
Agenda Item: Major Projects Update

Meeting Date: Monday 4 November 2024

Contact Officer: Project Officer

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

Background

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

This report aims to provide you with an update on the major projects linked to Parks and Recreation, which are: 'Wheeled Sports Park', 'Courtside Master Plan', and 'Raleigh Crescent Sports & Social Area'.

Wheeled Sports Park – Street Art Event



Current Situation

- Event held on 5th October
- 10 Artists participated and created high quality and diverse artwork
- High volume of visitor footfall, who provided positive feedback
- Event was delivered 12% under budget (est. cost £700 vs. act. Cost £617)
- Artwork has been on display for 4 weeks with no vandalism
- The delivery of this event marks the overall completion of the Wheeled Sports Park Project

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 – event and final artwork was inclusive and diverse with artists from a wide age range, disabilities and cultures.
- b) Biodiversity – n/a
- c) Crime & Disorder – The creation of high quality and diverse artwork helps to minimise offensive graffiti.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – n/a

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.

- Artwork has instilled a sense of pride in the park.
- Artwork has made the park more vibrant and a cool place for youngsters to use.
- Majority of artists who took part also use the park, which has improved self-policing of park.
- Officers discovered the benefits of creating street art has on the mental health of many young artists, which could drive future activity to improve social value.
- Due to the success of this event, there is an appetite to organise another next year, details of which will be issued to Council at the appropriate time.

Financial implications

- Project delivered under budget

Recommendations

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

Courtside Hub at The Leys



Current Situation

- Construction work has re-started on 14th October 2024
- Noticeable improvement in communication and project governance
- Tennis courts to be closed end of November
- Provisional project completion date is Autumn 2025
- Courtside have provided an update dated 31 Oct. See Confidential Appendix A

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

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

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- Track record of project, necessitates and justifies continuance of risk of delay on risk log, which is currently being managed through regular communication and collaborative review of project plans.

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

Social Value

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

- Courtside philosophy is to serve the community, providing a social and welcoming space for Witney’s residents and visitors
- Increased variety of sports will encourage Witney’s residents to exercise and feel the physical and social benefits
- The completion of the Courtside Hub, coupled with new skatepark, mini golf, splashpad and excellent play area, establishes the Leys as a destination park for the area.

Financial implications

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

Recommendations

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

Raleigh Crescent Sports and Social Park



Current Situation

- After successful consultation, officers have clarity on what the community want from the park
- Officers have explored the parks location and agreed for it to remain in Raleigh Crescent instead of Deer Park field
- Witney Town Council are working in partnership with West Oxfordshire District Council to procure this project due to constraints surrounding S106 monies. The procurement process has been clarified.
- The first draft of a procurement tender has been written. Once approved by WTC and WODC, it will be formally published in November.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – inclusivity and accessibility to everyone are important design features of this park, which are highlighted in tender and subsequent evaluation process.
- b) Biodiversity – the project plans to deliver above the minimal uplift in BNG
- c) Crime & Disorder – location is an area subjected to occasional anti-social behaviour, which was raised at consultation events. We have asked for this issue to be addressed within the design through lighting and seating innovations.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – building construction consists of environmentally friendly materials and lighting will be energy efficient.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- Differences in Town Council and District Council protocol, processes and cultures could present challenges when transferring ownership to Witney Town Council. We are managing risk by learning from previous experience with Play Park and effective comms through robust procurement process and project management.

Social Value

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

- A key objective of the park is to encourage exercise through fun activities, which attracts users from every segment of the community which encourages social, generational, cultural and physical integration.
- Another key objective is making a safe and fun area for girls to socialise and participate in sporting activities.

- The park will address a growing concern of anti-social behaviour in the existing park, due to its poorly lit and covered seating areas.

Financial implications

- The project budget is reliant on S106 monies from WODC, which means the Town Council must work in partnership to deliver project. Robust processes need to be in place to ensure a smooth transfer of ownership is achieved.

Recommendations

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

Witney Mills Bowls Club

Attached as Appendix B is tenancy information relating to Witney Mills Bowls Club which was presented to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee. Minute no. PR479 of the last meeting refers.