

## PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE



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<b>Agenda Item:</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2026
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Deputy Town Clerk

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The purpose of this report is for Members to review and recommend terms of reference for the Committee for the forthcoming municipal year.

### Background

At the Annual Council Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026, it was resolved that terms of reference for each Committee would be reviewed at each meeting in the current meeting cycle.

### Current Situation

The terms of reference for the Parks & Recreation Committee in relation to Town Council-operated facilities are:

- a) To maintain all Recreation Grounds, Parks (including play equipment), and public open spaces and to initiate and oversee all matters of control properly associated with this recreation function;
- b) To maintain and oversee all sports activities upon any Recreation Ground or other recreational open space and buildings erected for such purposes thereon;
- c) To keep under review/updated the sports strategy within the Council's adopted Open Spaces Strategy to meet the changing needs of the community, sporting governing bodies recommendations and West Oxfordshire District Council's Playing Pitch Strategy in the Local Plan;
- d) To deal with the development and investment in the Council owned play areas, ensuring they remain safe and are inclusive wherever possible;
- e) To facilitate entertainment, community, and third-party events by ensuring that parks, recreation grounds, and related facilities are suitable, safe, and properly maintained for such use;
- f) Within all its decision making ensure that the green environment and biodiversity of public open spaces is protected and enhanced in line with the Council's Climate Emergency aspirations.
- g) To oversee any development and investment of Council owned recreation ground sites and its supporting infrastructure, ensuring they remain safe and compliant;
- h) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of six Members plus the Town Mayor and the Leader of the Council ex officio with voting rights;
- i) The quorum of the Committee shall be four Members.

The Committee is asked if it would like to make any amendments to the terms for the forthcoming municipal year.

## **Corporate Strategy**

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

1. A Forward Looking Town Council

## **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 - see text in the report.
- b) Biodiversity - see text in the report.
- c) Crime & Disorder - no direct implications.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - see text in the report.

## **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.

Without clear terms of reference, Council committees risk role confusion, weak accountability, legal challenges, inefficient decision-making, and poor alignment with Council objectives. Clear and regularly reviewed terms of reference are essential for accountable, transparent, and effective committee operations.

## **Social Value**

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

## **Financial implications**

- The work of the Committee is funded from pre-defined budgets.

## **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report and;

1. Review the terms of reference; and
2. Consider any changes to the terms of reference; and
3. Recommend such changes be made to Full Council on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2026.