

**CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY & PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE  
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Tuesday, 13 October 2020**

**At 6.00 pm in the Virtual Meeting Room via Zoom**

**Present:**

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	J Aitman	M Jones
	L Ashbourne	A McMahon
	V Gwatkin	A Prosser
Officers:	Nicky Cayley	Democratic Services Officer
	Adam Clapton	Office Manager
	Angus Whitburn	Compliance and Environment Officer
Others:	3 members of the public.	

**P340 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for her absence was received from Cllr Bolger.

**P341 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs Ashbourne and Prosser declared an interest in planning application WTC/143/20 as they knew one of the applicants.

**P342 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned in line with Standing Order 42, in order to receive public participation.

Mr Guy addressed the Committee on his request to purchase Town Council owned amenity land adjacent to 10A Burwell Close, Witney.

Mr Nellist addressed the Committee on his Planning Application for Ash Close (WTC/143/20).

Following these addresses, the Committee reconvened.

**P343 REQUEST TO PURCHASE LAND**

This item was moved up the agenda with the express permission of the Chair, in order that Mr Guy could hear the debate.

The Committee received and considered the report of the Office Manager and the documentation supplied by Mr Guy.

Whilst the recent precedent of the Council had been not to sell amenity land, Mr Guy made a compelling argument and some members favoured selling the land as he had said that he would maintain it as part of his garden and would include a vegetable patch.

Some members were concerned about the fact that this would effectively enclose a narrow footpath and that the area in question currently provided a useful passing place – especially during social distancing.

Members also discussed the fact that if the land was sold, it would need to have a condition that it could not be built on imposed.

After further discussion members decided that they needed to understand what implications any sale may have on other areas of amenity land near to housing.

Members also wanted to look at the planning conditions associated with 10A as this house had been built in the grounds of number 10 Burwell Close.

Once this had been done the request could be reconsidered at the next meeting, and if provisional agreement on the sale was reached, officers would need to undertake further work to present this to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the request be noted and:-

- i) that the Committee looks at the pieces of land owned by the Town Council to assess what the impact would be if the land was sold and other requests were then forthcoming;
- ii) that the Planning application is checked for any covenants;
- iii) that the request is revisited at the meeting of this committee on 3 November. A site visit by the Chair and Vice Chair may be appropriate.

P344 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Members received and considered the schedule of Planning Applications from West Oxfordshire District Council. Application WTC/143/20 was considered first in order for Mr Nellist to hear the discussion.

**RESOLVED:** that the comments, as per the attached schedule, be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council.

P345 **APPEAL NOTIFICATION -4 BIRDLIP CLOSE**

Members received and considered an appeal notification for 4 Birdlip Close.

**RESOLVED:** that the appeal be noted.

P346 **LAKE AND COUNTRY PARK UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Compliance and Environment Officer.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted and:-

1. that the Compliance and Environment Officer obtains further background information on the Lake and Country park and commissions a company to carry out a phase 1 ecology survey for the lake and country park;
2. that £5, 000 be added to the budget for the eventuality of the formal design process of the river bank's at the lake and country park.

P347 **MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT - CONSULTATION ON PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE.**

This item had been deferred from the previous Climate, Biodiversity and Planning Committee as members were not sure what response should be made. In the interim period between meetings, Cllr Aitman had shared the response made by the District Council to this consultation. The Chair and Vice Chair had agreed that as this was a robust response, the Town Council did not need to make one of its own.

**RESOLVED:** that the Committee does not wish to make a response to this consultation as the response given by the District Council was adequate.

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The meeting closed at: 7.15 pm

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Chair