

**MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday, 8 June 2020**

**At 7.00 pm in the VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM - Virtual Meeting**

**Present:**

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

|              |                          |                |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Councillors: | L Ashbourne              | V Gwatkin      |
|              | T Ashby                  | M Jones        |
|              | R Bolger                 | J King         |
|              | D Butterfield            | A McMahon      |
|              | L Duncan                 | A Prosser      |
|              | D Enright                | R Smith        |
| Officers:    | Sharon Groth             | Town Clerk     |
|              | Adam Clapton             | Office Manager |
| Others:      | 6 members of the public. |                |

113 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies of absence were received from Cllrs O Collins, H Eaglestone, D Harvey and D Temple.

114 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared by Members at the meeting.

115 **MINUTES**

a) Members received the minutes of the ordinary Council meeting held on 10 February 2020.

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the ordinary Council meeting held on 10 February 2020 be agreed as a correct record.

b) Members received the minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Council meeting held on 20 March 2020.

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Council meeting held on 20 March 2020 be agreed as a correct record.

- c) There were no matters arising from the minutes of the Council meetings held on 10 February and 20 March 2020.

116 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None of the members of public present spoke under public participation.

117 **MINUTES OF THE HALLS & GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

Members received and considered the minutes of the Halls and Green Spaces Committee held on 9 March 2020.

**RESOLVED:**

that the minutes of the Halls & Green Spaces Committee of 9 March 2020 as detailed, be received and any recommendations therein approved.

118 **MINUTES OF THE STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

Members received and considered the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee held on 16 March 2020.

**RESOLVED:**

that the minutes of the Stronger Communities Committee of 16 March 2020 as detailed, be received and any recommendations therein approved.

119 **MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Members received and considered the minutes of Planning & Development Committee held on 18 February and 10 March 2020.

**RESOLVED:**

that the minutes of the Planning & Development Committee of 18 February and 10 March 2020 as detailed, be received and any recommendations therein approved.

120 **PLANNING RESPONSES SUBMITTED TO THE PLANNING AUTHORITY BETWEEN 25TH MARCH - 27TH MAY 2020**

Members received the planning responses submitted to West Oxfordshire District Council between 25 March – 27 May 2020. These having been delegated to the Planning & Development Committee during the Covid-19 lockdown.

**RESOLVED:**

that the planning application responses between 25 March and 27 May as detailed, be received and any observations therein approved.

121 **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING**

Members received and considered the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 13 May 2020.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 13 May 2020 as detailed, be received and any recommendations therein approved.
- b) There were no matters arising from the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 13 May 2020.

122 **APPOINTMENT OF ANY NEW STANDING COMMITTEES IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 30**

Members considered the appointment of new standing committees in accordance with standing Order 30. Members agreed the committee structure, as presented at the Annual Council Meeting be correct. Following a suggestion from a member, the estates and amenities committee was named 'Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments'.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Standing Committees of Witney Town Council, as outlined at the Annual Council Meeting on 13 May 2020 be agreed; and,
2. That the committee concerned with the Council's estate be named, The Halls, cemeteries & Allotments Committee.

123 **CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21**

Members received the draft calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2020/21. There was one fewer committee cycle due to the Covid-19 pandemic which had also led to the forthcoming one being held by virtual means. A review on how to hold meetings in subsequent cycles would be led by Government guidance nearer the time.

**RESOLVED:**

That the calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2020/21 as presented, be agreed and published.

124 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO STANDING COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES, AND THE ELECTION OF CHAIRS**

Members considered the appointment of standing committees and sub committees and proposed the following:

Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee

Cllr J Aitman  
Cllr M Jones

Cllr L Ashbourne  
Cllr A McMahon

Cllr R Bolger  
Cllr A Prosser

Cllr V Gwatkin  
Cllr R Smith

Chair of Committee Cllr R Smith

Sport & Play Committee

|               |                |                  |                    |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Cllr T Ashby  | Cllr J Aitman  | Cllr L Ashbourne | Cllr D Butterfield |
| Cllr L Duncan | Cllr V Gwatkin | Cllr A Prosser   | Cllr R Smith       |

Chair of Committee Cllr V Gwatkin

Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee

|               |                |                  |                |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Cllr T Ashby  | Cllr J Aitman  | Cllr L Ashbourne | Cllr O Collins |
| Cllr L Duncan | Cllr V Gwatkin | Cllr M Jones     | Cllr J King    |

Chair of Committee Cllr M Jones

Stronger Communities Committee

|                |                   |                |                    |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Cllr J Aitman  | Cllr L Ashbourne  | Cllr T Ashby   | Cllr D Butterfield |
| Cllr O Collins | Cllr H Eaglestone | Cllr D Enright | Cllr V Gwatkin     |

Chair of Committee Cllr O Collins

Policy, Governance & Finance Committee

|                |                  |                |                   |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Cllr J Aitman  | Cllr L Ashbourne | Cllr O Collins | Cllr H Eaglestone |
| Cllr V Gwatkin | Cllr D Harvey    | Cllr M Jones   | Cllr R Smith      |

Chair of Committee Cllr L Ashbourne

Personnel Sub-Committee

|               |                  |                |                |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Cllr J Aitman | Cllr L Ashbourne | Cllr O Collins | Cllr V Gwatkin |
| Cllr M Jones  | Cllr R Smith     |                |                |

Chair of Sub-Committee Cllr V Gwatkin

Corn Exchange Working Party

|               |                  |                |               |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Cllr J Aitman | Cllr L Ashbourne | Cllr O Collins | Cllr L Duncan |
| Cllr D Harvey | Cllr J King      |                |               |

Chair of Working Party Cllr O Collins

**RESOLVED:**

That the membership of the standing committees, sub committees and working parties and their Chairs be agreed as detailed above.

125 **APPOINTMENT TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

Members considered appointment to advisory committees and outside organisations and proposed the following positions.

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b><i>CCTV Management Group</i></b>  | - | <b><i>Cllr Owen Collins</i></b>   |
| <b><i>Friends of the Cemeteries</i></b>  | - | <b><i>Cllr Owen Collins<br/>Cllr Mel Jones<br/>Cllr Duncan Enright</i></b>                  |
| <b><i>Home Start (Champions)</i></b>   | - | <b><i>Cllr Joy Aitman<br/>Cllr Ruth Smith</i></b>   |
| <b><i>Lower Windrush Valley Project</i></b>  | - | <b><i>Cllr Rosa Bolger</i></b>  |
| <b><i>Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils<br/>(Executive)</i></b>            | - | <b><i>Cllr Rosa Bolger</i></b>  |
| <b><i>Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils<br/>(Larger Councils)</i></b>      | - | <b><i>Leader</i></b>  |
| <b><i>R.A.F Brize Norton – Local Consultation<br/>Working Group</i></b>            | - | <b><i>Cllr Rosa Bolger</i></b>  |
| <b><i>St Mary’s Church Preservation Trust</i></b>                                  | - | <b><i>Cllr Joy Aitman (as Mayor)</i></b>  |
| <b><i>Vice President of no. 2120 (Witney)<br/>Squadron Air Training Corps†</i></b> | - | <b><i>Cllr Joy Aitman (as Mayor)</i></b>  |
| <b><i>Volunteer Link-Up</i></b>  | - | <b><i>Cllr Liz Duncan</i></b>   |
| <b><i>West Oxfordshire Community Transport</i></b>                                 | - | <b><i>Cllr Joy Aitman</i></b>   |
| <b><i>West Oxfordshire Museum Service</i></b>                                      | - | <b><i>Cllr Liz Duncan</i></b>   |
| <b><i>West Witney Sports &amp; Social Club</i></b>                                 | - | <b><i>Cllr Joy Aitman<br/>Cllr Vicky Gwatkin</i></b>  |
| <b><i>Witney Allotment Association</i></b>   | - | <b><i>Cllr Ruth Smith</i></b>   |
| <b><i>Witney &amp; District Twinning Association</i></b>                           | - | <b><i>Cllr Joy Aitman (as Mayor)<br/>Cllr Owen Collins<br/>Cllr Liz Duncan</i></b>          |
| <b><i>Witney Fair Trade Action Group<br/>(Champion)</i></b>                        | - | <b><i>Cllr Duncan Enright</i></b>   |
| <b><i>Witney Traffic Advisory Committee</i></b>                                    | - | <b><i>Cllr Joy Aitman<br/>Cllr Liz Duncan<br/>Cllr Duncan Enright<br/>Cllr Jim King</i></b> |

|                                       |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Witney Town Band</b>               | - | <b>Cllr Ruth Smith</b>   |
| <b>Witney Youth Council (Mentors)</b> | - | <b>Cllr Thomas Ashby</b><br><b>Cllr Rosa Bolger</b><br><b>Cllr Vicky Gwatkin</b> |

*† This position is by invitation from The Squadron.*

*NB. The Mayor, Cllr Joy Aitman serves as ex-officio on St Mary's Preservation Trust, Witney 2120 Air Cadets and Witney & District Twinning Association during her term.*

**RESOLVED:**

That the appointment to advisory committees and outside organisations be agreed as detailed above.

126 **WORLD REFUGEE DAY - 20 JUNE 2020**

Members were advised that the World Refugee Flag had been flown from the Town Hall in 2019 to mark World Refugee Day and a further request had been made to fly it in 2020.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) that Witney Town Council flies the World Refugee Flag from the Town Hall on 20 June 2020
- b) that this occasion be added to the annual Council's flag flying calendar.

127 **HEALTH AND SAFETY - COVID-19**

The Committee received a verbal report from the Town Clerk updating members on the current situation in respect of Council run services.

The Senior Management team were working strategically, considering restrictions for varying sites under the Council's control, implementing the risk assessments and equipment needed to re-open them. The Operations & Estates Officer and Compliance & Environment Officer were looking at cleaning regimes, social distancing safety measure which could be implemented and working with the Public Halls team to work with hirers moving forward all of which would take time so they would be correct.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

128 **COMMUNICATION FROM THE LEADER**

There were no communications from the Leader. However, Cllr Ashbourne thanked officers and members for the extra-ordinary effort made in terms of capacity and support to the residents of Witney during such an unprecedented time with the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown.

129 **MOTION**

The committee received and considered the following motion submitted by Cllr R Smith and seconded by Cllr A Prosser.

Witney Town Council notes that a consortium of councillors, residents and social enterprises in the town worked together to compose 'Witney Reallocating Road Space Proposals' – termed 'Witney's Big Green Plan' – which was submitted to Oxfordshire County Council on 18 May. The measures were drafted in relation to travel in the town whilst public transport capacity is limited and social distancing is required due to COVID-19. They were informed by a wealth of detailed local knowledge, including from Windrush Bike Project.

We note that the main recommendations of Witney's plan, which was tailored to the government's proposals, match OCC's stated priorities:

- School Streets
- 20 mph speed limits
- Reallocation of road space in favour of pedestrians and cyclists

We express commitment to Witney's Big Green Plan throughout and beyond the pandemic by

- working with Witney's Traffic Advisory Committee to implement the plan alongside representatives from all councils, transport providers and user groups
- setting out the contents of the plan formally in a WTC Active Travel Infrastructure Development Plan
- communicating with residents as we work together to improve safety, public health, air quality and sustainability.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Witney Town Council supports Oxfordshire County Council's Big Green Plan for Witney throughout and beyond the Covid-19 pandemic by:
  - a) Working with Witney Traffic Advisory Committee to implement the plan alongside representatives from all Council's transport providers and user groups,
  - b) Setting out the contents of the plan formally in a Town Council Active Travel Infrastructure Development Plan,
  - c) Communicating with residents as the Town Council works together to improve safety, public health, air quality and sustainability.

130 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence brought before the Council by the Town Clerk.

131 **QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

There were no questions submitted to the Leader at the meeting.

132 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

The Town Clerk advised that the lease with The I.C.E Centre for Langdale Hall, Witney had been signed by herself and the Mayor/Chair on behalf of the Council. The Town Clerk added that although signed and delivered by Witney Town Council, the lease transfer had not been officially completed.

**RESOLVED:**

that the Council notes Seal no. 82 dated 9 March 2020 for the lease with Inclusive Care & Education Ltd for Langdale Hall, this being a ten year lease from March 2018.

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The meeting closed at: 8.50 pm

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Chair