

## Didcot Town Council

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### Notice of a meeting of the

**Environment and Climate Committee**  
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.30pm  
Online at Zoom.us (or via your device app).



**Members of the Environment and Climate Committee are invited to attend a meeting on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.30pm.**

#### **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.

#### **Due to the Covid-19 virus, admission to this meeting will be online.**

If any member of the public wishes to comment on these items, please contact the Planning and Environment Officer.

#### **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 Planning and Environment Officer before the start of the meeting.

#### **Public participation – via zoom.us (or via your device app)**

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).

At the relevant time during the meeting, the Chair will invite members of the public to present their questions, statements or petitions. To find out about participation – or to view without speaking – please email the Planning and Environment Officer for details of how to join the meeting – [Glangton@didcot.gov.uk](mailto:Glangton@didcot.gov.uk) or see the guidance below.

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#### **How to join the meeting using zoom.us**

Should any member of the public wish to join the meeting, please contact the Planning and Environment Officer by email ([GLangton@Didcot.Gov.UK](mailto:GLangton@Didcot.Gov.UK)) to request an invitation.

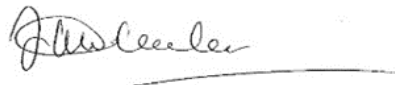
You will be provided with instructions on how to join the meeting. You will need to sign up to a Zoom account, which is free. You should use your browser to find **zoom.us**, then simply follow the instructions to sign up. Should you wish to make a comment rather than attend, please email the Planning and Environment Officer or any Committee Member prior to the meeting.

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## AGENDA

1. To receive apologies.
2. 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.
3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020.
4. Questions on the minutes and review the progress report.
5. To consider the draft terms of reference of the Tyne Avenue/DTFC working group.
6. To consider the locations suitable to be planted with trees provided by Councillor Wilson.
7. To consider the green strategy paper provided by Councillor Rouane.
8. To consider the Outdoor Services Manager's report.
9. To receive the FY2020-21 budget update.
10. To consider the report into work to maintain water quality at Ladygrove Lakes.
11. To consider the report on the installation of a path at Stubbings Land.
12. To consider the planting of 'wild areas' at Town Council parks and on Council owned or controlled land.
13. To consider the report on the Council's sourcing and use of electric vehicles and tools for the Outdoor Services Team.
14. To consider the provision and installation of picnic benches at social distance in Council owned and controlled parks to facilitate residents use of those green spaces.
15. To consider the report on metal detecting on Council owned or controlled land.

Janet Wheeler, **Town Clerk**



12<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**Voting members:**

Cllr P Davies  
Cllr A Hudson  
Cllr A Macdonald  
Cllr D Macdonald  
Cllr D Rouane  
Cllr A Thompson  
Cllr C Wilson

**Nominated Substitute**

**Members:**  
Cllr J Durman  
Cllr M Khan  
Cllr A Sandiford  
Cllr M Walsh  
Cllr P Geisberg

## Didcot Town Council

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### **Environment Committee**

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 7.30pm  
Online at Zoom.us



### **Minutes**

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

#### **PRESENT**

##### **Councillors:**

P Davies.

A Hudson.

A Macdonald.

D Macdonald (Chair).

D Rouane.

A Thompson.

C Wilson.

##### **Officers:**

Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk).

T Rudge (Outdoor Services Manager)

Mr G Langton (Planning and Environment Officer [minutes]).

##### **Others:**

Cllr J Moody (non-committee member)

Robert Harris (guest)

Alison Brown (resident)

#### **63. To receive apologies.**

No member tendered their apologies for the meeting, all were present.

#### **64. To receive declarations of interest**

Cllr D Macdonald and Cllr A Thompson declared that as allotment holders they had an interest in agenda item 9, the consideration of charges to be made by the Council for its facilities in the coming financial year.

**65. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020.**

Cllr D Macdonald proposed, Cllr A Hudson seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**66. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020.**

Cllr D Macdonald proposed, Cllr C Wilson seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**67. Questions on the minutes and review the progress report.**

**Minutes of the meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020:**

Cllr Wilson asked if the Wildlife Trust had held their pop-up tent event at the Ladygrove Lakes on the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

T Rudge confirmed that the event had, as far as he understood, taken place.

Cllr Davies asked when the policy on metal detecting, agreed at the September meeting, would be available for the Committee to consider.

G Langton confirmed that it would be available for the January meeting of the Committee.

**Minutes of the meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020:**

Cllr Wilson reported that she had been in touch with the SODC Officer in the legal team who was investigating the use of S106 to part-fund the path to cross Stubbings Land. A detailed response had not yet been forthcoming, and it would be forwarded to the Council Officers when she received it. In the meantime, Cllr Wilson offered to follow this up with the SODC Officers and asked that the Town Officer did the same.


The Committee heard the updates for each item as listed on the following 6 pages.

Action	Topic	Responsible	Rating	Minute 21 <sup>st</sup> September 2020	Minute 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
Bus Shelters (including petition). <sup>1</sup>	Installation of an end panel following petition.	Officers	Amber	The PEO reported that he had received no further detail from Clear Channel and would press them for an outcome.	It was confirmed that Clear Channel had not yet provided a date for the installation of the end panel, citing difficult trading circumstances and furloughed staff. The Town Clerk reminded the Committee that the Council had signed a contract extension min 2019, which included the installation of this panel as a condition, a contract which Clear Channel would be in breach of if they did not provide the end panel as agreed.
<b>For noting only:</b> Bus stops on Station Road (Cineworld & Broadways)	Installation of access platform ( <b>OCC project</b> )	N/A	Green	N/A	Planned improvement work at this pair of stops to provide easier access to buses, particularly for wheelchair users. (Scheduled week commencing 09.11.2020). At the time of writing, one had been installed (see overleaf). The Officer notes that it would not thwart attempts to install an end panel, though it did seem to be in the wrong place, the Officer had informed OCC.

<sup>1</sup> The following petition was considered by Council on 3rd 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.”

					
Tyne Avenue		Councillors	Amber	<p>Contrary to the report at the previous meeting, the approved minutes of Full Council demonstrate Full Council resolved to not re-instate the working group (ref. minute 17 (d) (iii) of Full Council 29.06.2020). The same minutes requested this Committee carry out further work to draft detailed proposal for the work required.</p> <p>The consideration of the matter is on the agenda.</p>	The matter was on the agenda for consideration.
Edmonds Park Play equipment.		Councillors	Amber	<p>The Company identified and its suppliers are returning from furlough but not yet back at full operation. Detail in the OSM's Play Equipment Report.</p>	The matter was on the agenda for consideration.
Edmonds Park Pavilion (demolition)		Officers	Amber	<p>The asbestos survey indicated that the building was clear of asbestos.</p>	The matter was on the agenda for consideration.

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Edmonds Park Pavilion (construction)		Officers	Amber	Latest designs were considered by the Committee and minor amendments made. A request to F&GP had been made to access funds to progress the project through the next stages. See separate report.	The matter was on the agenda for consideration.
Edmonds Park Splash pad.		Councillors	Amber	Officers have met with a utilities company on site to seek an alternative estimate for the installation of services only. The PEO reported that estimates had not yet been received from the companies that attended and these would be followed up.	The matter was on the agenda for consideration.
Ladygrove Sand Pit.		Officers	Amber	The sand pit was still to be commenced.	The sand pit was still to be commenced. It was noted that funds would be requested in the 2021-22 budget to complete this project.
Tree planting in Didcot.		Officers	Amber	Cllr Wilson was to update the Committee, but this was not done. It was noted that tree planting was best undertaken in November or March.	Cllr Wilson was to update the Committee, but this was not done. It was noted that tree planting was best undertaken in November or March. This would return as a substantive item for consideration at the January 2021 meeting of the Committee.
Community Transport (Cllr L Price).		Officers and Councillors.	Amber	The PEO reported he had not yet heard from Cllr Price and would follow this up.	There was no progress to report.
Bus Shelter adoption.		Officers	Amber	The PEO awaits an update on the legal position from Taylor	There was no progress to report.

				Wimpey, who have advised it may mean the Council being a signatory to the section 38 agreement but awaited confirmation from their legal team.	
Metal shelters in Edmonds Park		Councillors	Amber	Youth shelters would be raised as part of any redevelopment of the Council's parks.	There was no progress to report.
Creation of 'wild' areas in each of the Town Council's parks		Councillors	Red	To be confirmed.	T Rudge confirmed that this would be investigated in the spring of 2021. Cllr Rouane asked for the matter to be on a future agenda for consideration.
Installation of height restricting entry barrier at Edmonds Park		Officer	Green	The height barrier had been installed on the 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	
Changing the colour of the dog bins in the area to green		Officers	Amber	This would be undertaken as the bins were replaced or new ones installed.	There was no progress to report.
Completing the path on Stubbings Land		Councillors	Amber	See OSM's report.	The matter was on the agenda.
Paving 'desire lines' and widening footpaths in Ladygrove		Councillors	Amber	The PEO would bring this to the attention of the P&D Cttee if any S106 or similar grant money was seen to be forthcoming.	Cllr Davies reported that the request made to SODC to retain the surfaced desire path around recent road works had not been successful.
Implementing or improving the knowledge of recycling via Terracycle		Officers	Amber	Then provision will be advertised when Covid-19 restrictions sufficiently ease. The collection bin for Fabreze recycling is in the foyer of the Civic Hall. A bin was awaited for Carex recycling.	There was no progress to report.



**68. To note the next stages of the Edmonds Park community pavilion build.**

Cllr Davies commented that it was good to know that the project was being progressed, but he noted concern that the estimated cost was now in excess of £1.2million, compared to the original estimate of £730,000.

Cllr Hudson considered that the Council had a duty to provide all users of the park and its facilities a proper facility, suitable for the purpose.

Cllr A Macdonald noted that the rough estimate of £730,000 was now several years old.

G Langton reported that the architects had been instructed to move onto the next stages of the process, and that they had commissioned a topographic survey for the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

The Committee noted the paper.

**69. To note Chinnor Parish Council's 6 Point Plan for Climate Change.**

Cllr Rouane noted that the Council could emulate the example of Chinnor Parish Council, amongst others (a similar paper from Thame PC had been presented to the Committee earlier in the year).

Cllr Rouane would work with Cllr Wilson and Cllr Davies to prepare a strategy paper for the next meeting of this Committee.

**70. To consider the establishment of a working group, with appropriate terms of reference, to draft a detailed proposal to undertake work at Tyne Avenue with DTFC.**

Cllr Rouane, Cllr A Macdonald, Cllr Thompson and Cllr Hudson would reform the working group to continue the good work and prepare terms of reference to be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

**71. To consider the Council's Charges for FY2021-22.**

Following their declarations of interest, Cllr D Macdonald and Cllr A Thompson sat out of the meeting while the allotment charges were discussed. Cllr A Macdonald took the Chair for this discussion.

Cllr A Macdonald proposed, Cllr A Hudson seconded, and it was **RESOLVED** to increase the charges made for allotment in 2021-22 as presented (copied below). All members agreed.

Allotments	Current	Recommended at meeting on 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2020
Non-Concessions	£33	£35 (£17.50 part)
Concessions (65 or over at start of rent year)	£23	£24 (12 part)
Cultivation deposit (for new plots)	£40	No change
Late Payment Fee	£10	No change

Cllr D Macdonald resumed the Chair, Cllr Thompson re-joined the meeting.

Cllr D Macdonald proposed, Cllr Davies seconded, and it was **RESOLVED** to increase the other charges for 2021-22 as presented (copied below). All members agreed.

<b>Cemetery</b> Note: for all non-Didcot residents there is a 200% additional payment on all fees	Current	3%	Officer's Recommendation
<b>Exclusive Right of Burial</b>			
Person whose age at time of death exceeded 16 years	£290	£8.70	£300
Person whose age at time of death did not exceed 16 years	No Charge	-	No Charge
Cremated remains plot	£120	£3.60	£125
<b>Interments</b>			
In a grave (in respect of which an exclusive right of burial has been granted)	£415	£12.50	£425
Cremated remains (in respect of which an exclusive right of burial has been granted)	£215	£6.45	£220
Person whose age at time of death did not exceed 16 years	No Charge	-	No Charge
Late afternoon burial fee (applies for bookings 14:45 or later Mon - Thurs and 14:15 on Fri)	£40	-	£40
Private burial fee (for burials and cremations without a funeral director)	£100	-	£100
<b>Headstones and memorials</b>			
Headstones and memorials including first inscription	£115	£3.45	£120
Additional inscriptions	£50	£1.50	£55
Memorial bench fee (not including bench costs)	£100	£100	£100
Kerbing fee (in addition to headstone fee)	£400	£400	£400
<b>Other</b>			
Late/incomplete paperwork fee	£60	£60	£60
Cancellation/amendment/administration fee for reserved plot	£70	£70	£70
<b>Pitches</b>			
Adults	£58	£1.74	£60
Juniors	£18	£0.54	£19
<b>Fishing Permits</b>			
Adults	£21	£0.63	£22
Adult Concessions	£10.50	£0.82	£11
Juniors	£10	£1.50	£11
Juniors Concession	£5	£0.31	£5.50
<b>Park Events</b>			
Commercial Hire Per Day	£240	£7.00	£250

**72. To approve the FY 2021-22 budget to recommend to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.**

Cllr D Macdonald proposed, Cllr A Macdonald seconded, and it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the budget to the Finance and General Purposes Committee as presented with the below listed amendments (a full version is presented at the end of these minutes). All members agreed.

Budget heading.	Description.	Figure to be proposed.
3141	Vehicle Fuel	£6,000
3145	Machinery Costs	£10,000
3154	Maintenance (Cemetery)	£5,000
3155	Security	£13,500
3170	Waste Recycling	£7,500

**73. To consider the Outdoor Services Manager's report.**

The Committee noted the contents of the report, as follows:

**Allotments**

The final grass cut of the season had been carried out.

Car parking had been restricted on New Road and Mereland Road sites due to wet ground conditions, notices have been erected to notify plot holders.

The Council continued to store collected leaves at the New Road site and it was recognised that the tractor had caused some damage to the surface but it was the only place that leaf litter could be tipped.

**Play Areas**

Play areas remained open for use, in line with Government guidance. Weekly inspections were taking place and signs were in place advising compliance with 2 metre spacing.

The skate park was open, the outdoor gyms and tennis courts were closed in line with Government guidance.

The Outdoor Services Manager reported that the outdoor gym equipment at Edmonds Park had suffered from vandalism and deliberate damage over the previous weekend. Damaged pieces had been made safe. Signs had been erected to advise residents not to use it, in line with Government guidance. He would investigate the costs of repairing the damaged pieces.

The Outdoor Services Manager reported that the Edmonds Park play area required a great deal of work, with the large piece remaining closed due to damage.

Cllr D Macdonald proposed, Cllr Hudson seconded, and it was **RESOLVED** to remove this piece of equipment when plans for replacement were known, possibly combining it with the planned Splash Park. All members agreed.

### **Cemetery**

Burials to date 24 full burials & 18 cremated remains interments. Government guidance was that 30 mourners plus undertaker and bearers could attend graveside funerals.

### **Edmonds Park**

The new height restricting barrier had been installed, the car park was open and back in use.

Football was not being played in line with Government guidance. The Outdoor Services Manager reported that it was hoped to verti-drain the pitches at Edmonds and Ladygrove Parks before the start of December and the end of the lockdown.

### **Ladygrove Park**

The mound areas at Ladygrove Park had been cut, for health & safety reasons a remote-controlled bank mower was used.

Work continued on the football area at Ladygrove Park and it was hoped that two pitches would be available for use after Christmas, subject to restrictions being lifted. Football would be timed so it did not conflict the return of the Park Run. The Outdoor Services Manager confirmed that the car park would remain closed.

### **Edmonds Park Pavilion**

The old building remained fenced off for safety reasons. Demolition was planned but the removal and re-siting of the electricity and water supplies had been delayed.

### **Events**

The Remembrance Day parade had been cancelled in line with Government guidance. It was replaced by a small ceremony held at the war memorial on Sunday 8th November 2020. A commemorative tree had been planted and a plaque would be installed in due course.

### **Staffing**

The outdoor services team was back to full strength, with a member of the team back from long-term sick leave, albeit on light duties.

**74. To consider the Ladygrove Lakes report.**

The Outdoor Services Manager reported that the large lake continued to fill, and its water quality improve, so much so that it was hoped that water overflowing to the small lake would help improve that lake's water quality.

The Outdoor Services Manager also reported that a solar-powered aerator system was proving harder to source than anticipated, though he continued to seek a solution and present them to the Working Group as the situation developed.

The small lake remained fenced off, the walkways being unsafe.

The Committee discussed the issues caused by feeding ducks white bread, considering the Council's supply of duck food to be a possible solution.

Cllr Rouane proposed, Cllr Davies seconded, and it was **RESOLVED** to remove the walkways to allow the temporary fencing to be removed.

Cllr Davies proposed, Cllr Wilson seconded, and it was **RESOLVED** to purchase bulk bags of duck food and re-bag to small packets for distribution to those wishing to feed the ducks on the bank. This would be supported by notices, which would also be published on the website and social media.

**75. To consider the report on the Council's use of electric vehicles in its fleet.**

The Committee discussed the options presented in the paper and the option to extend the lease of the Nissan Cabstar further, or enquire as to its purchase cost.

The Outdoor Services Manager reported that he was seeking loan or hire examples so the Outdoor Services Team could use the vehicles in real-world situations.

The matter would return to the next meeting of the Committee for further consideration.

**76. To consider the relocation of the Didcot Town sign on Sir Frank Williams Avenue.**

Cllr D Macdonald proposed, Cllr Hudson seconded, and it was **RESOLVED** to instruct Company A (Reading Borough Council) to undertake the work at their convenience.

**The meeting closed at 21:29.**

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

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

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Draft minutes 16.11.2020

2021-22 Proposed

**Totals**

Notes (baseline increase of 3% included)

101 Central Administration			
1173	Green projects	25,600	May be used for projects across the Council.
	<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	25,600	<b>25,600</b>
301 External Works - Central Costs			
3101	Salaries - Basic	285,000	Assumed, based on 2.75% increase but OSM salary may change and annual increment may be applied. Addition of an apprentice.
3102	Events staffing	2,200	
3104	Agency Staffing	1,000	
3108	Staff Travel	2,300	
3120	Protective Clothing	4,000	New OSM, new apprentice.
3124	Telephone - Works	200	
3127	Subscriptions	400	
3140	Vehicle Insurance	3,896	Figure to be confirmed. This is an estimate, the insurance renews in November annually, precise figure will be known then. A small number of claims in 2019-20 may affect the quote.
3141	Vehicle Fuel	7,000	Fuel prices down by approx. 10% on 2019 figures.
3145	Machinery Costs	10,000	Service costs for general machinery.
9034	Ford ranger pick-up	3,290	Lease costs inclusive or service.
9039	Ransomes HR300 rotary	5,300	Lease cost, maintenance.
9045	Ransomes Parkway 3	1,230	HP plan complete. Costs for service and parts.
32504	Nissan Tipper Van Lease	7,000	Current lease expires end Dec 2020.
32519	John Deere	4,200	Lease at £295/month plus service every 6 months (at £300 each).

<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	337,016	<b>337,016</b>
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**302 Allotments**

3151	Water charges	1,060	
3233	Allotment Competition	250	
3244	Allotment Maintenance	2,600	
3386	Allotment noticeboards	-	All boards are under two years old, retain the code for future use.

<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	3,910	
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3282	Allotment Rents	12,500	2021-22 fees agreed as £35 (£25 concessions) for a full, £17.50 (£12 conc.) for a part.
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<b>Total Income</b>	12,500	
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<b>302</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	-	<b>8,590</b>	-	<b>8,590</b>
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**303 Cemetery**

3151	Water charges	210
3154	Maintenance	5,000

<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	5,210	
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3303	Cemetery Fees	17,500
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<b>Total Income</b>	17,500	
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<b>303</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	-	<b>12,290</b>	-	<b>12,290</b>
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<b>304 Edmonds Park</b>			
3155	Security	13,500	
	<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	13,500	<b>13,500</b>
<b>305 Ladygrove Park</b>			
32521	Ladygrove park	5,000	moved from <b>325 Projects</b> , sandpit & train.
3165	Ladygrove Lakes	11,330	maintenance
	<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	16,330	
3185	Ladygrove Lakes Income		
	<b>Total Income</b>	618	
<b>305</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	16,330	<b>16,330</b>
<b>306 Loyd Park</b>			
3151	Water Charges	80	
3152	Electricity	120	
	<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	200	
	<b>Total Income</b>	-	
<b>306</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	200	<b>200</b>
<b>308 General Parks &amp; Recreation Areas</b>			
3170	Waste Recycling	7,500	
3151	Water Charges	1,200	<b>Charges for all parks and recreation areas.</b>

3152	Electricity	1,160	
3154	Maintenance	21,070	
3166	Millennium Wood Upkeep	2,060	
	<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	32,990	
	<b>Total Income</b>	-	
<b>308</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	32,990	<b>32,990</b>

<b>309 Play Areas</b>			
3149	Bark Top-up	3,090	
3153	Play Equipment Maintenance	20,000	Play equipment is ageing and needs more work than in previous years. This must be recognised.
	<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	23,090	
	<b>Total Income</b>		
<b>309</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	23,090	<b>23,090</b>

<b>310 Environmental Services</b>			
3150	Plants	2,000	Reflecting the move to planting perennials rather than annuals
tbc	Decorative planting	-	For future years
3156	Seats and Litter Bins	1,500	Maintenance of benches and bins.
3157	Dog Fouling Clean-up Services	5,000	Significant increase in costs over 2019-20, with the full annual budget spent by the end of August 2020. 2021-22 budget increased to reflect this.
3168	Trees	12,500	2020 has been injurious to trees. Increase in budget to meet likely increase in costs to maintain and make safe.
9031	Tree Maintenance 3 yr Contract	-	Retain for future years.
3159	Grass Cutting	24,350	Highway verges - contactor engaged.

3162	Football pitch maintenance	8,860	2020 was too dry to undertake work, plan to carry work out in 2021-22
32588	Edmonds Park Pitch Maintenance	—————	moved from <b>325 Projects</b> , work included above, remove budget line.
3168	Street Furniture Maintenance	—————	Propose removal and a new cost centre included for Street Furniture.
	<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	54,210	
1183	Bowls Club Rent	50	
3180	Sports Hire	3,000	Pitch hire costs to be considered in separate report.
3184	Funfair Hires	1,675	Assuming fun fairs are allowed again in 2021-22
3186	Agency Income OCC	13,424	Grass cutting grant from OCC. Not increased since commencement, can be considered for renegotiation?
	<b>Total Income</b>	18,149	
<b>310</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	36,061	<b>36,061</b>

<b>NEW</b>	<b>Street Furniture</b>		<b>Proposed new cost centre</b>
9059	Bus shelter installation	10,300	Moved from <b>325 Projects</b> . Further shelters to be installed across the town as required. Represents 2 standard 2-bay shelters or 1 larger 3-bay green-roofed model.
9051	Memorial WW1 Commemorative seat, to be renamed		
??	Bench replacement & installation	2,000	Moved from <b>325 Projects</b> . <b>Journal £3000 from 2020-21 to earmarked reserves for FY2021-22.</b>
9060	Noticeboard replacement	925	Moved from <b>325 Projects</b> . Was to replace the Council boards across the town and at the Hall/Offices on a rolling basis, so not a one-off
3168	Street Furniture Maintenance	3,000	Figure included to cover probable costs of maintenance, including bus shelter cleaning.
	<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>	16,225	<b>16,225</b>

<b>NEW</b>	<b>Public Art &amp; Heritage</b>		<b>Proposed new cost centre</b>
tbc	Local heritage collection at Civic Hall	2,750	Cost of a display case plus any costs associated with the display/installation.
tbc		-	

305	OverHead Expenditure	2,750	2,750
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<b>325 Projects</b>			
9033	Ladygrove Lakes Bank Repair	-	
32503	Ladygrove Lakes	-	
9056	Ladygrove Lakes Staging	750	Retained in budget, <b>balance of 2020-21 budget to be journalled to Earmarked Reserves 2021-22</b> , 3% added as new budget.
tbc	Play equipment replacement	100,000	Small children's play area at Edmonds Park, where one piece is closed and two further need repair. Could also include a 'youth shelter'
tbc	Play equipment installation (outdoor table tennis)	3,000	
9058	Building projects fees	5,000	<a href="https://www.playcrete.com/concrete-table-tennis/">https://www.playcrete.com/concrete-table-tennis/</a> to include installed mat surround if appropriate.
32522	<del>Green waste disposal</del>	—————	<b>Remove</b>
32520	Cemetery	-	2020-21 resurfaced paths. No planned projects.
32525	Edmonds Park New Pavilion build	27,750	Stages 3, 4 and 5 of the Architects process towards build (£26,750), plus 10% snagging & sundry value (rounded up).
tbc	Edmonds Park Old Pavilion Removal	25,000	Assumed cost, if not completed in 2020-21
tbc	Edmonds Park pre-fab toilet block purchase	9,500	2 units: <a href="https://www.portablespace.co.uk/product/11-double-mains-toilet-8ft-x-5ft-ral-6007">https://www.portablespace.co.uk/product/11-double-mains-toilet-8ft-x-5ft-ral-6007</a>   <a href="https://www.portablespace.co.uk/product/steel-disabled-toilet-for-sale">https://www.portablespace.co.uk/product/steel-disabled-toilet-for-sale</a>
tbc	Edmonds Park refurbish slab	15,500	Refurbish slab, remedial base works, remedial works, DDA access ramp and installation of services.
32596	Disabled Access Stubbings Land	20,000	If carried across to 2021-22
32597	Loyd Rec Pavillions Project	-	Retain as zero.
32598	<del>Depot Proj-emp Accommodation</del>	—————	<b>Remove</b>

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Draft minutes 16.11.2020

32599	Splash Park	6,000	Retained in budget, <b>(to be journalled to Earmarked Reserves)</b> carry across to 2021-22, 3% added as new budget. Total available in 2021-22 £206,000	
<b>OverHead Expenditure</b>		410,229		
32524	Grant - Pavillion	-	Retained in budget as zero.	
32584	Grant Received	—————	Remove	
32582	Sale of Assets	-	Retained in budget as zero.	
32587	CIL S106 income	77,458	Rename as anticipated CIL receipt.   CIL Ref 3329. P18/S0719/RM. Land to the South of A4130 Didcot. Instalment 3. £77458.28	
		24,805	Rename as anticipated CIL receipt.   CIL Ref 2207. P14/S4066/FUL. Land to south of Hadden Hill Didcot. Instalment 3. £24805.48	
<b>Total Income</b>		102,264		
<b>325</b>	<b>Net Expenditure</b>	307,965	<b>307,965</b>	
<b>Grand total expenditure:</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>790,847</b>	

PTO for S106 funds available for Town Projects.

**S106 funds available:**

Received	Towards	Spend By	Officer Suggested Use of Funds
<b>P02/W0848/O (08S35) - Land to the west of Didcot, between A4130 and Park Road to both North and South of B4493 Wantage Road (Agreement dated 18 July 2008)</b>			
£196,781.51	"Civic Centre Contribution" towards the costs of improving Didcot Civic Centre or other community centres/services either on or within the proximity of the Site.	no date provided	Solar PV and the Civic Hall Balance to fund other (including Green) improvements.
<b>P08/W0251 (08S48) - Royal Berkshire Court Green Close Didcot OX11 8TD (Agreement dated 22 December 2008)</b>			
£9,687.50	"the Play Area Contribution" towards the provision of a children's play area at Edmonds Park	no date provided	Replacement of broken play equipment at Edmonds Park
<b>P09/W0956 (10S02) - Land adjacent to Marsh Bridge Cottages Didcot OX11 8DL (Agreement dated 14 January 2010)</b>			
£2,223.58	"Play Maintenance Contribution" towards Play facilities in Didcot	17/08/2022	Replacement of broken play equipment across town (Zip-Wires)
£1,607.71	"Play Capital Contribution" towards Play facilities in Didcot	17/08/2022	Replacement of broken play equipment at Edmonds Park
£1,887.17	"Green Space Contribution" towards the provision of additional green space identified by the Council's PPG17 study as a result of the growth of Didcot in such form and at such time as the Council shall in their discretion decide	17/08/2022	Stubbings Land disabled access
<b>P10/W1959 (14S16) - Land at Park Road Didcot (Agreement dated 19 May 2014)</b>			
£72,434.48	Community Contribution towards facilities in Didcot	19/06/2035	5% (£3,620 in either of these cases) of a S106 allocation may be used towards professional fees (Architects, planning etc) , eg to part-fund '32525' or '32599'
£72,434.48	Community Contribution towards facilities in Didcot	10/12/2034	

Action	Topic	Responsible	Rating	Minute 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	Minute 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
Bus Shelters (including petition). <sup>2</sup>	Installation of an end panel following petition.	Officers	Amber	It was confirmed that Clear Channel had not yet provided a date for the installation of the end panel, citing difficult trading circumstances and furloughed staff. The Town Clerk reminded the Committee that the Council had signed a contract extension in 2019, which included the installation of this panel as a condition, a contract which Clear Channel would be in breach of if they did not provide the end panel as agreed.	
Tyne Avenue Working Group	Liaison with DTFC	Councillors	Amber	Cllr Rouane, Cllr A Macdonald, Cllr Thompson and Cllr Hudson would reform the working group to continue the good work and prepare terms of reference to be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.	

<sup>2</sup> The following petition was considered by Council on 3rd 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.”

Edmonds Park Play equipment.	Make safe and replace broken play equipment	Councillors	Amber	Cllr D Macdonald proposed, Cllr Hudson seconded, and it was RESOLVED to remove this piece of equipment when plans for replacement were known, possibly combining it with the planned Splash Park. All members agreed.	
Edmonds Park Pavilion (demolition)	Removal of old pavilion building and re-purposing of slab.	Officers	Amber	The old building remained fenced off for safety reasons. Demolition was planned but the removal and re-siting of the electricity and water supplies had been delayed.	
Edmonds Park Pavilion (construction)	Design and build of pavilion building.	Officers	Amber	G Langton reported that the architects had been instructed to move onto the next stages of the process, and that they had commissioned a topographic survey for the 1st December 2020. Stages are detailed below.	

**Edmonds Park Pavilion Construction - Completed stages:**

<i>Stage 2:</i> Concept Design	This stage is complete. Copies of the drawings are in this folder and in the main folder on the shelves by the desk.
<i>Stage 1:</i> Topographic Survey	This stage is complete, the survey was undertaken in December 2020.



**Edmonds Park Pavilion Construction - Current Stages:**

<p><i>Stage 3:</i> Developed Design £7,500</p> <p>Planning permission Budget £2,000</p>	<p>During this stage, the Architects will prepare more developed presentation drawings and comprehensive supporting documentation. These are the documents needed to accompany an application for Planning Permission and will include coloured presentation drawings and a Design &amp; Access Statement which will explain the ethos of the proposal and indicate how relevant planning policies have been addressed.</p> <p>As members will understand, Planning Permission can never be 100% guaranteed. The Firm and Officers' will work to give the project the best chance of success. The drawings prepared in readiness for planning purposes will also enable a cost consultant or quantity surveyor to provide a preliminary estimate of the build cost.</p> <p>Planning Applications are charged at £462/75sqm. The current proposal measures 469m<sup>2</sup> if SODC are prepared to disregard the quite extensive canopied areas, the fee would therefore be £3,234. In addition, there would be a fee of £234 for works to the car park, giving £3,468. The Council is then offered a 50% discount on these fees, giving a figure of £1,734. Any other surface treatments would add to the footprint, so the Officer advises budgeting £2,000. The Council is not liable for CIL for this project.</p>
<p><i>Stage 4:</i> Technical Design £14,750</p>	<p>Once planning permission has been secured, the architects would draft technical drawings to accompany a Full Plans application for Building Regulations approval.</p> <p>During this phase, the firm would liaise with, and coordinate the work of, others including structural engineers, drainage, mechanical and electrical services engineers.</p> <p>At this stage it will also be prudent to obtain a utilities survey and ground condition survey/geological prognosis.</p>
<p>Environmental technologies.</p>	<p>Ground or Air source heat systems and photovoltaic panels. Fee proposals for these technologies can be obtained once a design has been finalised for planning purposes. These costs would form part of the final build cost at stage 6.</p>

**Edmonds Park Pavilion Construction - Future stages:**

It is probable that the Council will progress its Community Pavilion through stage 5 and into stage 6 in the coming financial year.

<p><b>Stage 5:</b> Specification and Tender £4500</p>	<p>During this stage, the architects will prepare a building specification for issue to tendering contractors along with drawings and information prepared by the rest of the Design Team.</p> <p>At this stage the detailed content design, such as floor finishes, decorations, built-in furniture, fixtures and fittings will be agreed, enabling contractors to price the work comprehensively and in true competition with one another.</p>
<p><b>Stage 6:</b> Construction Project Management 2.75% x net build cost (build cost before VAT)</p>	<p>he architects would administer the Building Contract on the Council’s behalf, including regular site inspections to monitor quality and content, chairing progress meetings, certifying when payments are due, handing over the building on Practical Completion with a schedule of any minor outstanding works or defects to be resolved, and agreement of the final account.</p>

Edmonds Park Splash pad.	Installation of splash park at Edmonds Park.	Councillors	Amber	The budget for 2021-20 was recommended, moving the £200,000 from 2020-21 to earmarked reserves.	
Ladygrove Sand Pit.	Installation of a sand pit with train feature at Ladygrove Park.	Officers	Amber	The sand pit was still to be commenced. It was noted that funds would be requested in the 2021-22 budget to complete this project.	
Tree planting in Didcot.		Officers	Amber	Cllr Wilson was to update the Committee, but this was not	

				done. It was noted that tree planting was best undertaken in November or March. This would return as a substantive item for consideration at the January 2021 meeting of the Committee.	
Community Transport (Cllr L Price).	A community Transport initiative for Didcot?	Officers and Councillors.	Amber	There was no progress to report, Cllr Price had been unable to attend due to Coronavirus restrictions and had not responded to requests for a video conference.	
Bus Shelter adoption.	Adopting bus shelters at Great Western Park (within Didcot Town's curtilage).	Officers	Amber	There was no progress to report, the matter being managed by Taylor Wimpy.	
Metal shelters in Edmonds Park	Installation of shelters for young people at Edmonds Park.	Councillors	Amber	There was no progress to report.	
Creation of 'wild' areas in each of the Town Council's parks		Councillors	Red	T Rudge confirmed that this would be investigated in the spring of 2021. Cllr Rouane asked for the matter to be on a future agenda for consideration.	

Changing the colour of the dog bins in the area to green		Officers	Amber	There was no progress to report as no bins had been replaced or new bins purchased in the intervening time.	
Completing the path on Stubbings Land		Councillors	Amber	The estimates received had put the works at a cost that would require the Council to put the work out to public tender.	
Paving 'desire lines' and widening footpaths in Ladygrove		Councillors	Amber	Cllr Davies reported that the request made to SODC to retain the surfaced desire path around recent road works had not been successful.	There has been little success in engaging SODC, as reported at the previous meeting in November 2020. To undertake this work DTC would need permission from the owners of the paths.
Implementing or improving the knowledge of recycling via Terracycle		Officers	Amber	There was no further progress to report.	Lockdown has effectively closed the Civic Hall for much of the civic year, footfall has dramatically reduced and the ability to publicise the location as a drop off point has been diminished by the need to keep visitor numbers at the Hall to a minimum.

Didcot Town Council

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## **Environment & Climate Committee**

18th January 2021

Report authors: Tony Rudge  
Robert Harris



## **Outdoor Services Manager Report**

### **Introduction**

1. This report asks the Committee to consider the items which have been re-evaluated and decide if these works are to be carried out.
2. Feedback on recent events within the report period and vandalism.

### **Recommendation**

3. That the Committee reviews the report, notes work completed and considers making a decision where required.

### **Allotments**

4. Car parking is being restricted on New Road, Mereland Road & Cockcroft sites due to wet ground conditions, notices have been erected to notify plot holders not to drive onto the sites.
5. Damage has been caused at Cockcroft where a vehicle delivering manure has left large ruts in the grass roadway, once weather improves this will need to be filled in and made safe.

## **Play Areas**

6. Play areas are currently open for use although this may change if government lockdown rules are changed. During the first lockdown Councils were instructed to close all play areas but the instruction currently is to close tennis courts and outside gyms but play areas can remain open as long as social distancing is observed. Signs are in place advising compliance with 2 metre spacing.
7. The large climbing frame at the junior play area in Edmonds Park has been totally removed. Parts were not available to repair this equipment and attempts to get parts made were unsuccessful, the equipment had been out of use since March 2020 and although fenced off children were constantly climbing the fencing and putting themselves in danger.

## **Cemetery**

8. Between 1<sup>st</sup> January & 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 the following burials have taken place  
31 Full Burials & 25 Cremated Remains burials.
9. Currently 30 mourners plus undertakers & bearers can attend graveside funerals

## **Edmonds Park**

10. Junior football returned briefly to Edmonds Park & Loyd Park in mid November but has been stopped again during the current lockdown.

## **Edmonds Park Pavillion**

11. The old building is currently fenced off for safety reasons. Demolition is being held up because we need to apply for Planning Permission both for the demolition and the placing of temporary changing facilities on the site. We had previously been informed that this was not necessary. We may also need to carry out a bat survey due to the location of the pavilion. The electricity supply has still not been removed due to problems with Opus Energy who have to remove the meter before SSE can disconnect the supply.

## **Ladygrove Park**

12. Work has been carried out on the field between the tennis courts and the skate park and it will now be possible to mark out 2 junior football pitches in this area. These pitches have not yet been allocated to any football club.

## **Events**

13. Hatwell Funfair have requested the following dates for 2021, these dates are subject to Government allowing funfairs to operate.

### **Ladygrove Park**

Arrive Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Open Friday 7<sup>th</sup>-Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May

Close Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup>-Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> for cleaning and assessment of safety measures

Open Thursday 13<sup>th</sup>-Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May

Leave Monday 17 May 2021

Total trading days = 8 - Income to DTC £2,000

### **Edmonds Park**

Arrive Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Open Friday 9<sup>th</sup>- Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July

Close Tuesday & Wednesday for deep cleaning and assessment of measures

Open Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>-Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July

Leave Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July

Total trading days = 8 – Income to DTC £2,000

## **Tree Works**

14. Oak Tree Edmonds Park – This tree was damaged during high winds on the 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020 when a large bough broke off, emergency works were carried out at the time to ensure tree was safe. The District Council's Tree Officer inspected the tree

and has allowed a reduction to take place and this work has now been undertaken at a cost of £525.

15. Oak Tree, Wheatfields, Stubbings Land. – This tree lost a bough on the 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020, emergency works were carried out to ensure broken branches were cleared away and the tree made safe. The District Council's tree officer inspected the tree and has allowed a reduction to take place and this work has now been completed at a cost of £1185. All Oak trees on Didcot Town Council parks have Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) and any pruning work has to be approved by the District Council's tree officer.

## **Staffing**

16. The outdoor services team are currently working reduced hours and some staff are self isolating due to either age or medical conditions. All essential works are being carried out by the team.



Didcot Town Council

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## **Environment & Climate Committee**

### **18<sup>th</sup> January 2021**



Report author: Tony Rudge

## **Ladygrove Lakes update report**

### **Introduction**

9. This report updates the Committee according to the terms of reference of the Ladygrove Lakes working group regarding the current problems with the lakes.

### **Recommendation**

10. That the Committee reviews the report, notes the ongoing work and recognises the present document as an interim report and considers making a decision where required.

### **Background & Update**

11. The large lake is looking much healthier and the water level is just below the overflow drainage pipe. This pipe has been blocked to prevent any water overflowing and being wasted, the lake bank is still 100mm above this pipe and can therefore take more water. The idea is to fill the lake to absolute capacity during the winter months, giving it a better chance when the weather warms up and evaporation takes place.
12. The boardwalk on the small lake has now been totally removed for Health & Safety reasons and the small lake remains fenced off to prevent public access.

13. A new company has now been approached to supply the solar aeration system, this follows problems with the previous companies who had both promised to carry out the works but have failed to hit deadlines and were both difficult to contact. The original quote was to supply 2 solar panels mounted on one of the existing islands with a compressor and storage battery that would give up to 8 hours aeration per day, the cost of this system would have been £7684.00p. It is my understanding that this system is no longer available in the UK.
14. The new system will operate from a floating island containing 6 solar panels these will connect to storage batteries to be placed on an existing island along with a compressor which will provide air to be pumped via weighted tubing along the bottom of the lake to 8 diffusers which will be spaced around the lake to give a good oxygen release.
15. Diffused Aeration System Floating
- 6no. Solar Panels
  - 2no. 24v battery banks
  - Lightning strike protection
  - Stainless Floating mounting platform
  - Battery low level shut off system
  - Compressor includes thermal overload motor protection
  - Heavy duty cooling fans for compressor enclosure
  - Stainless, lockable enclosure
  - Diffusers with stainless bases x 6
  - Tungsten sink tubing 16mm x 30m (8no.)
  - Full site installation
  - Total cost £17,173.88p + vat.
16. The Committee is asked to approve the funding for the new system, which could be partly funded from the existing Ladygrove Park & Lakes budget (£10,000 - 305 / 3165 & 3154) with the remaining £7,174 taken from the Ladygrove Lakes staging replacement budget 325 / 9056 which has not yet been tendered because the priority has been to improve the oxygen and water levels in the lakes before replacing the staging.
17. The calor gas generator which has been powering the surface aerator for the past 12 months has been stolen and currently no aeration is being carried out. The calor gas cylinders cost around £120 per week, £6240 per year.

Didcot Town Council

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## Environment & Climate Committee

18<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Report author: Tony Rudge



### Stubbings Land connection to Great Western Park (south)

1. The Environment & Climate Committee decided at its meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 to obtain costs for a tarmac path to run from the new entrance to the existing centre path.
2. Costs had been received for a gravel path with wooden edging boards but the committee rejected this option due to difficulties pushing wheelchairs or pushchairs across such a surface.
3. Estimates have been received for laying a path to the following specification:-
  - 120m length x 1.8m wide Bituminous base & surface course
  - 100mm deep subbase granular material
  - 240m Concrete edging kebs.

All 3 estimates have come in above £25,000 and therefore this project has been put out to tender on the Government contract finder with a closing date of the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

Didcot Town Council



## Environment Committee

### 18<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Report author: Guy Langton

# Bench installation on Council owned and controlled land

## Background

1. The Council has been contacted by residents of Didcot asking for more picnic benches to be provided for residents' use, given the ongoing restrictions related to the Coronavirus Pandemic.
2. Residents have asked if the Council could provide socially distanced picnic benches dotted at suitable social distance in the Council's parks and amenity land. Residents have noted that this would enable people to eat outside and not have to sit on grass. There do not seem to be any suitable benches in any of the public open spaces in the Town.
3. The Officer has visited some of the parks and it can be seen that there are few suitable benches of the type the residents describe

## Recommendation

4. The Committee consider the principle of installing picnic benches in various parks across the Town, as follows:
  - a. 3 at Edmonds Park, in the area between the playgrounds.
  - b. 3 at Ladygrove Park, within the fenced area.
  - c. 2 at Loyd Recreation Ground, within the fenced play area.
  - d. 1 at Smallbones Park, on the land to the east of the play area.

## Financial Implications

5. In the final quarter of the year, the outdoor services budgets have limited cost centres against which there remains enough money to fund benches. The Outdoor Services Manager has identified the funds below as available.

310/3156      Seats & Litterbins      £1,000

Bench installation on Council owned or controlled land

309/3149	Bark top up	£3,000 (the work can be carried out in April 21)
308/3154	Other Parks Maint.	£1,000

6. The installation could be undertaken by Council Outdoor Services Staff.
7. The cost of each bench is dependent on the quality. Volume manufacturers supply benches of varying qualities, but the Officer would recommend, if the decision is made to provide benches, then heavy-duty benches should be purchased. Cheaper benches would need to be considered disposable, lasting no more than one season. All benches would have a lead time of approximately 6 weeks.
8. The Officer also believes that the Council should provide benches that are accessible for wheelchair users.

The Officers favours recycled plastic benches, like the one on the right. This model is accessible for wheelchair users or for children in buggies to take a place at the table. The cost of these items is £465 each, soft ground fixing kits would be approx. £350 for 10 pairs. Delivery would incur a charge, assumed at approx. £175. All costs are subject to VAT.



Made completely from recycled plastic which does not rot, does not require staining or painting, does not fade and is very heavy. It doesn't feature the assistance arm rests. It is installed with direct to earth root fixings.



A alternative 2.4m softwood bench, supplied flat packed, of the type pictured to the left can be purchased for £358 (ex.VAT), plus delivery. Soft ground fixing kits would need to be sourced from another supplier, but cost in the region of £350 for 10 pairs.

9. All benches could have a small plaque attached, reading "Provided by Didcot Town Council", for example. The cost of this plaque would be approx. £55 in each case.
10. The Officer believes that the new piece of street furniture would have a minimal impact on the Council's insurance premium, there being an overall insured sum for 'street furniture'.

**Legal Implications**

11. Standing Order 98(a) provides the Environment & Climate Committee the authority to administer the Town Council Environment budget.

Bench installation on Council owned or controlled land

12. Financial Regulation 4 (Budgetary control and authority to spend) states that the Council's authority is needed for all items over £5,500; a duly delegated Committee's authority is needed for items over £1000; or the Clerk, in conjunction with the Leader, or Chair of the appropriate Committee, for any items below £1000. Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute.
13. The legal ownership or control of any proposed sites is Didcot Town Council.

**Risk Implications**

14. Any new furniture would have to be added to the Town Council asset register and insured (see para 8).



## Environment & Climate Committee

8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Report author: Guy Langton

### Metal detecting on Council-owned or controlled land

#### Introduction

1. This report asks the Committee to consider its response to requests from residents to metal-detect on Town Council-owned or controlled land.

#### Recommendation

2. That the Committee considers the report and decides:
  - a. What the intention of any policy on metal detecting should be
  - b. What level of control the Council may wish to exert over the activity
  - c. The level of any fee that may be payable, and
  - d. Any exclusions that may apply.

#### Background

3. Didcot Town Council has received requests for permission from individuals to carry out metal detecting on land owned, leased, or managed by the Town Council.

4. Local Authorities have the power to ban metal detecting and other activities using byelaws. In the absence of any such byelaws, or other specific restrictions, the Council needs to consider a policy to regulate requests for the activity.
5. The Officer has contacted all larger Parish and Town Council's in the County, receiving five responses, one confirming that the Council had a policy. The Officer also undertook a desk-based exercise to review the policies of fourteen other Councils across England, this included Parishes and Towns, and Boroughs and Districts.
6. In the case of all smaller (Parish or Town) authorities, policies that existed were the outcome of that Council receiving requests to use metal detecting equipment on the Council's land.
7. Of the fifteen policies reviewed, they all, without exception, controlled metal detecting on land for which they were responsible.
8. The level of control varied. At the most strictly controlled, Councils permit metal detecting only as part of an archaeological survey, associated with development, or an appropriate programme of academic research, for example.
9. Other Councils allow metal detecting to enable the recovery of lost personal items or to locate surface metal that could cause damage to machinery.
10. The Officer's research identified several potential problems with metal detecting on any land, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Damage to tree roots, plants, and wildlife.
  - b. Creation of trip hazards where land is disturbed and not correctly reinstated.
  - c. Loss of historic/archaeological information<sup>3</sup>:
    - i. Removal of artefacts from their original location
    - ii. Damage to related archaeological deposits

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<sup>3</sup> Any found object (portable antiquity) has its own archaeological significance and can tell us a little more about the historic and archaeological landscapes of the past, but this is only possible when objects are well provenanced and scientifically recorded.



- iii. Partial recovery of grouped artifacts by neglecting non-metal finds
- iv. Unreported discoveries leading to an accumulated loss of knowledge.

11. If metal detecting was permitted, it always required a permit. In all but one Council it limited in time and scope, and included a requirement to pay a fee (in some cases), provide the Council evidence of the individual's Public Liability Insurance (to a value of £10,000,000 (for any one incident)<sup>4</sup> and be accompanied by a member of Council staff to inspect the land for damage after the activity had occurred.

### **Financial Implications**

12. Damage to land may stop the Council gaining revenue from allowing other activities, such as team or individual sports or fairs from making use of the land.

### **Legal Implications**

13. The detail of ownership of any finds would need to be pursuant to the Treasure Act of 1996.

14. All treasure as defined by that Act and together with any artefacts including, amongst others, metal objects, worked flints, pottery and worked bone shall remain the property of the Council.

15. The rules and procedures as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 and accompanying guidance would need to be followed and complied with.

### **Risk Implications**

16. The Council risks damage to its land, which may create trip or other injury hazards and the commensurate insurance implications.

17. Damage to trees and other plants can result in an unanticipated cost to remove or maintain those trees and plants in the future.

18. Damage to land may cause damage to Council owned equipment.

Guy Langton

Planning & Environment Officer.

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<sup>4</sup> Advice may be sought from the National Council for Metal Detecting ([www.ncmd.co.uk](http://www.ncmd.co.uk))