

**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday 13 November 2017  
at 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall**

**Present**

Councillor: Cllr C Holliday (Chairman)

|              |               |             |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| Councillors: | C Brown       | D S Enright |
|              | H W Chirgwin  | C Holliday  |
|              | B J Churchill | T J Morris  |
|              | J M Doughty   |             |

|           |                                      |                                |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Officers: | Town Clerk                           | Operations and Estates Officer |
|           | Communications Officer               | Democratic Services Officer    |
|           | Responsible Finance Officer          |                                |
|           | Asst. Operations and Estates Officer |                                |

Also present: 2 members of the public

C542 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for his absence was received from Cllr Woodward.

C543 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs Chirgwin and Churchill declared an interest in agenda item 9 – Community First Oxfordshire Transport Survey 2017 - as they were members of the Public Transportation Working Party.

Cllr Chirgwin also declared an interest in agenda item 16 – Events – as his wife was the manager of Volunteer Link Up.

C544 **MINUTES**

- a) **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman with the following amendment:-  
Minute C453 “loan” to be replaced by “grant”.
- b) **MATTERS ARISING:** Minute 460 c)- the Town Clerk advised that she had contacted OCC about the removal of the bus stop on Welch Way and they had agreed to it being moved and adopted by the Town Council. However, there would be a cost - £2,800. This was approximately the same cost as purchasing a new one. At the moment there was no capacity in the Works Team to move and restore it so a new one may be a better option in the future.

C545 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee adjourned in line with Standing Order 42 so that a member of the public, Ms Jill Saint, could address the Committee on the use of Wood Green for a production of Thrush Green.

The Committee reconvened following the address by the member of the public.

C546 **PRODUCTION OF THRUSH GREEN ON WOOD GREEN – CIVIC AND COUNCIL EVENTS 2018**

**RESOLVED:** to bring forward part of item 10c - on the use of Woodgreen - forward in order that Ms Saint could hear the discussion.

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications Officer. She advised that having heard the presentation tonight, the production of Thrush Green could not be part of Heritage Open Days as it was planned to be a chargeable ticketed event and Heritage Open Days had to be free.

Members were very much in favour of the event and would be pleased to facilitate it in any way possible. A member suggested that the Town Council might be able to obtain funding from WODC or other sources. If enough funding could be obtained then it might be possible to have a free event.

**RESOLVED:** that the Council agrees to the use of Wood Green for a production of Thrush Green and that the item will be a standing item on the agenda for the next 2 meetings in order to explore options for funding. Ms Saint may be invited back to a future meeting.

The members of the public left the meeting.

C547 **OPERATIONAL REPORT – PROGRESS ON IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer as circulated with the agenda. He added that the resident with the tree issue at Farmers Close had signed the heave indemnity so the tree would be removed shortly.

A member asked if there would be a test run of the Christmas Lights and was advised that installation should be complete by that Friday and so a test run would be carried out.

Another member thanked the Operations and Estates Officer for attending a Britain In Bloom Seminar (in which the importance of community involvement had been highlighted) and asked if he was in a position to share this with the working party. The Operations and Estates Officer replied that as soon as the Christmas Lights Switch On was over, this would be an area of high importance and a meeting would be convened.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted.

C548 **PRESS COVERAGE UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered and update on press coverage.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the update be noted.

C549 **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications Officer as circulated with the agenda. A website audit was to take place in the run up to Christmas and she urged Members to advise her of any anomalies they come across.

She advised Members of the content the next Newsletter would contain, specifically Christmas related items, the Citizen of the Year Awards, Knit and Natter days and the stop press on the 213 service.

A member offered thanks to the staff for the Remembrance Day event.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted.

C550 **COMMUNITY FIRST TRANSPORT SURVEY 2017**

The Committee received and considered the Survey from Community First Oxfordshire as circulated with the agenda. Members agreed that it would be beneficial if the results could be shared with West Oxfordshire Community Transport.

**RECOMMENDED:** that Cllr Bartington as Chairman of the Public Transportation Working Party be asked to complete the survey on the Council's behalf.

C551 **REVISED BUDGET 2017/18 & ESTIMATES FOR 2018/19, FEES & CHARGES FOR 2018/19, CAPITAL & SPECIAL REVENUE PROJECTS FOR 2018/19 AND PREPARATION POOL 2019/2020**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer as circulated with the agenda.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the revised base budget for 2017/18 and the estimates for 2018/19 as presented be noted;
3. that the capital projects list for 2018/19 as circulated be taken forward to the Policy and Resources Committee.

C552 **EVENTS**

a) **Review of Terms and Conditions of Hire for Events**

The Committee received and considered the new draft of Terms and Conditions of Hire for Events, along with a report from the RFO and the Operations and Estates Officer as circulated with the agenda.

Members had a lengthy discussion on the policy and asked for a preamble to be included explaining that the Council welcomed events in Witney and explaining the sporting uses of The Leys as well. Also helpful would be a short description of each area available for hire.

There was a discussion involving the annual shut down for grounds maintenance on The Leys, which had previously been agreed by Council as some members had not realised that this would happen every year. The Town Clerk commented that after next year's renovations, Officers could review how well the work had gone and then Council may be able to revisit its decision and review what works would be needed the following year. It may transpire the length of shut down may be shorter. But in the meantime, the Council had committed to these works for the lifetime of the Grounds Maintenance Contract. The Operations and Estates Officer added that it was not helped by events not wanting to use the other side of The Leys or to move events to before or after the works period. The Town Clerk advised that the Music Festival had moved to August for 2018 and it may wish to stay in August the following year. It had also operated around Easter or the May bank holiday in the past and had only been in June since 2015.

A member expressed concern over the new charges contained in the terms and conditions. It was explained that these had been introduced in line with other council's charges.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that a preamble/introduction is included with a description of each site and the size of each site;
3. that whilst the Council's resolution for annual grounds maintenance to take place over the 6 week summer period is acknowledged, the Committee will revisit this decision in 2018 in order to assess the works and shut down required in 2019;
4. that the schedule of fees as set out in the draft terms and conditions be agreed;
5. that the document is branded with the usual Witney Town Council logo.

b) Update on Community Events and Requests for 2018

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer as circulated with the agenda. Remembrance Sunday had gone well, although there was an incident with a car attempting to run an officer over when they were prevented from accessing a closed road. The Town Clerk was asked to report this directly to PC Cochrane. There had been witnesses and the car's registration had been noted.

Members commented that they had not liked standing in a different area to previous years. The Communications Officer would feed this back to the Royal British Legion in the "wash up" meeting.

There was a brief update on the Christmas Lights Switch On event which members noted.

Two requests had been made to use Council land. The first was VAG revolution who wanted to use The Leys for a fundraising event and the second was Circus Wonderland who had asked for either The Leys or Burwell Field.

Members discussed both events and had concerns about cars driving over The Leys. It was suggested that they were offered King George V Field instead. Members then discussed this further and felt that anyone who wanted to use Town Council land could be offered King George V Field free of charge during 2018. All members agreed with this idea.

Circus Wonderland should be offered Burwell Recreation Ground or King George V Field at no cost.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that VAG Revolution is not permitted use of The Leys but is offered free use of King George V Field;
3. that King George V Field be offered free of charge for events in 2018;
4. that Circus Wonderland be offered Burwell recreation Field at the normal rate or King George V Field free of charge.

c) Civic and Council Events Programme 2018

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications Officer as circulated with the agenda.

In her report she had advised that in 2018 it would be the 30th anniversary of the Lake and Country Park and the Communications Officer suggested that it might be nice to mark the occasion with some sort of event. Similarly it would be the 40th anniversary of the Town Council re-opening the Corn Exchange and an event could be arranged for this. Members agreed to send ideas to the Communications Officer.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the report be noted;
2. that Volunteer Link Up be granted subsidised use of the Corn Exchange, funded by the events budget;
3. that members forward ideas to the Communications Officer for events celebrating the anniversaries of the Lake and Country Park and the Corn Exchange.

C553 **MINUTES OF WORKING PARTIES**

Christmas Lights Working Party – 2 October 2017

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Christmas Lights Working Party held on 2 October 2017 as circulated with the agenda. A member pointed out that on page 3, “Rt Hon. Robert Courts” should read “Robert Courts M.P” .

A member commented that people had approached him to ask if the lights would be able to go further down the High Street and had indicated that they might be willing to sponsor these. It was agreed that this could go into next year’s plan.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the minutes be noted and all recommendations contained therein be agreed.

Youth Council Working Party – 9 October 2017

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Youth Council Working Party held on 9 October 2017 as circulated with the agenda. The next meeting would be held on 27 November at 5pm.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the minutes be noted and all recommendations contained therein be agreed.

World War 1 Working Party – 6 November 2017

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the World War 1 Working Party held on 6 November 2017 as circulated with the agenda. Cllr Chirgwin had sent his apologies which were not recorded in the minutes.

A member thanked the Chairman of the Working Party for adding the Merchant Navy back onto the memorial.

A member queried the £3,000 budget for the RAF Freedom Parade. It was agreed but hoped that it would not be spent.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. that the minutes be noted and all recommendations contained therein be agreed.
2. that the £3,000 budget for the RAF Freedom parade be agreed.

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The meeting closed at 7.44pm.

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Chairman.