

## Notice of a meeting of the

### **Environment Committee**

17<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 7.30pm

All Saints Room, Civic Hall, Didcot



### **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 Deputy 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 18 - 20 on a matter before the Committee).

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

To find out about participation contact the Deputy Town Clerk.

# Agenda

1. To receive apologies.
2. 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.
3. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July as a true and correct record **(attached)**
4. Questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item
5. To consider and note the financial statements and budgets **(attached with appendix)**
6. To note the Outdoor Services Manager's Report, including feedback from previous events **(attached)**
7. To consider deferred decision of sites to consider for new bus stops and the petition referred from Council **(attached)**
8. To consider whether to begin to progress CCTV installation at Cow Lane Bridge **(attached)**
9. To agree a location for the proposed new RESTORE building at New Road allotments **(attached with appendices)**
10. To note the update report on Ladygrove Lakes **(attached)**
11. To note updates from the WW1 Working Group and to consider recommendations from it to the Committee **(attached with appendices)**
12. To note updates from the Allotment Liaison Working Group and to consider recommendations from it to the Committee **(attached with appendix)**
13. Future project suggestions

## **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**

14. To consider potential changes to the draft Bowls Club lease **(restricted circulation)**



Chris Wayman

**Town Clerk**

11<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**Voting members:**

Mr A Thompson  
Ms J Billington  
Mr S Connel  
Mr A Dearlove  
Ms C Augustine  
Mrs D Macdonald  
Mr S Hewerdine

**Nominated Substitute Members**

Mr J Hart  
Mr R Milton-Eldridge  
Mr T Harbour  
Mr B Shaw  
Mr B Cooper  
Mr D Healy

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**Environment Committee**  
Monday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2018 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: Mr A Thompson  
Miss J Billington  
Mr S Connel  
Mr A Dearlove  
Mrs D Macdonald

Officers: Mr T Hudson (Deputy Town Clerk)  
Mr T Rudge (Outdoor Services Manager)

No members of the public

**128. APOLOGIES**

None

**129. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Mr A Thompson and Mrs D Macdonald reminded the Committee of their allotment holdings but noted that no allotment-specific items were on the agenda.

**130. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Proposed by Councillor Mr S Connel and seconded by Councillor Mr A Dearlove - **RESOLVED** to agree the minutes of the ordinary meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018 as a true and correct record and that the Chairman sign them as such.

**131. QUESTIONS REGARDING PROGRESS OF ITEMS IN PREVIOUS MINUTES**

None

### **132. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND BUDGETS**

The Committee considered a report on the financial statements and budgets to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

Councillors questioned when 90020 (Skate park refurbishment) would take place and were informed that the Outdoor Services Manager was currently in the process of seeking recommendations on the work needing to be undertaken.

Councillors also questioned the progress of seeking a WREN contribution to 325-32590 (Smallbone Play Area refurbishment) and were informed that the closing date for the application was September 13<sup>th</sup> so no decision or further information would be available prior to that.

The report was **NOTED**.

### **133. OUTDOOR SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT**

The Committee considered the Outdoor Services Manager's report.

In discussing the report Councillors asked questions on a number of issues raised:

- 1) Under item 10 Councillors asked whether the pedal roundabout could be replaced within the current budgets, or whether it was possible to ensure that the roundabout was made safe and considered as a project for next year. The Outdoor Services Manager indicated that the cost of replacement would put severe strain on existing budgets and that the roundabout could easily be made safe. It was proposed by Councillor Mr A Thompson, seconded by Councillor Mrs D Macdonald and **RESOLVED** that the roundabout be made safe.
- 2) Councillors sought clarification on the penalties that could be levied on the grass cutting contractor for non-performance. The Outdoor Services Manager explained that the contract allowed for a number of solutions, but due to his chasing the non-performance had now been made good and consequently these were not necessary.
- 3) The Outdoor Services Manager expressed doubts on item 32 as to whether the report should have listed the event as being booked without the agreement of the Committee. It was proposed by Councillor Mrs D Macdonald, seconded by Councillor Mr A Dearlove and **RESOLVED** to grant permission subject to satisfactory insurance and risk assessments.

The report was **NOTED**.

### **134. LADYGROVE LAKES UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report providing an update on the closure of Ladygrove Lakes due to algal bloom. In addition to the report, the Outdoor Services Manager informed the Committee that a meeting to assess whether the Lakes could be reopened had been organised. He also passed on that one of the possible

treatments, the use of barley straw to break down algae was not able to be implemented until the weather cooled or it would exacerbate low oxygen levels in the Lakes. The Committee had initial discussions about potential means to solve the issue on a longer term basis, and welcomed the opportunity to do so at the next meeting.

### **135. SUNDAY LOCKING OF EDMONDS PARK**

The Committee considered a report asking it to consider a recommendation from the Personnel Committee that an external contractor be appointed to lock Edmonds Park on a Sunday.

In discussing their response Councillors noted the low cost of the service, the positive impact it would have on outdoor staffing capacity during the week. It was proposed by Councillor Mr A Thompson, seconded by Councillor Mr A Dearlove and **RESOLVED** to extend the Town Council's existing contract with Calber to include the locking of Edmonds Park from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018, and for a virement of £935 be made from Edmonds Park maintenance (304 3154) to the Edmonds Park security budget (304 3155)

### **136. FUTURE PROJECTS SUGGESTIONS**

The following future project suggestions were put forward for costing and consideration at the Committee's budget-setting meeting in November.

- 1) Proposed by Councillor Mr S Connel, seconded by Councillor Mr A Thompson and **RESOLVED** to consider replacing the pedal roundabout in the Ladygrove play park with a non-pedal one, and for quotes to be sought that include wheelchair-friendly options.

The meeting ended at 8:05 pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Environment Committee 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Report author: Tom Hudson



## Financial Statement and Budgets

### Introduction

1. Attached are the “Detailed Income and Expenditure by Budget Heading” reports to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018.

### Recommendation

2. That the committee notes the financial statements and budgets having raised questions on the content.

### Background

3. Standing Order 98 a) delegates the administration of the Environment budget to the Environment Committee.

### Legal Implications

4. The council is required to arrange for the proper administration of its financial affairs; this includes regular reporting.

### Financial Implications

5. As set out in the attached financial statements.

### Risk Implications

6. None

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	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% of Budget
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**Environment****301 External Works-Central Costs**

3101	Salaries - Basic	15,584	78,918	226,000	147,082	147,082	34.9 %
3103	Events Staffing	243	657	1,800	1,143	1,143	36.5 %
3108	Staff Travel	179	876	2,000	1,124	1,124	43.8 %
3120	Protective Clothing	0	318	3,500	3,182	3,182	9.1 %
3124	Telephone-Works	0	41	250	209	209	16.3 %
3127	Subscriptions	0	90	200	110	110	45.0 %
3140	Vehicle Insurance	100	231	3,300	3,069	3,069	7.0 %
3141	Vehicle Fuel	977	1,741	3,600	1,859	1,859	48.4 %
3145	Machinery Costs	290	3,468	9,500	6,032	6,032	36.5 %
9034	Small Pick-up Lease	228	943	4,400	3,457	3,457	21.4 %
9039	Iseki Tractor - HP	407	2,035	5,700	3,665	3,665	35.7 %
9045	Ride on Mower	548	2,776	6,579	3,803	3,803	42.2 %
32504	Nissan Tipper Van Lease	340	1,700	4,080	2,380	2,380	41.7 %

External Works-Central Costs :- Expenditure	<b>18,897</b>	<b>93,795</b>	<b>270,909</b>	<b>177,114</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>177,114</b>	<b>34.6 %</b>
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<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>18,897</b>	<b>93,795</b>	<b>270,909</b>	<b>177,114</b>			
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**302 Allotments**

3151	Water Charges	206	611	350	-261	-261	174.7 %
3233	Allotment Competition	0	0	250	250	250	0.0 %
3244	Allotment Maintenance	0	1,008	2,000	992	992	50.4 %
3386	Allotment Noticeboards	0	69	0	-69	-69	0.0 %

Allotments :- Expenditure	<b>206</b>	<b>1,689</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>65.0 %</b>
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3282	Allotment Rents	81	10,491	10,650	-159		98.5 %
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Allotments :- Income	<b>81</b>	<b>10,491</b>	<b>10,650</b>	<b>-159</b>			<b>98.5 %</b>
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<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>-8,802</b>	<b>-8,050</b>	<b>752</b>			
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**303 Cemetery**

3151	Water Charges	105	117	100	-17	-17	116.9 %
3154	Maintenance	308	497	1,500	1,003	1,003	33.1 %

Cemetery :- Expenditure	<b>413</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>38.4 %</b>
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3383	Cemetery Fees	1,138	7,975	20,700	-12,725		38.5 %
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Cemetery :- Income	<b>1,138</b>	<b>7,975</b>	<b>20,700</b>	<b>-12,725</b>			<b>38.5 %</b>
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<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>-725</b>	<b>-7,361</b>	<b>-19,100</b>	<b>-11,739</b>			
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		Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% of Budget
<u>304</u>	<u>Edmonds Park</u>							
3151	Water Charges	1,118	1,139	300	-839		-839	379.6 %
3152	Electricity	0	320	750	430		430	42.7 %
3154	Maintenance	1,956	3,820	8,065	4,245		4,245	47.4 %
3155	Security	0	156	1,115	959		959	14.0 %
3170	Waste Recycling	598	3,355	7,200	3,845		3,845	46.6 %
	Edmonds Park :- Expenditure	<b>3,672</b>	<b>8,791</b>	<b>17,430</b>	<b>8,639</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8,639</b>	<b>50.4 %</b>
	<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>3,672</b>	<b>8,791</b>	<b>17,430</b>	<b>8,639</b>			
<u>305</u>	<u>Ladygrove Park</u>							
3154	Maintenance	330	10,026	36,000	25,974		25,974	27.9 %
3165	Ladygrove Lakes	3,932	8,051	11,800	3,749		3,749	68.2 %
	Ladygrove Park :- Expenditure	<b>4,262</b>	<b>18,077</b>	<b>47,800</b>	<b>29,723</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29,723</b>	<b>37.8 %</b>
3185	Ladygrove Lakes Income	0	0	3,000	-3,000			0.0 %
	Ladygrove Park :- Income	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>-3,000</b>			<b>0.0 %</b>
	<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>4,262</b>	<b>18,077</b>	<b>44,800</b>	<b>26,723</b>			
<u>306</u>	<u>Loyd Park</u>							
3151	Water Charges	0	11	100	89		89	10.9 %
3152	Electricity	0	25	150	125		125	16.5 %
	Loyd Park :- Expenditure	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>14.2 %</b>
	<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>214</b>			
<u>308</u>	<u>Other Parks &amp; Recreation Areas</u>							
3154	Maintenance	1,758	2,147	5,000	2,853		2,853	42.9 %
3166	Millennium Wood Upkeep	0	69	1,500	1,431		1,431	4.6 %
	Other Parks & Recreation Areas :- Expenditure	<b>1,758</b>	<b>2,217</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>4,283</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,283</b>	<b>34.1 %</b>
	<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>1,758</b>	<b>2,217</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>4,283</b>			
<u>309</u>	<u>Play Areas</u>							
3149	Bark Top-up	0	3,000	3,200	200		200	93.8 %
3153	Play Equipment Maintenance	0	732	13,000	12,269		12,269	5.6 %
	Play Areas :- Expenditure	<b>0</b>	<b>3,732</b>	<b>16,200</b>	<b>12,469</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12,469</b>	<b>23.0 %</b>
	<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,732</b>	<b>16,200</b>	<b>12,469</b>			

Month No : 5

## Committee Report

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% of Budget
<b>310 Environmental Services</b>							
3150 Plants	0	4,903	12,000	7,097		7,097	40.9 %
3156 Seats and Litter Bins	0	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0 %
3157 Dog Fouling Clean-up Service	0	284	1,200	916		916	23.6 %
3158 Trees	975	975	7,500	6,525		6,525	13.0 %
3159 Grass Cutting	0	6,904	22,000	15,096		15,096	31.4 %
3168 Street Furniture Maintenance	0	0	500	500		500	0.0 %
Environmental Services :- Expenditure	<b>975</b>	<b>13,066</b>	<b>45,200</b>	<b>32,134</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32,134</b>	<b>28.9 %</b>
1183 Bowls Club Rent	0	50	50	0			100.0 %
3180 Sports Hire	0	192	3,500	-3,308			5.5 %
3184 Funfair Hires	1,175	3,290	2,500	790			131.6 %
3186 Agency Income OCC	0	13,424	13,424	0			100.0 %
Environmental Services :- Income	<b>1,175</b>	<b>16,956</b>	<b>19,474</b>	<b>-2,518</b>			<b>87.1 %</b>
<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>-200</b>	<b>-3,890</b>	<b>25,726</b>	<b>29,616</b>			
<b>325 Projects</b>							
9033 Ladygrove Lakes Bank Repair	0	0	0	0		0	0.0 %
9051 Memorial WW1 Commemorative	0	0	900	900		900	0.0 %
9058 Building projects fees	2,026	26,896	30,000	3,105		3,105	89.7 %
9059 Bus shelters	0	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	0.0 %
32588 Edmonds Park Pitch Maintenance	0	4,278	5,000	722		722	85.6 %
32589 Loyd Rec Pitch Maintenance	0	1,688	3,000	1,312		1,312	56.3 %
32590 Smallbones Play Area Refurbish	0	0	27,500	27,500		27,500	0.0 %
32593 CCTV Additional Camera	0	0	13,405	13,405		13,405	0.0 %
32596 Disabled Access Stubbings Land	0	117	1,000	883		883	11.7 %
32597 Pavilions Project	0	0	10,000	10,000		10,000	0.0 %
32598 Depot Proj Temp Accommodation	0	0	15,000	15,000		15,000	0.0 %
Projects :- Expenditure	<b>2,026</b>	<b>32,978</b>	<b>110,805</b>	<b>77,827</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>77,827</b>	<b>29.8 %</b>
32587 CIL S106 Income	0	3,646	0	3,646			0.0 %
Projects :- Income	<b>0</b>	<b>3,646</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,646</b>			
<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>2,026</b>	<b>29,332</b>	<b>110,805</b>	<b>81,473</b>			
Environment :- Expenditure	<b>32,208</b>	<b>174,993</b>	<b>519,294</b>	<b>344,301</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>344,301</b>	<b>33.7 %</b>
Income	<b>2,394</b>	<b>39,069</b>	<b>53,824</b>	<b>-14,755</b>			<b>72.6 %</b>
<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>	<b>29,814</b>	<b>135,924</b>	<b>465,470</b>	<b>329,546</b>			

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% of Budget
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**Earmarked Reserves**

## 955 Earmarked Reserves

90010	Building Repair Fund	0	0	100,000	100,000	100,000	0.0 %
90011	Building Maintenance Fund	0	0	44,380	44,380	44,380	0.0 %
90015	Depot Fund	0	0	400,000	400,000	400,000	0.0 %
90020	Skatepark Refurbishment	0	0	17,348	17,348	17,348	0.0 %
90025	Election Fund	0	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	0.0 %
90026	Ladygrove Lakes Staging	0	0	20,000	20,000	20,000	0.0 %
90027	Building Project Fees	0	0	20,060	20,060	20,060	0.0 %
90028	CIL 2018	0	0	5,709	5,709	5,709	0.0 %
90029	GDPR	250	2,540	15,000	12,460	12,460	16.9 %
Earmarked Reserves :- Expenditure		<b>250</b>	<b>2,540</b>	<b>632,497</b>	<b>629,957</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>629,957</b> 0.4 %
<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>		<b>250</b>	<b>2,540</b>	<b>632,497</b>	<b>629,957</b>		
<hr/>							
Earmarked Reserves :- Expenditure		<b>250</b>	<b>2,540</b>	<b>632,497</b>	<b>629,957</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>629,957</b> 0.4 %
Income		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>0.0 %</b>
<b>Net Expenditure over Income</b>		<b>250</b>	<b>2,540</b>	<b>632,497</b>	<b>629,957</b>		

## Didcot Town Council

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# Environment Committee

## 17th September 2018

Report author: Tony Rudge



## Outdoor Services Manager Report

### Introduction

1. The report lists all the grounds works completed along with updates on allotment availability. Also includes contract work.
2. Feedback on recent events within the report period and vandalism.
3. Staff updates on training.

### Recommendation

4. That the Committee reviews the report and notes works completed.

### Allotments

5. Allotment inspections have been carried out and letters have been sent to plot holders who are not maintaining their plots to the required standard. After 28 days the plot will be re-inspected and if the plot has not improved a termination letter will be sent.
6. Grass cutting is currently being carried out and will continue on a monthly basis. Pathways between plots will be cut by DTC staff if they are not being cut by the plot holder.
7. There are currently 28 vacant allotment plots as follows, Broadway 3, Cockcroft 16 & New Road 11. Wantage Road have no vacancies although a letter has been sent to one plot holder giving 28 days for improvement & Mereland have no vacancies but two plot holders have been given warning letters giving 28 days for improvement.

8. There are currently 14 applicants on our waiting list (2 live within the Vale of the White Horse District Council). The majority on the waiting list are waiting for plots on Wantage Road but are being offered other sites as an option.
9. Great Western Park estate has 47 people waiting for the new allotment site to be created – 2020. Would the committee allow vacant plots to be offered to people on the Great Western Park waiting list?

## **Play Equipment**

10. Formal weekly recorded inspections are being carried out by ROSPA trained staff.
11. During July ROSPA carried out an annual inspection of all our play equipment.
12. Only minor risks were found and these are being rectified by the Outdoor Services Department. It has been recommended that all our zip wires are inspected by an engineer to ensure none of the wires have become worn; this should be carried out every 5 years. HAGS are carrying out this work for us during the winter period.

## **Trees**

13. A total of 4 trees have been removed from Ladygrove Park along the pathway from Tyne Avenue. 2 Ornamental Cherries (*Prunus Avium*) which were dead and 2 Weeping Willows (*Salix*) which had split and were overhanging adjoining property. Replacement trees will be planted during the winter period.

## **Cemetery**

14. There have been 6 burials since the last meeting making a total of 18 burials this year. 1 Cremated remains burial has taken place since last meeting. The total for the year is 8.
15. Grass cutting has now returned to the original method with all areas being cut using strimmer's. 2 cuts have taken place since last meeting and no further complaints have been received.

## **Edmonds Park**

16. A request has been received to remove a bench from near the pavilion due to anti-social behaviour. Youths are gathering around this bench at night and are



playing loud music & allegedly smoking cannabis. The request has come from a resident of Samor Way whose house is next to the park.  
Police are aware of the complaints and are investigating.

## **Edmonds Park Depot**

17. Verbal update will be given at the meeting.

## **General Maintenance**

18. Litter collection is ongoing at all sites and waste is disposed of into a skip.

19. Grass cutting is on schedule & all grass is now being cut fortnightly, during the recent hot spell grass cutting was suspended due to lack of growth.

20. All flower beds were watered daily during the recent hot spell.

## **Machinery**

21. All grounds machinery is currently working satisfactorily.

## **Staff**

22. There have not been any staff changes since last meeting.

## **Events**

23. July 27 – 29 John Lawson Circus – event cancelled

24. August 4<sup>th</sup> – Town Fayre – well attended, successful event

25. August 8 – 12<sup>th</sup> – Hatwell's funfair – well attended.

26. August 3<sup>rd</sup> – Skate Park event sponsored by ATB & SODC.  
Well attended plenty of give a ways & demonstrations.

## **Future Events Booked**

27. September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Sutton Courtney Fishing Competition – cancelled due to Lakes condition.

28. September 25<sup>th</sup> Centenary Field Service of Dedication – 14.00hrs Smallbones Recreation Ground.

29. November 11<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Parade & Service. – After problems last year the

road closure has been extended this year to 2 hours.

## Event Requests

30. June 15<sup>th</sup> 2019 Style Acre have requested to hold a colour run at Edmonds Park Following the success of this year's event.
31. Active Women project would like to hold family explorer events at Edmonds Park. Several events would be held throughout the year & would involve orienteering and mapping for all the family to take part in. This event is managed by SODC.

## Other

32. An application has been received to place a memorial bench in Smallbones Recreation Ground in memory of Anthony Lyford, a Didcot resident 1933-2017 who worked on the railways. The request is from his wife who would prefer the bench to go into Smallbones but would consider Kynaston Road Cemetery as an alternative.
33. TiksPac have requested permission to place a further 22 stations on our parks bringing the total to 44. The new signs would be in partnership with PetPlan. Several of the existing stations have been vandalised and any agreement must include posts.
34. Stubbings Land, the developer of the new housing estate adjoining the site has put a footpath up to our boundary. During works to clear out the drainage culvert the developers contractor removed the fence separating the housing site from the recreation ground. A new fence has now been erected leaving a gap for the footpath which means residents from the new estate have direct access to Stubbings Land.  
This entrance does not appear to have been on the existing plans however if the path had been fenced across the fence would probably have been vandalised to give access.

## Didcot Town Council

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# Environment Committee

## 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Report author: Tom Hudson



## Bus Shelters

### Introduction

1. The Committee is asked to consider 1) whether it wishes to use the budget available to erect a new bus shelter in Didcot, and if so, to identify sites for further consideration, and 2) its response to the petition referred by Council

### Recommendation

2. That the Committee 1) decides whether to proceed with putting in new bus shelters, and identifies those stops it would like to give more detailed consideration to, and 2) considers the petition and decides its response.

### *Bus Shelter Site Nominations*

### Background:

3. The Environment Committee previously considered this issue on 18<sup>th</sup> June and deferred consideration to allow more time to identify sites.
4. The Environment Committee has a budget of £5000 for the provision of new bus shelters around Didcot.
5. In the financial year 2017/18 a Town Council-funded bus shelter was put up by Ladygrove shops. At the time of the decision of where to locate the new bus shelter it was noted that the options put forward had been focused almost exclusively on Ladygrove. The reason for this was that was where public demand for the bus shelters had arisen from.

6. If Councillors wish to commence the process for putting in a bus shelter with the 2018/19 budget they are asked to nominate their preferred locations to assess for suitability and fuller consideration at a later date.
7. Feedback from consultation on this has identified the following as possible areas of interest:
  - All stops previously considered last year that are practicable
  - The stop by the Bingo Hall, opposite the Civic Hall on the Broadway
  - Putting in additional panels to the existing bus stop outside the Orchard Centre
8. Of interest, by a significant distance the single greatest area of demand for a bus stop from the public is outside the Didcot Parish boundary, which is on the Wantage Road and next to Aureus School.

### **Financial Implications**

9. None in nominating locations for further consideration.

### **Legal Implications**

10. None in nominating locations for further consideration.

### **Risk Implications**

11. None in nominating locations for further consideration.

### *Bus Shelter Petition*

#### **Background:**

12. The following petition was considered by Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 and referred to the Environment Committee for consideration:

“We, the undersigned request that the existing bus shelter S1 alongside the Cinema in the Orchard Centre be replaced with a shelter the same standard and size as the S2 shelter situated at the South End of Station Road, Didcot by The Broadway pub.

The current S1 bus shelter is situated at the bottom end of a wind funnel and provides no shelter from the strong winds and rain. There are no side panels and inadequate seating. All bus passengers find it is not fit for purpose.”

13. As can be seen in section 7 of this report above, Councillors have already been made aware of the demand for changes to the bus stop in question.

### **Financial Implications**

14. The Town Council has an existing bus shelter budget meaning that should the Committee wish to prioritise this shelter over others and quotes for the work be within budget it would be possible for the Town Council to meet the costs from existing budgets.

### **Legal Implications**

15. The shelter is managed by a company called Clear Channel and a replacement would need to be organised through them rather than an alternative supplier.
16. Under Standing Order 25 the petitioner is to be informed on the action taken or to be taken in response to the petition within 10 working days.

### **Risk Implications**

17. None at present.

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## Environment Committee 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Report author: Tom Hudson



## Cow Lane Bridge CCTV

### Introduction

1. This report asks the Committee to consider whether it wishes to set in motion the process for putting in CCTV cameras by Cow Lane Bridge and if so, to consider how to collate the information required to submit an application to South Oxfordshire District Council.

### Recommendation

2. That the Committee considers whether it wishes to begin the process for putting in CCTV cameras by Cow Lane Bridge, and if so, to consider how to collate the information required to submit an application to South Oxfordshire District Council.

### Background

3. The Environment Committee has a budget of £13,405 available to fund a new CCTV camera.
4. The suggested placement and costings have been worked out on the basis of a new CCTV camera being installed on the Ladygrove side of Cow Lane Bridge.
5. In order to progress the application for a new camera with South Oxfordshire District Council the following information needs to be submitted:
  - a. evidence of the ongoing problems in the area associated with crime and disorder
  - b. options explored and any action taken to solve the problems
6. From feasibility discussions with South Oxfordshire District Council officers it has been suggested that likely sources of information which would help demonstrate

ongoing need would include crime statistics from Thames Valley Police, personal statements from residents and local resident surveys.

7. Councillors are asked to consider whether they wish to proceed with sourcing the suggested sources of information, and if so, to agree who will do so.
8. Councillors are also asked to contribute any knowledge they have of previous options explored and taken to reduce crime and the fear of crime in the area.

### **Legal Implications**

9. None in gathering information.

### **Financial Implications**

10. None whilst an application is being put in.

### **Risk Implications**

11. None.



## Didcot Town Council

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### Environment Committee

17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Report author: Chris Wayman



## RESTORE Application for Building on Fleet Meadow

### Introduction

1. This report asks the committee to agree a way forward for the RESTORE project on Fleet Meadow carpark /New Road Allotments

### Recommendation

2. That the Committee notes the decision of Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) attached
3. That the Committee agrees a site for the building and that an application is sent off to MHCLG for the disposal of allotment land.
4. That the Committee agrees Heads of Terms to be incorporated into a lease for the land

### Background

5. Attached is a report form RESTORE which details the background of the project.
6. Below is a draft set of Heads of Terms:

Legal fees associated with drawing up the lease	RESTORE to cover the costs
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Term of lease	To cover a period of 21 years
Purpose	RESTORE to carry out functions and provide activities in relation to the objectives of the Charity
Rent	Peppercorn – in providing the facility at peppercorn rent grant applications from RESTORE during the lease period would not be supported in all but exceptional circumstances
Deposit	None
Payment for utilities, servicing & maintenance	RESTORE have to pay the cost of all utilities and maintenance
Subletting	Not permitted
Alterations/improvements	To be authorised in advance by the Town Council (but not unreasonably withheld)
Insurance	The responsibility of RESTORE to include £10 million public liability cover
Use	To be agreed with the Town Council on an ongoing basis
Safety and security	Building safety and security to be the responsibility of RESTORE and maintained at all times
Inspection	By the Proper Officer of the Council (or their representative) by arrangement at any time
NNDR costs	To be the responsibility of RESTORE
Consideration	In all use of the facility RESTORE are not to impact negativity on surrounding properties or the allotments
Security of tenure	Lease to be contracted out of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 (no right of renewal at the end of the lease period)

## **Legal Implications**

7. The application to MHCLG is required to dispose of allotment land (Allotments Act 1925, s8.)
8. Entering into the lease would be a legally binding document

## **Financial Implications**

9. The application to MHCLG does not have any financial implications
10. There will be a cost associated with drawing up the lease and then any agreed upon financial implications as a result of the lease.

## **Risk Implications**

11. There are risks in no action and that ongoing situation of the existing building would need to be reviewed.
12. There is a risk that the MHCLG turns down the request, in which case an alternative would have to be sought.
13. There is a risk in the awarding of a lease; however, this can be mitigated by taking legal advice during the preparation of the agreement.
14. RESTORE not having the funding available at the moment means that the project may not be completed. However, it is acknowledged that a lease or Heads of Terms may need to be agreed before other funding sources can be secured.

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Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

Ms Perrin  
Interim Town Council  
Didcot Town Council

Via Email: [JPerrin@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:JPerrin@didcot.gov.uk)

**Please ask for:** Michelle Peart  
**Tel:** 0303 44 48042  
**Email:** @communities.gsi.gov.uk

**Your ref:**

**Our ref:** PCU/ALLOT/Q3115/3205007

**Date:** 27 July 2018

Dear Ms Perrin

### **Allotments Act 1925 Section 8**

#### **Location: Lease/Appropriation of Allotment Land at Fleet Meadow, Didcot**

1. I am directed by the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government to refer to your email of 11 June 2018 and to subsequent correspondence regarding the council's proposal for the disposal of allotment land at Fleet Meadow, Didcot.

2. As you are aware the Government is committed to ensuring adequate protection is afforded to allotments. The Secretary of State's consent for disposal will only be given if he is content that Section 8 (the statutory criteria) of the Allotments Act 1925 is satisfied:

“consent may be given unconditionally or subject to such conditions as the Minister thinks fit, but shall not be given unless the Minister is satisfied that adequate provision will be made for allotment holders displaced by the action of the local authority or that such provision is unnecessary or not reasonably practicable”.

3. The Secretary of State's guidance, published 30 January 2014 sets out the assessment criteria against which applications for consent to dispose of statutory allotments are to be determined. These criteria are intended to provide a safeguard against the erosion of allotment sites through pressure on local authorities to provide land for other purposes.

4. The Secretary of State's consent will normally only be given if he is satisfied the following policy criteria have been met:

Planning Casework Unit  
Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government  
5 St Philips Place  
Colmore Row  
Birmingham B3 2PW

Tel: 0303 44 48050  
[pcu@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:pcu@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

- i). The allotment in question is not necessary and is surplus to requirements;
- ii). The number of people on the waiting list has been effectively taken into account;
- iii). The council has actively promoted and publicised the availability of sites and has consulted the National Allotment Society;
- iv). The implications of disposal for other relevant policies, in particular local plan policies, have been taken into account.

### Considerations

5. In relation to Section 8 of the Allotments Act 1925, the Secretary of State considers that the statutory criteria have been satisfied as there will be no loss of plots, nor any displacement of any existing plot users. The land to be disposed of is un-cultivated and not used as allotment despite it being held under section 8 of the Allotments Act.

6. In relation to the policy criteria, the Secretary of State considers that criterion i), has been met as there is no waiting list nor has any objection to this disposal been received. The council has demonstrated that there is no demand for this part of the site as an allotment.

7. In relation to criterion ii), the Secretary of State considers that this criterion has not been met as the council is unable to provide a detailed plan of the site, which clearly demonstrates the 0.26 hectares it wishes to dispose of for lease.

8. In relation to criterion iii), the Secretary of State considers that this criterion has been met as the council has promoted the site through the internet, distributed leaflets, displayed posters and placed announcements in newspapers. It has also consulted with the National Allotment Society. The National Allotment Society has not raised an objection to the disposal of this allotment.

9. In relation to criterion iv), the Secretary of State considers that this criterion has been met as Didcot Town Council has advised the Secretary of State that there are no local plan policies for this site. It considers there are no implications in relation to the disposal for other relevant policies.

10. The Secretary of State makes decisions with consideration of the relevant policy, unless there are exceptional reasons to justify departure from that policy. In this instance, the statutory criteria have not been met and policy criterion have not been met and there no exceptional circumstances to justify departure from policy.

11. Therefore in pursuance of his powers under section 8 of the Allotments Act 1925, the Secretary of State **refuses** consent for the disposal of 0.26 hectares of land at Fleet Meadow, Sandringham Road, Didcot.

On this occasion, it is considered that your application is premature, as you are unable to provide the Secretary of State with a detailed plan of the site which clearly demonstrates the area of 0.26 hectares your council wishes to dispose of, for lease.

Therefore, if your council wishes to pursue this matter and seek disposal of the 0.26 hectares of land at Fleet Meadow, Sandringham Road, Didcot, we advise you to resubmit your application once the exact location of the land is agreed.

Yours sincerely

*Michelle Peart*

Michelle Peart  
Planning Officer

CC: Liz Bunting - National Allotment Society

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Oxford Brookes Management of  
Volunteers Award 2015



**REPORT TO DIDCOT TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
17<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018  
SUBJECT: FLEET MEADOW REPLACEMENT BUILDING**

Background and History

The Town Councils Finance and General Purposes Sub Committee met on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 and endorsed the following resolution previously approved by the Town Councils Environment Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and the full Town Council Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

- a) That the Council expresses its support in principle to enter into a minimum 30 year lease to Restore to allow the erection of a replacement building on Restore's existing garden site subject to DCLG approval, and**
- b) That Restore be responsible for applying to and covering the cost of gaining DCLG approval for building on allotment land**

Subsequently with Restores assistance the Town Council submitted on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018, and with clarifications on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018, an application to the Department of Communities and Local Government<sup>1</sup> for approval from the Secretary of State to dispose of a piece of the allotment land to Restore.

The application was refused by the DCLG on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2018 as the original application unfortunately did not specify the exact location of the allotment land to be disposed of.

In order to obtain the approval we need the Town Council to confirm to the MHCLG what is an acceptable location for the proposed Restore building.

Members will recall that our original feasibility identified three options and these were;

Option A: Taking up part of the garden oasis and close to the existing properties to the east.

Option B: The area closest to the existing Restore Building.

Option C: At the top end of the Allotments on currently uncultivated land.

Taking each of these options in turn our appraisal process had concluded the following;

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<sup>1</sup> DCLG as then was now the MHCLG <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government>



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**Option A:** This was not suitable as it would involve losing a significant part of the garden oasis that has taken so long to create by our members and is enjoyed by many visitors to the allotments. Its close proximity to the existing residential properties to the east was also felt to be a disadvantage as was the possibility that the ground conditions would require a more complicated and costly surface water drainage solution. Our pre planning application also solicited this advice from the SODC planning officer; “ *This (option) could be problematic and increases both the visual and neighbourly impact of the development. I would not encourage this option moving forward*”.

**Option B:** This is Restores preferred location. It would be simpler to tap into existing service runs and retains the garden oasis built by Restore members. The planners advice from our pre planning application stated that;

- He shared our view that this was the best location
- A planning condition would be added to any subsequent consent that required us to remove the old building on completion of the new
- We would need to obtain approval to allotment land release
- We would need to address the location of the new access road into the site as part of any planning application

The planning officer also noted that within Option B two sub options existed and that “*Option 2 appears to project less into the open space to the south and extends parallel to the existing parking. This is likely to have a slightly less intrusive impact than Design Option 1*”.

We have attached a site plan that shows these two sub options within Option B (option1-dark blue outline) & (option2-light blue outline). The plan (attached at appendix A) is in simple block form to show location.

**Option C:** This was and is the least favoured option due to the high cost of providing utilities and service runs to the building plus any hardstanding access road. In addition the planning officers view following our pre planning application was that it would have; “*potentially the greatest visual impact. In my view this option is the least favourable*”.

### Conclusions:

From a planning and development perspective the best and most economical location for the new Restore building is one of the two sub options identified in Option B. This will require moving the allotment site access gate further west subject to appropriate planning and highways consultation. Our intention would be to facilitate this new site entrance as one of the first elements of the construction programme so that allotment holders are not inconvenienced. We would also anticipate including various contractual controls in the building contract to ensure working times and construction activities are as neighbourly as possible.



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The costs of constructing the building will be met by Restore through a fundraising programme which we are anticipating to launch at the same time as any planning application is submitted. We have a skilled fundraising team at Restore who are experienced in submitting bids to grant giving organisations and running community events as Restore annually has to raise nearly 40% of its running costs through such activities. This team is also supplemented with external bid writing resources who again are experienced in the charitable fundraising sector.

We will be approaching a variety of public and private grant making bodies in order to pursue funding. We already have secured £130,000 from South Oxfordshire and would hope that both the Town Council and South Oxfordshire would also look favourably on any possible use of available Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 monies.

CIL Register

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=CILList&PARISH=DID&Submit=Search>

S106 Register

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=Section106List&DEPT=SO&PARISH=DID&Submit=Search>

The estimated costs of construction, assuming a traditional new build, plus on costs are estimated in excess of £0.5m so we are actively investigating alternative methods of construction and procurement to reduce costs. A timber frame building which is prefabricated off site would minimise on site building activities and save money as would other forms of prefabricated buildings. These ideas are being explored currently and would be refined as part of working up our detailed planning submission.

In order to obtain Secretary of State approval to the disposal of a relatively small piece of unused allotment land Didcot Town Council needs to approve the location of the land in question. Restore is asking the Town Council to approve Option B (see above) without committing to either sub option 1 or 2 at this point. Once the MHCLG has approved the disposal we can work up Heads of Terms for the lease and our detailed planning submission. We would expect to confirm the precise design solution as part of that process.

### Recommendation

Didcot Town Council's Environment Committee approves the location of the proposed Restore replacement building as shown in the attached plan (Appendix A). This plan to be submitted to the MHCLG with a further request to approve the disposal of allotment land.

Report by: Mark Adams Joint Chief Executive Restore 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018.



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## Didcot Town Council

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### **Environment Committee** 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Report author: Tony Rudge



### **Report on Ladygrove Lakes**

#### **Introduction**

1. This report updates the Committee regarding current problems following the Blue Green Algae bloom in the lakes at Ladygrove Park.

#### **Recommendation**

2. That the Committee reviews the report and notes ongoing works.
3. The lakes were closed on the 25<sup>th</sup> June on the advice of the Environment Agency and remained closed until Friday 17<sup>th</sup> August . The lakes reopened for Ladygrove Fishing Association members only and only float fishing is permitted until further Notice.
4. During the recent hot weather the water level in the lakes has fallen by almost a Metre and this is now causing a problem, there is no way of adding water to the lakes and rainfall has been scarce. It may become necessary to move some fish out if they become distressed. The situation is being monitored daily.
5. Hiring an agitator pump for a long period of time is difficult, most specialist suppliers will only hire short term and ideally we would need a pump that is solar powered because there is not an electrical connection near the lakes, if we used a generator this may have security implications and would require daily refuelling. The dissolved oxygen levels are within an acceptable range at the current time and this is being monitored.
6. Dead fish are still being found in the lakes and this is being monitored by the Fishing association and the Town Council.

7. If the water level continues to drop we may have to consider closing the lakes again, this will only be carried out as a last resort but we have to keep fish welfare as a priority.
8. A lakes project will be presented to the Committee at the November meeting after consultation with the Environment Agency & Ladygrove Fishing Association.

### **Legal Implications**

9. Public Safety

### **Financial Implications**

10. The Fishing Association are willing to help towards the cost of the agitator which will help circulate the water and improve the oxygen level.

### **Risk Implications**

11. The Town Council must ensure all works are suitably risk assessed before any work takes place.

## Didcot Town Council

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## Environment Committee 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Report author: Tom Hudson

## World War 1 Working Group

### Introduction

1. The Committee is asked to note the feedback report from the World War 1 Working Group, and to consider whether it wishes to pursue the suggestion that the Town Council engage with the Trees of Remembrance project. Councillors are also asked to consider whether to fly the Union flag at half-mast on Remembrance Sunday.

### Recommendation

2. That the Committee notes the update report and decides whether it wishes to pursue the suggestion that the Town Council engage with the Trees of Remembrance project, and if so, to make decisions about where to situate the tree, and how or whether it should integrate with the Town Council's own commemorative tree-planting programme. Councillors are also recommended to decide whether to fly the Union Flag on Remembrance Sunday.

### Background:

3. There has been one meeting of the World War 1 Working Group since the Environment Committee's latest update report. A copy of the agreed actions is attached as Appendix 1.
4. The report references a number of events Councillors may wish to be aware of:
  - a. The dedication of Smallbone Recreation Ground as a Centenary Field will take place on September 25<sup>th</sup>, starting at 2:00 pm. The Royal British Legion are organising the event, and encourage councillors both to attend and publicise it. On the same day there will be an unveiling on the plaque to the animals that died in World War 1.

- b. Due to the increased size of the Remembrance Sunday parade in Didcot over the past few years, the Royal British Legion have requested that Didcot Town Council apply for closure of the Broadway and side-roads for an extra forty-five minutes, to run from 2:00pm until 4:00pm. Councillors are asked to agree to fly the Union flag on the 11<sup>th</sup> November at half-mast from 10:30 until the conclusion of the parade.

## **Issues Referred: Trees of Remembrance**

5. At the August 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the World War 1 Working Group it was recommended that the Environment Committee consider engaging with the Trees of Remembrance initiative.
6. The Trees of Remembrance initiative is organised by Oxfordshire County Council in partnership with the Woodland Trust which provides young native tree saplings ('whips') and plaques commemorating the centenary of the armistice of World War 1 free of charge. An example of the plaque provided can be found as Appendix 2.
7. The Town Council has, to date, planted a commemorative tree each year as part of its own World War 1 commemorations. No location has been formally agreed for this year's tree, though it has been previously suggested by the World War 1 Working Group that Millennium Wood be considered.
8. It is the advice of the Outdoor Services Manager that whips, such as those provided by the Woodland Trust, whilst free, are less developed and are more likely not to survive. The local oaks planted by the Town Council are more robust, even though they tend to cost approximately £200. It should be noted, however, that the Woodland Trust do provide a free replacement tree if their sapling fails.
9. The recommended planting date of such trees is either October/November, or spring.

## **Financial Implications**

10. The Environment Committee has an existing budget for trees: 310 – 3158.

## **Legal Implications**

11. Any tree planted will form part of Didcot Town Council's responsibility to maintain.

## **Risk Implications**

12. None



## Didcot Town Council

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### World War 1 Working Group

15<sup>th</sup> August 2018 at 4:00pm

Civic Hall, Didcot



### Agreed Actions

#### 1. PRESS RELEASE

The Press release was agreed, with the word “finally” deleted from section 2 of the ‘Notes for Editors’.

**TU** to make changed re: Hugh Boorman.

#### 2. PARADE MASTER

The original suggestion for the Parade Master for the Remembrance parade, has not shown much interest in the position, therefore **JU** will arrange for someone from Vauxhall Barracks to take the position.

#### 3. CENTENARY FIELD DEDICATION

The Plaque for the Centenary Field Dedication will be made by Kingdom Signs, being approximately 30x45cm in size.

It will be attached to the Memorial facing the Bowls Club, underneath the names of the fallen Soldiers.

Moving of the Memorial will be suggested has been approved for consideration by the Environment Committee as a project for next year.

**JU** has ordered 2 WW1 Centenary wreaths for the Mayor and the Army.

**TH** to look to see if the Civic Hall has a moveable PA system.

The School children will stand around the memorial and place the crosses for each fallen Soldier, in a box on the memorial. No names will be read out as this will take much of the time of the service, up. Crosses have already been sent to the schools.

**JU** has already spoken to Civic Hall Manager regarding the parking for the event. She will see if she can arrange for a Soldier to help 'man the car park'.

**BS** suggested the person to contact re: Service Dogs.

#### **4. THE MAYOR'S MURDER MYSTERY EVENING 10<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER**

**BS** has confirmed everything is in place; numbers just need to be confirmed.

#### **5. TREES OF REMEMBRANCE PROJECT**

The Group felt that it would be a good idea to join in the Trees of Remembrance project, although we do already plant a tree each year.

Woodlands Trust supply a suitable sapling tree and we would need to get a plaque.

**TH** to put this project to the Environment Committee for consideration.

#### **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**JU** thanked the Town Council for their support with the Grant Aid application for the Remembrance Concert.

Next meeting to be arranged.

Planted on the Centenary of the Armistice  
in remembrance of all in this community  
whose lives were changed by World War One



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**



**WOODLAND  
TRUST**

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## Didcot Town Council

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# Environment Committee

## 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Report author: Tom Hudson



## Allotment Issues

### Introduction

1. This report asks the committee to note the feedback from the allotment liaison group, to consider the issues referred to the Committee by the allotment liaison group, and to make a decision regarding policy around non-Didcot residents applying for allotments.

### Recommendation

2. That the Committee
  - a. Notes the update from the allotment liaison group and raises any questions on the contents
  - b. Considers the issues referred by the allotment liaison group regarding fencing, dogs, security on Broadway and the 'spares shed'
  - c. Considers issues around non-Didcot residents applying for allotments

### Background

3. The allotment liaison group met on 8<sup>th</sup> August. A copy of the minutes are available as Appendix 1.

#### *Fencing on Allotments*

4. The Town Council has received a request to fence off an allotment, the stated reason being to encourage the owner's children to attend and not disrupt any other allotments in the process of playing. When put before it, the feedback from the allotment liaison group is that individual fencing should not be encouraged. It is requested by the group that the Committee consider and endorse this position

for new fencing, but not to require the taking down of the scant amount of existing fencing.

#### *Dogs on Allotments*

5. Councillors have been asked by the allotment liaison group to review the Council's policy on dogs on allotments, which is not to allow them aside from assistance animals.

#### *Broadway Security*

6. Councillor Jackie Billington has been sent correspondence at Councillor site rep for Broadway over concerns about the level of security. This was brought up at the allotment liaison group and suggested that the Environment Committee consider it as a project in November.
7. For the timebeing Councillors are asked to note this issue; the writer of the correspondence has been asked to put together more detail on what they are requesting in order for it to be considered and priced, but this has not presently been submitted.

#### *Spare Shed*

8. New Road Allotments have requested that the Town Council consider providing a 'spare shed', a shed with gardening tools. It is suggested that this would be of benefit to new members who do not have their own tools.
9. At present there is no firm proposal of where such a shed should be sited, what it will contain, how much it will cost to erect and populate or how with multiple users tools will be safeguarded from misplacement. In the absence of this information Councillors are advised to seek greater clarity.

#### *Non-Didcot Residents Applying for Allotments*

10. At the most recent meeting where it was discussed in April 2018, a non-Didcot resident was given permission to apply for an allotment. However, it was agreed by the Committee that this would not constitute a policy but a one-off decision and future similar applications would also have to be brought before the Committee.
11. The Town Council currently has two applicants waiting for plots who are in the non-Didcot parish side of Great Western Park.
12. The Town Council also holds the waiting list for Great Western Park allotments whilst they are being developed, which is 46 people long.

13. Presently there are a total of 30 Didcot Town Council allotments vacant, which is approximately 7% of the total, the majority of which are on the Cockcroft and New Road sites. Empty plots are doubly expensive for the Council due to the rent foregone, and the fact that the Council becomes responsible for a limited degree of maintenance.
14. On the basis that there is demand for allotments on one side, and unused plots on the other, it makes prima facie sense to offer Didcot Town Council plots to those on the waiting list for Great Western Park. However, the likelihood is that a significant number of these people on the waiting list are from outside the parish boundary, which would make having clarity necessary.
15. Should Councillors agree to a policy which allows non-Didcot residents to apply for allotments they may wish to consider the cost to do so; the rent received from the allotments does not cover the costs of managing them, meaning there is an effective subsidy. It is for Councillors to decide whether it is appropriate to extend a subsidy beyond the parish (and therefore precept-paying) boundary, and if not, what the level of additional charge should be. The Cemetery charges a 200% surcharge on fees to non-residents, but the cost of £87 for a standard plot is undoubtedly high and likely to be sufficiently high as to put people off.
16. It is known that there are currently at least two non-Didcot residents who have been given plots accidentally. It is recommended that Councillors consider the fairest way to manage this situation in light of any changes made.

### **Legal Implications**

17. The Town Council is not prevented in law from allowing non-Didcot residents from having allotments, but it must ensure that there is sufficient provision for existing residents.

### **Financial Implications**

18. Due to the number of possible outcomes, Councillors are advised to ask for financial implications whilst considering their response to this report.

### **Risk Implications**

19. As with financial implications above, Councillors are advised to ask for risk implications whilst considering their response to this report.

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## Didcot Town Council

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### Allotment Liaison Group

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2018 at 7:00pm

All Saints Room, Civic Hall, Didcot



## Minutes

### PRESENT

Allotment Holders:

Mr L Anderson	(New Road)
Ms E Bracken	(New Road)
Mr T Bray	(Cockcroft Road)
Mr B Phillips	(Cockcroft Road)
Mr A Feest	(Broadway)
Ms T Feest	(Broadway)
Mr P Phillips	(Mereland Road)
Mr B Tilley	(Mereland Road)

Officers:

Mr T Hudson	(Deputy Town Clerk)
Mr T Rudge	(Outdoor Services Manager)
Mrs L Blake	(Information Services Manager)

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were tendered by Cllr Anthony Dearlove.

### 2. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018 be approved.

Eileen Bracken informed the group of the reasons for Phil Nobes ceasing to be a New Road site rep.

### 3. OUTDOOR SERVICES MANAGERS REPORT

The Outdoor Services Manager gave an update on current works being undertaken. Inspections of all plots on all sites have started, with letters starting to be sent out this week. TR is to contact Brian Tilley in regards to inspecting Mereland Road. Some pegs have been removed from plots, leaving one peg in the corner on each plot. The numbered pegs ordered are not up to standard (not waterproof) so officers are awaiting replacements.

The Outdoor Services Manager is in talks with local farmers to see if he can negotiate land for composting and is looking into whether 'Green Recycle Scheme' could be practical across all sites.

Eileen Bracken mentioned the fence at New Road is being damaged by trees. It was confirmed that the cutting of the trees should start asap.

### 4. BROADWAY SECURITY

Cllr Jackie Billington had received an email from a Broadway site plot holder, regarding the lack of security at the site. The site reps indicated that the majority of plot holders were happy with things as they are, but will report back if anything else is mentioned. The Broadway reps offered to support the original complainant if he needed them to. The Deputy Town Clerk said that this could be discussed in the November Environment Committee budget setting meeting.

### 5. ALLOTMENT AWARDS

The annual Didcot Town Council Awards will be taking place on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October, at 6.30pm in the Didcot Civic Hall.

The Outdoor Services Manager will be responsible for picking the winner of:

- Best Overall Plot
- Best Plot per Site (with suggestions from reps sent to TR prior to deciding)
- Best Overall Crop
- Best Overall Site

The new awards will be judges by site reps and these include:

- Best Allotment Site – Access
- Best Allotment Site – Community Spirit
- Best Allotment Site – Environment
- Best Allotment Site – Sustainability
- Best Plot Turnaround (up to 2 nominations per site)
- Community Contribution (up to 2 nominations per site)
- Fastest Learner (up to 2 nominations per site)
- Happiest Animal (1 nomination per site)
- Weirdest Shaped Vegetable (up to 2 nominations per site) Reps to forward picture to the Outdoor Services Manager

For Best Plot Turnaround, Community Contribution and Fastest Learner, all site representatives will need to write a reason why they are nominating the holder and send this to the Outdoor Services Manager prior to the competition (deadline for all nominations is 30<sup>th</sup> September). The final decision will be made by the Outdoor Services Manager.

## **5. HOW TO NOMINATE HOLDERS FOR THE AWARDS**

Nominations can be made by the site representatives and plot holders. Plot holders can inform their site reps of their suggestions. All nominations will need to be forwarded to the Town Council prior to the awards. No later than 30<sup>th</sup> September.

A notice will be made available for the noticeboards on all sites, informing allotment holders of the awards.

## **6. FENCING SURROUNDING INDIVIDUAL PLOTS**

An allotment holder had contacted the Information Services Manager regarding getting permission to surround his plot with a small fence. This was discussed by the group but it was felt it would cause too many issues with safety and with strimming pathways and plots.

It was **AGREED** not to recommend to the Environment Committee that new fences not be given permission to be erected around individual plots.

## **7. TREE SIZES**

The problems involving the size of trees on plots were discussed. Dwarf trees are the only trees allowed, up to a height of 6/7ft tall.

The Outdoor Services Manager explained that it is difficult to deal with trees already on plots, but once plots become vacant, the trees could be removed. In the meantime, any tree causing a nuisance can be cut back.

It was **AGREED** that a notice would be put up in the noticeboards on all sites, explaining about the trees and that permission is needed before planting.

It was **AGREED** to add 'Tree sizes' to the agenda of the next Allotment Review Working Group.

## **8. BADGERS**

Badgers have been causing issues on the Mereland Road site. As they are protected by law, there isn't a lot that can be done to stop them.

It was mentioned that they could be drawn towards the allotment, due to the weather being so hot and water being available on site.

Suggestions of maybe feeding off site and placing something holding water outside of the site might discourage them from entering.

## 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### i. Dogs

The subject of dogs being allowed on site was brought up. Eileen Bracken mentioned that Wallingford, Wantage and Abingdon allotments allow dogs on site, provided they are tethered to the owners plot. The majority of reps agreed dogs should be allowed. Brian Tilley suggested making owners insure the dogs before allowing them on site. The Deputy Town Clerk suggested we put the subject of allowing or not allowing dogs, onto the agenda for the next Allotment Review Working Group meeting and to make sure reasons why they should be allowed are made available. Ultimately it will need to be put to the Environment Committee.

### ii. Policing misdemeanours

Allotment reps expressed frustration at the lack of enforcement of rules when they had reported misdemeanours to the Council. The difficulty of taking enforcement action by the Council on the word of a non-officer was discussed.

It was **AGREED** that allotment rules will be added to the agenda of the next Allotment Review Working Group meeting.

### iii. New Road

Eileen Bracken informed the group that as the New Road site is big; it sometimes becomes difficult for people to move their equipment to their plots, especially in the winter.

It was **AGREED** that if at the end of the financial year there was a sufficient under-spend, funds could become available to purchase a trolley for New Road. All other sites could have the equivalent to use on what they needed.

### iv. Spare Shed

It was discussed that a 'spare shed' housing spare tools would be beneficial to plot holders, especially new and inexperienced ones and those who cannot get tools to the sites. The issue with this would be that the shed will need to be locked and who would manage it.

It was **AGREED** to be put to the Environment Committee for consideration for next year's budget as a project.

### v. Chickens

Chickens were discussed. Three sites have chickens; Cockcroft, Mereland Road and New Road. It was asked who monitors the conditions of the chickens and the maximum number of chickens allowed per plot, was confirmed as 6.

vi. New Town Clerk

The new Town Clerk has been appointed. The successful candidate was Chris Wayman and he has now started his new role.

The meeting finished at 8:10pm.