

Notice of the Meeting of

Didcot Town Council

4th November 2024 at 7.30pm

Main Hall, Didcot Civic Hall



All Members of Didcot Town Council are summoned to attend the Meeting of the Council on Monday 4th November 2024 in the Main Hall at Didcot Civic Hall at 7.30pm.

There will be a presentation from 7pm about the work of a volunteer – Stanislav Induchny - to alleviate the suffering of the people in Ukraine.

Admission of the public and media

The Council welcomes members of the public to its meetings in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960.

Reports and minutes

We add reports and minutes to our website.

Recording, photographs, and filming

The press or public may audio-record, photograph or film meetings, or report from the meeting using social media. As such members of the public may be recorded or photographed during the meeting.

We ask that anyone wishing to record or photograph the meeting notifies the Town Clerk before the start of the meeting.

Public participation

The Council welcomes the public's involvement in meetings, which must be in accordance with our rules (Standing Orders 30 - 32 on a matter before the Council).

The Chairman will invite members of the public to present their questions, statements, or petitions, usually at the start of the meeting.

To find out about participation contact the Town Clerk – jwheeler@didcot.gov.uk

The business to be transacted at the meeting will be:

1. To receive apologies

2. To receive declarations of interests

Members are reminded to declare any interests on any item on this agenda in accordance with Didcot Town Council's Code of Conduct. Members are also reminded to review their register of interests which will be available at the meeting.

3. To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 2nd September 2024, and the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 30th September 2024, and to include questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item

4. To receive the Committee minutes and decisions taken under delegated authority and to consider recommendations of Committees to Council in accordance with Standing Orders 98 to 112

(a) Planning and Development Committee

(i) To receive the minutes:

28th August 2024 (inc Appendix 1)

18th September 2024

8th October 2024 (to be approved by Committee)

(ii) No recommendations

(b) Finance and General Purposes Committee

(i) To receive the minutes:

30th September 2024

21st October 2024 (to be approved by Committee)

(ii) Recommendations to Council

Minute 80 – To approve two virements - £3,000 to cost centre 103/4210 Civic Functions and £10,000 to 150/4701 – Grant Aid – see *attached report*.

Minute 88 – To purchase the HR380 Ransomes Out Front Rider Rotary – *covered in the confidential part of the agenda*.

(c) Environment & Climate Committee

- (i) To receive the minutes:
16th September 2024 (to be approved by Committee)

(ii) Recommendations to Council

Minute 31 – To approve the allotment rental charges for the 2026-2027 financial year– see attached papers.

(d) Personnel and Administration Committee

- (i) To receive the minutes:
7th October August 2024 (to be approved by Committee)

(ii) Recommendations to Council:

Minute 34 - To approve the Social Media Policy – see attached.

Minute 35 - To approve the DTC Dignity at Work (Bullying and Harassment) Policy to include Sexual Harassment (incorporating measures from The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023) – see attached papers.

Minute 36 – To approve a new date for the next meeting of the P&A Committee – from 2nd December to 9th December 2024.

(e) Property & Facilities Committee

- (i) To receive the minutes:
25th September 2024 (to be approved by Committee)

(ii) No Recommendations

5. To receive the Mayor’s report – 1st September 2024 – 28th October 2024

Date	Day	Event
5 th September 2024	Thursday	Home-Start 35 th Celebration/AGM – Didcot Civic Hall
8 th September 2024	Sunday	Planting of tree at DACA Open Day – Northbourne Community Centre
13 th September 2024	Friday	Citizen’s Advice 85 th Anniversary, Abbey House, Abingdon.
5 th October 2024	Saturday	Didcot Events Food Festival, Civic Hall
15 th October 2024	Tuesday	High Sheriff of Oxfordshire Court Sermon, Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

18 th October 2024	Friday	DGS exchange students' welcome event
23 rd October 2024	Wednesday	Community First Oxfordshire AGM – via Zoom
7 th November 2024	Saturday	Didcot Events Gift Fair, Civic Hall

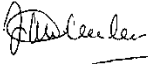
Deputy Mayor – 1st September 2024 – 28th October 2024

Date	Day	Event
15 th October 2024	Tuesday	Oxfordshire South & Vale Citizens Advice AGM Wallingford.

6. **To note the conclusion of the 2023 – 2024 Annual Governance Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended 31 March 2024 – see attached signed AGAR.**
 7. **To note the general insurance renewal of approx. £27,285 inc IPT and all fees but not motor insurance – the third year of a three year contract – the schedule is available to be emailed to members if required.**
 8. To elect a **new Leader** – and potentially a new Deputy Leader if required.
 9. To elect a nominee to act as the second trustee to represent DTC for the **Hagbourne Charities** – (these positions are currently taken by Cllr C Jennings and Cllr O Glover but Cllr Glover will be standing down in the Spring)
 10. There are no motions
 11. To receive such communications as the Leader of the Council may wish to bring before the Council and to consider the recommendation of the leader on how such communications should be dealt with.
 12. Didcot Garden Town Project and the report of the Council's Representative on the Didcot Garden Town Management Board – *see attached report and slide presentation.*
 13. Questions to the Leader concerning the business of the Council in accordance with Standing Order 58.
- 14. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**
Pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 the committee will be asked to exclude the press and public

from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

15. **F&GP Minute 88 – To approve the purchase of the HR380 Ransomes Out Front Rider Rotary at a cost of £31,920 + vat** including a part exchange offer – *see attached confidential papers.*
16. **To discuss the quotes on security** – *see attached confidential papers for discussion – more quotes are to come.*
17. **To note the NJC Pay award for 2024 back-dated until April 2024** – *see attached advice from OALC and new pay scales.*



Janet Wheeler

Mrs Janet Wheeler
Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer
29th October 2024



Didcot Town Council

Council Meeting

Monday 2nd September 2024 at 7.30pm

Main Hall, Didcot Civic Hall



Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of the Council.

PRESENT

Councillors:

A Jones (Mayor)	C Jennings (Leader)
J Loder (Deputy Mayor)	K Morrison (Deputy Leader)
S Cole	D Macdonald
S Nohre	G Roberts
J Broadbent	D Rouane
A Macdonald	T Worgan
N Hards	A Hudson
M Khan	O Glover
H Macdonald	

Officers:

Janet Wheeler – Town Clerk
Arek Guzinski – Planning and Estate Officer

36. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Z Mohammed, L Hislop, G Ryall, D Aragao and the Deputy Town Clerk.

No other apologies were received.

37. To receive declarations of interests

Cllr C Jennings declared a disclosable pecuniary interest on item 4b) ii) Minute 38 CCTV cameras.

Cllr D Rouane declared an interest on item 9) Didcot Garden Town and would not participate in the discussions.

No other declarations were made.

38. To approve and adopt the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24th June 2024 and to include questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item

It was proposed by Cllr A Jones, seconded by Cllr A Hudson, and RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2024, and note them as a true and accurate record.

The vote was unanimous.

39. To receive the Committee minutes and decisions taken under delegated authority and to consider recommendations of Committees to Council in accordance with Standing Orders 95 – 112

a) Planning and Development Committee

It was proposed by Cllr D Rouane, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and RESOLVED to receive the Minutes for the meetings held on 25th June, 16th July and 7th August 2024 (to be approved by Committee).

The vote was unanimous.

Cllr M Khan raised a question on minute 46 relating to the request from Cllr L Hislop to be removed from the Neighbourhood Plan Report but not the minutes.

It was clarified that this report was received at full Council on 24th June 2024 and could not therefore be amended. It was confirmed that any Neighbourhood Plan reports after that date would remove Cllr Hislop's name.

b) Finance and General Purposes Committee

It was proposed by Cllr T Worgan, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to receive the Minutes for the meetings held on 22nd July 2024 and 19th August 2024 (to be approved by Committee).

The vote was unanimous. Cllr J Loder enters the meeting.

There were three recommendations:

Minute 38: CCTV Cameras – This item was discussed later on in the agenda.

Minutes 40 and 55: Telephone contracts - This item was discussed later on in the agenda.

Minute 48: To approve the budget timetable for the 2025 - 2026 financial year AND to note the new date for the September meeting of F&GP - Monday 30th September 2024.

It was proposed by Cllr T Worgan, seconded by Cllr G Roberts, and RESOLVED to approve the budget and to note the new meeting date.

The vote was unanimous.

c) Environment & Climate Committee

It was proposed by Cllr G Roberts, seconded by Cllr A Macdonald, and RESOLVED to receive the Minutes for the meeting held on 15th July 2024 (to be approved by Committee).

The vote was unanimous.

There was one recommendation:

Minute 17: To consider a possible relocation and replacement skate park and investigate options for the area in Ladygrove, in principle.

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr A Macdonald, and RESOLVED to investigate options for a possible relocation and replacement of the skate park.

The vote was unanimous.

d) Personnel and Administration Committee

It was proposed by Cllr C Jennings, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and RESOLVED to receive the minutes for the meeting held on 5th August 2024 (to be approved by Committee).

The vote was unanimous.

There were two recommendations:

Minute 23: To support the bid by Wallingford Radio for a new licence to cover the Didcot and south Oxfordshire area.

It was clarified that this was an application to OFCOM for a new broadcasting licence to cover Didcot and south Oxfordshire. The application would be made before Christmas this year and a site for an antenna would be placed in Didcot.

It was proposed by Cllr C Jennings, seconded by Cllr O Glover, and RESOLVED to support the bid by Wallingford Radio.

The vote was unanimous.

Minute 24: To adopt the new Oxfordshire Parish Charter.

Cllr C Jennings stated that while the Charter was lacking in some areas, it was good in principle, and that it was a good overall start, but was hopeful that it would be improved over time.

Cllr N Hards stated that as the formatting of the document was poor, he was unable to read it, and therefore would not be able to support a decision.

It was confirmed that the purpose of the Charter was to improve communications within the three tiers of local government – County; District and Town/Parish.

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It was proposed by Cllr C Jennings, seconded by Cllr D Macdonald, and RESOLVED to adopt the new Oxfordshire Parish Charter.

Vote: **IN FAVOUR:** 16, **AGAINST:** 0, **ABSTENTIONS:** 1.

e) Property & Facilities Committee

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr H Macdonald, and RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 24th July 2024 (to be approved by Committee). Cllr K Morrison stated that there were minor amendments which would be made at the next meeting of this Committee.

The vote was unanimous.

40. To receive the Mayor's Report and the Deputy Mayor's report

Both reports were noted by the Council.

Cllr A Jones corrected one of the dates.

41. To approve the increased subscription for the membership of the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils

Cllr D Rouane stated that OALC was a valuable resource for both the Councillors and Town Council Staff providing information and training opportunities.

It was proposed by Cllr D Rouane, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and RESOLVED to approve the increased subscription.

The vote was unanimous.

42. To consider one motion:

Motion one: Proposed by Cllr H Macdonald, seconded by Cllr D Rouane. To develop a Neighbourhood Plan with an agreed allocation of up to £20,000.

Cllr H Macdonald stated that the Full Council had previously agreed to create the working groups in principle, which has also been passed through the Planning and Development Committee. Cllr H Macdonald gave an overview of the proposal, as well as a timeline of the previous steps.

Cllr H Macdonald also confirmed that South Oxfordshire District Council would cover the costs of the referendum.

Cllr M Khan presented a series of questions regarding the Neighbourhood Plan. These questions were answered by Cllr D Rouane.

(Cllr S Nohre left the meeting at 20:18 and returned at 20:22.)

Cllr M Khan stated that he was minded to support the Neighbourhood Plan, but would like it to be fully costed and the process explained in more detail as key information was missing. He questioned whether the staff had the experience, knowledge or capacity to assist. He had concerns over the time frame and of the content as future sites needed to be considered very carefully. Cllr M Khan felt that the detail should come back to full Council for future debate. He also requested should expenditure get near £10,000 then further progression should be reviewed

and approved at full Council. Cllr M Khan stated that the Council should be focusing on and supporting the Joint Local Plan and HIF as these will benefit Didcot.

Cllr D Rouane summed up by saying that this would be a learning process for everyone involved. There would be regular up-dates from the Working Group reporting to the Planning & Development Committee. Cllr D Rouane did not wish for the Neighbourhood Plan process to be political, but open to any and all members of the Council and volunteers.

Cllr H Macdonald summed up by saying that the initial goals and aims would be modest and realistic, and echoed the words of Cllr D Rouane regarding the learning curve, stating that this project would require a lot of effort. He also said that this would be the largest exercise in Council democracy that Didcot has ever done.

It was proposed by Cllr H Macdonald, seconded by Cllr D Rouane, and **RESOLVED** to develop a Neighbourhood Plan with an agreed allocation of up to £20,000.

The vote was unanimous

43. To receive such communications as the Leader of the Council may wish to bring before the Council and to consider the recommendation of the leader on how such communications should be dealt with

There were no communications for this meeting.

44. Didcot Garden Town Project and the report of the Council's representative on the Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board

(Cllr D Rouane left the meeting at 20:35 and returned at 20.39)

Cllr C Jennings stated that the meeting scheduled for the 15th of July was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, however an online meeting took place. Cllr C Jennings stated that the current proposals were a good start, and while they were lacking in some areas, the overall report was positive. The report included items on wayfinding, green spaces, and the Garden Party project. Future reports will also be made more inclusive.

(Cllr A Hudson left the meeting at 20:37 and returned at 20.39.)

Cllr M Khan asked for a written report for future meetings.

Cllr C Jennings explained that this report contained confidential information, and therefore, only a verbal report could be given at this date, however a written report would be provided for future meetings.

45. Questions to the Leader concerning the business of the Council in accordance with Standing Order 58

There were no questions.

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Item 12 CCTV cameras would be moved to the end of the meeting to allow Cllr C Jennings to participate in other items on the agenda.

47. F&GP Minute 40 and 55 – To approve the 12-month contract for office telephones with Sloane Curtis.

Cllr T Worgan explained that this was approved at the F&GP meeting but requires ratification from full Council.

Cllr J Broadbent commented that while more modern solutions are available, due to those systems relying on broadband, a backup would need to be in place, which would be more costly.

It was proposed by Cllr T Worgan, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to approve the 12-month contract for office telephones. The vote was unanimous.

48. F&GP Minute 54 – To approve the quote of £9,900 for the final two grass cuts of the year.

Cllr T Worgan explained that the current contract was terminated due to circumstances beyond the control of DTC. This quote was presented to complete the grass cutting for the rest of this season. A new tender would be prepared for next year.

It was proposed by Cllr T Worgan, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to approve the quote for two grass cuts. The vote was unanimous.

(Cllr C Jennings left the meeting at 20:47.)

46. F&GP Minute 38 – To approve the installation of two new CCTV cameras.

Cllr T Worgan stated that this had been agreed by F&GP but required ratification from full Council. These two cameras were in new locations and the ongoing costs for maintenance and monitoring would be in the region of £2,500.

It was proposed by Cllr T Worgan, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to approve the installation of two new CCTV cameras at £13,700 taken from the EMR 351. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting closed at 20:51

Signed:

(Mayor)

Date:

Didcot Town Council

Extra-ordinary Council Meeting

Monday 30th September 2024 at 6.00pm

Main Hall, Didcot Civic Hall



Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of the Council.

PRESENT

Councillors:

A Jones (Mayor)	C Jennings
J Loder (Deputy Mayor)	K Morrison (Deputy Leader)
S Cole	D Macdonald
J Broadbent	G Roberts
A Macdonald	D Rouane
N Hards	T Worgan
M Khan	A Hudson
H Macdonald	L Hislop
Z Mohammed	G Ryall
D Aragao	

Officers:

Janet Wheeler – Town Clerk
Lucy Blake – Deputy Town Clerk

In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor opened the meeting at 6pm.

47. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr O Glover. Cllr S Nohre was absent.
Cllr D Rouane explained that Cllrs Z Mohammed and A Jones were on their way.

48. To receive declarations of interests

No declarations of interest were made.

- Cllr Z Mohammed entered the meeting at 6.04pm

49. To decide the way forward for the Didcot Neighbourhood Plan – one plan or two and which will be done first

Cllr D Rouane addressed the Committee regarding the original motion presented at the Full Council meeting on 2nd September 2024, expressing confusion as to why further clarification was required. In his view, Full Council had been informed that the £20,000 allocated for the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) might extend to areas beyond the Didcot Parish boundary. He noted that the Town Council occasionally spends funds outside the boundary for the benefit of Didcot residents, citing Millennium Woods as an example.

Cllr D Rouane further explained that the Planning and Development Committee will instruct a working group to engage with local parishes to explore the boundary for the NP. He reminded members that the Council had previously resolved to give the Planning and Development Committee authority to progress the plan.

In his opinion, the motion passed by Full Council allocated £20,000 for the NP, established two working groups, and authorised the Planning and Development Committee to oversee the project and this extraordinary meeting should not have been called. Cllr D Rouane proposed that there was no motion to consider, which was seconded by Cllr H Macdonald.

- Cllr A Jones entered the meeting at 6.10pm and resumed the role of the Chair

Cllr M. Khan PROPOSED an amendment to the original motion (which should have been tabled as a new proposal):

“This Council resolves to:

- 1. Proceed with the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Didcot containing all areas within Didcot Town Council boundary.*
- 2. Asks the Planning & Development Committee to establish a working group to produce the Neighbourhood Plan.*
- 3. Total budget allocated for Neighbourhood Plan is £20,000. When the amount is approaching £10,000, the working group to report back to Full Council for approval before progressing.*

Proposed: Cllr M Khan

Seconded: Cllr N Hards”

Cllr M. Khan further remarked that if the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer was uncertain, it justified the need for an extraordinary meeting to obtain clarity. This was seconded by Cllr N Hards.

The proposal was not accepted by Cllr D Rouane.

Cllr N Hards addressed the proposal, acknowledging that elected members had unanimously supported the Neighbourhood Plan (NP). However, he noted that the original written motion referenced two plans (on page two), which inadvertently caused confusion. He stated that the situation required clarification,

Some members had expressed concerns regarding the spending of money outside of the Didcot Parish boundary.

Cllr J Broadbent clarified that the underlying motion from the May meeting, in his opinion, was for the Council to form two working groups: one to develop the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Didcot, and another to gauge interest from neighbouring parishes with the potential to create a second NP. In his view it is clear where the confusion lies.

Cllr H. Macdonald expressed disagreement with the points made by Cllrs M. Khan, N. Hards, and J. Broadbent, stating that if the proposal were passed, it would alter the outcome of the decisions made at the previous two Full Council meetings.

Cllr D. Rouane addressed the Committee, stating that the NP is an 'evolving process,' and what may seem obvious to some might not be clear to others. He explained that the £18,000 funding for the NP is provided by Central Government, not the District Council, and the grant can be utilised for areas within South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. Regarding the inclusion of parishes in the NP, Cllr D Rouane stated that it would ideally cover parishes within the Garden Town 'area of influence.' Some of these parishes already have their own NPs, while others do not, and it would be up to them to decide if they wish to participate in a joint NP. South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) had reportedly confirmed that the working groups could not initiate a NP solely for the Didcot Parish boundary with the intention of extending it later or creating a second plan to include neighbouring areas.

Cllr M. Khan thanked members for their comments and acknowledged that there were 'grey areas' requiring clarification. He suggested that his proposal would provide the necessary clarity.

Cllr N Hards called for a recorded vote.

	For	Against	Abstention
Cllr D Macdonald	x		
Cllr A Macdonald	x		
Cllr M Khan	x		
Cllr A Hudson	x		
Cllr J Broadbent	x		
Cllr G Ryall	x		
Cllr L Hislop	x		
Cllr N Hards	x		
Cllr G Roberts		x	
Cllr T Worgan		x	
Cllr S Cole		x	

Cllr H Macdonald		x	
Cllr K Morrison		x	
Cllr C Jennings		x	
Cllr D Guerra Aragao		x	
Cllr D Rouane		x	
Cllr Z Mohammed		x	
Cllr J Loder		x	
Cllr A Jones		x	
Cllr O Glover	-	-	-
Cllr S Nohre	-	-	-

Votes **IN FAVOUR**: 8, votes **AGAINST**: 11. The proposal **FAILS**.

The Town Clerk asked that the item on the agenda needed to be answered.

- Cllr C Jennings left the meeting briefly and then returned

It was PROPOSED by Cllr D Rouane that there will be one Neighbourhood Plan that may extend beyond the boundaries of Didcot. There would be two Neighbourhood Plan Working Groups (NPWGs). One of these NPWGs will collaborate with neighbouring Parishes, should they choose to be included in the NP, to confirm the NP boundary. This was seconded by Cllr S Cole.

The Council voted on this clarification:

Votes: **IN FAVOUR**: 11, votes **AGAINST**: 0, **ABSTENTIONS**: 8. The amendment **PASSES**.

The meeting closed at 6.50pm.

Signed:

(Mayor)

Date:

Didcot Town Council

Extra-ordinary Council Meeting Monday 30th September 2024 at 6.00pm Main Hall, Didcot Civic Hall



DRAFT Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of the Council.

PRESENT

Councillors:

A Jones (Mayor)	C Jennings
J Loder (Deputy Mayor)	K Morrison (Deputy Leader)
S Cole	D Macdonald
J Broadbent	G Roberts
A Macdonald	D Rouane
N Hards	T Worgan
M Khan	A Hudson
H Macdonald	L Hislop
Z Mohammed	G Ryall
D Aragao	

Officers:

Janet Wheeler – Town Clerk
Lucy Blake – Deputy Town Clerk

In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor opened the meeting at 6pm.

47. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr O Glover. Cllr S Nohre was absent.
Cllr D Rouane explained that Cllrs Z Mohammed and A Jones were on their way.

48. To receive declarations of interests

No declarations of interest were made.

- Cllr Z Mohammed entered the meeting at 6.04pm

49. To decide the way forward for the Didcot Neighbourhood Plan – one plan or two and which will be done first

Cllr D Rouane addressed the Committee regarding the original motion presented at the Full Council meeting on 2nd September 2024, expressing confusion as to why further clarification was required. In his view, Full Council had been informed that the £20,000 allocated for the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) might extend to areas beyond the Didcot Parish boundary. He noted that the Town Council occasionally spends funds outside the boundary for the benefit of Didcot residents, citing Millennium Woods as an example.

Cllr D Rouane further explained that the Planning and Development Committee will instruct a working group to engage with local parishes to explore the boundary for the NP. He reminded members that the Council had previously resolved to give the Planning and Development Committee authority to progress the plan and report back to council. Any confusion appears to have arisen out of a draft minute of the latest meeting of the Planning and Development Committee which could have been resolved by contacting the chair of the meeting for clarification.

~~In his opinion,~~ the motion passed by Full Council allocated £20,000 for the NP, established two working groups, and authorised the Planning and Development Committee to oversee the project and this extraordinary meeting should not have been called. Cllr D Rouane proposed that there was no motion to consider, which was seconded by Cllr H Macdonald.

- Cllr A Jones entered the meeting at 6.10pm and resumed the role of the Chair

Cllr M. Khan PROPOSED an amendment to the original motion (which should have been tabled as a new proposal):

"This Council resolves to:

- 1. Proceed with the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Didcot containing all areas within Didcot Town Council boundary.*
- 2. Asks the Planning & Development Committee to establish a working group to produce the Neighbourhood Plan.*
- 3. Total budget allocated for Neighbourhood Plan is £20,000. When the amount is approaching £10,000, the working group to report back to Full Council for approval before progressing.*

Proposed: Cllr M Khan

Seconded: Cllr N Hards"

Cllr M. Khan further remarked that if the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer was uncertain, it justified the need for an extraordinary meeting to obtain clarity as this had been agreed by the Chair of Finance and General Purposes. This was seconded by Cllr N Hards.

The proposal was not accepted by Cllr D Rouane.

Cllr N Hards addressed the proposal, acknowledging that elected members had unanimously supported the Neighbourhood Plan (NP). However, he noted that the original written motion referenced two plans (on page two), which inadvertently caused confusion. He stated that the situation required clarification,

Some members had expressed concerns regarding the spending of money outside of the Didcot Parish boundary.

Cllr A Worqan pointed out that he had not agreed to the calling of the meeting

Cllr J Broadbent clarified that the underlying motion from the May meeting, in his opinion, was for the Council to form two working groups: one to develop the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Didcot, and another to gauge interest from neighbouring parishes with the potential to create a second NP. In his view it is clear where the confusion lies.

Cllr H. Macdonald expressed disagreement with the points made by Cllrs M. Khan, N. Hards, and J. Broadbent, stating that if the proposal were passed, it would alter the outcome of the decisions made at the previous two Full Council meetings.

Cllr D. Rouane addressed the Committee, stating that the NP is an 'evolving process,' and what may seem obvious to some might not be clear to others. He explained that the £18,000 funding for the NP is provided by Central Government, not the District Council, and the grant can be utilised for areas within South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. Regarding the inclusion of parishes in the NP, Cllr D Rouane stated that it would ideally cover parishes within the Garden Town 'area of influence.' Some of these parishes already have their own NPs, while others do not, and it would be up to them to decide if they wish to participate in a joint NP. South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) had reportedly confirmed that the working groups could not initiate a NP solely for the Didcot Parish boundary with the intention of extending it later or creating a second plan to include neighbouring areas.

Cllr M. Khan thanked members for their comments and acknowledged that there were 'grey areas' requiring clarification. He suggested that his proposal would provide the necessary clarity.

Cllr N Hards called for a recorded vote.

	For	Against	Abstention
Cllr D Macdonald	x		
Cllr A Macdonald	x		
Cllr M Khan	x		
Cllr A Hudson	x		
Cllr J Broadbent	x		
Cllr G Ryall	x		
Cllr L Hislop	x		
Cllr N Hards	x		
Cllr G Roberts		x	

Cllr T Worgan		x	
Cllr S Cole		x	
Cllr H Macdonald		x	
Cllr K Morrison		x	
Cllr C Jennings		x	
Cllr D Guerra Aragao		x	
Cllr D Rouane		x	
Cllr Z Mohammed		x	
Cllr J Loder		x	
Cllr A Jones		x	
Cllr O Glover	-	-	-
Cllr S Nohre	-	-	-

Votes **IN FAVOUR**: 8, votes **AGAINST**: 11. The proposal **FAILS**.

The Town Clerk asked that the item on the agenda needed to be answered.

- Cllr C Jennings left the meeting briefly and then returned

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr D Rouane that there will be one Neighbourhood Plan that may extend beyond the boundaries of Didcot. There would be two Neighbourhood Plan Working Groups (NPWGs). One of these NPWGs will collaborate with neighbouring Parishes, should they choose to be included in the NP, to confirm the NP boundary. This was seconded by Cllr S Cole.

The Council voted on this **motionclarification**:

Votes: **IN FAVOUR**: 11, votes **AGAINST**: 0, **ABSTENTIONS**: 8. The **motionamendment** **PASSES**.

The meeting closed at 6.50pm.

Signed:

(Mayor)

Date:

Didcot Town Council

Minutes of the

Planning and Development Committee Wednesday 28th August 2024 at 7:30pm All Saints Room, Civic Hall, Didcot



PRESENT

Councillors:

Cllr D Rouane (Chair)
Cllr H Macdonald (Vice Chair)
Cllr S Cole
Cllr N Hards
Cllr A Hudson
Cllr D Macdonald
Cllr C Jennings

Officers:

A Guzinski (Planning and Estate Officer [minutes])
J Wheeler (Town Clerk)

Public:

1 member of the public attended.

61. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr S Nohre.

Cllr C Jennings substituted for Cllr S Nohre.

No other apologies were received.

62. To receive declarations of interest

Members should declare any interests they may have on any item on this agenda in accordance with Didcot Town Council's Code of Conduct

No declarations were made.

63. To approve the draft minutes of the meeting held on 7th August 2024 (attached)

It was proposed by Cllr D Rouane, seconded by Cllr C Jennings, and **RESOLVED** to **approve** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting, and note them as such.

Six members agreed, one member abstained.

64. Questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item

Cllr D Rouane updated the Committee regarding minute 50 and explained that the Town Clerk had communicated with the Councillors via email regarding matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr D Rouane confirmed that a Councillor's name cannot be removed from a previous meeting or minutes of a meeting as this would not be a true record. Cllr D Rouane further explained that the Councillor is allowed to make a statement on the next applicable meeting to clarify their position regarding the previous documents.

Cllr H Macdonald questioned the wording of the minutes where the "request has been approved by the Town Clerk".

Cllr H Macdonald enquired about the steps taken by the Town Clerk to ensure that the request was made on appropriate conditions.

Cllr H Macdonald also stated that they visited a Councillor forum and enquired about altering the record of meetings and stated that there were no circumstances in which this would be possible.

The Town Clerk was asked some direct questions by Cllr H Macdonald. However, no notice was given of these questions and therefore she was not prepared to respond without due consideration.

Cllr D Rouane suggested that Cllr H Macdonald should send the questions directly to the Town Clerk in writing.

The Town Clerk also explained that the Councillor was not requesting for the minutes to be altered, rather to remove their involvement from any of the Neighbourhood Plan Group work.

Cllr D Rouane suggested that the previous minutes should have been worded more specifically, as they *could* imply that the Councillor was seeking for the name to be removed from *all* documents, including the minutes of the meetings.

It was **AGREED** that the wording of minute 46 was made in error, and should *not* include the word “previous”, and amend the word “any documents” to “the report”.

Cllr D Rouane suggested that there might have been a communication error between the Planning and Estate Officer and the Town Clerk.

Cllr D Macdonald requested to go over the previous meetings to find out the exacts of the situation. All members agreed. Cllr D Rouane would liaise with the Town Clerk to resolve this matter.

65. To note as listed: correspondence received regarding planning matters

The Committee noted that there was no correspondence listed.

The Planning and Estate Officer updated the Committee on two late items of correspondence.

The first item regarded the previous correspondence from the Real Estate Comms, and informed the Committee that a representative would like to attend the next Committee meeting.

The second item regarded a response to the Committee’s objections to planning application P21/S1580/MPO and clarified the purpose of the application.

The Committee noted the late correspondence received.

66. Applications for certificates of Lawful Development and Information only

The Committee noted that no applications for certificates of lawful development were received.

67. To consider as listed: Planning Applications

7a)	Application	P24/S2411/LB	21 Manor Road Didcot OX11 7JZ
	Proposal	Erection of a new oak porch.	
	Response date	29 th August 2024 (extended from 22 nd August 2024)	

	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr S Cole, seconded by Cllr A Hudson, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 266714) All members agreed.	
7b)	Application	P24/S2410/HH	21 Manor Road Didcot OX11 7JZ
	Proposal	Erection of a new oak porch.	
	Response date	29 th August 2024 (extended from 22 nd August 2024)	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr S Cole, seconded by Cllr A Hudson, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 266715) All members agreed.	
7c)	Application	P24/S2401/HH	123 Park Road Didcot OX11 8QS
	Proposal	Proposed single storey infill rear extension.	
	Response date	29 th August 2024 (extended from 28 th August 2024)	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr S Cole, seconded by Cllr A Hudson, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 266716) All members agreed.	
7d)	Application	P24/S2559/HH	6 Macdonald Close Didcot OX11 7BH
	Proposal	Removal of existing rear conservatory and replace with single storey rear extension including alterations to landing window to accommodate new roof pitch.	
	Response date	6 th September 2024	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr N Hards, seconded by Cllr C Jennings, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 266717) All members agreed.	
7e)	Application	P24/S2636/FUL	Land to the rear of 98 Park Road Didcot OX11 8QR
	Proposal	Two new dwelling houses with new access onto Park Road	
	Response date	11 th September 2024	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr C Jennings, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 266718) All members agreed.	

68. To note as listed: Planning Appeals.

The Committee noted that no applications were appealed.

69. To note as listed: Planning Applications approved.

The Committee noted the planning applications approved as listed.

Didcot Town Council's recommendation	Planning Application Number	Proposal and Address
No objections	P24/S1944/HH	The removal of porch window and loft conversion. 20 Humber Close Didcot OX11 7RU
No objections	P24/S1936/HH	Single storey ground floor rear and side aspect (west) extension. Two storey rear extension. Garage front aspect (north) moved forward with first floor over. 3 Elbourne Didcot OX11 0BL
No objections	P24/S2142/FUL	Proposed installation of ventilation flue. Unit 8 Moorbrook Park Didcot OX11 7HP
No objections	P24/S2140/HH	Erection of boxy-style front dormer. 45 Churchill Road Didcot OX11 7BU
No objections	P24/S2178/HH	Installation of air source heat pump located in the rear side of the property. (Additional noise assessment details received 17 July 2024). 55 Abingdon Road Didcot OX11 9BY

70. To note as listed: Planning Applications refused

The Committee noted the planning applications refused as listed.

Didcot Town Council's recommendation	Planning Application Number	Proposal and Address
No objections	P24/S0201/HH	Erection of a two-storey rear extension and single storey rear extension. (Amended plans received 27 June 2024).

		1 Tavistock Avenue Didcot Oxon OX11 8NA
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71. To note as listed: Planning Applications withdrawn

The Committee noted the planning applications withdrawn as listed.

Didcot Town Council's recommendation	Planning Application Number	Proposal and Address
N/A	P24/S2113/PDH	Replace existing conservatory with single story rear extension using prefabricated roof system 6 Macdonald Close Didcot OX11 7BH
The Council has no objections to the proposal identified above but would like the below comments to be taken into account when determining the application. • The two roundabouts should be improved in compliance with LTN 1/20, the Department for Transport Cycle Infrastructure Design note published in July 2020, and along the lines of the Fendon Road roundabout in Cambridgeshire. • The connections to the existing shared path, the Ladygrove Loop, should be as direct as possible, making use of the land owned by SODC to form a connection if necessary. The current design requires two right-angle turns to be made by pedestrians and cyclists. LTN 1/20 expects "Cycle routes should be at least as direct – and preferably more direct – than those available for private motor vehicles". The proposals do not	P20/S2361/O	Outline planning application for a residential development comprising up to 250 dwellings (with up to 40% affordable housing provision), public open space, play area, pedestrian and cycle links, landscaping and associated supporting infrastructure and earthworks. Means of access (including separate emergency access) to be determined via Hadden Hill (A4130). Land at Ladygrove East Didcot

<p>accord with that expectation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Traffic passing the site to the south, and especially that from the east, would be affected significantly if the planned perimeter road were not installed prior to the commencement of any development.		
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72. To note as listed: Planning Applications referred

The Committee noted that no applications were referred.

73. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr D Rouane explained that this document had already been added to the next Full Council agenda but was included on the Planning and Development Committee agenda for information or questions.

Cllr N Hards enquired whether it was possible to request for South Oxfordshire District Council to provide a written confirmation that SODC would be able to cover the costs of any referendums which may be required as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process, as Cllr N Hards was unable to find any written legislation to ensure that all costs would be covered. Cllr N Hards requested this information to be provided prior to the Full Council meeting if possible.

Cllr H Macdonald reassured the Committee that the Neighbourhood Plan had verbal reassurance that legislation regarding Neighbourhood Plans provided for the appropriate authority to pay for the conduct of the referendum.

Cllr H Macdonald does not recall any of the local parishes raising any disputes regarding funding for referendums.

Cllr D Rouane stated that he would also raise this question with the Planning team at SODC.

Cllr N Hards explained that the costs of Didcot's referendum would be larger than the local parishes, especially considering the raising costs of postage, and pressed that a written and signed confirmation should be in place to confirm SODC's commitment to funding any of the necessary referendums.

Cllr H Macdonald stated that this question was inappropriate to be raised by this Committee, as the issue of the referendum falls outside of the scope of the documents being questioned during the meeting and should be a separate matter in the future.

Cllr D Rouane declared an interest on this item, as a member of the South Oxfordshire District Council, however as the question is regarding confirmation whether the payments will be made, rather than a request for the payments to be made, Cllr D Rouane will remain in the room for the discussions.

Cllr D Macdonald stated that it is a reasonable request to have all the information in writing.

Cllr H Macdonald queried the need for a written confirmation.

Cllr D Macdonald stated that having a written confirmation would solidify the SODC's position and give additional reassurance for the Councillors making the decisions.

Cllr N Hards also stated that this is not the first time that this issue had been raised, and that the current legislation does not cover the authority to pay for the costs of the referendum.

Cllr H Macdonald requested for Cllr N Hards to provide the date on which the first query regarding the referendum costs was made.

Cllr D Rouane stated that it would have been raised and resolved verbally, rather than on paper.

It was proposed by Cllr N Hards and seconded by Cllr D Macdonald to request for a written confirmation of funding for the referendum to be sent to SODC.

Three members voted **FOR**, three members voted **AGAINST**, the Chair **ABSTAINED**.

The Chair cast a standing vote **FOR**.

The final vote was 4 members **FOR**, 3 members **AGAINST**, the request **PASSES**.

Cllr D Macdonald questioned if the two working groups had any expectations regarding the political proportions.

Cllr H Macdonald responded to say that there were no expectations for political proportions.

Cllr S Cole asked if there are any age restrictions on participation in the working groups or any works regarding the neighbourhood plan.

Cllr D Rouane stated that the groups are open to all members, including members of the public, as the present member of the public wanted to join the groups.

Cllr D Macdonald stated that people under the age of 18 would need parental permissions and special conditions to allow for people under the age of 18 to be able to volunteer in the groups.

Cllr D Rouane suggested that this could be addressed by creating consultation events, which would not require people under the age of 18 to be formally listed as members of the working group, while still being involved in the consultations.

The meeting closed at 20:23

Signed: _____

Date: _____

QUESTIONS RECEIVED AFTER 28TH AUGUST MEETING - REQUEST TO ATTACH TO MINUTES

3rd September 2024 – Appendix one

Responses to the two questions received from Cllr H Macdonald (not compared to the recording but taken as they were received after the meeting via email)

1. What steps were taken by the Town Clerk as Responsible Officer to ensure that the request by Cllr Hislop was properly made and was it legally valid for a DTC Officer to amend committee records on the Town Clerk's authority?

Answer:

As stated in the timeline – the request was from an elected member who no longer wished to be part of the Neighbourhood Plan Group. Other than the reasons expressed in the email of 23 June – I had no desire to speak further with LH or to question his request. I made AG aware and he duly made the PD Committee aware at the next meeting. The Chair of the Group having been copied in there was nothing else for me to do.

I am unsure of what Committee records Cllr H Macdonald is referring to. I have the authority to make amends to draft minutes if they contain inaccuracies but not to approved committee minutes. I also have the authority to make those amends even if I am not attending the meeting – but any amends will always come back to the Committee for final approval.

In future I will clearly mark any of my comments as “Town Clerk comments” if I am not present.

2. With whom did the Town Clerk consult so as to be sure that the statements contained in Cllr Hislop's email were factually correct and devoid of any political bias; and specifically did the Town Clerk consult with the Leader of the Council; the Chair of the PDC; the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Group, or any other Councillors prior to making the decision that Cllr L Hislop's request was valid, appropriate and complied with by the Town Council without any reference to the PDC or Full Council?

Answer:

As already expressed in the timeline; I actioned the request by sending over to the Planning and Estate Clerk so that he could alert the PDC. There was nothing for me to question or approve – it was a personal decision and his right to make that decision without requiring approval from the Town Clerk. I did not consider it necessary to discuss the email with others because it was a personal decision. Those with questions should approach him directly.

The Officers of Didcot Town Council are aware of the politics but strive to not get involved with any party. We remain neutral and aspire to giving the same service to all 21 elected members. No member has any rights over others including the Leader. The only person who has an additional right is the Mayor with the casting vote on full Council and the standing committee Chairs who also have a casting vote.

Janet Wheeler

Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

Didcot Town Council

Minutes of the

Planning and Development Committee Wednesday 18th September 2024 at 7:30pm All Saints Room, Civic Hall, Didcot



PRESENT

Councillors:

Cllr H Macdonald (Vice Chair)
Cllr S Cole
Cllr D Macdonald
Cllr C Jennings
Cllr A Jones

Officers:

A Guzinski (Planning and Estate Officer [minutes])

Public:

4 representatives from Martin's Properties attended the meeting.

74. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs N Hards, A Hudson, and D Rouane.

Cllr A Jones substituted for Cllr D Rouane.

No other apologies were received.

It was proposed by Cllr C Jennings, seconded by Cllr H Macdonald, and **RESOLVED** to **co-opt** Cllr A Jones into the Planning and Development Committee for the duration of the meeting.

All members agreed.

75. To receive declarations of interest

Members should declare any interests they may have on any item on this agenda in accordance with Didcot Town Council's Code of Conduct

No declarations were made.

76. To approve the draft minutes of the meeting held on 28th August 2024
(attached)

It was proposed by Cllr H Macdonald, seconded by Cllr C Jennings, and **RESOLVED** to **approve** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting, and note them as such.

All members agreed.

77. Questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item

Cllr H Macdonald gave a brief update on the ongoing item regarding the accuracy of the previous minutes, regarding the withdrawal of one of the Councillors from the Neighbourhood Plan Group.

Cllr H Macdonald stated that the Town Clerk has given a written statement, which has been circulated to all Councillors. Cllr H Macdonald stated that the response is **noted**, and the matter is resolved. The response will be recorded as a document of this Committee.

The written statement has been attached to these minutes as appendix 1.

78. To note as listed: correspondence received regarding planning matters

The Committee noted the correspondence received as listed:

Item	Date received	Received from	Sent to Members	Details
5a)	04/09/2024	OCC	09/09/2024	To inform DTC that the Section 73 application to continue the development of the extraction of sand and gravel and restoration using in situ and imported clay materials to create a wet woodland habitat

				without complying with conditions 1 and 16, in order to remove the remaining stockpile of sand and gravel by road rather than conveyor. And to vary conditions 2 and 32 for the substitution of an updated restoration plan at Bridge Farm Quarry, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, OX14 4PP has been approved. (ref: MW.0008/20)
5b)	04/09/2024	OCC	09/09/2024	To inform DTC that the Section 73 application to continue the development to extract sand and gravel and restoration to agriculture and lakes with reed fringes) without complying with conditions 2, 39 and 42 to extend the date for final restoration and to reflect the relevant amended restoration design at Land at Bridge Farm Quarry, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, OX14 4PP has been approved. (ref: MW.0067/22)

79. To receive a presentation from Martins Properties regarding the Brownfield Site at Abingdon Road

The representatives have introduced themselves and gave an outline of the company, as well as the proposed project, including the previous iterations of the proposals. The representatives have stated that they had consulted with the residents and amended the proposals accordingly with the responses received.

The representatives also stated that they have reused the existing access points, however the proposal will widen the vision splays for improved safety.

Cllr S Cole enquired whether any cycle racks would be included in the plan.

The representatives stated that cycle storage will be included in the submitted proposal.

Cllrs D Macdonald and C Jennings enquired about whether it would be possible for the proposed entrance to be shifted closer to the nearby Hadden Hill roundabout, to reduce the need to use a stretch of Abingdon Road, as the Abingdon Road to Tamar Way stretch is known for people accelerating and decelerating rapidly. Traffic coming down from Abingdon Road towards the roundabout could also create a queue, similar to the one nearby Aldi at the Broadway roundabout.

The representatives responded that an additional exit would be too close to the entrance, and the developer wished to retain the existing entrance point.

Cllr S Cole enquired about the time scale of the project.

The representatives responded that the target goal was the second quarter of 2025 for construction to begin, and the completion time was the second quarter of 2026.

Cllr A Jones enquired if there was any contaminated land on site.

The representatives stated that the contaminated land survey results were better than anticipated, as the gas was only stored, and not created.

Cllr A Jones enquired if the proposal would include solar PV panels on the rooftops.

The representatives stated that solar panels were included in the proposal.

Cllr C Jennings stated that the proposal should be visually striking, to improve Didcot's gateways.

Cllr D Macdonald asked if the increase in biodiversity would be achieved through the landscaping and verges.

The representatives stated that the aspiration is to achieve the 10% target on-site, however if this target was not achieved, increases could be made off-site.

The Committee thanked the representatives for their time and resumed the meeting.

The representatives left the meeting at 20:20

80. Applications for certificates of Lawful Development and Information only

The Committee noted the applications for certificates of lawful development as listed:

7a)	Application	P24/S2868/PDH	38 Kynaston Road Didcot OX11 8HD
	Proposal	Single storey rear extension.	

81. To consider as listed: Planning Applications

8a)	Application	P24/S2607/S73	Land located to the North East of Didcot Didcot
	Proposal	Variation of condition 2 (Approved plans) on application P18/S2339/RM (Reserved Matters Application in respect of 173 dwellings including affordable housing, car parking, open space, landscaping and associated work) - for amendments/layout changes to plots 138-141, 145-148, 154-159, 163-165 and 166.	
	Response date	19 th September 2024 (extended from 13 th September 2024)	
	Agreed response	<p>It was proposed by Cllr C Jennings, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and RESOLED to submit no objections with the following comments:</p> <p>Didcot Town Council's Planning and Development Committee has no objections to this application but would like to support the comments made by the OCC Transport Development Control Team. (Ref: 267479)</p> <p>All members agreed</p>	
8b)	Application	P24/S2236/FUL	Land at 60-68 Broadway Didcot OX11 8RJ
	Proposal	Change of use from a vacant site to a hand-operated carwash and car sales lot with erection of timber frame offices.	
	Response date	19 th September 2024 (extended from 14 th September 2024)	
	Agreed response	<p>It was proposed by Cllr C Jennings, seconded by Cllr D Macdonald, and RESOLVED to object to this application with the following comments:</p> <p>Didcot Town Council's Planning and Development Committee would like to object to this application, as it believes that the access to the site is poor, considering the traffic on Lower Broadway.</p> <p>The Committee also noted the potential loss of parking spaces, which are vital to the local residents.</p> <p>The Committee also noted that the proposed structure is of poor design and quality. (Ref: 267478)</p> <p>All members agreed.</p>	

82. To note as listed: Planning Appeals.

The Committee noted that no applications were appealed.

83. To note as listed: Planning Applications approved.

The Committee noted the planning applications approved as listed.

Didcot Town Council's recommendation	Planning Application Number	Proposal and Address
No objections	P24/S2357/HH	Loft conversion with side dormer and skylights. As amended by drawing no CP01 V2 received 30 August 2024. 6 Box Tree Lane Didcot OX11 6HS
No objections	P24/S2337/HH	Single storey rear extension. 19 Wantage Road Didcot OX11 0BS
No objections	P24/S2411/LB	Erection of a new oak porch. 21 Manor Road Didcot OX11 7JZ
No objections	P24/S2410/HH	Erection of a new oak porch. 21 Manor Road Didcot OX11 7JZ

84. To note as listed: Planning Applications refused

The Committee noted the planning applications refused as listed.

Didcot Town Council's recommendation	Planning Application Number	Proposal and Address
Didcot Town Council s Planning and Development Committee would like to object to this application for the following reasons: The proposed development will have a severe, negative impact on the character of the area, and alter the	P24/S2273/FUL	Development of three detached houses and garages. Land between Manor Road and Lydalls Close Didcot

<p>overall appearance of the landscape within the conservation area. The proposed houses are not in-keeping with the surrounding area and are an overdevelopment of this quiet piece of green space.</p> <p>The proposed development would also have a severe and negative impact on the local flooding, as the Lydalls Road area is already prone to flooding. This development will negatively impact the existing drainage, which appears to be damaged. The green area is able to soak up some of the rain water, however with a new development, this area will not be able to provide as much flood protection.</p> <p>The proposed development will also have a severe and negative impact on the local wildlife the development will result in major net loss of biodiversity, and off-site gains are not the appropriate solution and should not be used as the primary solution. The current planning policy states that any new development should result in a 10% increase in net biodiversity.</p>		
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85. To note as listed: Planning Applications withdrawn

The Committee noted that no applications were withdrawn.

86. To note as listed: Planning Applications referred

The Committee noted that no applications were referred.

87. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr H Macdonald provided an update on the current membership of both Neighbourhood Plan Working Groups. Across both groups, there were 5 permanent members, two substitutes, and one member of the public who wished to be a permanent member.

Cllr H Macdonald gave a second update, following a meeting with the South Oxfordshire District Council. SODC have advised that the work of only one of the working groups should be pursued, due to current time constraints. SODC have advised that only the Wider Group should be focused on, as it will include the Parish boundary in the project. The boundary needs to be agreed by the end of October, if possible, in order for SODC to submit the application to the Government for their financial support. Should there be a delay beyond the end of October, there is a risk of the application being delayed until May 2025.

SODC have further advised that the communication between parishes may take 2-3 weeks to ensure that all details are accurate and agreed between all the relevant parties. All information needs to be ready within the next 6 weeks for the project to go ahead on schedule.

It was proposed by Cllr C Jennings, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and **RESOLVED** that the final membership to both Neighbourhood Plan Working Groups is as follows:

5 permanent members (Cllrs S Cole, K Morrison, C Jennings, A Jones, H Macdonald), 1 vacancy, 2 substitute members, and 1 permanent member of the public.

The meeting closed at 20:50

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Didcot Town Council

Minutes of the

Planning and Development Committee Tuesday 8th October 2024 at 7:30pm Main Hall, Civic Hall, Didcot



PRESENT

Councillors:

Cllr D Rouane (Chair)
Cllr H Macdonald (Vice Chair)
Cllr S Cole
Cllr D Macdonald
Cllr A Hudson
Cllr J Loder
Cllr J Broadbent

Officers:

A Guzinski (Planning and Estate Officer [minutes])

Public:

Cllr A Jones attended as a member of the public.

88. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs N Hards and C Jennings

Cllr J Broadbent substituted for Cllr N Hards, and Cllr J Loder substituted for Cllr C Jennings.

No other apologies were received.

All members agreed.

89. To receive declarations of interest

Members should declare any interests they may have on any item on this agenda in accordance with Didcot Town Council's Code of Conduct

Cllrs D Macdonald and J Broadbent declared an interest on agenda item 8g) – *Planning Application P24/S2925/HH* and would not participate in the discussion.

Cllr J Loder declared an interest on agenda item 6) - *SESRO application by Thames Water and* would be excluded from the discussions.

No other declarations were made.

90. To approve the draft minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2024 (attached)

Cllr D Rouane has provided a list of amendments suggested by Cllr H Macdonald:

Minute 77 – The Committee agreed that the matter would be resolved but requested the Town Clerk's response to be added to the minutes as an appendix.

Minute 87 – Cllr D Rouane listed several clarifications, listed below:

- The minute should state that SODC recommended the work of one *working group* to commence, instead of one *plan*.
- The wording regarding the October deadline should include "*if possible*", as it was not a hard deadline.
- The wording regarding the boundaries should be clarified, as only one boundary is needed.
- The wording of deadlines for working groups should be clarified as "*suggestions*".
- The working group membership should state that all members listed will be admitted to **both** working groups, instead of one group.

It was proposed by Cllr S Cole, seconded by Cllr D Macdonald, and **RESOLVED** to **approve** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting, subject to the above amendments, and note them as such.

All members agreed.

91. Questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item

No questions were raised.

92. To note as listed: correspondence received regarding planning matters

The Committee noted the correspondence received as listed:

Item	Date received	Received from	Sent to Members	Details
5a)	23/09/2024	OCC	30/09/2024	To inform DTC about a new parking restriction informal consultation (to be discussed in the next TAG meeting)
5b)	27/09/2024	Planning Inspectorate	30/09/2024	To inform DTC about the Application by Thames Water Utilities Limited (the Applicant) for an Order granting Development Consent for South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO) (the Proposed Development) – To be discussed in item 6.
5c)	19/09/2024	OCC	30/09/2024	To ask DTC whether there are any changes to the proposed 20mph restriction zones.
5d)	01/10/2024	SODC	01/10/2024	To inform DTC that the Joint Local Plan has been moved to the publication stage.

The Committee noted items 5a), 5b), and 5d), and discussed item 5c).

Cllr D Rouane explained the previous drafts of the proposed 20mph zones.

Cllr J Broadbent enquired about the speed limit around the Broadway roundabout, leading into Wantage Road.

Cllr D Rouane explained that this was a previous point raised by the Committee and stated that another request to lower the speed limit on the stretch from Manor Crescent to Broadway to improve safety of children attending local schools.

All members agreed.

The Planning and Estate Officer explained that a resident has raised concerns about the speed limit of the Northern Perimeter Road leading into the new Willowbrook Park estate.

Cllr D Rouane explained that the correspondence was also received by the County Council, however as the road is designated to divert traffic away from the town centre, no plans to reduce the speed limits were currently considered.

Cllr D Rouane also added an item of late correspondence, regarding the draft Emergency Plan, and asked the Planning and Estate Officer to circulate the previous draft plan with all Council members. Cllr D Rouane also enquired about amending the website, so that the Emergency Plan can be found more easily.

93. To discuss and comment on the SESRO application by Thames Water regarding the proposed Abingdon Reservoir

Cllr J Loder left the meeting at 19:53

The Committee paged through the proposals provided by Thames Water regarding the SESRO application.

Cllr J Broadbent would like to query what job opportunities would be created by the scheme, such as local employment. Cllr J Broadbent would also like to ask about the impact on the local wildlife, as well as access to the green spaces.

Cllr S Cole would like to question whether the new reservoir would prevent flooding, and what new wildlife will it introduce to the area, as well as extra leisure opportunities.

Cllr D Macdonald queried the length of the project, stating that the distribution will impact the condition of the roads.

Cllr H Macdonald stated that the A34 would be impacted by the development, and therefore the works would need to be restricted to minimise disruption.

Cllr D Rouane summarised the points as listed:

Concerns:

- The construction of the reservoir would take a considerable amount of time.
- The construction would cause major disruptions to the local roads, impacting the traffic and the condition of the roads – The Committee would like to ask whether

they could ask for stipulations regarding the timings for the heavy machinery being allowed on the roads.

- Impact on local wildlife during the construction period, and the access to green spaces.

Feedback:

- What amenities would be introduced by the scheme, such as leisure facilities?
- Would local employment opportunities be provided during the construction and maintenance phases?
- Would there be a biodiversity net gain once works are completed?

Cllr J Loder returned to the meeting at 20:00

94. Applications for certificates of Lawful Development and Information only

The Committee noted the applications for certificates of lawful development as listed:

7a)	Application	P24/S2847/LDP	3 Cray Court Didcot Oxon OX11 7UE
	Proposal	Single storey rear extension.	
7b)	Application	P24/S2919/PDH	129 Wessex Road Didcot OX11 8BJ
	Proposal	Single storey rear extension.	

95. To consider as listed: Planning Applications

8a)	Application	P24/S2841/RM	Willington Down Land at North East Didcot Didcot OX11 9BS
	Proposal	Reserved Matters relating to Phase 6 Infrastructure comprising underground foul water drainage pipeline and associated engineering works pursuant to outline planning permission P15/S2902/O (Outline planning application with details of the means of access only to be considered for a new and integrated neighbourhood to the northeast of Didcot of up to 1880 homes (with up to 40% being Affordable Housing) and comprising: (i) two new primary schools; (ii) a new secondary school; (iii) a new leisure/sports facility and sports pitches, including a pavilion; (iv) a neighbourhood centre comprising: a 1500 sqm Class A1 (shop) use; up to 5 units, each up to 200 sqm, of small flexible units within Classes A1, A2, A3, A4 or A5; a Class A4 or A3 or mixed use Public House/restaurant; a Class C1 hotel; and a Class D1 non-residential institutional use (for example a creche or children's day nursery); (v) a new community hall; (vi) a Class C3 residential Extra Care Housing facility; (vii) new areas of green infrastructure	

		including amenity green space, allotments and children's play areas; and (viii) a comprehensive suite of other supporting town-wide and site-specific associated infrastructure).	
	Response date	9 th October 2024 (extended from 7 th October 2024)	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr D Macdonald, seconded by Cllr A Hudson, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 268207) All members agreed.	
APPLICATION BELOW WAS DISCUSSED VIA EMAIL			
8b)	Application	P24/V0470/RM	Phase T2b Dahlia View Valley Park Didcot
	Proposal	Reserved Matters for Phase 2Tb (Dahlia View) of Outline Planning Permission P14/V2873/O for layout, appearance, scale, and landscape, comprising 284 new homes with associated infrastructure and 35% affordable housing. An Environmental Statement was submitted with the outline application. (as amended by plans and documentation received 9 September 2024)	
	Amendment	No. 1 - dated 9th September 2024	
	Response date	1 st October 2024	
	Previous comments	Didcot Town Council's Planning and Development Committee would like to see a condition prohibiting the occupation of any household prior to the sewage network being completed. The Committee would also like to see a condition to replace or reinstate the hedgerow, which was removed without permission, before the end of the growing season, and to mitigate any wildlife losses. The Committee requests a revised application to reflect those conditions.	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr D Rouane, seconded by Cllr H Macdonald, and RESOLVED to continue the previous comments . (Ref: 268208) All members agreed..	
8c)	Application	P24/S2876/HH	6 Box Tree Lane Didcot OX11 6HS
	Proposal	Side extension and loft conversion with side dormer and skylights.	
	Response date	9 th October 2024	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr D Macdonald, seconded by Cllr A Hudson, and RESOLVED to submit a comment to this application. Didcot Town Council's Planning and Development Committee would like to point out that the application is not clear whether this proposal lays entirely within the applicant's property boundary. The Committee would also like to point out that the proposal may be overlooking the neighbouring property. (Ref: 268209) All members agreed.	
8d)	Application	P24/S2943/HH	22 Elm Park Didcot OX11 6DS
	Proposal	Two storey rear extension	
	Response date	9 th October 2024	

	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr D Macdonald, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 268210) All members agreed.	
8e)	Application	P24/S2928/HH	83 Sinodun Road Didcot OX11 8HW
	Proposal	Two storey rear extension and new porch to front.	
	Response date	9 th October 2024	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr A Hudson, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 268211) All members agreed.	
8f)	Application	P24/S2764/O	Land off Sires Hill southeast of B4106 Didcot
	Proposal	Outline application for up to 200 dwellings, a site and buildings of up to 2 hectares for Class E (e) and/or (f) and/or Class F1 (a) and/or Class F2 (b) uses and public open space with all matters reserved except access.	
	Response date	9 th October 2024	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr D Rouane, seconded by Cllr D Macdonald, and RESOLVED to object to this application with the following comments : Didcot Town Council's Planning and Development Committee would like to object to this application, noting other objections raised by statutory consultees. This development is not a part of the Local Plan, and would be an overdevelopment of the area, especially considering other local developments. (Ref: 268212) All members agreed.	
8g)	Application	P24/S2925/HH	15 Ash Way Didcot OX11 6AN
	Proposal	Installation of air source heat pump.	
	Response date	10 th October 2024	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr A Hudson, seconded by Cllr H Macdonald, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 268213) 5 members agreed, 2 members abstained.	
8h)	Application	P24/S2957/HH	16 Wills Road Didcot OX11 7DH
	Proposal	Single storey rear extension.	
	Response date	11 th October 2024	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr D Rouane, seconded by Cllr A Hudson, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 268214) All members agreed.	
8i)	Application	P24/S2756/A	214-216 Broadway Didcot OX11 8RS

	Proposal	A fascia sign, a projecting sign and three digital display screens (retrospective).	
	Response date	16 th October 2024	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr J Loder, seconded by Cllr A Hudson, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 268215) 6 members agreed, 1 member abstained.	
8j)	Application	P24/S2966/HH	6 Edwin Road Didcot OX11 8LF
	Proposal	Proposed rear, side and front extension.	
	Response date	16 th October 2024	
	Agreed response	It was proposed by Cllr A Hudson, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and RESOLVED to submit no objections to this application. (Ref: 268216) All members agreed.	

96. To note as listed: Planning Appeals.

The Committee noted that no applications were appealed.

97. To note as listed: Planning Applications approved.

The Committee noted the planning applications approved as listed.

Didcot Town Council's recommendation	Planning Application Number	Proposal and Address
No objections	P24/S2401/HH	Proposed single storey infill rear extension. 123 Park Road Didcot OX11 8QS
No objections	P24/S2559/HH	Removal of existing rear conservatory and replace with single storey rear extension including alterations to landing window to accommodate new roof pitch. 6 Macdonald Close Didcot OX11 7BH
No objections	P24/S2183/HH	Two storey side & rear extension. (As amplified by additional information received 29 August 2024.) 39 Arndale Beck Didcot OX11 7SU

98. To note as listed: Planning Applications refused

The Committee noted that no applications were refused.

99. To note as listed: Planning Applications withdrawn

The Committee noted that no applications were withdrawn.

100. To note as listed: Planning Applications referred

The Committee noted that no applications were referred.

101. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr H Macdonald stated that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Groups have commenced their work.

Cllr D Rouane added that local parishes were contacted by both the Working Groups and the SODC Neighbourhood Plan Team, with a few parishes responding to the initial letter.

The meeting closed at 20:23

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Didcot Town Council

Finance and General Purposes Committee

30th September 2024 at 7.30pm

All Saints Room, Didcot Civic Hall



Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this Committee.

Present:

Councillor T Worgan (Chair)
Councillor G Roberts (Deputy Chair)
Councillor G Ryall
Councillor J Loder
Councillor J Broadbent
Councillor N Hards
Councillor D Aragao

Officers:

Mrs J Wheeler – Town Clerk (TC)
Mrs L Blake – Deputy Town Clerk (DC)

5 Grant Aid applicants were in attendance.

57. To receive apologies

There were no apologies. All members were present.

58. To receive declarations of interests. Members are reminded to declare any interests they may have on any item on this agenda in accordance with Didcot Town Council's code of conduct

Cllr N Hards declared an interest in the Great Western Railway (GWR) Grant Aid application and would therefore leave the meeting when the item was discussed. No other declarations of interest were made.

59. To agree the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th August 2024

It was proposed by Cllr N Hards, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to approve the minutes as an accurate record and note them as such. The vote was unanimous.

60. Questions on the Minutes as to the progress of any item

Cllr G Roberts asked for an update on contacting Edfest organisers and whether Officers had received a response. Cllr T Worgan confirmed that he had spoken with

one of the organisers and a report would be presented to members at the next meeting.

The Chair proposed to suspend standing orders to allow the Grant Aid applicants to address the Committee. All members agreed.

- *Cllr N Hards left the meeting at this stage so that the GWR application could be presented.*

Ann Middleton addressed the Committee regarding the £2,000 application from GWR to install a public water refill station at Didcot Railway Centre. This application was deferred from the previous grant meeting in May 2024. Councillors raised several questions, including whether the applicant had sought funding from any other authority or organisation. It was confirmed that no other suitable funding opportunities were available at the time.

- *Cllr N Hards returned to the meeting.*

Bill Service addressed the Committee regarding the £2,810.80 application from Didcot Bowls Club to renew the security system and install CCTV in the clubhouse. This application was also deferred from the F&GP meeting in May 2024. He explained that the existing systems are outdated and require replacement. It was noted that all maintenance at the Club is performed by volunteers. Additionally, it was confirmed that the club hosts open days for the public and welcomes members of all ages and abilities.

Bill Service thanked the Committee for their time and consideration and left to go to another meeting.

Hannah Waugh from Be Free Young Carers spoke to the £5,000 grant application to support their befriending programme. Statistics presented at the meeting indicated that there are 164 registered young carers in Didcot alone. The money would be used for training new staff and providing activities for respite sessions. The Committee expressed their support for the program and thanked the charity for providing this valuable service to the young carers in the town.

Gemma Malin and Leanne Longland addressed the Committee regarding First Step Baby Bank's £1,000 application to fund a laptop, storage boxes, and other essential items for the newly established charity. The charity supports new families by providing essential items to those referred to them by professionals. Since referrals went 'live' two weeks ago, the charity has received requests for assistance from six families. The Committee reiterated their support for the charity and the initiative, recommending that the applicants explore additional fundraising opportunities and sponsorship.

The Town Clerk presented a grant application on behalf of Faye Mortonson for £1,077.12 to support the running costs of the weekly 'Keep Fit with Faye' sessions. These sessions are popular with Age UK charity and aim to enhance social interaction as well as mental and physical well-being.

The Chair thanked everyone for their presentations.

Following the adjournment, the Chair reinstated Standing Orders and the meeting continued.

61. To review the grant application report summary

Members discussed each application and reiterated the importance of the work they do for residents in Didcot. Members noted that the Council is still waiting on receipt of the Citizens Advice application. Based on last year's application, this could come in at around £11,000.

It was proposed by Cllr G Roberts, seconded by Cllr G Ryall, and RESOLVED to award the full amount to each applicant. Cllr N. Hards did not participate in the vote due to his declared interest; however, the vote was unanimous.

The amounts awarded were as follows:

- £2,000 to the Great Western Railway Society to install a public water refill station
- £2,810.80 to Didcot Bowls Club to renew security and install CCTV at their clubhouse
- £5,000 to Be Free Young Carers to help fund their befriending programme
- £1,000 to First Steps Baby Bank to help purchase items such as laptops, and storage boxes
- £1,077.12 to Keep Fit with Faye to help run weekly exercising and socialising classes

The total amount awarded at this meeting is £11,887.92. This leaves £8,174.08 for any future applications this financial year (cost centre 150/4701 Grant Aid).

Members discussed the potential to increase the Grant Aid budget for this year, which will be addressed in greater detail at the October meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

62. To note a total of four grant reports

Members noted the grant reports from organisations who had received funding from the Town Council this year. Cllr T. Worgan requested that the Events and Communications Officer promote these reports on the Town Council's website to inform residents about how the budget is being used.

63. To review and approve the financial reports for July 2024

It was proposed by Cllr T Worgan, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to approve the financial reports for July 2024. The vote was unanimous.

64. To review the 2024-2025 budget report

Members reviewed the budget report. Cllr N. Hards raised a query regarding the Hanging Basket budget (noted in brackets). The Town Clerk confirmed that the cost had been allocated from Ear Marked Reserves and would be reflected as a separate budget item in the 2025-2026 budget.

65. To consider the first round of budget considerations for the 2025-2026 financial year

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that this provided an opportunity to discuss potential future capital projects, including the possible relocation and replacement of the skate park in Ladygrove. It was confirmed by members that the Environment and Climate Committee would continue to explore this matter and consider the inclusion of a potential bike track in Ladygrove.

Cllr D. Aragao inquired whether it would be advantageous to categorise large and small Grant Aid applications separately to facilitate easier comparison. Cllr G. Ryall supported this suggestion, noting that each application would still be subject to the necessary due diligence. Members agreed that the budget should distinguish between small and large applications and that a review of the overall Grant Aid budget should be undertaken, with a view to increasing it when setting the 2025-2026 budget in November.

66. To review the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ended March 2024

Members reviewed the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The Town Clerk clarified that the attached letter indicated it is best practice for a Town or Parish Council to maintain a minimum of three months' worth of expenditure at the year end. As a result, the General Reserves are still considered low and careful financial management will be required to ensure that we end the year on a higher figure than last year.

67. To review the partial VAT exemption calculations for the year ending 31st March 2024

The Committee reviewed the VAT exemption calculations. The Town Clerk confirmed that by opting to tax the Civic Hall and the new Edmonds Park Pavilion, the Council has ensured compliance with the de minimis level and will not be required to repay any VAT receipts.

68. To review the quote of approx. £825 + VAT for a legal template for procurement and awarding of contracts

The Committee reviewed the quote. It was proposed by Cllr G Ryall, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to accept the quote of £825 + VAT for a legal template for procurement and awarding of contracts from Hampshire Legal Services. The vote was unanimous.

69. To consider some ideas for commemorating 80 years of VE Day in May 2025

The Committee reviewed the report, and the event suggestions put forward by the Town Clerk. Members expressed their agreement with the suggestions and proposed contacting the Railway Station for support. It was proposed by Cllr T Worgan, seconded by Cllr G Roberts, and RESOLVED to approve the events in principle and to instruct Officers to book the Big Sound Force Band for £800. Further details regarding the events and associated expenditures will be provided to establish a budget in the 2025 – 2026 financial year. The vote was unanimous.

70. To review the progress report

Members reviewed the progress report. The Town Clerk confirmed that Restore had been in contact, and discussions regarding the future use of the site were now ongoing. The increase in the number of individuals on the allotment waiting lists has complicated matters and should be taken into careful consideration when the Council makes any decisions on future use of the site at the New Road allotments.

71. Exclusion of the press and public

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

72. To receive an up-date on the grass cutting situation and potential tender application

Members received the update. Concern was expressed on some areas in Didcot who seemed to miss out on the grass cutting. There was a desire to cut equally across Didcot but this was difficult due to the different responsibilities of different Councils and ownership of newly developed land that was still in the hands of the developer.

It was proposed by Cllr G Ryall, seconded by Cllr N Hards, and **RESOLVED** that the maps provided by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) be 'split' so that the Town Council's outdoor team can undertake some of the cutting. Additionally, the purchase of new machinery and a potential new contract award, will be considered at the next meeting of the Committee in October. The vote was unanimous.

The National Living Wage would be named in any contract that goes out from the Town Council.

73. To note the quote of £157,527.97 from 'company three' submitted as the chosen quote for the CIL application after consultation via email due to application time constraints

The Committee officially noted that the quotation of £157,527.97 from 'Company Three' was submitted in the Town Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) grant funding application. As of this time, no response has been received regarding this application.

74. To consider a quote of £788 + £94.56 IPT – total £882.56 on cyber insurance

The Committee considered the report. The Town Clerk explained that the current insurance budget had been slightly overspent due to the additions of the Edmonds Park Pavilion and Splash Pad. However, it was confirmed that the Town Council would benefit from cyber insurance, even though the Council is considered 'low risk.' It was proposed by Cllr T Worgan, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation of £882.56 for one year's cyber insurance from Coalition Risk Solutions Ltd. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting closed at 8.51pm.

Signed: _____(Chair)

Date: _____

Didcot Town Council

Finance and General Purposes Committee

21st October 2024 at 7.30pm

All Saints Room, Didcot Civic Hall



Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this Committee.

Present:

Councillor T Worgan (Chair)
Councillor G Roberts (Deputy Chair)
Councillor G Ryall
Councillor J Broadbent
Councillor N Hards
Councillor D Rouane (Sub for Cllr D Aragao)

Officers:

Mrs J Wheeler – Town Clerk (TC)
Mrs L Blake – Deputy Town Clerk (DC)

75. To receive apologies

Apologies were tendered by Cllrs D Aragao and J Loder.
Cllr D Rouane attended as substitute for Cllr D Aragao.

76. To receive declarations of interests. Members are reminded to declare any interests they may have on any item on this agenda in accordance with Didcot Town Council's code of conduct

No declarations were received.

77. To agree the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2024

It was proposed by Cllr G Ryall, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to approve the minutes as an accurate record and note them as such. The vote was unanimous.

78. Questions on the Minutes as to the progress of any item

There were no questions.

79. To review and approve the financial reports for August 2024

It was proposed by Cllr T Worgan, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to approve the financial reports for August 2024. The vote was unanimous.

80. To consider the virement of two sums in two cost centres

Members reviewed the report outlining the need for a virement of £3,000 to the Civic Functions cost centre (103/4210) and £10,000 to the Grant Aid cost centre (150/4701). These funds are intended to support the 80th VE Day commemorations and to accommodate additional grant applications for the current year, respectively.

It was proposed by Cllr T Worgan, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to RECOMMEND the virement of £10,000 sum to the specified cost centres, subject to formal ratification at the next Full Council meeting. The vote was unanimous.

81. To review the 2024-2025 budget report

The Town Clerk presented the budget report for review by the Committee members. She clarified that the figures provided included most of September's transactions and some of October's. Additionally, she noted that certain costs had been incorrectly allocated to a few cost centres, which will be corrected during DCK's next visit.

It was confirmed that the figure of 96.1% income for this point in the financial year is attributed to the receipt of the second instalment of the precept.

The income generated from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions is expected to slightly increase, potentially making additional funds available for future projects.

82. To discuss any micro budget projects that require funding in the next budget 2025-2026

The Committee examined the documentation regarding proposed budget item increases presented by the Officers. Consideration was given to future projects, including the potential relocation and replacement of the skate park, which will require budgeting. Other items, such as subscriptions, insurance, and advertising, will also need to be adjusted upward.

The Deputy Town Clerk noted that the wooden climbing frame in Great Western Drive Park will need to be replaced soon, and the Property and Facilities Committee is planning to redesign the Civic Hall garden. Councillor D Rouane suggested that the garden redesign could be postponed for now, as other projects may take priority.

83. To receive and discuss the report on Edfest

Councillor M Khan, in his capacity as an Edfest event organiser, provided the Chair and Town Clerk with an email update regarding the planned events for 2025, which was subsequently presented to the Committee. The update included details about a "mini Edfest" event - a Beer Festival, scheduled for February 2025, with the main event set to take place on 2nd August 2025. It was noted that no additional funding would be requested from DTC; however, the Council may consider sponsorship opportunities for the event in the future.

Concerns were raised about the potential conflict between the February event and football activities at Edmonds Park, as Didcot Town Youth Football Club holds an agreement permitting them to utilise the pitches from September to May each year. This matter will need to be communicated to the event organisers. Additionally,

members agreed that the use of the new pavilion at Edmonds Park would incur a fee.

Further concerns were expressed regarding the £10,000 grant awarded for the Edfest event, which was originally designated for a single large event. Questions were raised about the status of the associated charity established for this purpose, as the grant was deposited into a temporary bank account at the time.

Members agreed to invite the event organisers to address the Committee during the December meeting where detailed plans and updated cost estimates for both events, along with an update on the status of the charity, can be received.

84. To note the CIL transfer letter

Members noted that £34,781.18 in CIL receipts will be transferred to DTC at the end of October 2024. This amount is identified as a first instalment, indicating the potential for DTC to receive additional funds in the future from this particular development.

85. To receive and discuss the interim internal auditor's report for the 2024-2025 financial year

Members received the report and noted there were no areas of concern. It was confirmed that the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee had subsequently signed the necessary forms referenced in the document. Cllr J Broadbent thanked staff for their work.

86. To review the progress report

Members reviewed the report. It was noted that a meeting had been arranged with Restore on 25th October at the New Road allotments, to receive an update on their project and discuss DTC's plans for the allotment site. All Cllrs are welcome to attend.

The Chair discussed the possibility of dividing the current Grant Aid cost centre into two separate categories: one for larger grants and another for smaller grants (min 65 on the progress report). He recommended that this matter be revisited in February 2025 when the Committee evaluates whether holding three dedicated meetings to discuss grant applications is appropriate. Any decisions regarding this will be presented to the Full Council for consideration. All members agreed.

The Town Clerk provided an update to the Committee regarding the VE Day commemorations. The Big Sound Force Band has been secured for the event, and staff are exploring options for hiring vintage fish and chip vans. Additionally, Age UK is considering hosting an afternoon tea event. The new Estate and Administration Officer has commissioned a new plaque for the memorial, which is expected to be installed in time for Remembrance Day.

The Town Clerk confirmed that Air IT will be implementing mandatory Endpoint Security starting in August 2025. Councillor G Ryall inquired about the progress of the search for a new IT provider. The Committee agreed that an invitation to quote for the Council's IT provisions should be posted on the Government's Contract

Finder website, with a specification that interested companies should have experience working with Parish and Town Councils.

87. Exclusion of the press and public

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

88. To consider the purchase of new grass cutting equipment

The Committee reviewed the report and the options for acquiring the new HR 380 Ransomes Out Front Rider Rotary with Flail Deck, to help the outdoor team with the cutting of some of the grass verges in the town. The options presented included purchasing the equipment outright or entering into a hire purchase agreement. Additionally, Didcot Town Council has the option to part exchange the existing Ransomes Parkway 3 which is very rarely used by the team.

Members unanimously agreed that purchasing the new machine outright would be the preferable option. It was proposed by Cllr J Broadbent, seconded by Cllr G Roberts, and **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** the purchase of a new HR 380 Ransomes Out Front Rider Rotary with Flail Deck, at a cost of £31,920 + VAT from Turneys, with a trade-in, to Full Council for approval. Members expressed the desire for extended warranty and servicing – Officers would investigate. The vote was unanimous.

The purchase of the backpack blower, at a cost of £657.50 + VAT, was also **APPROVED**.

89. To consider a proposal to work in partnership with the outdoor services

The Committee considered the proposal received to work in partnership with the outdoor services team on a range of projects in addition to grass cutting. It was proposed by Cllr G Ryall, seconded by Cllr D Rouane, and **RESOLVED** to instruct Officers to obtain two more like-for-like quotes which can be presented to the Committee for consideration.

90. To discuss the splash pad reports and the opening options for 2025

Members reviewed the report and its contents in detail. There was unanimous agreement that DTC should manage the Splash Pad for at least the upcoming year, hiring new seasonal staff to extend its operating hours. Councillor D Rouane emphasised that by advertising soon, the Council can attract the most suitable candidates.

The Committee also discussed the potential safety benefits of transitioning the kiosk to a cashless system for the casual workers at the Splash Pad.

It was proposed by Councillor T Worgan, seconded by Councillor G Ryall, and **RESOLVED** to keep the management of the Splash Pad "in-house" for 2025 and to advertise for two seasonal staff members. The vote was unanimous.

91. To note the insurance pre-renewal papers – as part of a three-year contract

The Town Clerk explained that the Council’s insurance is ‘locked in’ as part of a three-year contract which would come to an end next year. Any Cllr wishing to view the renewal papers can contact the Town Clerk directly.

92. To approve the DTC motor fleet insurance renewal – quotes to be presented at the meeting if received – or to be circulated via email after the meeting

The Town Clerk confirmed that quotes for the fleet insurance have not yet been received but will be distributed to members as soon as they are available, prior to the next Committee meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.07pm.

Signed: _____ (Chair) Date: _____

DRAFT

Recommendation Minute 80 - Finance and General Purposes Committee

21st October 2024

Report author: Janet Wheeler



Proposed virements for two cost centres

Introduction

1. Annual budgets are agreed around four to five months before the end of the financial year. Most annual Council budgets remain fairly accurate with a small amount of change due to unexpected events. More significant changes to cost centres should correctly be approved by the F&GP Committee, **then ratified by full Council.**

Proposal

2. That the Committee formally considers and approves the following virements:

103/4210 Civic Functions – current budget £3,500 (actual year to date £1,975)
Suggest **viring the sum of £3,000** to cover the 80th VE commemorations with the unspent sum to be rolled over to the 2025-2026 financial year

150/4701 Grant Aid – current budget £47,000 (actual year to date £38,826)
suggest **viring the sum of £10,000** to cover further grant applications with any unspent sums to be rolled over to the 2025 – 2026 financial year

Recommendation

The additional £13,000 to come from EMR 355 Grant Aid £4,000; EMR 334 Community Projects £1,726 and the remaining sum of £7,274 to come from 301 Current year fund.

Delegated authority

- (a) Under Standing Order 100, the administration of the Finance and General Purposes budget is delegated to this Committee.

Legal and risk implications

Agenda item 4 b ii Minute 80 – Virements for two cost centres

- (b) The Council is required to arrange for the proper administration of its financial affairs: this will include regular reporting.
- (c) The Accounts and Audit Regulations require local councils to ensure that financial management is adequate and effective and have a sound system of internal control.

Janet Wheeler
Town Clerk

Didcot Town Council

Environment & Climate Committee Monday 16th September 2024 at 7.30pm All Saints Room, Civic Hall



Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this committee.

PRESENT

Councillors:

Cllr G Roberts (Chair)
Cllr K Morrison (Deputy Chair)
Cllr A Macdonald
Cllr S Cole
Cllr J Broadbent

Officers:

Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk – TC)
Mrs L Blake (Deputy Town Clerk - DC)
Mr M Blake (Outdoor Services Manager - OSM)

Non-voting Councillors:

Cllr A Jones

20. To receive apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr A Hudson and Cllr Z Mohammed.

21. To receive declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were received.

22. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2024 as a true and correct record

It was proposed by Cllr S Cole, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting, and note them as such. All members agreed.

23. Questions on the minutes and review the progress report

The Committee noted the progress report – shown on the next page.

Progress report			
Meeting	Item	Comments	Review date/meeting
-	Smokefree play park signs	To be 'picked back up' in September	New Estate Administrator to pick this up
-	Investigate chicanes/bollards at Stubbings Land	Taylor Wimpey will not pay for the work but may allow DTC to install at their cost (to include associated drawing costs). Should DTC consider putting something on DTC land or wait for the land to be transferred and work with the landowner?	No update received
-	Dog signs for the open green spaces/parks	Signs have been installed	N/A
-	CIL Grant Fun application	Application submitted on 28 th June 2024	When decision has been made
15.07.2024 – min 15 (17)	Hiring the robotic mower to cut the mounds	Delayed due to the outdoor team taking on the cutting of some of the verges	Due to commence mid-September
15.07.2024 – min 17	Recommend the potential relocation, replacement and investigations into the skate park and adjacent area in Ladygrove, to Full Council	Will be discussed at Full Council on 2 nd September 2024	At FC meeting 2 nd September 2024
15.07.2024 – min 18	Repair to the aerator due 31 st July 2024	This work has now been completed	N/A
Future Projects			
	Investigate water supply at the lakes	The Council investigated this in the past and many ideas were looked into	On-going
	'Do not feed ducks/geese' signs	The OSM will investigate the costs	
	Art grants to potentially create a lake feature and/or literary trail for children		

	Hedges – to be cut back at the lakes and skate park	Already part of the outdoor team’s work – will be done in the winter months	
	Investigate specific Ladygrove events, or events that can ‘travel around’ other parks		
	Walking Trail to Wittenham Clumps	Been confirmed there is already a trail but maybe this could be improved?	
	Pears Mapping	Staff to investigate when this will become ‘live’ – additional training will be needed	New Estate Administrator to take on?
	Clearing the vegetation at the community polytunnel	Long term idea. This area could be cleared to create ‘community planting’ areas as per the motion approved by Full Council 24 th June 2024	16.09.2024 – agenda item

Cllr K Morrison asked if progress had been made regarding investigating options for the potential relocation and replacement of the skate park. The OSM confirmed that he had visited Henley Town Council, alongside the Outdoor Services Supervisor and looked at their skate park. The Henley skate park is well used and extremely popular and cost in the region of £300,000 in 2017. Officers will continue to investigate options for the skate park.

24. To note the Income and Expenditure to date for the Environment and Climate Committee report, as updated on 5th September 2024

Cllr J Broadbent queried the grass verge cutting cost centre, as it was in brackets. The Town Clerk (TC) confirmed that this was because the funds are being transferred from the ear marked reserves.

Cllr A Macdonald was impressed with the cost of the hanging baskets in the town as this included watering. The TC confirmed that she would investigate options for the future.

25. To consider the Outdoor Services Manager's report

The Committee noted the Outdoor Services Manager's report, noted the updates, and considered the recommendations.

7. Broadway allotments

Members considered the recommendation to approve the cost of installing new gates at the Broadway allotment site to help with security, unauthorised vehicular access and limit the risk of vandalism.

It was proposed by Cllr A Macdonald, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to approve the £1,936 cost to install gates from C & B Brickworks and Fencing, at the site. This would come from cost centre 311/4041. All members agreed.

21. Initial marking of the football pitches

The OSM explained how it usually takes two members of the outdoor team one whole week to initially mark all the football pitches at both Edmonds Park and Loyd Recreation Ground. However, the recent marking was undertaken by a GPS robotic machine and was completed in four hours. This freed up the staff so that their everyday asks could be completed even when staff were away on annual leave.

Members agreed with the OSM that the initial marking of the pitches should be undertaken by the GPS robot in future and would consider the quotes for next year, when available.

27. Ladygrove Lakes

The emergency aerator used to help aerate the lakes in urgent situations needs replacing. It was proposed by Cllr A Macdonald, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and RESOLVED to approve the purchase of a new, emergency aerator at a cost of £749 (+ VAT) with an additional £30 delivery charge, from Solar Aerations Systems. All members agreed.

29. Millennium Woods

It was confirmed by the OSM that the application for 420 tree saplings from the Earth Trust had been successful. Cllr A Macdonald asked the Committee to consider a planting scheme, which would be done. The saplings would, in the first instance, be planted at the polytunnel to allow them time to establish.

34. Staffing

It was confirmed that the Horticultural Apprentice had recently passed both his PA1 and PA6 qualifications.

26. To consider the purchase of a Playground App to aid the outdoor team with inspections report and the recommendations to the Committee

The Committee considered the report, and the additional brochure provided by the OSM. The OSM had spoken with the staff at Henley Town Council on his recent visit, and they confirmed how easy the app is to use and how efficient it makes the playground inspection process. All inspections are kept securely within the app and any urgent, dangerous or emergency works can be sent directly to the OSM by the officer on site.

It was proposed by Cllr J Broadbent, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and RESOLVED to purchase the Playground Inspection App from The Play Inspection Company at a cost of £1500 (+ VAT) for one year. All members agreed.

The £895 initial in-person set up training quote to train the staff in how to use and set up the app could be lowered by using the staff at Henley. This will be investigated.

27. To consider the report on a potential 'Community Planting' area at New Road allotments and the recommendations to the Committee

The Committee considered the report and noted the previously passed motion to investigate areas which could be suitable for community planting.

All members expressed their support for this project. It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to dedicate the area adjacent to the polytunnel at the New Road allotments as a Community Planting area and allow Officers to start clearing the site. All members agreed.

The Earth Trust and Sustainable Didcot were two groups suggested to contact.

28. To consider the report to permanently ban the use of chemicals by tenants, on all allotment sites, and the recommendations to the Committee

The Committee considered the report, and the potential severity of the incident mentioned.

It was proposed by Cllr A Macdonald, seconded by Cllr G Roberts, and RESOLVED to permanently ban the use of chemicals that require a PA1 and PA6 qualification to be sprayed, by all allotment tenants across all allotment sites. The vote was unanimous.

The current allotment rules would be amended to reflect this change.

29. To consider the first round of budget considerations for the 2025-2026 financial year (*dates amended as incorrect dates included on agenda*)

The Committee considered capital projects for the first round of budget considerations for the 2025-2026 financial year. The potential relocation and replacement of the skate park, along with relocating some of the play equipment due to flooding was the main project ideas from members. Public consultation will be needed, and funding will need to be investigated. Officers would start to investigate this further.

Cllr J Broadbent explained that land ownership needs to be made clear, and it would be a good idea to encourage families to enjoy the lakes and the local walking trails.

30. To note the draft Ladygrove Management Working Group meeting notes from the meeting held on 11th July 2024

The Committee noted the draft meeting notes.

31. To note the draft meetings notes from the Allotment Liaison Group meeting on 22nd August (item 12) and the recommendations to the Committee (item 12a) and to approve the proposed 2024-2025 Rent letter (item 12b) to accompany this year's invoices

The Committee noted the draft meeting notes, considered the recommendations and considered the draft allotment rent letter.

Minute 5, recommendation 1:

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr G Roberts, and RESOLVED to increase the allotment rent to £50 for a 5-pole allotment plot, for the 2026/2027 season. All members agreed – *this will need to be approved by Full Council.*

Minute 6, recommendation 1:

The OSM was asked to identify which sites needed extra water troughs and bring this information back to the Committee along with costings to enable members to make an informed decision on whether to install more water troughs across the sites.

Minute 10, recommendation 1:

It was proposed by Cllr A Macdonald, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and RESOLVED to number all allotment plots with a wooden, numbered peg, once they are vacated and before they are re-let. All members agreed.

Minute 10, recommendation 2:

Officers will draft a 'Rat Guidance Policy' for members to consider at a future meeting.

Minute 10, recommendation 3:

It was proposed by Cllr A Macdonald, seconded by Cllr J Broadbent, and RESOLVED to allow Community groups to pick the surplus fruit from trees on allotment plots which are vacant, provided they are either accompanied by a site representative, or an Officer of the Council.

Members discussed the draft allotment rent letter. It was agreed to add a sentence informing tenants that if they need help on their plot, due to injury or ill health, a temporary co-tenant may be found (from applicants on the waiting list).

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr A Macdonald, and RESOLVED to approve the 2024-2025 allotment rent letter, subject to this amendment. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting closed at 8.37pm

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____

Environment and Climate Committee

Recommendation to full Council meeting on 4th November 2024

Report author: Lucy Blake



Recommendation Minute 31 – To approve the allotment rental increase for the 2026-2027 financial year

The extract of minute 31 follows:

The Committee noted the draft meeting notes, considered the recommendations and considered the draft allotment rent letter.

Minute 5, recommendation 1:

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr G Roberts, and **RESOLVED** to increase the allotment rent to £50 for a 5-pole allotment plot, for the 2026/2027 season. All members agreed – *this will need to be approved by Full Council.*

Recommendation

That the Council formally approves this rental increase for the 2026-2027 financial year.

Lucy Blake
Deputy Town Clerk

Didcot Town Council

Personnel and Administration Committee

Monday 7th October 2024 at 7.30pm
All Saints Room, Didcot Civic Hall



Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this committee.

Councillors

J Loder (Deputy Chair)
D Macdonald
H Macdonald
G Ryall
T Worgan (sub for Cllr Jennings)

Officers:

Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk)

Present:

Cllr K Morrison (Deputy Leader)

It was noted that Cllr Chris Jennings has resigned as Chair of the Personnel and Administration Committee. Cllr Jim Loder took the Chair.

29. Apologies

There were no apologies from current members. Cllr T Worgan was a substitute for Cllr C Jennings.

An additional Committee member will be approved at the next full Council meeting on 4th November 2024.

30. Declarations of interest

None declared.

31. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5th August 2024

It was proposed by Cllr J Loder and seconded by Cllr D Macdonald and RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true record. The vote was unanimous.

32. Questions on the Minutes

There were no questions.

33. To consider the budget setting process for this Committee and any large items of expenditure which members may wish to include

The Town Clerk mentioned two areas of Council business which may require more budget: operation of the splash pad if this facility is to remain in-house and administrative support for the Neighbourhood Plan. Security in some of our buildings is also an increasing risk and the Council has a duty of care not only to hirers but also the DTC staff.

Cllr H Macdonald spoke of the need for commercial advertising of our properties – something which was being discussed at the Property and Facilities Committee. The Town Clerk confirmed that detailed budget information on the staff salaries for 25/26 year will come to the December meeting. It is hoped to table these figures at the November meeting of F&GP – however this is dependent on the NJC pay award back-dated to April 2024 being finalised.

34. To review the draft social media policy

This policy was discussed and Cllr H Macdonald again spoke of the Property and Facilities Committee where a more comprehensive and targeted advertising strategy was being worked on. The Town Clerk reminded members that the direction of each building in relation to a targeted advertising strategy needs to be made clear from the Councillors. Officers can then come up with promotional ideas and campaigns for members to consider. Cllr G Ryall felt that the list of social media addresses was comprehensive and the twitter could be removed as the least used.

It was proposed by Cllr G Ryall and seconded by Cllr T Worgan and RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to full Council for adoption of this policy. The vote was unanimous.

35. To review the new legislation requiring employers to actively prevent sexual harassment at work

The Deputy Town Clerk had up-dated the existing DTC Dignity at Work Policy with new measures from The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 which is due to become law in October 2024. Staff training has already started and training for Councillors will also need to follow. The Town Clerk mentioned the Civility and Respect training which this Council has yet to undertake. Cllr G Ryall said that it was good to see the Council re-acting to new legislation so quickly. He suggested that this policy is part of the Employee Pack.

It was proposed by Cllr J Loder and seconded by Cllr G Ryall and RESOLVED to RECOMMEND this policy to full Council. The vote was unanimous.

36. To approve a new date for the next meeting of the Personnel and Administration Committee

The Town Clerk explained that she was unable to clerk the scheduled meeting on 2nd December 2024. It was proposed by Cllr J Loder and seconded by Cllr D Macdonald to move the meeting back by one week to Monday 9th December 2024.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND this new date to full Council. The vote was unanimous. Cllr G Ryall will be unable to make the new date but will seek a substitute for this meeting.

37. To consider activities to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day

The Town Clerk circulated a report which proposed a number of activities from Thursday 8th May to Friday 9th May 2025 including:

Thursday 8th May at 9.00am – raising of the special VE Day flag by the Mayor of Didcot – followed by an unveiling of the new badge on the war memorial. The Vicar to be invited to say a prayer for all those who gave their lives or suffered life-changing injuries.

Thursday 8th May – time to be confirmed – a special session with Age UK to commemorate VE Day – traditional afternoon tea with war time songs and flags

Friday 9th May 2025 – evening event with the Sound Force Big Band – two 45 minute sets of 40s,50s and 60s music – dressed in uniforms and ending with more flag waving! Tables to be priced around £10 a head to include a drink and snacks; seats only at £5 per head; Fish and Chip van outside at additional cost (Winston Churchill did not ration fish and chips during the war). Raffle to raise money for the Mayor's charities and also the Royal British Legion.

Throughout the week, possible war bunker or display in the Civic Hall for photo opportunities. Possible display of Didcot in the war if possible to get enough material.

The Committee were keen to move forward with these plans and Cllr D Macdonald gave the Town Clerk details of The Redline Home Guard group who may be able to add to the event.

38. To approve the Christmas opening hours

It was proposed by Cllr J Loder and seconded by Cllr G Ryall and **RESOLVED** to approve the following opening hours:

- DTC Offices officially close at 4pm on Friday 20th December and re-open on 2nd January 2025.
- Office staff will be available with a rota of re-directed phone numbers to pick up any urgent calls.
- Senior staff – the Town Clerk; Deputy Town Clerk; Outside Services Manager and the Estate Manager to scan their emails once or twice over this period for any urgent matters.
- Outside team will run a holiday rota to keep bins clear and some litter picking over this period.
- The Santa Fun Run will go ahead on Saturday 21st December as planned.
- Other DTC buildings may have a couple or regular bookings as required.

The Committee voted unanimously to approve these arrangements.

39. Progress report

The Committee reviewed the progress report. It was noted that a meeting would be held to progress the Youth Council. The need for a Councillor training session with OALC was also noted.

40. Exclusion of the press and public

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

41. To receive a Staffing Report

The Town Clerk presented the staff report which gave details of two new members of staff – one for the outdoor team and another in the office; more issues with security at our events; and a raft of new workers’ rights which will give the Town Council additional work as an employer.

It was proposed by Cllr J Loder and seconded by Cllr G Ryall and RESOLVED to pay a call out fee for staff responding to the need for security cover. The fee would be the same as the splash pad cover - £80 for the first two hours and £30 per hour for each hour.

All members AGREED.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed _____ Chair Date _____

Personnel & Administration Committee

Recommendation to full Council meeting on 4th November 2024

Report author: Lucy Blake



Recommendation Minute 34 – To adopt the Social Media Policy

The extract of minute 34 follows:

This policy was discussed, and Cllr H Macdonald again spoke of the Property and Facilities Committee where a more comprehensive and targeted advertising strategy was being worked on. The Town Clerk reminded members that the direction of each building in relation to a targeted advertising strategy needs to be made clear from the Councillors. Officers can then come up with promotional ideas and campaigns for members to consider. Cllr G Ryall felt that the list of social media addresses was comprehensive, and the twitter could be removed as the least used.

It was proposed by Cllr G Ryall and seconded by Cllr T Worgan and RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to full Council for adoption of this policy. The vote was unanimous.

Recommendation

That the Council formally approves adoption of this policy.

- *A copy of this policy is attached for reference*

Lucy Blake
Deputy Town Clerk

Didcot Town Council



Didcot Town Council External Social Media Policy

Didcot Town Council uses social media channels and websites to communicate with residents, businesses and visitors.

Our social media accounts and websites are listed below:

- [Didcot Town Council Website](#)
- [Didcot Civic Hall Website](#)
- [Fleet Meadow Community Hall Website](#)
- [Didcot Town Council Instagram](#)
- [Didcot Town Council Twitter](#)
- [Didcot Town Council Facebook](#)
- [Didcot Civic Hall Facebook](#)
- [Didcot Mayor Facebook](#)
- [Willowbrook Leisure Centre Facebook](#)
- [Fleet Meadow Community Hall Facebook](#)
- [Didcot Town Council YouTube](#)

These accounts are monitored Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Friday 8.30am to 4pm, except bank holidays and public holidays. If you contact us during these hours we will try to reply as soon as possible, however if the delay in getting back to you is due to downtime of an external service for which the council is not responsible, we do not accept responsibility for a lack of response.

Contacting us on social media

We will always try to help with queries received via our social media channels, but we may not be able to formally act on or respond to all of them. The primary method of contacting the council is via email or telephone, details below:

council@didcot.gov.uk

01235 812637

Acceptable conduct

Most social platforms have their own official rules and guidelines, which we will always follow.

Additionally, we reserve the right to remove or report any online comments that break the following guidelines:

- No disruptive, offensive or abusive behaviour
- No personal attacks or offensive comments
- No unlawful or objectionable content
- No spamming or unauthorised promotion of websites or services
- No impersonation
- Do not publicise your, or anyone else's, contact details or other personal information
- Do not comment non-factual statements

In order to provide a safe and inviting place for other users to engage with our services we may mute or block users who continue to make comments that go against our guidelines. Any comments that breach the rules of the social media platforms we use will be reported by us to the relevant company who may take action against the user.

Didcot Town Council operates a zero-tolerance policy regarding abusive comments towards staff or the Council in general. This policy includes abuse, aggression or threats made in person, over the telephone or in written communication, including on social media. Continual or persistent negative comments and non-factual statements made on social media towards Didcot Town Council also breaches the zero-tolerance policy.

Didcot Town Council reserve the right to block and /or mute any social media accounts breaking these rules and regulations.

Our interactions on social media

The following guidelines apply across all our channels:

- If you follow or subscribe to one of our social media accounts, we will not automatically do the same back
- We do not endorse any individual or organisation merely by virtue of creating a social media connection with them (e.g. following on Twitter or liking on Facebook).
- We reserve the right to turn off the comments section on any of our posts
- We reserve the right to remove ourselves from any tagged conversations on social media
- We reserve the right to hide any comments made on any of our social media posts

Reviewed by Personnel & Administration Committee – 7th October 2024

Approved by Full Council on 4th November 2024

Next review date: November 2025

Personnel & Administration Committee

Recommendation to full Council meeting on 4th November 2024

Report author: Lucy Blake



Recommendation Minute 35 – To adopt the amended Dignity at Work – Sexual and General Harassment Policy

The extract of minute 35 follows:

The Deputy Town Clerk had updated the existing DTC Dignity at Work Policy with new measures from The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 which is due to become law in October 2024. Staff training has already started and training for Councillors will also need to follow. The Town Clerk mentioned the Civility and Respect training which this Council has yet to undertake. Cllr G Ryall said that it was good to see the Council re-acting to new legislation so quickly. He suggested that this policy is part of the Employee Pack.

It was proposed by Cllr J Loder and seconded by Cllr G Ryall and RESOLVED to RECOMMEND this policy to full Council. The vote was unanimous.

Recommendation

That the Council formally approves adoption of this policy.

- *A copy of this policy is attached for reference*

Lucy Blake
Deputy Town Clerk

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DIDCOT TOWN COUNCIL

Dignity at Work – Sexual and General Harassment Policy



Reviewed by: Personnel & Administration Committee – 7th October 2024
Ratified by Full Council on 4th November 2024
Next review date: October 2025



From October 2024 new legislation, The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 places greater responsibilities and legal requirements on all Employers, to take proactive steps to prevent Sexual harassment at work. In response to this legislation, taking effect on 26th October 2024, a comprehensive joint policy addressing both sexual harassment and general harassment (including bullying) has been drafted, this combines the existing 'Dignity at Work – Bullying and Harassment Policy' with the new legislation. This new policy aims to ensure a safe and respectful workplace environment for all employees.

Statement:

1. Didcot Town Council recognise that harassment and victimisation is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. As such, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
2. In support of our value to respect others, Didcot Town Council will not tolerate harassment of any kind, by, or of, any of their employees, officials, members, contractors, visitors to the Council or members of the public from the community which we serve. The Town Council is committed to the elimination of any form of intimidation and harassment in the workplace.
3. Personal harassment can manifest in various ways, including but not limited to offensive jokes, derogatory comments, unwelcome requests for sexual favours, intimidating actions, and physical abuse. For the purposes of this policy, personal and/or general harassment also encompasses bullying.
4. Bullying is defined as targeted and persistent behaviour that is offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting. It may also involve the abuse or misuse of power with the intent to undermine, humiliate, demean, or cause harm to the individual affected.
5. This policy reflects the spirit in which the Town Council intends to undertake all of its business and outlines the specific procedures available to all employees and councillors, in order to protect them from sexual and general harassment. It should be read in conjunction with the Council's Grievance Policy; the Elected Members' Code of Conduct; the Member/Officer protocol and the terms of reference for the Personnel and Administration Committee.
6. The Town Council will issue this policy to all employees as part of their induction and to all Members as part of their Welcome Pack. The Town Council may also wish to share this policy with contractors, visitors and members of the public.

7. Sexual, personal and general harassment are behaviours which are unwelcome and unsolicited by the recipient. They are generally evidenced by a pattern of conduct, rather than one-off incidents. Harassment in the workplace can result in several negative consequences, including diminished morale, reduced productivity, and decreased performance. It can also lead to increased sickness absence, a lack of respect among colleagues, higher employee turnover, damage to the Town Council's reputation, and, ultimately, legal action against the Town Council, which may incur legal fees and potentially result in significant compensation payouts.

Examples of personal and general harassment

8. Personal harassment takes many forms and employees and councillors may not always recognise that their actions constitute harassment. It refers to unwanted behaviour directed by one person towards another. Examples of personal harassment include:
 - Insensitive jokes and pranks
 - Lewd or abusive comments
 - Deliberate exclusion from conversations
 - Displaying abusive or offensive materials or writings
 - Abusive, threatening, or insulting language or behaviour
 - Name-calling
 - Targeting an individual or setting them up to fail
 - Exclusion or victimisation
 - Undermining the individual's contributions or position
 - Demanding a greater work output
 - Blocking opportunities for promotion or other professional development and advancement
9. These examples are not exhaustive and disciplinary action at the appropriate level will be taken against employees and councillors committing any form of personal harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment

10. Sexual harassment can manifest in various forms within the workplace and may go unrecognized for some time, as employees might not be aware that certain behaviours are classified as sexual harassment. It is defined as unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature directed by one person towards another. Examples of sexual harassment include:
 - Lewd or abusive comments of a sexual nature, particularly regarding an individual's appearance or body
 - Unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature
 - Displaying sexually suggestive or offensive writings or materials
 - Asking inappropriate questions of a sexual nature
 - Making sexual propositions or advances, whether expressed verbally or in writing

11. Sexual harassment can also occur when an employee is treated less favourably due to their rejection of, or submission to, unwanted conduct related to sex or of a sexual nature. The assessment of whether less favourable treatment has taken place will be conducted broadly and may encompass various aspects, including the denial of promotions and the refusal of training or other professional development opportunities.

Examples of victimisation

12. Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated unfavourably as a direct consequence of making a legitimate complaint regarding discrimination or harassment. Additionally, any employee who supports or assists another in raising a complaint may also experience victimisation if they are subjected to unfavourable treatment as a result.

Third party harassment

13. Didcot Town Council upholds a zero-tolerance policy regarding harassment directed at its employees by third parties, including customers or contractors. All employees are encouraged to report any instances of harassment involving a third party, without exception.

14. If investigations determine that an allegation is well-founded, the Council will take appropriate actions deemed necessary to address the complaint. These actions may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing a warning to the individual regarding the inappropriate nature of their behaviour
- Prohibiting the individual from accessing Council-owned premises
- Reporting the individual's actions to the police

Additionally, Didcot Town Council is committed to taking all reasonable measures to always deter and prevent any form of harassment by third parties.

Responsibilities

15. All parties to the Town Council have a responsibility to ensure that their conduct towards others does not harass or bully or in any way demean the dignity of others. If unacceptable behaviour is observed, then each individual can challenge the perpetrator and ask them to stop.

Employee Responsibilities

16. Didcot Town Council expects its employees to always maintain appropriate and professional conduct during the workday, including during work-related events held outside of normal working hours. Employees must not engage in discriminatory, harassing, or aggressive behaviour toward any individual at any time.

17. Any form of harassment or victimization may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, if committed in the following circumstances:

- During a work situation
- In any situation related to work, such as a social or community event
- Against a colleague or individual connected to the Town Council outside of work, including on social media
- Against anyone outside of work, where the incident is relevant to the individual's suitability to perform their role

18. A breach of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Didcot Town Council's responsibilities

19. Didcot Town Council is responsible for ensuring that all staff, including senior and management personnel, are fully aware of the rules and policies regarding the prevention of harassment and bullying in the workplace and at work-related social events. The Council is committed to fostering a professional and positive work environment, where managers remain vigilant and proactively identify areas of risk, as well as potential incidents of harassment, sexual harassment, and bullying.
20. We will also take into account aggravating factors, such as abuse of power over a more junior colleague, when deciding what disciplinary action to take.
21. Where an incident is witnessed, or a complaint is made under this policy, Didcot Town Council will take prompt action to deal with this matter. All incidents will be deemed serious and dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.

Process for Dealing with Complaints of General Harassment

Informal Approach

17. Didcot Town Council acknowledges that complaints of personal harassment, particularly those involving sexual harassment, can be highly sensitive. Recognising the potentially intimate nature of such complaints, the Council understands that it may not always be suitable to address these issues through the standard grievance procedures. In such instances, individuals are encouraged to approach a senior colleague of their choice, regardless of whether that individual holds direct supervisory responsibility, to act as a confidential adviser.
18. If you experience minor harassment, it is advised that you clearly communicate to the individual involved that their behaviour is unwelcome and request that it ceases. This can be done verbally or, if preferred, in writing. Should you feel uncomfortable addressing the matter directly, your confidential adviser is available to provide support and guidance in this process.
19. Any individual (employee, contractor, member, or visitor) who feels they are experiencing harassment is encouraged to attempt to resolve the matter informally in the first instance. In many cases, addressing the issue directly with the person involved by explaining that their behaviour is inappropriate, offensive, or causing discomfort may be sufficient. To maintain a positive working environment, it is recommended that concerns be initially discussed with your Line Manager, the Town

Clerk, or the Deputy Town Clerk, with the goal of reaching an informal resolution if feasible.

If the individual feels that an informal approach is inappropriate or ineffective, or if they wish to escalate the matter formally, they should follow the procedure detailed below.

Formal approach

Employees

20. If the informal approach is unsuccessful, or if the harassment is of a more serious nature, the issue should be formally reported to the Town Clerk. In the Town Clerk's absence, the matter should be raised with the Deputy Town Clerk as a formal written grievance. Your confidential adviser can assist you in preparing this formal complaint. This will initiate the formal Grievance Procedure. Where possible, the written grievance should include the following details:
 - The name of the individual(s) involved in the alleged harassment
 - A description of the nature of the alleged harassment
 - The dates and times when the incidents occurred
 - The names of any witnesses to the incidents
 - Any actions you have taken to address or stop the harassment
21. Where it is not possible to make the formal complaint to the above-named persons, for example where they are the alleged harasser, the Council encourages you to raise your complaint to the Chair of the Personnel and Administration Committee.
22. On receipt of a formal complaint the Council will take action to separate you from the alleged harasser to enable an uninterrupted investigation to take place. This may involve a temporary transfer of the alleged harasser to another area or suspension with contractual pay until the matter has been resolved.
23. Upon the conclusion of the investigation, a report detailing the findings will be submitted to the manager responsible for conducting the grievance meeting. You will be invited to attend this meeting at a mutually convenient time and location to discuss the matter, after the grievance officer has reviewed the report. You have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or union representative during the meeting, and you are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend. All individuals involved in the investigation are required to maintain confidentiality, and any breach of this obligation will be treated as a disciplinary matter.
24. During the meeting, you will have the opportunity to present your case, and the manager will explain the findings of the investigation. You will have the right to appeal the outcome if you disagree with the decision.
25. Didcot Town Council is committed to ensuring that no employee is discouraged from using this procedure. No individual will face victimisation or retaliation for bringing forward a complaint.

Others

26. Any non-employee party to the Town Council who feels they are being bullied or harassed should, where possible, raise their complaint with a Town Councillor. If an informal notification to a Councillor does not resolve the issue, or if a Councillor is directly involved in the bullying or harassment, the complaint should be escalated to the Monitoring Officer at South Oxfordshire District Council. The complaint should then be investigated, and a hearing held to discuss the facts and recommend the way forward.
27. A member of the public who feels they have been bullied or harassed by any Members or officers of the Town Council should use Didcot Town Council's official Complaints Policy. It is essential that the Officer(s) or Member(s) against whom the complaint is made do not interfere with or hinder the Council's ability to conduct an impartial investigation and make an objective decision in this matter.

Penalties

28. Harassment by any employed persons can be considered examples of gross misconduct which will be dealt with through the Town Council's Grievance and Disciplinary procedures if the incident involves Town Council's staff. If the harassment involves one Councillor to another or one (or more) Councillors to a member of Town Council staff, the matter should in the first instance be made in writing to the Personnel and Administration Committee. The matter will be investigated following the internal Grievance procedure and if a serious breach of the Members' Code of Conduct is found this could result in penalties against the Member (s) concerned.

In extreme cases harassment can constitute a criminal offence and the Town Council should take appropriate legal advice, sometimes available from the Town Council's insurer, if such a matter arises.

Disciplinary Action

For an Employee

29. If the investigation concludes that the allegation of harassment is substantiated, the harasser will be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Town Council's disciplinary procedures, which may include dismissal.

For Members

30. If the investigation concludes that the Town Council reasonably believes a Member has engaged in harassment while carrying out Town Council activities, any action taken must be proportionate. In some cases, counselling or training in relevant areas (such as interpersonal communication, assertiveness, or chairmanship) may be more appropriate than a formal penalty.
- The range of disciplinary sanctions available to the Council in cases where a Member has been involved in harassment may include, but is not limited to;

- Formal admonishment and a commitment from the Member not to repeat the behaviour
- Restriction or removal of opportunities to engage in further harassment
- Exclusion from Council Committees and external bodies where the Member represents the Council
- Referral to the Monitoring Officer at South Oxfordshire Council's (or equivalent), initiated by either the Town Council or the aggrieved party

There may also be a referral to the Police under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, or a claim to an Employment tribunal for Third Party harassment (for harassment relating to one of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act) in the most extreme cases (this list is not exhaustive).

False Allegations

31. False or malicious allegations of sexual or general that harm the reputation of a fellow employee or Member will not be tolerated. Such actions will be treated as serious misconduct addressed under the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure. In addition, a referral may be made to South Oxfordshire Council's Monitoring Officer.
32. Bullying is more likely to be complained about when individual Members criticise staff, often without objective evidence, and in environments which are open to the public or other employees or by way of blogs, social media comments, or in social situations.
33. The Town Council undertakes to share its policy with all Members and workers and request that each party signs to demonstrate acceptance of its terms. All new Members and employees will be provided with a copy of this policy.
34. A review of the policy shall be undertaken each year (or as appropriate) and necessary amendments will be undertaken by the Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk and reported to Full Council for approval. The Council will undertake to ensure that its Members and workers are trained in the processes required by this policy as deemed appropriate.

The Legal Position

35. Councils have a duty of care towards all their employees and hold liability under common law as stipulated in the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Furthermore, they are also accountable under recent legislation, specifically Section 40A of the Equality Act 2010. If an employer fails to act reasonably with regard to this duty of care by allowing harassment to continue unchallenged, an employee may decide to resign and claim "constructive dismissal" at an Employment Tribunal.

Under the Equality Act 2010, harassment may constitute unlawful discrimination, and the legal concept of "Third Party Harassment" has been introduced. This makes employers vicariously liable for harassment by third parties, such as parishioners or contractors. Employers are required to take reasonable steps to address such

situations, which may include seeking legal recourse on behalf of an employee or a member of the Town Council.

In addition, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and Protection from Harassment Act 1997 created a criminal offence of harassment with a fine and/or prison sentence as a penalty and a right to damages for the victim. A harasser may be held personally liable for damages if a victim files a complaint with an Employment Tribunal on the grounds of discrimination.

DRAFT

To be completed by Employee/Elected Member:

I confirm that I have read and understood the Dignity at Work – Sexual and General Harassment Policy and will comply with it.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Please return this signed page to your Line Manager, the Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk, it will then be added to your personal file. Please keep the rest of the document for your records.

DRAFT

Didcot Town Council

Property and Facilities Committee

Wednesday 25th September 2024 at 7.30pm
All Saints Room, Didcot Civic Hall.



Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this Committee.

Present:

Cllr K Morrison
Cllr H Macdonald
Cllr D Aragão
Cllr A Hudson
Cllr L Hislop
Cllr M Khan

Officers:

Mr S Mundy – Estate Manager
Mr S Hunt – Estate Officer
Ms C Lordan – Events and Communications Officer

24. Apologies

Apologies were tendered from Cllr Z Mohammed and Mrs J Wheeler Town Clerk.

25. Declarations of interests

No declarations were received.

26. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th July 2024

The Chair paged through the minutes for any amendments or questions.

Cllr K Morrison asked for two amendments to the minutes of the meeting held on the Wednesday 24th July 2024. These were to remove last sentence of 20.1 – “*The Estate Manager will task officers to investigate further for future big events, but staffing is always an issue and costs the council to achieve this service.*” and 20.5 due to post

minute noted - *“The Town Clerk advises that this training will need to wait until later in the year due to concerns over cash flow.”*

It was proposed by **Cllr K Morrison**, seconded by **Cllr A Hudson**, and **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes once amendments have been made. All members agreed.

27. Questions on the minutes

No questions were received.

28. To review the facilities online advertisement report and consider recommendations from the Events and Communications Officer.

The Committee considered the report.

The Officer clarified that free advertising and promotion (social media, Council website etc.) would always be used and that any paid advertising and promotion would be used and targeted as required.

Cllr K Morrison thanked the Officer and asked for a plan for the remainder of the budget and a steer for the budget for the next financial year

Events and Communications Officer left the meeting at 19:50

29. To review the detailed income and expenditure for Property and Facilities Committee on 31st August 2024

The Committee discussed the income and expenditure reports.

	Civic Hall	Actual current month	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual budget	Variance annual total
	Income	£4,588.00	£56,211.00	£127,500.00	£71,289.00
	Indirect expenditure	£9,828.00	£60,159.00	£198,663.00	£138,504.00
	Net income over Expenditure	(£5,241.00)	(£3,948.00)	(£71,163.00)	(£67,215.00)
	Civic Hall Catering	Actual current month	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual budget	Variance annual total
	Income	£1,975.00	£12,089.00	£16,000.00	£3,911.00
	Direct expenditure	£102.00	£3,360.00	£8,000.00	£4,640.00
	Indirect expenditure	£968.00	£2,018.00	£1,000.00	(£1,018.00)
	Net income over Expenditure	£905.00	£6,711.00	£7,000.00	£289.00
	Willowbrook Leisure Centre	Actual current month	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual budget	Variance annual total
	Income	£7,284.00	£43,128.00	£72,000.00	£28,872.00
	Indirect expenditure	£8,975.00	£30,713.00	£137,254.00	£106,541.00
	Net income over Expenditure	(£1,690.00)	£12,415.00	(£65,254)	(£77,669.00)
	Edmonds Park Pavillion	Actual current month	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual budget	Variance annual total
	Income	£2,033.00	£3,237.00	£0.00	(£3,237.00)
	Indirect expenditure	£2,897.00	£10,428.00	£0.00	(£10,428.00)
	Net income over Expenditure	(£3,213.00)	(8,817.00)	£0.00	£8,817.00

No questions were received.

30. To consider the first round of budget considerations for the 2025-2026 financial year

The Committee discussed various options for consideration.

It was proposed by the Committee to consider the following:

- The Civic Hall Garden requires a plan to make into a usable space that members of public can hire and utilise the outside bar
- Strategy for the use of Didcot Town Council properties
- Review of Willowbrook staffing budget to open for longer hours
- Edmonds Park Pavilion utilisation strategy for 2025

The Committee requested

- A report on the feasibility of re introducing a community gym at Willowbrook Leisure Centre.
- Marketing strategy for promoting and advertising building use.

31. To review the properties report and consider the recommendations

The Committee reviewed the report.

31.1 To review the Civic Hall bar takings on 31st August 2024

The bar takings were:

	Civic Hall Bar	Actual current month	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual budget	Variance annual total
1050	Bar Sales	£840.00	£7,530.00	£15,000.00	£7,470.00
3001	Bar cost of sales	£1,264.00	£5,586.00	£8,000.00	£2,414.00
3003	F&B cost of sales	£0.00	£96.00	£0.00	£300.00
	Indirect expenditure	£96.00	£1,236.00	£3,000.00	£1,764.00
	Net income over expenditure	(£520.00)	(£707.00)	£4,000.00	£3,293.00

31.2 To review the usage figures at Didcot Civic Hall

2024 Civic Hall usage

July Utilisation: 25% for all spaces, 40% for the Main Hall

August Utilisation: 26% for all spaces, 40% for the Main Hall

2023 Civic Hall usage

July Utilisation: 21% for all spaces, 31% for the Main Hall

August Utilisation: 22% for all spaces, 33% for the Main Hall

31.3 Update on the Civic Hall works

The Committee noted the Civic Hall works update which included: -

The following items have been completed since the last Committee meeting at the Civic Hall on 24th July 2024.

- Actuator fixed in the Main Hall for **£268.56+VAT by Scoop Electrical Services**

Outdoor Services building:

- C1 and C2 works completed from FET report

The following maintenance items have been scheduled in over the coming months:

- Roller shutters service (Foyer and Kitchen) - Cost **£220.00+VAT with Sprint Door Systems**
- External door and automatic entrance door service - Cost **£375.00+VAT with BH Doors**
- Air handling and air conditioning 6-month service – Cost **£720.00+VAT with Carlton Services UK Ltd**
- Building management system (BMS) – Cost **£520.00+VAT with BMS systems**
- Fire Warning system and emergency lighting 6-month service

The Estate Manager provided an update to the Committee on leaks within the Civic Hall during the heavy rain on 20th September. Remedial fixes from **Polar FM £1656.27+VAT** has been planned.

Works included: -

- Clear all debris from gutters around the building
- Investigate leak above the reception desk
- Supply and fit new access panel to bar area
- Replace 5no spotlights to LED's in the bar area due to water coming through the current bulbs
- Disposal of waste

31.4 Annual water hygiene monitoring for Outdoor Services Building

The Committee reviewed the report.

It was proposed by **Cllr K Morrison**, seconded by **Cllr H Macdonald** and **RESOLVED** to proceed with the quote from **Rochester Midland Corporation of £818.00+ VAT** using budget code 330 4044 Maintenance Contracts. All members agreed.

31.5 To note the fix of the Outdoor Services Battery storage

The Committee noted the installation of the new batteries on 30th August.

31.6 Updated security requirements and deposit scheme for Didcot Civic Hall

The Committee considered the report.

Cllr D Aragão & Cllr M Khan suggested this should be inclusive in a package rate.
Cllr H Macdonald suggested a deposit as a deterrent of £150

It was proposed by **Cllr K Morrison**, seconded by **Cllr A Hudson** and **RESOLVED** to proceed with Committee recommendations. All members agreed.

The Committee recommendations

- Remove the current statement on the booking form - *“Didcot Town Council takes the safety and security of its staff and guests seriously, and as a result, if the Officers of the Council deem that your event requires an SIA approved member of staff to work, you will be notified during the booking process and charged £25 excl. VAT per hour (£30per incl. VAT) for each required member of staff.”*
- The security cost to be added as part of the room/package hire costs
- To add a damage deposit of £150 which can be returned if no damage the building and if security has not had to get involved with the function.

31.7 Annual catering and bar appliance service for 2024

The committee reviewed the report. The catering quote has been reduced as we no longer require a gas safe certificate, but the refrigeration quote has increased due to not servicing any of our fridges in the past years.

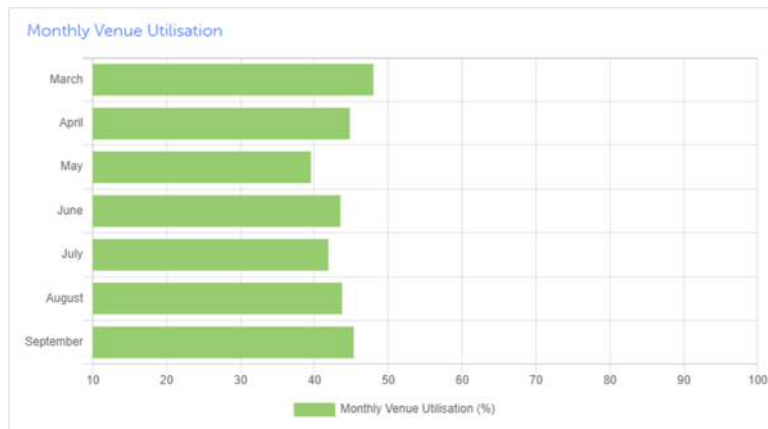
It was proposed by **Cllr K Morrison**, seconded by **Cllr A Hudson** and **RESOLVED** to proceed with annual service of **£1,050+VAT using MCFT** using budget code 403 4044 Maintenance contracts. All members agreed.

32. To review the Willowbrook report including the financial summary and consider recommendations.

The Committee considered the report.

32.1 – To the note Willowbrook usage figures

The Willowbrook usage figures are:



The committee reviewed the usage figures provided and noted the consideration of cancelling Drop-in Badminton on a Thursday evening due to low numbers. The Estate Manager explained we have a large amount of booking enquiries at present and we can look at bringing back in the spring.

32.2 – Update on the works completed at Willowbrook

The Committee noted the works that had been completed since the last Committee meeting which included: -

Since the last meeting held on 25th September 2024 the following works have been completed:

- Fixed electrical testing completed and received report, and all is **satisfactory**
- Two fire detectors have been replaced due to becoming faulty. This is due to their age.

The following maintenance items need to be completed over the coming months:

- Roller shutters service (Outside store) – Cost **£120+VAT with Sprint Door Systems**
- Moveable door service (Function room) – Cost **£385+VAT with BH doors**
- 6-month air handling and air conditioning service – Cost **£360+VAT with Carlton Service UK Ltd**
- Fire warning system and emergency lighting 6-month service

32.3 – Servicing the BMS panel at Willowbrook

The Committee considered the report.

It was proposed by **Cllr H Macdonald** and seconded by **Cllr K Morrison** to **proceed** with **BMS Systems at £520.00+VAT**, using budget code 411/4044 Maintenance Contracts. All members agreed.

32.4 To review the change of Sanitary bin and nappy bin contract

The Committee commended the Estate Manager for identifying the saving for this area. They agreed changing the frequency of the collection for weekly to monthly for the sanitary and nappy waste will mean Didcot Town Council save money and getting better value for money.

The Committee noted the **saving of £1986.32** for this year.

The Committee also noted updated cost of this service as **£332.80+VAT per annum** through **Initial Washroom Services**.

33. To review the Edmonds Park Pavilion and Splash Pad report and consider the recommendations

33.1 – To review the Edmonds Park Pavilion booking summary

The Committee noted the update provided.

33.2 – To review the Splash Pad usage

The Committee considered the report and provided feedback to Estate Manager.

A discussion took place regarding signage for above the kiosk. The Committee would like the officer to investigate costs for a sign

Cllr A Hudson would like the Officers to investigate benches closer to the Splash Pad around the kiosk. The Estate Manager agreed to investigate costs.

33.3 – The annual water hygiene monitoring for Edmonds Park Pavilion

The Committee reviewed and considered the quotes noting the importance of maintaining our water hygiene systems.

It was proposed by **Cllr K Morrison** and seconded by **Cllr D Aragão** to proceed with recommendation for **Rochester Midland Corporation £1,124.00+VAT** using budget code 421 4044 maintenance contracts. All members agreed.

34. To consider the waste management for DTC properties

The Committee considered the report.

The Committee thanked the Estate Manager for this excellent report and the need to ensure DTC waste is under control.

Cllr D Aragão suggested that the Waste management report be published on Council website. The Estate Manager agreed to speak with the Events and Communication Officer to publish this.

It was proposed by **Cllr K Morrison** and seconded by **Cllr A Hudson** to proceed with Estate Manager's recommendations and for Officers to go out to tender for waste contract. All members agreed.

Recommendation for Civic Hall –

- Remove old bins and replace with black waste corridor boxes. Civic Hall would require a minimum 5x general waste bins totalling **£125+VAT** from **Grundon Waste Management Limited**.

Recommendations for Willowbrook -

- Purchase recycling and waste corridor bins totalling **£250+VAT** from **Grundon Waste Management Limited**.
- Purchase of caddy bins for the party rooms at Willowbrook for **£5.33** each from Robert Dyas. Total cost **£15.99**
- The Committee agreed to replacing the paper dispensers with six hand dryers for **£682.98+VAT** from **Direct 365**
- The cost from a local electrician wasn't received in time for the meeting and the Estate Manager would communicate this cost to the Committee when received.

35. To review the progress report on items not on this agenda

The Committee noted the progress report.

Meeting closed at 21:07

Signed _____ Chair Date _____



Our ref: 979/1623161

5 September 2024

Mrs J Wheeler
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Dear Clerk

Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year ended 31 March 2024

Please find enclosed the signed External Audit Report to accompany your Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024.

We also enclose a note of our charges based on the fixed rate audit fee as set by the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd.

Authorities who have not claimed exemption

Regulation 13 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 stipulate that Authorities, who are not inactive Authorities, must publish the following (including on the Authority's website):

- (a) The audited version(s) of the Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement
- (b) The auditor's certificate and opinion
- (c) Any public interest report or other recommendation of the auditor.
- (d) A form of Notice of Conclusion of Annual Audit

We draw your attention to the following points.

- Upon review, it appears general reserves are being held at a low level. We are aware that the council is aware and that they are continually monitoring the position. Per Paragraph 5.33 of JPAG Practitioners' Guide, best practice suggests this level should be at least 3 months expenditure as a minimum. These cannot include ring fenced funds and should avoid including funds which are designated for another purpose.
- The Council have used negative (-) signs to indicate payments in Boxes 4 to 6 on Section 2 of the return which could cause confusion to the reader. Best practice would be to use no negative (-) signs when entering figures onto Section 2.

A template Notice of Conclusion of Audit form is available on our website using the following link <https://www.moore.co.uk/sectors/public-sector/smaller-authorities>.



This notice must also state that an elector may inspect those documents at all reasonable times and without payment. The address and times when this inspection may be carried out must also be given.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Moore' in a cursive script.

Moore

Encs.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** **must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** **must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2024**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2024**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2024.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2023) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2024).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2024**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	n/a	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓	

***Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices**, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24


ENTER ENTITY NAME	Didcot Town Council
ENTER PUBLIC WEBSITE WEBSITE ADDRESS	www.didcot.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes ✓	No	Not applicable

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken	Name of person who carried out the internal audit
16/10/2023 14/02/2024 07/06/2024	Chris Hackett for Auditina Solutions Ltd
Signature of person who carried out the internal audit	Date
	07/06/2024

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

****Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).**

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

DIDCOT TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
	✓		
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

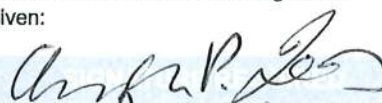
24/06/2024

and recorded as minute reference:

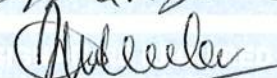
MINUTE IBC 29 i

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair



Clerk



WWW.DIDCOT.GOV.UK WEBSITE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

DIDCOT TOWN COUNCIL

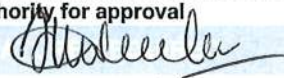
	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1107212	864773	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1241562	1331855	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	312726	2773659	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	- 632606	-735985	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	- 122603	-210080	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	- 1041518	-3065146	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	864773	959076	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	924336	1150507	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	6934956	9350301	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	1202317	3509407	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGN



Date

18/06/2024

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

24/06/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE IBC 29 ii

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of **Didcot Town Council**

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>.

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors

2 External auditor limited assurance opinion 2023/24

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with the Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

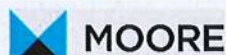
NONE

3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

We ~~certify~~ ~~do not certify~~* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name



External Auditor Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Moore'.

Date

01/09/2024

ITEM 9 - HAGBOURNE CHARITIES DTC REPRESENTATIVES



Didcot Town Council contact details: 01235 812637 / council@didcot.gov.uk / www.didcot.gov.uk

Didcot Civic Hall contact details: 01235 512436 / civichall@didcot.gov.uk



This email and its attachments may be confidential and are intended for the above-named recipient only. If this has come to you in error, please notify the sender immediately and delete this email from your system. You must take no action based on this, nor must you copy or disclose it or any part of its contents to any person or organisation. Statements and opinions contained in this email may not necessarily represent those of Didcot Town Council. As a public body, the Council may be required to disclose the content of this email [or any response to it] under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the General Data Protection Act 2018, unless the information in it is covered by one of the exemptions in the Act. This email message has been checked for the presence of computer viruses; however, we advise that in keeping with good IT practice the recipient should ensure that the e-mail together with any attachments are checked for viruses. We cannot accept any responsibility for any damage or loss caused by software viruses.

From: hagbourne.charities@gmail.com <hagbourne.charities@gmail.com>
Sent: 14 October 2024 11:28
To: Council <council@didcot.gov.uk>
Cc: Olly Glover <oglover@didcot.gov.uk>
Subject: Didcot Town Council nominee as second Trustee for Hagbourne Charities.

Hello,
Please could this request be forwarded to the appropriate person?

At the recent trustees meeting of the Hagbourne Charities, it was decided to seek a replacement trustee from the Didcot Town area.
The charity's charter calls for two trustees from Didcot and while Olly Glover has kindly offered to remain as trustee in his continuing capacity as Town councillor, this does leave the position of second trustee vacant.
Ideally, since the Charity's remit covers that part of Didcot formerly known as Northbourne, the trustee should be a councillor representing wards south of the Broadway and east of Park Road.
Thank you for your consideration,

Best regards,
Doug Amos
Clerk and Trustee

Acting Leader's report on Didcot Garden Town meetings

Cllr K Morrison 27th October 2024

DGT Parish Council Sounding Board

I attended the DGT Parish Council Sounding Board meeting held 18/09/24.

The only parish in attendance was DTC (including Janet Wheeler).

From DGT we had Charlotte (Programme Manager), Emma (Project Manager), Wendy (Development Officer Didcot & Berinsfield), and Robin Bennett (Cabinet Member for Development at SODC).

The following are notes from the discussion points in addition to the slides:

Green Infrastructure Strategy:

- Projects focused on green infrastructure owned by DTC or developers (i.e. Taylor Wimpey)
- 4 projects underway with a budget of £500,000 including:
 - NE (Ladygrove) - will work with DTC
 - SE - Mowbray Nature Reserve; ownership is unclear at this time
- Invitation to tender for the detailed design phase for these projects due summer 2025, for implementation 2025-26.
- Potential to pool budgets between DGT and parishes

Wayfinding Strategy:

- £175k with a potential extra £50k from OCC CIL
- Janet asked about the removal of illegal advertising banners; this is the county highways.
- Robin asked about organised branding and a promotional service from DTC.
- Expected installation completion Dec 2025

Healthy Didcot:

- Didcot SE and W wards have worse health outcomes compared to the English average. Even though they are typically economically higher than average, these wards have worse child, pensioner, and fuel poverty compared.
 - A steering group will be formed to create an action plan
- Didcot Garden party is still proving popular but awaiting official figures and results from surveys and anecdotes. There were more community days in 2023, and the garden party may have been more visited in 2023 due to poorer weather compared to 2024. To consider the plan for future years and the legacy of the garden party.

- Robin asked how the garden party events tie in with DTC events, Janet advised these were not in conflict.

Eco Fair:

- 2nd Nov at Cornerstone
- Robin asks how can other parishes be involved with the eco fair?
- Janet asks if parishes could have a stall? Emma advised yes if there is a related topic. Janet has ideas for making crackers with useful gifts inside such as plant seeds - Kelly suggested advertising our community growing areas. The polytunnel should also be mentioned at the eco fair.

Energy Champions:

- Date TBC
- 12 places available for organisations who can provide support to residents in need.

Active Community SE Didcot:

- 5k & 10k tracks - maps to be printed
- Yr6 Didcot obesity rates highest in county.

Report from DTC:

- Janet discussed the splash pad opening, including the issues with piping and coming to a temporary solution to ensure this opened on time. Thames Water are coming in 30th Sept to replace piping. There were just under 4000 users over 6 weeks. The surrounding area will be worked on over winter.
- Janet discussed the community planting, including seed planting and daffodil planting events, and 420 saplings received from the Earth Trust to overwinter in the polytunnel for planting into Millenium Woods. Janet advised that community groups can book to use the polytunnel, and that work will be underway to create community beds. The community orchard was taken over from Restore and fruits will be picked for Sofea or the foodbank.
- Janet briefly touched on the Neighbourhood Plan which is expected to include Didcot and the Areas of Influence.

Public Art:

- Developing art plan to spend S106. Cllr Jennings has previously provided feedback on this.

DGT Advisory Board

I attended the DGT Advisory Board meeting held 21/10/24. There was a meeting planned for July but this was cancelled due to the general election.

There was a number of parishes, cllrs, and DGT members in attendance.

One parish suggested that poor attendance to the sounding board held in September was because smaller parishes are unclear as to the purpose of DGT. DGT agreed that a more compelling agenda was needed for sounding boards – Cllr Rouane suggested including businesses in the sounding board and advised that Didcot First would be interested.

Public Art

The Didcot public art plan had been amended and was on the agenda to endorse today.

Cllr Rouane made clear his frustration over the lack of progress with this programme so far, Cllr Rouane would like to have seen some installations by now. DGT will look at “quick wins” once endorsed.

The Didcot public art plan was endorsed by the board.

Central corridor & HIF1

The Options Appraisal Review (pt 1) is being written and is now in its second draft. Once this is complete a technical note will be produced which will go for internal review.

There is some concern over the Options Appraisal Review (pt 2) as there currently isn't funding for completing some sections.

Cllr Bennett had reservations on the progress; the board is still discussing initiatives that were formed 6 years ago and subsequently lost funding. Cllr Bennett found the strategies abstract and queried how can DGT obtain funding when S106 is already allocated.

Cllr Thomas asked for a timetable, and was concerned that funding will be sought at the end of the process (after the Options Appraisal Review reports had been written).

Cllr Rouane is unclear on what new sites are included. Cllr Rouane also noted that rumours are causing concern – for instance Broadway Traders are under the impression that it has been decided to pedestrianise Broadway. Cllr Rouane advised that DGT need to communicate better with its stakeholders.

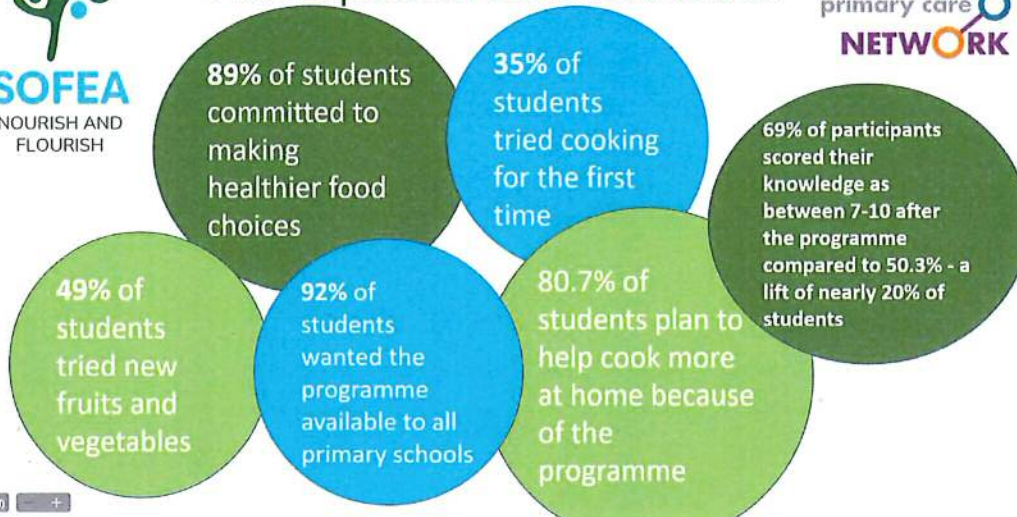
The update regarding HIF1 was no more than what we already knew – awaiting decision from the Secretary of State. DGT will be ready to spring into action once the decision is made.

Nourish and Flourish

This programme has seen success with its visits to 8 local schools in 2023. The visits concentrated on “cooking with what you have” and teaching children about nutrition. They have measured the impact following the programme with surveys and the results are encouraging:



Nourish and Flourish School Programme Pilot Expansion 2023 resulted in:



Schools are able to continue the work without the programme (the programme was teacher-led with free nutrition information). The programme is seeking additional funding to roll this initiative out further.

Didcot Perimeter Road

An update was provided on this project, the preliminary design is complete and the project is now at the stage of stakeholder consultation on the preliminary design.

Active Communities and Healthy Didcot

The south east Didcot nature trail is now open.

The Healthy Didcot Steering Group has the final draft stakeholder report. Notable items from the report included:

- 300 service organisations in Didcot which either overlap or have gaps in the support they provide.
- 34,000 residents living in Didcot (including W Valley?)
- Poverty affecting Didcot South East adults over 60
- Driving and walking the main methods of transport in Didcot

Following the report the next step is to hold focus groups with organisations such as Age UK, Community Kitchen, and TRAIN, to compile case studies and finalise in a report.

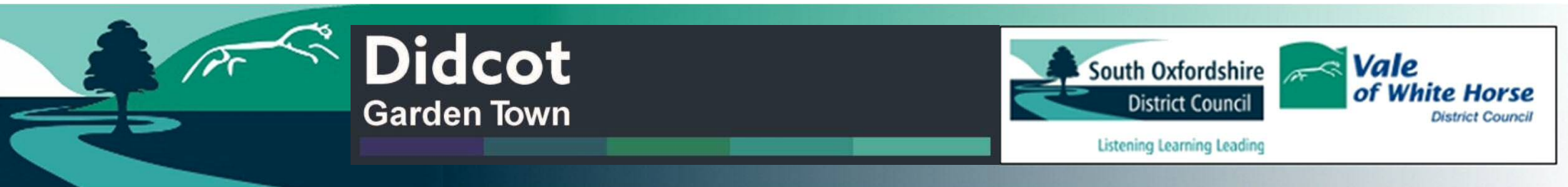
CLlr Rouane noted that residents do not feel involved in the decision making – they are consulted but do not see any delivery.

CLlr Bennett appreciated that the focus has moved away from “top 10 deprived wards” to recognise that some residents need help even when living in more affluent wards.

Didcot Garden Town

**Meeting of the Parish Council
Sounding Board**

Wednesday 18 September 2024
6pm – 7.30pm on MS Teams



Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Green Infrastructure Strategy
3. Wayfinding Strategy
4. Public Art
5. Healthy Didcot and Active Communities
6. News from Didcot Town Council
7. AOB



Didcot
Garden Town



Introduction 1



Parish Sounding Board meetings in 2021 helped create the updated DGT Delivery Plan 2022



27 projects led by DGT team, other council teams, county council, external organisations and/or community groups



Some complete e.g. 10. Didcot Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and 12. MultiCAV autonomous bus trials at Milton Park



Some delays e.g. highways infrastructure & those linked to Joint Local Plan



Most are on track including 9. Wayfinding Strategy, 16. Green Infrastructure Strategy, and 19. Public Art Plan

Introduction 2

approved by both councils:

- Didcot Wayfinding Strategy 2024 - implementation of whole scheme in hand
- Didcot Green Infrastructure Strategy 2024 – four detailed projects in hand
- Didcot Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) - now adopted by OCC

still to be approved by both councils

- Didcot Public Art Plan Public Art Plan – adding to sites in original draft
- OCC led Didcot Central Corridor placemaking options

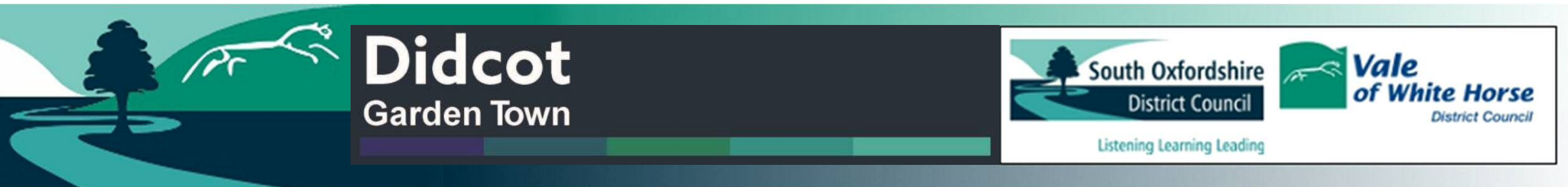
Delivery Plan tracking

Status	Delivery Plan Objective	Ref	Project name
Complete 10%	Active travel and innovation	10	Didcot Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
		11	Science Vale Active Travel Network
		12	MultiCAV Autonomous vehicle trials
On track 48%	Infrastructure and built environment	5	Didcot Central Corridor Placemaking Strategy & Options
		6	Northern Perimeter Road (NPR3)
		7	Didcot Gateway - masterplan
		8	Didcot Gateway - council offices
		9	Wayfinding
	Green infrastructure and leisure	16	Green infrastructure strategy
		20	Didcot Leisure & Recreation Strategy
	Economic development	23	Apprenticeships, skills and training
	Community programmes	17	Environment and sustainability activation
		19	Didcot Public Art and Culture
		21	Active Communities & Healthy Didcot
Communications and legacy	27	Identity, legacy and stewardship	
Paused 24%	Economic development	24	Digital inclusion and co-working
	Infrastructure & built environment	1-4	HIF1 Highways infrastructure
	Active travel and innovation	13	Didcot Area Travel Plan
	Community programmes	18	Meanwhile uses
	Economic development	22	Didcot Town Centre and Retail Study
		25	Local Development Orders (LDOs)
		26	Milton Bio-Science Centre
Business as usual	High quality housing and placemaking	14	DGT development principles in development
		15	DGT principles in planning policy

Didcot Green Infrastructure Strategy 2024

The strategy – prepared by Arkwood landscape architects:

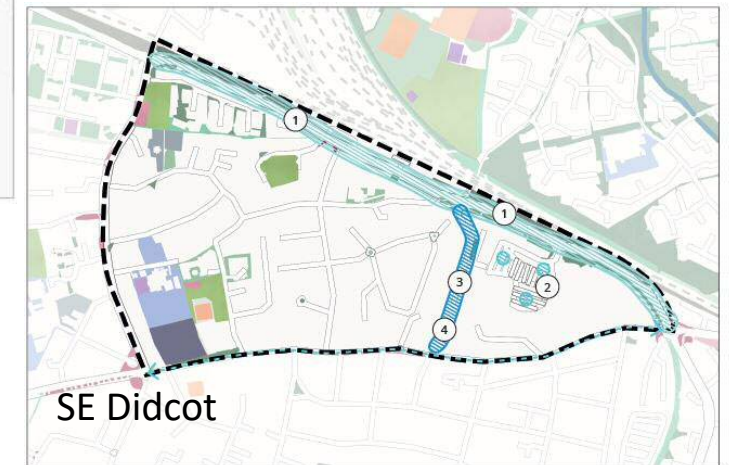
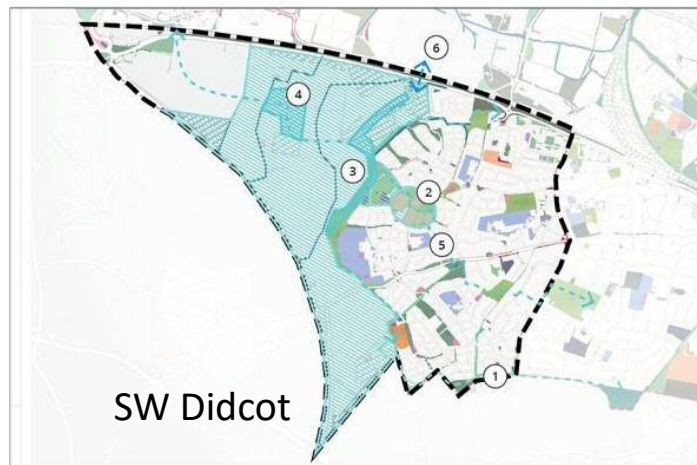
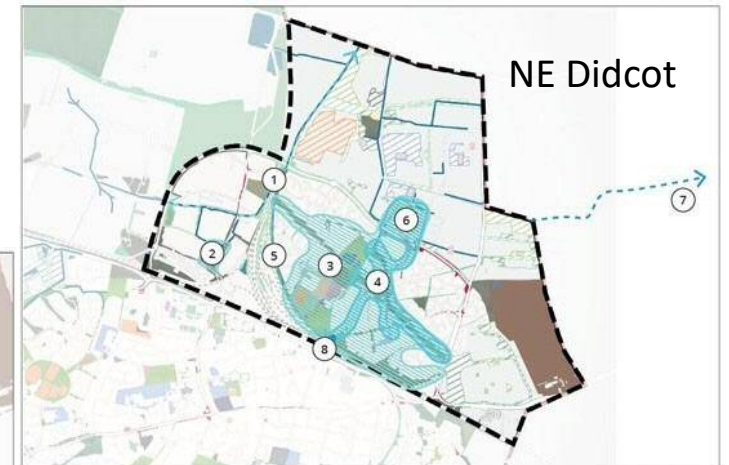
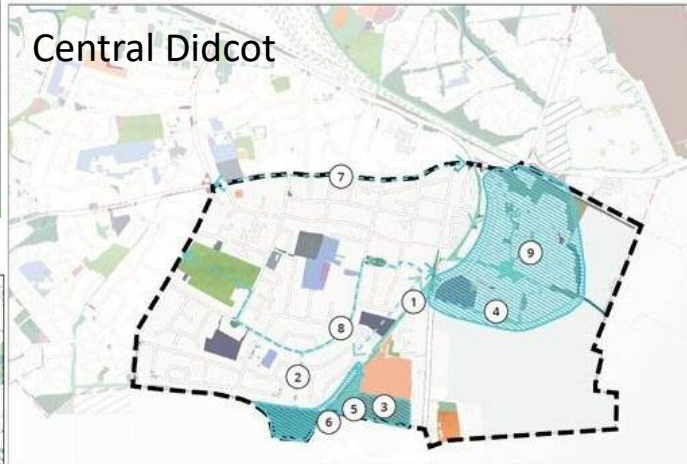
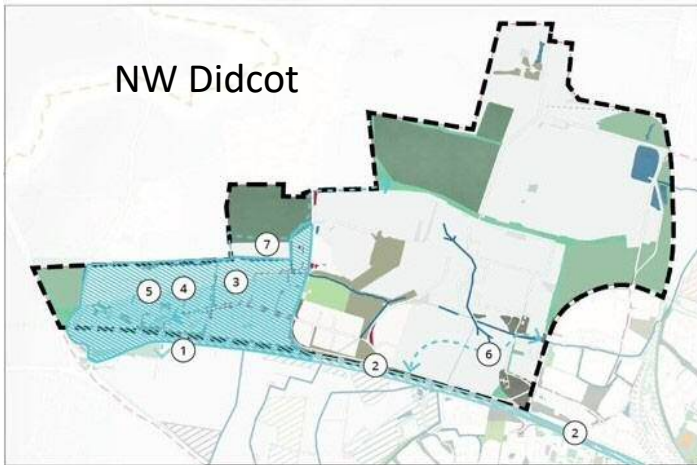
- assessed current provision and mapped out key GI assets.
- reviewed previous strategies and plans for Didcot
- met with key stakeholders and engaged with DGT Advisory Board
- considered and coordinated with LCWIP and other emerging projects
- mapped key GI improvement opportunities across all landowners
- identified key projects for short and long-term implementation



Proposed projects

- Short term connection
- Medium term connection
- Long term connection

- Short term proposals
- Medium term proposals
- Long term proposals



Green infrastructure implementation

Cabinet agreed funding for four projects

- **northeast** – increase multifunctionality of Ladygrove green spaces including biodiversity connectivity, play, food growing, public art & safe spaces for all
- **southeast** – improve Sustrans NCR 544, sightlines, lighting, signage and safety for all
- **southwest** – improve southern perimeter routes Mowbray nature reserve to Valley Park, include play and exercise features
- **central** – create biodiversity corridors, tree and shrub planting – Station Road

Detail design to involve engagement with town and parish councils

Contractor ready detailed designs due summer 2025 for implementation 2025-26

How would you like to be involved as these projects developed?



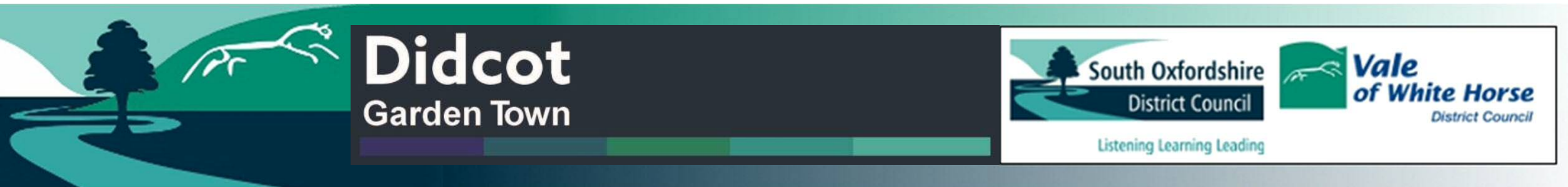
Didcot
Garden Town



Didcot Wayfinding Strategy 2024

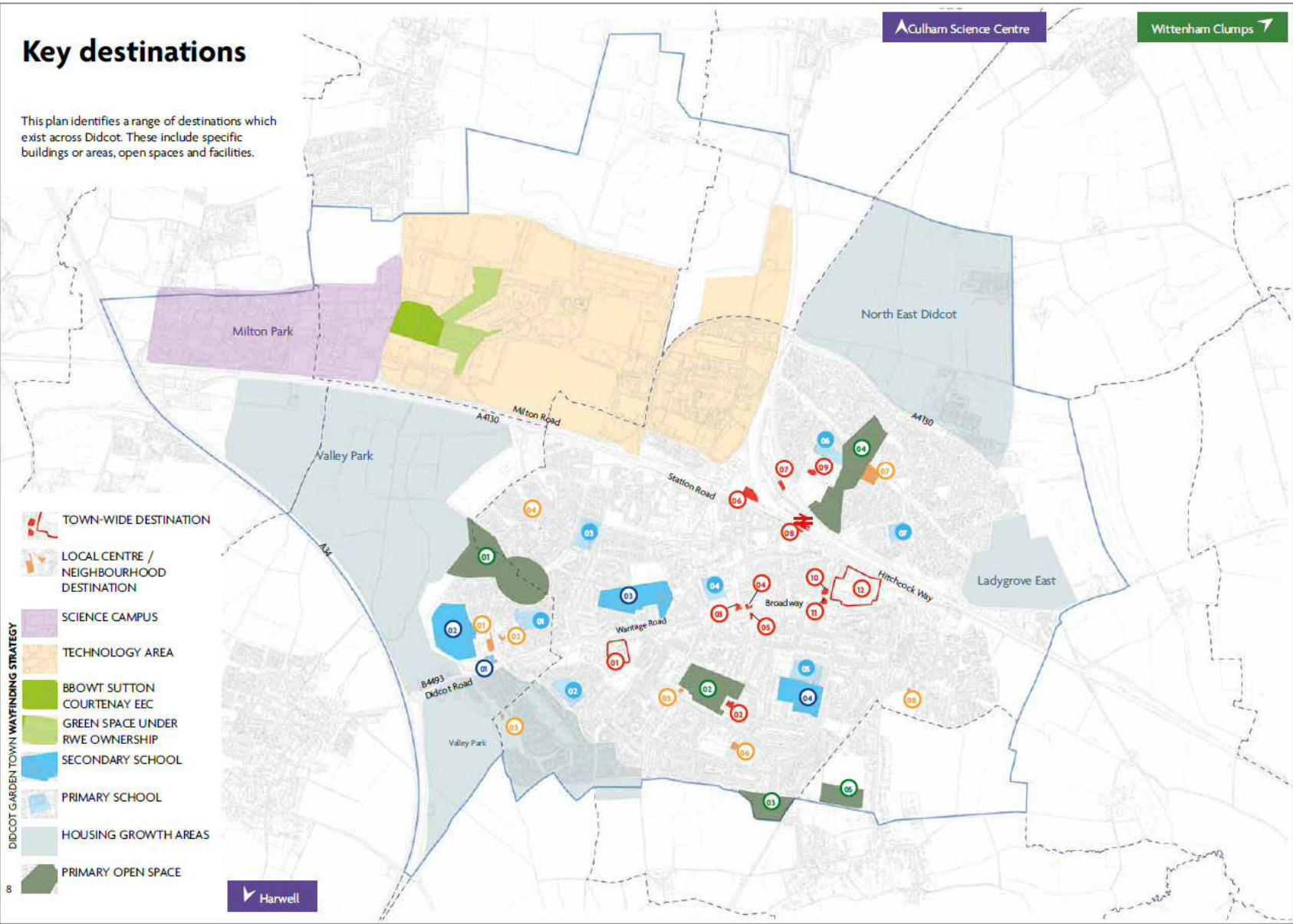
Purpose of the strategy prepared by David Lock Associates:

- enhance inclusive access to Didcot's spaces and destinations
- support active travel (walking and cycling) and greater connectivity between neighbourhoods and key destinations around Didcot and in Science Vale
- identify signage locations, walking times and cycling distances
- specify a wayfinding scheme for delivery on the ground in Didcot
- set design principles e.g. sustainable, accessible, consistent, eye catching, reduced clutter



Key destinations

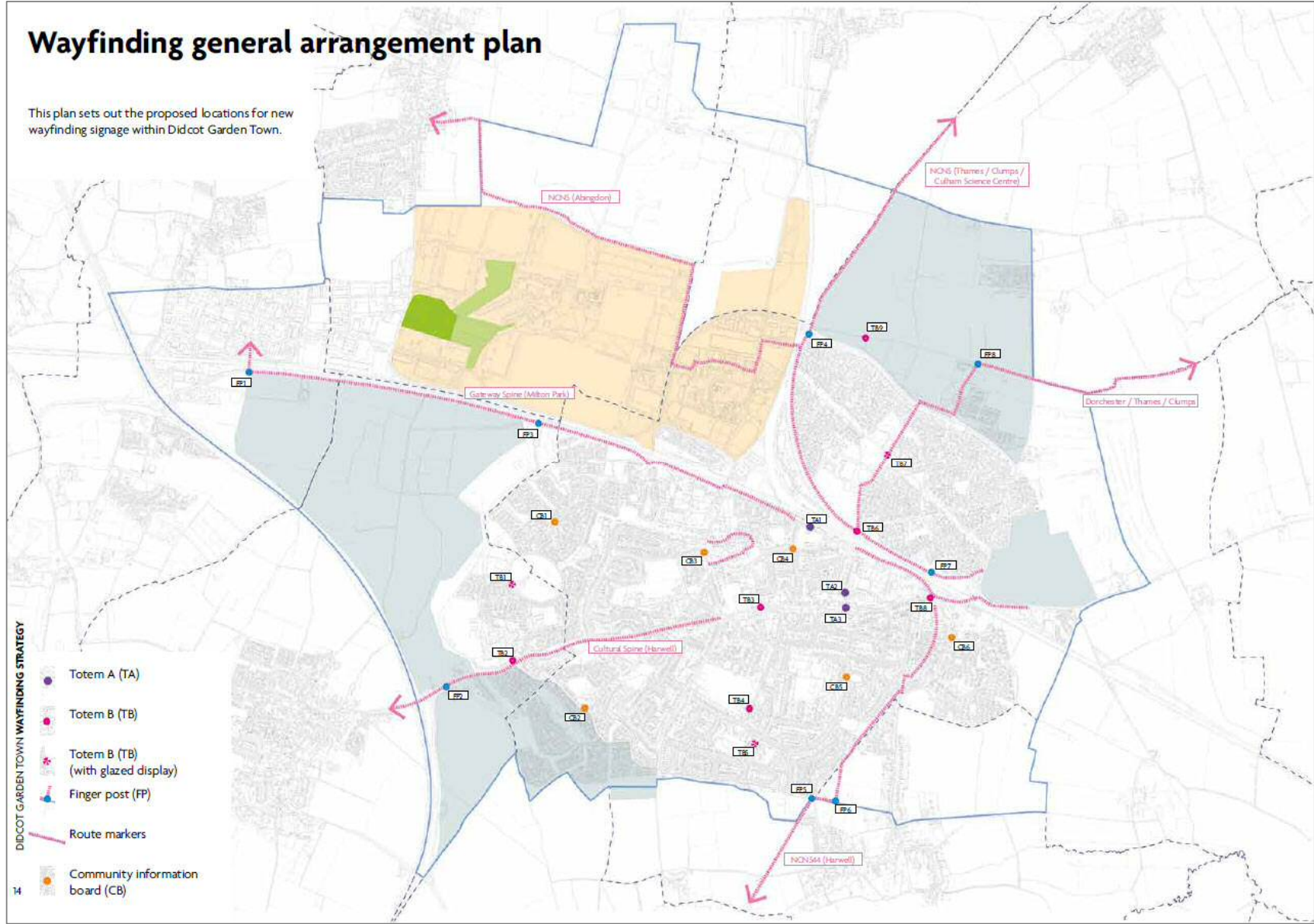
This plan identifies a range of destinations which exist across Didcot. These include specific buildings or areas, open spaces and facilities.



DIDCOT GARDEN TOWN WAYFINDING STRATEGY

Wayfinding general arrangement plan

This plan sets out the proposed locations for new wayfinding signage within Didcot Garden Town.



Font, colour & neighbourhood patterns

PQRSTUVWXYZ

stuvwxyz

Highlight

RAL2007
Luminous bright orange

White

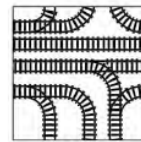
RAL9005
Jet Black

Background

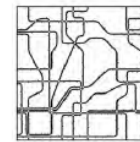
RAL9011
Graphite Black



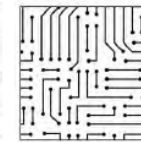
07. Map



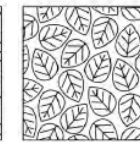
08. Rail lines



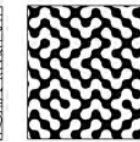
09. Rail network



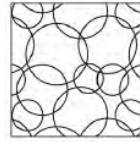
10. Circuit



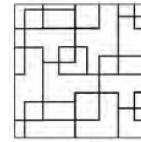
11. Leaves



12. Mitosis



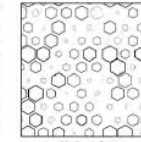
13. Circles



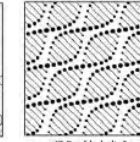
14. Squares



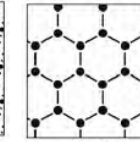
15. Grain



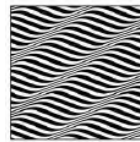
16. Crystalline



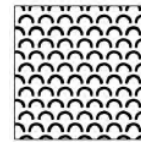
17. Double-helix 1



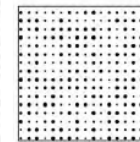
18. Graphene



19. Wave



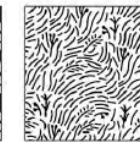
20. Clumps



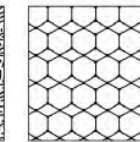
21. Interferometry



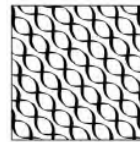
22. Reed



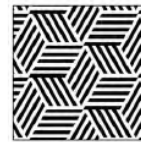
23. Marsh



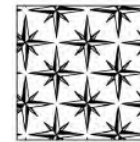
24. Cellular



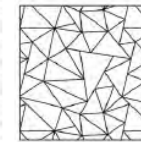
25. Double-helix 2



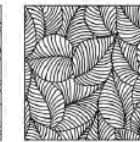
26. Ridge & furrow



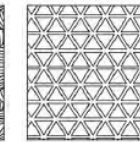
27. Compass



28. Scalene



29. Orchard



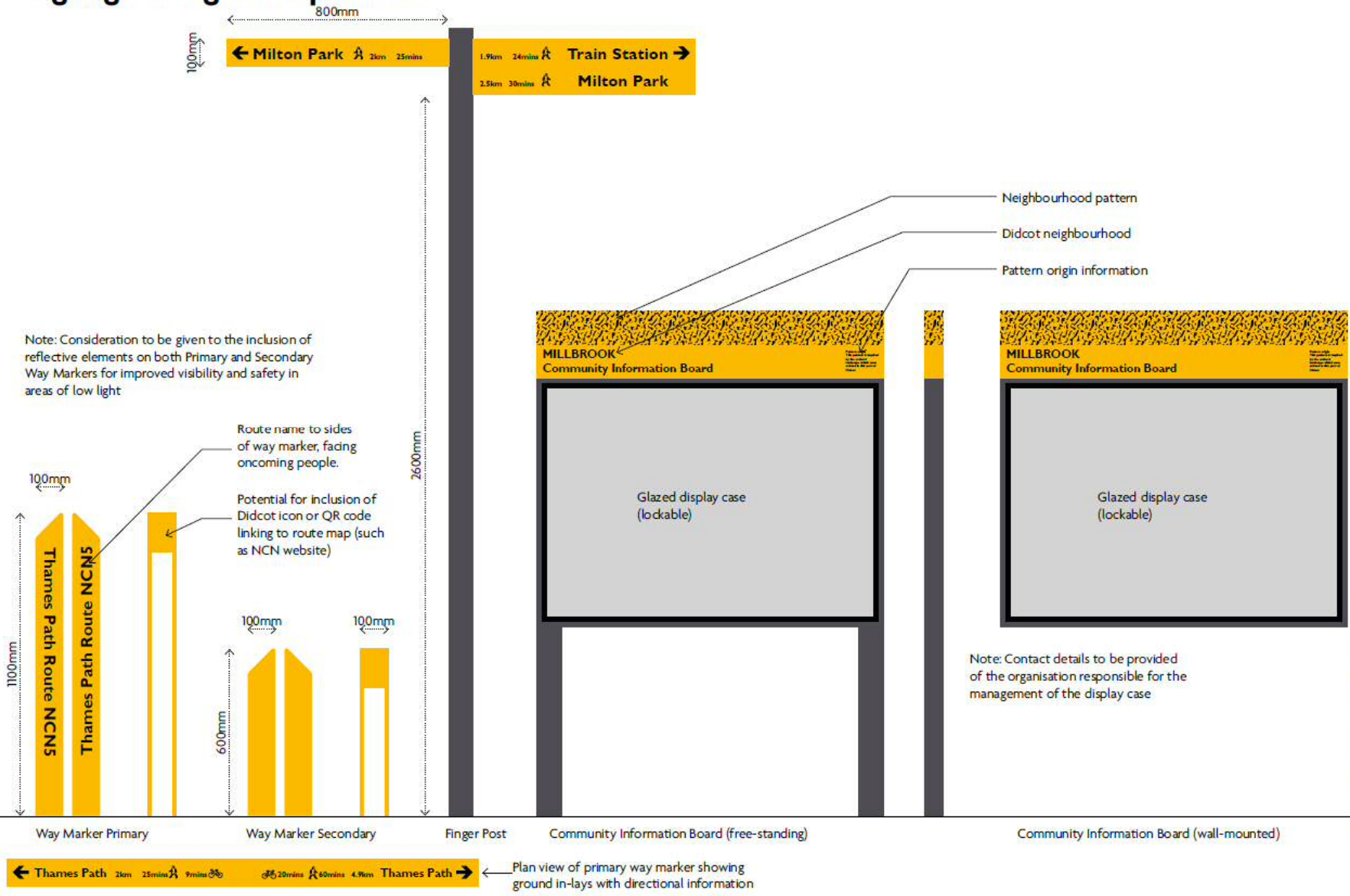
30. Equilateral



Didcot
Garden Town

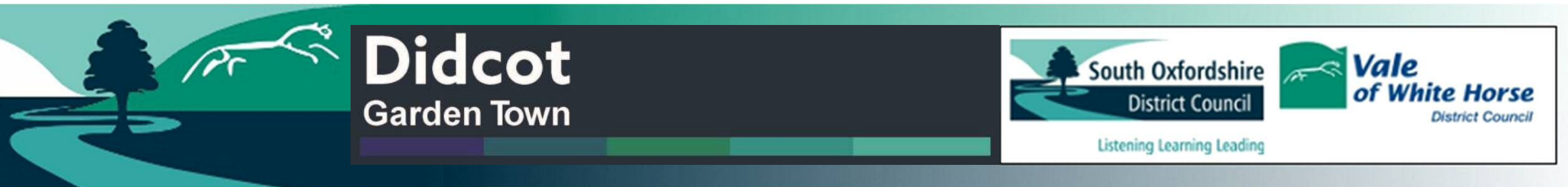


Signage design components



Wayfinding implementation funded

- detailed design to involve engagement with town council and parishes.
- signage due to be installed fully by December 2025
- subject to funding, should we consider a further roll out of the scheme to the DGT Area of Influence ?



Healthy Didcot project

Healthy Didcot project is working with local partners to help some residents living in Didcot.

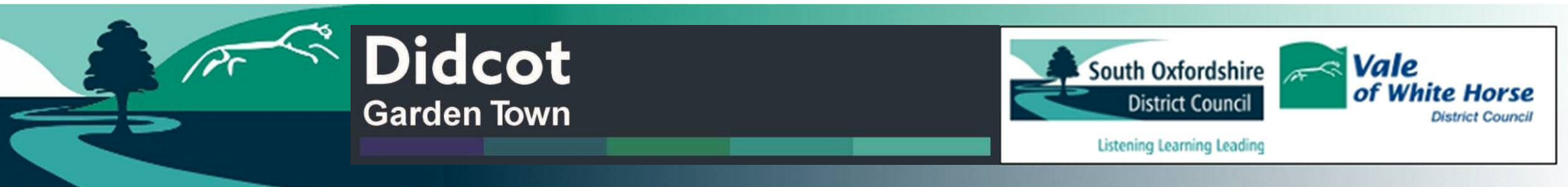
Data from Census 2021 and Oxfordshire Local Area Inequalities Dashboard identified some health indicators are worse than the English average, and some areas have a higher than average rate of child, pensioner or household fuel poverty.

What we've done so far:

- Healthy Didcot Steering Group formed – local organisations
- stakeholder engagement by consultant Anthony Atkins obo of district councils
- resident survey – completed by 1,655 people

Next steps:

- all three reports will help form a Community Insight Profile for Didcot with recommendations
- the recommendations will help the steering group to create an Action Plan



Community Events - you're chance to get involved!

Didcot Garden Party

For the fourth year running, we held the Didcot Garden Party during the school summer holidays.

This summer we had:

- 9 performances and activities at Cornerstone
- 3 community days
- 20 sports activities



Didcot
Garden Town

South Oxfordshire
District Council

Vale
of White Horse
District Council

Listening Learning Leading

Community Events – you're chance to get involved!



Saturday 2 November

11am - 3pm

Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot, OX11 7NE

Eco Fair

We're hosting an Eco Fair at Cornerstone on 2 November in partnership with Sustainable Didcot.

Energy Champions

We're inviting local organisations to become Energy Champions to help residents to reduce their household energy bills by providing practical support to reduce their outgoings as well as being able to provide a few giveaways, such as radiator keys and room thermometers.



Didcot
Garden Town



South Oxfordshire
District Council
Listening Learning Leading



Vale
of White Horse
District Council

Active Communities SE Didcot Nature Trail



Didcot Town Council Splash Pad



**Welcome to Edmonds Park
Splash Pad!**



Brought to you by Didcot Town Council and The Splash
Contact telephone number 01235 812637 for more information.
Please visit Didcot Town Council website - www.didcot.gov.uk for opening hours.



Didcot Town Council – community gardening

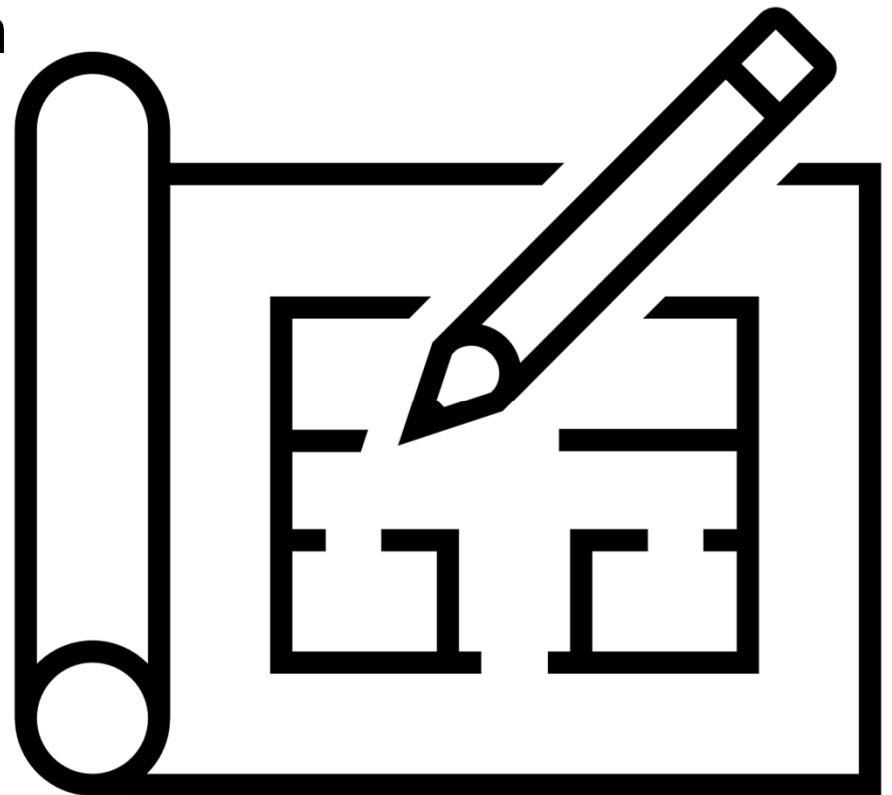
Children sunflower planting with Valerian Court residents



Community polytunnel

Didcot Town Council

- Neighbourhood Development Plan





Public Art

- Developing a Didcot Art Plan, currently reviewing feedback on initial draft
- Wider public art implementation in Didcot and the surrounding parishes:
 1. Site specific strategies
 1. Great Western Park
 2. Harwell Campus
 2. Working with Parish Councils - S106 project in the area of influence
 1. Sutton Courtenay
 2. Chilton
 3. Harwell
 4. Emerging projects

Working with parish councils

S106 projects in the area of influence

Sutton Courtenay

Sutton Courtenay Parish Council embraced the opportunity to incorporate public art within the streetscape, bring our local community together and to develop our local artists. The Parish Council a public art strategy in response to the funding provided by the new developments, creating a village map, a trail of markerposts, benches and bespoke noticeboards by local artist and wood specialist Rodas Irvin.

S106 funding £42,000



Chilton

Amphitheatre – earth works by Tim Norris 2020

The amphitheatre is cut into the landscape and shaped like the science facility based at Harwell Campus, which produces intense beams of light to examine materials in scientific research. the seating area is constructed from galvanized steel gabions faced internally with Natural Oxfordshire Ardley Stone. The gabion cages are lined on top with sawn oak decking for a tactile and durable seating surface. The Seating area reaches a maximum height of 1.5m and a width of 10m.

S106 funding £80,000



Harwell Village Hall

Harwell parish Council and Harwell Village Hall commissioned local artist blacksmith, Julie Grose to create distinctive signs for both entrances of the village hall, celebrating the villages history of cherry orchards and fruit picking.

S106 funding £15,000



August 2021
Issue 229

The Harwell News

www.harwellparish.co.uk

New signs for Harwell Village Hall

Passers-by along the High Street and Westfield may have noticed the very recent addition of two new signs at the two entrances to Harwell Village Hall. These were commissioned by the Trustees after the successful application for a grant for Public Art, made available via S106 funding from the original Talbot Close development in 2015.

Talented Metal Artist and Sculptor [Julie Grose](#) was asked to design and create the works and a group of Trustees worked closely with her to agree the style and composition. The theme of



the signs tie in with the "Cherry" and "Orchard" heritage of the village, after which the two main halls in Harwell Village Hall are named.

The Trustees are planning an unveiling ceremony which will be advertised soon, and to which the village and local media will be invited, to thank all who were involved in the planning, execution and delivery of the signs. We will report on that event in our next issue so watch this space!

Alison Fautley, Editor



Julie Grose, installation day!

Emerging projects in the villages



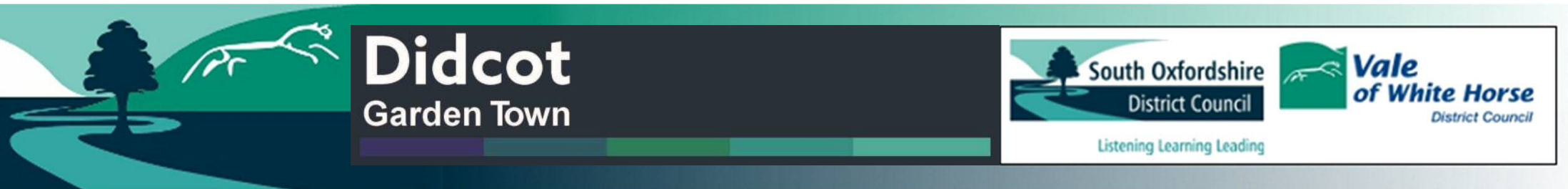
Other villages currently developing Public art projects are Milton and Blewbury.

Steventon benches (£35,000) - designs for eight benches throughout the village celebrating its rich history and natural beauty have been proposed. The eight benches will celebrate ancient field systems, cricket, the causeway, Great Western Railway as well as local stories and wildlife. The full funding be drawn down and the project will start in late 2024

Questions?

Keep up to date and sign up to our newsletter!

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/didcot-garden-town-latest-news/>



Is there any news updates from your parishes that you would like to share?

