

Parks & Recreation

Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 30th June, 2025 at 6.00 pm

To members of the Parks & Recreation Committee - J Aitman, S Simpson, J Treloar, T Ashby, R Smith, A Bailey, J Doughty and D Edwards-Hughes (and all other Town Councillors for information).

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney** for the transaction of the business stated in the agenda below.

Admission to Meetings

All Council meetings are open to the public and press unless otherwise stated.

Numbers of the public will be limited, with priority given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda. Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk in advance.

Recording of Meetings

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 the council's public meetings may be recorded, which includes filming, audio-recording as well as photography.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings, please let the Deputy Town Clerk or Committee Clerk know before the start of the meeting.

Agenda

1. 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 8(e)(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 3 - 8)

a) To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee held on 12 May 2025;

b) Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda (Questions on the progress on any item).

4. **Participation of the Public**

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 25. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

5. **Annual Residents Survey 2025** (Pages 9 - 13)

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the results of the 2025 annual residents satisfaction survey for this Committee.

Recreation

6. **Recreation Costs** (Pages 14 - 18)

To receive and consider the report of the Operations Manager.

7. **Projects Update** (Pages 19 - 22)

To receive and consider the report of the Projects Officer concerning ongoing projects under the remit of this Committee



Town Clerk

**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 WEST WITNEY 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

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Annual Resident's Survey 2025

Meeting Date: Monday, 30 June 2025

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is to present Members with the results of the annual residents' satisfaction survey, conducted between February and May, regarding services overseen by this Committee.

Background

The survey was sent to every household in the post and was promoted online via social media and in the local secondary schools; 344 responses were received in total.

While the number of responses is a very small percentage of the population, the results are still an important resource in advising the Council in which areas projects, communications, and future spending should be considered.

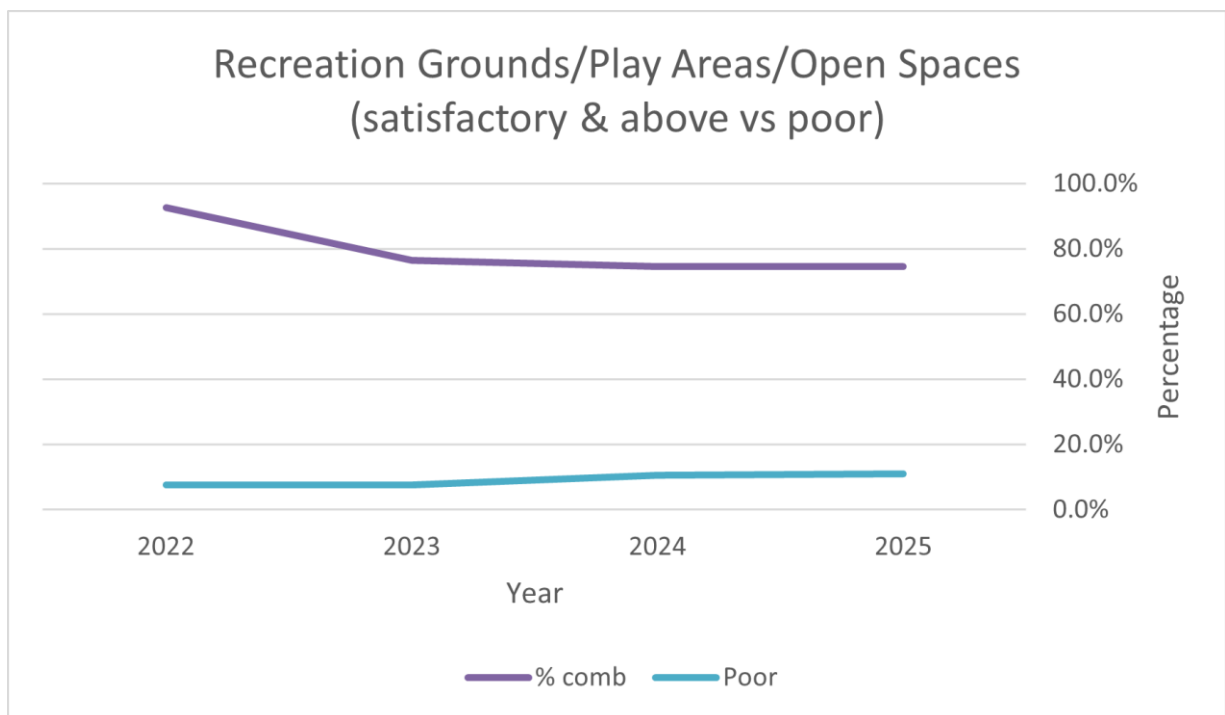
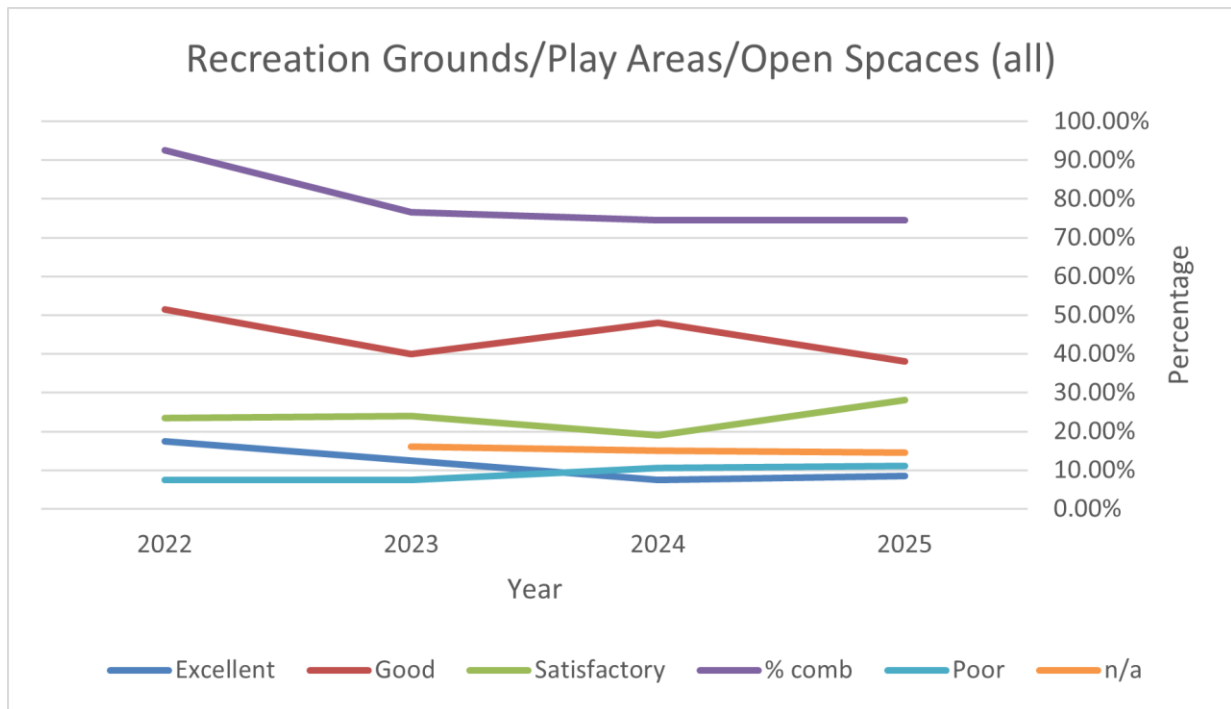
Current Situation

The following table shows how the services scored overall in the survey (with percentages rounded).

As a comparison, the figures/percentages from the previous three years surveys are included. It should be noted that in 2022 there was no n/a option available which is why the figures are vastly different from the last three years.

Service	Year	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	% comb	Poor	n/a	Resp
Recreation Grounds/Play Areas/ Open Spaces	2025	8.5% (29)	38% (131)	28% (96)	74.5%	11% (37)	14.5% (49)	342
	2024	7.5% (33)	48% (207)	19% (82)	74.5%	10.5% (45)	15% (65)	432
	2023	12.5% (27)	40% (86)	24% (52)	76.5%	7.5% (16)	16% (34)	215
	2022	17.5% (51)	51.5% (151)	23.5% (69)	92.5%	7.5% (22)	n/a	293
The Leys Splash & Adventure Parks	2025	6.5% (22)	23.5% (81)	18% (62)	48.0%	16.5% (56)	35.5% (121)	342
	2024	11% (48)	27% (117)	20% (87)	58.0%	11.0% (48)	31% (134)	434
	2023	11% (23)	31% (66)	11% (24)	53.0%	7.0% (15)	40% (86)	214
	2022	21.5% (60)	46% (129)	25% (70)	92.5%	7.5% (19)	n/a	278

The following graphs track performance over the previous four years for these services and show the levels are broadly the same across the period.



In addition to the results above, the survey also welcomes specific comments, all of which relating to this Committee can be seen below:

Please use this space to add more about your experience or feedback regarding any of our services, good or bad.

Parks

Parks need more swings for babies. have to wait to be able to use a swing.
 Splash does not work very well.

The play area on Oxlease should be fenced in for safety reasons.

Most parks are dismal.

Mostly good but a lot of the equipment is for younger kids. I would like to see some equipment that is larger and nicer for older kids. Maybe also some exercise equipment in a corner as some people enjoy the exercise section at the park near Cogges Farm.

I think the Splash Park could do with cleaning or a refurbishment.

The Crazy Golf circuit is badly in need of TLC.

I think that children's facilities i.e. parks are very poor compared to Carterton + surrounding villages.

The splash park doesn't work half the time - the playground in Woodford Way is not fit for purpose not enough equipment.

Recreation ground at the Leys is not enough for the size of the town.

Unterhaching Park - notices needed on gates to say "No Dogs". The sign at the moment is in the centre of the park which is no good. People should not be exercising dogs in a children's play park.

Skate park is a big improvement but again not big enough for the amount of kids using it.

Deer Park playground is very poor. Broken equipment and usually waterlogged - needs walkway/bridge to get from one area to another. Not enough to do.

At the Leys items broken e.g. swing + see saw. It's also too muddy graffiti on tall climbing frame.

More seating in the Leys Splash Park & Adventure play.

The Leys play/splash park always out of action.

Recreation

West Witney feels distinctly unloved and everything planned for development there takes forever.

Depot, new club house, artificial pitch... no signs on progress for any of them. Council vehicles churn up the ground at West Witney when wet. Public toilets there are also disgusting.

The Leys has a lot of rubbish lying around which can be quite unpleasant.

Why maintain the cricket pitch on the Leys (scarifying, fertilizing, etc.) when cricket is never played there?

The Leys is a lovely community area - but cafe facilities need finishing.

For the size of Witney the facilities for sport are inadequate. So many football teams, only one all weather pitch and the upkeep of it is disgraceful. The car park is a pot hole mess, the changing rooms and toilets are poor. The grass pitches are OK but again we need more and the grass needs to be cut more regularly parking is bad too. Witney needs more development with sports facilities.

As detailed in several emails to council and P&RC, pitch provision and condition at Burwell and The Leys has been shocking this season. Supported by the latest STRI report

750 local families are paying good money for clumps, craters, invisible pitches, missing penalty spots, long grass and visiting travellers

Community volunteers are attacked on social media by council leadership and relevant officers are detached and disengaged. Having been working with council for 15 years, never before have I experienced such levels of resentment

How not to treat a huge family club celebrating its 50th birthday.

Football pitches are poor.

Not maintained properly and goal posts need replacing.

As a referee who officiates all over Oxfordshire WTC are by far the worse.

The King George's field football pitch doesn't get the required maintenance.

All sports have outgrown the town. There needs to be more investment and infrastructure into youth sports.

Sports facilities in great need of updating, and more required, particularly astro turf & sports pitches with proper facilities.

The Leys are a mess. Too much football played ruining the grass - too many council vehicles driving over the fields [including for bin emptying].

Maintenance of the Bowling Green (Witney Town) is very poor: threatening the future of the club.

Insufficient + poorly maintained sports pitches & facilities.

We need the café back at the Leys.

Play/open fields are being cut far too less times... So it's harder to play any games with kids and easier for a dog walkers to leave the poo behind them and not pick it up.

More bins in parks and seating at the leys.

A dog waste bin should be reinstated at the top of Oxlease Park.

Poor winter facilities for floodlit sports events

There is inconsistency in the maintenance of the areas under control.

I like that the splashpad is being replaced as the kids love to use it - simple play is enjoyed so much.

The Leys development is poor communicated, will it ever be ready? Have you fined the developer?

Analysis

Play Areas

A review of play areas is currently underway by officers and findings are expected to be presented at the next meeting. This will highlight inclusive equipment and make recommendations ahead of budget-setting at the end of the financial year. The Splash Park has now been upgraded and has received positive feedback since re-opening.

Recreation Areas

Concerns are raised about the maintenance of the sports pitches and general areas along with a lack of adequate sports facilities in the town. There are also requests for additional bins and seating in these areas. The Committee should consider how best to address these concerns.

Projects

Comments are made regarding West Witney Sports Ground and the Leys projects, the latter being project managed by Courtside Hubs CIC and the length of time they are taking to deliver. With respect to West Witney, communications regarding the project and a Council loan have been issued since the survey.

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 residents' survey helps identify service inequalities and amplify underrepresented voices, supporting fairer, more inclusive decision-making. It may also highlight items which need addressing under the Equality Act 2010. Inclusive play equipment is an issue in this report.
- b) Biodiversity - The survey contains feedback on some of the Council's green spaces. The Council must ensure any issues are dealt with in line with biodiversity legislation and its own policy.

- c) Crime & Disorder - The survey provides the ability to highlight concerns about safety and anti-social behaviour. The survey can inform targeted responses, resource allocation, and partnership working with police and community safety teams. It may help identify hotspots, vulnerable groups, and areas needing intervention.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – The survey supports the Council's climate emergency commitments by ensuring resident feedback can help shape relevant policies and actions.

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.

There is a reputational risk if the Council does not address comments received in its satisfaction survey as it will be seen as not listening to residents.

The Council's committees will have competing demands on the overall Council budget so any additional project funding has to be balanced and proportionate. Additions should be in line with Councils objectives and adopted policies/strategies.

Social Value

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

Listening to residents' feedback on Council services delivers significant social value by showing empowerment, inclusion, trust, and community wellbeing; It affirms that their opinions matter and helps building a sense of respect and transparency. This is especially important for the Council, where inclusive decision-making ensures diverse needs are reflected in service design and delivery.

Internally, it supports continuous improvement across the Council's services and helps identify future objectives thereby demonstrating meaningful change.

Financial implications

- There are no new implications from the contents of this report at this point. The Committee may like to consider further projects based on the feedback or increasing/creating budgets for any item.

Recommendations

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

1. What action is required from the results of the survey for services under the remit of this Committee.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Recreation Costs

Meeting Date: Monday, 30th June 2025

Contact Officer: Operations Manager

Background

At the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting on the 12th May, officers submitted a report to Members on the cost of cricket provision to Witney Town Council. These costs were not inclusive of machinery or football renovations that benefited the cricket pitch. Members asked that full costs be detailed and to include the cost of football pitch provision.

Current Situation

The total cost for football renovations and ongoing maintenance has been calculated from the 2023-24 season. The figures below are the total annual running costs of each site; the income received per site and the percentage that income covers those annual running costs.

Site	Total Annual Cost	Income received for the 2023-24 season	The percentage of income covers maintenance costs
West Witney	£22,268.11	£6,627.42	29.76%
Burwell	£14,533.95	£6,366.93	43.81%
Leys	£9,295.13	£2,570.38	27.65%
King Georges	£5,346.86	£1,551.17	29.01%
Total	£51,444.05	£17,115.90	33.27%

The figures are adjusted below to include cricket maintenance and income for West Witney Sports Ground.

Site	Total Annual Cost	Income received for the 2023-24 season	The percentage of income covers maintenance costs
West Witney	£24,178.34	£8,627.42	35.68%

The figures are all-encompassing of all the Council's costs to maintain and prepare the fields that sports teams play on, including machinery depreciation. It should also be noted that the same maintenance costs above benefit the recreational purposes of the grounds, as they are not exclusively used for football.

The subsidised cost for football is around 70% except for football played at Burwell Recreation ground. Burwell is heavily used due to its 3 x 11aside pitches and inset pitches. This is starting to wear out the ground and damage the grass sward, which is why it is essential to bring more pitches online and maintain investment in the council's current pitches.

A full breakdown of costs is attached as a confidential appendix to this report.

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 – Junior football focuses on ensuring all young players have equal opportunities to participate.
- b) Biodiversity – The large areas of grass offer valuable habitats and support various species.
- c) Environment & Climate Emergency – Correct maintenance of recreation grounds will ensure water is drained into the soils, helping to alleviate flooding in other areas.

Social Value

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

The provision of pitches for junior football and amateur adult teams is significant for the local community. Football teams promote physical and mental well-being, encourage community engagement, and help reduce antisocial behaviour by offering positive, structured activities.

Financial implications

Members are invited to note the report.

Document is Restricted

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Major Projects Update

Meeting Date: Monday, 30th June 2025

Contact Officer: Project Officer

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update regarding the major projects that are currently underway.

Background

As Members are aware, Witney Town Council's Open Spaces Strategy cited 5x themes to deliver improvements for our community: Parks, Sport, Leisure, Infrastructure & Effectiveness.

This report aims to provide you with an update on the major projects linked to Parks and Recreation, which are: 'Courtside Hub at the Leys' and 'Raleigh Crescent MUGA'

Courtside Hub at the Leys



Current Situation

- Construction work on Padel Courts is underway with foundations completed. Portico (padel court contractor) are onsite and are planned to complete by 15th July 2025.
- Due to Health and Safety regulations the Wheeled Sports Park will be temporarily closed until 15th July 2025 when the padel court building is planned to be completed.

- Courtside and the Principle Contractor have been proactive in keeping the Skatepark open as long as possible and during the week when it was planned to close if no construction work was happening.
- Courtside have also made the Mini-Golf free to use for community during the evenings when the Skatepark is closed. In addition, Courtside has arranged skateboard/scooter lessons on weekends until the Padel Court construction is complete.
- Further proactive engagement of Fernleigh residents has occurred prior to Padel Court construction. This is to mitigate potential complaints as the padel court is 2.5m higher than the main building.
- Courtside have experienced several Anti-Social Behaviour incidents and site trespass over the last few weeks. They are working with TVP to resolve, without impacting on council resource.
- Provisional project completion date remains Autumn 2025

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 – n/a
- b) Biodiversity – the project plans to achieve over 100% improvement in BNG
- c) Crime & Disorder – contractor is now on site, which ensure site security and reduces risk of trespassing, vandalism and anti-social behaviour
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – building construction consists of environmentally friendly materials, which will also improve thermal efficiency and reduce energy consumption.

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.

- Due to previous complaints received from Fernleigh residents, Courtside are proactively engaging the residents prior to the construction of the padel court building to mitigate risk of complaints.
- Officers have ensured that all comms regarding wheeled sports park closure are from Courtside, readers are signposted to Courtside contact details for queries and initial comms are approved by the council. Any comments or complaints received by the council will be sent directly to Courtside.
- Courtside are employing an overnight security guard to protect the wheeled sports park and construction site during the Padel building construction phase. TVP are also involved in supporting in reducing Anti-Social Behaviour and trespass.

- Officers intend to phase the council's £250,000 contribution to Courtside at set milestones that are weighted towards the end of the project, to minimise the risk of any financial loss.

Social Value

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

- Increased variety of sports will encourage Witney's residents to exercise and feel the physical and social benefits
- The completion of the Courtside Hub, coupled with new skatepark, mini-golf, renovated splashpad and excellent play area, establishes the Leys as a destination park for the area.

Financial implications

- Witney Town Council's contribution of £250,000 will be segmented and phased in accordance with project milestones and acceptable level of risk.
- Work is underway to renegotiate the lease between the council and Courtside

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

Ralegh Crescent MUGA

Current Situation

- Officers have received clarification from West Oxfordshire District Council on the conditions of use for the S106 money allocated to provide a MUGA at Ralegh Crescent.
- Officers have re-issued the tender document to reflect the S106 requirements for WODC to approve and publish.
- WTC Officers have collaborated with WODC Officers to respond to several complaints from local residents who are concerned with location of the planned MUGA. Officers have captured relevant concerns and included within proposed tender to WODC. Residents have also been given guidance on the formal process they can follow to comment on planning when design and location has been confirmed.

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 – inclusivity and accessibility to everyone are important design features of this park, which are highlighted in tender and subsequent evaluation process.

- b) Biodiversity – the project plans to deliver above the minimal uplift in BNG
- c) Crime & Disorder – location is an area subjected to occasional anti-social behaviour, which was raised at consultation events. Officers have asked for this issue to be addressed within the design and lighting/CCTV innovations.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – building construction consists of environmentally friendly materials and lighting will be energy efficient. The Muga specification includes soundproof materials to reduce sound of ball strikes.

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.

- Differences in Town Council and District Council protocol, processes and cultures could present challenges agreeing tender specifications and transferring ownership to Witney Town Council. Officers are managing risk by learning from previous experience with Play Park and effective comms through robust procurement process and project management.
- Officers recognise that concepts which were presented at public consultation last year will be different to what is being delivered due to S106 spending criteria. Officers are taking relevant feedback from the consultation event to incorporate into the new design scope. In addition, officers are working with WODC officers to re-engage community to reset expectations.

Social Value

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

- A key objective of the park is to encourage exercise through fun activities, which attracts users from every segment of the community to encourage social, generational, cultural and physical integration.
- Another key objective is making a safe and fun area for girls to participate in sporting activities.
- The park will address a growing concern of anti-social behaviour in the existing park, due to its covered seating areas, which are poorly lit.

Financial implications

- The project budget is reliant on S106 monies from District Council, which means the town council must work in partnership to deliver project. Robust processes need to be in place to ensure robust contracts are in place and smooth transfer of ownership is achieved.

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated