
Agenda Item: Policy, Governance & Finance

Meeting Date: Monday, 13th July 2026

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is to present any outstanding or urgent matters requiring the Council's consideration before the next scheduled meeting cycle in September 2026.

Current Situation

Finance Report

Earmarked Reserves (Responsible Financial Officer)

APPENDIX A

West Witney Project Funding (Responsible Financial Officer)

APPENDIX B

Grants & Subsidised Lettings

Witney Community Primary School Discretionary Grant Request (Deputy Town Clerk)

A grant application was considered by the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee at its meeting on 30 March 2026 which asked for £5,000 'to fund much needed new playground equipment and repairs to existing old equipment not fit for purpose supporting the children to be active.'

In accordance with the Council's Discretionary Grants Policy, which provides for two grant funding rounds each year (January and June), the Committee resolved to defer consideration of the application until the June funding round. This was to ensure fairness and to avoid prejudicing the Council's ability to consider and award funding to other eligible applicants submitting applications within the published timetable.

No applications were received for the June discretionary grants round, as the meeting prioritised the allocation of the Council's Youth Services Grants.

Members are asked to consider the application accordingly (attached as Appendix C & D).

Witney Town Hall Charity – Grant Awards to Witney Town Council (Deputy Town Clerk)

Witney Town Council has been successful in achieving the following grants from the Charity:

Witney Town Council – Unterhaching Park	£1,000 (Est total cost) £872 (Estimate) £2,200 (rounded up)	(a) Raised Beds/Planter [OCC Cllr A Coles Priority fund pledge £350] (b) Accessible Picnic Table (c) Sensory Play Panels & Totems
Bus Shelter – Oxford Hill	£5,900	

Further information was requested in relation to a request for a grant towards the Public Halls Hearing Loop project.

Work on these items will now go ahead during the remainder of the year.

Subsidised Letting – Eco Fair

The Climate & Biodiversity Committee is seeking a subsidised letting in order to accommodate the second annual Eco Fair. As only the Main Hall is available in September the amount for the hire equates to £210.

Additional Financial Matters

Cogges Welfare Trust Payments

By way of an historic agreement, the Trust provides a token amount towards the maintenance of the Buttercross Clock. Previously this has been by way of a biannual payment of £3.

Following a review, this payment has not been made since 2020. To rectify this and to reduce the administrative cost of processing a payment every two years, which exceeds the value of the payment itself, the Trustees propose making a payment of £9 to bring the account up to date to June 2026, together with a further £15 in advance to cover the next ten years, to June 2036. The Trustees also propose that the Buttercross Clock payment be included as an annual agenda item at the Trust's AGM, with the minutes recording that it has been reviewed and noting the date the next payment falls due, thereby ensuring that future payments are not overlooked.

Security Fence at Witney Lake (Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer)

The Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer is seeking approval for a 25m stretch of palisade fencing to be positioned on the largest peninsula at Witney Lake. It would extend into the water to prevent “squeezing round the side.”

Please see the map showing the area below.



Restricting access to the peninsula will allow it to remain as an undisturbed habitat within the nature reserve area of the lake, providing a safe refuge for wildlife and helping to protect sensitive habitats. Limiting public access will also reduce antisocial behaviour, including rough sleeping. There have been incidents resulting in injury to wildlife, including the death of a swan, highlighting the need for greater protection. In addition, the peninsula is occasionally accessed by anglers despite the presence of overhead power lines, creating a significant safety risk. As the peninsula forms part of the designated nature reserve, it is considered inappropriate for general public access.



The cost of the gate above and necessary and necessary ironmongery will total approximately £1,200 + staff time, from existing budgets.

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 – The provision of sensory items at Unterhaching Park will provide inclusive provision in this play park.
- b) Biodiversity – The inclusion of a fence at Witney Lake will help protect the natural habitats in the nature reserve.
- c) Crime & Disorder – The inclusion of a fence at Witney Lake will help mitigate against anti-social behaviour in this area
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – the provision of a second Eco Fair will provide a free to access event aimed at promoting climate and environmental initiatives.

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.

There is social value in providing equipment for physical activity and social inclusion and in providing residents with information on how to make their homes more eco efficient and friendly.

Financial implications

➤ As presented in the report.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider;

1. To note and approve the document “schedule of reserves at 31 March 2026 and other items to note,” including the movements in relation to earmarked and restricted reserves.
2. Note & approve the financial update in relation to the West Witney Project as at 10 July 2026The discretionary grant application from Witney Community Primary School
3. Noting the grant awards from Witney Town Hall Charity
4. The subsidised letting request for an Eco Fair at the Corn Exchange in September 2026
5. The proposal for payments from Cogges Welfare Trust towards maintenance of the Buttercross Clock
6. Approval for the palisade fencing at the Witney Lake peninsula.