

Extra Ordinary Full Council Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 5th January, 2026 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 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. 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 25. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

4. **OCC Consultation - Proposals to Improve Oxfordshire's Fire and Rescue Service** (Page 3)

To receive and consider a draft response to this proposal, deferred from the Full Council meeting on 8th December 2025.

For further details please follow this link <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ofrs-consultation>

5. **Committee Appointments & Representation on Outside Organisations**

To confirm appointments to the 'The Community Trust' ahead of its creation. At the Full Council meeting held on 15th December 2025 it was proposed the membership should consist of:

- A West Witney Ward Member
- A Member of the Parks & Recreation Committee
- A Member of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee

6. **Council Budget: Revised Budget 2025/26 and Estimates 2026/27**

To receive a presentation from the RFO on the Council's Revenue Budget and the options relating to how it can be funded; the desirable level of Precept/Council Tax Band D equivalent so that the final budget can be calculated for adoption at the Extra Ordinary Council date to be confirmed.

7. **Exclusion of Press & Public**

To consider passing the following resolution, if appropriate:

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions 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.



Town Clerk

Draft Response to Oxfordshire County Council's

Consultation on Proposals to Improve Oxfordshire's Fire & Rescue Service

Witney Town Council is concerned about the potential impacts of these proposed changes to Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, particularly the proposed closures of Eynsham and Woodstock fire stations. The Council considers that these closures would have a direct and adverse impact on emergency response provision in Witney and across West Oxfordshire.

The Town Council is concerned that meaningful engagement with frontline staff did not take place at an early stage of the proposals. It is noted that staff have disputed the data used to justify the changes, and it believes this raises significant concerns regarding the robustness of the evidence base.

Witney Town Council is also concerned that the proposed restructuring would make the recruitment and retention of on-call (retained) firefighters more difficult. This risks weakening the service's resilience at a time when a more supportive and sustainable structure is needed to ensure effective cover.

While the Town Council recognises that the proposals may bring some benefit to Witney through an increase in full-time firefighter provision, this appears to be at the detriment of neighbouring areas. The Council is particularly concerned about night-time cover and the overall availability of fire engines across West Oxfordshire as a whole, which could reduce the service's ability to respond effectively to incidents.

Furthermore, the Town Council highlights that there is significant large-scale residential development planned and underway on the periphery of Witney and across the district, amounting to many thousands of new homes. The Council seeks reassurance that the increased demand this will place on fire and rescue services has been fully taken into account, as long-term service capacity and sustainability are key concerns.

In summary, Witney Town Council urges Oxfordshire County Council to reconsider the proposed changes, engage more fully with staff, and ensure that future provision is based on robust data, supports recruitment and retention, and delivers a resilient, sustainable service for Witney and the wider West Oxfordshire area.