

Annual Council Meeting of Witney Town Council



Wednesday, 8th May, 2024 at 7.00 pm

To members of the Annual Council Meeting Committee - O Collins, J Aitman, T Ashby, R Smith, D Temple, D Enright, A Bailey, L Cherry, R Crouch, G Doughty, J Doughty, D Edwards-Hughes, G Meadows, 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.

Numbers of the public will be limited, with priority given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda. Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the 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. **Election of Town Mayor 2024/25**

To receive nominations for the position of Chair/Mayor for the civic year 2024/2025 and to elect the Chair/Mayor.

2. **Election Of Deputy Mayor 2024/25**

To receive nominations for the position of Deputy Chair/Mayor for the civic year 2024/2025 and to elect the Deputy Chair/Mayor.

3. **Election of Leader 2024/25**

To receive nominations for the position of Leader of Witney Town Council for the Council term and to elect the Leader.

4. **Election of Deputy Leader 2024/25**

To receive nominations for the position of Deputy Leader of Witney Town Council for the Council term and to elect the Deputy Leader.

5. **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(d)(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.

6. **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.

7. **Minutes** (Pages 4 - 12)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 15 April 2024 in accordance with Standing Order 18 including questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item.

8. **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.

9. **Adoption of Meetings Calendar 2024/25** (Page 13)

To formally adopt the timetable of Council Committee meetings for the 2024/2025 municipal year.

10. **Appointment of any new Committees in accordance with Standing Order 30**

To consider whether to create any new Council Committees.

11. **Review (or request the Town Clerk to review) any TORS**

To consider whether any Committee terms of reference should be reviewed for the municipal year 2024/25.

12. **Appointment of Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties and the Election of Chairs** (Pages 14 - 15)

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk, and appoint Members to the Standing Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Parties, Task & Finish Groups and Elect the Chairs for the municipal year 2024/25.

13. **Appointment to Advisory Committees & External Bodies/Outside Organisations** (Pages 16 - 18)

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk and appoint Members Advisory Committees & External Bodies/Outside Organisations and Elect the Chairs for the municipal year 2024/25.

14. **Review of Council Policies**

To review any Council policies if appropriate, noting that Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were updated in 2023.

15. **Annual Town Meeting Minutes - 20 March 2024** (To Follow)
To receive the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 20 March 2024.
16. **Climate Emergency Action Plan** (Pages 19 - 23)
To receive the report of the Head of Estates & Operations.
17. **Community Governance Review** (To Follow)
To receive the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.
18. **Councillor Attendance Register 2023/24** (Page 24)
To receive the annual Councillor attendance register for the 2023/2024 municipal year.



Town Clerk

**FULL COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 15 April 2024

At 7.15 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor O Collins (Chair)

Councillors:	G Meadows	R Crouch
	J Aitman	G Doughty
	T Ashby	D Edwards-Hughes
	D Enright	D Newcombe
	R Smith	J Robertshaw
	D Temple	S Simpson
	A Bailey	J Treloar
	L Cherry	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Nigel Warner	Responsible Financial Officer
Others:	Inspector Chris Ball (Thames Valley Police)	

192 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J Doughty.

193 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor O Collins declared a personal interest in Item 8 as the applicant of the request for a subsidised letting was known to him.

There were no other declarations from Members or Officers

194 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 19 February 2024 were received.

Minute Item 99 – A Member raised a concern regarding the wording of the minute. The Town Clerk confirmed that this wording was directly taken from the statement that she made and was therefore an accurate reflection of the meeting. The request for an amendment was withdrawn.

Minute Item 102 – It was suggested that Members may like to re-consider amendments to the Committee Calendar following the resolution of Item 10 on the agenda, in which case, the minutes should be approved subject to this item.

A vote to approve the minutes was taken. The result being:

In Favour	16
Against	0
Abstention	2

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 19 February 2024 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair, subject to minute 102 regarding the Committee Calendar.

195 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

196 **WITNEY COMMUNITY POLICING ISSUES**

Members received a verbal update from Inspector Chris Ball of Thames Valley Police (TVP). He began by thanking the council for the subsidised use of the Corn Exchange for the launch of the “through their eyes” campaign which attracted 60 attendees. TVP hoped this scheme would be introduced nationally.

He also thanked the Council for the support provided for Youth Services which would complement the sessions that TVP had planned throughout the summer at the All-Terrain Pitch on Gordons Way to engage with younger people.

Insp Ball also reported that his team had recently:

- Begun the introduction of a new scheme (DISC) to link shops and other premises together to share information about incidents, shoplifting and other Anti-Social behaviour.
- Carried out speed enforcement on Downs Road following complaints.

Members thanked Insp Ball for the support TVP had provided in deterring the use of Pony & Trap racing on the A40. Though he advised this was not legal activity there was a concern for safety of the participants as well as other road users.

A Member asked Inspector Ball for further information on the yellow phone located outside Witney police station following the advice from the Inspector at the Annual Town Meeting that residents are able to speak to an officer directly if used. Inspector Ball advised that the calls were routed to the main Kidlington call centre who were able to radio to local officers; he did acknowledge some issue with this facility and residents using web access which he is investigating.

A Member raised concerns about unauthorised access to the old boxing club on Newland; Insp Ball asked that information on the ownership be forwarded to him, and he would try and encourage that repairs are made to restrict the access.

A Member also raised the issue of the level of shoplifting in the town which they described as being "rampant". In response Insp Ball advised that there had been 13 report incidents in March however, he did not believe it was higher and incidents were under reported. He hoped that the introduction of the new DISC scheme and the encouragement for premises to improve their CCTV technology should help to reduce incidents of shoplifting along with Anti-Social behaviour (ASB) issues in retail premises.

A Member asked if there was evidence of assaults on shop and health workers in Witney. Inspector Ball advised that this was not a major issue other than the ASB mentioned.

Resolved:

That, the verbal updates be noted.

(Inspector Ball left the meeting at 7:40pm)

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

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)

Councillor D Enright advised that the planning inspectorate hearing in relation to the Shores Green had ruled in favour of the scheme proceeding and it was hoped this would proceed with pace.

West Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)

Councillor D Enright highlighted to members that the West Hive scheme can be utilised by small business, 34 grants were paid out in March, the District Council is keen to particularly support requests which provide a Biodiversity or Net Zero advance.

Councillor R Crouch updated members on the activity at the Witney Hotel, the initial occupancy of 280 was now down to around 60 as the Home Office has processed claims and residents are either being sent home or moved on to accommodation in the UK.

Cllr R Smith advised that the district's housing stock would be looked at by a new Housing Enablement Officer.

Councillor T Ashby advised members that a temporary surface was to be applied by the County Council to the bridleway between the Deer Park and Windrush Place estates. He also reported that work was in progress in relation to an adventure playpark and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) in the Deer Park area.

He also advised that the WODC planning enforcement team was working with businesses on the Tungsten Business Park to ensure they adhere to their planning conditions on lighting and other matters.

Lastly, Councillor J Aitman updated on Youth Services and the funding of a Youth Officer. She also encouraged members to recommend the West Hive scheme and assured members that

organisations should not hold back making applications as WODC officers are very willing to advise and are able to assist in any form filling.

Resolved:

That, the verbal updates be noted.

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

Witney & District Twinning Association

Cllr O Collins along with Cllr R Crouch had attended the AGM and witnessed new energy within the committee and their keenness to celebrate the 35th anniversary with Unterhaching and 45th Anniversary with Le Touquet in 2025.

Witney Educational Foundation

Cllr R Crouch advised the organisation provided several grant opportunities, including for families struggling to pay school trip costs.

Witney Town Charity

Cllr R Crouch updated the Council that works were progressing and that checks on the Almshouses were ongoing, with one currently vacant.

Resolved:

That, the verbal updates be noted.

199 **CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING - 20 FEBRUARY, 12 MARCH & 9 APRIL**

The minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee meetings held on 20 February, 12 March & 9 April 2024 were received.

P180 – A proposal by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Bailey to include a QR code on the signs to direct the public to information of the current sewage discharge at Colwell Brook was agreed unanimously by Members.

Members also noted the verbal recommendation from the earlier Special Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee regarding the Witney North Strategic Development Area that a Community Governance Review of boundaries should be considered and discussed at a future meeting.

Resolved:

1. That, Officers include a QR code on the Colwell Brook sewerage signage and,
2. That, the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee meeting held on 20 February, 12 March & 9 April 2024 be received, and any recommendations therein approved and,
3. That, that officer prepare a report on a Community Governance Review to be received at the Annual Council Meeting on 8 May 2024.

(Cllr A Bailey offered his apologies and left the meeting at 7:54pm)

200 **PARKS & RECREATION - 4 MARCH 2024**

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

Cllr Aitman thanked the Council and Officers for their support to Earthwatch regarding the erection of the wooden monolith at the Tiny Forest.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 4 March 2024 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

201 **HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS - 11 MARCH 2024**

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 11 March 2024 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

202 **STRONGER COMMUNITIES - 18 MARCH 2024**

The Chair of the Committee, Cllr L Cherry, presented the above minutes to Council and moved their acceptance.

SC152 - Cllr Smith advised that an online meeting of the Inclusivity & Diversity panel was due to take place on 22 April 2024 and an update to Council would be provided.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee meeting held on 18 March 2024 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

203 **POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE - 25 MARCH 2024**

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

F162 – A Member asked that Officers approach West Oxfordshire District Council to request use of specialist machinery if this would lead to a lesser use of Glyphosate. The Deputy Town Clerk (DTC) advised that the policy was adopted however Officers would consider on a case-by-case basis.

Owing to his earlier declaration, Cllr O Collins relinquished the Chair and passed to Deputy Cllr G Meadows for the consideration of a request for a subsidised letting. The DTC advised that owing to the event being held on 14 June it was necessary to present to the Council at late notice.

Members discussed the request and all members agreed bar the abstention of Cllr Collins to a subsidised let of the Corn Exchange to a value of £257 with the stipulation that evidence of the payments to the two charities is provided to Officers by 28 June 2024.

Resolved:

1. That, a subsidised let of the Corn Exchange to a value of £257 be approved for a charity quiz event in favour of Oxfordshire Mind and Bridewell Gardens subject to evidence of the payments to the charities being provided and,
2. That, the minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 25 March 2024 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

204 **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Council received the report of the Mayor and Mayor's Secretary which highlighted the civic engagements of the Mayor and Deputy since the last meeting.

He expressed thanks to his Deputy and Secretary and reported that the "Mumma Mayor" event in Thame did not take place however he attended the Chipping Norton Mayor fun run and duck hunt instead.

He also expressed his pleasure at opening the new wheeled sports park which was attended by what he described as over 100 people of all ages.

Resolved:

That, the report be noted.

(Cllr L Cherry left the meeting at 8:10pm)

205 **MAYOR ELECT**

The Chair, Cllr O Collins invited nominations for the position of Town Mayor for the ensuing municipal year.

With no further nominations forthcoming Cllr Collins was proposed to serve a second term by Cllr G Meadows and seconded by Cllr D Enright. All Members agreed with one abstention from Cllr Collins himself.

Therefore, Cllr O Collins was duly voted Mayor Elect by the Council for the municipal year 2024/2025.

Following the resolution, Members re-considered the calendar of meetings for 2024-25 and were all in agreement that the date of the Annual Council Meeting be reverted back to 8 May 2024 along with an amendment to the first meetings of the Parks & Recreation and Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments in the cycle.

Resolved:

1. That, Cllr Owen Collins be voted Mayor Elect for the ensuing municipal year and,
2. That, the dates of the Annual Council Meeting, Parks & Recreation and Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments be amended, and a new calendar of meetings be circulated. This would include a change of date for the next Traffic Advisory Meeting, now due to be held on 18 June.

206 **HEALTH & SAFETY**

There were no Health & Safety items to update Council on.

207 **CORN EXCHANGE ACCESS & SECURITY**

The Council received the report of the Venue & Events Officer concerning a proposal to install a magnetic door access system to the Corn Exchange main door.

Members were pleased to hear of the potential financial savings and additional security the system would provide however, a member raised a query regarding the release of the doors in the event of a fire alarm.

Members agreed that if the release of the doors occurred in the event of a fire alarm, they were happy to proceed with the purchase at a cost of £1,321 ex VAT.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted.
2. That, Officers further investigate the options for release of the doors in the event of fire and,
3. That, the proposed magnetic lock system is purchased at a cost of £1,321.

208 **VANDALISM & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

The Council received a list of vandalism reports since the last meeting.

Resolved:

That, the verbal update be noted.

209 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

The Council received a verbal report from the Leader regarding a request from CoHSAT (Coalition for Health Streets and Active Travel) to facilitate an awareness meeting between CoHSAT and the residents of Witney regarding the "Traffic Filters" which were being introduced in Oxfords during the Autumn, these would require many people who drive vehicles into Oxford to make changes to their route. This would be a chance to receive information at a free, ticketed event and was not a consultation event.

Members discussed a proposal from the leader, seconded by Cllr Aitman for a meeting to be held and that this would be a subsidised letting if Oxfordshire County Council who were introducing the scheme were unwilling to pay for the hire of the venue. A vote was taken, the result of which was:

For	13
Against	0
Abstention	1

Members agreed that the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee would discuss the proposal further at a future meeting of that committee.

Resolved:

1. That, the verbal report be noted and,
2. That, the request from CoHSAT be added to the agenda of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee on 15 April 2024 for further discussion.

210 **OCC PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE**

The Council received correspondence from Oxfordshire County Council advising of the approval of the Shore Green development and welcomed the projection of this long-awaited scheme.

Resolved:

That, the correspondence be noted.

211 **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY CORRESPONDENCE**

The Council received correspondence from the Environment Agency with a project update on the Thames Valley Flood Scheme.

Members welcomed the update.

Resolved:

That, the correspondence be noted.

212 **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY RESPONSE**

The Council received correspondence from the Environment Agency Area Director for the Thames following the letter submitted by the Council on 21 February 2024 regarding the flooding issues being suffered in the town.

Members were disappointed at the lack of commitment in the reply however were pleased to hear that a programme of works was proposed for August 2024.

Members were also disappointed that a response had not been received from the Environment Minister who was also written to in February 2024.

Resolved:

That, the correspondence be noted.

213 **POLICE CRIME COMMISSIONER CORRESPONDENCE**

The Council received correspondence from Matthew Barber the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Thames Valley. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the letter had been restricted in the Agenda Pack due to the pre- election period of purdah as Mr Barber was a candidate seeking re-election.

Members welcomed the update and asked that once the new PCC was appointed that they be invited to a future meeting of the council.

Resolved:

1. That, the correspondence be noted and,
2. That, the future PCC be invited to a meeting of the Council.

214 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

A Member asked that reference to a West Oxfordshire Conservative Association Election Agent in meetings ceased. They were not relevant to the matters being debated by the Council, and if they were so, should be noted in the minutes.

A Member asked that the Council consider the display of a portrait of the King, the Deputy Town Clerk advised that one had been procured through a free nationwide scheme and the matter would be discussed further at the Stronger Communities Committee meeting on 3 June.

In response to a further question, the Deputy Town Clerk advised Members that an update on the Climate Emergency was being prepared by the Head of Estates & Operations for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

215 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

The Town Clerk advised the following leases had been signed and sealed.

Date	No of Seal	Nature of Document
07 March 2024	90	Lease relating to Unit 3 Coseley Building, Windrush Ind Estate, Witney. Welland Property Trustee I Limited & Welland Property Trustee II Limited In duplicate
07 March 2024	91	Licence to carry out works Lease relating to Unit 3 Coseley Building, Windrush Ind Estate, Witney. In duplicate

Resolved:

1. That, the above sealed documents be noted and,
2. That, the seal of the Council be affixed to any documents arising from decisions taken by this meeting of the Council.

The meeting closed at: 8.42 pm

Chair

Witney Town Council – Calendar of Meetings 2024-25

All meetings held at the Corn Exchange, Witney unless otherwise stated on the published Agenda									
CLIMATE, BIO-DIVERSITY & PLANNING	6pm	Tuesday	23 April 14 May 4 June*†	25 June 16 July*†	6 August 3 September 17 September*†	8 October 5 November 26 November*†	17 December 7 January 28 January 11 February*†	4 March 25 March 22 April*†	13 May*†
PARKS & RECREATION	6pm	Monday	13 May	1 July	9 September	4 November	13 January	10 March	
HALLS, CEMETERIES AND ALLOTMENTS	6pm		20 May	8 July	16 September	11 November	20 January	17 March	
STRONGER COMMUNITIES	6pm		3 June	15 July	23 September	18 November	27 January	24 March	
POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE (& Personnel sub-committee)	6pm		10 June	22 July	30 September	25 November	3 February	31 March	
COUNCIL	7pm		17 June***	29 July	14 October	9 December 16 December**	24 February	28 April*	

Sub- Committees

Working parties

Annual Council Meeting – Wednesday 7 May 2025

Annual Town Meeting – Wednesday 19 March 2025

NOTE: CHRISTMAS BREAK – Meetings will not be called between 17 December 2024 and 2 January 2025 unless deemed necessary

* Indicates full Planning Committee Meeting, including minutes † Meeting to incorporate Environmental/Climate Items
Full Planning/Environmental meetings will be held 'in person' with other planning meetings being held online.

** Meeting on 16 December 2024 for budget purposes only

*** Meeting for adoption of AGAR

× Meeting outside of normal schedule due to Bank Holiday

Witney Traffic Advisory Committee at 2.30pm – 18 June 2024, 24 September 2024, 21 January 2025, 18 March 2025

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 8 May 2024

Title: Appointment of Standing Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties and the Election of Chairs

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

Background

Members will be aware of the Council’s Committee Structure and how the membership works from the previous Annual Council meeting.

For ease the Deputy Town Clerk has provided the following table with details of the membership required.

Committee/Sub-Committee	Membership required
a) Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee	6 Members + Ex-officio Town Mayor & Leader
b) Parks & Recreation Committee	6 Members + Ex-officio Town Mayor & Leader
c) Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee	6 Members + Ex-officio Town Mayor & Leader
d) Stronger Communities	6 Members + Ex-officio Town Mayor & Leader
e) Policy, Governance & Finance	2 Members + Chair of the above Standing Committees and Ex-officio Town Mayor & Leader
f) Personnel Sub-Committee <i>[this is a sub-committee of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee]</i>	Town Mayor, Leader, and Chair of above Standing Committees. Subject to inclusion of an elected Member with experience in this field maybe 1 additional Member
g) Disciplinary & Grievance Panel	3 Members* – must not be Chair or Members of Personnel/Policy Governance & Finance Committee

NOTE: The Vice-chair of these Committees/Sub-Committees will be appointed at the first meeting.

Working Parties	Membership required
Christmas Lights Working Party	6 Members - reports to Stronger Communities Committee. <i>Currently: Cllrs T Ashby, R Crouch, D Edwards-Hughes, A Bailey and G Doughty</i>
Task & Finish Groups	Membership required
Inclusivity & Diversity Panel	Chairs of Committees
Youth Council	Currently elected: – Cllrs J Aitman, L Cherry, R Crouch, S Simpson, R Smith, and G Meadows
D-Day 80 th Anniversary	Currently elected: - Cllrs J Robertshaw, J Treloar, A Bailey, and R Smith

NOTE: The Chair of the Working Parties/Task & Finish Groups will be appointed at the first meeting.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following;

1. that the membership to the Council's Standing Committees (a to d) be elected, and;
2. that the Chairs of those Standing Committees be elected, and;
3. that in order to form the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee at e – it be made up of the Committee Chairs (a to d) plus Ex-Officio Town Mayor and Leader, plus 1 additional Member to make the membership of 8 Members;
4. that the Personnel Sub-Committee is formed of the Town Mayor and Leader, plus the Chairs of the Standing Committees
5. that a Disciplinary & Grievance Panel is elected – *to be formed from Councillors not sitting on the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee* – membership is a minimum of 3.
6. that the future of the Working Parties be agreed – membership of the Christmas Lights WP being confirmed if continuing and;
7. that the membership of the Task & Finish Groups be reaffirmed.

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

Date:	Wednesday, 8 May 2024
Title:	Appointment to Advisory Committees & External Bodies/Outside Organisations
Contact Officer:	Deputy Town Clerk

Background

The Town Council appoints representatives to the following Advisory Committees/Outside Bodies, and it is usually recommended that those appointed as per below should serve until the Annual Council Meeting following the next ordinary election of Councillors in 2023, although Members may wish to step down at this juncture if they so wish.

Witney Traffic Advisory Committee	-	4 – J Aitman, T Ashby, S Simpson, R Smith
Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils [Larger Councils]	-	1 – Leader of the Council
West Witney Sports & Social Club	-	2 – D Newcombe, R Smith
Witney Town Band	-	1 – O Collins
Witney & District Twinning Association	-	3 (Mayor (Ex officio)) R Crouch, J Doughty
West Oxfordshire Museum Centre	-	1 – O Collins
St Mary’s Church Preservation Trust	-	Mayor
Volunteer Link Up	-	1 – J Aitman
RAF Brize Norton – Local Consultation Working Group	-	1 – D Newcombe
Witney Allotment Association	-	1 – R Crouch
Witney Youth Council Mentors	-	2 – G Meadows, S Simpson, J Treloar
Friends of the Cemeteries	-	2 – D Enright, J Doughty
Home Start Champions	-	3 – J Aitman, L Cherry, S Simpson
Lower Windrush Valley Project	-	1 – R Smith
West Oxfordshire Community Transport	-	1 – S Simpson
Witney Fair Trade Action Group Champion	-	1 – R Crouch

North Witney Collaboration Group	-	2 – R Smith, A Bailey
Witney Community Profile Steering Group	-	2 – L Cherry, <i>J Aitman</i>

NOMINEES – SERVING AS TRUSTEES

Listed below are the Town Council nominees serving on other outside bodies. The expiry dates of terms of office on these bodies are shown. The terms of office are set by the various bodies and Council appointments are made on the expiry of the term or vacancies caused by resignation, disqualification, etc.:

(* Denotes non-Member of Witney Town Council) Term of office expires

Witney Town Hall Charity – 4-year term of office

The Witney Town Hall Charity owns the Town Hall, Townhouse and the Buttercross and is the Town Council's landlord. The primary purpose of the Charity is to ensure the properties are kept in good order, and secondly with the rental income a small grant pot is provided to support the work of local organisations.

Mr H B Eaglestone*	May 2025
Ms Mandy Collicut* (Co-opted Trustee)	Feb 2027
Cllr O Collins	May 2027
Cllr S Simpson	May 2027
Mrs R Crouch*	May 2026
Mr D Semaine* (Co-opted Trustee)	Oct 2027
Mrs L J Semaine*	Jun 2026

(The Town Council does not nominate co-opted Trustees)

Witney Town Charity – 4-year term of office

The charitable objectives of the Witney Town Charity are:

1. The provision and maintenance of Almshouses for poor persons
2. The relief of poor persons in conditions of need, hardship or distress. It operates 18 Almshouses and also provides grants for those in need.

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

Mr B Beadle*	May 2026
Mrs M Jones*	Jun 2024
Mrs R Crouch*	May 2026
Cllr G Meadows	May 2027
Cllr J Aitman	Jun 2025
Mr C Woodward*	Feb 2026

Witney Educational Foundation (WEF) – 4-year term of office

WEF provides financial support for the schools of Witney and surrounding communities to enable all students to enjoy full range of activities offered by each school. It also provides grants for families in need, to assist with the cost of extra-curricular activities, educational visits, school clothing and other essential items.

Cllr L Cherry	Jul 2027
Mrs L Duncan*	May 2025
Mr R W Barton*	May 2028
Mr C K Woodward*	May 2026

Cogges Welfare Trust Charity – 4-year term of office

The Cogges Welfare Trust Charity maintains the charities property including the upkeep of the Witney Market Clock and Clock House. Remaining income is used for the relief of hardship etc. by the way of grants to people in need.

Cllr J Aitman	Jul 2024
Cllr D Enright	Jul 2024
Mr H W Chirgwin*	Jul 2024

Madley Park Hall Trust - 4-year term of office

Objectives and aims: The provision and maintenance of a village hall for the use of the inhabitants of Witney and the surrounding area without distinction of political, religious or other opinions, including use for:

- (a) meetings, lectures and classes, and
- (b) other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants

J Aitman	May 2027
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Arising from the above, the nominees required are listed below:

1. Witney Town Charity:- **1 Council-nominated vacancy**

The term of office of Mrs M Jones expires in June 2024 – the Charity has advised that Mrs Jones would be willing to stand for another term. She is an active and valued Trustee and although she is not now a Town Councillor, the Charity would welcome Witney Town Council reappointing her for a further 4-year term.

2. Cogges Welfare Trust Charity:- **3 Council-nominated vacancies**

The terms of office of Cllrs J Aitman, D Enright and former Councillor (and town council representative) Mr H Chirgwin are all due to come to an end in July.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and

- 1. consider the appointments to the outside bodies/organisations, and
- 2. consider the appointments as trustees to the two organisations where trusteeships have or are due to expire this municipal year.

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

Date:	Wednesday, 8 May 2024
Title:	Climate Emergency Action Plan
Contact Officer:	Head of Estates & Operations

Background

Witney Town Council declared a Climate Emergency at the Council meeting on 26th June and swiftly followed up with a Public Meeting on Sunday 28th July enabling everyone to share ideas and visions for change, and to explore ways in which we can all work together to make Witney net-zero carbon as soon as possible.

To explain why the government, local councils and organisations have declared an emergency; Many organisations have been working for many years to try to prevent climate change, but change needs to happen faster. It's a key priority to prevent global temperatures from increasing by more than 1.5%, the consequences of which, would have a massive impact on all of us.

Witney Town Council is committed to ensuring it does everything possible to address climate change and has set a target to become carbon neutral by 2028 to ensure a cleaner and better future for its residents.

West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council have made a commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

Members may have heard the terms carbon neutral and net zero, and there is a difference between the two.

1. Carbon neutrality is when you calculate your carbon emissions and compensate for what you have produced via carbon offsetting projects. Offsetting carbon emissions, in addition to avoidance and reduction, is how this is achieved.
2. The net zero target refers to a government commitment to ensure the UK reduces all its greenhouse gas emissions by 100% from 1990 levels by 2050.

Legislation

The Climate Change Act 2008 is the basis for the UK's approach to tackling and responding to climate change. It requires that emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are reduced and that climate change risks are adapted to. The Act also establishes the framework to deliver on these requirements. The Act supports the UK's commitment to urgent international action to tackle climate change.

A Climate and Nature Bill is currently before the UK Parliament that ensures a comprehensive and joined-up approach to the climate emergency and nature crisis. While the existing Environment Act only offers to halt the decline of nature by 2030, the Climate and Nature Bill commits to reversing biodiversity loss by 2030.

Current Situation

Witney Town Council need to create a climate change strategy and a climate emergency action plan. The Town Council will have to be mindful of the County Council and District Council's climate actions, targets and objectives to enable WTC to focus on what can be achieved within its control and remit, while at the same time being able to deliver as a collective.

These documents will be produced by WTC officers setting clear targets and detail the journey with clear milestones that will include a reassessment of the Council's present carbon emissions, identifying and prioritising actions.

Since the council declared the climate emergency in 2019 the council has;

- calculated WTC carbon footprint for 2019-2020 to be 64.08 tCO₂e, and a further 34.83 tCO₂e with the inclusion of West Witney Sports Club and Langdale Hall. Appendix 1.
- purchased an electric vehicle to replace a diesel vehicle within the operations teams fleet, and the council have agreed to another electric vehicle when the next vehicle is due for renewal this year.
- invested £4,000 in replacing combustion powered ground maintenance tools, hedge trimmers, strimmers and blowers with battery powered.
- offered two forms of green burials, woodland and meadow. Both are designed to be environmentally friendly, with no plastic tributes, no headstones, and biodegradable coffins.
- recycled good quality soil from street future installations for reuse in burials.
- recycled hedge & tree cuttings being chipped and reused in flower beds, and mixed with poor quality soil to enhance and improve its use in bedding and allotments.
- distributed bark removed from play areas to allotment sites along with chippings.
- a tree replacement programme to ensure our tree stock doesn't diminish and explored expanding the programme on available land.
- improved the efficiency of the heating to Town Council offices where all new electric radiator emitters are energy efficient ceramic core units.
- replaced the heating and hot water system at Burwell hall with an efficient condensing gas boiler and a remote programming control system that has saved over £2,500 of energy use and over 200kg of CO₂ over the winter months.
- installed LED or CFL lighting in the offices.
- procured energy efficient printers in the office that include a scheme of tree planting to offset the paper used.
- provided recycling bins across all buildings and open spaces.
- selected the most competitive utilities supplier that supplies energy through 100% renewable sources.

- committed to several major projects that will reduce our carbon footprint and emissions through asset renovation and modernisation that include West Witney Social Club, Langdale Hall and a New Depot. There will also be the opportunity to offset our carbon emission using renewable technologies.
- included energy efficiency in the scoring matrix within the procurement of the Christmas illuminations contract currently out to tender.
- bus shelters with green sedum roofs with benefits to the environment not only as a carbon sink, but providing a habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, adding to the biodiversity of the town.
- recycled coffee bags to be used on the edible garden for soil nourishment
- incorporated climate and nature recovery when providing comments to planning applications focussing on the use of renewable energy and sustainable design, and environmental and biodiverse thinking for biodiversity net gain.
- Four allotment sites producing local produce encouraging healthy eating and minimising the impact of transportation.
- created 300m of new hedgerow
- created a Tiny Forest (600 whips)
- completed 60m of bank work increasing the level of carbon offset
- started working on Biodiversity Net Gain
- secured funding for wet meadow habitat reinstatement that will enhance carbon sequestration

There is a wealth of guidance and support for local councils which will be utilised to help WTC achieve its goals.

These include but are not restricted to;

- National Association of Local Councils (NALC) [Website Link](#)
- Centre for Sustainable Energy <https://www.cse.org.uk/about-us/>
- The Great Collaboration <https://greatcollaboration.uk/>
- Climate Emergency UK <https://climateemergency.uk/>

Environmental impact

As noted above.

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 draft Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy will be reported to Council for approval.

Financial implications

Described here or as stated in the report above.

There will be costs associated with the Climate Emergency Action Plan that will follow Council process to be reported to committees for approval.

All funding opportunities will be explored to support climate action costs and WTC will maximise the use of support by the various organisations and agencies available.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Officers will produce a climate change strategy and a climate emergency action plan.

Summary

Scope	Emissions Type	Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Percentage of Total Emissions
Scope 1	Heating	19.23	30.0%
	Fugitive Emissions	0.00	0.0%
	Authority's Fleet	0.89	1.4%
Scope 2	Electricity	40.52	63.2%
Scope 3	Staff Travel	0.00	0.0%
	Transmission & Distribution Losses	3.44	5.4%
	Water	0.00	0.0%
Total Emissions		64.08	100.0%

Summary by scope

Scope	Emissions Type	Activity	Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Percentage of Type Emissions	Percentage of Total Emissions	
Scope 1	Heating	Natural Gas	19.23	100.0%	30.0%	
		Burning Oil - Kerosene	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Gas Oil	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Wood Pellets	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
	Fugitive Emissions	HFC-32	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		R410A	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		HCFC-22/R22	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Other Fugitive Emissions	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Small diesel car ≤ 1.7 litre	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Medium diesel car, 1.7 - 2.0 litre	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
	Authority's Fleet	Large Diesel Car > 2.0 litre	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		MPV - Diesel	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Diesel van Class I (up to 1.305 tonnes)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Diesel van Class II (1.305 to 1.74 tonnes)	0.89	100.0%	1.4%	
		Diesel van Class III (1.74 to 3.5 tonnes)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Diesel 4x4	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Minibus - Diesel	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Small Petrol Cars ≤ 1.4 litre	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Medium Petrol Car 1.4 - 2.0 litre	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Large Petrol Car > 2.0 litre	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Small Hybrid Car - Petrol	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Medium Hybrid Car - Petrol	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Large Hybrid Car - Petrol	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Electric Vehicle (Average Sized Car)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Average Medium Car (Unknown Fuel)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Rigid HGV (>3.5 - 7.5 tonnes)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Rigid HGV (>7.5 tonnes-17 tonnes)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Rigid HGV (>17 tonnes)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		All Rigid HGVs	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Articulated HGV (>3.5 - 33t)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Articulated HGV (>33t)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		All Articulated HGVs	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		All HGVs	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
	Other Vehicles - Diesel	0.00	0.0%	0.0%		
	Other Vehicles - Petrol	0.00	0.0%	0.0%		
	Scope 2	Electricity	Building Use	34.17	84.3%	53.3%
			Streetlighting	6.34	15.7%	9.9%
	Scope 3	Staff Travel	Small Petrol Motorbike (Mopeds/Scooters up to 125cc)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%
			Medium Petrol Motorbike (125-500cc)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%
			Average Medium Car (unknown fuel)	0.00	0.0%	0.0%
			Small Petrol Cars ≤ 1.4 litre	0.00	0.0%	0.0%
			Medium Petrol Car 1.4 - 2.0 litre	0.00	0.0%	0.0%
			Large Petrol Car > 2.0 litre	0.00	0.0%	0.0%
Small Diesel Car ≤ 1.7 litre			0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
Medium Diesel Car 1.7 - 2.0 litre			0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
Large Diesel Car > 2.0 litre			0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
Small Hybrid Car - Petrol			0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
Medium Hybrid Car - Petrol			0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
Large Hybrid Car - Petrol			0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
Electric Vehicle (Average Sized Car)			0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
Transmission & Distribution Losses		T&D Losses - Scope 2 Electricity	3.44	100.0%	5.4%	
		T&D Losses - EV	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
Water		Water Supply	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	
		Water Treatment	0.00	0.0%	0.0%	

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Local Partnerships LLP 2020

Councillor Attendance 2023-2024 - Committee Meetings

	Expected Attendances	Present	Percentage	Absent	Apologies received	In Attendance
Cllr Joy Aitman	54	45	83%	0	9	0
Cllr Thomas Ashby	29	26	90%	0	3	6
Cllr Andy Bailey	44	28	64%	5	11	0
Cllr Lisa Cherry	24	8	33%	0	16	1
Cllr Owen Collins	54	35	65%	1	18	0
Cllr Rachel Crouch	34	32	94%	1	1	2
Cllr Geoff Doughty	24	24	100%	0	0	6
Cllr Jane Doughty	24	20	83%	0	4	3
Cllr David Edward-Hughes	27	27	100%	0	0	0
Cllr Duncan Enright	19	17	89%	0	2	1
Cllr Georgia Meadows	40	37	92%	1	2	0
Cllr Denis Newcombe	30	27	90%	1	2	1
Cllr James Robertshaw	31	27	87%	0	4	3
Cllr Sandra Simpson	36	33	92%	0	3	1
Cllr Ruth Smith	55	51	93%	0	4	1
Cllr Dean Temple	31	12	39%	8	11	0
Cllr Jack Treloar	22	19	86%	1	2	4