because no one seemed able to confirm whether pedestrians had right of way when walking in the restricted areas and/or what enforcement measures were actually being undertaken to make sure that whatever restrictions on vehicle access were being enforced.

Members were not in principle opposed to coming up with new plans for the High Street. However, it was felt very strongly that these should be formally proposed, discussed, and consulted upon with a detailed economic impact assessment undertaken.

The meeting decided that, as Chairman, I should write to yourself and the other decision-makers to put on record formally that the Chamber of Commerce is opposed to the current plans and the proposal that these should be made permanent in response to the decision from the December meeting. I have also been asked that the businesses of Witney as represented by the Chamber of Commerce should be allowed to lobby for a change to the plans with an immediate return to two-way traffic on the High Street whilst proper plans are developed which won't have the adverse impact that many of the businesses feel that the current arrangements are having on their level of trade.

Duncan did explain that, as far as he was concerned, a binding decision had been taken, but as some of those attending argued strongly, there are many decisions of Government at all levels which have been overturned after a period of review. It is certainly the view of the majority of Chamber of Commerce members that such a rethink would be appropriate at this stage.

Duncan further went on to explain that significant funds had been approved for the improvement of the immediate High Street environment and that input from the Chamber members would be welcome as to how the available finance could be spent to have the maximum positive impact. To this end, I have proposed that the majority of our next scheduled meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July should be devoted to collating ideas which can then be put formally to the relevant authorities. However, it was again reiterated by members that this should not prevent us making the Chamber's objections to the current plans known.

I look forward to hearing back from you with your response, and hopefully finding a date when it might be possible for us to meet in person, potentially with other Chamber Members, in order that the strength of opinion on this matter can be clearly expressed. It is our hope that some alternative proposition can be agreed upon which does not damage a number of the Chamber of Commerce members' businesses in the way that they feel the current regulations are doing, and will continue to do, if no alternative less business-damaging approach can be found.

Yours sincerely

David Gambier  
Managing Director  
Great Experience Travel  
Chairman of the Witney Chamber of Commerce.

Cc: Cllr Andy Graham - WODC, Cllr Liz Duncan – WTC, Robert Courts – MP for Witney.