

# Full Council

## Meeting of Witney Town Council



**Monday, 17th April, 2023 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, P Hiles and D Thomas (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.

Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting and speak on a particular item should contact the Committee Clerk ([derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk](mailto:derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk)) in advance.

### 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 Deputy Town Clerk or Committee Clerk know before the start of the meeting.

### Agenda

190. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Hiles, D Thomas and D Butterfield.

191. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

192. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held 13 February 2023 were received.

A member requested clarification regarding the agreement of the Witney Music Festival partnership agreement, the member was not present and therefore unaware of it was approved by the Council at the meeting of 13 February 2023. Minute item 93 relates.

Councillor J Aitman requested that all councillors consider supporting the events being arranged by the council to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles. Minute Item 101 relates.

Councillor D Harvey advised that the water can misspelling was "Cemetery" and not "Cemetary" as noted in minute item 104.

### Resolved:

That, the minutes of the meeting held 13 February 2023 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

193. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

194. **Witney Community Policing Issues**

Apologies were received from Inspector Ball that unfortunately a representative of the Witney Police Team was unable to attend the meeting. No written or verbal report was provided.

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

Councillor Enright provided an update advising the a decision regarding the Shores Green developments has been deferred to May due to the supply of information from South Leigh Parish Council.

**West Oxfordshire District Council**

Councillor Enright provided an update advising that WODC are close to securing a new tenant for the empty unit, previous occupied by Debenhams. He also expressed his delight with the umbrella decorations that have added to the look for the shopping area.

Councillor Smith updated that the Audit Committee will analyse the results of the voting due to take place on 4 May 2023 in order to gather demographic information to assist with decision making. A lot of work has gone into ensuring voters are aware of the new requirements to provide Identification in order to vote.

Councillor Prosser advised members that the next stage of the local plan was due for decision next week and that there has been good engagement with the consultation. The next stages are to call for sites for use as Green Space, renewable energy and housing.

Councillor Aitman asked members to provide any comments or feedback they have in respect of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire & Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership.

**Resolved:**

That, the verbal updates from Councillors be noted.

196. **Report Back from the Councillors on the Work with External Bodies where they serve as the Town Council's Nominated Representative**

There were no reports from Councillors.

197. **Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee - 14 February, 7 March & 28 March 2023**

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 14 February, 7 March and 28 March 2023 be received, and any recommendations therein approved.

198. **Parks & Recreation Committee - 6 March 2023**

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

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 6 March 2023 be received, and any recommendations therein approved.

199. **Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - 13 March 2023**

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 13 March 2023 be received, and any recommendations therein approved.

200. **Stronger Communities Committee - 20 March 2023**

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

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee meeting held on 20 March 2023 be received, and any recommendations therein approved.

201. **Policy, Governance & Finance Committee - 27 March 2023**

The 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 27 March 2023 be received, and any recommendations therein approved.

202. **Annual Town Meeting - 15 March 2023**

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

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Annual Town meeting held on 15 March 2023 be received and be adopted as a true record.

203. **Financial Regulations Review**

The Council received the amended Financial Regulations as recommended by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee. Minute number F158 Relates.

The adoption of the Financial Regulations was proposed by Councillor Ashbourne and seconded by Councillor Harvey.

Members voted. The proposal was carried unanimously.

**Resolved:**

That, the amended Financial Regulations be adopted.

204. **Working Party's**

The council received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk in respect of the dissolution of the councils working parties along with smaller task and finish groups once their objective is achieved.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the council's Corn Exchange, 20mph and Platinum Jubilee Working parties are dissolved.
3. That, the smaller task and finish groups are dissolved on the completion of their objective.

205. **Civic Announcements**

The Council received the report of the Mayor & Mayor's Secretary.

The Mayor thanked those councillors that attended the Civic Reception to celebrate the Citizen of the Year Awards which was the highlight of her term as Mayor

**Resolved:**

That, the report be noted.

206. **To Agree a Mayor Elect**

The Council considered the election of a Mayor Elect. Members discussed at some length and merits of the election.

An agreement to elect a Mayor elect was proposed by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Prosser.

Members voted. The proposal was carried, with voting as follows:

In Favour 9

Against 3

Abstentions 1

Further discussion ensued regarding the importance of ensuring that any candidates are hardworking and aware of the importance of a good social media presence. Upon completion

Councillor O Collins was proposed to be Mayor Elect by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Gwakin.

Members voted. The proposal was carried, with voting as follows:

In Favour 9

Against 3

Abstentions 1

**Resolved:**

1. That, a Mayor elect is agreed.
2. That, Councillor O Collins be Mayor Elect subject to a successful re-election to the Town Council on 4 May 2023.

**207. Community Speedwatch Scheme**

The council received the report and verbal update of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the proposed speed watch scheme.

Members discussed the council providing support to establish the scheme which would include some administration, members were in favour providing it was made clear that responsibility lay with the Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC).

**Resolved**

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, administration support is provided by council staff to TAC.

**208. Vandalism and Health & Safety**

The Council received the report and verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk.

Members discussed the issues experienced relating to access from Ducklington Village to the Country Park either via the privately owned access road at the Allotment end or via the Scottish & Southern Electric owned access road. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed to members that Ducklington Parish Council had previously been contacted in order to advise their residents of the access restrictions.

Members requested that Witney schools are contacted to advise of anti-social behaviour in Tower Hill Cemetery and also the other areas of the town and to encourage their students to be more socially responsible.

Regarding Health & Safety events, members heard that the council had completed the Fire Extinguisher assessment. A swing had been identified as unsafe in a recent inspection; this was replaced.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, a letter is issued to Witney Schools regarding anti-social behaviour.

**209. Communication from the Leader**

There was nothing to report in respect of Communications from the Leader.

**210. Civil Parking Enforcement**

The Council received correspondence from Oxfordshire County Council regarding the transfer of on-street parking enforcement that took effect on 1 April 2023.

**Resolved**

That, the correspondence be noted.

**211. Civility & Respect - Ethical Standards Review - Standards in Public Life**

The Council received correspondence from the office of Robert Courts MP in response to his letter to Paul Scully MP concerning the Government response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

Members were disappointed to see the errors in the letter in respect to the Town Clerk's name and position.

**Resolved**

That, the correspondence be noted.

**212. Thames Valley Police - New Chief Constable**

The Council received correspondence from Thames Valley Police advising of the appointment of Jason Hogg as the new Chief Constable.

Members asked that a letter of congratulations is sent to him along with an invitation to attend a meeting of the full council. All members were in favour.

**Resolved**

1. That, the correspondence be noted.
2. That, a letter of congratulations is sent along with an invite to attend a meeting.

**213. Questions to the Leader of the Council**

There were no questions for the Leader.

**214. Sealing of Documents**

There were no documents sealed.

Councillor Harvey reflected on his 25 years as a Councillor following his decision not to stand in the upcoming elections. He thanked the support of officers and staff during this time.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Harvey and also Councillor Eaglestone, who had served of a 16 year term, along with all other councillors not standing in the elections. She also thanked all staff who guided the council through the COVID period to ensure the continued services for the town.

Councillor Gwatkin also received thanks for her support, leadership and dealing with official correspondence on behalf of the council.



Town Clerk