
Agenda Item:	Unterhaching Park Lighting
Meeting Date:	13 January 2025
Contact Officer:	Head of Estates and Operations

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the electricity costs for the lighting at Unterhaching Park.

Background

The Unterhaching Park was transferred by West Oxfordshire District Council to Witney Town Council on 18 December 2023 and the transfer included nine street style lamps. Officers were asked to report on the energy costs when sufficient data was available.

Current Situation

WTC now have a twelve months of electricity consumption data for the lighting at Unterhaching Park which through the current energy supplier 'DRAX' equates to £2,250.

In view of other play areas and green spaces that are in the pipeline for transfer from WODC to WTC any lighting in these locations must be carefully considered. WTC have always had extensive discussions before accepting responsibility for the lighting due to the repair, maintenance and electricity costs.

A commuted sum of £30,000 was included in the transfer and Officers will look at the viability and benefits of replacing the lights with the latest LED equivalent.

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 - Thoughtfully designed park lighting ensures that everyone, regardless of background, ability, or socio-economic status, can safely enjoy parks at night.

b) Biodiversity – Consideration must be given to how artificial lighting in parks can disturb the natural activities of various species, particularly nocturnal animals like bats, insects, amphibians, and certain bird species. These animals often rely on darkness for feeding, mating, and navigation.

c) Crime & Disorder - Well-lit parks are less prone to criminal activities. Proper lighting in public spaces, like parks, can discourage crime, particularly violent offenses, theft, and anti-social behaviours.

d) Environment & Climate Emergency - Lighting is an essential part of urban design that influences safety, aesthetics, functionality, and environmental sustainability. Proper lighting enhances the attractiveness of outdoor spaces, promotes security, and supports energy efficiency.

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.

No risks identified at this time.

Social Value

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

The social value of lighting in Unterhaching park extends beyond just improving visibility. It plays a critical role in shaping public spaces and fostering positive community experiences.

Financial implications

- N/A at this stage

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report as an update.