

**HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 13 September 2021

At 6.00 pm in the Main Hall, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor M Jones (Chair)

Councillors:	V Gwatkin	O Collins
	J Aitman	R Smith
	L Ashbourne	
Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Simon Wright	Democratic & Legal Services Officer
Others:	0 members of the public.	

H463 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Ashby and L Duncan.

H464 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

H465 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 July 2021 were received.

The Town Clerk advised members that tenders were still awaited regarding the accessibility works at Tower Hill cemetery. It was further reported that a meeting had been held with Thames Valley Police regarding anti-social behaviour at Windrush cemetery and they would be undertaking more frequent patrols in the area.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee held on 12 July 2021 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

H466 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

H467 **COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk providing an update on the committee work plan and seeking any projects to be put forward as part of the budget setting process.

In response to a query it was clarified that applicants for allotments were not means tested and previously there had been rent reductions for users in receipt of benefits.

Members indicated support for signage for the halls to be included in the budget setting and it was noted that Town Council events would also be advertised in the new reception area. Clarification was given that cinema equipment for the Corn Exchange and works to the chapel at Tower Hill were already included for consideration.

Resolved:

That the Committee Work Plan be noted and that signage for the halls be put forward for consideration as part of the budget setting process.

H468 **BURWELL HALL - REPLACEMENT HEATING SYSTEM**

Consideration was given to the report of the Project Officer regarding a replacement heating system at Burwell Hall.

Members expressed their support for exploring a renewable/green energy solution. The financial implications were clarified and it was explained that the consultants had been recommended through Oxfordshire County Council.

Resolved:

To commission ESOx to carry out a feasibility study for Burwell Hall, for a new heating/hot water system that reduces its carbon footprint and use of fossil fuels, at a cost of £1,500.

H469 **LANGDALE HALL - REQUEST FOR OUTSIDE SEATING**

The Committee considered a request from the tenants of Langdale Hall to allow the positioning of tables and chairs outside of the building. Clarification was given on the proposed location of the tables and chairs.

During discussion members considered access to the site and neighbouring properties, potential noise nuisance for nearby residents, licensing implications, health and safety, management of events if outside facilities were in place and support for the night-time economy.

Members, whilst sympathetic to the aims of the applicants, considered that further information in respect of a health and safety audit and event management plans was required before a decision could be made. In addition it was felt that if satisfactory information was received any agreement should be on a trial basis so the impact could be fully assessed.

It was proposed and agreed that the matter be delegated to the Town Clerk in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee to make a decision subject to the information provided by the applicant.

Resolved:

1. That, the applicant be requested to provide a detailed health and safety audit and event management plan for consideration; and
2. That, the decision be delegated to the Town Clerk in conjunction with the Chair & Vice-Chair of the Committee.

H470 **PUBLIC HALLS & 1863 CAFÉ BAR REPORT**

The Committee received the report of the Venue & Events Officer regarding usage and income from The Corn Exchange, Burwell Hall and 1863 Café bar. Members noted the increasing number of bookings as organisations returned to face to face events and the encouraging income levels from the café.

In response to a question it was clarified that the Town Council did not approach organisations and all groups had equitable access to bookings. If there was an issue regarding regular clashes then discussions would be instigated by the Venue & Events Officer.

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that an approach had been made for an event which was outside the allocated budget. The John Coghlan Quo had proposed using the Corn Exchange with the Town Council paying for the event and keeping the income from ticket sales. The Committee considered that it was not affordable at this time and the offer should be declined.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised members that the current pavement licence at the Corn Exchange would expire at the end of September and the renewal for a year would cost £100. Members supported making an application and that it should include longer hours than the current licence to allow greater flexibility in the future. It was noted that the hours would not necessarily be needed and decisions around longer opening hours of the venue was a separate decision.

Resolved:

1. That, the current usage and income from the Town Council venues be noted;
2. That, the John Coghlan Quo event is not supported as it is outside the current allocated budget; and
3. That, an application for a new Pavement Licence, with longer hours than currently, be made for the Corn Exchange.

The meeting closed at: 7.00 pm

Chair