

**STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday 8 July 2019
at 7pm in the Gallery Room, Corn Exchange**

Present

Councillor: Cllr J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors: R Bolger A McMahon
D T Enright R Smith
J King

Officers: Mrs Sharon Groth - Town Clerk
Mr Adam Clapton – Office Manager
Mr John Hickman - Operations and Estates Officer
Mrs Polly Inness - Communications Officer
Mrs Nicky Cayley – Democratic Services Officer

Also present: 5 members of the public

C324 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for her absence was received from Cllr L Ashbourne.

C325 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

C326 MINUTES

- a) **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- b) **MATTERS ARISING:** there were no matters arising to be discussed at the meeting.

C327 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Council adjourned in line with standing order 42 so that Mr Ron Spurs could address the Council on agenda item 9.2 (Third Party Events on Council Land) on behalf of Witney Carnival Committee.

C328 THIRD PARTY EVENTS ON COUNCIL LAND

With the express permission of the Chair, this item was moved up the agenda.

In respect of the Carnival's Event Management Plan, a list had been circulated at the meeting to show how many items including PLI and Food Safety Certificates were missing. Consequently the Operations and Estates Officer advised that he was not happy to issue an event permit to the Carnival as it would expose the Council to an unacceptable level of risk if

Officers had not seen the required documentation as requested by the Council's external Health and Safety Advisor. The Town Council had a responsibility as landlord of The Leys to ensure that these items were in order, demonstrating due diligence to discharge the Council's liability.

The Town Clerk added that she'd had a conversation with the Chair of the Carnival Committee and he had cited GDPR as the reason that the information had not been passed on. However, she pointed out that the stall holders should have been informed at the start how their data would be shared - passed on to the Town Council as part of the Event Management Plan.

The Operations & Estates Officer informed Councillors of the requirements set out in the Council's Events Terms and Conditions of hire, and how both Libfest and Witney Music Festival had been compliant in supplying the required information. It was important that all event organisers were treated the same.

RESOLVED: that at 7.16pm the committee adjourned the meeting so that it could have a free dialogue with Mr Spurs.

At 7.26pm the Committee reconvened.

Further to the discussion the Town Clerk reiterated that neither she or the Operations and Estates Officer would sign the Event Permit for the Carnival and were therefore absolving themselves of any responsibility for the event, due to the fact that the Council would be facing an unacceptable level of risk if the Committee chose to issue a permit.

The Mayor proposed that he would sign the event permit at 12pm on 9 July 2019 subject to an e-mail from the Carnival Committee stating that they would be checking public liability insurance and food safety certificates on the day of the Carnival and supplying photographic evidence of all of the required documentation to the Town Council. The Carnival Committee must tell all stall holders that if they did not supply this information then they would not be able to hold their stall. All members were in favour.

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

The Committee agreed that wash up meeting should be held with LibFest, the Music Festival and the Carnival and as soon as possible following these, one meeting to which all were invited to. 3 councillors should attend these meetings.

The deposit from the Music Festival would be retained due to the damage on The Leys until this had been discussed at the wash up meeting. It would then be decided if this should be retained permanently.

Members also requested that the Large Events Policy was brought to the next meeting for review so that the Committee could ensure that there was a standard practice in place. This should include consideration of environmental impact.

RESOLVED:

1. that the report of the Operations and Estates Officer be noted;
2. that the Mayor signs the event permit at 12pm on 9 July 2019 subject to an e-mail from the Carnival Committee stating that they would be checking public liability insurance and food safety certificates on the day of the Carnival and supplying photographic evidence of all of the required documentation to the Town Council. The Carnival Committee must tell all stall holders that if they did not supply this information then they would not be able to hold their stall;
3. that wash up meeting should be held with LibFest, the Music Festival and the Carnival and as soon as possible following these, one meeting to which all were invited to. 3 councillors should attend these meetings;
4. that the deposit from the Music Festival would be retained due to the damage on The Leys until this had been discussed at the wash up meeting. It would then be decided if this should be retained permanently;
5. that the Large Events Policy be brought to the next meeting for review so that the Committee could ensure that there was a standard practice in place. This should include consideration of environmental impact.

Mr Ron Spurs left the meeting at 7.35pm.

C329 **WITNEY YOUTH FORUM – RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee welcomed County Councillor Laura Price to the meeting to discuss the recommendations from the Youth Forum which had come about from her motion to Council when she sat as a Town Councillor. The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk which had previously been presented to Council on 26 June 2019. Cllr Price was invited to make suggestions and assist with the formation of the Youth Services Working Party.

Cllr Price explained that this would be a task and finish working party to set the specification of the type of youth work required. She thought it should be a combination of elected members, cross party members and people with direct experience of delivering Youth Work. She would like to see all those who had already been involved directly in the Youth Forum with the addition of Julie Edwards who was very experienced in youth work and also the leader of Cogges Youth Club. She would also like to see Lucy Cullen who had a good understanding of the issues involved.

Cllr Price also suggested representatives from all 3 tiers of Council – she would be delighted to join the working party as the representative for OCC.

She thought that the Working party should: -

- Write the specification of posts and how many posts there should be
- Set the hours the Youth Works should work
- Take advice from those who understood the issues

- Decide what the ultimate goals of the service would be
- Decide upon the type of service – direct or partnership organisation
- Write funding bids to OCC, WODC and Thames Valley Police

A member asked if the Youth Worker would be attached to a premises. Cllr Price explained that this would largely be down to the worker as they may feel that it would be better not to be.

RECOMMENDED: that Cllr Prices suggestions be accepted and that that 3 Labour members, 1 Conservative member and 1 Green member should represent the Town Council. The groups should put forward names and the approval of these would be delegated to the Town Clerk.

Cllr Price left the meeting at 8.02pm.

C330 COMMITTEE VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

A member commented that the committee had set two objectives that evening – youth provision and review of large events policy. Other items would flow down from the Council's objectives.

RESOLVED: that this be reviewed at the next meeting.

C331 OPERATIONAL REPORT – PROGRESS SINCE LAST MEETING

The Committee received the report and a verbal update on its contents from the Operations and Estates Officer.

A member mentioned recent discussions by residents about provision of CCTV for The Leys. The Town Clerk commented that money had been put in the budget for this but the Town Council was very much in the hands of the Police and WODC as they managed the scheme. A camera capable of linking with the current system would be required.

The Town Clerk added that she was also seeking to renew the Public Space Protection Order which would afford the Police more powers at The Leys.

RESOLVED: that the report and update be noted.

C332 STREET FURNITURE & INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Benches

Cllr Rosa Bolger gave a verbal report on the siting of a bench on Blakes Avenue adjacent to the WOCT bus stop. A site had been agreed with the resident who had requested it and the Operations and Estates Officer was seeking permission from Cottsway Housing who owned the land.

The resident had also explained that he and his fellow elderly residents would appreciate an additional bench at the top of Oxlease Park. A site had been agreed with him and the Operations and Estates officer and there was a suitable bench in stock.

2. Cycle Rack

Cllr Ruth Smith requested that the Committee give consideration to the installation of a cycle rack at Oxlease Park, which Oxfordshire County Councillor Dr S Bartington had agreed to fund from her County Councillor Priority Fund. The Operations & Estates officer had provided some examples of suitable cycle racks. All members were in favour.

RESOLVED:

1. that the resident's request for a bench at the top of Oxlease Park be agreed.
2. that Cllr Bartington be taken up on her offer to fund a cycle rack from her Councillors Priority Fund - the Council's preference is for four cycle rack hoops to be purchased and concreted in securely.

C333 **PRESS COVERAGE**

The Committee received and considered the report of press coverage which had been mostly positive.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

C334 **EVENTS UPDATE**

1. Civic/Council Run Events

The Committee received and considered a v. She advised that the Heritage Open Day meeting had been arranged for 29 July and a public meeting for the Climate Change Emergency was set for 28 July.

2. Christmas Dinner Community Event for the Disadvantaged

Cllrs Smith and Aitman presented the concept of a community Christmas Dinner for the disadvantaged to the Committee. It would be run by volunteers and Replenish who would be running the community fridge were very positive about this. Tower Hill School could be a possible venue.

A member asked what would happen if the whole town turned up wanting a meal. Cllr Smith replied that she was not exactly sure how it would work but thought that low key, targeted advertising would be the key.

Members agreed to delegate the organisation to groups who were interested and that Cllr Smith should bring back a report on progress to the next meeting in September.

RESOLVED:

1. that the verbal update from the Communications and Events Officer be noted.
2. to delegate the organisation to groups who were interested and that Cllr Smith should bring back a report on progress to the next meeting in September.

C335 **WITNEY DISTRICT TWINNING ASSOCIATION**

The Committee received the minutes from the Twinning Association’s meeting of 11 June 2019. The Mayor also gave an account of his recent weekend trip to Unterhaching for the 30th Anniversary celebrations, which had been splendid.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

C336 **CHRISTMAS SUB COMMITTEE**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2019.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted and the recommendations contained therein agreed.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

Chair