

Full Council Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 18th September, 2023 at 5.15 pm

To members of the Full Council Committee - O Collins, G Meadows, J Aitman, T Ashby, D Enright, R Smith, D Temple, A Bailey, L Cherry, R Crouch, G Doughty, J Doughty, D Edwards-Hughes, D Newcombe, J Robertshaw, S Simpson and J Treloar (and all other Town Councillors for information).

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Gallery Room, 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. 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.

4. **Witney High Street & Market Square Enhancements** (Pages 3 - 8)

To consider submitting High Street & Market Square design-shaping feedback in response to Oxfordshire County Council's engagement on the project.



Town Clerk

EXTRA-ORDINARY COUNCIL

Date: Monday, 18 September 2023

Title: Witney High Street & Market Square Enhancements

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

Background

Oxfordshire County Council is currently engaging with residents and local stakeholders regarding ‘**A scheme to deliver street improvements that support and maintain the new traffic arrangement**’ in Witney High Street and Market Square.

It has been awarded £1.98m for the scheme, funded from Active Travel England, and comes with scope to improve the way the area is used as well as how residents travel through it.

From the Oxfordshire County Council website: ***About the improvements,***

‘Our vision is for Witney High Street and Market Square to be a healthy, attractive and historically rich environment that complements the character and vibrancy of the market town whilst managing the impacts of climate change through improved opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

To deliver the vision, we are proposing five key objectives to be achieved by the project:

- *Enhance public spaces while protecting the town’s history and character.*
- *Support local businesses and the markets.*
- *Make it easier and more enjoyable to walk, wheel and cycle.*
- *Upgrade access to public transport.*
- *Improve safety for all users.*

The scheme is at an early stage and a design is yet to be developed. We are seeking the views of Witney residents and businesses to help shape the designs by finding out what is important to the local community. This information will be used to develop proposals which we will consult on next year.’

Current Situation

Members are invited to consider feedback from Witney Town Council (as a Corporate Body). This does not preclude Councillors submitting their own feedback to the engagement in a personal capacity.

Agreement on specific design features may not be possible, but key response themes should be related to the five key objectives of the project above, if appropriate. Questions from the County Council’s online engagement survey are attached as an appendix to this report.

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 with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Members should consider the environmental impact of any work in the High Street and Market Square areas and balance this against the aims of the project.

Risk

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

The Town Council is supportive of this community engagement and Members have been engaged with the electorate on this issue intently for some time. A debate on the subject shows it is fully committed to the process on behalf of its residents. A submission would highlight any key shaping ideas and items which would most benefit all affected.

Financial implication

- There are no known implications at this time.
- The introduction of any public realm enhancements, including planting and additional street infrastructure is likely to result in additional future maintenance costs for the Town Council.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the report and consider:

1. Enhancements it would like to see in order for Oxfordshire County Council 'to deliver street improvements and maintain the new traffic arrangement' in the High Street & Market Square.

1. What best describes your overall opinion of the objective to 'Enhance public spaces while protecting the town's history and character'? Select one option only.
 - Fully support
 - Partially support
 - Do not support
 - Really do not support
 - No opinion
 - Not sure

2. What best describes your overall opinion of the objective to 'Support local businesses and the markets'? Select one option only.
 - Fully support
 - Partially support
 - Do not support
 - Really do not support
 - No opinion
 - Not sure

3. What best describes your overall opinion of the objective to 'Make it easier and more enjoyable to walk, wheel and cycle'? Select one option only.
 - Fully support
 - Partially support
 - Do not support
 - Really do not support
 - No opinion
 - Not sure

4. What best describes your overall opinion of the objective to 'Upgrade access to public transport'? Select one option only.
 - Fully support
 - Partially support
 - Do not support
 - Really do not support
 - No opinion
 - Not sure

5. What best describes your overall opinion of the objective to 'Improve safety for all users'? Select one option only.
 - Fully support
 - Partially support
 - Do not support
 - Really do not support
 - No opinion

- Not sure
6. What improvements would you like to see in Witney High Street and Market Square? (Please select your choice of response for each option listed below).
- New road design at Corn Street and Welch Way junctions
 - Less traffic
 - Revised taxi rank
 - More loading bays
 - Blue badge parking
 - More crossings
 - Wider footways
 - Improved footway surfacing
 - Better directions and signage
 - Improved lighting
 - More safe and secure cycle parking
 - More space for bus stops
 - More trees
 - More plants and gardens
 - More seating
 - Play Space
 - Public Art
 - More areas for outdoor dining
 - More space for events space
 - More space for the market
 - Information on local history and heritage
7. If there is another improvement you would like to see in Witney High Street and Market Square please tell us here.
8. What improvements would encourage you to walk, wheel or cycle to Witney High Street and Market Square more often? (Tick all that apply).
- More safe secure cycle parking
 - Better walking and cycling routes to the town centre
 - Better enforcement of the traffic restriction
 - More seating, plants and gardens
 - Improved pedestrian crossing facilities
 - Improved footway surfacing
 - Other

9. Which measures would encourage you to use public transport more often for access to Witney High Street and Market Square? (Tick all that apply).

- More space for bus stops
- Bigger shelters/more seats
- Better bus timetables and route maps
- Improved access for disabled people
- Other

10. In your opinion, what makes a successful High Street?

11. Please tell us anything else you would like to say about Witney High Street and Market Square

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