

**VE DAY 75 WORKING PARTY MEETING**  
**OF WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday, 2 September 2019**

**At 4.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall**

**Present:**

Councillor J King (Chair)

Councillors:     J Aitman                             D Enright  
                          O Collins

Officers:           Office Manager – Adam Clapton  
                          Communications & Events – Polly Inness  
                          Democratic Services Officer – Nicky Cayley

**1.     ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Cllr King was proposed and seconded as Chair of the working party.

**RESOLVED:**             that Cllr J King be elected Chair for the ensuing municipal year.

**2.     APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**3.     DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

**4.     COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee received and considered the Draft Terms of Reference and agreed them.

**RECOMMENDED:**         that the Draft Committee Terms of Reference, as circulated, be agreed.

**5.     COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS**

The Working Party Members received and considered the report of the Office Manager on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Leys as a Recreation Ground and the commemorations for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. The Office Manager cautioned that the Council's role was only to facilitate rather than run any events as it had done for the Armistice Centenary in 2018.

The Working Party discussed how to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Leys and agreed that it would be appropriate to tie this in with the 2020 Carnival. The Carnival should be asked if they would make this the theme of the Carnival and the Town Council could run an appropriately themed stall.

In respect of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day it was agreed that commemorations should mirror national events so members agreed to ask the Town Crier to take part in the Cry for Peace and to ask the Church to ring the bells to take part in Ringing for Peace, both on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020. The Working Party was also supportive of holding an afternoon tea in the Corn Exchange on the same day and to ask Richmond Village if they would like to host this. There was also a desire to ask the Town Band to play tunes from the 1940's in the Market Square on that afternoon and for the Town Council to apply for a road closure to facilitate this.

The Working Party further agreed to approach the Witney Schools Partnership to enquire whether they would like to contribute to the commemorations, possibly in the form of an exhibition as they had been so supportive of the WW1 commemorations.

It was also felt to be a good idea to offer free use of Burwell Hall and the Corn Exchange on the evening of Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May to the public so that they could run events if they wanted to.

The Chair of the Working Party expressed a desire for a Freedom Parade on the Sunday, including a Fly Past. Officers advised that the RAF had not managed to do a Fly Past the previous year for WW1 despite having promised to do so and that there was a current agreement in place to hold a parade every three years.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that free use of the Corn Exchange and Burwell Halls be offered to the public on the Friday evening of the VE Day 75 weekend and the public are encouraged to be as imaginative as possible;
2. that an afternoon tea be held in the Corn Exchange for VE Day 75 and that Richmond Villages be asked to host this;
3. that the Town Band be asked to provide music from the 1940's in the Market Square on the Friday afternoon; and that the High Street is closed to facilitate this;
4. that the Town Council takes part in "A Cry for Peace Around the World" and "Ringing out for Peace" on Friday 8 May and the "Church Service of Celebration and Commemoration" on 10 May;
5. that RAF Brize Norton be invited to carry out a Freedom Parade before the Church service on the Sunday morning and also be requested to carry out a "Fly Past";
6. that the following organisations are contacted to ask if they would like to participate over the weekend: -
  - Richmond Village
  - Town Crier
  - St. Mary's Church
  - Voice Box Choir
  - Schools Partnership
  - RAF
  - Royal British Legion.
7. that the Witney Carnival Team be asked to help celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Leys by making that the theme of the Carnival for 2020 and the Town Council could perhaps run a stall with penny arcade games etc;
8. that each event – VE Day 75 and the 100 Anniversary of The Leys – be given a £500 budget.

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The meeting closed at: 4.37 pm

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Chair