

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.

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) 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

1. Apologies for Absence

To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

Committee members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk **prior to the meeting**, stating the reason for absence.

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

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minutes (Pages 5 - 14)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13 February 2023 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 14 February and 28 March 2023, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein.
 - a) **Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee - 14 February, 7 March & 28 March 2023** (Pages 15 - 38)
 - b) **Parks & Recreation Committee - 6 March 2023** (Pages 39 - 42)
 - c) **Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - 13 March 2023** (Pages 43 - 46)
 - d) **Stronger Communities Committee - 20 March 2023** (Pages 47 - 52)
 - e) **Policy, Governance & Finance Committee - 27 March 2023** (Pages 53 - 60)
9. **Annual Town Meeting - 15 March 2023** (Pages 61 - 66)
To receive the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 15 March 2023.
10. **Financial Regulations Review** (Pages 67 - 88)
To adopt amended Financial Regulations as recommended by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee at its meeting held on 27 March 2023 (minute no. F158 refers).
11. **Working Party's** (Pages 89 - 90)
To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.
12. **Civic Announcements** (Pages 91 - 92)
To receive the report of the Mayor & Mayor's Secretary.
13. **To Agree a Mayor Elect (If Appropriate)**
Subject to Local Elections – to agree the Mayor Elect for the Municipal Year 2023/24.
14. **Community Speedwatch Scheme** (Pages 93 - 94)
To receive the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.
15. **Vandalism and Health & Safety** (Pages 95 - 96)
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) **Civil Parking Enforcement** (Pages 97 - 98)

To receive correspondence from Oxfordshire County Council concerning the transfer of on-street enforcement in West Oxfordshire (as previously individually circulated).

b) **Civility & Respect - Ethical Standards Review - Standards in Public Life** (Pages 99 - 100)

To receive correspondence forwarded on from Robert Courts MP in response to a further letter on this subject, sent by the Council regarding a new parliamentary early day motion (minute no. 92, Full Council 13 February 2023 refers).

c) **Thames Valley Police - New Chief Constable** (Pages 101 - 102)

To receive open correspondence from the new Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police.

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

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**MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 13 February 2023

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

Present:

Councillor L Duncan (Chair)

Councillors:	L Ashbourne O Collins H Eaglestone D Enright	V Gwatkin A D Harvey A Prosser P Hiles
Officers:	Adam Clapton Sharon Groth Derek Mackenzie Nigel Warner	Deputy Town Clerk Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Responsible Financial Officer
Others:	None.	

76 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Jones, R Smith, J Aitman, D Thomas and T Ashby.

77 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

78 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings held 5 December 2022 and 4 January 2023 were received.

Members raised two minor discrepancies in the minutes of the meeting of 5 December 2022.

Firstly, the silence for former Mayor Jim King were led by Councillor Owen Collins. This had been amended in the minutes prepared for signing.

Secondly, the two references to the "climate" event in Councillor Aitman's District Councillor update (minute 613) should have read "cost of living".

A Member noted the minutes did not refer to a discussion regarding the cost of the proposed County Council Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) packages. The Plan currently listed the costs at £73m but it was widely accepted these would be higher, possibly over £100m. These were formidable amounts of money alone, and it would be disappointing if these

proposals were implemented to the detriment of other infrastructure and service needs from developer funding, if no other financial contributions were available.

Resolved:

1. That, amendments are made to the minutes of 5 December 2022 be noted to correct the discrepancies and,
2. That, the minutes of the meetings held 5 December 2022 and 4 January 2023 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

79 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

80 **WITNEY COMMUNITY POLICING ISSUES**

A representative of the Witney Police Team was unable to attend the meeting and no written or verbal report was provided.

The Chair expressed her gratitude to the Witney Police Team for the work they do and understood the pressures they were under to be able to attend Council meetings.

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

Oxfordshire County Council

Councillor Enright provided an update advising that it was “Budget Week” at the District and County Councils. Efficiencies would need to be agreed which would not affect front line services, particularly in Adult and Social Care at the County.

Councillor Enright also reported the County Council were progressing with a number of schemes including the Shores Green improvements for which planning would be submitted in March 2023. The Eynsham Park & Ride development was also progressing, and changes would be more evident soon.

West Oxfordshire District Council

Councillor Prosser advised the District Council would be hosting a Climate & Biodiversity event on 8th March 2023.

Resolved:

That, the verbal updates from Councillors be noted.

82 **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.

83 **MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES**

The Council received minutes of Committees and Sub Committees.

84 **CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE - 6 DECEMBER 2022, 3 JANUARY AND 24 JANUARY 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 6 December 2022, 3 January and 24 January 2023 be received, and any recommendations therein approved.

85 **PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE - 9 JANUARY 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 9 January 2023 be received, and any recommendations therein approved.

86 **HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE - 16 JANUARY 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 16 January 2023 be received, and any recommendations therein approved.

87 **STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE - 23 JANUARY 2023**

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

SC43 - The Chair updated members that following correspondence received, to be discussed later in the meeting under Agenda Item 19, amendments had been made to the Council's plan of events for the coronation.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee meeting held on 23 January 2023 be received, and any recommendations therein approved.

88 **POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE - 30 JANUARY 2023**

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

F69 – The Deputy Town Clerk gave a verbal update in respect of the application received from Clean Slate. Additional Information had been received from the charity and circulated to members of the committee. Members deferred the decision to the next meeting.

Resolved:

1. That, the grant request from Clean Slate be deferred to the meeting of the Policy, Governance & Finance committee on 27 March 2023 and,
2. That, the minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 30 January 2023 be received, and any recommendations therein approved.

89 **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

The Mayor thanked all the Officers, Staff and Deputy Mayor for their support whilst carrying out her duties and particularly whilst she was out of action in the previous weeks.

Resolved:

That, the report be noted.

90 **STANDING ORDERS**

The Council received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

A Member queried the start time of meetings being 6pm for Committees and 7pm for the meeting of the Full Council. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed this has historically been the case to allow members to balance their attendance with work and home commitments.

A member requested the amendment of the use of the word 'he' in section 47e in order for it to be non-gender specific in line with the rest of the document.

Adoption of the amended Standing Orders was proposed by Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Harvey and unanimously approved by all members.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the amendment to 47e be made and,
3. That, these Standing Orders be adopted by Witney Town Council with immediate effect.

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

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

Witney Town Charity

The Council had a vacancy for a nominated trustee and unable to fill the position had sought suggestions from the Charity. Members welcomed the appointment of one of those proposed, providing they were able to commit to the role. The appointment was proposed by Councillor Enright, seconded by Councillor Harvey and approved unanimously.

A Member expressed thanks to the Witney Town Charity and the work they did to ensure that the Almshouses remained in a beautiful and well-presented manner.

Air Quality Action Plans (AQAP) Steering Group

The District Council was in the process of establishing this steering group and sought a representative from the Town Council.

Councillor Duncan was happy to attend this group and report back to the Council. There were no objections to her offer.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Council proposes the appointment of the suggested nominee to serve on Witney Town Charity on behalf of Witney Town Council and,
3. That, Councillor L Duncan represents Witney Town Council on the AQAP Steering Group.

92 **CIVILITY & RESPECT**

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

Members were disappointed that the local MP was not prepared to support Early Day Motions (EDMs) and agreed EDM 611 was vitally important as it sought to formalise civility and respect standards at parish and town council level, and discussed the action that they wish to take.

A member raised that Mr Courts' reasoning for not supporting EDMs was due to his holding a Ministerial position. As this is no longer the case it was felt the council should follow up earlier correspondence on this issue to ask if he could advise of the current position.

All members were in agreement to support the EDM.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Witney Town Council support the EDM 611 – Intimidation at community, parish and town councils and,
3. That, Witney Town Council write to MP Robert Courts to request his support in EDM 611.

93 **WITNEY MUSIC FESTIVAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

The Council received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk in respect of the partnership agreement between Witney Town Council and Witney Music Festival.

The adoption of the partnership agreement was proposed by Councillor Gwatkin and seconded by Councillor Collins.

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

In Favour	6
Against	0
Abstentions	3

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the partnership agreement with Witney Music Festival be adopted.

94 **DESIGNATION OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

Members noted the importance of the Responsible Financial Officer in statute and welcomed Mr Warner to the role.

Resolved:

That, Mr N Warner be officially designated as the Responsible Financial Officer of Witney Town Council.

95 **PROJECTS UPDATE**

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

Members were updated on a number of projects. Further discussion arose on some of the projects.

Platinum Jubilee Garden

Members were disappointed to hear that on the first night following its installation at Unterhaching Park the post to support the sundial was vandalised. The Operations Manager would be investigating alternative options for the installation..

Members were happy for the proposed planting to go ahead at Unterhaching Park as this would ensure the Sundial is complemented as planned when the installation can be completed.

Children's Memorial Garden

It was advised that the proposed archway would need to be made from a more robust material than first thought. Members agreed that this decision be delegated to the Officers and the Chair of the Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments (HCA) Committee.

Burwell Hall Boiler Replacement

Members discussed and agreed that a decision on a replacement should be deferred to the HCA Committee with the request that it is looked at one final time with all options considered. They stressed it was now important that a decision is reached.

The Leys Traffic Calming

Members received an update advising that an informal survey of the residents surrounding the Leys was in progress and results would be known soon. Members agreed to defer to the Parks & Recreation Committee to allow feedback to be provided to Oxfordshire County Council (OCC).

Resolved:

1. That, the report, and verbal report be noted and,
2. That, Officers, and the Chair of the HCA Committee decide on a suitable memorial archway for the Children's Memorial Garden and,
3. That, a decision for the Burwell Hall Boiler is reached by the HCA Committee and,
4. That, the Parks & Recreation Committee feedback to OCC regarding the Leys Traffic Calming responses.

96 **COUNCIL'S VEHICLE FLEET**

The Council received and considered the report of the Town Clerk/C.E.O.

Members discussed the Council's fleet of vehicles and the global issues impacting the delivery of electric vehicles. Members recognised the immediate need for vehicle replacements, however wished to retain the option of the UTV and therefore agreed to leave the order in place so the issue and how it relates to the Council's carbon neutrality objectives are considered.

Members discussed the importance that the Ranger and Works Team had suitable vehicles to perform their duties, particularly now the Council was responsible for all the grounds maintenance.

The proposal to purchase a vehicle for the Ranger was proposed by Councillor D Harvey and seconded by Councillor O Collins.

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

In Favour	8
Against	0
Abstentions	1

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, a vehicle is purchased for the Ranger and,
3. That, the decision to cancel the purchase of the UTV is deferred to the next meeting of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and,
4. That, the purchase of future vehicles is made via the procurement partnership.

97 **VANDALISM AND HEALTH & SAFETY**

The Council received a verbal report from the Deputy Town Clerk confirming the change in Health & Safety support partner.

Resolved:

That, the verbal report be noted.

98 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

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

99 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Council received the following correspondence.

100 **WITNEY HIGH STREET**

The council received correspondence from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) concerning the Witney High Street enhancement scheme.

Members were disappointed that OCC were yet to make arrangements to hold consultation sessions with residents.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised the OCC Project Lead had attended the meeting of Witney Traffic Advisory Committee on 10 January 2023 and advised stakeholder and public consultation would happen, likely after local elections in May and that there would be further engagement during the year. No further update had been received.

Members agreed that pressure should be maintained by sending correspondence to confirm that free use of the Corn Exchange is available to OCC to utilise for the public consultations.

Resolved:

1. That, the correspondence be noted and,
2. That, a reminder letter, offering the Corn Exchange for public consultation meetings, is issued to OCC.

101 **KING CHARLES III'S CORONATION**

The Council received correspondence from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities giving direction regarding community events for the Coronation period.

Resolved:

That, the correspondence be noted.

102 **A40 HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE - SMART CORRIDOR**

The Council received correspondence from the Department of Transport in relation to the removal of the Side Roads and Compulsory Purchase Orders.

Resolved:

That, the correspondence be noted.

103 **ROTARY CLUB OF WITNEY - FIREWALK**

The Council received correspondence from the Rotary Club of Witney requesting support for their Fire Walk Event on 24 March 2023.

Members discussed the request and agreed to support by way of a subsidised let of the Corn Exchange and warmly supporting them via the council social media channels and noticeboards.

Resolved:

1. That, the correspondence be noted.
2. That, subsidised use of the Corn Exchange is provided for the event,
3. That, the Council and Councillor support the publicising of the event.

104 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

A member asked that the watering cans at Windrush Cemetery are corrected. They currently have the spelling of "Cemetary" rather than "Cemetery"

105 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

There were no documents sealed.

The meeting closed at: 8.21 pm

Chair

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

Held on Tuesday, 14 February 2023

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor A Prosser (Chair)

Councillors:	T Ashby L Duncan	P Hiles
Officers:	Derek Mackenzie Claire Green	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
Others:	None.	

P106 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R Smith.

P107 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

P108 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

P109 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

P110 BRIZE NORTON AIRSPACE CHANGE PROPOSAL

The Committee received the correspondence from Brize Norton's Air Change Proposal Team (BZN ACP) regarding proposed changes to the airspace, part of which covered Witney.

Members discussed the Draft Design Principles and agreed to take up the offer from Brize Norton ACP Team to have a face-to-face meeting to fully understand the principle effects of the proposal and to ask questions.

The closing date for responses was 30 April 2023 so time allowed for a request to be made for BZN ACP to attend either the 7 or 28 March 2023 meeting of the committee.

Resolved:

1. That, the correspondence is noted and,
2. That, a representative of Brize Norton ACP be invited to attend either the 7 or 28 March 2023 meeting of the Committee.

The meeting closed at: 6.53 pm

Chair

consent being granted. The Town Council has little confidence in the capacity provided by the local water and sewerage company, and ask for reassurances that drainage and sewerage infrastructure for Witney as a whole will be able to absorb the increased capacity required from this proposed major development.

Members ask that as far as possible, the developer puts in place the pedestrian and cycle path connections in the earliest phase of development, rather than on its completion.

Finally, Members wanted to reiterate their disappointment in the loss of the Community Hub and ask that all options for this continue to be explored.

109- 4	WTC/023/23	Plot Ref :-23/00036/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :-	.	Date Received :-	23/01/2023
	Location :-	24 MARKET SQUARE MARKET SQUARE	Date Returned :-	15/02/2023
	Proposal :	Installation of one new CCTV camera.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

109- 5	WTC/024/23	Plot Ref :-23/00037/LBC	Type :-	LISTED BUI
	Applicant Name :-	.	Date Received :-	23/01/2023
	Location :-	24 MARKET SQUARE MARKET SQUARE	Date Returned :-	15/02/2023
	Proposal :	External alterations to install one new CCTV camera.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

109- 6	WTC/025/23	Plot Ref :-23/00090/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-	.	Date Received :-	01/02/2023
	Location :-	3 HORNE LANE HORNE LANE	Date Returned :-	15/02/2023
	Proposal :	Conversion of part of existing garage to create a home office.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		

109- 7	WTC/026/23	Plot Ref :-23/00102/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-	.	Date Received :-	01/02/2023
	Location :-	61 NEWLAND MILL NEWLAND MILL	Date Returned :-	15/02/2023
	Proposal :	Alterations to include erection of two storey and first floor front and first floor rear extensions.		
	Observations :	While Witney Town Council does not object to this application in terms of material concerns, it notes the loss of permeable drainage and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding in this area, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.		

109- 8 WTC/027/23 Plot Ref :-22/02599/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 01/02/2023
Location :- UNIT 2 CRANBROOK COURT Date Returned :- 15/02/2023
AVENUE TWO

Proposal : Change of use to hot food takeaway (retrospective) Subdivision of retail unit to create two separate retail units and associated works to include installation of mezzanine floor and insertion of roof lights to unit 2, along with the erection of fencing and addition new external doors.

Observations : Witney Town Council acknowledge the extra information submitted by the applicant, but note the comments from Environmental Services. The Council is not able to make further comment on this proposal while ERS do not have sufficient information to assess the proposal and it's potential impacts.

109- 9 WTC/028/23 Plot Ref :-23/00024/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 01/02/2023
Location :- 79A HIGH STREET Date Returned :- 15/02/2023
HIGH STREET

Proposal : Internal and external alterations to demolish rear outbuilding and the erection of a dwelling.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

109- 10 WTC/029/23 Plot Ref :-22/03151/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 01/02/2023
Location :- 79A HIGH STREET Date Returned :- 15/02/2023
HIGH STREET

Proposal : Demolition of rear outbuilding. Erection of a dwelling.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

109- 11 WTC/030/23 Plot Ref :-23/00176/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 07/02/2023
Location :- ABBOTT DIABETES CARE Date Returned :- 15/02/2023
RANGE ROAD
WINDRUSH INDUSTRIAL PARK

Proposal : Erection of combined heat and power unit (CHP) and ancillary infrastructure.

Observations : Witney Town Council welcome this proposal from Abbott Diabetes and support this application.

The Meeting closed at : 7:02pm

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, 7 March 2023

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser T Ashby J Aitman	L Duncan V Gwatkin
Officers:	Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie Claire Green	Deputy Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
Others:	no members of the public.	

P122 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P Hiles.

P123 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in application 23/00103/LBC by virtue of knowing the applicant.

Councillor T Ashby declared that he had made an objection comment in respect of application 23/00286/FUL as a Member of the public rather than as a Councillor.

P124 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

P125 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

P126 WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 10 January 2023.

The Deputy Town Clerk gave an update on minute item T14 to advise that information had been gathered from Thames Valley Police by officers in respect of the potential commencement of a Speedwatch scheme to support the lower speed limits across the town. He encouraged members to provide any comments on such a scheme for inclusion in his report to be presented at the next meeting of the Traffic Advisory Committee on 21 March 2023.

Resolved:

1. That, the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held 10 January 2023 be noted
2. That, the verbal update of the Deputy Town Clerk be noted.

6:48pm - Councillor T Ashby left the meeting following Planning Application 23/00029/FUL.

P127 WITNEY AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN STEERING GROUP

The committee received a verbal report from Councillor L Duncan in respect of her attendance at the meeting of the District Council's Witney Air Quality Action Plan Steering Group.

She attended along with Councillor A Prosser, the meeting was well attended and covered various subjects such as pilot schemes for car sharing, modelling for the removal of HGV's from Bridge Street. The meeting was used for factfinding from the many organisations represented and was evident that there is a significant amount of cross over between the work that these organisations carry out.

Resolved :

That, the verbal report be noted.

P128 FLOOD MITIGATION & RIPARIAN OWNERSHIP

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the County Council's preferred process in dealing with waterway blockages which are the responsibility of riparian owners.

There was concern from Members that if the town council became involved with this process, there was intimated liability on an issue in which it had no remit or statutory duty. The Local Flood Authority (LFA), Oxfordshire County Council was responsible for ensuring these issues were concluded satisfactorily and blockages were removed before flooding occurred. There was, however, recognition the town council was in a position to help concerned residents by reporting any blockages to the LFA directly if informed and chase up actions to resolve them. There were suggestions on how best to advertise this process and gather riparian landowner details from a local action group.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,

2. That, Witney Town Council supports local residents with waterway blockage concerns by forwarding the matter to Oxfordshire County Council (as the LFA) with riparian owner details if available.

P129 **NOTICE OF DEFINITIVE MAP NOTICE OF LANDOWNER DEPOSIT**

The Committee received and considered the correspondence received from West Oxfordshire District Council in respect of a resolution made by the committee on this matter at the meeting held on 24th January 2023, minutes no.P54 refers.

Members discussed their concerns following the application made by The Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance. These included the potential limiting of access to the land, the maintenance of the fence bordering the site and the impact on the work of the Wychwood Forest Trust.

Resolved:

1. That, the correspondence be noted and,
2. That, officers request the thoughts of Wychwood Forest Trust prior to writing to The Diocesan to advise of the committees concerns and request an explanation as to the reason for the submission of the application.

The meeting closed at: 7.20 pm

Chair

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Proposal : Internal alterations to include the installation of underfloor heating together with the replacement of kitchen and dining room floor tiles.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

125- 4 WTC/034/23 Plot Ref :-23/00140/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 14/02/2023
Location :- 58 HERON DRIVE Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
HERON DRIVE
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. Whilst the development is small, Members expressed concern that surface water is to discharge to existing drainage, with the possibility of this causing increased flood risk elsewhere. Members ask that a SUDS strategy and 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.

125- 5 WTC/035/23 Plot Ref :-23/00275/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 14/02/2023
Location :- 19 TOWER HILL Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
TOWER HILL
Proposal : Single storey rear and side 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.

125- 6 WTC/036/23 Plot Ref :-23/00041/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 14/02/2023
Location :- 18 PAINSWICK CLOSE Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
PAINSWICK CLOSE
Proposal : Conversion of garage into a kitchen including adding a window to the rear of the house.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

125- 7 WTC/037/23 Plot Ref :-23/00198/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 27/02/2023
Location :- 52 BURFORD ROAD Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
BURFORD ROAD
Proposal : Proposed two storey rear extension, alterations to existing windows and doors, rendering of existing house, detached garage addition and enlargement of driveway.
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.

125- 8 WTC/038/23 Plot Ref :-23/00246/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 27/02/2023
Location :- 238 COLWELL DRIVE Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
COLWELL DRIVE
Proposal : Demolition of garage. Erection of single storey rear and side extensions.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

125- 9 WTC/039/23 Plot Ref :-23/00286/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 27/02/2023
Location :- 90 RALEGH CRESCENT Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
RALEGH CRESCENT
Proposal : Retrospective planning application for the flexible use of part of the dwelling as a gym/personal training space and residential accommodation in association with the main dwelling.
Observations : Witney Town Council object to this application. The scale of the operation is inappropriate in this residential area. The associated issues of noise disturbance, light disturbance, excessive vehicle movements and parking are detrimental to residents of neighbouring properties. Policy OS2 requires that development should be compatible with adjoining uses and not have a harmful impact on the amenity of existing occupants. Further, Policy OS4 requires that development not harm the use or enjoyment of land and buildings nearby including living conditions in residential properties.

125- 10 WTC/040/23 Plot Ref :-23/00237/S73 Type :- VARIATION
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 27/02/2023
Location :- 8 MARKET SQUARE Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
MARKET SQUARE
Proposal : Variation of condition 3 of permission 22/02411/FUL in order to extend the opening hours restrictions.
Observations : Witney Town Council object to this application for variation of Condition 3 of permission 22/02411/FUL to extend the opening hours. Whilst the consultee comments from ERS are creative they don't alleviate noise and disturbance issues for nearby residential properties. Members are concerned that it is too soon since the premises first opened for the impacts to have been measured, and that the development become better established before extended opening hours be given consideration.

125- 11 WTC/041/23 Plot Ref :-22/03516/HHD Type :- AMENDED
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 27/02/2023
Location :- PRIORY HOUSE Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
CHURCH LANE
Proposal : Secondary glazing to all windows and replacement of 4 windows on north-eastern elevation (amended plans and amended description).
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

125- 12 WTC/042/23 Plot Ref :-22/03517/LBC Type :- AMENDED
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 27/02/2023
Location :- PRIORY HOUSE Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
CHURCH LANE
Proposal : Secondary glazing to all windows and replacement of 4 windows on north-eastern elevation (amended plans and amended description).
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

125- 13 WTC/043/23 Plot Ref :-23/00029/FUL Type :- AMENDED
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 27/02/2023
Location :- THE ANNEXE, 124 CORN STREET Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
CORN STREET
Proposal : Change of use from an existing self-contained annexe to a separate dwelling with associated works.
Observations : Witney Town Council withdraw the earlier objection comments for this application 23/00029/FUL. Members thank the applicant for the additional information provided by the Planning Statement - Members have no objection to a separate dwelling with associated works. In order to provide for reasonable private outdoor space Members prefer that a separate garden area be marked out for 'The Annexe'.

125- 14 WTC/044/23 Plot Ref :-23/00307/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 27/02/2023
Location :- 38 WINFIELD DRIVE Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
WINFIELD DRIVE
Proposal : Erection of a 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.

125- 15 WTC/045/23 Plot Ref :-23/00064/ADV Type :- ADVERTISIN
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 28/02/2023
Location :- 3 BRIDGE STREET Date Returned :- 08/03/2023
BRIDGE STREET
Proposal : Erection of an externally lit hanging sign.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

The Meeting closed at : 7:15pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

Held on Tuesday, 28 March 2023

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

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser	V Gwatkin
	J Aitman	P Hiles
	L Duncan	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
	Claire Green	Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
	Carl Whitehead	Park Ranger
Others:	1 member of the public.	

P173 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Ashby & J Aitman.

P174 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

P175 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned for this item.

The committee received representations from a resident of Manor Road in respect of application 23/00689/HHD to be discussed at part of Agenda Item 5.

At the discretion of the Chair planning application 23/00689/HHD was moved up the agenda and discussed after which the member of the public left the meeting.

The Committee reconvened.

P176 MINUTES

The minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee meetings held on 24 January, 14 February and 7 March were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee meetings held on 24 January, 14 February and 7 March be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

P177 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

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

In addition, the Committee also discussed planning application 23/00179/FUL for an Anaerobic Digestion Facility in the neighbouring South Leigh parish.

The Committee objected to the application on grounds of transport, road safety and community benefit.

Resolved:

That, the comments, as per the attached schedule and for 23/00179/FUL, be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council.

P178 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning decisions received from West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)

Resolved:

That, the list circulated advising of WODC planning decisions be noted.

P179 **WODC - PLANNING VALIDATION CHECKLIST**

The Committee received copies of the new Biodiversity checklist implemented by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)

Resolved:

That, that the new Biodiversity checklist be noted.

P180 **NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING APPEAL - 118C QUARRY ROAD**

The Committee received notice of planning appeal APP/D3125/W/22/3309162 – 118C Quarry Road, Witney.

Resolved:

That, the planning appeal decision be noted.

P181 **NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING APPEAL - LAND SOUTHWEST OF DOWNS ROAD, CURBRIDGE BUSINESS PARK, WITNEY**

The Committee received notice of planning appeal APP/D3125/W/22/3307358 – Land Southwest of Downs Road, Curbridge Business Park, Witney.

Resolved:

That, the planning appeal decision be noted.

P182 **APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE - 355C THORNEY LEYS, WITNEY**

The Committee received the application from Barry's Food Store, 355C Thorney Leys, Witney for a new premises licence.

Resolved:

That, the Council makes no objection to this application.

P183 **APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE - 91 CORN STREET, WITNEY**

The Committee received the application from Green Mobility Limited, 91 Corn Street, Witney for a new premises licence.

Resolved:

That, the Council makes no objection to this application.

P184 **ADDRESS MANAGEMENT - ROAD AT GLENMORE BUSINESS CENTRE, WITNEY**

The Committee received correspondence from West Oxfordshire District Council's address management team.

Members confirmed there were no objections to the proposed name of "Norreys Avenue".

Resolved:

That, the correspondence be noted.

P185 **MANAGEMENT OF WATERCOURSE - SNIPE MEADOW**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Biodiversity Officer.

Members discussed the current impact of the River Windrush and Colwell Brook overtopping their banks during flood events and how this might be prevented to maintain good water quality at Witney Lake. There was the possibility of working with the Environmental Agency (EA) to help alleviate the problem with improved bank maintenance and potential bunds, but this bore significant costs and EA approval was not guaranteed.

Further discussion took place on the wider issue of managing the watercourse over the Council's meadows, neighbouring sites and on contributing to a District Council proposal on how to gain more local autonomy over bank maintenance, with agreement this would be beneficial.

The Committee agreed to the recommendations contained in the report and asked that the Biodiversity Officer prioritised the watercourse stretches requiring the most urgent attention and makes an enquiry to the Environment Agency to ascertain the level of response. Further stretches could then be included in the facility's land management plan and budgeted for accordingly.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, any tree works are to be carried out by the Ranger, the works team and if needed, the Council's preferred tree contractor Town & Country Trees and,
3. That no bank work is to be carried out without exploring the full costs beforehand and,
4. That, the Council reinstates and strengthen the pathway around the lake using binding ballast and,
5. That, the water in the lake be tested to clarify its status and,
6. That, the Biodiversity Officer prioritises the stretches of watercourse banks and enquires to the Environment Agency about the most urgent and,
7. That, the Biodiversity Officer contacts West Oxfordshire District Council regarding the issues of bank works along the watercourse and the difficulty in resolving them.

P186 **OPEN SPACES STRATEGY**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Biodiversity Officer.

Members heard that progress was underway on the action points relating to the Lake, Country Park, and Open Spaces in the Council's adopted Open Spaces Strategy. There was little more that could be done by officers at this point, however the current work would be expanded on, mostly with the help of volunteers in the coming months.

The Committee welcomed the feedback and were pleased to hear the number of volunteers was growing.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Council has a Tree policy which outlines its strategy going forward.
3. That, the Council has a significant resource, and it needs to be made use of and maintained to facilitate use by as wide a range of users as possible.
4. That, the Lake & Country Park should be promoted as a "health and wellbeing" resource.
5. That, the value of volunteers is enormous in both the output of their work and also more importantly the social interactions and wellbeing created in a like-minded, well-motivated and confidently led team.

P187 **TREESCAPE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Biodiversity Officer.

Members were presented with a report which was presented to the Council in 2022 which highlighted the Council's current tree and hedging stock and proposals on how these could be increased over the coming years. The report was comprehensive, and officers were able to utilise many aspects in long term management plans and projects, but there were also some aspects which simply would not be possible due to designated land use.

The Committee agreed that officers should explore projects on a case-by-case basis as and when time allowed to bring the proposals, such as a community orchard to fruition. With the right support and resources, the Council could maximise its potential to increase the natural capital of green spaces.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted and
2. That each area needed to be looked at on a "case by case" basis.

P188 SWIFT BRICKS

The Committee received the correspondence from the principal planning policy officer at West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) regarding the consideration of Swift Bricks.

A member also updated that since the correspondence was received on 10 February, discussions have progressed at WODC and that it is an expectation that the use of Swift Bricks will be included in the Local Plan.

Resolved:

That, the correspondence is noted.

P189 WODC - ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CAR CLUB SCHEME AT WOODFORD WAY

The Committee were pleased to hear that an opportunity for residents to experience the use of Electric Vehicles (EV) would be possible under this scheme.

A Member had already heard of the news and reported to the committee that the scheme was not yet live on the Enterprise website but looking at other similar schemes in the area it looked very promising. Members were keen to encourage use as there was no known car share scheme in the witney area.

Resolved:

1. That, the council would actively promote the scheme and,
2. That, the council does not have any feedback for WODC regarding the scheme currently.

The meeting closed at: 8.00 pm

Chair

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Witney Town Council

Planning Minutes - 28th March 2023

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177- 1 WTC/046/23 Plot Ref :-23/00330/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 06/03/23
Location :- 35 - 37 WOODGREEN Date Returned :- 29/03/23
WOODGREEN
Proposal : Replacement of single glazed wooden rear window.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

177- 2 WTC/047/23 Plot Ref :-23/00344/FUL Type :- FULL
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 06/03/23
Location :- 70 HIGH STREET Date Returned :- 29/03/23
HIGH STREET
Proposal : Replacement of two first floor windows in front elevation.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

177- 3 WTC/048/23 Plot Ref :-23/00290/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 06/03/23
Location :- 71 BURFORD ROAD Date Returned :- 29/03/23
BURFORD ROAD
Proposal : Erection of garden office.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

177- 4 WTC/049/23 Plot Ref :-23/00340/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 06/03/23
Location :- 34 TOWNSEND ROAD Date Returned :- 29/03/23
TOWNSEND ROAD
Proposal : Conversion of existing integral garage into a second reception room.
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this proposed development, Members expressed concern for limited cycle storage following the loss of garage space. Members ask that efforts are made by the applicant to provide cycle storage adequate for a family home.

177- 5 WTC/050/23 Plot Ref :-23/00280/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 06/03/23
Location :- 107 BURFORD ROAD Date Returned :- 29/03/23
BURFORD ROAD
Proposal : Erection of a two storey side and replacement single storey rear extension with roof mounted solar panels. Construction of a linked garage to replace existing carport.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

177- 6 WTC/051/23 Plot Ref :-23/00360/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE

Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 06/03/23

Location :- 104 BARRINGTON CLOSE Date Returned :- 29/03/23
BARRINGTON CLOSE

Proposal : Remove existing conservatory, proposed two storey pitched roof 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.

177- 7 WTC/052/23 Plot Ref :-23/00451/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE

Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 06/03/23

Location :- 180 FARMERS CLOSE Date Returned :- 29/03/23
FARMERS CLOSE

Proposal : Proposed first floor extension and two storey side extension. Internal layout modifications.

Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, members ask that the proposed development does not have detrimental impact on the amenity of the neighbouring property.

177- 8 WTC/053/23 Plot Ref :-23/00471/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE

Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 20/03/23

Location :- 7 SPRING MEADOW Date Returned :- 29/03/23
SPRING MEADOW
WITNEY

Proposal : Single storey rear extension.

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

177- 9 WTC/054/23 Plot Ref :-23/00469/FUL Type :- FULL

Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 20/03/23

Location :- ABBOTT DIABETES CARE Date Returned :- 29/03/23
RANGE ROAD
WITNEY

Proposal : Demolition of existing single storey element and erection of extensions to two existing buildings together with associated infrastructure.

Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to this application, Members discussed the proposed mitigations to protect and enhance biodiversity at the site as outlined in the documents accompanying the application. Members ask that the West Oxfordshire District Council Biodiversity Officer makes careful assessment of this to ensure that adequate protection is given for existing habitats and that proportionate opportunities are sought for biodiversity enhancement at the site. In accordance with Policy EH3 of the Local Plan.

177- 10 WTC/055/23 Plot Ref :-23/00610/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 20/03/23
Location :- 74 WEST END Date Returned :- 29/03/23
WEST END
WITNEY
Proposal : Refurbishment works to include the installation of three roof lights in existing rear roof slope.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

177- 11 WTC/056/23 Plot Ref :-23/00611/LBC Type :- LISTED BUI
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 20/03/23
Location :- 74 WEST END Date Returned :- 29/03/23
WEST END
WITNEY
Proposal : Internal and external alterations to refurbish the existing house, including the installation of three roof lights in existing rear roof slope, removal of existing chimney from single storey rear extension together with internal changes to reinstate open fireplace.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

177- 12 WTC/057/23 Plot Ref :-23/00634/S73 Type :- VARIATION
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 20/03/23
Location :- 1 ST MARYS COURT Date Returned :- 29/03/23
ST MARYS COURT
WITNEY
Proposal : Variation of condition 2 of permission 21/02628/FUL to allow amendments to the balconies and their roofs and to raise the floor level by 300mm from existing building.
Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.

177- 13 WTC/058/23 Plot Ref :-23/00689/HHD Type :- HOUSEHOLDE
Applicant Name :- . Date Received :- 21/03/23
Location :- 111 MANOR ROAD Date Returned :- 29/03/23
MANOR ROAD
Proposal : Two storey side and single storey rear extension with associated alterations.
Observations : While Witney Town Council does not object to the proposed extension, Councillors expressed concerns about the proposed new parking space at the rear of the property. The new parking space and associated dropped kerb would impact negatively on the street scene, and the proposed additional driveway space would remove on-street parking in this location for other users. Further, Members discussed the potential removal of the stone wall to create the additional parking space, it is the opinion of this committee that the stone wall forms part of the character of the estate and it is unusual for the boundary walls to be removed or replaced with alternative boundary treatments.
Members ask that any proposals for a driveway at the rear of property 111 Manor Road, take account of the current driveway and access required for 113 Manor Road.

The Meeting closed at : 8:00pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

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

Held on Monday, 6 March 2023

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

Present:

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

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

PR111 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr L Ashbourne who was substituted by Cllr O Collins.

Councillor D Enright had advised he would arrive late for the meeting.

PR112 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

PR113 MINUTES

The minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 9 January 2023 were received.

PR20 Smoke Free Parks. The Deputy Town Clerk advised officers would be launching an online competition for children to design smoke free signs for the parks. The winner would be chosen by the Mayor & Chair of this Committee.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 9 January 2023 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

PR114 **PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC**

There was no public participation.

18:03 - Councillor D Enright arrived.

PR115 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

The Town Clerk advised that the last paragraph of Page 2 of the report should have read “*for a number of these **underspends***” rather than “*overspends*”.

The Town Clerk also provided the members with an explanation regarding the difference in the table showing year to date figures and those of projected estimates.

Resolved:

That, the report and verbal update be noted.

PR116 **THE LEYS TRAFFIC CALMING**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Project Officer.

Members discussed the additional informal survey responses received from residents of the surrounding area at The Leys on an Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) designed traffic calming scheme, as requested by the town council in 2018.

Further information was required following an OCC consultation in 2022 if the town council still thought the scheme was warranted. Members felt the responses pointed more to the calming being installed for road safety, rather than the reduction of Anti-Social Behaviour, although this was still noted as an issue.

Members asked if the scheme could be redesigned to incorporate safety measures around the crossing point between the church path and the tree lined avenue across the Leys.

Members voted, the proposal to support the scheme was carried, with voting as follows:

In Favour	6
Against	0
Abstentions	1

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, a response is sent to Oxfordshire County Council advising support of the scheme with a request to re-evaluate the crossing from the Church to the Recreation Ground.

PR117 **WEST WITNEY CRICKET BOUNDARY ADVERTISING**

The Committee received the report of the Operations Manager.

Members were in support of the recommendations to purchase boundary rope and a winder and to allow Witney Swifts CC to install boundary wedges at West Witney Sports Ground. The Committee however asked that the Cricket team carries out a safety risk assessment to assess trips and falls.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the request to install boundary wedges by Witney Swifts CC be granted and the purchase of a boundary rope/winder is made by the Town Council and,
3. That, Witney Swift Cricket Club are asked to carry out a risk assessment for match days.

PR118 WEST WITNEY BOWLS GREEN IRRIGATION SYSTEM

The Committee received the report of the Operations Manager.

Members were in favour of the Town Council taking over the commissioning, decommissioning, and servicing of West Witney bowls green irrigation system.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That Witney Town Council take over the responsibility of the irrigation system at West Witney Bowls Green.

PR119 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That in accordance with section (1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission 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.

PR120 PROPERTY & LEGAL MATTERS

The Committee received the confidential report and verbal update of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding an application for modification to the Definitive Map and Statements under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (DMO).

Members were advised that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) was investigating the application and had opened a consultation.

Members discussed the application which the Council had already objected to and agreed that it should encourage that a path is made, as part of the proposed Moors housing development to allow public access between Witney Road and the country park, this removing the possibility of trespassing via the lakeside allotment access road.

Resolved:

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,

2. That, a further comment is submitted to OCC via the consultation to request a path is requested as part of the planning application for The Moor development.

PR121 **MAJOR/STRATEGIC PROJECTS UPDATE**

The Committee received the confidential verbal report of the Town Clerk/C.E.O to update them on a number of projects.

Members heard an update on the Leys Masterplan, Burwell changing room refurbishment and the West Witney Sports Club project. They also heard that negotiations where in progress with respect to the lease for Witney Lawn Tennis club and that other lease arrangements would be reviewed.

The Town Clerk also advised that she was waiting to hear from West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) in respect of the various outstanding Play Area transfers and repairs.

The council had been advised that following a recent court ruling, VAT no longer applied to sports pitch bookings so the councils Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) would report further on this to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee on 27 March 2023.

Resolved:

That, the confidential verbal report be noted.

The meeting closed at: 6.22 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 13 March 2023

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

Present:

Councillor M Jones (Chair)

Councillors:	D Enright T Ashby D Butterfield	O Collins L Duncan V Gwatkin
Officers:	Adam Clapton Sharon Groth Derek Mackenzie	Deputy Town Clerk Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	None.	

H130 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P Hiles.

H131 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

H132 MINUTES

The minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 16 January 2023 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 16 January 2023 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

H133 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

H134 FINANCE REPORT

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

In addition to noting the quarterly figures and the Committees healthy financial situation, Members discussed the purchase of two repurposed post boxes for use in Tower Hill and Windrush Cemeteries as part of the “Letters to Heaven” scheme. This allowed individuals to post a letter to departed loved ones. The boxes, at a cost of approx. £200 each, would be installed and managed by the councils works team and the contents composted.

The proposal was carried, with the voting as follows:

In favour	6
Against	0
Abstention	1

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, that Letters to Heaven post boxes be installed in Windrush and Tower Hill Cemetery.

H135 **PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

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

The report concerned hall usage numbers, the newly installed screen and projector at the Corn Exchange, an update on the 1863 café and the success of the Anniversary Open Day.

Members discussed the introduction of a loyalty drink scheme which they were supportive of and the café furniture following a request for some items to be replaced. They asked that any replacement items did not reduce the capacity of the café and that any furniture replaced was offered to the community.

The committee discussed the proposed Film Club and were supportive of this providing the club was free to join but asked that officers investigate all costs to ensure this works in practice.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, a loyalty drinks scheme be established in line with Council financial regulations and,
3. That, replacement furniture be purchased where required and,
4. That, items of furniture no longer needed be offered to the community and,
5. That, a film club be established with free membership following further investigation by officers on charges and costs.

H136 **CORN EXCHANGE - SEATING SPONSORSHIP**

The Committee received the report of the Project Officer.

Members discussed the proposed scheme and believed it would be well received by supporters of the Corn Exchange. They agreed in principle to a cost of £150 for a five-year term and an Aluminium plaque to be fixed to the underside of the seat with screws was appropriate, though this should be a higher figure for corporate purchases.

The Committee would also like for sponsors to be given the ability to book seat in advance perhaps as part of the proposed "Friends of Witney Corn Exchange" scheme.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Officers draw up details of the scheme to present to a future meeting of the committee for consideration.

H137 **BURWELL HALL BOILER**

The Committee received the report of the Project Officer.

Members discussed the new information provided on this project, however, were still concerned about lack of evidence of the Fuel Cell Technology being effective for Burwell Hall. The cost of the initial implementation was no longer an issue as the difference had reduced. The was whether the boiler had sufficient output to cope with the demands of the hall and its users.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the purchase of the Fuel Cell boiler would go some way to helping the council achieve its commitment of carbon neutrality by 2028, more so than a replacement gas boiler upgrade.

Members were supportive of procuring the fuel cell boiler in principle but asked that officers investigate and provide details on whether the council could be used as a case study or if a guarantee of output could be obtained from the Fuel Cell provider to ensure it covered the building's needs

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, officers further investigate the option of being case study or obtaining a guarantee of output for the Micro Fuel Cell Boiler and,
3. That, officers provide an update to the next meeting of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee on 27th March 2023 for a final decision.

H138 **CEMETERY REGULATIONS**

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

Members heard that since the change in Cemetery Regulations agreed by this Committee in October 2022, an issue regarding one of the changes had arisen in respect of pre-sold funeral plans by one or more of the local funeral directors.

Officers would be meeting with the funeral director soon and would discuss a resolution for future burials were the issue arises.

Members agreed to the burial of one set of ashes in Windrush Cemetery outside of the current rules & regulations whilst officers continue to explore further options and alternatives.

Resolved:

1. That, the verbal report be noted and,

2. That, a burial of ashes be allowed at Windrush Cemetery outside of regulations and,
3. That, Officers further investigate this issue and report back to the next meeting of this committee on 5 June.

H139 TOWER HILL CEMETERY - PEDESTRIAN GATE

The Committee received the report of the Operations Manager.

Members were disappointed to hear of anti-social behavioural problems in the Tower Hill cemetery which appeared to have been brought about by the installation of the gate. They discussed the implementations of locking the gate in the evenings, thus restricting access to the cemetery however it was agreed that these changes were not appropriate.

The Committee was happy for a sign to be installed to advise that the gate would be locked during funeral services, they also asked that the Operations Manager investigate if a 'soft close' spring could be considered to ensure the gate closes over after use.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, a sign be erected on the pedestrian gate to advise of closure when funerals are in progress.

H140 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

That in accordance with section (1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission 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.

H141 PROPERTY & LEGAL MATTERS

The Committee received a confidential verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the Lakeside Allotment Access Road and action which needed to be implemented by the town council in this area.

Resolved:

That, the confidential verbal update be noted.

The meeting closed at: 7.05 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 20 March 2023

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

Present:

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman L Ashbourne L Duncan H Eaglestone	V Gwatkin A Prosser R Smith
Officers:	Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie	Deputy Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	None.	

SC142 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

SC143 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

SC144 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Stronger Communities committee held on 23 January 2023 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Stronger Communities committee held 23 January 2023 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

SC145 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

SC146 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the financial report of the Responsible Financial Officer showing figures for aspects under its remit during the last Quarter. The report also covered a recommendation to engage professional cleaning for the war memorial.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, professional cleaning of the War Memorial is carried out periodically at the estimated cost of £3,000.

SC147 **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications and Community Engagement Officer (CCEO).

Members were disappointed to hear the annual newsletter distribution had been delayed and sporadic. The supplier had apologised for the poor service which resulted in some residents not being made aware of the Annual Town Meeting on 15 March.

Next, members discussed the proposal to change the Council's website provider and reviewed the options presented, then chose a preferred style for the CCEO to progress.

The Committee discussed the vandalism to the noticeboard at The Leys and agreed a replacement should be installed on the Coffee Shed, subject to their approval. The Town Clerk responded to a Member's question as to why the noticeboard was removed from outside the Woolgate Shopping Centre, she advised it had become disorganised and unkempt and was under the remit of West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC).

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the noticeboard at The Leys be replaced and installed on the wall of the Coffee Shed providing they agree and,
3. That, the CCEO explores the chosen Website style with the provider as presented and,
4. That, the Council writes to WODC with a request to reinstall the noticeboard outside the Woolgate shopping centre for the use of residents and community groups.

SC148 **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications and Community Engagement Officer (CCEO).

Members discussed and provided ideas to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the NHS in July 2023. A member suggested that he had contact details for a poet who was also a NHS employee and would investigate if they were able to be involved. Members also suggested that the council could offer a free drink at the Corn Exchange for holders of the Bluelight card on the 5 July.

There were also plans for St Mary's Church to hold a drinks reception to mark the 75th anniversary and the Committee was happy to support this in principle while further discussions took place.

Members were keen to support a litter pick event and a member advised that the Witney Land Army was looking to reform; this could give them an event to recommence with, they asked that the CCEO investigate in order to arrange this for the day of the "Big Help Out" as part of the coronation events, rather than the Great British Spring Clean week 2023.

Regarding the Witney Carnival. Members felt a presence from the Council would be beneficial and thought that the idea of again presenting the school in bloom wheelbarrows would be well received. They also discussed the idea of having a “Mini Mayor” competition and delegated to the CCEO to investigate this further.

The Committee noted a wildflower planting project with the Rotary Club of Witney at Tower Hill Cemetery, a smoke-free sign competition and notes from the most recent Witney Forum meeting.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Council agrees in principle to support St Mary’s Church mark the 75th anniversary of the NHS and exploring other Council events and,
3. That, the CCEO investigate a collaboration with Witney Land Army to promote a litter pick as part of the coronation “Big Help out” day and,
4. That, the wheelbarrows for the Schools In Bloom project be judged at Witney Carnival and,
5. That, the CCEO investigate the potential of hosting a “Mini Mayor” competition at Witney Carnival and,
6. That, the work of Witney Rotary in Tower Hill is noted and,
7. That, the minutes of the Witney forum meeting held 2 February 2023 be noted.

SC149 **PROJECTS UPDATE**

The Committee received the report of the Project Officer.

Members were pleased to hear the installation of the Covid-19 memorial was due to take place in early April, they agreed that an additional £750 be made available towards the completion of the project. Members were happy with the carving of the stone and for a small sign to be erected.

They then discussed the QE II sundial at Unterhaching Park and agreed that the council should not give up with the installation due to the act of vandalism which had delayed the project. All members agreed delegation to the Operations Manager to find the best solution and an additional £500 was agreed should this be needed.

All members were in favour of contractor two being used for the exterior signage of the Reception/Administration Office.

Members were sad to hear that no entries for the Smoke Free Playground competition had been received, they asked that officers promote again to the schools and on social media.

Lastly, members discussed the tribute to the Windrush Generation and agreed a budget of £500 towards the project. They also asked that the potential of a play or similar event could be hosted in the Corn Exchange to commemorate the 75th anniversary in June 2023 and that information is added to the council website to explain the connection to the River Windrush and the naming of the HMT Empire Windrush boat.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,

2. That, the carving of the stone and small sign be installed along with an additional £750 added to the Covid-19 memorial budget and,
3. That, the installation of the QEII sundial goes ahead as planned in Unterhaching Park along with an additional £500 budget if required and,
4. That, contractor two is used to carry out the reception office signage and,
5. That, the Council proceeds with the Windrush Generation project as outlined in the report with a budget of £500 and,
6. That, officers investigate the idea of a performance in the Corn Exchange to commentate the 75th Anniversary of National Windrush Day and,
7. That, information be added to the council website explaining the relationship between the River Windrush and the Windrush Generation.

SC150 **MADLEY PARK BUS SHELTER**

The Committee received the report and verbal update of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the current condition of the bus shelters on Woodstock Road and their immediate surroundings.

The bus shelters could not be re-sited as it would undermine their structural integrity, but maintenance of the verge and hedges could take place when the regular bus shelter maintenance occurred.

Resolved:

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, additional maintenance of 1-2 metres (including verge and hedges) around the shelter be carried out.

SC151 **WITNEY IN BLOOM**

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

Members considered the sites suggested for entry to the Thames & Chiltern In Bloom competition for 2023 and agreed on the Country Park. The Mayor spoke about how many of the organisations at the award ceremony that she attended were from small groups and that this perhaps would be an idea for the 2024 entry when more time allowed to get smaller groups involved. Members also agreed to a request for a compost bin to be installed on Council land by the Edible Gardening Group.

Members discussed at length the possible theme for the school wheelbarrow competition, they were keen for this to be centred around the subject of food and settled on the name title of "Food for Thought". They welcomed the barrows being displayed on the Leys in the weeks running up to the Witney Carnival event as discussed earlier in the meeting.

Members felt that the vouchers issued to the community gardeners should be increased as proposed to £50.

Lastly, members considered the two options for planters to be placed at the entrances to the town as part of the Impact Project using the remaining 2022 In Bloom budget. They agreed the stone planters were the preferred of the two options, but a member suggested that Witney Shed would potentially be able to help with the construction of wooden planters, this would

allow for bespoke pieces however they would need to be of substantial quality and weight to protect them from theft.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Witney Lake & Country Park be entered into the Thames & Chilterns In Bloom competition and,
3. That, the theme of the Schools Inb Bloom wheelbarrow competition be “food for thought” and,
4. That, the “food for thought” wheelbarrows be displayed on The Leys and,
5. That, an increase to a £50 voucher for community gardeners be agreed and,
6. That, Officers investigate with Witney Shed if they can make the planters to the necessary standard.
7. That, the request from Edible Gardens for a compost bin be granted.

SC152 **CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III**

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

Members agreed that the Town Council’s Coronation offer should be a “simple but engaging event” and that this was in line with the wishes of the King.

Members discussed the proposed schedule of events and offered the following amended draft structure.

Saturday – A non-ticketed showing of the Coronation using the newly installed projector and screen in the Corn Exchange. This would be followed in the afternoon by a Childrens activity event in the Gallery Room. The Mayor would also judge a best dressed shop competition.

Sunday – Celebrate the “Coronation Big Lunches” The Leys would be used by the community to have a picnic between 2-6pm, Windrush Radio had been approached regarding hosting the event and those groups that were due to perform in the Market Square on Bank Holiday would be invited to perform as part of the Sunday event instead.

Monday – Promote the “Big Help Out” scheme with the idea of a litter picking event to include the collaboration/relaunch of the Witney Land Army and Volunteer Link-Up.

One member was passionate about the need for councillors to engage with the celebrations and support their fellow councillors and council staff in ensuring that they attend and more importantly help with the running of the events.

Members agreed to delegate the decision of the organisation of the events programme to the Communications & Community Engagement Officer in conjunction with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in order to expediate decisions given the limited time until the event weekend.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, decisions on the Coronation Events be delegated to Officers in conjunction with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to expediate the planning of the events and,

3. That, purchase of a coronation flag is made to be flown from the Town Hall and,
4. That, an additional budget of £3,500 be made available towards the cost of coronation events.

The meeting closed at: 7.47 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 27 March 2023

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

Present:

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	O Collins	V Gwatkin
	L Duncan	M Jones
	H Eaglestone	R Smith
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Project Officer
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
	Nigel Warner	Responsible Financial Officer
Others:	None.	

F153 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D Harvey.

F154 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

F155 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 30 January 2023 were received.

Comments were made on two items.

F69 – A member expressed how pleased they were to see the partnership with Witney Music Festival finally in place.

F70 – Request to return Christmas Light, this was with the Operations Manager to resolve.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 30 January 2023 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

F156 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

F157 **BURWELL HEATING SYSTEM**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Project Officer regarding the replacement boiler for Burwell Hall, brought up the agenda with the express permission of the Chair.

The replacement of the boiler has been discussed on a number of occasions by various committees and a final decision was now needed.

Members raised numerous questions regarding the proposed boilers effectiveness and suitability along with it being new technology. The Project Officer confirmed the use of a Fuel-Cell boiler would ensure the council was working towards its target of carbon neutrality by 2028 and that though the technology was not widespread in the UK it is very popular overseas. The supplier had assured her the boiler was suitable for the size of building.

The Project officer further explained that the Fuel Cell boiler would meet the demands for heating and produce around 50% of the current electricity use of the hall. A built in "mini boiler" would deal with any additional on demand requirements needed for hall users.

It was proposed that the Committee proceed with the procurement of a Micro Fuel Cell Boiler for Burwell Hall, therefore rescinding the resolution contained in minute no. F605 of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee on 21 November 2022 to install a replacement gas boiler. The motion passed, in line with Standing Order 23(a) with the voting as follows:

In Favour	6
Against	1
Abstentions	0

Recommended:

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the council proceeds with the purchase of a Micro Fuel Cell (Viessman Vitocalour PT2) to be installed in Burwell Hall.

The Project Officer left on the conclusion of this item.

F158 **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS REVIEW**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer along with the amended Financial Regulations.

A member raised a question in respect of the removal of the definition of "material" from page 8. The RFO explained the definition was too prescriptive and removing it would reduce the time taken to produce reporting when small monetary amounts are involved.

All members were in favour of the adoption of the amended Financial Regulations.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the amended financial regulations be adopted by the Full Council on 17 April 2023 and,
3. That, the financial regulations be reviewed by 20 April 2025 and regularly thereafter.

F159 **OPEN WATER POLICY**

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed this policy was not ready for presentation to the Committee. It would be added for consideration at a future meeting.

F160 **METAL DETECTING POLICY**

The Committee received and considered a draft Metal Detecting Policy on town council owned land.

No questions or comments arose from the members.

Recommended:

That, the Metal Detecting Policy be adopted.

F161 **INTERNAL AUDIT - SECOND INTERIM REPORT 2022-23**

The Committee considered the Interim Audit Report 2022-23 from the Council's internal Auditors, Auditing Solutions Limited.

Members welcomed the report highlighting there were no areas of concern raised, and in response to a question it was confirmed that the auditor does review the council processes as part of the reviews carried out.

Resolved:

That, the Interim Audit Report 2022-23 from the Council's internal auditors be noted.

F162 **EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL: CORPORATE & FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT 2022/23**

Consideration was given to the report of the Responsible Financial Officer regarding the Risk Management Policy and Corporate & Financial Risk Assessment for 2022-23.

In response to a question raised by the Mayor it was confirmed that by signing the risk assessment she was signing on behalf of the Council to confirm it had received and considered the document under its financial management obligations, it did not hold her individually responsible as the Council was a corporate body with its own legal identity. Insurance was in place to cover the Council against loss or damage caused as a result of its actions unless these were proved to be reckless.

The RFO confirmed there were a few small amendments to be made to the document such as the updating of some officer job titles, these were outlined to members. As the amendments were minor, members were in agreement for these to be made post meeting.

The Deputy Town Clerk also confirmed that any risks identified by officers are detailed in their reports to committees so that members are kept informed as these arise.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and
2. That, the Risk Management Policy & Corporate Risk Assessment for the financial year 2022-23 be endorsed.

F163 **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Committee received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer outlining payment schedules, bank statements and bank reconciliations which are brought to the Policy, Governance & Finance committee as part of the Council's due diligence.

Resolved:

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

Cheque Numbers	In the sum of:	Account
Cheque 101200, DDs and Standing Orders January 2023	£123,285.42	General CB 1
Cheques 33915 - 33941, DDs, BACS and Standing Orders January 2023	£157,336.97	Imprest CB 2
Cheques 101201 – 101203, DDs and Standing Orders February 2023	£150,562.13	General CB 1
Cheques 33942 - 34001, DDs, BACS and Standing Orders February 2023	£149,933.97	Imprest CB 2

F164 **BANKING ARRANGEMENTS - AUTHORISED OFFICERS**

The Committee noted the request asking that the Deputy Town Clerk, Adam Clapton and Responsible Financial Officer, Nigel Warner be approved as authorised officers in order to deal with banking queries and be able to cash cheques up to £500 for petty cash purposes.

All members approved and recognised this would ensure business continuity of the Council moving forward.

The Town Clerk also advised the Mayor would be required to be added to the bank mandate, even given the short time that remained of her term as mayor to facilitate a smooth transfer to the new Council administration in May.

Resolved:

1. That, the Deputy Town Clerk, Adam Clapton and Responsible Financial Officer, Nigel Warner be approved as authorised officers for banking and,
2. That, the Town Mayor is added to the bank mandate.

F165 **GRANTS & SUBSIDISED LETTINGS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding three requests for grant assistance.

Clean Slate – This grant was deferred from the Grant funding requests considered earlier in the year so that additional supporting documentation could be provided to members. Members discussed the importance of providing support to the rising issue of domestic violence. A vote was called for with the result being:

For	6
Against	1
Abstention	0

Rotary Club of Witney – Members received a request for £500 towards the organisation of the Colour Run event on 21 May 2023. Again, as with the Fire walk event request this came at very short notice and outside of the usual Grant consideration period.

Members discussed the application and agreed to grant an amount of £310, this being the rounded difference between the £500 requested and the £196 awarded by way of a subsidised let of the Corn Exchange earlier this month.

Witney Photo Group – Members discussed the request for a subsidised let of the Corn Exchange. All members were in agreement with the request.

Lastly members received letters of thanks from Witney Talking News and Witney Pride for the respective grant and subsidised letting awarded to their organisations.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, £500 be approved for Clean Slate and,
3. That, £310 be approved for The Rotary Club of Witney and,
4. That, a subsidised let be granted to Witney Photo Group, valued at £340 and,
5. 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 during the event and,
6. That, the correspondence from Witney Talking News and Witney Pride be noted.

F166 **YOUTH SERVICES GRANT MONITORING 2022-23**

The Committee received the report and verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the monitoring of the large youth services grants awarded in 2022.

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that as part of the internal audit reporting, that recipients are asked to provide evidence that the amounts awarded are being used as requested in the organisation's applications.

Information had been received from Got2B, Home-Start and Oxfordshire Music & Arts Trust. Members requested that additional information be requested from Got2B to show more specifically where the funds are being spent in Witney. They also noted that APCAM had not provided any feedback and asked officer to request this so that it may be reviewed at the next meeting of the committee on 26 June 2023.

Resolved:

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the reports from Got2B, Home-Start and Oxfordshire Music & Arts Trust be noted and,
3. That, additional information be requested regarding Got2B's activities to review 26 June 2023 and,
4. That, evidence is re-requested from APCAM to review 26 June 2023.

F167 **FINANCIAL REPORT & ASSOCIATED MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) which contained detailed income and expenditure statements for the whole of the Council's approved budgets for the period up to 28 February 2023, along with an update on the Council's investments.

Also covered were a variety of topics including, an update of the council budget to date, disposal of the Corn Exchange old seating platform, the renewed energy contracts, VAT on sports pitch bookings, the continued membership of Oxfordshire Association of Local Council and the CCTV system covering Witney.

Budget Update - In response to a question raised by a member regarding the £20 spend on Bus Shelter Maintenance (4035) the RFO confirmed that most of the cost of maintenance of the bus shelters is labour, this £20 is likely to have been for materials.

Corn Exchange Old Seating Platform – Members were pleased with an offer from a local Witney youth group, the RFO confirmed the amount offered was £350. All members agreed with the sale, however asked that it is make clear it was sold as seen and that the council insurers are advised of the disposal of the asset.

VAT on sports bookings – The RFO gave a verbal update and explanation of the details in his report including an explanation of the "Outside the Scope" VAT Category. Members were in unanimous agreement that any VAT returned by HMRC should be paid back to the sports club from which it was paid.

There was a further discussion regarding the fees and charges for all the sports facilities during 2023-24, which were listed as including VAT. Members agreed to reduce charges to sports clubs by deducting the element of VAT currently charged, representing a decrease of approximately 9% compared with the 2022-23 charges. For the Council this would keep income the same as the reduction to the clubs is VAT which would have been passed on to HMRC; the subsidy to the facilities would remain the same.

Membership of OALC – Members were pleased to hear that it was due to being a member that the Council received information timely regarding the refund of VAT. Members all agreed to continuation of membership to ensure the Council retained the support they provide.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and the management accounts for the Council for the period 1 April 2022 to 28 February 2023 be approved and,
2. That, the recommendations of the spending committees as detailed in the report be agreed and,

3. That, the officer recommendation to sell the Corn Exchange seating platform, which is surplus to the Council's requirements for the sum of £350 be approved and,
4. That, the Council has entered a contract with Green Energy UK for supply of gas and electricity to Council premises be noted and,
5. That, the new VAT position regarding sporting fees including football and cricket pitch hire be noted and to: (i) return any refunds obtained from HMRC for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2022 to the respective clubs and (ii) reduce charges on sports bookings to clubs for 2023-24 by deducting the element of VAT currently charged, representing a decrease of approximately 9% compared with the 2022-23 charges.
6. That, the officer recommendation to remain in membership of the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils during 2023-24 be approved and,
7. That, correspondence from West Oxfordshire District Council in relation to CCTV be noted and,
8. That, the Council's investments as detailed in the report be noted.

F168 **COUNCIL VEHICLE FLEET**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer providing details of the Councils fleet of vehicles and the upcoming purchases.

Members were pleased to hear that the delivery of the long-awaited Nissan Townstar was expected before 31 March 2023 thanks to the immediate response of officers to the notification from the supplier and that there was reference to electric vehicles in the future.

Members also expressed how important it is for the council to ensure it has a good policy for the replacement of Vehicles to ensure that they always have reliable resources.

Resolved:

That, the report be noted.

F169 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved:

That in accordance with section (1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission 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.

F170 **PROPERTY & LEGAL MATTERS**

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

She reported that the council's solicitors and agent were making progress with the lease negotiations for the sports clubs at West Witney.

It was also advised that the Council would be carrying out work to secure access to private road leading to Lakeside allotments.

Resolved:

That, the confidential verbal report be noted.

F171 **MAJOR STRATEGIC PROJECTS**

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

The Leys masterplan was moving forward following the award of £650,000 to Courtside CIC. This work must be completed in the next 12 months and therefore the council would now be working quickly to relocate the works depot. Work on this would commence as soon as the Head of Estates joined the Council in early May.

Discussions had also progressed with West Witney Sports Club regarding the potential refurbishment of the clubhouse.

Resolved:

That, the confidential verbal update be noted.

F172 **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Committee received the minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee meeting held on 9 February and a verbal update from the meeting held earlier in the evening.

Resolved:

That, the confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 9 February and the verbal update from the meeting held earlier on 27 March be noted, and the recommendations contained therein approved.

The meeting closed at: 7.26 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 9

WITNEY ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Held on Wednesday, 15 March 2023

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

Present:

Councillors:	J Aitman T Ashby O Collins L Duncan D Enright V Gwatkin	A D Harvey A Prosser R Smith P Hiles D Thomas
Officers:	Adam Clapton Sharon Groth Polly Inness Derek Mackenzie Tomas Smith Nigel Warner Angus Whitburn Carl Whitehead	Deputy Town Clerk Town Clerk Communications & Community Engagement Officer Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk Venue & Events Officer Responsible Financial Officer Operations Manager Park Ranger
Others:	41 members of the public.	

1 INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR OF WITNEY, CLLR LIZ DUNCAN

The Town Mayor, Cllr Liz Duncan welcomed the public to the meeting and introduced herself and officers of the Town Council. She advised that a representative of Thames Valley Police was expected to attend.

2 OFFICIAL NOTING OF THE TOWN COUNCILLOR APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Witney Town Councillors L Ashbourne, M Jones, and H Eaglestone.

3 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF 25 APRIL 2022

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 25 April 2022, copies of which were available at the meeting, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 **THAMES VALLEY POLICE**

A representative from Thames Valley Police was invited to attend the meeting, however no representation was made. The Mayor asked residents that if they had any questions the Town Council would pass them on to the police for an answer.

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

The Mayor gave an update on her year as Mayor which included attending over 100 events representing the town council on behalf of residents. She had thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many residents of the town and she thanked all those in attendance.

The Chairs of the town council's committees were then invited to give brief updates on their Committees' responsibilities and an overview of what they had been working on during the past twelve months.

Cllr Aitman began as Deputy Leader of the Council and Chair of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee, followed by, Cllrs Smith, Gwatkin, and Collins who introduced themselves as Chairs of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee, Parks & Recreation Committee, and Stronger Communities Committee respectively.

Deputy Mayor Cllr Collins thanked officers and staff of the Council for their efforts over the past year. He also thanked all the individuals who provide support services to the town and its residents for making Witney such a supportive community to live in.

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

Further to the updates from Committee Chairs, the Mayor opened the floor to questions from the public, beginning with the first four which had been submitted to the Town Clerk ahead of the meeting.

Q1. Urban Meadow and Verge Guidelines. Will the Town Council be following these guidelines within Witney Town? Will the mower operators be given appropriate instructions and monitored?

Cllr R Smith responded and explained that not all areas in Witney were owned by WTC. All Councils had plans to increase biodiversity, however some of these schemes had not been successful and the town council was no exception; it had tried multiple ground maintenance methods with varied success.

The Town Council does however maintain a wildflower meadow in Windrush cemetery and will add wildflower seed to Tower Hill & Curbridge Road roundabouts this year. If any of these swards successfully flower the cuttings can be collected and distributed over areas to promote species diversity using our "Grillo" grass cutting machine. Some schemes, such as the reduction of cutting in Quarry Road have not been welcomed by residents.

In October 2022 the town council's grounds maintenance was brought in house so it now had qualified operators who were able to act more quicker and carry out action where required.

Q2. Does Witney Town Council monitor the potholes in the town? Who informs Oxfordshire County Council about the potholes that need repair? And How is it that a hole, like one outside the Windrush Pub, can have a white mark around it and be filled, while holes immediately before and after it are ignored?

Cllr D Enright (OCC) advised the County Council highways crew actioned repairs on receiving a report and were tasked to inspect the area for other potholes, however they were unable to relay whole section of road. He explained March was the worst time of year for potholes following the cold, wetter, winter months and repairs could not take place during that time. Money had been borrowed and more had been fixed this year than ever before; a trial of pothole 'Superusers' was ongoing to expediate reports.

He encouraged residents to report potholes via the Fix My Street online service. It was a nationwide scheme for reporting all manner of problems that residents encounter and reports in Oxfordshire would be sent to the relevant authority to deal with.

Q3. Do Witney Town Council and the residents of Witney have a say in the speed restrictions, the implementation and review of them?

I ask this because of what I see as inconsistencies in how they have been imposed across parts of Oxfordshire I have visited. I compare Woodstock Road in a busy built-up part of Oxford, where the speed limit is 30 compared with 20 on the Burford Road which could easily be 30 and then 40. I look at the speed limits in Charlbury and compare them to Witney.

Cllr D Enright (OCC) again replied confirming that most councils were moving to 20mph which would become the norm. In response to inconsistency, he added that some of the bus routes into Oxford were still 30mph at the request of Bus Providers in order that they could still provide the required service. There were a number of things to be considered in changes which included; wideness of the roads, proximity to schools and pet mortality. Regarding the 20mph in Puck Lane raised by a resident, Cllr Enright advised that this was the lowest legal limit that could be applied.

It was advised that the town council were contacted by the County Council to become a 20mph trial area which allowed councillors to highlight the roads to be included in the scheme and the town council supported the reduction. It also hosted the Witney Traffic Advisory Group where all subjects that involve travel and transport were discussed.

Cllr Enright continued by advising that road safety appeared to be improving, and the town council had received positive feedback, including correspondence from the Headmaster of Wood Green School supporting its introduction and stating that children felt more safe travelling to School.

Cllr R Smith advised that it was Thames Valley Police who were responsible for the speed cameras and enforcement of the 20mph limit, however it also relied on everyone being socially responsible for their speed.

There were representations on the scheme for and against and non-adherence, particularly in Corn Street

Q4. I cross the Windrush on my way to work and have noticed that since the national outcry over the polluted state of many of the nation's rivers, including the Windrush, it has lost its opaque grey appearance. I can only assume that that is because the sewage company upstream is no longer releasing effluent into it. As the Windrush river passes through the council's boundaries I assume that you have an active interest in the river's condition. I would like to know what you are doing to ensure that the water companies that have been causing the pollution are kept to account?

This question was raised ahead of the meeting and the resident was not in attendance. The Mayor advised that everyone was rightly concerned about this issue and the Council did keep abreast of situations as much as it could. The town was fortunate to have the group Windrush Against Sewage Pollution (WASP) who kept everyone informed.

Q5. What are the changes to on street parking enforcement?

Cllr D Enright (OCC) responded and advised the County Council would take over the on-street parking enforcement from 1 April 2023; the District Council would retain the enforcement in its car parks. As the authority responsible for all the highways in the county, information was collected on traffic flows so if the flow was restricted in an area due to parking issues, they would be better places to focus enforcement on that area.

Q6. Where are residents of Corn Street to park? Will there be resident parking permits and charges?

Cllr D Enright (OCC) agreed to look into this and report back to the resident. He was not aware of any charges and the only area with permits was West End as part of a historical arrangement.

Cllr D Harvey added that he hoped that the transfer of enforcement changes and change of staffing would not mean a loss of the community aspect the District Council community wardens brought to their role.

Q7. Who is responsible for the lifts at Marriotts Shopping Centre?

Cllr D Enright (WODC) advised that following the ownership changes at the shopping Centre he would investigate the continual breakdown of lifts with the necessary officers at the District Council.

Q8. Does the council have a digital strategy to engage with young people in order to engage with them?

Cllr Joy Aitman (WODC) responded to inform the District Council had recently completed a survey of schools to gather information on forming a strategy to reach younger people, as a former teacher, she was aware of the issues faced.

It was advised that the Witney Town youth council was wound down over the Covid period. Cllr Aitman explained she was also aware of the relationship between youngsters' mental health and sport and was working along with her fellow councillors across authorities to improve and inform the sports strategy.

Q9. Could we have an update on the Flood Warden initiative?

Cllr L Duncan advised the details of the County Council pilot scheme had been advertised and asked that any interested parties contact the town council so their details could be forwarded.

Q10. Are there any plans for the West Witney Sports Ground, such as a commercial aspect to generate income for the council?

Cllr V Gwatkin advised there were plans for the facility, but it was a difficult site with many stakeholders and varying restrictions. The town council supported Witney Parkrun, tennis and football teams, and West Witney Sports & Social Club. It was working with these clubs to grant leases so that they can access grant funding and the Council's aims could be found in the adopted Open Spaces strategy on the Council's Website.

Cllr J Aitman (WODC) advised there was a playing pitch strategy which covered west Oxfordshire. There was a huge shortage in pitches, and this was trying to re-address the balance.

Q11. What does it take to get the Witney Gazette to attend?

Cllr O Collins understood the frustration of residents about the Witney Gazette not covering Witney news and confirmed the town council did send press releases to them. There was little else the Council could do to encourage attendance.

Q12. In response to the above question, an attendee referred to problems in advertising amateur dramatics events, which were exacerbated by the difficulty in advertising on the town hall noticeboard?

Cllr O Collins apologised but assured the town council supported all events across the town and would investigate the problems with advertising third party events.

Q13. What plans do the council have for the Coronation of King Charles III?

Cllr O Collins responded the town council did indeed have plans, party in the park, volunteer day, children's activities and a community bunting-making challenge. Further details would be advertised in the coming weeks.

Q14. What are the Plans for opening the High Street?

Cllr D Enright (OCC) advised that nearly £2m had been allocated to improve the access for all, and the County Council had engaged with the Witney Chamber of Commerce and Traffic Advisory Group. After May there would be an in-person event/exhibition and associated stakeholder meetings to assist in the planning of a brand-new scheme.

It was advised the District Council were hoping to hold an event on the High Street in the Autumn for food and drink event.

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

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

She also requested that any residents with questions for Thames Valley Police should leave these along with contact details and they would be passed on.

The meeting closed at: 9.03 pm

Chair



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Updated March 2023

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1. General

- 1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
 - for the timely production of accounts;
 - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
 - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
 - identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.
- 1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.6. Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7. Members of council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. *[An RFO has been appointed for this council and these regulations will apply accordingly. In the absence of an Officer designated RFO the Town Clerk/Proper Officer will resume the role as appropriate.]*
- 1.9. The RFO together with the Proper Officer of the Council (the Town Clerk);
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;

- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
 - assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.10. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 1.11. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
 - a record of the assets and liabilities of the council; and
 - wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.12. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
 - procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
 - identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
 - procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
 - measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.13. The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain

specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- writing off bad debts;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors, shall be a matter for the full council only.

1.14. In addition the council must, through its Policy, Governance & Finance Committee:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £5,000; and
- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.15. In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.

In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

1.16 Where a power is exercisable by the Town Clerk and it is necessary to exercise that power at that time it may, in their absence, be exercised by the Deputy Town Clerk. Similarly where a power/ delegation is exercisable by the RFO and it is necessary to exercise that delegation at that time it may, in their absence, be exercised by the Town Clerk. Having regard to the requirement to separate duties where possible, if a power is exercisable by two officers then these should be different officers.

2. Accounting and audit (internal and external)

2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

- 2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, Bank Reconciliations shall be made available and presented at the meeting of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee for formal review as part of the Council's internal control process.
- 2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. The internal auditor shall:
- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - report to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
 - demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council
- 2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the council;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.

- 2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.10. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors, excluding regular correspondence that does not involve statements on the finances of the Council.

3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning

- 3.1. Each September the RFO shall meet with the Town Clerk and each Head of Service/Budget Holder to consider revenue and capital proposals for the following year.
- 3.2. Each committee shall through the actions of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee, review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of November each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.
- 3.3. The RFO must each year, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and the Council.
- 3.4. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 3.5. The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the middle of February each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.
- 3.6. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

4. Budgetary control and authority to spend

- 4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included in the approved budget. Approved budgets may only be used for the purpose agreed by Council unless otherwise agreed in accordance with these regulations.
- 4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement'). Conditions regarding these are as follows:-
- (a) Within the same cost centre a departmental head may recommend to the RFO transfers between budget lines provided that this does not distort Council policy, and that the RFO may authorise such transfers provided that this does not distort Council policy.
 - (b) A committee may authorise a reallocation of resources between its departments/cost centres.
 - (c) A reallocation of resources between committees will require the approval of the Council, acting on the advice of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and the committees concerned.
 - (d) A reallocation of resources between capital projects will require the approval of the Council, acting on the advice of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and the committees concerned.
- 4.3. The Town Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done immediately, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of either £5,000 or any amount which is reserved for that purpose in the repairs and renewals fund (or other relevant Earmarked Reserve), whichever is higher. The Town Clerk shall report the action to the appropriate committee as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.4. Where expenditure is incurred in accordance with regulation 4.3, above and the sum required cannot be met from savings made elsewhere within that department's/Committee's approved budget, it shall be subject to the provisions of the supplementary estimate approved by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee or the Council.

- 4.5. Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year unless placed in an earmarked reserve by resolution of the Council on the advice of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee.

The estimated cost of any capital project for which one off budgetary provision has been made, which has not commenced by 31st March in any year, may be carried forward as slippage, subject to: -

- (a) the approval of the RFO, or in the absence of the RFO, the Town Clerk;
- (b) the approval of the Council, acting on the advice of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and the appropriate spending committee.

In making this decision the Council should have regard to the net expenditure budget relating to the relevant cost centre or capital programme.

- 4.6. Supplementary estimates for revenue and capital expenditure will only be granted when it is considered that such estimates are important in order that the Council may achieve its service objectives, and when such expenditure cannot be financed from existing budgets. Such requests shall be made by the relevant committee, referred to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee, and subject to the approval of the Council.
- 4.7. No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving expenditure on the capital account unless the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee is satisfied that it is contained in the rolling capital programme and that the necessary capital funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval can be obtained.
- 4.8. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.9. Any capital expenditure below £1,000 is to be treated as revenue expenditure.
- 4.10. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in October for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Town Clerk on behalf of the Personnel Sub-Committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.11. The RFO shall regularly provide each spending committee with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget and shall provide the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee with periodic statements of income and expenditure relating to the whole of the Council's approved revenue and capital

budgets on the same basis. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances.

- 4.12. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process. However the Council may by resolution delegate to individual committees the powers to utilise specific earmarked reserves for expenditure. Note that unless an earmarked reserve comprises capital receipts or restricted funds (e.g. a grant given to the Council for a specific purpose), they shall be considered to comprise unrestricted revenue funds and therefore a specific earmarked reserve may be, by Council resolution, returned to the general fund at any time.

5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments

- 5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO in consultation with the Town Clerk, and approved by the council following a recommendation from the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency. Two current accounts shall be maintained at the bank, a general account and an imprest account. Banking arrangements may include online access to bank accounts subject to the scheme being approved by the Council and in accordance with these regulations and good practice.
- 5.2. All payments of less than £5,000 shall be authorised by the Town Clerk (or RFO/Deputy Town Clerk if appropriate permissions are in place by Council resolution) and paid by cheque or electronically, from the Council's Imprest (No.2) account. The Cashbook/payment schedule will be authorised by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and recorded in the minutes referred to in 5.4 below.
- 5.3. All payments of £5,000 or more shall require the approval of two members prior to payment and shall be paid on the Council's General (No.1) account. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 5.4. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant description of goods/services, present the schedule to Policy, Governance & Finance Committee. The committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee. The approved schedule shall be cross referenced in the minutes. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.

- 5.5. All purchase invoices shall be authorised by the appropriate Head of Service or officer prior to them being passed to Finance for payment. Each initial purchase invoice shall be supported by a purchase order which is attached to the invoice. Subsequent invoices for the same goods or service do not require additional purchase orders. Each purchase invoice shall be coded to a cost centre / account code for which the authoriser has authority to charge to and which has sufficient budget available.
- 5.6. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Head of Service or officer/budget holder to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council through its budget setting process. All invoices shall be coded by the Head of Service or Officer to a budget area appropriate to the nature of the invoice.
- 5.7. Employees authorised to sign off purchase invoices [and purchase orders within agreed limits up to £1,000 without requiring authorisation by the Town Clerk] are:
- (a) Town Clerk
 - (b) Deputy Town Clerk
 - (c) Responsible Financial Officer
 - (d) Head of Estates and Operations
 - (e) Operations Manager
 - (f) Venue & Events Officer
 - (g) Project Officer
 - (h) Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer
 - (i) PA to Town Clerk
 - (j) Senior Admin Officer and Committee Clerk
 - (k) Communications & Community Engagement Officer
- 5.8. The Admin Support Assistant or RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available payment run as appropriate.
- 5.9. The Town Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
- a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of council, where the Town Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee];

- b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.8 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Policy, Governance & Finance Committee ; or
- c) fund transfers between the Council’s bank accounts, in order to allow for effective treasury management, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Policy, Governance & Finance Committee .
- 5.10. For each financial year the Town Clerk and RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which Policy, Governance & Finance Committee may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Policy, Governance & Finance Committee .
- 5.11. A record of regular payments made under 5.8 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.
- 5.12. In respect of grants the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.
- 5.13. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.14. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

6. Instructions for the making of payments

- 6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Town Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3. All payments shall be affected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of Policy, Governance & Finance Committee .

- 6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council or committee shall be authorised for payment in accordance with the bank mandate. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.
- 6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil or by authorisation on the Bank system.
- 6.6. The RFO may, subject to the agreement of the Town Clerk arrange for the payment of utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.7. The RFO may, subject to the agreement of the Town Clerk or in their absence the Deputy Town Clerk, arrange for the payment of certain items (principally salaries) by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members, are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.8. The RFO may, subject to the agreement of the Town Clerk or in their absence the Deputy Town Clerk, arrange for the payment of certain items by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.
- 6.10. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to the Town Clerk and retained in a sealed dated envelope and locked in the Town Hall safe. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as

soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.

- 6.11. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 6.12. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.
- 6.13. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.14. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Town Clerk [RFO] shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.
- 6.15. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.16. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by [two of] the Town Clerk [the RFO] [a member]. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.
- 6.17. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Town Clerk [and the RFO] and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of [£500] unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 6.18. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee . Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee .

- 6.19. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk [and RFO] and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 6.20. The RFO may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.
- a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of £500 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.
- b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
- c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to council under 5.4 above.

7. Payment of salaries

- 7.1. As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available ordinary of Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's payscale, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Personnel Sub-Committee, Policy, Governance & Finance Committee or full Council.
- 7.4. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
- a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;

- b) by the internal auditor;
 - c) by the external auditor; or
 - d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.
- 7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.
- 7.8. Before employing interim or additional staff, the council must consider a full business case. However will not be required if there is existing budgetary provision and as long as this does not distort Council policy.

8. Loans and investments

- 8.1. All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the council and negotiated by the RFO after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council and shall be for a set period of time in accordance with Council's Investment Policy. Changes to loans and investments should be reported to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee . In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Policy, Governance & Finance Committee in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 8.3. At each meeting of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee all bank statements along with the bank reconciliations will be examined as part of the internal controls, and minuted accordingly.
- 8.4. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 8.5. The council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and

guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee at least annually.

- 8.6. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 8.7. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.8. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

9. Income

- 9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the RFO to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee.
- 9.4. Any individual sums of £100 or more which are found to be irrecoverable shall be reported to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and shall be written off. Individual sums of less than £100 may be written off by the RFO with the agreement of the Town Clerk or in their absence the Deputy Town Clerk.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made in accordance with the relevant regulations.
- 9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first

instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

10. Orders for work, goods and services

- 10.1. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained by the Officer and a copy passed to the RFO at the time the order is placed.
- 10.2. Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 10.3. All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11 below.
- 10.4. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 10.5. The officer ordering goods or services shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the shall consult with the RFO to ensure that the statutory authority exists. This shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is reported so that the minutes can record the power being used.

11. Contracts

- 11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
 - a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
 - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - iii. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;

v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £2000 (in excess of this sum the Town Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and

vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.

b) Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £25,000 as specified by the Public Contract Regulations 2015, the council must comply with the requirements of those regulations.

c) The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time).

d) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee.

e) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Town Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Town Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.

f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Town Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.

g) If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £25,000 or if all the tenders are identical the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing works.

Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders, and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.

(h) A notice issued under the regulations shall contain a statement of the effect of the following.

- If a supplier/tenderer of any goods/services is to their knowledge related to any member of or the holder of any office under the Council, they and the person to whom they are related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Town Clerk. A person who fails so to do

shall be disqualified for such contract and, if engaged, the contract may be withdrawn without further notice. The Town Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate Committee any such disclosure.

- Canvassing of members or of any Committee, directly or indirectly, for any work/service under the Council shall disqualify the supplier/tenderer. The Town Clerk shall make known the purport of this sub-paragraph to every supplier/tenderer.
- A member of the Council shall not solicit for any person any work under the Council or recommend any person for such work; but, nevertheless, a member may give a written testimonial of a supplier's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council.

i) When it is to enter into a contract of less than £65,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £5,000 the Town Clerk or duly authorised officer shall have executive power, and shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.

j) The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.; however satisfactory justification shall be required and recorded in the minutes of the Council having disregarded the financial regulations relating to contracts.

k) Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

12. Payment under Contracts for Building or Other Construction Works

12.1. Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).

12.2. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum by 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the Council.

- 12.3. Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the Council and Town Clerk to the Contractor in writing, the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13. Stores and equipment

- 13.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 13.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

14. Assets, Properties and Estates

- 14.1. The Town Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties owned by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of unless the Council has made budgetary provision for such property and any other consents required by law have been obtained.
- 14.3. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in

the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

- 14.6. Inventories shall be maintained by all departments and therein shall be recorded an adequate description of furniture, fittings and equipment, plant and machinery. All inventories shall be in a form approved by the RFO, who in consultation with the Town Clerk may agree that certain items may be excluded from the records.
- 14.7. Each departmental head shall be responsible for maintaining an annual check of all items on the inventory, for taking action in relation to surpluses or deficiencies and noting the inventory accordingly, and possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

15. Security

- 15.1. Each officer is responsible for maintaining proper security at all times for all buildings, stocks, stores, furniture, equipment, plant, machinery, cash, etc. under his or her control. Officers shall consult the Town Clerk in any case where security is thought to be defective or where it is considered that special security arrangements may be needed.
- 15.2. Maximum limits for cash holdings shall be agreed with the Town Clerk and shall not be exceeded without their express permission.

16. Insurance

- 16.1. Following an annual risk assessment, the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers in consultation with the Town Clerk.
- 16.2. Each officer shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties, plant or vehicles under their control, which require to be insured, and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 16.3. Departmental heads shall forthwith notify the RFO in writing of any loss, liability or damage, or any event likely to lead to a claim.
- 16.4. All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance, which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the Council.
- 16.5. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and shall annually, or at such other period as they may consider necessary, review all insurances in consultation with other chief departmental heads as appropriate.

17. Risk Management

- 17.1. The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk, and has a risk management policy in place. The Town Clerk with the RFO and/or other Officers shall prepare, for approval by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee/Council at least annually.
- 17.2. When considering any new activity, the Town Clerk and RFO and/or other Officers shall prepare a draft risk assessment addressing the legal and financial liabilities and risk management proposals for consideration and, if thought appropriate, adoption by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee/Council.
- 17.3. All reports prepared for a decision by the Town Council and its Committees/Sub-Committees and Working Parties shall include sections on “Financial Implications” and “Risk Assessment”.

18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

- 18.1. It shall be the duty of the Council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Town Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of council.

Approved by Minute No. at the Full Council meeting held on

Draft with amendments to be considered by Policy, Governance and Finance Committee at its meeting on

FULL COUNCIL

Date:	Monday, 17 April 2023
Title:	Council Working Party's
Contact Officer:	Deputy Town Clerk – Adam Clapton

Background

The purpose of this report is to review the progress of the Council's current Working Party's/task and finish groups and consider dissolving those which have completed their work per Standing Order 30 (d) (vii).

A Working Party is designed to oversee and advise on a specific task/project on behalf of a Council Committee. In its terms of reference, it has objectives and a date by when it should have completed its work (shown below).

Current Situation

Corn Exchange Working Party

'The purpose of this Working Party is to formulate a vision for the long-term future of the Corn Exchange based on current knowledge, advice from professionals, input from stakeholders and in consultation with the wider community. In particular, the Working Party should develop a costed and reasonable plan for the phase two refurbishment of the hall taking into account expected use of the facilities, needs of the current and prospective users and compliance with all legislation....the project in its entirety should be completed by May 2023.' (*CEWP Terms of Reference*)

The phase two refurbishment has been successfully completed in January 2023; Any further Corn Exchange-related items can be referred to the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee and any larger projects can be referred to a specially designated task and finish group or Sub-Committee, as and when the Council decides this is appropriate.

20mph Working Party

'The purpose of this Working Party is to formulate a proposal for the implementation of 20MPH Speed Limits in Witney in accordance with the scheme adopted by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)... the project in its entirety should be completed by June 2022.' (*20mph WP Terms of Reference*)

A plan was formulated and subsequently implemented by Oxfordshire County Council after public consultation in October 2022.

Platinum Jubilee Working Party

This Working Party/task and finish group was established to facilitate events for the Late Queen's Platinum Jubilee in the summer of 2022.

The events successfully took place under the auspices of this Working Party in June 2022.

The Council has further task and finish groups/delegations for smaller projects which will automatically cease at the end of this administration. These include; Covid-19 Memorial, Children's Memorial Garden, Platinum Jubilee Sundial, Rebranding, In Bloom, Coronation and Remembrance 2022. The details of these projects have either completed or are in the process of being implemented by Officers.

Environmental Impact

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

Risk

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

There is no perceived risk in dissolving these Working Party's.

Financial Implications

➤ There are no financial implications.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and;

1. Consider dissolving the Council's Corn Exchange, 20mph and Platinum Jubilee Working Party's due to the successful completion of their objectives and,
2. Note the dissolution of smaller project task and finish groups on their successful completion.

FULL COUNCIL

Date: Monday, 17 April 2023

Title: Civic Announcements

Contact Officer: Secretary to the Mayor – Loraine Harwood

FEB 23 – APRIL 23

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

Witney & District Museum AGM
Visit to Madley Brook Primary School for World Book Day
Rotary Club guest speaker
First anniversary of The Shed opening
Yellow Submarine 10th Anniversary Awards Deputy Mayor also attending

REPRESENTING and PROMOTING WITNEY

West Oxon Air Quality Action Plan steering group meeting
Flag raising for Commonwealth Day
Reception with Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire to discuss ongoing support to Oxfordshire
Bicester Mayor fundraising lunch

KEY EVENTS AND COUNCIL ACTIVITY

Winter warmer day at Corn Exchange
Corn Exchange opening Deputy Mayor also attended
Corn Exchange open day
Civic Reception and Citizens of the Year Award event
Annual Town meeting

RAISING FUNDS

Mayor's Charities 2022-23:

Volunteer Link Up
Windrush Bike Project

Prepared by:

Cllr Liz Duncan and Loraine Harwood

FULL COUNCIL

Date:	Monday, 17 April 2023
Title:	Community Speedwatch
Contact Officer:	Deputy Town Clerk – Adam Clapton

Background

At the meeting of the Traffic Advisory Committee held on 21 March 2023 it was proposed that the Committee could be responsible for formulating a Community Speedwatch scheme across the town, subject to a necessary change to its terms of reference.

Current Situation

Witney Traffic Advisory Committee is administered by the Town Council and the facilitation of a Community Speedwatch scheme would fall indirectly to the Council and its officers. While this is unlikely to be overly time-consuming process, it would inevitably cost some administration time. A Speedwatch scheme is solely reliant on volunteers and without them it cannot proceed under the auspices of the town council and its staff.

Thames Valley Police have advised Witney TAC they will cover the cost of the speed equipment and insurance of volunteers. The only additional cost would be signage which could be sought via Councillor Priority or discretionary grant applications. The Town Council could provide the following support:

- Publication and Volunteer Recruitment Promotion
- Administration (via the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee) This would involve the management of volunteers.
- Storage of Equipment

If the Council agrees, the Witney TAC terms of reference can be amended by Members at its meeting in June and the scheme can be advertised. Once volunteers have come forward and training has taken place the scheme could potentially be ready to run later in the summer.

Environmental Impact

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

Risk

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

There is a reputational risk that the Town Council is involved in becoming involved in the 'policing' of a scheme outside its remit.

However, There is a risk that if the Town Council does not assist facilitation of a Community Speedwatch scheme it will not happen, and as such negates the purpose of the implementation of lower speed limits as further enforcement by Thames Valley Police is not definite.

Financial Implications

- Administrative costs
- Potential cost of signs

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and;

1. Consider the Town Council assistance in establishing a Witney Community Speedwatch scheme, as stated above, under the supervision of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee.

Anti-Social Behaviour / Vandalism (From 01.02.23)

Date	Item/Location	Date/Time Reported	Cost if known	Action	Police Reference
07.02.23	Vandalised Noticeboards at The Leys	By Ops Manager		These have now been vandalised so many times the works team will be removing them, and a better option installed.	
07.02.23	Trampled down fence – by dog walkers to avoid flooded area.	Park Ranger	£50	Stock netting safety fence on pathway around Lake. 15 Meters. Will require replacement asap – Cost £50 to replace	
07.02.23	Break into Allotment Shed 52b at Lakeside	By plot owner		Glass on shed broken, damage to outer fence.	Plot owner will report to police
27/02/2023	Witney Mills Bus Stop			Graffitied	
28.02.23	ASB at Tower Hill Cemetery	Cemetery User		There was an incident yesterday where a group of boys from Henry Box School were jumping on graves and headstones, kicking flowers over and have broken some of the water containers. They were challenged, but they were rude to her, so much so that she has already phoned the school to make a complaint. Request to close the gate at night, increase signage and write to the school	
03/03/2023	Oxford Hill/Church Lane Junction Bus stop			Graffitied	
13/03/2023	Spray paint on Country Park Defibrillator	Operations Manager	£25	To be cleaned by works team.	

16/03/2023	Oxford Hill/Church Lane Junction Bus stop			Graffitied – Again	
16/03/20253	Witney Mill Cricket – Bus Stop			Graffitied	

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