

## Full Council

## Meeting of Witney Town Council

**Monday, 28th July, 2025 at 7.00 pm**



To members of the Full Council Committee - 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 (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](mailto: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](mailto: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 5 - 16)

To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 23 June 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 (if appropriate).

6. **An Update from Witney Oxfordshire County Councillors and West Oxfordshire District Councillors**

To receive a short verbal update from Oxfordshire County Councillors representing Witney Wards and West Oxfordshire District Councillors.

7. **Report Back from the Councillors on the Work with External Bodies where they serve as the Town Council's Nominated Representative**

To receive a short verbal update from councillors who sit on external bodies where they serve as the Town Council's nominated representative.

8. **Minutes of Committees and Sub Committees**

To receive and NOTE the RESOLUTIONS in the minutes of the meetings held between 23 June and 22 July 2025, and agree the RECOMMENDATIONS contained therein.

a) **Planning & Development Committee - 24 June & 15 July 2025** (Pages 17 - 18)

**Minutes of 15 July – To Follow**

b) **Parks & Recreation Committee - 30 June 2025** (Pages 19 - 22)

c) **Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee - 7 July 2025** (Pages 23 - 26)

d) **Stronger Communities Committee - 14 July 2025**

**To Follow**

e) **Policy, Governance & Finance Committee - 21 July 2025 (and 23 June 2025)** (Pages 27 - 31)

The minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee held on 23 June 2025 are included for information. The recommendations were presented verbally and approved at the Council meeting held on 23 June.

**Minutes of 21 July – To Follow**

f) **Climate Action Working Party - 22 July 2025**

To receive recommendations from this Working Party for adoption and further development during the summer recess.

9. **Civic Announcements** (Page 32)

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

10. **Health & Safety** (Pages 33 - 37)

To receive an update from Officers on health and safety items.

11. **Vandalism & Anti Social Behaviour** (Page 38)

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

12. **Committee Appointments & Representation on Outside Organisations** (Pages 39 - 41)

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

13. **Future Plans for Witney**

Members are asked to consider how the following plans align, with a view to submitting a final response to the Local Plan 2041 consultation on behalf of Witney Town Council.

a) **Witney Town Council Strategic Plan** (Pages 42 - 65)

To receive the draft Strategic Plan as discussed at the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting on 21 July 2025; and

b) **West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2041**

To receive the draft consultation response as recommended by the Planning & Development Committee at its meeting on 15 July 2025 and,

c) **Witney Oxford Transport Group**

Integrating Rail Infrastructure in Oxfordshire Development Plans

[WOT's response to WODC on the recent consultation](#)

14. **Future of Local Government in Oxfordshire**

To receive a verbal update from Officers as appropriate.

15. **A40 Barnard Gate Junctions - Experimental TRO** (Pages 66 - 67)

To receive notice of an initial consultation from Oxfordshire County Council regarding an Experimental on the A40.

16. **Communication from the Leader**

To receive such communications as the Leader of the Council may wish to bring before the Council and to consider the recommendation of the Leader on how such communications should be dealt with.

17. **Correspondence**

To receive any correspondence received (if applicable).

a) **Part-Night Lighting Consultation - Oxfordshire County Council** (Page 68)

To receive notice of an Oxfordshire County Council consultation on part night-time lighting. As the Council passed a motion requesting lights remain on in Witney at its meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025, this is for information only.

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

To receive the June & July newsletters from the Thames Valley Police, Police & Crime Commissioner.

[June Newsletter](#)

[July Newsletter](#)

18. **Questions to the Leader of the Council**

Questions to the Leader of the Council concerning the business of the Council in accordance with Standing Order 22.

19. **Sealing of Documents**

To receive details of documents sealed by the Council (If applicable).



Town Clerk

**MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday, 23 June 2025**

**At 7.05 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney**

**Present:**

Councillor A Bailey (Chair)

|              |                           |  |
|--------------|---------------------------|--|
| Councillors: | J Doughty                 | R Crouch   |
|              | G Meadows                 | G Doughty  |
|              | J Aitman                  | D Edwards-Hughes                                   |
|              | T Ashby                   | D Newcombe   |
|              | D Enright                 | J Robertshaw                                       |
|              | R Smith                   | S Simpson  |
|              | D Temple                  | J Treloar  |
|              | A Mubin                   |  |
| Officers:    | Sharon Groth              | Town Clerk   |
|              | Adam Clapton              | Deputy Town Clerk                                  |
|              | Derek Mackenzie           | Senior Administrative Officer &<br>Committee Clerk |
|              | Nigel Warner              | Responsible Financial Officer                      |
| Others:      | One member of the public. |  |

**349     APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr O Collins.

**350     DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors J Doughty, R Crouch, J Aitman, R Smith, J Robertshaw, T Ashby and D Enright declared a Pecuniary interest in Agenda item 19 – Future of Local Government in Oxfordshire owing to them being an elected Member of either West Oxfordshire District Council or Oxfordshire County Council or both, receiving remuneration.

There were no other declarations from Members or Officers

**351     MINUTES**

The minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 7 May 2025 were received.

Minute 254 – Cllr T Ashby was not appointed a member of the Disciplinary & Grievance Panel; a correction was therefore requested to update the minute.

**Resolved:**

1. That, a correction be made to remove Cllr Ashby from the Disciplinary & Grievance Panel
2. That, the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 7 May 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meetings and be signed by the Chair.

352 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*The Committee adjourned for this item.*

The Committee received representations from a resident of Corn Street concerning Agenda Item 5.

The resident was concerned about the speed and noise from motorcycles around the town, in particular at Corn Street and Church Green. An accident had occurred recently at the junction of Holloway Road and Corn Street and the resident believed speed to be a contributing factor.

*The Committee reconvened.*

353 **WITNEY COMMUNITY POLICING ISSUES**

The Council heard from Inspector C Ball who first acknowledged the issues of bikes in the town however, explained that it was difficult to bring prosecution as the noise caused was not illegal and in terms of speeding this would need to be evidenced. He explained that the police's focus was targeted on the bigger issue of illegal e-bikes. Seizures of three bikes had recently taken place and he hoped more would follow.

Additionally, he advised that Officers had been targeting the town's highest rated problem makers with regular intervention to disrupt their activities, this included visits to their homes to reduce the possibility of anti-social activity.

He also updated members of plans for the summer when TVP would be working in conjunction with The Station to engage with young people. He hoped that this would be a successful venture as it was in 2024.

A presentation of the Pony & Trap racing on the A40 dual carriageway was provided to the Council which includes videos and images of the activity. TVP had considered the options available to them to discourage the use and were in the process of considering an application for a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) which would prohibit the use of the A40 for racing.

The Council welcomed this approach and agreed unanimously, with the exemption of one abstention, to support a PSPO.

Members raised questions regarding issues of drug dealing, illegal use of e-scooters and harassment of residents of the Witney Hotel. In response Insp Ball advised that a number of arrests had taken place in relation to drug offences as well as engagement with users of e-scooters. He was not aware of the incident at the hotel and would further look into this following the meeting.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the verbal update be noted and,

2. That, the Council supports the PSPO when the formal consultation commences.

*Inspector Ball and the member of the public left the meeting at 7:34pm*

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

**West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)**

Cllr D Enright provided updates on the launch of a **grant scheme for small businesses** as well as grants for the improvement of shop fronts. He also updated Members on the success of cross-party Business and Trade Select Committee visit on June 17 which was aimed at gathering evidence for an inquiry into revitalising town centres.

A Member noted that the visit by the select committee had not been widely advertised, particularly to members of the Witney Chamber of Commerce, Cllr Enright responded that wider notification would have been an increased security risk.

Cllr R Crouch advised that WODC had received a **Council of Sanctuary award** and made the suggestion that this may be something that the Town Council itself consider looking into.

She also provided an update on the **Community activity grants** which had a £22,000 budget and was open to aid small organisations with grants of between £500-1,000.

Cllr T Ashby advised that consultation would soon commence on the vision and policy direction of the new Local Plan, with opportunities to give feedback on specific development sites later in 2025.

**Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)**

Cllr T Ashby shared a comprehensive update on a variety of subjects. He began with confirmation that the **Councillor Priority Fund** had returned, with £10,000 allocated to each councillor to support local groups and initiatives during their May 2025 and May 2027 term.

A programme of **gully cleaning** had commenced with work already carried out in Witney South, ongoing in Witney East, and then due to move on to Witney North in August & West early in 2026. Additionally In terms of **highways** resurfacing and patching work had been completed or scheduled on key roads including Downs Road, Corn Street, and Hailey Road, and a new **zebra crossing** was planned near Sainsbury's on Station Lane.

Meanwhile, the long-awaited redevelopment of **Witney High Street** had been delayed, with construction now expected to begin in January 2026 and ANPR cameras to be installed later in 2025.

He expressed his concerns around delays to infrastructure projects, particularly the **Madley Park, Windrush Place & Deer Park paths and road crossings**, which had been postponed again, with consultations expected in late 2025 or early 2026.

The **temporary Witney Library** at the fire station continued to operate successfully, with positive feedback and welcomed the new community hire space.

**Resolved:**

That, the updates be noted.

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

Witney Fairtrade Action Group

Cllr R Smith noted that comments had been raised regarding the extent of Fairtrade items available in the Corn Exchange Café. s=She explained that she had spoken with the Café manager to understand the supply issues and the wish to remain using local suppliers also in line with the Council's procurement policy

Witney Town Charity

Cllr R Crouch confirmed that the Almshouses under its remit had all be checked and no issues had arisen.

**Resolved:**

That, the updates be noted.

356 **CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE - 22 APRIL 2025**

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

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee meeting held on 22 April 2025 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

357 **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE - 13 MAY & 3 JUNE 2025**

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

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Planning & Development Committee meeting held on 13 May & 3 June 2025 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

358 **CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE - 20 MAY 2025**

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

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Climate & Biodiversity Committee meeting held on 20 May 2025 be received and any recommendations therein approved.



359 **PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE - 12 MAY 2025**

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

PR265 – In response to a Member's question, it was advised no further update was available on the issues encountered around Basketball.

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 12 May 2025 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

360 **HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE - 19 MAY 2025**

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

H284 – The Deputy Town Clerk advised no action had yet been taken in respect of engaging with Thames Water.

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 19 May 2025 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

361 **STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE - 2 JUNE 2025**

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

SC310 – In response to a Member's question, the Chair of the Committee confirmed that it was still his intention to attend the Witney Forum meeting on 24 June.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee meeting held on 2 June 2025 be received and any recommendations therein approved.

362 **POLICY GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE - 9 JUNE & 23 JUNE 2025 (VERBAL UPDATE)**

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes of the Committee's meeting of 9 June to Council and moved their acceptance.

They also provided a verbal update of the Special meeting held earlier that evening summarising the recommendations made to approve Committee terms of reference, objectives for the year and the award of a £1,080 grant to Apollos Clothing.

The Committee also approved the Annual Governance & Accountability Return which would be discussed later in the meeting and to further advance the work to desilting the River Windrush at Bridge Street.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the minutes of the Policy Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 9 June be received and any recommendations therein approved.
2. That, the recommendations of the Special Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 23 June, provided verbally, be noted and approved.

363 **STANDING ORDERS**

The Council received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk which re-presented revised Standing Orders for the Council.

The revised document had stood adjourned following its agreement at the Annual Council Meeting on 7 May 2025 (Minute no:256 refers) to allow sufficient time for Members to review and reflect on the revisions.

With no amendments being requested their acceptance was proposed with all Members in agreement.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Standing Orders as presented be adopted by Witney Town Council.

364 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Council received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk which provided the agreed Terms of Reference for each of the Council's Committees.

Additionally, a verbal update was provided which updated Members on the recommendation of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committees Terms of Reference which had been agreed earlier that evening.

Members thanked Officers for their diligence in the preparation of the Terms of Reference reports which has been presented to each Committee and provided clarity in each case.

It was proposed by Cllr D Enright, seconded by Cllr R Crouch that the Terms of Reference be adopted with Members unanimous in agreement.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Committee terms of reference for the 2025-26 municipal year as presented be approved.

365 **SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

The Council received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk which was last reviewed in 2019 however, a more regular review would now be put in place.

Members welcomed the confirmation of the extent of the responsibilities of the Council, Committees, Officers and those in a role of responsibility.

Acceptance, as presented was proposed by Cllr J Aitman, seconded by Cllr G Meadows with all members in favour.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the Scheme of Delegation as presented be adopted by Witney Town Council

366 **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2025**

The Council received a verbal update from the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) in respect of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2024/25 under its obligations to the Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015.

The Policy, Governance and Finance Committee had scrutinised the documents and recommended approval and adoption at the meeting held earlier that evening.

The general public would have the right to inspection the documents which would be published following being signed by the Mayor, RFO and Town Clerk. These would be advertised via the Council's noticeboard and online.

Members were unanimous in agreement.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the verbal report be noted and,
2. That, the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1 be approved and adopted by the Council with questions 1 to 8 answered "yes" and question 9 "not applicable" and,
3. That, the Statement of Accounts at Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2025 be approved and adopted and,
4. That, the Notice of Public Rights and Publication for 2024/24 b5 approved and published.

*During the following item Cllr R Crouch left the meeting at 8:03pm.*

367 **PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BORROWING - WEST WITNEY SPORTS GROUND**

The Council received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) which provided a comprehensive summary of the proposal for the Council to make an application to the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb). The loan would facilitate the refurbishment of the West Witney Sports & Social Club and establish a new Works Depot.

Members were advised the necessary public consultation had been conducted earlier in the summer and the response overwhelmingly indicated support for the projects and for applying for a loan to complete the projects.

He confirmed that his report reflected the current and interest rate terms of the PWLB however, since the initial precept budget setting in December 2024, interest rates had changed to a more favourable rate and therefore the proposed costs of the loan were lower than originally

projected. The RFO also provided a mid-term financial forecast which was welcomed by Members and advised a five year plan would be coming to the next meeting.

The RFO responded to the questions of Members explaining that only a single application was needed as both projects were on the same site and therefore tied in together; also that if the full amount applied for was not required then the loan conditions allowed for this to remain undrawn, and interest would only fall due on the amount advanced. Finally, the interest rate to apply would be that applicable at the time of the initial drawdown of funds.

Members moved on to the consideration of which of the two options of repayment should be selected and, following a vote with 14 Members in favour and 1 against, the Equal Instalments of Principal method was chosen although it was acknowledged that inflation would have an effect however, the use of a fixed rate would prove prudent.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
  2. That, an application for a loan of £1,250,000 be made and,
  3. That, a preference of an Equal Instalments of Principal (EIP) loan be arranged and,
  4. That, Witney Town Council approves Officers to seek the approval from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for a PWLB loan of up to £1,250,000 over the borrowing term of 40 years for the delivery of the West Witney Project. The annual loan repayments will come to around £107,000 (EIP loan year one). It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments as these have already been provided for in the Council's budget.
- That, the mid-term financial forecast be noted,

368 **CLIMATE ACTION WORKING PARTY**

The Council received the resolution of the Climate & Biodiversity Committee made on 20 May 2025 (Minute CB296 refers) and considered appointments to a Climate Action Working Party.

The appointment of Cllr S Simpson, Cllr D Edwards-Hughes, Cllr D Enright, Cllr J Aitman and Cllr J Robertshaw were proposed, seconded, and agreed unanimously:

**Resolved:**

That the membership of the Climate Action Working Party be agreed as detailed above.

369 **CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

Both the Mayor and his deputy confirmed that they were enjoying the commencement of their terms in the post and the Mayor thanked his Deputy for her assistance, it had been a very busy start to the year.

**Resolved:**

That, the report be noted.

370 **HEALTH & SAFETY**

The Council received the report of the Compliance and Environment Officer regarding Health & Safety matters.

Members welcomed the report. In response to a Member's question, it was confirmed that the surface of renovated Splashpark was installed as per the specification of the professional supplier.

**Resolved:**

That, the report be noted.

371 **VANDALISM**

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

A Member noted the incorrect spelling of "Semitic"

**Resolved:**

That, the report be noted

*Cllr D Edwards-Hughes left the meeting briefly between 8:35pm and 8:37pm*

372 **COMPLAINTS & COMPLIMENTS**

The Council received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk which outlined complaints, comments and compliments received since the last report in November 2024.

Members heard from the Deputy Town Clerk who provided some additional specific details of the complaint received relating to the acceptance of support dogs into the Corn Exchange and were satisfied with the way in which Officers had dealt with the issue raised.

A concern was raised regarding a Councillor's role as administrator of a social media page that some residents felt presented a biased view and reflected poorly on the Council, particularly in light of the Committees the Councillor served on. The Councillor responded, stating that a recent review by the Monitoring Officer confirmed they had not breached any agreed standards. Members were very pleased to see the positive number of compliments and thanked Officers and Town Council staff for their continued efforts.

**Resolved:**

That, the report be noted.

373 **FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN OXFORDSHIRE**

The Council received notification of the proposals of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) and Oxford City Council in respect of the plans for the future of Local Government in Oxfordshire.

Members agreed that at this stage, in order to ensure impartiality due to the number of Members whom sat on additional tiers of local government, the most appropriate approach would be for Officers to engage with the three authorities by way of letter and ask for them to specifically explain the effects on Witney of their proposals; they should also outline what Witney Town Council would expect to see by way of financial payments or service agreements from the devolution process.

It was additionally agreed that a standing item be added to meetings of the Council for Officers to report back to Members as the proposals progress.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the notifications from OCC, WODC and Oxford City Council regarding the future of Local Government in Oxfordshire be noted and,
2. That, the Town Clerk/CEO write to WODC, OCC and Oxford City Council requesting further details on their proposals and,
3. That, a standing agenda item be added to meetings of the Council.

374 **PART NIGHT-TIME LIGHTING**

The Council received notification of a consultation on the part-night time lighting framework from Oxfordshire County Council.

Following a Member's question, the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the consultation only related to the proposed framework and unless the Council made an application to request lighting to be amended, then no further changes would be implemented.

As the Council had previously resolved to write to Oxfordshire County Council requesting that no further consideration be given to turning the lights off in Witney (Full Council 17 Feb 2025 Minute 114 refers) it was agreed that a response be submitted to confirm acceptance of the framework in order to reinforce their agreement that Parishes would have to apply to amend the lighting within their area.

However, Members were encouraged to complete an individual response should they be minded.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the correspondence be noted and,
2. That, a response be submitted supporting the introduction of the proposed framework.

375 **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER NO 5(W)**

**Resolved**

That, Standing Order 5(w) be suspended in order to allow the meeting to continue as it had now lasted for two hours.

376 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

The Leader offered their congratulations to the Town Clerk/CEO on her achievement of becoming an associate of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

**Resolved:**

That, the Leader's communication be noted.

377 **REMOTE ATTENDANCE AND PROXY VOTING IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES: CONSULTATION RESULTS AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

The Council received notice of this government response following a consultation to town and parish Council's earlier in the year.

Members welcomed the summary and conclusion which indicated the Government would legislate for remote meetings in the future.

**Resolved:**

That, the correspondence be noted.

378 **WITNEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SURVEY RESULTS**

The Council received the results report provided by Witney Chamber of Commerce (WCoC) following the collaboration with the Council who facilitated the issuing of the survey.

Members welcomed the report and highlighted the insights that the Chamber's work provided. They emphasised the importance of a collaborative approach and were eager to engage further as the implementation work of the WCoC proceeded.

Members noted the points relating to young people in the survey and asked that the results and comments received from young people to the Council's own recent resident survey be shared with the Chamber of Commerce.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised Members that the Survey results would be further considered in detail at the next meeting of the Stronger Communities Committee on 14th July.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the survey results be noted and,
2. That, Officers write to thank the Chair of the WCoC and provide the details of the responses from young people to the Council's residents' survey.

379 **POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER - NEWSLETTERS**

The Council received the most recent Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner newsletters.

**Resolved:**

That, the PCC newsletters be noted.

**380     POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER - NEIGHBOURING POLICING ENGAGEMENT SURVEY**

The Council received the additional correspondence from the PCC relating to an engagement survey which Members were encouraged to complete individually.

**Resolved:**

That, the PCC correspondence be noted.

**381     QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

A Member raised a request that all Councillors be provided with details of upcoming flag raising events to which the Leader deferred to the Officers to respond. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that Officers would review the request however, flag raising was not a civic event and that the Council need to be conscious of any disturbance a large number of people may have on the distraction of motorists at the busy intersection outside the Town Hall.

A Member highlighted to the Leader his pleasure that West Oxfordshire District Council had been voted the second-best place to open a business in a recent survey.

A Member raised a question regarding replacement of vandalised bins on council-owned land. The Leader asked if officers could explore this issue further.

**382     SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

The Town Clerk advised that the following documents were sealed by the Council.

| <b>Date</b>   | <b>No of Seal</b> | <b>Nature of Document</b>  |
|---------------|-------------------|--|
| 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 |

**Resolved:**

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

---

The meeting closed at: 9.15 pm

---

Chair



**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Tuesday, 24 June 2025**

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

**Present:**

Councillor G Doughty (Chair)

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

**P383    APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**P384    DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from Members or officers.

**P385    PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**P386    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.

**P387    NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING APPEAL DECISION - 17A MOOR AVENUE, WITNEY -  
APP/D3125/X/24/3340800**

The Committee received correspondence concerning the appeal decision APP/D3125/X/24/3340800 for 17a Moor Avenue, Witney

**Resolved:**

That, the appeal decision be noted.

*Cllr R Smith joined the meeting at 6:12pm*

**P388 LAND SOUTH OF A40 STANTON HARCOURT ROAD, WITNEY**

The Committee received and considered an application by Swim Oxford Limited for the proposed construction of a grass mesh car park area and an enclosure for chemical toilet cubicles, to facilitate the use of a lake for open water swimming – Oxfordshire County Council planning application Ref:MW.0034/25.

Although the application site fell outside of the Parish, it was on Witney's boundary and adjacent to the Country Park. After consideration Members agreed the following submission be made:

*Witney Town Council welcomes the introduction of an open water swimming facility in close proximity to the town. Members recognise the growing popularity of open water swimming and support the development of recreational and wellbeing opportunities that encourage healthy, active lifestyles. The Council also understands that the proposed facility will operate on a membership basis, which should help to manage numbers and ensure the activity is conducted responsibly.*

*However, Members wish to raise the following concerns regarding the current proposal:*

- **Safe Access:** *The access point to the site appears to be located on a blind bend, raising significant concerns about road safety for both vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. Increased traffic movements, particularly turning in and out of the site, could pose a hazard unless appropriate mitigations are put in place.*
- **Traffic Management and Signage:** *Given the potential increase in vehicle movements associated with the facility onto a well-used local route, the Council requests a review of signage and traffic calming measures in the area to improve visibility and manage access safely- appropriate directional and warning signage may be necessary.*

*Witney Town Council would be happy to explore opportunities for collaboration, including possible future pedestrian access to the Lake and Country Park, as well as working together on biodiversity initiatives, and the development of green corridors onto adjoining town council owned land that enhance both the ecological value and public enjoyment of this important natural space.*

**Resolved:**

That, the above submission be made to Oxfordshire Country Council.

---

The meeting closed at: 6.15 pm

---

Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 30 June 2025**

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

**Present:**

Councillor A Bailey (Mayor in the Chair)

|              |                                |                                   |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Councillors: | R Smith                        | G Doughty (In place of J Treloar) |
|              | J Doughty                      | R Crouch (In place of S Simpson)  |
|              | D Edwards-Hughes               | G Meadows (In place of J Aitman)  |
|              | D Temple (In place of T Ashby) |                                   |

|           |                 |   |
|-----------|-----------------|---|
| Officers: | Sharon Groth    | Town Clerk                                      |
|           | Adam Clapton    | Deputy Town Clerk                               |
|           | Derek Mackenzie | Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk |
|           | Adam Cook       | Project Officer                                 |
|           | Angus Whitburn  | Operations Manager                              |

Others: Two members of the public.

**PR389 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Ashby, J Aitman, J Treloar & S Simpson, Councillors D Temple, G Meadows, G Doughty & R Crouch attended respectively as substitutes.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised the Committee that Cllr T Ashby had advised he would be stepping down from the Committee and had proposed he should be replaced by Cllr D Temple. The request would be considered at the meeting of the Council on 28 July 2025.

**PR390 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

**PR391 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 12 May 2025 were received.

PR265 – Officers advised that the owners of the basketball court adjacent to Windrush Leisure Centre were the responsibility of West Oxfordshire District Council.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 12 May 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

PR392 **PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC**

*The Committee adjourned for this item.*

The Committee received representations from two residents of Edington Road concerning Agenda Item 7 – Projects Update.

The residents raised concerns of the lack of additional consultation regarding the proposed Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Raleigh Crescent. They understood through recent engagement with the Town Council's Project Officer and Cllr T Ashby how the scheme would progress however, felt that alternative locations and designs had not been fully explored.

Concerns were also raised regarding Anti-Social behaviour, noise, lack of parking provision and potential nuisance if the nearby wooded copse was used inappropriately.

*The Committee reconvened.*

*The members of the public left the meeting at 6:30pm following the discussion regarding the Raleigh Crescent MUGA.*

PR393 **PROJECTS UPDATE**

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 Project Officer.

**Raleigh Crescent MUGA**

Members were provided with an update on the project. They heard that it was still in the early stages with no decision yet on the size, design or exact position. He confirmed that the areas under consideration were owned by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) and currently designated as a play area.

The financing of the MUGA was reliant on funds from a Section 106 contribution from a development in the Curbridge Parish to provide recreation facilities. Once the procurement process was complete then WODC would move forward with finalising the design and placing a planning application. Residents would at that stage be able to submit their comments for consideration.

It was agreed that the Project Officer would liaise with WODC to ensure that communications with residents were maintained.

**Courtside Hub at The Leys**

Members received an update and heard that progress had once again slowed due to supply issues and this had led to an updated completion date of December 2025.

The Committee was very disappointed to hear that delays continued and raised concerns of the effect of the overall delay would be having on Courtside's business forecasts. A Member also added the concern of whether some of the clubs and individuals, in particular tennis, would

return to the Leys when it was complete as they were now established in using other facilities during the hiatus.

Members were somewhat reassured that no financial contributions had been made to Courtside and that payments were tied to Courtside reaching set milestones, such as completion of changing rooms, the access road and the completion of the hub building. The Town Clerk/CEO confirmed that she would continue to engage Courtside to obtain assurances before the release of any funds.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report and verbal updates be noted and,
2. That, the Chair write to WODC Planning Department to highlight potential issues regarding noise, lighting & use of open space as a toilet and,
3. That, Town Council Officers liaise with WODC Officers to ensure residents are kept informed and,
4. That, the Committee write to Courtside to express the Council's disappointment with continued delays to the project.

*The Project Officer left the meeting at 6:40pm*

**PR394 RECREATION COSTS**

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

The Committee received the report of the Operations Manager regarding the costs of maintenance of recreation grounds in respect of the provision for football.

Members heard that the pitches at Burwell were well used, hence the lower subsidy however, this was having an effect on the quality of pitches due to the demand placed on it from the increasing number of teams that used the facility.

It was highlighted that the maintenance of the football pitches also provided benefits to all recreational ground users, including dog walkers and that the annual STRI review of the Council's grass pitches would take place soon to support the work.

A Member noted the absence of the Leys Cricket pitch from the report, in response the Operations Manager confirmed that little was spent to maintain the cricket square as it was not and had not been in use for many years.

A Member was pleased to see that the Council was providing such quality of grass pitch provision for what was an overall subsidy of £34,240. Which in his opinion offered great value.

An issue that did arise during the discussion was that of unofficial training by football clubs who had been witnessed on a number of occasions using the recreational grounds without agreement. This impacted the recovery of pitches as they were not receiving the necessary rest and continued to be compacted from this off-season activity. Teams had been reminded recently of the need to book their use or make use of the alternative locations provided by the Council.

Cllr D Temple, seconded by Cllr R Crouch suggested that the Committee consider the introduction of a fee to cover the annual out of season training and make a recommendation to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee during budget-setting.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the Committee consider the introduction of an annual fee for out of season training.

*The Operations Manager left the meeting at 7:03pm*

**PR395 ANNUAL RESIDENTS SURVEY 2025**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the results of the resident's annual satisfaction survey which was held at the beginning of the year.

Members were advised the report represented the survey results for the services under the remit of this committee and showed the combined satisfactory and above percentages against poor ones. Previous years data was also included to help benchmark the results. The report also contained all unedited comments on the services.

The Committee were pleased to see a number of positive comments interspersed with the negative ones however overall, it was noted that there was a decline in the overall satisfaction of respondents. It was agreed that any issues that had a simple and quick to action solution, such as the posting of "No Dogs" signs at Underhaching Park should be introduced without delay and communications should be published to highlight facts around pitch booking and minimal cancellations.

The Town Clerk/CEO confirmed to Members that the decision to bring the Council's grounds maintenance contract back in house was not based on cost cutting, rather it was to improve the response and quality of work. There was a budget available to increase the workforce which would have an impact on the delivery of expected Council and resident's standards.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Officers review the comments and schedule work to resolve any simple tasks.

---

The meeting closed at: 7.18 pm

---

Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 7 July 2025**

**At 6.02 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney**

**Present:**

Councillor R Crouch (Chair)

|              |                           |  |
|--------------|---------------------------|--|
| Councillors: | J Robertshaw              | D Temple   |
|              | R Smith                   | J Aitman (In place of A Bailey)                    |
|              | O Collins                 | Doughty (In place of J Treloar)                    |
|              | G Doughty                 |  |
| Officers:    | Sharon Groth              | Town Clerk   |
|              | Adam Clapton              | Deputy Town Clerk                                  |
|              | Derek Mackenzie           | Senior Administrative Officer &<br>Committee Clerk |
|              | Mark Lewis                | Head of Estates & Operations                       |
| Others:      | One member of the public. |  |

**H396 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Treloar & A Bailey, with Councillors J Doughty & J Aitman attending retrospectively as substitutes.

**H397 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

**H398 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 19 May 2025 were received.

H284 – A Member clarified that the river flow rates were monitored by the Environment Agency.

**Resolved:**

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee meeting held on 19 May 2025 be approved a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

**H399 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*The Committee adjourned for this item.*

The committee received representations from a representative of Holy Trinity Church, Woodgreen concerning Agenda Item 8.

Members heard of their concern of the size of an individual tree within the churchyard which they asked to be reviewed as it was a potential risk to the church building, the safety of parishioners and users of the green, including the children that used the adjacent playpark.

They also raised concerns regarding the recent removal of trees from West Oxfordshire District Council office site across the road from the church. Whilst this had not caused a disturbance to Sunday worship, it was the representatives understanding that tree removal in a conservation area could only be instructed by a West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) tree officer of which nobody held that position at that time of the removal. They had requested a response some weeks previously from WODC however nothing had been forthcoming.

In closing they offered their thanks to the Operations Manager and his team for the excellent work in grass cutting regime which had led to biodiversity of the churchyard and the appearance of orchids and other wildflowers.

*The Committee reconvened.*

#### H400 **CLOSED CHURCHYARDS**

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

The Committee discussed the issues raised by the representative of Holy Trinity Church. Firstly the Chair, who also held a position as a WODC Councillor agreed she would follow up with Officers there to investigate and respond in respect to the issue of the removal of trees on their property.

Additionally, Members were unanimous in agreement that the Town Council's Operations Manager arrange a review of the trees under the remit of the Town Council in conjunction with the newly appointed WODC tree officer in order to address the church's concerns further.

Members were keen that it be expressed upon the WODC officers that one of the main reasons for the area being a conservation area is due to the location of the church itself.

#### **Resolved:**

1. That, Officers engage with the WODC tree Officer and liaise with the church and,
2. That, the Chair follow up with WODC Officers in respect of the church concerns of tree removal in a conservation area.

#### H401 **ANNUAL RESIDENTS SURVEY RESULTS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning the results of the resident's annual satisfaction survey which was held at the beginning of the year.

Members were advised the report represented the survey results for the services under the remit of this committee and showed the combined satisfactory and above percentages against poor ones. Previous years data was also included to help benchmark the results. The report also contained all unedited comments on the services.



The Committee discussed some of the comments made and reflected that many were relevant to individual residents some of which not able to be resolved as it would not be prudent use of Town Council funds.

Members agreed that Burwell Hall was potentially underutilised and that it should be promoted to highlight its availability as a cut effective venue. It was suggested that an Open Day event could be held as part of the promotion activity.

The Committee also discussed cycling along the St Mary's church path, an issue that had been highlighted by a resident by email to Officers prior to the meeting, it was agreed unanimously that Officers speak with Oxfordshire County Council to review signage to inform of this prohibited use by cyclists.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Officers work with OCC to review the signage at St Mary's Church and,
3. That, Officers compile a promotion strategy to promote Burwell Hall.

**H402 PUBLIC HALLS REPORT**

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

Members were pleased to hear of the news of the recruitment of a Venue & Events Co-ordinator who was due to commence the role in August.

The Committee heard from the Head of Estates & Operations who provided a verbal update to explain that proposal to review the long-standing seat sponsorship arrangements. Members provided their updated thoughts of how the scheme could be implemented and that it posed a low-risk financial outlay and would be self-advertising once plaques were in place. They welcomed the review report at the next meeting of the Committee.

Members were also pleased to hear that there had not been any negative reaction to the placement of the clothing bin in support of Thames Valley Air Ambulance, however recognised it was still at an early stage of use.

**Resolved:**

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

**H403 CORN EXCHANGE BUSINESS REPORT**

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

Members were pleased to receive the summary of activity and to hear of the success of events held especially the premiere of Los Banditos of Ducklington Lake by a local young filmmaker.

They also heard of the success of the relaunched summer outdoor music events which had been bolstered by the fine weather in June and welcomed the launch of a quarterly Open Mic showcase event which they hoped would see the same level of engagement from residents.

**Resolved:**

That, the report and verbal update be noted.

**H404 CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL GARDEN**

The Committee received the report of the Project Officer confirming the completion of the Children's Memorial Garden project at Windrush Cemetery.

The Head of Estates & Operations summarised the report to highlight the tasks completed and the level of support provided by the Halls & Green Spaces Administration Support Assistant which had been pivotal in bringing a swift conclusion to the project.

Members thanked all those involved and were pleased to hear that the Friends of the Cemeteries group had also passed on their words of gratitude.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report and verbal update to noted and,
2. That, all staff involved be thanked for their support in order to complete the project.

**H405 NEWLAND ALLOTMENTS - REQUEST FOR SHEDS**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk outlining a Witney Allotment Association request for the Council to pay for the installation of three sheds at the Newlands Allotment site.

Members were unanimous in agreement that the sheds should be replaced at a cost to the Council as the reason for their removal was in order for the Council to install additional fencing to future proof the security of the site.

The Committee thought the budget specified by the Allotment Association was prudent and therefore agreed a budget of £1,000 from the allotments earmarked reserve and that the purchase of the units required be delegated to Officers.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, three new replacement sheds be purchased for the Newland Allotment site utilising a £1,000 budget and,
3. That this be delegated to officer to finalise.

---

The meeting closed at: 6.50 pm

---

Chair

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

**Held on Monday, 23 June 2025**

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

**Present:**

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

|              |   |  |
|--------------|---|--|
| Councillors: | J Aitman<br>R Crouch<br>A Bailey<br>J Doughty                   | T Ashby<br>G Doughty<br>S Simpson  |
| Officers:    | Sharon Groth<br>Adam Clapton<br>Derek Mackenzie<br>Nigel Warner | Town Clerk<br>Deputy Town Clerk<br>Senior Administrative Officer &<br>Committee Clerk<br>Responsible Financial Officer |
| Others:      | One member of the public.                                       |  |

**F338 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received however Cllr T Ashby had advised he would arrive late.

**F339 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from Members or officers.

**F340 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*The Committee adjourned for this item.*

The Committee received representations from the spokesperson of the Witney Flood Group concerning Agenda Item 9.

Members heard of the progress of the Witney Flood Group (WFG) in relation to their target to mitigate flood risk within the town. They had recently received a quote from a contractor in respect of the cost to improve the area from Langel Common to Farm Mill Lane which would include lowering the level of the footpath that crossed the common and acted as a dam, as well as the removal of trees and other riverbank obstructions. Additional work required to carry out desilting of the riverbed was projected to raise the entire costs to approx. £500,000.

WFG welcomed the assistance already provided by both West Oxfordshire District Council and Witney Town Council and asked that they continue to set a good example of maintenance in the areas where they were riparian owners which would hopefully be cascaded down to other landowners.

The Council was thanked for their offer of assistance to other residential groups looking to utilise the Oxfordshire County Council flood alleviation grant scheme. This was currently under consideration and the Town Council was asked if they would be happy to accept these grant awards and facilitate works using the specialised equipment, such as its winch for the removal of trees from the river.

The Spokesperson advised that the Flood Warden scheme was well established and that its volunteers were eager to engage and assist with the above works, however Officers advised that the group should clarify with OCC that flood wardens engagement in such work was covered by the insurance cover. Officers also recommended that WFG engaged with the Local Member for Parliament and other agencies to further advance the potential large funding gap needed to carry out the work they proposed.

*The Committee reconvened.*

*Cllr T Ashby joined the meeting toward the end of the following agenda item at 6:25pm.*

**F341 BRIDGE STREET DESILTING**

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

The Chair provided a summary of the current situation which had been discussed at the meeting of the Committee on 9 June 2025.

Officers provided a verbal update to the Committee on the costs received in relation to a road closure to carry out the desilting work at Bridge Street. Four companies had been approached however, only one had responded with a proposed cost for a three-day road closure of between £1,925 and £2,620. These quotes were dependent on whether automatic or manually operated traffic lights were used. It was noted that the cost would need to be taken from the £15,000 agreed budget if required, but other avenues should be sought by officers.

In response to a Members suggestion, it was unanimously agreed that Officers consider an amount to be put aside each year to build an earmarked reserve to repeat this work in the future. Once the work was completed it was felt the situation should be reviewed regularly to see when it required completing again.

Additionally, it was raised that Oxfordshire County Council could levy a fee for the closure of the road and although the amount was unknown, it was suggested that it be requested to be waived in light of the reasoning for the works.

The proposed desilting project was welcomed by the spokesperson of Witney Flood Group present who agreed the worth of carrying out the work and assessing its success.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the verbal update be noted and,
2. That, de-silting work at Bridge Street should proceed without further delay and,
3. That, Officers and Town Councillors who are also OCC members, engage with Oxfordshire County Council regarding the waiving of any road closure permit cost and,

4. That, Officers consider an amount to be budgeted each year to build an earmarked reserve for further de-silting work.

*The spokesperson for WFG left the meeting at 6:30pm*

**F342 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee considered the changes to the Committee Terms of Reference as deferred from the meeting of the Committee on 9 June 2025 (Minute F324 refers)

Members welcomed the changes and agreed unanimously.

**Recommended:**

That, the Terms of Reference as detailed be approved at the meeting of the Council to be held later the same evening.

**F343 COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES & WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

As the Committee with strategic oversight of the Council, Members considered the objectives and work programme of all the Council's Committees, this item having been deferred from the meeting of the Committee on 9 June 2025 (Minute F325 refers)

Members welcomed the changes and agreed unanimously to their acceptance.

**Recommended:**

That, the Council's objectives and work programme for the 2025/26 municipal year be approved.

**F344 ACCOUNTS & AUDIT (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2015 - ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2024-25**

The Council received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) concerning the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25 under its obligations of the Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015

The RFO gave a verbal explanation of each question comprising Section 1, Regarding Question 4 following debate a vote was taken on answering "yes" to the question as members believed that by the Council advertising the publication of the AGAR and Internal Audit information for one day longer than required by the legislation in both 2023 & 2024 it had indeed provided proper opportunity to the electorate. The result of the vote being seven in favour with one abstention.

It was therefore agreed that questions 1 to 8 be answered "yes" and question 9 answered "Not Applicable" in Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement and that the statement be agreed and recommended for signing at the meeting of the Council later that evening. All Members were in agreement.

It was further agreed that the Accounting Statement which formed section 2 be recommended to Full Council for agreement and adoption. All Members were in favour.

The RFO advised that the remainder of the report was for information; Section 3 would be submitted to the External Auditor with supporting information and would be an analytical review concentrating on variances year on year, or above a certain percentage. The general public would have the right to inspect the documents which would be published following adoption.

The Leader of the Council thanked officers, particularly the RFO for their diligence in presenting the information in such an understandable format.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the report and verbal updates be noted and,
2. That, the Annual Governance Statement at Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2025 be approved, and formally adopted by the Council and,
3. That, the Statement of Accounts at Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2025 be approved, and formally adopted by the Council and,
4. That, in light of the above the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2024/25 be formally agreed and adopted by the Council.

**F345 INTERNAL AUDIT 2024-25**

The Council received the final report of the Council's independent Internal Auditor.

Members were advised this was the final report for the fiscal year 2024-25 and there were no issues to draw members attention to.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) explained the reasoning behind the auditor's responses to questions (m) & (n) in the Annual Internal Audit Report of the AGAR documents which arose due to the Council advertising the publication of the information for one day longer than required by the legislation in 2024. All Members were in agreement that this only increased the transparency of the Council's records.

The RFO assured members that the Notice of Public Rights and Publication once signed would be advertised for the regulatory 30 working days.

The Leader of the Council thanked Officers, particularly the RFO for their diligence in preparation of the Council's finances.

**Recommended:**

1. That, the internal Audit report for 2024/25 be approved and,
2. That, the draft notice advertising electors' rights for 2024/25 be noted.

**F346 GRANTS & SUBSIDISED LETTINGS**

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

Following its deferment from the meeting of the Committee on 9 June Members welcomed the additional information provided by Apollos Clothing in support of their discretionary grant application (Minute Ref: F333 refers).

**Resolved:**

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, a grant of £1,080 be awarded to Apollos Clothing be awarded under the General Power of Competence and that they be asked to acknowledge the Council's financial contribution in their promotional literature.

F347 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS & 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.

F348 **PROPERTY, INSURANCE & LEGAL MATTERS**

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk/CEO.

Updates were provided on lease agreements with Courtside Hubs CIC, Witney Lawn Tennis Club, ICE Centre, Witney Allotment Association, Madley Park Hall, and West Witney Sports & Social Club along with Madley Park and Waterford Road Play Areas.

An issue concerning a piece of land under the town council's ownership was discussed, with the Council agreeing that further information was required from its solicitor to progress the matter.

**Resolved:**

1. That, the confidential report and updates be noted and,
2. That, further information on the historical designation of the land identified in the report be explored further by the Council's solicitor up to the value of £1,000.

---

The meeting closed at: 6.58 pm

---

Chair

## FULL COUNCIL



---

**Agenda Item:** Civic Announcements

**Meeting Date:** Monday 28 July 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.

### Supporting the Community

Visiting Witney Food Bank  
Annual staff leaving event at Wood Green School; long service retirement of staff member  
Witney Carnival 25 procession judging  
Wood Green School Summer concert  
ICE Centre summer party – also attended by Deputy Mayor

### Representing and Promoting Witney

Oxfordshire County Summer Festival of Music concert– also attended by Deputy Mayor  
Churchfields Care Home Summer Party – attended by Deputy Mayor

### Key Events and Council Activity

Armed Forces Day flag raising  
Youth Council meeting with High Sheriff  
Hosting supper with Youth Council, High Sheriff and visitors from Le Touquet  
Hosting the Mayor of Le Touquet for breakfast at Corn Exchange  
In Bloom Volunteer picnic

### Raising Funds -Mayor's Charities 2025-26:

Mayor's charities:  
Witney & West Oxfordshire Food Bank - <https://witney.foodbank.org.uk/>  
Apollos - <https://www.apollos.uk/>

***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, 28 July 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, Members are reminded that they have a collective responsibility for the Health & Safety of the organisation.

The current Health & Safety Policy document will be reviewed this year to identify any amendments and actions necessary.

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 | Windrush Ind. Est. Temp Works Depot | Stanley Court Temp Works Depot |
|---|---------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Fire Risk Assessment                                | Completed     | Completed | Completed    | Completed    | Completed                           | Completed                      |
| Fire Alarm Testing                                  | Completed     | Completed | Completed    | Completed    | Landlord                            | N/A                            |
| Fire Extinguishers                                  | Completed     | Completed | Completed    | Completed    | Completed                           | Completed                      |
| Steel fire exit staircase                           | Completed     | N/A       | N/A          | N/A          | N/A                                 | N/A                            |
| Emergency Lighting                                  | Completed     | Due       | Due          | Due          | N/A                                 | Added to testing regime        |
| Security  | Completed     | Completed | Completed    | Completed    | N/A                                 | N/A                            |
| Lift  | Completed     | N/A       | N/A          | N/A          | N/A                                 | N/A                            |
| Gas Safety  | Completed     | N/A       | N/A          | Completed    | N/A                                 | N/A                            |
| Electrical Periodic                                 | Completed     | Completed | Completed    | Completed    | Landlord                            | Landlord                       |
| PAT Testing   | Completed     | Completed | Completed    | Completed    | Completed                           | Completed                      |
| Legionella Risk Assessment                          | Review        | Completed | Completed    | Completed    | Landlord                            | Landlord                       |
| Asbestos  | Completed     | Completed | Completed    | Completed    | Completed                           | Report provided with Lease.    |
| Air Handling Unit                                   | Completed     | N/A       | N/A          | N/A          | N/A                                 | N/A                            |
| Air conditioning                                    | N/A           | N/A       | N/A          | Completed    | N/A                                 | N/A                            |

### Admin Office

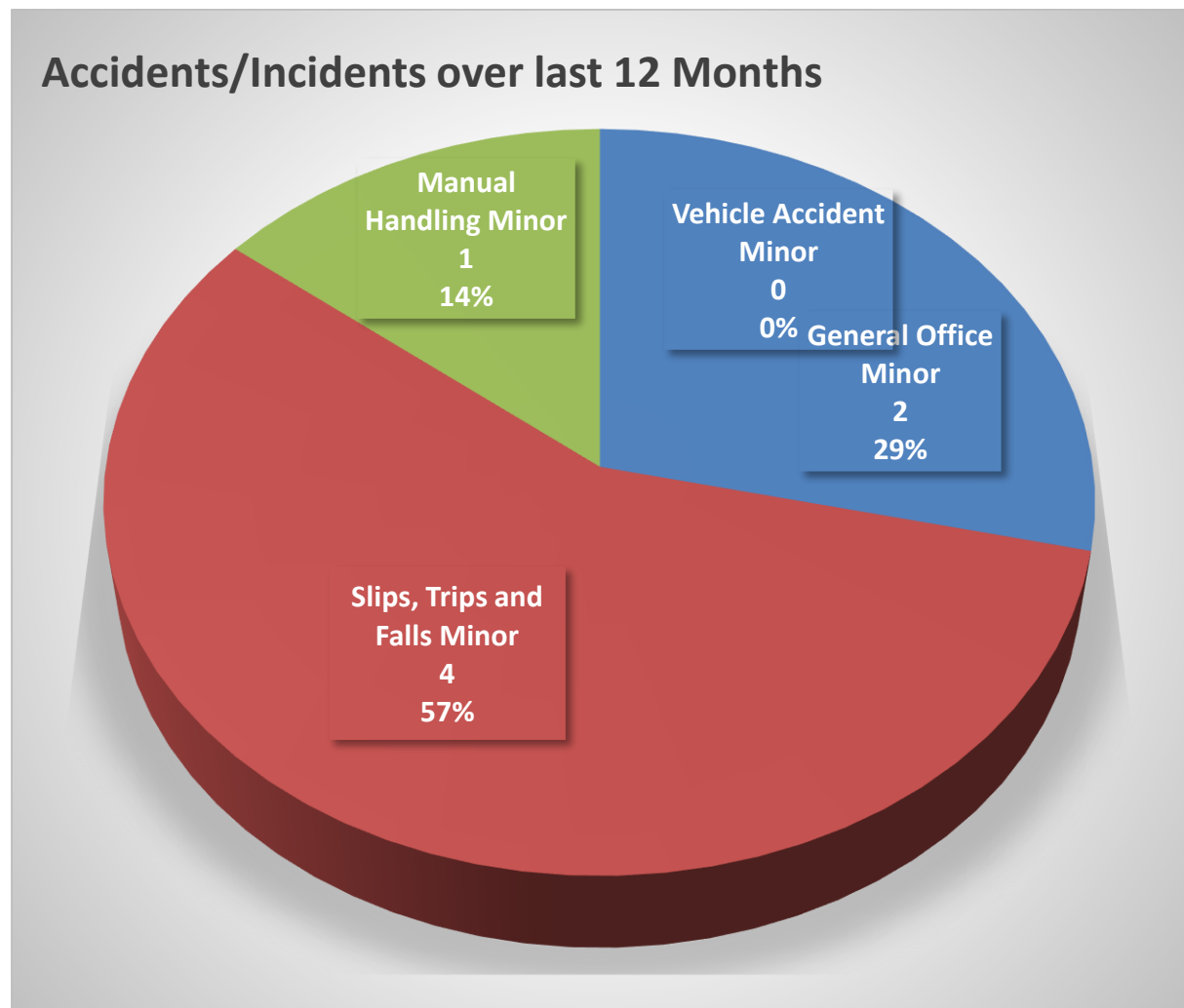
The 'Welcome to Your Community Window Space' guidance has been updated following a recent risk assessment. Minor works will also be carried out by the Works Team. The window remains available for use by charities, groups and community organisations in Witney.

### Emergency Plan

The Council's Emergency Plan is currently undergoing a review. As part of this process, officers will consult with the Emergency Planning Officer at West Oxfordshire District Council to gain a detailed understanding of their procedures and systems. The review will also include an evaluation of the Council's out-of-hours emergency call handling arrangements.

## Health and Safety incidents

- RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)
  - No reportable incidents.
- Accidents/Incidents
  - There has been one reported accidents/incidents since the last meeting. See confidential **Appendix A** for supporting documentation.



## 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.

Document is Restricted

## Vandalism

18 June to 28 July 2025

| Date    | Item/Location  | Date/Time/Who Reported | Cost if known     | Action                     | Police Reference          |
|---------|--|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 27 June | Two occasions of Graffiti on benches at Country Park | B&GSO                  | N/a               | Removed by Ranger          | None                      |
| 2 July  | Tree Damaged at Burwell Park                         | Public                 | £600              | Tree to be removed         | Reported to TVP by Public |
| 14 July | Report of wild Swimming and Fire setting             | Public                 | n/a               | TVP Notified               | BOS-60498-25-4343-03      |
| 14 July | Fly tipped Sofa                                      | Public                 | £25 disposal cost | Removed by Ranger same day | BOS-60498-25-4343-03      |
| 14 July | Lifebuoy missing                                     | Ranger                 | £70               | Replacement purchased      | BOS-60498-25-4343-03      |

## FULL COUNCIL



---

**Agenda Item:** Committee Appointments & Representation on Outside Organisations

**Meeting Date:** Monday, 28 July 2025

**Contact Officer:** Deputy Town Clerk

---

The purpose of this report is for the Council to appoint Members to vacant Committee and outside organisation positions.

### Background

Committee positions are reviewed at the Council's Annual Meeting; however, vacancies may arise during the year at the request of Members.

The Town Council also appoints representatives to serve on outside organisations. It is generally recommended that appointees serve until the Annual Council Meeting following the next ordinary election of Councillors (scheduled for May 2027). Nevertheless, requests for changes or new appointments may be brought to the Council for consideration throughout the year.

### Current Situation

#### Committees

##### Parks & Recreation Committee

Councillor T Ashby has indicated his intention to step down from the Council's Parks & Recreation Committee. It is proposed that Councillor D Temple be appointed as his replacement.

#### Outside Bodies & External Organisations

##### Witney Flood Group

The Council has been informed that Councillor J Robertshaw will be stepping down as the Council's liaison to this group. It is proposed that Councillor D Temple be appointed as his replacement.

As a reminder to Members, the purpose of the Witney Flood Group as set out with the Charities Commission is as follows:

'For the benefit of the community the preservation of human life and property by working with other stakeholders to preserve, maintain, restore, and/or improve flood defences and flood protection measures and flood damage in the area of Witney, Oxfordshire.'

The Flood Group will invite the appointed liaison to meet with them as and when required and communicate invites for updates and send updates via email when necessary. They will be invited to specific sessions identified for WFG and WTC collaboration subjects only and will neither be an elected trustee nor observer at regular meetings to preserve the Group's independence.

Although representing the Council, the appointed liaison is not permitted to act ultra vires – commit the Council to any course of action. Issues or reports should be passed to the Council and vice versa via the normal democratic process. Updates should be provided, when possible at Full Council meetings.

#### The Henry Box Book Collection Trust

The Council has been advised that Mrs E. Duncan wishes to resign from her position as an elected trustee representing Witney Town Council on this organisation.

The objects of the charity, as outlined with the Charity Commission, shall be to 'promote the education of the public, through the maintenance, for the purposes of study, research and exhibition, of a collection of books and manuscripts known as the Henry Box Collection.'

### **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 – no direct implications.
- b) Biodiversity – no direct implications.
- c) Crime & Disorder – no direct implications.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – By formalising direct communications with the Witney Flood Group it will help the Council stay abreast of any issues which may arise regarding flooding within the town and assist with collaborative engagement.

### **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.

- Representatives on Outside Body groups provide the town council with means to be involved in their work which may affect and improve the lives of residents sustainably, socially, and environmentally.



## **Financial implications**

There are no financial implications.

## **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and;

1. Confirm the appointment of Councillor D Temple to the Parks & Recreation Committee.
2. Confirm the appointment of Councillor D Temple as Witney Town Council's Witney Flood Group Liaison.
3. Consider and nominate a Town Council trustee for the Henry Box Book Collection Trust.

Document is Restricted

**From:** Oxfordshire County Council

**Sent:** 16 July 2025

**Subject:** INITITAL Consultation – A40 Barnard Gate junctions (Eynsham) – Proposed experimental right turn prohibition

**RE: INITITAL Consultation – A40 Barnard Gate junctions (Eynsham) – Proposed experimental right turn prohibition**

We are writing to seek your initial views on the proposal to potentially introduce an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) which would prohibit right turns out of either of the junctions onto the A40 at Barnard Gate in Eynsham (as shown in the attached plan) – traffic would be required to undertake left turns only. The scheme is being promoted as part of the Council's "*2025-26 Vision Zero Junction incidents hot spots (cluster sites) programme*".

The intention would be for a 'sign only' restriction – with some minor kerbing works (i.e. temporary 'bolt-down' style, or water-filled barriers) on the minor road at the western junction to help supplement the signage to guide vehicles to turn left. At the eastern junction, the current layout in any case does this – albeit from a recent traffic survey only a very small number of vehicles were recorded making this turn, which is though currently permitted. It should be noted that Emergency service vehicles would be exempted from the prohibition. In addition to providing regulatory 'No right turn' signing at the junctions, advance-warning signing would also be provided to advise road users of the restriction – including at the junctions of the local roads with the A4095.

If approved, the experimental restrictions would be in place from later in autumn 2025, for up to a maximum of 18 months. A general consultation would then be open for a minimum of six months after the scheme is introduced to allow feedback to be given. The County Council would also closely monitor the effects on all road users during the course of the experiment, specifically regarding potential non-compliance – and should the ETRO be recommended to become permanent in the future, the need for any further supporting measures to ensure compliance would be considered.

Any comments or other representations on the proposal should be submitted by **Friday 15th August 2025**.

Network Management | Highways & Operations | Environment & Place  
Oxfordshire County Council | County Hall | New Road | Oxford | OX1 1ND

# A40 at Barnard Gate: Proposed experimental prohibition of right turns from Barnard Gate to A40

traffic to turn left only to A40

You are granted a non-exclusive, royalty free, revocable licence solely to view the Licensed Data



A40 at Barnard Gate Proposed  
Experimental Prohibition of  
right turns  
to A40

SCALE 1 : 2500

DATE 03/07/2025

DRAWING NO.

DRAWN BY

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

**Sent:** 11 July 2025


**Subject:** Part-Night Lighting Consultation - Do you think that your area would be interested in the implementation of part-night lighting schemes?

Dear District, Town and Parish Councils/Meetings,

As many of you are aware the [consultation on the proposed Part-Night Lighting Framework](#) has recently concluded, and we would like to thank those who have submitted responses. We are keen to understand the potential appetite for Part-Night Lighting schemes across the county and **are asking those who didn't respond to the formal consultation** to let us know (using the poll below) whether the area you represent may be interested. More details on the proposals can be found in the [consultation documents](#).

This is not a commitment or formal expression of interest, but will improve our understanding of potential demand.

**Please respond using the poll in this email by midnight on Sunday 10 August.**

 [Poll: Do you think that your area would be interested in the implementation of part-night lighti](#)

Many thanks,

Economy and Place Directorate | Oxfordshire County Council | County Hall | New Road | Oxford | OX1 1ND