

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

Held on Monday, 6 March 2023

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

Present:

Councillor V Gwatkin (Chair)

Councillors:	D Butterfield J Aitman T Ashby	L Duncan D Enright O Collins (In place of L Ashbourne)
Officers:	Adam Clapton Sharon Groth Derek Mackenzie	Deputy Town Clerk Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	None.	

PR111 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr L Ashbourne who was substituted by Cllr O Collins.

Councillor D Enright had advised he would arrive late for the meeting.

PR112 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

PR113 MINUTES

The minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 9 January 2023 were received.

PR20 Smoke Free Parks. The Deputy Town Clerk advised officers would be launching an online competition for children to design smoke free signs for the parks. The winner would be chosen by the Mayor & Chair of this Committee.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting held on 9 January 2023 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

PR114 **PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC**

There was no public participation.

18:03 - Councillor D Enright arrived.

PR115 **FINANCE REPORT**

The Committee received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

The Town Clerk advised that the last paragraph of Page 2 of the report should have read “*for a number of these **underspends***” rather than “*overspends*”.

The Town Clerk also provided the members with an explanation regarding the difference in the table showing year to date figures and those of projected estimates.

Resolved:

That, the report and verbal update be noted.

PR116 **THE LEYS TRAFFIC CALMING**

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

Members discussed the additional informal survey responses received from residents of the surrounding area at The Leys on an Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) designed traffic calming scheme, as requested by the town council in 2018.

Further information was required following an OCC consultation in 2022 if the town council still thought the scheme was warranted. Members felt the responses pointed more to the calming being installed for road safety, rather than the reduction of Anti-Social Behaviour, although this was still noted as an issue.

Members asked if the scheme could be redesigned to incorporate safety measures around the crossing point between the church path and the tree lined avenue across the Leys.

Members voted, the proposal to support the scheme was carried, with voting as follows:

In Favour	6
Against	0
Abstentions	1

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, a response is sent to Oxfordshire County Council advising support of the scheme with a request to re-evaluate the crossing from the Church to the Recreation Ground.

PR117 **WEST WITNEY CRICKET BOUNDARY ADVERTISING**

The Committee received the report of the Operations Manager.

Members were in support of the recommendations to purchase boundary rope and a winder and to allow Witney Swifts CC to install boundary wedges at West Witney Sports Ground. The Committee however asked that the Cricket team carries out a safety risk assessment to assess trips and falls.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the request to install boundary wedges by Witney Swifts CC be granted and the purchase of a boundary rope/winder is made by the Town Council and,
3. That, Witney Swift Cricket Club are asked to carry out a risk assessment for match days.

PR118 WEST WITNEY BOWLS GREEN IRRIGATION SYSTEM

The Committee received the report of the Operations Manager.

Members were in favour of the Town Council taking over the commissioning, decommissioning, and servicing of West Witney bowls green irrigation system.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That Witney Town Council take over the responsibility of the irrigation system at West Witney Bowls Green.

PR119 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.

PR120 PROPERTY & LEGAL MATTERS

The Committee received the confidential report and verbal update of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding an application for modification to the Definitive Map and Statements under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (DMO).

Members were advised that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) was investigating the application and had opened a consultation.

Members discussed the application which the Council had already objected to and agreed that it should encourage that a path is made, as part of the proposed Moors housing development to allow public access between Witney Road and the country park, this removing the possibility of trespassing via the lakeside allotment access road.

Resolved:

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

2. That, a further comment is submitted to OCC via the consultation to request a path is requested as part of the planning application for The Moor development.

PR121 **MAJOR/STRATEGIC PROJECTS UPDATE**

The Committee received the confidential verbal report of the Town Clerk/C.E.O to update them on a number of projects.

Members heard an update on the Leys Masterplan, Burwell changing room refurbishment and the West Witney Sports Club project. They also heard that negotiations where in progress with respect to the lease for Witney Lawn Tennis club and that other lease arrangements would be reviewed.

The Town Clerk also advised that she was waiting to hear from West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) in respect of the various outstanding Play Area transfers and repairs.

The council had been advised that following a recent court ruling, VAT no longer applied to sports pitch bookings so the councils Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) would report further on this to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee on 27 March 2023.

Resolved:

That, the confidential verbal report be noted.

The meeting closed at: 6.22 pm

Chair