

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

Held on Tuesday, 12 July 2022

At 6.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor R Smith (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser T Ashby	L Duncan P Hiles
Officers:	Adam Clapton Claire Green	Deputy Town Clerk Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
Others:	None	

P370 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor V Gwatkin.

P371 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from members or officers.

P372 MINUTES

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meetings held on 31 May and 21 June 2022.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the meetings of the committee held on 31 May & 21 June 2022 were adopted as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

P373 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned for this item.

Gavin Hyatt addressed the Committee on agenda item 5.3 – a planning application for T Robins Building, Avenue Three, Witney. West Oxfordshire District Council application reference 22/01068/FUL. Questions followed from Committee members.

The meeting reconvened for planning applications to be considered.

P374 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning applications from West Oxfordshire District Council.

Resolved:

That the comments, as per the attached schedule, be forwarded to West Oxfordshire District Council.

P375 **OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING R3.0073/22 - MOORLAND ROAD, WITNEY**

The Committee received and considered Oxfordshire County Council planning application R3.0073/22 at Moorland Road, Witney.

Resolved:

That, Witney Town Council has no objection to this application.

P376 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

The Committee received and considered a schedule of planning decisions received from West Oxfordshire District Council.

Resolved:

That, the list circulated advising of District Council planning decisions be noted.

P377 **NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING APPEAL - 141 QUEEN EMMA'S DYKE**

The Committee received notice of Planning Appeal APP/ D3125/W/22/3293742 for 141 Queen Emma's Dyke, Witney.

Resolved:

That, the Planning Appeal be noted.

P378 **WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 7 JUNE 2022**

The Committee received the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 7 June 2022.

Resolved:

That the minutes, as circulated, be noted.

P379 **LOCAL CYCLING & WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (LCWIP)**

The Committee received a presentation from the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) meeting held on 23 June 2022.

Members were advised that the outcomes of this project were by no means confirmed and would not conflict with more advance plans due to be funded from Section 106 contributions. The proposed improvements in the document were examples and suggestions and the final plans would be developed in future meetings.

Resolved:

That, the update on the LCWIP be noted.

P380 **CLIMATE INITIATIVES UPDATE**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided the committee with a verbal update on initiatives across the Council estate which crossed over with the climate aspirations of this committee and where further reports had not yet been presented.

Members were advised that a Fuel Cell CHP Boiler had been agreed at Burwell Hall by the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee. There was some concern this solution was not as environmentally friendly as other options, but the Council was constrained by the cost of these. It would provide a greener option and would work well with the development of changing rooms at the Hall.

Changes had been made to Council's facilities and operations including procurement of plastic free sanitary equipment and the impending tendering for a more environmentally friendly printing contract and an electric works vehicle. It was advised that officers were exploring purchasing more electric work items, but this was proving problematic as some alternatives didn't exist.

Regarding other buildings and the estate, although funds had been allocated to these for climate initiatives, several were tied up with long-term projects and plans had not yet been finalised. The Chair advised there had been approach from a group of residents regarding solar panels at Madley Park Hall and they would be contacting the Council regarding their proposals in due course. At the Country Park, the Environment Agency had begun clearing debris from the river through the section owned by the Council.

In response to a Member, it was advised that a Carbon Footprint document for the Council's Estate and forward plan, while started, had not been completed due to resourcing issues but it was essential to deliver the Councils Climate Objectives.

In terms of encouraging active travel, the committee heard that Car Free Day would be held on 22 September, 20mph speed restriction proposals were with the County Council for a decision, and the vandalised bike repair stands at the Leys and in Market Square were proving costly to repair. On the latter, members suggested contacting Active Oxfordshire to see if further funding was available.

Resolved:

That, the updates be noted.

Cllr T Ashby left the meeting at 7.33pm

P381 WILDFLOWER PLANTING

The Committee received and considered the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer concerning wildflower planting.

Members were pleased with what had been achieved this summer but there was some concern that the sowing of annual wildflower seed beds was more akin to regular planting. A more bio-diverse approach had been utilised in other areas, such as Windrush Cemetery so there was a need for both kinds of approach. In terms of increasing biodiversity, the wildflower seed beds should be scaled up with bee friendly flowers; these extended areas contributing towards a biodiverse corridor in the town.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That the extension of the wildflower areas at Oxlease and the Cemeteries be supported under the current wildflower seed bed scheme in these areas to create a wildlife corridor and,
3. That, Wild Witney be asked to carry out wildflower planting at the Lake & Country Park along the yellow rattle long-term approach and,
4. That, Witney Land Army be approached to see if they would like to carry out wildflower seed planting this autumn.

P382 THERMAL IMAGING CAMERA

The Committee received the report of the Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer concerning a thermal imaging camera purchased by the Council

Members agreed it was an excellent time to launch this initiative given the cost-of-living crisis and need for residents to identify home insulation issues ahead of the winter.

It was suggested by a member there was a group in Witney who may be willing to facilitate the use of the camera to residents. A disclaimer/terms of reference and crib sheet on how to use the camera would be required.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the thermal imaging camera be loaned to the local Eco Forum Group to help residents identify home insulation issues.

The meeting closed at: 7.57 pm

Chair