

Full Council

Meeting of Witney Town Council

Monday, 23rd June, 2025 at 7.00 pm



To members of the Full Council - A Bailey, J Doughty, O Collins, G Meadows, J Aitman, T Ashby, D Enright, R Smith, D Temple, A Mubin, R Crouch, G Doughty, D Edwards-Hughes, D Newcombe, J Robertshaw, S Simpson and J Treloar

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. 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.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minutes (Pages 7 - 14)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 7 May 2025 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 and consider the request for the Town Council to support the consultation on the application for a Public Spaces Protection Order on the A40 (verbal report from Inspector Ball/Town Clerk at the meeting)

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 15 April and 23 June 2025, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein.

- a) **Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee - 22 April 2025** (Pages 15 - 20)
- b) **Planning & Development Committee - 13 May & 3 June 2025** (Pages 21 - 28)
- c) **Climate & Biodiversity Committee - 20 May 2025** (Pages 29 - 32)
- d) **Parks & Recreation Committee - 12 May 2025** (Pages 33 - 38)
- e) **Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - 19 May 2025** (Pages 39 - 43)
- f) **Stronger Communities Committee - 2 June 2025** (Pages 44 - 49)
- g) **Policy Governance & Finance Committee - 9 June & 23 June 2025 (verbal update)** (Pages 50 - 56)

9. **Standing Orders**

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

(Report to Follow)

10. **Committee Terms of Reference** (Pages 57 - 61)

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

11. **Scheme of Delegation**

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

(Report to Follow)

12. **Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025**

In line with The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 - To receive and consider the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for 2024/25 – and formally agree and adopt.

13. **Public Works Loan Borrowing - West Witney Sports Ground**

To receive and consider the report of the Project Officer.

(Report to Follow)

14. **Climate Action Working Party**

To consider membership of this Working Party, recommended by the Climate & Biodiversity Committee under minute no: CB296 of the meeting held on 20 May 2025.

The WP is formed to help expediate the creation of a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan and direct Council resources to achieve the Council's carbon neutrality aims. Membership need not be more than five Councillors.

15. **Civic Announcements** (Pages 62 - 63)

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

16. **Health & Safety** (Pages 64 - 67)

To receive the report of the Compliance & Environmental Officer.

17. **Vandalism** (Page 68)

To receive an update showing the latest vandalism to Council property and reported Anti-Social Behaviour.

18. **Complaints & Compliments**

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

(Report to Follow)

19. **Future of Local Government in Oxfordshire - (See Next Page for Detail)**

To receive information regarding the options proposed by Local Authorities regarding the future of Local Government in Oxfordshire and consider whether the town council should submit any queries, or support during the current consultation periods. Members may like to consider delegating this matter to a small group of Councillors.

Option 1

Two new unitary councils with the working titles of Oxford and Shires Council and Ridgeway Council. This proposal is being developed by West Oxon & Cherwell District Councils.

- **Oxford and Shires Council** would comprise all of the existing district areas of Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire.
- **Ridgeway Council** would be made up of the whole of West Berkshire Council's area and all of the existing district areas of South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.

<https://news.westoxon.gov.uk/news/your-views-will-help-shape-proposals-for-a-new-local-council-for-our-area>

Option 2

A single unitary council covering the current county council boundary. This proposal is being developed by Oxfordshire County Council.

<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/>

Option 3

Three unitary councils. One covering Oxford City but with expanded boundaries from the current city council. A second including the current districts on Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire along with West Berkshire. A third including the current districts of West Oxfordshire and Cherwell. This proposal is being developed by Oxford City Council.

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/1696/greater-oxford-one-council-local-decisions-a-better-place-to-live>

20. Part night-time Lighting (Pages 69 - 83)

To receive notice of and consider a response to a consultation by Oxfordshire County Council on a part night-time lighting framework.

21. 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.

22. Correspondence

To receive any correspondence received (if applicable).

- a) **Remote attendance and proxy voting in local authorities: consultation results and government response**

To receive notice of the results and conclusion of the Government's consultation on remote and hybrid meetings. See link below for details:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/enabling-remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting-at-local-authority-meetings/outcome/remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting-in-local-authorities-consultation-results-and-government-response#conclusion-and-next-steps>

b) **Witney Chamber of Commerce Survey Results** (Pages 84 - 152)

To receive the results and analysis of an online survey conducted in and around Witney by the Witney Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with Witney Town Council earlier this year.

This item will be considered fully at the scheduled meeting of the Stronger Communities Committee on 14 July but Members may raise any points for consideration at this juncture.

c) **Police & Crime Commissioner - Newsletters**

To receive the April & March newsletters from the Thames Valley Police, Police & Crime Commissioner:

[April 2025](#)

[May 2025](#)

d) **Police & Crime Commissioner - Neighbouring Policing Engagement Survey** (Pages 153 - 155)

To receive additional correspondence from the Police & Crime Commissioner with a request for completion of the Neighbouring Policing Engagement Survey.

23. **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.

24. **Sealing of Documents**

To receive details of documents sealed by the Council.

Date	No of Seal	Nature of Document
29 April 2025	98	Tenancy at will – Courtside Hubs CIC re: Leys Recreation Ground
29 April 2025	99	Licence for alterations relating to land forming part of land on the northwest side of Station Lane – Courtside Hubs CIC



Town Clerk

Members Interests & Registration Of Gifts & Hospitality

Members are reminded that any changes to the register of interests previously completed by them or any registration of Gifts or Hospitality received which exceed £50 should be reported to the Town Clerk **within 28 days** of the occurrence.

**ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING OF
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Wednesday, 7 May 2025

At 7.01 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor A Bailey (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	D Temple
	O Collins	G Doughty
	R Smith	J Doughty
	R Crouch	J Robertshaw
	D Newcombe	D Edwards-Hughes
	D Enright	T Ashby
	S Simpson	A Mubin
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Nigel Warner	Responsible Financial Officer
Others:	9 members of the public.	

Prior to the commencement of the official business the outgoing Mayor Cllr O Collins thanked all that had provided support to him during the two years he had held the position and provided a summary of activities he had participated in.

Following this the Reverend Dr Hester Jones blessed the Town Council for the year ahead.

241 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR 2025/26

Following the appointment of Cllr A Bailey as Mayor-Elect at the meeting of the Council on 14 April 2025, the Chair invited any further nominations for the position of Town Mayor for the ensuing municipal year and none were forthcoming.

All members were in agreement. Cllr A Bailey was therefore nominated and duly elected Chair/Mayor by the Council.

Resolved:

1. That, Cllr Andy Bailey be elected Town Mayor/Chair of Witney Town Council for the ensuing municipal year 2025/26 and,
2. That, the Declaration of Acceptance of Office be signed following the meeting in the presence of the Proper Officer of the Council.

242 **ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR 2025/26**

The new Chair invited nominations for the position of Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing municipal year. Cllr J Doughty was nominated and duly elected Deputy Mayor by the Council.

Resolved:

1. That, Cllr Jane Doughty be elected Deputy Town Mayor/Chair of Witney Town Council for the ensuing municipal year 2025/26 and,
2. That, the Declaration of Acceptance of Office be signed following the meeting in the presence of the Proper Officer of the Council.

243 **DESIGNATION OF MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN**

Following her appointment to the position of Team Rector of the parish, Members officially welcomed Rev'd Dr Hester Jones to Witney. The Rector was usually appointed Mayor's Chaplain and provided pastoral and ecclesiastical guidance to the Mayor and the Town Council.

Resolved:

That, Rev'd Dr Hester Jones be designated Mayor's Chaplain.

244 **ELECTION OF LEADER 2025/26**

The Chair invited nominations for the position of Leader of the Town Council. Cllr R Smith was nominated and elected by the Council.

Resolved:

That, Cllr Ruth Smith be elected as the Leader of the Town Council for the ensuing municipal year 2025/26.

Eight Members of the Public left the meeting at 7:19pm

245 **ELECTION OF DEPUTY LEADER 2025/26**

The Chair invited nominations for the position of Deputy Leader of the Town Council. Cllr J Aitman was nominated and elected by the Council.

Resolved:

That, Cllr Joy Aitman be elected as the Deputy Leader of the Town Council for the ensuing municipal year 2024/25

246 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Treloar and G Meadows.

247 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

At this point in the meeting, and with the permission of the Chair, the Town Clerk/CEO addressed the Council regarding recent conduct concerns, particularly highlighting three complaints stemming from social media activity around the Oxfordshire County Council elections. The Town Clerk emphasised that such incidents negatively impacted staff wellbeing, divert resources from Council priorities, and damage the Council's collective reputation. Members were reminded of their commitment to the Civility and Respect pledge adopted in October 2022 and were urged to revisit the Councillor Code of Conduct which was reviewed at agenda item 16(c). The Town Clerk encouraged participation in available training and stressed that public service required Members to maintain appropriate conduct in all interactions, including online communications in order to foster a respectful working environment and preserve public trust.

248 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the ordinary Council meeting held on 14 April 2025 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Council meeting held on 14 April 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meetings and be signed by the Chair.

249 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

250 **APPOINTMENT OF ANY NEW COMMITTEES**

The Council received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk which provided details of the current Council Committees.

Members discussed the proposed separation of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee and agreed on the establishment of a new Climate & Biodiversity Committee along with a Planning & Development Committee. This would allow the Council to focus on its target of being carbon neutral by 2028.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, separate Climate & Biodiversity and Planning & Development Committees be established.

251 **ADOPTION OF MEETINGS CALENDAR**

The Council received the updated proposed calendar of meetings, including changes to incorporate the newly established Climate & Biodiversity Committee.

Resolved:

1. That, the calendar of Council meetings for 2025/26 be adopted.

252 **REVIEW (OR REQUEST FOR THE TOWN CLERK TO REVIEW) ANY TERMS OF REFERENCE**

There were no changes to the current Terms of Reference for Committees as changes to the structure had been proposed at this meeting. Members were advised each committee would also have the opportunity to review their remits at their first meetings.

253 **SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

As changes to Committees had been proposed, officers advised this item would be deferred to the next meeting.

Resolved:

That, the Scheme of delegation be reviewed at the meeting of the Council on 23 June 2025.

254 **APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES & WORKING PARTIES AND THE ELECTION OF CHAIRS**

Members received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk and considered appointments to standing committees, sub committees, working parties and task & finish groups. In addition, the Chairs were also elected at this juncture. The following appointments were proposed, seconded, and agreed unanimously:

Planning & Development Committee

G Doughty (Chair)	D Temple
J Aitman	G Meadows
J Doughty	R Smith

Climate & Biodiversity Committee

S Simpson (Chair)	D Newcombe
D Enright	A Bailey
A Mubin	R Smith
J Treloar	J Robertshaw

Parks & Recreation Committee

J Aitman (Chair)	J Doughty
D Edwards- Hughes	S Simpson
J Treloar	R Smith
T Ashby	A Bailey

Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments

R Crouch (Chair)	J Treloar
G Doughty	D Temple
J Robertshaw	R Smith
A Bailey	O Collins

Stronger Communities Committee

T Ashby (Chair)	D Enright
G Meadows	A Bailey
R Smith	A Mubin
D Edwards-Hughes	J Treloar

Policy Governance And Finance Committee

R Smith (Chair)	A Bailey
J Aitman	R Crouch
S Simpson	G Doughty
T Ashby	J Doughty

Personnel Sub- Committee

R Smith (Chair)	A Bailey
J Aitman	R Crouch
D Newcombe	G Doughty
T Ashby	J Doughty

Disciplinary & Grievance Panel

D Enright	O Collins
T Ashby	D Temple

Community Voices (was Inclusivity & Diversity Panel)

R Smith	T Ashby
J Aitman	R Crouch
S Simpson	G Doughty

VE/VJ-Day 80th Anniversaries Task & Finish Group

J Robertshaw	J Treloar
J Aitman	O Collins
G Meadows	R Crouch

Community Governance Task & Finish Group

O Collins	R Smith
A Bailey	G Meadows
S Simpson	R Crouch
D Edwards-Hughes	

Pavilion Working Party

R Crouch	D Newcombe
R Smith	G Doughty
J Aitman	

Members unanimously agreed that the Christmas Lights Working Party and Youth Council Task & Finish Groups could be disbanded as their tasks had been successfully completed.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted and,
2. That the membership of the standing committees, sub committees, working parties and task & finish groups and their Chairs be agreed as detailed above and,
3. That the Christmas Lights Working Party and Youth Council Task & Finish Group be disbanded.

Cllr T Ashby left the meeting at 7:34pm.

255 **APPOINTMENT TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES & EXTERNAL BODIES/OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

The Council received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning nominations for advisory committees and external bodies/outside organisations.

The Chair sought nominations for vacancies on outside organisations all to serve until the Annual Council Meeting following the next ordinary election in 2027.

Witney Traffic Advisory Committee	J Aitman, D Enright S Simpson R Smith
Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils [Larger Councils]	R Crouch
West Witney Sports & Social Club	D Newcombe R Smith
Witney Town Band	O Collins
Witney & District Twinning Association	A Bailey (Mayor) R Crouch R Smith
West Oxfordshire Museum Centre	O Collins
St Mary's Church Preservation Trust	A Bailey (Mayor)
Volunteer Link Up	J Aitman
RAF Brize Norton – Local Consultation Working Group	D Newcombe
Witney Allotment Association	R Crouch

Witney Youth Council Mentors	G Meadows S Simpson J Aitman
Friends of the Cemeteries	D Enright J Doughty
Home Start Champions	J Aitman A Bailey S Simpson
Lower Windrush Valley Project	A Bailey
West Oxfordshire Community Transport	D Enright
Witney Fair Trade Action Group Champion	R Smith
Witney Infrastructure Neighbourhood Group	R Smith D Enright
Witney Community Profile Steering Group	J Aitman
Witney Flood Group Liaison	J Robertshaw

Nominees Serving as Trustees

The following were proposed as Town Council nominees to serve on outside bodies for a four-year term of office.

Witney Town Hall Charity	Mr H Eaglestone
Witney Town Charity	Cllr J Aitman
Witney Education Foundation (WEF)	Cllr S Simpson

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted and,
2. That the appointments to advisory committees & external bodies/outside nominations be agreed as detailed above.

256 **STANDING ORDERS**

The Council received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk which outlined the updating and significant redesign based on the National Association of Local Council's 2025 model version.

The updates referred to sections on code of conduct and financial controls; the remaining information was updated wording but by adopting these Standing Orders the Council would remain compliant with legislation.

Members unanimously agreed to approve the proposed changes and adjourn them until the meeting of the Council on 23 June 2025 in order to allow sufficient time for Members to review and reflect on the revisions before discussing further.

In response to a Member's question, the Town Clerk advised Councillors of the difference in voting rights if attending as a substitute or a guest of a Committee.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, that the proposed standing orders be approved but stand adjourned until the meeting of the Full Council on 23 June 2025.

257 **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised the Council's financial regulations had been reviewed by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee on 14th April and stood adjourned for adoption at the meeting on 9 June 2025.

Resolved:

That, the Council note that the current Financial Regulations are under review and stand adjourned until the meeting of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee on 9 June 2025.

258 **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Council received the Council's Current Code of Conduct and unanimously agreed that it should be reaffirmed.

Resolved:

That, the Council's Code of Conduct be re-adopted.

259 **COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE 2024-25**

The Council received an annual attendance register for Members of the Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.

The Leader of the Council along with Cllr D Edwards-Hughes thanked Members for their attendances and highlighted that it should be understood when viewing such figures that many factors influenced an individual Councillor's attendance such as illness and family or dependent commitments.

Resolved:

That, the annual attendance registers for 2024/25 be noted.

The meeting closed at: 7.55 pm

Chair

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 8a

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

Held on Tuesday, 25 March 2025

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting via MS Teams - Virtual Meeting

Present:

Councillor G Meadows (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)

Councillors:	A Bailey T Ashby J Aitman S Simpson	G Doughty J Doughty R Smith
Officers:	Adam Clapton Cara Murray	Deputy Town Clerk Admin Support Assistant - Communities & Planning
Others:	None.	

P174 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies of absence.

The Chair, Cllr A Bailey had advised he would have connectivity issues so relinquished the Chairship to the Vice-Chair, Cllr G Meadows ahead of the meeting.

P175 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr R Smith and Cllr T Ashby declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in application 25/00322/LBC as the applicant was known to them.

P176 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

P177 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.

P178 **NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING APPEAL DECISION - 65 WINFIELD DRIVE, OX29 7AU - APP/D3125/D/24/3355711**

The Committee received and considered correspondence concerning the appeal decision APP/D3125/D/24/3355711 for 65 Winfield Drive, Witney.

Resolved:

That, the appeal decision be noted.

P179 **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) DRAFT CHARGING SCHEDULE**

The Committee received correspondence regarding the West Oxfordshire District Council Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) draft charging schedule.

A Member advised this update was referring to the feasibility of developer contributions and what rates should be set to ensure developments took place, but that the community received adequate funds for infrastructure.

Resolved:

That, the correspondence be noted.

The meeting closed at: 6.37 pm

Chair

Flood Risk, Drainage & Water Environment

There are concerns regarding the adequacy of the current drainage systems and the potential impact of the development on these systems. Specifically, Members have raised the issue of increased surface water runoff and the risk of exacerbating drainage problems on Dry Lane, Crawley and Bridget Street, Witney. It is imperative that a detailed drainage strategy is provided to demonstrate that the development will not negatively impact local infrastructure or increase flooding risks in the surrounding area. Standing water and flooding have been highlighted as significant concerns. Members request that the development plan thoroughly addresses how water runoff will be managed and that measures to prevent further standing water issues, which could worsen flooding in the area, are included. A comprehensive assessment of the potential flood risk, including an updated flood risk report, should be provided as part of the EIA.

Ground Conditions and Contamination

Members have expressed concerns regarding the potential for contamination, particularly following flooding events. Given the site's history and vulnerability to flooding, there is a need to assess how floodwaters might interact with the land and any associated contamination risks. A detailed flood risk assessment, including modelling and an environmental impact study, should be undertaken to evaluate this risk fully.

Additionally, there are concerns about the land's quality due to its previous agricultural use. The site has historically been used for agricultural purposes, which may have led to contamination from the use of pesticides, fertilizers, chemicals, and other industrial activities. Members are particularly concerned about the potential for soil contamination and its impact on the health and safety of future occupants. A comprehensive land quality survey should be conducted to assess any contamination, and if identified, appropriate remediation measures should be proposed.

Built Heritage and Archaeology

The Council acknowledges that the development site includes a historic barn. Therefore, scoping should be undertaken to assess and address the potential impacts of the proposed development on this important historical and cultural asset.

Socio Economics

Given the prospect of imminent local government devolution, this should be considered as part of any parish boundary changes that may result from an accompanying community governance review. The socio-economic impact of the development, including its potential effects on local health, quality of life, social cohesion, and well-being, should be assessed. In addition, the impact on access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and housing should be examined, with an evaluation of whether existing infrastructure and services can accommodate the anticipated demand.

In light of the concerns raised, Members strongly request that the applicant undertakes a comprehensive investigation into these matters as part of the EIA, with full consideration of the potential impacts on both land quality and local infrastructure. It is vital that these investigations are conducted in line with current environmental and planning policies to ensure a safe, sustainable, and well-planned development.

177- 9	WTC/038/25	Plot Ref :-25/00663/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	20/03/2025
	Location :-	30 SCHOFIELD AVENUE SCHOFIELD AVENUE	Date Returned :-	26/03/2025
	Proposal :	Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of new single storey rear extension.		

Observations : Witney Town Council does not object to this application; however, Members note the increased footprint and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

The Meeting closed at : 6:37pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 8b

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday, 13 May 2025

At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting via MS Teams - Virtual Meeting

Present:

Councillor G Doughty (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	R Smith
	J Doughty	D Temple
	G Meadows	
Officers:	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
	Cara Murray	Admin Support Assistant - Communities & Planning
Others:	None	

P274 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

P275 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

P276 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Committee.

It was proposed that Councillor J Aitman or G Meadows be elected, a vote was taken with the result being four votes in favour of Cllr Aitman and two votes in favour of Cllr Meadows.

There being no other nominations it was:

Resolved:

That, Councillor J Aitman be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.

Cllr G Meadows left the meeting at 18:11pm.

P277 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

P278 **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.

The meeting closed at: 6.30 pm

Chair

278- 5	WTC/057/25	Plot Ref :-25/01012/FUL	Type :-	FULL
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	01/05/2025
	Location :-	10 TUNGSTEN PARK, COLLETTS WAY COLLETTS WAY	Date Returned :-	14/05/2025
	Proposal :	Provision of 4 additional windows to the Northern Eastern flank elevation to match existing.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections to this application and considers that the proposed development would enhance working conditions within the unit though the increase in natural daylight thus reducing the use of artificial lighting. Members support improvements that contribute positively to the functionality and usability of existing commercial or industrial spaces.		
278- 6	WTC/058/25	Plot Ref :-25/01011/LBC	Type :-	LISTED BUI
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	01/05/2025
	Location :-	24 MARKET SQUARE MARKET SQUARE	Date Returned :-	14/05/2025
	Proposal :	'Like for like' making good and redecoration works to front elevation including DOFF stonework clean.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections to this application and welcomes the proposed improvements to this historical building. Members support sympathetic developments that contribute to the preservation and enhancement of Witney's architectural heritage and considers this application to be a positive step towards maintaining the character and integrity of the building.		
278- 7	WTC/059/25	Plot Ref :-25/01071/ADV	Type :-	ADVERTISED
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	01/05/2025
	Location :-	1ST FLOOR UNIT 1 DES ROCHES SQ DES ROCHES SQUARE	Date Returned :-	14/05/2025
	Proposal :	Erection of two fascia signs and window graphics.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council has no objections regarding this application.		
278- 8	WTC/060/25	Plot Ref :-25/01051/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	01/05/2025
	Location :-	34 WILMOT CLOSE WILMOT CLOSE	Date Returned :-	14/05/2025
	Proposal :	Demolition of existing porch and erection of single storey front extension.		
	Observations :	Witney Town Council does not object to this application; however, Members note the increased footprint and would ask that mitigating measures are considered to help decrease the possibility of surface water flooding, in accordance with policy EH7 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.		
278- 9	WTC/061/25	Plot Ref :-25/01085/HHD	Type :-	HOUSEHOLDE
	Applicant Name :-		Date Received :-	01/05/2025
	Location :-	97 COGGES HILL ROAD COGGES HILL ROAD	Date Returned :-	14/05/2025
	Proposal :	Conversion and first floor extension of garage to create ancillary accommodation.		

Observations : Witney Town Council has no objections to this application in principle. However, Members request that a condition be attached to any approval to confirm the use of the accommodation will remain ancillary to the main property.

The Meeting closed at : 6:30pm

Signed : _____ Chairman Date: _____

On behalf of :- Witney Town Council

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

**Held on Tuesday, 3 June 2025
At 6.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney**

Present:

Councillor G Doughty (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	R Smith
	J Doughty	D Temple
	G Meadows	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
	Cara Murray	Admin Support Assistant - Communities & Planning
Others:	None	

P311 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

P312 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

P313 MINUTES

The minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee meeting held on 22 April and the new Planning & Development Committee meeting on 13 May 2025 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee meeting held on 22 April and the new Planning & Development Committee meeting on 13 May 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meetings and be signed by the Chair.

P314 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

P315 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding changes to the Committee Terms of Reference along with a verbal update confirming the remit of Committee.

Members were unanimous in agreement with the proposed changes, some of which had arisen due to the Council decision to establish a separate Climate & Biodiversity Committee.

Members asked that an amendment to be made to (e) so as to include consideration for water and therefore read as:

To consider the impact on the green and water environments, ecosystems and biodiversity of all planning applications and comment in the name of the Council accordingly.

Recommendation:

1. That, Objective (e) be amended to read as noted above and,
2. That, the amended Terms of Reference be presented for approval by Full Council on 23 June 2025.

P316 **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.

P317 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

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

The Committee Clerk summarised the reasoning for the decisions that were contrary to the Committee's submission.

Resolved:

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

P318 **APPLICATION FOR A NEW PREMISES LICENCE - SA SPAZA SUPPLIES UK LTD, 38B HIGH STREET, WITNEY**

The Committee received the application from SA Spaza Supplies UK Ltd, 38b High Street, Witney for a new premises licence.

The Committee had no objections to the licensing application. Members welcomed and were pleased to support the expansion to this new diverse small business.

Resolved:

That, the Council makes no objection to this application.

The meeting closed at: 6.15 pm

Chair

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

Held on Tuesday, 20 May 2025

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

Present:

Councillor S Simpson (Chair)

Councillors:	D Enright	R Smith
	D Newcombe	J Treloar
	J Robertshaw	J Aitman (In place of D Enright)
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
	Janine Sparrowhawk	Compliance & Environment Officer
	Carl Whitehead	Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer
Others:	None.	

CB290 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Enright, A Bailey & A Mubin.

Councillors J Aitman, G Meadows and T Ashby attended as substitutes respectively.

CB291 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

CB292 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor J Aitman and seconded by Councillor R Smith that Councillor D Enright be elected.

An additional proposal was made by Councillor J Treloar, seconded by Councillor T Ashby that Councillor J Robertshaw be elected.

There being no other nominations a vote was taken with the result being:

Councillor D Enright	Four Votes
Councillor J Robertshaw	Three Votes

There was one abstention.

Resolved:

That, Councillor Duncan Enright be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.

CB293 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

CB294 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Council outlining the terms of reference for the Committee.

A Member requested that (f) be amended to include the word “Promote” and therefore read as:

(f) To explore and promote the expansion of community energy to keep the benefits of our local energy generation in our local economy.

Additionally, a Member asked that “Local Oxfordshire Organisations” be added to (d) and therefore read as:

(d) To engage with Central Government, West Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, local Oxfordshire Organisations, relevant stake holders and other organisations to initiate local action on climate change (towards achieving net zero carbon emissions) air & water pollution, and other environmental issues within the town.

It was proposed by Cllr J Aitman, seconded by Cllr G Meadows that the terms of reference be adopted with the above amendments. Members were unanimous in agreement.

In response to a Member’s question, the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that matters of Flooding mitigation would be dealt under the Planning & Development Committee’s Terms of reference as it was considered infrastructure. Flooding events and larger flooding issued would be referred to Full Council.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Terms of Reference including the above suggested changes be recommended for approval by the Full Council at the meeting of 23 June 2025.

CB295 BIODIVERSITY & GREEN SPACES UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal update from the Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer (B&GSO).

Members heard that the B&GSO was pleased to see the establishment of a dedicated Committee which he hoped would help to reinforce the work which had resulted in the award reorganisations the Council had received, these were in respect of the Lake & Country Park and further lead to greater opportunities for grant funding applications and for an application in early 2026 for local wildlife site status.

He updated the Committee regarding his and the newly promoted Park Ranger's recent progress and activity which included water testing, a furniture review, increase of noticeboard and information boards across the sites, greater volunteer interest, work to improve over 700 metres of pathway as well as having gained permission to raise pathways to reduce flooding risks.

The B&GSO responded to Members' questions regarding the results of the bank stabilisation work already carried out and that which was planned for the future, action taken and plans for the introduction of wildflower sites across the town, and ongoing water testing at the convergence of Colwell Brook and lake.

The offer of a walk with the B&SGO and Park Ranger was offered, Members agreed that this should be extended to all Councillors ideally to take place ahead of the Witney Carnival on 9th July so that Members were well informed.

The B&GSO confirmed that a written report would be submitted to the Committee at the next meeting.

Resolved:

1. That, the verbal update be noted and,
2. That, Officers to issue invites to Councillors to participate in a walk with the B&GSO and Park Ranger.

CB296 CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY & CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

The Committee received and considered the report of the Compliance & Environment Officer (C&EO).

Members welcomed the summary report that had been provided and the Compliance & Environment Officer to the new role.

A Member raised concern of the cost of making retrofit and upgrades however recognised that a solid plan would allow the Council to plan effectively to strive to reach its goals.

In response to a Member's question regarding the promotion of schemes to benefit the community, the Deputy Town Clerk reminded the Committee of its remit and that as a Town Council the resources were limited however there was nothing stopping the Council promoting a wide scope of District, County and Government lead schemes to Witney residents and businesses as highlighted in Phase 3 & 4 of the roadmap provided by the C&EO.

The Chair raised the idea of hosting an event in the Council's buildings to facilitate and bring together community and support organisations in order to help educate and promote schemes and grant schemes that may be available.

Lastly, Members considered the recommendation to establish a working party in order to help expediate discussions with Officers who would be drafting the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. It was agreed that an offer be made to all Council Members to join the working party at the next meeting of the Full Council.

Members were unanimous in agreement with all the recommendations made in the report.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Officers produce a detailed roadmap following the completion of a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan and,
3. That, the idea of a Climate roadshow event be investigated by Officers and,
4. That, a Climate Action Working Part be established, and its membership be agreed at the meeting of the Full Council on 23rd June 2025 and,
5. That, this Committee be provided with regular updates of the Working Party.

CB297 COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES & WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Committee received the detailed report of the Town Clerk/CEO concerning the Committee Objectives & Work Plan for 20x25/26.

Members noted that the Objectives mirrored the report of the Compliance & Environment Officer and therefore outlined the major elements of the roadmap that the Committee should focus on.

The Committee were unanimous in acceptance of the recommendations which included the already agreed establishment of a Working Party.

Resolved:

That, the Committee Objectives & Work Plan for 2025/26 be noted.

The meeting closed at: 6.55 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 12 May 2025

At 6.03 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	S Simpson	D Edwards-Hughes
	A Bailey	R Smith
	J Doughty	J Treloar
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	3 members of the public.	

PR260 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor T Ashby, Councillor G Doughty attended as a substitute.

PR261 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

PR262 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr R Smith and seconded by Cllr J Treloar that Cllr S Simpson be elected. There being no other nominations it was:

Resolved:

That, Councillor Sandra Simpson be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.

PR263 MINUTES

The minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 10 March 2025 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 10 March 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

PR264 **PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC**

The Committee adjourned for this item.

The Committee received representations from Members of Witney Wolves Basketball Club concerning Agenda Item 10

The Committee reconvened.

During the following item:

Cllr J Treloar left the meeting at 6:08pm rejoining at 6:10pm

Cllr D Edwards-Hughes left the meeting at 6:35pm rejoining at 6:38pm.

PR265 **WITNEY BASKETBALL**

With the permission of the Chair, this item was moved up the agenda so the members of public could hear the discussion and outcome.

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk as to the current position of the provision for Basketball in Witney. Members had earlier heard from the members of the Witney Wolves Basketball Club of their own lived experiences.

It was clear to the Committee that the available basketball facilities were either of poor standard or non-existent, with particular issues around access to an acceptable indoor court, notably Windrush Leisure Centre. This resulted in the club currently having to play at Carterton leisure centre which came at a significant higher hire cost as their regular indoor court at Wood Green School was unavailable at times for example at exam periods. The Club had also had to host games and training sessions across multiple locations to satisfy the desire of their 60-80 players.

The Town Clerk confirmed that following an earlier exploratory meeting with the club held in April 2025, the Town Council had passed information to West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC), the club thanked the Town Council for this and reported that WODC had been in contact and a time to meet was being arranged.

Members also discussed the various ways it could help raise the profile and assistance to help improve the facilities, including the court, colloquially known as "The Cage" situated behind the Oxfordshire County Council Family Centre on Witan Way, which provided a centrally located outdoor court. It was thought that this area was owned and under the responsibility of OCC however attempts by the club to enter discussions had failed. It was agreed that Officers would look to obtain confirmation and enter discussions as to the potential for improvement to be made.

Other ideas to provide support were to consider the inclusion of basketball courts/hoops in the design of multi-use games areas, financial support for summer holiday youth sessions, integration with The Station detached youth provision, collaborations with Witney Hockey Club and use of the WODC Spacehive fundraising scheme.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,

2. That, Officers establish the ownership of the outdoor court on Witan Way and,
3. That, Officers explore options to support the promotion and improve the provision of Basketball in Witney.

PR266 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk which outlined the current Terms of Reference for the Committee along with changes for consideration.

Following the Members discussions, it was agreed that the following amendments and additions be made:

That the wording of (c) be amended to read “To keep under review/updated the sports strategy within the Council’s adopted Open Spaces Strategy to meet the changing needs of the community, sporting governing bodies recommendations and West Oxfordshire District Council’s Playing Pitch Strategy in the Local Plan.

That (d) and (e) be amended as noted in the report.

That two additional terms be added and read:

(f) Within all its decision making ensure that the green environment and biodiversity of public open spaces is protected and enhanced in line with the Council’s Climate Emergency aspirations.

(g) To oversee any development and investment of Council owned recreation ground sites and its supporting infrastructure meets the needs of the community, ensuring they remain safe and compliant

That the current Terms of Reference (f) and (g) be relisted as (h) and (i).

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and
2. That, the amendments noted above be made and
3. That, the recommended changes be approved at the meeting of the Council on 23 June 2025.

PR267 **COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES & WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The Committee received the tabled report of the Town Clerk/CEO along with a verbal update concerning the Committee Objectives & Work Plan for 2025/26.

Following the discussions regarding the provision for Basketball in Witney it was agreed that an objective be added.

To support the development of basketball provision in Witney by:

- (i) Collaborating with Oxfordshire County Council on the future of ‘the Cage’ facility at Witan Way to explore opportunities for Witney Wolves Basketball Club to establish a home base; and
- (ii) Reviewing existing Witney Town Council-owned recreational facilities and planned projects to assess and integrate provision for basketball where appropriate.

In response to a Member's query regarding the capacity of Officers to manage and deliver what was a significant portfolio of projects, the Head of Estates & Operations confirmed the team were ambitious and looking forward to bringing about the completion of the projects for the town.

Resolved:

1. That, an objective be added to support the development of basketball provision in Witney by:
 - (i) Collaborating with Oxfordshire County Council on the future of 'the Cage' facility at Witan Way to explore opportunities for Witney Wolves Basketball Club to establish a home base; and
 - (ii) Reviewing existing Witney Town Council-owned recreational facilities and planned projects to assess and integrate provision for basketball where appropriate. be added and,
2. That, the Committee Objectives & Work Plan for 2025/26 be agreed.

PR268 LEYS CRICKET UPDATE

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations Manager along with a verbal explanation from the Head of Estates & Operations (HE&O) which related to West Witney Sports & Social Club's cricket provision.

The HE&O explained that the table of costs was comprehensive however, as noted in the report, it did not include costs of equipment along with the proportion of costs that was spent during the football season. These cost calculations would continue to be worked on, and updated versions covering all costings would be made available to Members which would cover both Cricket and Football.

He also updated Members on the progress of the agreement with Swifts CC and confirmed it was hoped that the final agreement would be reached and signed in the coming weeks.

Recommended:

1. That, the report and verbal updates be noted and,
2. That, updated cost calculations be provided to the Committee.

PR269 UPDATE ON CRICKET PROVISION AT THE LEYS RECREATION GROUND

The Committee received a verbal update from the Town Clerk/CEO in respect of the progression of discussions with the Oxfordshire Cricket Board and Henry Box School regarding the desire for an artificial wicket at The Leys Recreation Ground.

Oxfordshire Cricket Board had confirmed ongoing interest in reintroducing cricket at The Leys. This included a renewed expression of interest from Henry Box school in using a proposed artificial pitch on the field adjacent to their premises, and general support from the OCB for facilitating cricket activities—including All Stars and women's sessions—once construction works at Courtside are completed. The OCB had emphasised that, due to the ongoing construction and the lack of available changing facilities, it had not been feasible to resume cricket activities during the current summer season.

Resolved:

That, the verbal update be noted.

*During the following item:
Cllr J Treloar left the meeting at 7:13pm rejoining at 7:16pm*

PR270 MAJOR STRATEGIC PROJECTS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Project Officer regarding the major projects within the Town along with a verbal update from the Head of Estates & Operations (HE&O).

The Leys Masterplan

Members were concerned to hear of a further delay to the delivery of the renovations and the proposed period of closure of the Skatepark however, they appreciated Officers actions to ensure that Courtside Hubs continued to provide regular clear communication and updates.

The Committee welcomed that the Splashpark was to be delivered ahead of time as had the skatepark, further adding to their confidence in the new operations and projects team. Members remarked on the positive comments they had received from residents who had closely watched the progress and looked forward to the official opening by the Mayor prior to the half term school holidays.

Raleigh Crescent Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)

Members received an illustration which depicted the potential for the new MUGA and were reminded of the need for confidentiality due to the commercial sensitivity of the document.

They heard progress had been slower than Officers would like to have seen, due to the number of projects West Oxfordshire District Council had in flight. Officers explained that due to the Section 106 funds held by WODC, it had to be included in the tender process however, it was thought that once the tender was awarded it could move with more pace under the project management of the Town Council.

West Witney – Portaloo

The Town Clerk/CEO provided an update on the grant made by the Council to facilitate the use of toilets within the West Witney Sports & Social Club by parkrun. An issue had arisen regarding parkrun gaining access as was believed to be agreed. The Town Clerk/CEO would be investigating further with the Social Club to resolve.

Resolved:

That, the report and verbal updates be noted.

PR271 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.

PR272 PROJECT UPDATE

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

The Head of Estates & Operation answered Members' questions regarding welfare provisions, insulation and cycle storage provision.

The report had outlined the building of the new works depot would be over one storey, rather than two storeys and would provide a saving of approximately £10,000 - £20,000 however, Members agreed that the additional storey would provide additional storage space and future proof the Council given the proposed changes to local government responsibilities with anticipated devolution.

Members were unanimously in agreement with proceeding with the option of building the new work depot with two storeys.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Officers proceed with plans for construction of a new two storey works depot.

PR273 FINANCE REPORT

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer regarding the West Witney Clubhouse renovation project and the option to tax to ensure that Value Added Tax (VAT) would be able to be reclaimed.

Members heard that the Council would be taking professional advice ahead of progressing further to confirm the plan. The Committee was unanimous in support.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Council engage professional services to advise on whether to opt-to-tax the West Witney Clubhouse and,
3. That, a budget for professional services be set at £5,000 and
4. That, authority be delegated to the Town Clerk/CEO to implement the above actions.

The meeting closed at: 7.43 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 19 May 2025

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

Present:

Councillor R Crouch (Chair)

Councillors:	J Treloar	G Doughty
	J Robertshaw	D Temple
	R Smith	G Meadows (In place of O Collins)
	A Bailey	
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
	Angus Whitburn	Operations Manager
	Thomas Davies	Deputy Venue & Events Officer
Others:	None.	

H279 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor O Collins, Councillor G Meadows attended as a substitute.

H280 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

H281 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Committee.

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor J Treloar or O Collins be elected. There being no other nominations a vote was taken. The result being unanimous in favour of Councillor Treloar.

Resolved:

That, Councillor J Treloar be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.

H282 MINUTES

The minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 17 March 2025 were received.

H154 – The Town Clerk reported that Witney Allotment Association had been written to requesting that they update their waiting list. Whilst a response had been received from WAA North a response was awaited from the overarching WAA Committee detailing the full position of all allotment sites

Resolved:

1. That, the verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 17 March 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

H283 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned for this item.

The Committee received representations from two members of Witney Allotment Association South Sub-Committee concerning Agenda Item 11.

The Town Clerk read a statement forwarded by the Site Representative of Lakeside Allotments which detailed their thoughts on the officer's report to be considered under agenda item 11.

Additionally, the allotment members present thanked the Committee for their consideration of the options regarding flooding at Lakeside allotments.

The Committee reconvened.

H284 LAKESIDE FLOODING OPTIONS

With the permission of the Chair, the item was moved up the agenda so that the members of public present could hear the discussion and outcome.

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations Manager as well as hearing earlier the words of the Site Representative for Lakeside Allotments and the two Members of WWA-South who were present.

Following on, Members discussed the specifics of the proposals with questions regarding the layout, ditch orientation and flow levels of the various water courses being answered by the Operations Manager.

Although the Committee sympathised with the allotment holders' frustration about flooding, potentially involving sewage water, it was mutually agreed by all present that the allotments were situated on a flood plain. There was no simple or inexpensive solution to the issue which had appeared to worsen in recent years. Some plots were unusable in the winter, and the viability of the soil and the longevity of any mitigation was unknown.

The Committee was unanimous in agreement to decline both recommendations in the report in favour of alternative proposals.

It was therefore proposed by Cllr A Bailey and seconded by Cllr J Treloar that the Council developed a strategy to engage with Thames Water and other interested parties to review the

issues being experienced. In particular a request be made to Windrush Against Sewage Pollution to provide the historical flow rates of Colwell Brook. Members were unanimous in support.

Additionally, Members further agreed to review an earlier topographical survey regarding hydrology movement. If any further survey work was found to be needed, then Officers should review and report back to the Committee.

Recommended:

1. That, the report and verbal contributions be noted and,
2. That, a strategy be developed to engage with Thames Water and interested parties and,
3. That, Officers investigate any additional hydrology survey work that may be required.

The Members of the public left the meeting along with the Operations Manager at 6:45pm

H285 **THE EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (EHRC) CONSULTATION - TOILET PROVISION IN PUBLIC HALLS**

With the permission of the Chair, the item was moved up the agenda.

The Committee had been asked to note the intention that EHRC were imminently to issue a public consultation following the Supreme Court ruling on the definition of "sex" under the Equality Act 2010 and to consider any implications for the provision of single-sex and staff toilet facilities at the Corn Exchange and other public halls.

A Member raised that these changes were mandatory for public bodies however, felt that Witney Town Council should highlight its concerns with regards to the practicalities of introducing changes.

The Committee was concerned that it was overreach to include toilet provisions in the guidance however, a solution to change the use of the disabled toilet would meet the requirements of the court ruling but it was a person's right to choose their sex, and it should not be viewed as a disability.

Cllr G Meadows proposed, and Cllr R Smith seconded that the Council consult with LGBTQ & disabled communities, who would be affected by the additional use of the designated toilet, prior to submission of a response from Witney Town Council by the Mayor, Leader of the Council, Cllr Meadows and Town Clerk. The Committee were unanimous in agreement with the proposal.

Recommended:

1. That, the Council enter a submission to highlight their concerns the formation of which be delegated to the Mayor, Leader, Cllr Meadows and the Town Clerk; and
2. That, the Council consult with groups prior to help inform its response.

Cllr A Bailey left the meeting at 7:05pm

H286 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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

It was proposed by Cllr R Smith, seconded by Cllr J Robertshaw that the following recommended changes to the current Terms of Reference be made.

- (e) To oversee the management of Hailey Road, Lakeside, Newland and Windrush Place Allotments whilst leased to the Witney Allotment Association.

And that additionally the following new Terms of Reference be included:

- To oversee the development and management of the Corn Exchange (including the 1863 café bar) as a community hub and arts centre in line with the Council's vision and long-term business plan for the venue.
- Within all its decision making ensure that the green environment and biodiversity of public open spaces is protected and enhanced in line with the Council's Climate Emergency aspirations.
- To oversee any development and investment in Council-owned public halls, and the supporting infrastructure, ensuring they meet the needs of the community, remain safe and compliant.

Members were unanimous in agreement of the proposed changes.

Recommended:

1. That, the changes as noted above be made to the Terms of Reference and,
2. That, those changes be approved at the meeting of the Council on 23rd June 2025.

H287 **COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES & WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The Committee received the detailed report of the Town Clerk/CEO along with a verbal update concerning the Committee Objectives & Work Plan for 2025/26.

No additional objectives or changes were request by Members.

Resolved:

That, the Committee Objectives & Work Plan for 2025/26 be noted.

H288 **PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of new Venue & Events Officer and offered him their best wishes.

The V&EO answered Members' questions which related to clarification of the maintenance of the charity clothes bank at Burwell Hall as well as outlining the need for changes to the Corn Exchange flag design to ensure these were more robust.

He further explained the importance of attendance from Councillors at the Advent Fayre on the 30 November in order that it could proceed without additional costs of staffing being incurred.

The Leader of the Council supported the V&EO comments and asked that all Councillor be written to highlight the importance of their support.

Resolved:

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, all Councillors are advised of the Advent Fayre date and their need to support the event and,
3. That, Officers proceed with the recommendations to alter the style of banner.

H289 CORN EXCHANGE BUSINESS REPORT

The Committee received and considered the report of the Venue & Events Officer which provided an update on the activity of the Corn Exchange events.

Members were pleased to receive the updated data on the attendance figures as requested by them previously and to hear of new events that were being established. including the summer outdoor music events which would return in conjunction with the fizzy Friday promotion.

The Committee expressed their thanks to the events staff for the hard work to ensure the 80th anniversary VE Day celebrations were delivered smoothly.

Resolved:

That, the report and verbal update be noted.

The meeting closed at: 7.25 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 2 June 2025

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

Present:

Councillor T Ashby (Chair)

Councillors:	R Smith	D Enright
	G Meadows	A Mubin
	A Bailey	J Treloar
	D Edwards-Hughes	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	One member of the public.	

SC298 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

SC299 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

SC300 MINUTES

The minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee meeting held on 24 March 2025 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee meeting held on 24 March 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

SC301 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned for this item.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Simon Watson from Carterton Town Council who was attended the meeting with a particular interest in Agenda Item 10 – Youth Council.

The Committee reconvened.

SC302 **YOUTH COUNCIL**

With the permission of the Chair, this item was moved up the agenda to allow the visiting Councillor from Carterton to hear the discussions.

The Deputy Town Clerk and Leader of the Council outlined the progress of the Youth Council to date explaining in brief how the Council has approached the re-establishment of the Youth Council. The recruitment had ensured it was open to all to apply and that each potential member had the opportunity of a face-to-face meeting to discuss what they wanted to achieve.

Overall, the Youth Council has been a great success with any challenges being overcome and objectives set.

The Committee then received the minutes of the meeting of the Youth Council on 28 April 2025 and were pleased to see that it would be active and participate with interaction at the upcoming Witney Carnival.

Members also heard of the upcoming visit from the Le Touquet Youth Council on 8 July 2025 and it was proposed with all Members in agreement that a budget be set to subsidise the costs of providing a takeaway meal and use of the Corn Exchange that day. Additionally, it was suggested that non-Youth Council members be invited to participate in the meeting to encourage cultural bonds between the twinned towns.

Recommended:

1. That, the verbal updates be noted and,
2. That a budget for a reception meal be considered by Policy, Governance & Finance at their meeting of 9 June 2025 and,
3. That, the minutes of the Youth Council meeting held 28 April 2025 be noted.

SC303 **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

The Chair called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr J Treloar and seconded by Cllr T Ashby that Councillor D Edwards-Hughes be elected.

An additional proposal was made for the election of Cllr G Meadows by Cllr D Enright which was seconded by Cllr R Smith. There being no other nominations a vote was taken:

In favour of Cllr Edwards-Hughes	Four
In favour of Cllr Meadows	Four

The Chair exercised his casting vote in favour of Cllr Edwards-Hughes.

Resolved:

That, Councillor David Edwards-Hughes be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.

SC304 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the terms of reference for the Committee.

Members welcomed the suggested amendments and additions in the report which highlighted the Council's commitment to equality and engagement.

Recommended:

That, the Committee terms of reference be updated to include all suggestions in the report and recommended for Council approval on 23 June.

SC305 COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES & WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Committee received the detailed report of the Town Clerk/CEO along with a verbal update concerning the Committee Objectives & Work Plan for 2025/26

The Deputy Town Clerk advised clarity would be provided to Members in respect of the quoted £40,000 at a later date.

In response to a question, Members reflected on the support the Council may provide to Witney Chamber of Commerce (WCoC) and the towns businesses in general following submission or results from a survey they had held earlier in the year, and due for discussion at the next meeting. It was noted that there were already several objectives included in the report and that the Town Council could work to explore these opportunities further.

The Mayor confirmed that her was due to meet with the Chairman of WCoC later that week to discuss their needs.

Later in the meeting when the Committee considered Agenda Item 9b – Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey – it was agreed that an objective be added to review the need for an indoor meeting venue for young people.

Resolved:

1. That, the Committee Objectives & Work Plan for 2025/26 be noted and
2. That, additional clarity of the amounts of Core Grant and Community Transport be provided to Members and,
3. That, an objective be set to review in conjunction with The Station and Courtside Hubs for provision of an indoor meeting venue for Young People.

SC306 COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer, with the points in the report being summarised by the Chair.

Members agreed that West Oxfordshire District Council be contacted in respect of the Welcome to Witney guide so that the Town Council could help promote the work being carried out by them as part of their wayfinding project.

The Committee considered the press coverage and asked that Officers ensure that press releases were issued whenever possible; Members were disappointed to hear that even when provided with a press release this had not necessary lead to publication as had been the case with the 80th VE Anniversary celebrations and the opening of the refurbished Splashpark, both of which would have illustrated and educated residents on the work of the Town Council.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Officers issues a press release when relevant and continue to monitor inclusion in the press.

SC307 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications & Community Engagement Officer, again the points in the report were summarised by the Chair following thanks and pride in the management and facilitation of the excellent VE Day 80th anniversary events in Witney.

Members welcomed the news that The Station would attend to the next meeting of the Committee and provide their 3-year plan.

In respect of the Witney Carnival, the Committee considered their participation in the procession event with mixed interest. Members were reminded of the positive feedback received following the 2024 event which helped to show the Councils “human side”. It was agreed a decision be made by 9 June. However, the Committee noted the participation of the Youth Council and looked forward to supporting them on the Council stand.

Members were unanimous in agreement that the Town Council facilitate a Climate event to highlight the work of local organisations and Council bodies, additionally the Committee agreed that promotion of heritage events, walks, and activities be promoted such as those arranged by Witney Museum to coincide with Heritage Open Days.

The Committee heard from the Chair who highlighted the work of the Community insight Profile Steering Group and encouraged Members to engage with the group.

The Chair would

follow up with his Oxfordshire County Council contacts and also investigate how the Town Council could potentially get more involved.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Council decide whether to participate in the Witney Carnival by 9 June and advise officers and,
3. That, the Council facilitate a Climate awareness event,
4. That, the council promote local heritage open day events.

SC308 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Members received and considered the updated Community Engagement Strategy.

Members suggested some minor amendments and agreed to provide any final comments to the Community & Communications Officer ahead of the meeting of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee on 9 June.

However, Members were unanimous in agreement with its recommendation for adoption.

Recommended:

1. That, the updated strategy document be noted and,
2. That, any final amendments to the Community Engagement Strategy be advised to Officers ahead of agreement at the 9 June meeting of Policy, Governance & Finance and,
3. That, the strategy be recommended for approval.

SC309 ANNUAL SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

The Committee received and considered the results of the annual residents' satisfaction survey.

Members were pleased to see that the highest percentage of responses had been from the under 17 age group, Officers advised they believed this to be due to push on social media to local schools and also youth council members.

Officers advised that each individual Committee would receive detailed information and comments for areas under their jurisdiction and that Members were welcome to provide any comments or suggestions for improvement.

The Committee were pleased how highly the Councils Civic Events had been scored and how this reflected on the organisation and effort of Officers.

They were however, concerned to see comments from younger residents stating they were not made to feel "welcome" and were "moved on" when they congregated. In response to this it was suggested that the Council consider again what support that The Station could provide either utilising the Corn Exchange or the upcoming Courtside building on The Leys perhaps once a week as an indoor meeting venue for younger people. It was unanimously agreed that this be added an objective for the Committee.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, an objective be set for the Committee to consider an indoor venue provision for young people and,

SC310 WITNEY FORUM NOTES

The Committee received the notes of the Witney Forum Meeting held on 25 March 2025.

The Chair confirmed his intention to attend the next meeting of the Forum on 24 June 2025 in order to find out more about the groups that were working hard to provide assistance to the town's residents.

In reflection of the work of the Witney Forum he asked that a social media post be created to celebrate the work of volunteers across the town as it was currently National Volunteer Week, all Members were in agreement.

Resolved:

1. That, the Witney Forum minutes of 25 March 2025 be noted and,
2. That, Officers recognises the work of Volunteers in the community by way of a social media post.

The meeting closed at: 6.58 pm

Chair

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

Held on Monday, 9 June 2025

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

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	D Edwards-Hughes (In place of T Ashby)
	R Crouch	D Temple (In place of J Doughty)
	A Bailey	J Treloar (In place of G Doughty)
	S Simpson	
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Nigel Warner	Responsible Financial Officer
	Mark Lewis	Head of Estates & Operations
	Angus Whitburn	Operations Manager
Others:	None.	

F319 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs G Doughty, J Doughty, and T Ashby. They were substituted by Cllrs J Treloar, D Temple and D Edwards-Hughes respectively.

F320 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers at this point of the meeting.

Cllr R Crouch later made a *personal, non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 14*

F321 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr A Bailey and seconded by Cllr R Crouch that Cllr J Aitman be elected. There being no other nominations it was:

Resolved:

That, Councillor Joy Aitman be elected Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.

F322 MINUTES

The minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 31 March 2025 and the Special Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 14 April 2025 were received.

F195 Property, Legal & Insurance Matters – The Chair advised the Pavilion task and finish group should be a Working Party due to the ongoing nature of its work. All were in agreement.

In response to a Member, the Town Clerk advised Cllr J Aitman had been added to the Pavilion Working Party at the Annual Council meeting and that Cllr D Newcombe had retained membership.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 31 March 2025 and the Special Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 14 April 2025 be approved as correct records of the meetings and be signed by the Chair.

F323 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

F324 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee received the report from the Deputy Town Clerk, which included proposed amendments to the current terms.

A verbal update was also provided, recommending that the terms and committee objectives be reviewed further to ensure they remained aligned.

Resolved:

That, agreement of the Committee terms of reference be deferred to the Special meeting of the Committee scheduled for 23 June 2025.

F325 COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES & WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Committee received the report of the Town Clerk/CEO.

Like the terms of reference, a verbal update was also provided, recommending that the terms and committee objectives be reviewed further to ensure they remained aligned with policy, properties and finances.

Resolved:

That, agreement of the Committee objectives and works programme for the municipal year be deferred to the Special meeting of the Committee scheduled for 23 June 2025.

F326 **BRIDGE STREET DESILTING**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Operations Manager.

Members were informed that this item had been agreed by the Council in 2024 as part of a broader report on riparian watercourse works for which it held responsibility in Witney. Although the area in question fell outside the Council's formal remit, it was agreed that the Council should set a positive example in riparian management by carrying out desilting work near the bridge, in the interest of the wider community.

Persistent high-water levels throughout 2024 had delayed the project, and the method of desilting now proposed differed from the original plan. Further information was still required, but current thinking suggested the revised approach would involve a road closure and incur higher costs than initially anticipated.

The Committee welcomed the renewed momentum behind the project and remained fully supportive of the scheme. It was agreed that all opportunities to secure funding for both the project itself and the potential road closure should be thoroughly explored by officers.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and;
2. That, further information is sought on costs and presented to the next meeting of the Committee and;
3. That, the budget be increased to a maximum of £15,000 if required but;
4. That, funding opportunities be sought for the project and possible road closure from other sources wherever possible.

F327 **MEMORIAL BENCH POLICY**

The Committee received the current memorial bench policy and agreed the process had expediated requests and therefore should be re-adopted and reviewed every two years.

Recommended:

That, the Memorial Bench Policy be re-adopted by the town council and reviewed every two years.

The Operations Manager left the meeting at 6.24pm

F328 **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS ADOPTION**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (R.F.O) along with the proposed new Financial Regulations approved on 31 March 2025.

The RFO confirmed the regulations complied with audit legislation and the updated sector Practitioner's Guide. Based on the NALC model, they had been adapted to reflect the Council's diverse services. Minor changes since March were noted, and Members were invited to adopt the final version.

The Chair thanked officers for their work. In response to a query, officers explained that risk management was addressed separately to ensure effective controls.

Key amendments proposed were updates to sections 7.1 (electronic payment authorisation) and 7.2 (insertion of “on request”). Regarding section 11, the Town Clerk/CEO clarified that while Councillors did not currently claim allowances, the clause should remain for flexibility. It was agreed the document would be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation changed.

Recommended:

That, the updated Financial Regulations, subject to the above amendments, be adopted by the town council and reviewed annually or when legislation dictated.

F329 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Committee received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (R.F.O) with the accompanying payment schedules, bank statements and reconciliations.

In response to a Member’s query it was confirmed that an issue with direct debits was in hand and that Members would notice an increase in electronic payments moving forward due to the time and cost of processing cheque transactions.

In addition, the RFO tabled an addendum to the report at the meeting concerning the banking mandate for the Council’s CCLA investments. A correspondent for the investments was required along with Councillor signatories for payments.

Recommended:

1. That, Sharon Groth (Town Clerk/CEO) and the Members of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee, Cllrs Ruth Smith, Joy Aitman, Rachel Crouch, Andy Bailey, Jane Doughty, Thomas Ashby, Geoff Doughty, and Sandra Simpson, be appointed as signatories for the Council’s Public Sector Deposit Fund and the Local Authorities Property Fund and,
2. That, Nigel Warner, RFO, act as correspondent for the Local Authorities Property Fund and main contact for the Public Sector Deposit Fund and,
3. That, the report, bank statements and reconciliations be noted, and the following schedule of payments be approved:

Payment reference/ Cheque Numbers	In the sum of:	Account
Cheque 101277, DDs, ELPs 14 to 29 (electronic payments) and Standing Orders February 2025	£204,277.60	General CB 1
Cheques 35116-35119; DDs, BACs and Standing Orders February 2025	£16,883.13	Imprest CB 2
DDs, ELPs 30 to 41 and Standing Orders March 2025	£153,723.16	General CB 1
Cheques 35120-35158, cancelled cheques 34935 & 35115, DDs and Standing Orders March 2025	£28,302.47	Imprest CB 2

The Responsible Financial Office left the meeting at 6.49pm

Cllr J Treloar left the meeting briefly at 6.52pm during the following item.

F330 **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Committee received a Community Engagement Strategy, recommended for approval by the Stronger Communities Committee on 2 June.

Members thanked the Communications & Community Engagement Officer for producing the document, which outlined the Council's approach to community engagement, how it was currently being achieved, and how its success would be measured moving forward.

Recommended:

That, the Community Engagement Policy be adopted by the town council and reviewed every two years.

Cllr D Edwards-Hughes left the meeting briefly at 6.59pm during the following item.

F331 **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

The Committee received a draft Volunteer Policy from the Council's Operations team and heard the Council currently had approximately eight interested parties.

The policy would apply to all volunteers, not just those supporting the Lake & Country Park. It outlined roles, responsibilities, and health and safety provisions. It did not cover volunteers involved in activities outside the Council's remit or individuals under the age of 16. A tailored induction would be provided, and reimbursement would be limited to minimal refreshments.

Recommended:

That, the Volunteer Policy be adopted by the town council and reviewed every two years or when any relevant legislation was changed.

F332 **FINANCIAL MATTERS REFERRED FROM SPENDING COMMITTEES**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk. Members noted the financial implications from decisions taken by the Council's standing Committees during the last meetings cycle.

PR273 – Members commended the Committee for resolving to engage professional services to deal with the issue of tax for the West Witney renovations.

Resolved:

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, recommendations of the spending Committees as detailed be approved.

Cllr R Crouch declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in the following item.

F333 GRANTS & SUBSIDISED LETTINGS

The Committee considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report on local grant activity.

Members welcomed the new round of applications and approved subsidised use of the Corn Exchange for Witney in Pink, OCVA, and a centenarian birthday party. They also approved free use and a £500 budget to support hosting the Le Touquet Youth Council in July.

The discretionary grant application from Apollos Clothing was deferred to the next meeting pending clarification.

Members also noted grant monitoring updates on the £50 for 50 grants scheme, West Oxfordshire Community Transport, and thanked the Witney Town Hall Charity for its contribution toward Leys play equipment.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and;
2. That, a grant request from Apollos Clothing be deferred to the meeting of 23 June to allow further information to be submitted and;
3. That, Witney in Pink be awarded a subsidised let of the Corn Exchange for the sum of £287 and;
4. That, subsidised letting of the Corn Exchange for the Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action Group (OCVA) to host a public awareness event for the sum of £140 be approved and;
5. That, the use of the Main Hall at the Corn Exchange for a centenarian birthday party be approved and;
6. That, subsidised hire for the sum of £70 and a budget of £500 be approved an event to welcome the Le Touquet Youth Council to Witney in July and;
7. That, a grant of £1,236.24 from Witney Town Hall Charity for replacement play equipment at The Leys be welcomed and;
8. That, the usage figures from West Oxfordshire Community Transport for the previous six months be welcomed and;
9. That, the update on grant monitoring for the Council's £50 for 50 scheme be noted.

F334 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.

F335 PROPERTY, LEGAL & INSURANCE MATTERS

The Town Clerk/CEO advised that instead of providing a verbal update at the meeting she would provide a report for the newly scheduled Special Committee meeting on 23 June.

Resolved:

That, a report of these matters be deferred to the Special meeting of the Committee scheduled for 23 June 2025.

F336 **WITNEY SWIFTS LICENCE AGREEMENT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Estates & Operations.

Members welcomed the report which included a draft copy of the final licence agreement between the Council and Witney Swifts Cricket Club for use of the cricket pitch at West Witney Sports Ground.

Members were advised the agreement offered security of tenure to the Club and covered any concerns of the Council so was therefore agreeable to both parties.

The Committee thanked officers and representatives for their positivity in negotiations and agreed to approve the licence.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and;
2. That, the licence agreement between Witney Town Council and Witney Swifts Cricket Club for use of the cricket pitch at West Witney Sports Ground be approved and signed.

The Responsible Financial Officer rejoined the meeting at 7.20pm during the following item.

F337 **WEST WITNEY CONSULTATION & PROJECT UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Project Officer concerning funding for proposed West Witney Sports Ground projects.

Members were pleased with the positive public response to the consultation on the projects and the Council's decision to take out a loan to achieve their delivery. The comprehensive details provided in communications, including historical context and rationale, reflected the professionalism of the officers involved.

The Committee was unanimous in recommending to the Council that public works loan should be applied for to complete these projects.

Recommended:

1. That, the report be noted and;
2. That, based on the approval ratings noted in the report, the Council proceeds to apply for a public works loan, not exceeding £1,250,516, to fund both parts of the West Witney Project.

The meeting closed at: 7.25 pm

Chair

FULL COUNCIL



Agenda Item: Committee Terms of Reference

Meeting Date: Monday, 23 June 2025

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is for the Council to approve standing Committee terms of reference for the new municipal year.

Background

At the Annual Council Meeting held on 7th May 2025, it was resolved that terms of reference for each Committee would be reviewed at each meeting in the current meeting cycle and referred to the Council for ratification at this meeting.

Current Situation

The recommended terms for each Committee are listed below:

Parks & Recreation Committee

- a) To maintain all Recreation Grounds, Parks (including play equipment) and public open spaces and to initiate and oversee all matters of control properly associated with this recreation function;
- b) To maintain and oversee all sports activities upon any Recreation Ground or other recreational open space and buildings erected for such purposes thereon;
- c) To keep under review/updated the sports strategy within the Council's adopted Open Spaces Strategy to meet the changing needs of the community, sporting governing bodies recommendations and West Oxfordshire District Council's Playing Pitch Strategy in the Local Plan
- d) To deal with the development and investment in the Council owned play areas, ensuring they remain safe and are inclusive wherever possible;
- e) To facilitate entertainment, community, and third-party events by ensuring that parks, recreation grounds, and related facilities are suitable, safe, and properly maintained for such use;
- f) Within all its decision making ensure that the green environment and biodiversity of public open spaces is protected and enhanced in line with the Council's Climate Emergency aspirations.
- g) To oversee any development and investment of Council owned recreation ground sites and its supporting infrastructure, ensuring they remain safe and compliant.
- h) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of six Members plus the Town Mayor and the Leader of the Council ex officio with voting rights;
- i) The quorum of the Committee shall be four Members.

Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee

- a) To operate, maintain and control the Corn Exchange, Burwell Hall, Langdale Hall and Madley Park Hall in all matters relative to their use as public halls be it through direct management or via trusteeships;
- b) The operation of such other buildings as the Council may from time to time acquire if so instructed;
- c) To operate and maintain the Cemeteries, burial responsibilities and associated duties, consequential to Statutory or Council requirements, together with the War Memorials;
- d) To carry out the Council's obligations with regard to the Closed Churchyards of St Mary's and Holy Trinity;
- e) To oversee the management of Hailey Road, Lakeside, Newland and Windrush Place Allotments whilst leased to the Witney Allotment Association;
- f) To oversee the development and management of the Corn Exchange (including the 1863 café bar) as a community hub and arts centre in line with the Council's vision and long-term business plan for the venue;
- g) Within all its decision making ensure that the green environment and biodiversity of public open spaces is protected and enhanced in line with the Council's Climate Emergency aspirations;
- h) To oversee any development and investment in Council-owned public halls, and the supporting infrastructure, ensuring they meet the needs of the community, remain safe and compliant;
- i) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of 6 Members plus the Town Mayor and the Leader of the Council ex officio with voting rights;
- j) The quorum of the Committee shall be 4 Members.

Stronger Communities Committee

- a) To acknowledge and promote the value and contributions of voluntary groups, local organisations, and community interest companies that deliver social value to our community—supporting and facilitating services, whether through partnerships or ad hoc arrangements, in accordance with relevant policies and legislation;
- b) To oversee community engagement with all residents of Witney, relevant stake holders and businesses, including, but not limited to conducting an annual resident satisfaction survey to gauge feedback;
- c) To recognise the importance of inclusivity by ensuring all voices in the community are heard and represented, advocating for underrepresented groups in line with equality legislation;
- d) To engage proactively with young people, supporting and promoting youth services where possible, and to oversee the operations of the Witney Youth Council;
- e) To oversee and maintain the infrastructure owned by the Town Council, including street furniture in the town centre (e.g. seating, litter bins, and salt bins), bus shelters, CCTV, noticeboards, and Christmas light displays;
- f) To organise and deliver civic events, such as Remembrance, in line with the approved programme and within the budget set by the Council;
- g) To work in collaboration with other partnerships on town wide events such as the Christmas Lights switch-on and others that may arise from time to time;

- h) To co-ordinate national commemorations, special community events, and initiatives in accordance with the Council's agreed programme and budget;
- i) To oversee the Council's communications and publications, including the website, newsletter, and social media platforms;
- j) To administer the Children & Young People Grant funds, considering applications and/or funding on an annual basis and making recommendations to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee;
- k) To oversee the local Schools in Bloom competition and the Council's entry into the regional In Bloom Competition;
- l) Within all its decision making ensure that the green environment and biodiversity is protected and enhanced in line with the Council's Climate Emergency aspirations;
- m) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of 6 Members plus the Town Mayor and The Leader of the Council ex officio with voting rights;
- n) The quorum of the Committee shall be 4 Members.

Climate & Biodiversity Committee

- a) To work to achieve energy efficiencies and net zero carbon emissions in the Council's operations and facilities by 2028, in line with the Council's Climate Emergency resolution made in June 2019;
- b) To manage the Council's Environmental Spaces, including Amenity Areas, Witney Lake and Country Park, Tiny Forest and Community Orchards (except recreation grounds);
- c) To oversee the management of the Council's tree stock across the town;
- d) To engage with Central Government, West Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, local Oxfordshire organisations, relevant stake holders and other organisations to initiate local action on climate change (towards achieving net zero carbon emissions) air & water pollution, and other environmental issues within the town;
- e) To encourage biodiversity and healthy recreation in the environmental spaces;
- f) To explore and promote the expansion of community energy to keep the benefits of our local energy generation in our local economy;
- g) To identify ways for event's organisers to reduce the carbon footprint of events held on council ground. Any financial or policy change implications should be recommended to the Council;
- h) To oversee the maintenance of the Council's infrastructure concerning planting displays (including hanging baskets);
- i) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of 6 Members plus the Town Mayor and the Leader of the Council ex officio with voting rights;
- j) The quorum of the committee shall be 4 members.

Planning & Development Committee

- a) To receive planning applications and to comment on them in the name of the Council within the time limit set by statute. The Committee may decide, where time for consultation allows, to make a recommendation to the Council on any application considered to have a major impact on the town;
- b) To consider any planning decisions, appeals, planning briefs and tree preservation orders, and recommend, if appropriate, any views that should be expressed by the Council, or any action that should be taken, in respect of these;
- c) To consider, and submit appropriate representations on behalf of the Council, in respect of applications for justices, gaming, public entertainment and pavement licences;
- d) To consider, and submit appropriate representations on behalf of the Council, in respect of street naming, highways and traffic regulation consultations unless deemed by the Proper Officer of significance to be referred to Full Council;
- e) To consider, and submit appropriate representations on behalf of the Council, in respect of consultations relevant to the sphere of planning and development including forward planning;
- f) To consider and submit appropriate representations on behalf of the Council concerning the potential impact of flooding in Witney, including requests for mitigation measures and comments on sustainable drainage solutions. Due to the serious nature of flooding events, any incidents will be referred to Full Council for further consideration, response and escalation with other agencies;
- g) To consider the impact on the green and water environments, ecosystems and biodiversity of all planning applications and comment in the name of the Council accordingly;
- h) To promote sustainable and active travel in the future planning of the town;
- i) To receive and review the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee and address any resulting actions relevant to the Town Council;
- j) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of 5 Members plus the Leader of the Council ex officio with voting rights;
- k) The quorum of the committee shall be 4 members.

Policy Governance & Finance Committee

This item was deferred until the special meeting of the Committee prior to the Full Council meeting. A verbal update will be provided.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – The Stronger Communities Committee has proposed terms on inclusivity for all residents. The Policy, Governance and Finance Committee ensures the Council acts in compliance with legislation, this includes equality laws.

- b) Biodiversity – All Committee terms of reference have reference to biodiversity.
- c) Crime & Disorder – This item is considered by all Committees via this standing item in Reports.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - All Committee terms of reference have reference to the environment.

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.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

The majority of Council services provide social value for different parts of the community. This item on Committee reports ensures consideration during discussion on projects.

Financial implications

- There are no financial implications pertaining to this report. In meeting terms of reference each Committee has budgets for services under its remit.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and,

1. Approve the Committee terms of reference for the 2025-26 municipal year as recommended by each Committee above.

FULL COUNCIL



Agenda Item: Civic Announcements

Meeting Date: Monday 23 June 2025

Contact Officer: Secretary to the Mayor

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 which detailing the activities of the Mayor since the last meeting of the Council.

This report spans the terms of office of Cllr Owen Collins as Mayor from 14.4.25 to 7.5.25 and from that date Cllr Andy Bailey.

Supporting the Community

Witney Beer Festival reception – St Mary’s Church
Chair of WODC charity garden party – attended by Deputy Mayor
Voice Box concert with choir from Cologne – St Mary’s Church
The Big Lunch – ICE centre Witney
Summer drinks and jazz charity event Adventure Plus Clanfield
Witney Music Festival
Care Home Open Week – Cedar Court care home

Representing and Promoting Witney

St George’s Day service at St Michael of North Gate Oxford
Twinning Association visit to King’s School
Twinning Association visit to Blanket Hall, lunch and talk
Air Show – Le Touquet
Inauguration of Le Touquet-Elizabeth II Airport
Mayors and Chairs dinner – Dorchester Abbey
SERFCA Oxon and Bucks Armed Forces Briefing – RAF Brize Norton

Key Events and Council Activity

Twinning Association Civic Reception and signing ceremony – also attended by Deputy Mayor
V E Day arrangements – also attended by Deputy Mayor
Re-opening Splash Park – Deputy Mayor attended
Pride flag raising
World Refugee Day flag raising

Raising Funds -Mayor's Charities 2024-25:

Mayor's Gala (Cllr Owen Collins) total raised £1,345

APCAM

Yellow Submarine

ABandOfBrothers

Any hospitality totalling £50 or more afforded to the Mayor whilst undertaking any event as Civic Leader of Witney Town Council will be declared as hospitality in line with the Councillor Code of Conduct & Localism Act 2011. The acceptance of any hospitality does not afford the provider any undue influence or favour in any Town Council business.

FULL COUNCIL



Agenda Item: Health and Safety Report

Meeting Date: Monday 23 June 2025

Contact Officer: Compliance and Environment Officer

The purpose of this report to update Councillors on Health and Safety across the services and facilities provided by the Council.

Background

It is the policy of Witney Town Council to comply with our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (as amended), the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) and other supporting legislation concerning Health and Safety. At all times we endeavour to provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment for our employees, and to protect the health and safety of all visitors; including contractors, temporary workers and members of the public, who might be affected by our operations.

Current Situation

In accordance with the approved Witney Town Council Health and Safety Policy Statement 2024, Members are reminded that they have a collective responsibility for the Health & Safety of the organisation.

GH Safety Ltd were appointed in 2024 to implement a Health & Safety Compliance Audit to ensure that key aspects of the Council's undertaking are managed in a proactive way in which all reasonable and practical steps have been taken to manage risk to persons under the Council's duty of care.

Their finding's reported risk is managed to a high standard; the leadership representatives of the Town Clerk and Head of Estates and Operations fully understand their obligations in creating a positive safety culture where tasks are assigned and understood at all levels within the Council.

Departmental managers remain accountable for compliance within their areas of responsibility which is overseen by the Compliance and Environment officer.

The key objectives are to ensure that the Council operates in a lawful manner in respect of health and safety compliance with its service delivery and functions, identifying and advising management and Council of possible risks and finding solutions to mitigate such risks.

Compliance Table

Compliance Inspection, Testing and Servicing Status	Corn Exchange	Town Hall	Admin Office	Burwell Hall	Temp Depot Windrush Ind. Est.
Fire Risk Assessment	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed 28/05/25. Awaiting Report	Completed
Fire Alarm Testing	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Landlord
Fire Extinguishers	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Steel fire exit staircase	Completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emergency Lighting	Due	Due	Due	Due	N/A
Security	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	N/A
Lift	Completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gas Safety	Completed	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A
Electrical Periodic	Completed 07/03/25. Report being reviewed.	Completed	Completed	Completed	Landlord
PAT Testing	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Legionella Risk Assessment	Review	Review	Completed	Completed	N/A
Asbestos	Completed	Completed 15/05/25. Report being reviewed.	Completed	Completed	Completed
Air Handling Unit	Completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Air conditioning	N/A	N/A	N/A	Completed	N/A

Stanley Court Temporary Works Depot

The temporary Works Depot at Stanley Court is now operational and in use by the Works Team. Compliance work is currently being carried out in collaboration with the Operations Manager to ensure all necessary standards are met and will be reported at the next Council meeting.

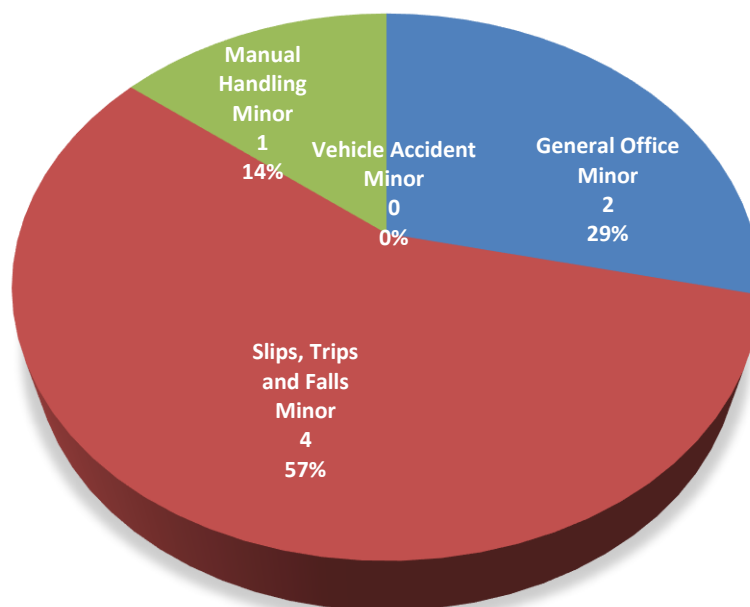
Training

The Project Officer has successfully completed the Construction Design and Management (CDM) Regulations 2015 Principal Designer – Roles and Responsibilities course.

Health and Safety incidents

- RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)
 - No reportable incidents.
- Accidents/Incidents
 - Two reported accidents/incidents have occurred since the last meeting consisting of the following category and severity and both relate to customers using the Café (chair failure and loss of balance):
 - Slips, trips and falls - Minor.

Accidents/Incidents over last 12 Months



Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Ensuring equality in health and safety measures so that all individuals, regardless of their background, job role, or personal circumstances, have equal access to a safe and healthy environment.
- b) Biodiversity plays a crucial role in health and safety measures, influencing public health, workplace safety, and overall environmental well-being.

- c) Crime and disorder pose risks to health and safety in workplaces, public spaces, and healthcare settings. Issues such as violence, theft, and vandalism can compromise safety measures.
- d) The Environment & Climate Emergency is a critical issue that directly impacts health and safety measures in workplaces and communities. It is important to integrate environmental and climate considerations into the council's health and safety policies to protect workers, reduce environmental hazards, and build resilience against climate-related risks.

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.

All accidents and incidents are properly documented and investigated with measures put in place in order to prevent reoccurrences.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

There are the broader benefits that the Council generates for employees and the public embedding a safer, healthier, and more productive workforce.

Financial implications

The Council makes budgetary provision in order to carry out its obligations in relation to its statutory compliance checks using external contractors to certify the work accordingly.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report.

Vandalism

14/04/2025 – 23/06/2025

Date	Item/Location	Reported By	Cost if known	Action	Police Reference
29/05/2025	BBOWT Mammal Monitoring Equipment taken - Country Park	BDGS&O	£200	Reported back to BBOWT	None
19/05/2025	Anti Sementic and Homophobic Graffiti in Snipe Meadow Underpass	Cllr Collins	Labour Costs	Removed by Park Ranger	
20/05/2025	Artistic Phallus graffiti – St Marys Church Wall	Deputy Town Clerk	Labour Costs	Removed by Works Team	
24/05/2025	Tree on The Leys graffitied	Admin Office	Labour Costs	Removed by Works team	
30/5/2025	Covid Memorial, one stone broken free of foundation	Operation Manager	Unknown at Present	Stone may need to be lifted and reset into foundation	
02/06/2025	Graffiti on the Buttercross	Operation Manager	Labour Costs	Removed by works team	
11/06/2025	Stone Setts removed from Buttercross Flooring	Compliance Officer	£500	Setts collected and Works Team to reset	DP-14801-25-4343-00

From: Oxfordshire County Council **On Behalf Of** Part Night Lighting

Subject: Part-Night Lighting Public Consultation is now live - We look forward to getting your consultation responses

Good Morning,

We are writing to let you know that the public consultation on the proposed Part-Night Lighting Implementation Framework is now live on 'Let's Talk Oxfordshire' [Part-night lighting and street lighting policy | Let's Talk Oxfordshire](#)

The Consultation is running until midnight on Sunday 6th July.

What this consultation is about

This framework is about how part-night lighting could be implemented in Oxfordshire. It is not about whether part-night lighting is right for specific areas. In September 2025, the council's cabinet will decide whether or not to move forward with part-night lighting. If the decision is to proceed, we are proposing that towns, parishes or Oxford city wards apply for part-night lighting schemes in their areas and that a public consultation is carried out for each scheme.

About the framework

The draft part night lighting framework proposes to introduce part night lighting in Oxfordshire locations where:

- it is requested by the local town or parish council/meeting, or local governance authorities
- the part night lighting exemption criteria does not apply
- local residents have been consulted via a public consultation, as well as stakeholders like the police, night economy employers and community groups
- the part night lighting scheme is approved at Oxfordshire Council Council's Delegated Decision by Cabinet Member for Transport Management

Please can you share this consultation with your residents, local community and stakeholder groups and your Councillors. We very much want to hear back from Parish's and Town Council's on their views and comments on the proposed Part-Night Lighting Implementation Framework, as if approved, then Parish and Town Council's would be able apply for part-night lighting schemes in their areas.

Press information and the consultation documents are attached. Printed copies of the consultation are also available; You can request a paper copy of the consultation documents by emailing: partnightlighting@oxfordshire.gov.uk (External link) or call the county council's Customer Services Team on 01865 792422 or download it from this page. We will provide a Freepost address on the paper survey form for you to return your completed survey.

Any queries or questions, please let us know. We look forward to getting your consultation responses.

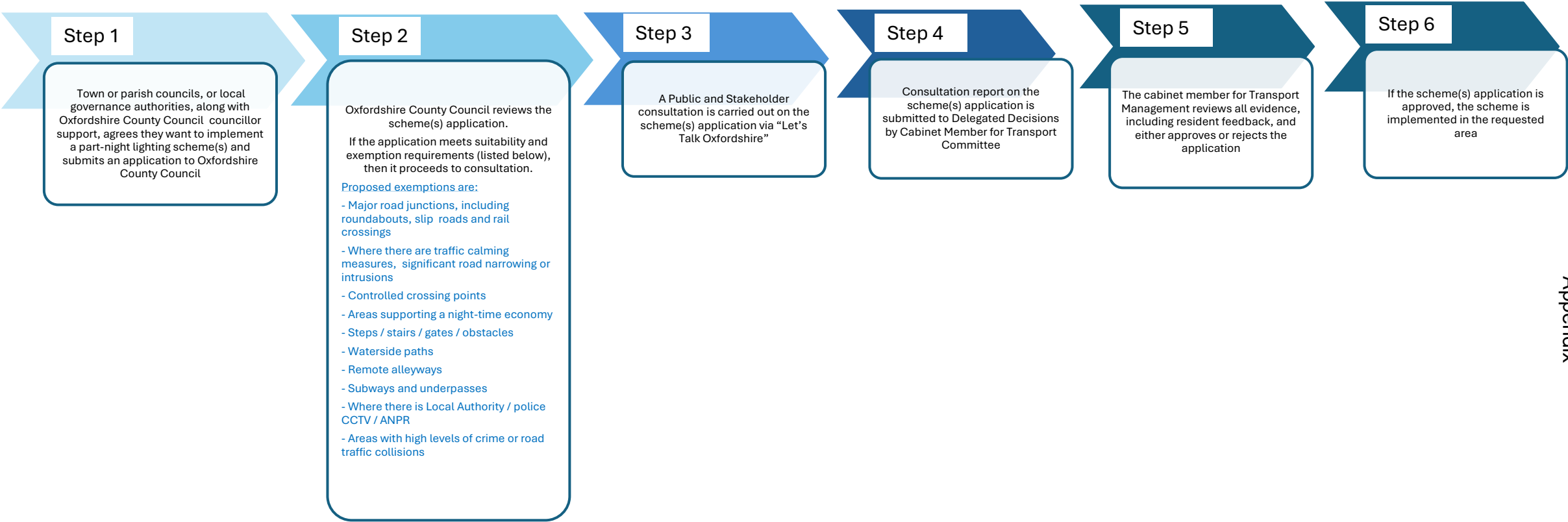
Kind regards,

Highways Maintenance and Road Safety Team, Oxfordshire County Council

Part Night Lighting Implementation Framework

Step 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town or parish councils, or local governance authorities, along with Oxfordshire County Council councillor support, agrees they want to implement a part-night lighting scheme(s) and submits an application to Oxfordshire County Council
Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxfordshire County Council reviews the scheme(s) application. If the application meets suitability and exemption requirements (listed below), then it proceeds to consultation. <u>Proposed exemptions are:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Major road junctions, including roundabouts, slip roads and rail crossings - Where there are traffic calming measures, significant road narrowing or intrusions - Controlled crossing points - Areas supporting a night-time economy - Steps / stairs / gates / obstacles - Waterside paths - Remote alleyways - Subways and underpasses - Where there is Local Authority / police CCTV / ANPR - Areas with high levels of crime or road traffic collisions
Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Public and Stakeholder consultation is carried out on the scheme(s) application via "Let's Talk Oxfordshire" Let's Talk Oxfordshire
Step 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation report on the scheme(s) application is submitted to Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Committee
Step 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cabinet member for Transport Management reviews all evidence, including resident feedback, and either approves or rejects the application
Step 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the scheme(s) application is approved, the scheme is implemented in the requested area

Proposed Part-Night Lighting Implementation Framework



Part-Night Lighting – Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are the council's legal responsibilities for street lighting?

There is no legal requirement for local authorities in the UK to provide street lighting. However, where we provide street lighting on public highways (including roads and footways) we do have a responsibility to maintain it. This includes the county councils' streetlights, illuminated traffic signs and bollards on the public highway, but not lighting in private areas, private car parks or on new housing developments.

Not all streetlighting in Oxfordshire is the responsibility of the county council. Some parish and town councils have installed their own street lighting systems, and they are responsible for maintaining these.

2. What is part-night lighting?

Part-night lighting is an approach to dimming, or switching off, streetlighting in an area for part of the night. Over half of local authorities have introduced part-night lighting, with the first schemes being introduced in the 1970s. It is intended to be used at night during the hours when the fewest people are using the streets.

Part-night lighting is not the same as 'Dark Skies'. Dark Skies is a national initiative which aims to conserve night skies, reduce light pollution and increase awareness of the impacts of night light. It encourages responsible outdoor lighting practices and advocates for policies to protect natural night environments.

3. Will part-night lighting be compulsory?

No. Part-night lighting will only be implemented where it has been:

- requested by a town and parish council/meeting, or local governance authority
- supported by the area's County Councillor
- is suitable for part-night lighting and not subject to any of the exemptions outline in the framework
- subject to a public consultation to hear residents' and stakeholders' views
- approved at the council's Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management meeting.

4. Why is the council proposing a part-night lighting framework?

Implementing part-night lighting can have several benefits, including:

Reducing carbon emissions:

Last year our street lighting generated over 2,420 tonnes of carbon emissions, around a third of the council's overall emissions and the largest contributor to them.

If lights are switched on for fewer hours, they will use less electricity and carbon emissions will be reduced. We estimate that part-night lighting could reduce energy consumption by over 5,000kWh per day, saving over 400 tonnes of carbon per year. This could also reduce annual spending on energy by over £400,000.

Reducing light pollution:

Reducing light pollution can boost nature recovery and biodiversity, as it creates an improved night-time environment for wildlife. This is especially true for encouraging nocturnal wildlife, such as moths, nighttime pollinators, some birds, and a wide range of invertebrates.

People can also benefit directly, with evidence linking reduced light pollution to better sleep patterns and the many health benefits that can go hand in hand with this.

5. Is part-night lighting definitely happening in Oxfordshire?

Yes and no.

Some places in Oxfordshire already have part-night lighting and our current street lighting policy allows for it. This consultation is asking for your views on our draft part-night lighting implementation framework, and is not about removing part-night lighting where it already exists.

But part night lighting is not definitely happening across the whole of Oxfordshire. In September 2025, the county council's cabinet will decide whether to go forward with this framework for implementing part-night lighting.

If cabinet approves the proposed framework, then town and parish councils/meetings, or local governance authorities, will be able to apply to the county council and request part-night lighting schemes for locations in their areas. Applications will also require the support of the area's

Oxfordshire County Council Councillor prior to submission. If the scheme application meets the part-night lighting criteria and following a public consultation on 'Let's talk Oxfordshire', the scheme will go forward for a decision on its approval at the council's Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Transport Management meeting. The part-night lighting scheme would be implemented if approved at this meeting. An important part of deciding whether a location is suitable for a part-night lighting scheme will be listening to residents' views through a public consultation on each scheme.

6. How can people have their say on part-night lighting?

There will be several ways in which people can have, or have had, their say on part-night lighting:

- We have already worked with a wide range of stakeholders to develop this framework, including:
 - ✓ Community group representatives
 - ✓ Representatives of women and girls' groups
 - ✓ Emergency services and community safety teams
 - ✓ District, town and parish councillors
 - ✓ Universities and student unions
 - ✓ Employers of shift and nighttime economy workers
- This public consultation gives people the opportunity to share their views on the draft framework for part-night lighting. This is the proposal for how part night lighting could be implemented. The results will inform the cabinet decision in September 2025.
- If the cabinet decision is to move forward with part-night lighting, where the scheme meets the part night lighting criteria and does not include any exempt areas, and there are no technical reasons for part-night lighting not to be implemented in that location, a public consultation on 'Let's Talk Oxfordshire' would be held to make sure that local residents', local stakeholders' and community group voices are heard

7. Are you listening to vulnerable groups?

Yes.

To develop this draft framework we engaged with representatives from a range of communities, including people with disabilities, women and girls, LGBTQ+ people, people of different ages, and people from different ethnic and faith backgrounds. They helped us to understand the potential impacts of part-night lighting on their communities and explore how we could mitigate negative effects, and they are sharing this consultation with their communities to make sure that their voices are heard.

As part of this consultation we are asking some (optional) demographic questions, this will help us to understand the different perspectives of different groups.

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is being conducted to help us understand how part-night lighting could impact people with vulnerabilities and those with protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010). As well as assessing the potential impacts, the EIA lists actions to be taken, timescales for them to be completed and monitoring arrangements. The EIA is considered a 'live document' and will be revisited over the course of the part night lighting programme.

8. Would part-night lighting be the same across the whole county?

No, part-night lighting is not a one size fits all approach. It could be implemented in different ways to meet the needs of different communities.

We are considering two 'standard' timeframes for part night lighting:

- Between 11:30 pm and 05:30 am in **rural** locations
- Between midnight and 05:30 am in **urban** locations

This is based on when the fewest people are using roads and paths, and when the last trains and buses run. These times could be tailored for an area's individual needs (e.g. if the last trains arrive after midnight). There may also be temporary variations for legitimate reasons such as public events or road works.

There will be some factors which may make a location unsuitable for a part-night lighting scheme, such as at road crossings, if there are high levels of crime or road incidents, or where there is public CCTV. One of the things we're asking for in this consultation is your views on the criteria that would make a location exempt from part-night lighting.

9. Why can't you just dim the lights, or use energy efficient lights?

Many of Oxfordshire's streetlights already use energy efficient lights and dimming technology. As lights have come to the end of their structural life they have been replaced with the newest technology, including LED lights. These new streetlights are already operating more efficiently, saving energy and requiring less maintenance.

10. What about the possible effects on crime and road safety?

We are working closely with Thames Valley Police and other relevant stakeholders, and they have helped to shape this draft framework.

While research has found that there is no significant evidence indicating part-night lighting increases crime rates, or road traffic incidents, we are proposing that locations at high risk of road traffic incidents, or with high levels of crime, be exempt and are not be eligible for part-night lighting schemes. Road traffic incidents and crime levels will also be monitored after a part-night lighting scheme is introduced and changes, including reversal, could be made to the scheme if needed.

Street lighting levels can also affect people's perceptions of safety. We are working with Thames Valley Police to ensure part-night lighting schemes do not take away from the need to deliver well-lit public spaces that provide a sense of safety. Working with Thames Valley Police, we will use data from Street Safe ([StreetSafe | Police.uk](#)) to help us understand how safe people feel in different locations. Street Safe allows you to report any safety concerns you may have about a particular area or location, even when no crime has taken place. You can share your safety concerns anonymously if you wish.

We also encourage you to use our 'Fix My Street' ([FixMyStreet](#)) online tool to report any highway or street safety issues.

11. How much would part-night lighting cost?

The total costs and savings of part-night lighting would depend on:

- how many local areas want to have part-night lighting, and

- the number and type of streetlights affected by each scheme

Each scheme would be different, as it would be tailored to the location's individual needs. This means that we can't give an accurate estimate of the costs at this time, but we can assure you that the cost of implementing part-night lighting would be managed through existing budgets.

Part-night lighting: Public consultation questionnaire

Q1. I am responding to this survey as: (standard OCC survey wording)

- An Oxfordshire resident
- A member of the public living outside of Oxfordshire
- A business (please give the name of the business you represent)
- A representative of a group or organisation (please give the name of the group/organisation you represent)
- A parish, town, district, or county Councillor (please give your name and the parish or town/ward or division you represent)
- Other (please specify)

Q1a. Question routing for 3 of the possible responses (open text box):

- A. Please give the name of the business you represent
- B. Please give the name of the group/organisation you represent
- C. Please give your name and the parish or town/ward or division you represent

Q1b. [If parish, town, district, or county Councillor] Do you think that your area would be interested in the implementation of part-night lighting schemes?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
- I don't know

Q2. After reading the [draft framework] and [frequently asked questions], what is your overall view of part-night lighting in Oxfordshire?

- Completely positive
- Mostly positive
- Neither positive nor negative
- Mostly negative
- Completely negative

Q3. Some factors would make an area unsuitable for part-night lighting, we are calling these 'Exemptions'. The exemptions are listed in the [draft framework].

Do you think that anything should be added, removed or changed in the list of exemptions?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Q3a. [If not 'No'] Please tell us more

- Open text response

Q4. We are considering two 'standard' timeframes for part night lighting.

- Between 11:30 pm and 05:30 am in rural locations
- Between midnight and 05:30 am in urban locations

This is based on when the least amount of people are using roads and paths, and when the last trains and buses run. These times could be tailored for an area's individual needs (e.g. if the last trains arrive after midnight).

Do you think that these are the right timings for rural and urban locations?

- Right timings for both rural and urban areas
- Right timings for rural areas, but wrong timings for urban areas
- Wrong timings for rural areas, but right timings for urban areas
- Wrong timings for both rural and urban areas
- I don't know

Q5. Question routing for the possible responses (open text box):

- A. Please tell us why you gave that answer
- B. Please tell us why you gave that answer, including what timings you think would be right for urban areas
- C. Please tell us why you gave that answer, including what timings you think would be right for rural areas
- D. Please tell us why you gave that answer, including what timings you think would be right for rural and urban areas

Q6. How often do you currently travel (including walking, wheeling or cycling) between the hours of 11:30PM and 5:30AM?

- Daily
- Multiple days per week
- Once a week
- Less than once a week
- Never

Q7. Would the introduction of part night lighting at the proposed 'standard' times affect how you travel?

As a reminder, the proposed 'standard' times are:

- Between 11:30 pm and 05:30 am in rural locations
- Between midnight and 05:30 am in urban locations
- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Q7a. [If not No] Please tell us how and why part-night lighting would affect how you travel

- Open text response

Q8. The draft framework says that part-night lighting would only be considered in areas where it is requested by the town and parish councils, or local governance authorities, and supported by the area's Oxfordshire County Councillor.

Do you think that these are the right people to be able to request part-night lighting?

Please remember that a local public consultation would also take place before any part-night lighting scheme was introduced.

- Yes
- Partly
- No
- I don't know

Q8a. [If not Yes] Please tell us who you think should be able to request part-night lighting in an area? Open text response

Q9. This image shows the draft implementation process by which a part-night lighting scheme could be introduced. You can also [\[view the image here\]](#).

Do you think that anything should be added, removed or changed in this draft implementation process?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Q9a. [If not No] Please tell us more

- Open text response

Q10. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the proposed draft implementation framework for introducing part-night lighting in areas in Oxfordshire.

- Open text response

About You

We would like to know more about you so that we can understand more about our customers and residents, as it helps us to know if we are hearing the views of a wide range of people and communities.

If you do not wish to provide any of this information, please select prefer not to say. All information given is anonymous and is governed by the [General Data Protection Regulations 2018](#)

What is your postcode?
Please provide the first four or five digits of your postcode (but not the letters at the end). e.g. OX1 1 or OX14 5.

What is your age? (Choose one option) *
Under 16
16 - 24
25 - 34
35 - 44
45 - 54
55 - 64
65 – 74
75 - 84
85 or over
Prefer not to say

What is your sex? (Choose one option) *
Female
Male
Prefer not to say
I use another term (please state here)

Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth? (Choose one option)
Yes
No
Prefer not to say

What is your sexual orientation? (Choose one option)
Straight/Heterosexual
Bisexual
Gay or Lesbian
Prefer not to say
Other sexual orientation - please state:

What is your ethnic group or background? (Choose one option)*
Asian or Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or any other Asian background)
Black or Black British (Caribbean, African, or any other Black background)
Chinese
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, and any other mixed background)
White (British, Irish, or any other white background)
Prefer not to say

Other ethnic group or background (please specify)

What is your current religion, if any? (Choose one option)
Buddhist
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)
Hindu
Jewish
Muslim
Sikh
No religion
Prefer not to say
Any other religion (please state below)

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a long-term illness, health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? (Choose one option) *
Yes - a lot
Yes – a little
No
Prefer not to say

Data protection and privacy *

Under the Data Protection Act 2018, we (Oxfordshire County Council) have a legal duty to protect any personal information we collect from you. Oxfordshire County Council is committed to open government and this may include quoting extracts from your consultation response in our report.

We will not however, disclose the names of people who have responded unless they have provided consent. For this purpose, we ask that you are careful not to disclose personal information in your comments – for example the names of service users or children. If you do not want all or part of your response to be made public, or shared with councillors, please state below which parts you wish us to keep confidential.

View Oxfordshire County Council's privacy notice online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/privacy-notice

Please use this space to tell us if there is any specific part of your response you wish to keep confidential:

--

Stay in touch *

We invite you to sign up to get regular email updates on news, events, and developments from across the county.

Any contact details you provide will be separated from the feedback you have shared in this survey.

Would you like to sign up?
Yes, I'd like to receive updates about activities on Let's Talk Oxfordshire
Yes, I'd like to sign-up to get regular updates on the county's news, events, and developments from the council.
Yes, but I would only like to be kept informed about this consultation
No thanks

<i>If you have chosen 'Yes' for 'Would you like to sign-up?'</i>
Please provide your email address below <i>(Question routing for three of the possible responses)</i>

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions

Document is Restricted



Matthew Barber
Police & Crime Commissioner
for Thames Valley

Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
The Farmhouse, Thames Valley Police HQ
Oxford Road, Kidlington, OX5 2NX

01865 541957
pcc@thamesvalley.police.uk
www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk

To Town Councils; Parish Councils & Parish Meetings

10 April 2025

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to update you on some of the working going on across Thames Valley to cut crime and catch more criminals.

The headline figures are positive. Overall crimes is down across Thames Valley by nearly 2%. This means that there were more than 2,000 less crimes in the 12-months to February compared with the previous year (and more than 3,000 less crimes compared to the year before that). Some of the biggest reductions have been in residential burglary, knife crime and vehicle crime.

There is of course more work still to do. Although cutting crime remains the priority – ensuring less people become victims in the first place, it is of course vital that criminals are brought to justice. This is a commitment shared by the Chief Constable and I am encouraged that the number of “positive outcomes” (solved crimes in plain English) has increased by 14% in the last year.

These improvements can only continue if the public have confidence to report crime and other incidents to the police. We know that one of the barriers in the past has been the delays in answering 101 calls. I am pleased to report that the average time to answer calls from January to March this year has been well under three minutes. This is an area I will continue to focus on, and we are bringing in further improvements to both the online and telephone contact to make it easier to report issues to the police.

Our neighbourhood policing teams are vital to tackling crime locally as well as engaging with your community. Working with the Chief Constable over recent years we have doubled the number of neighbourhood officers across the Force and I have now been successful in bidding to the Government for funding to recruit an additional 68 neighbourhood police officers.

Although resources need to be focussed on cutting crime and catching criminals, reporting back to communities is important. The connection between local councils and local neighbourhood teams is an important part of that, both in terms of representing community concerns to the police and in sharing the activity of what the police are doing to make our communities safer. To that end I would be grateful if you could contribute to a short survey to understand how Thames Valley Police could improve their links with your council: <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/local-council-survey/>.

As always please do feel free to contact me or my office if we can support your local council in our collective efforts to keep the public safe and I would be delighted to come and meet with you locally.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Barber
Police & Crime Commissioner

Neighbourhood Policing engagement survey

Introduction from Matthew Barber (Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley)

Communication with communities is vital; local councils are an important part of that. Although resources need to be focussed on cutting crime and catching criminals, reporting to communities is important.

Activity of Neighbourhood Policing teams is an operational matter for the Chief Constable, but I want to seek views in order to inform conversations with the Force to get the best, more efficient and effective way of reporting.



Matthew Barber

Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley

Level of contact with Neighbourhood Policing team

1. How satisfied are you with the current level of contact you have with your local neighbourhood team?

- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

2. What contact do you currently have with your local neighbourhood team? Please select all that apply:

- Attendance on request at public meetings
- Direct contact in person outside of meetings
- Direct contact via telephone/email
- Occasional attendance at public meetings
- Regular attendance at public meetings
- Regular written report
- Written report on request
- None
- Other - please specify:

3. What level of contact would you like to have with your local neighbourhood team? Please select all that apply:

- Attendance on request at public meetings
- Direct contact in person outside of meetings
- Direct contact via telephone/email
- Occasional attendance at public meetings
- Regular attendance at public meetings
- Regular written report
- Written report on request
- None
- Other - please specify:

4. What information would you find useful in neighbourhood policing reports?

- Comparison with other areas
- Force-wide statistics
- Local crime statistics
- Narrative report on local issues
- Other - please specify:

5. What level of contact would you like to have with your local [Independent Advisory Group](#)? Please select all that apply:

- Attendance on request at public meetings
- Direct contact in person outside of meetings
- Direct contact via telephone/email
- Occasional attendance at public meetings
- Regular attendance at public meetings
- Regular written report
- Written report on request
- None
- Other - please specify:

6. If you have any additional comments, please detail below: