

Notice of a meeting of the

Environment and Climate Committee

Monday 16th January 2023 at 7.30pm

All Saints Room, Civic Hall



Members of the Environment and Climate Committee are summoned to attend a meeting on Monday 16th January 2023 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.

Reports and minutes

We add reports and minutes to our website.

Recording, photographs, and filming

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

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

Public participation

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

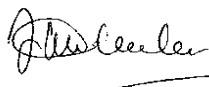
Please note that the wearing of masks both in the meeting and the communal areas in the Civic Hall is no longer mandatory. Please do not attend if you feel unwell.

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, please email the Planning and Environment Officer at

lblake@didcot.gov.uk

Agenda

1. To receive apologies
2. To received 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 21st November 2022 as a true and correct record (**attached**)
4. Questions on the minutes and review the progress report (**attached**)
5. To note the Outdoor Services Manager's Report (**attached**)
6. To consider the suggested Allotment Rental Charges for 2024-2025 (**attached**)
7. To consider the proposal from the Ladygrove Angling Association (**attached**)
8. To consider the re-installation of the hanging baskets report and the recommendations to the Committee (**attached**)
9. To consider the Millennium Woods signage report and recommendations to the Committee (**attached**)
10. To consider the Queen's Green Canopy report and recommendations to the Committee (**attached**)



Janet Wheeler
Town Clerk
10th January 2023

Voting members:

Cllr Axel Macdonald (Chair)
Cllr Celia Wilson (Vice Chair)
Cllr Marie Walsh
Cllr Phil Davies
Cllr Paul Giesberg
Cllr Alan Thompson
Cllr Anthony Hudson

Nominated Substitute Members

Cllr Denise Macdonald
Cllr Eleanor Hards
Cllr Amanda Sandiford
Cllr Bill Service
Cllr Dave Chandran

Didcot Town Council

Environment & Climate Committee Monday 21st November 2022 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:

A Macdonald (Chair)
C Wilson (Vice Chair)
A Hudson
P Giesberg
M Walsh
V Haval

Officers:

Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk)
Mr F Lamb (Outdoor Services Manager)

Others present:

Mike Piggford – Representative from the Lawn Tennis Association
2 members of the Fishing Association

27. To receive apologies.

Apologies were tendered from Cllrs A Thompson and P Davies.
Cllr V Haval substituted for Cllr P Davies.

28. To receive declarations of interests.

No declarations of interest were received.

29. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 16th May 2022.

It was proposed by Cllr A Macdonald, seconded by Cllr A Hudson, and **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting, and note them as such.

All members agreed.

Cllr A Macdonald proposed suspending standing orders to allow the attending representative from the LTA to address the Committee and to discuss agenda item 10 at this point.

All members agreed.

Mike Piggford, the representative from the LTA, addressed the Committee on the revised proposal for the tennis courts in Ladygrove. Two options were discussed which can be found below (taken from the Didcot Parks Tennis – investment proposal’ document which was made available to Committee members at the meeting):

“Option 1 - Partnership model

- *NTA provide complete venue management, including customer support, marketing and administration, while driving participation through a dual offer of coaching and venue hire.*
- *The Council receives all revenues from whatever venue access scheme it chooses (free access, pay & play and/or annual pass income).*
- *In return for operational venue management responsibilities, NTA would deliver a professional and community coaching programme, rent-free.*
- *The Council commits to ensuring the long-term maintenance and upkeep of the courts*
 - *General cleaning including power washing and moss killing when needed.*
 - *Resurface of the courts within 15 years of the completion of the funded works.*

Option 2 - Operator model

This was the previously proposed option which is still available should the council choose.

- *An Annual license fee is paid by NTA to the council, to cover the full sinking fund to make courts fully sustainable*
- *NTA provide complete venue management, including customer support, marketing, and administration, while driving participation through a dual offer of coaching and venue hire.*
- *Court bookings are available to players at an hourly pay and play rate (approx. £6/hr), with the option of a fixed price annual household pass for regular players which gives the household free bookings for the year (approx. £45 per annum).*
- *Specific times for reduced or free access can be provided.”*

The proposed funding for the courts in Ladygrove would be approximately £41,000 which would include resurfacing the three courts, replacing the nets and posts and the installation of a new 'smart' gate with online booking system.

When asked how people could 'book' a court if they did not have access to the internet, the representative informed the Committee that the NTA, who would be operating the courts, have a dedicated customer support team who would be contactable via telephone. Courts could be booked this way.

There were also questions regarding the VAT on the project as the funding would not cover this (approximately £8,000). The Town Clerk informed members that expert advice would need to be sought to clarify if the VAT claim could be dispersed over several years.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

30. To consider the revised proposal from the LTA and NTA for the tennis courts in Ladygrove

The Committee discussed the options in depth and considered them both, as well as whether Didcot Town Council could manage the courts 'in house' at Willowbrook.

Although some members were supportive in principle, some were also concerned over a long-term commitment and mentioned having a 'break clause' at 3-5 years should be considered.



The funding would be provided by the LTA as a national organisation whilst the NTA (a private company) would provide the coaching.


It was proposed by Cllr A Macdonald, seconded by Cllr P Giesberg, and **RESOLVED** to instruct Officers to gather more information on the options (to include costs to resurface the courts and manage in house and information on the VAT) and to arrange an Extra Ordinary meeting of the Environment and Climate Committee.

All members agreed.

31. Questions on the minutes and review the progress report.

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

Action	Responsible	Rating	Meeting 03.10.2022	Meeting 21.11.2022
Ladygrove Sandpit	Officers	Amber	<p>Work on the construction of the sandpit in Ladygrove started w/c 26th September 2022.</p> <p>The Huck Rotator Basket in Ladygrove had been repaired.</p>	<p>The Sandpit in Ladygrove had been completed:</p> 
Tidying up of the noticeboards	Officers	Amber	Due to staff shortages this had not been possible, but it was hoped this could be done in the coming months.	This was ongoing.
Wheelchair Inclusive Swing	Councillors & Officers	Green	<p>The matter was addressed in the Outdoor Services Manager's report.</p> <p>Work was due to start at the beginning of November.</p>	<p>The swing has been installed.</p>  <p>Signs would be installed, and the relevant RA written before the swing was officially opened.</p>
Jubilee- Trees	Councillors & Officers	Amber	TOE funding application had been approved, on the condition that SODC gave permission for the planting to proceed. Officers were still	SODC supplied DTC with an agreement which went before Full Council on 7 th November 2022. The trees had been ordered and would be planted asap.

			waiting on updates from SODC.	
Replacement trees in Edmonds Park	Officers	Amber	Investigations are on-going but a new order may be needed.	These had been ordered with the TOE application trees.
Shared cycle path additions to visible desired line in Ladygrove	Officers & Councillors	Amber	The OSM would investigate costings for the work at location 3 (E&C Minutes 21.03.2022).	This would be re-visited again in 2023 due to the departure of the OSM.
Wall at Broadway Allotments	Officers	Amber	Min.19 (9) it was agreed to repoint the roadside of the wall at a cost of £1,255.	The roadside wall along the Broadway allotments would be repointed 26 th -27 th November 2022.
Cableway Dismantling Inspections	Officers	Green		Dismantling Inspections were carried out and issues found, were fixed.
				The new zipwire in Ladygrove had been damaged, therefore the seat had been removed until the company could rectify it.
Cemetery Soil Box	St Birinus School	Green		Technology Technicians at St Birinus School made a beautiful wooden soil box for DTC to use when overseeing interments in the cemetery. 
St Annes Playground refurbishment	Officers & Councillors	Amber		The refurbishment to St Annes Playground was due to commence before Christmas.

32. To consider the Outdoor Services report

The Committee noted the Outdoor Services report.

4. New Road Allotments

The Committee noted the concerns regarding the burn dates at all sites and considered alternative options.

Although 'mulching' in future would be create an additional cost to the Council, it should be investigated.

It was **AGREED** to pass this to the Allotment Liaison Group to discuss at their next meeting.

11. 'Eat the Rainbow Border'

The Committee considered the proposal to construct a small, healthy eating border with raised beds and hanging baskets at the Civic Hall.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the proposal in principle.

12. Playgrounds

The Committee considered the OSM's recommendation to commit to annual disassembling inspections of the zip wires and the inspection schedule for the play areas, as listed below:

Site	Inspected	Annual Cost
Edmonds Park Junior	Quarterly	£320
Edmonds Park Northeast corner Gym	Biannually	£160
Edmonds Park Northwest corner Gym	Biannually	£160
Edmonds Park Teen Zone Outdoor Gym	Biannually	£160
Edmonds Park Teen Zone	Biennial cableway inspection and biannual operational	£311
Great Western Drive	Quarterly operational and biennial cableway disassembly inspection	£480
Ladygrove Park	Quarterly operational and biennial cableway disassembly inspection	£480
Ladygrove Skate Park	Biannually	£160
Loyd Recreation Ground	Quarterly operational and biennial cableway disassembly inspection	£480
Marsh Recreation Ground	Quarterly operational and biannual cableway disassembly inspection	£480
Smallbone Recreation Ground	Quarterly	£320
St Annes Playground	Quarterly	£320
Total		£3,391

It was proposed by Cllr A Macdonald and **RESOLVED** to accept the costs and instruct Active Play to progress with the inspections across all the sites, at a cost of £3,391.

All members agreed.

16. It was agreed to remove the red net from the teen zone in the new year.

19. Proposal from Style Acre

The Committee noted the proposal from Style Acre to position a container on Ladygrove that could house specially adapted bikes and trikes.

The Committee agreed the proposal in principle; however, they requested further investigations into the type of unit which would be required. The Committee considered possibly purchasing a unit and 'renting' it to Style Acre so it could be available to all residents to hire.

It was **AGREED** that once costings had been found for this project they would be sent to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to consider.

20. Boulders for Ladygrove and the Cricket Wicket

The Committee discussed the projects and the estimated costings of £40,000 for the boulders and £12,000 for the Cricket Wicket. They noted the boulders would be fairly vandal proof.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend these projects as a larger project for the development of Ladygrove to the Ladygrove Liaison Working Group to progress.

All members agreed.

23. Smallbones Recreation Ground fencing

The Committee decided to ask Officers to investigate various options of fencing for the recreation ground.

24. Ladygrove Lakes

The Committee heard that a lot of different types of fish were found in the lakes when they were 'netted' on 12th October 2022.

Progress on the purchase of a pump had stalled due to the legalities with permission to abstract the water. Initial talks with Thames Water had been positive. Planning permission would need to be applied for to install a pump at the lakes.

The OSM explained the next step would be consulting with an expert for quotes on installing a pump and progressing with the planning. He also mentioned the main priority would be the setting up the Ladygrove Lakes Working Group/Ladygrove Liaison Working Group to progress the project.

Cllr A Macdonald proposed suspending standing orders to allow the attending representatives from the Fishing Club to address the Committee.

All members agreed.

The representatives spoke of the urgent need to have the pump installed and the issue with the silt in the lakes. They suggested that local farmers may make use of the silt. The representatives also spoke of the need for toilets at the lake and they asked the Committee to consider allowing the bailiffs to sell day tickets at the lakes.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

The OSM explained he had received the toilet proposal and would forward to the Planning and Environment Officer.

The Chair asked the representatives to put the day ticket request into a proposal for the Committee to consider at a future meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the pump and the setting up of the Ladygrove Liaison Group.

All members agreed.

30. Queen's Green Canopy

The Committee noted that the trees ordered for the Queen's Green Canopy project would be delivered by 16th December.

33. Beech tree at the front of the Civic Hall

The OSM recommended ordering an established Red Oak tree to be planted alongside the Chestnut tree, so it would have time to mature before the Chestnut needed removing in the coming years.

All members agreed.

33. To consider the suggested budget for 2023-2024

The Committee discussed the suggested budget for 2023-2024.

It was noted that OCC land would only be cut once a year if DTC did not continue cutting it.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the suggested budget but to remove cost centre 3163 ('Sandpit and Train') as the maintenance could be incorporated into the general maintenance cost centre, 3154.

**34. To consider the vehicle access deterrents for Smallbone Recreation
Ground report and recommendations to the Committee**

The Committee considered the report and agreed that a combination of bunding and bollards should be considered.

Members also discussed the War Memorial and the option of improving and relocating it further onto the open green area to create more space, especially for Remembrance Day.

It was **AGREED** to allow Officers to investigate the improvement of the area as a bigger project and feedback to the Committee once more information had been obtained.

35. To consider applying to 'drop the kerb' on Park Road, to create a staff only access to the Outdoor Services Depot report and recommendations to the Committee

The Committee considered the report.

It was **RESOLVED** to progress with the dropped kerb application for Park Road to create a 'works vehicle only' access.

All members agreed.


36. To note the Edmonds Park Noticeboard update

The Committee noted the update.

The meeting closed at 21:30

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____

Action	Responsible	Rating	Meeting 21.11.2022	Meeting 16.01.2023
Tidying up of the noticeboards	Officers	Amber	Due to staff shortages this had not been possible, but it was hoped this could be done in the coming months.	This is ongoing.
Wheelchair Inclusive Swing	Councillors & Officers	Green	<p>The matter was addressed in the Outdoor Services Manager's report.</p> <p>Work was due to start at the beginning of November.</p>	<p>The swing has been installed.</p>  <p>Signs have been ordered, and the relevant RA have been written. Once the signs are delivered and installed the swing will be officially opened.</p>
Queens Green Canopy	Councillors & Officers	Amber	SODC supplied DTC with an agreement which went before Full Council on 7 th November 2022. The trees have now been ordered and will be planted asap.	This item is addressed in the OSM report.
Replacement trees in Edmonds Park	Officers	Amber	These have been ordered with the TOE application trees.	This item is addressed in the OSM report.
Shared cycle path additions to visible desired line in Ladygrove	Officers & Councillors	Amber	The OSM would investigate costings for the work at location 3 (E&C Minutes 21.03.2022).	To be re-visited again in 2023 due to the departure of the OSM.

Wall at Broadway Allotments	Officers	Amber	The roadside wall along the Broadway allotments was due to be repointed 26 th -27 th November 2022.	Re-pointing has been completed.
Cableway Dismantling Inspections	Officers	Green	The new zipwire in Ladygrove had been damaged, therefore the seat had been removed until the company could rectify it.	All sites have had their cableway dismantling inspections, except Ladygrove.
St Annes Playground refurbishment	Officers & Councillors	Amber	The refurbishment to St Annes Playground was due to commence before Christmas.	Work on the refurbishment is due to commence from 11 th January 2023.
Ladygrove Lake Pump	Officers & Councillors			Work is on-going.

Didcot Town Council

Environment and Climate Committee

16th January 2023 at 7.30pm

Report author: Mike Blake



Interim Outdoor Services Manager's Report

Introduction

1. This report updates the Committee on all matters regarding the Outdoor Services.

Recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to review the report, note any updates, and consider decisions and actions to be made, where required.

Allotments

3. All water has been turned off across all sites until the spring and signs have been put up to remind allotment tenants not to drive onto site.

New Road allotments

4. Most of the composting area has been mulched by Enviroplant. They are due to come back later on this month to finish mulching this site. Once this has been done, the team can then move all the mulch into the compost bays, cover the piles for a few months and it will be ready to use later this year either by the allotment holders, and/or the outdoor team.

Wantage Road allotment

5. A couple of small jobs were carried out before Christmas which were to do with an email that had been received regarding the security of the allotment. The lock has now been attached to the front gate and a new lock has been added to the back gate. The site has also had its annual delivery of leaves.
6. The main gate post has deteriorated and will need replacing. This will be done in house with an additional cost of £30 for the postcrete.
7. It was also brought to my attention that the site is having issues with people 'dumping' items over the fence, next to the Woodlands Health Centre.

Recommendation

8. The Committee should consider allowing the outdoor team to plant a new hedgerow, to deter this from happening again. Quotes are pending and will be made available to members via email, once received. Costs of this can be taken from cost centre 310/3150 'plants'.

Cockcroft allotments

9. It was reported that the main gate at the Cockcroft allotments had dropped and was scraping along the floor this was temporarily fixed before Christmas. The metal post needs realigning meaning that we will need to hire a breaker to get it out of the ground and we should only need 4 bags of postcrete to reset it. This can also be done in house.

The hire cost of a breaker is £80 for two days hire. Postcrete for this post will cost approximately £30.

Cemetery

10. There has been one full burial since the last meeting of the Environment and Climate Committee.

Parks General

11. We were late finishing the cutting this year, 'manpower' and the weather being the main reasons. Over the next couple of months, the team will need to get the hedge cutting and tree works completed. This will be made a lot easier with the purchase of a new chipper – as agreed by the F&GP Committee £16,000.

12. Although the Ability Swing has been installed and the risk assessments have been written, the Council are still waiting on the delivery of the signs for the park. Once they have been received and installed Didcot Town Council can organise an official 'opening' for the swing.

Edmonds Park

13. Two bird boxes, two bat boxes and two hedgehog houses have been installed in Edmonds Park:



14. Some play equipment will have to be removed as it is too dangerous to keep up. This includes the central red net in the senior's park which will only leave 3 pieces of play equipment left there.

In the junior side the fossil jams and the old sand wheel post will need to be removed as they are a hazard. The tennis courts have started to be cleaned 5/1/23 and should be completed by the end of the following week.

15. A request has been received by a resident asking the Town Council to install more benches in Edmonds Park so that those who need to can rest whilst out walking.

Recommendation

16. The Committee should consider:

- a) Whether to install a bench, and if so, how many
- b) What material the bench(es) should be made of

Ladygrove Lakes

17. The outdoor team spent a few days before Christmas breaking the first 2 meters of ice around both lakes, to deter people from attempting to cross them. Signs were also placed to inform visitors of the danger of attempting to cross the ice. We also spent time cutting and clearing some of the islands this work will resume when we get the chipper.

Smallbone area

18. There are two benches near to the War memorial which need replacing at a rough cost of £1,000, due to health and safety concerns. It is recommended to replace these with the same wooden bench that has recently been installed.

19. The three bins in the same area will need replacing. They are unsightly. It is recommended to replace these with double recycling bins, like those in the pictures below (the bins could have separate sections for recycling and general waste):



20. These style bins range from between £500-£800 each.

Recommendation

21. The Committee should consider the purchase of two new wooden benches, at a rough cost of £1,000 to come from cost centre 310/3168 'Street Furniture Maintenance'.

22. The Committee should also consider the purchase of three waste bins for the War Memorial area, to improve the aesthetics and allow visitors to area the option of recycling their waste. The rough cost of this would be between £1,500 - £2,400 and could come from cost centre

310/3168 'Street Furniture Maintenance'.

Events

Edmonds Park

23. Monday 13th February 2023 – Xplorer Event, 9.15am-1pm (including set up and clear down time)

SODC have requested this date to run their free family "Xplorer Orienteering" event in Edmonds Park. This would be attended by approximately 50 people, is open to all members of the public and is free to attend. These events have been running annually since 2017 and SODC have been able to hire the park free of charge each time.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider and approve this event.

24. Didcot Town Youth Football Tournament – 10th – 11th June 2023

Didcot Town Youth have requested this weekend in June to hold their annual football tournament. The request includes setting up from midday on 9th June 2023.

Two full days hire of the park will be £700.00 with additional charges for the toilet and/or changing block, if required.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider and approve this event and whether there would be a charge for the 'set up' time.

25. Didcot/Vauxhall Barracks Play & Activity Day 2023 – Saturday 24th June 2023, 9am – 4pm

The Oxfordshire Play Association wish to hold their free community event for children, young people, and their families on Saturday 24th June 2023.

The Oxfordshire Play Association (organisers) had informed Officers that they are not charged for this hire as it is a "charitable event delivered on a not-for-profit basis".

As of 1st April 2023, hire charges will be:

- Up to £300 – Hire per day – Charities

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider approving this event and decide if any charge applies.

26. Hatwell and William Amusements – 17th July – 31st July 2023

The Funfair has requested the dates as follows:

- Arrive Monday 17th July 2023
- Open Thursday 20th – Sunday 23rd July
- Close for three days
- Open Thursday 27th – Sunday 30th July
- Leave Monday 31st July 2023

Historically the Funfair has only been charged for the trading days.

Total of 8 trading days. Total income for the trading days = **£2,800** (new charge applies from 1st April 2023).

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider and approve this event.

27. Summer Fayre – ‘Ed Fest’

Didcot Town Council's Summer Fayre is booked for Saturday 5th August 2023.

Ladygrove Park

28. Didcot Festival of Transport – Sunday 14th May 2023

Although previously approved for Sunday 21st May, organisers of this event have requested a change of date.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider and approve the date change.

29. Hatwell and William Amusements – 2 dates in 2023

The Funfair has requested the following two dates to hold their fair in Ladygrove:

- Arrive Sunday 5th March 2023
- Open Thursday 9th – Sunday 12th March
- Close for three days

- Open Thursday 16th – Sunday 19th March
- Leave Monday 20th March 2023

Total of 8 trading days. Total income for the trading days = **£2,080** (2022-2023 charges apply to bookings before 1st April 2023).

- Arrive Sunday 1st October 2023
- Open Thursday 5th – Sunday 15th October
- Close for three days
- Open Thursday 12th – Sunday 15th October
- Leave Monday 16th October 2023

Total of 8 trading days. Total income for the trading days = **£2,800**.

The fair did question whether the new day charge for hire (from 1st April 2023) would be the same for Ladygrove as it is for Edmonds Park, due to the size difference. They were concerned it may not make the event in Ladygrove financially viable.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider these two sets of dates for the Funfair in Ladygrove.

Trees

Queen's Jubilee – Green Canopy

30. The Queen's Green Canopy planting was completed in December 2022, despite horrendous weather conditions.

It was hoped that the community could have been involved with the planting but due to the time restraint and weather conditions, risk assessments deemed it unsuitable.

It is hoped the community will become involved with the upkeep of the trees and hedgerows and 'green' community events will be organised for the area (see agenda item 10).

31. The completion paperwork for the TOE grant has been submitted and the Council waits the receipt of the funds.

32. A tree has been planted in Stubbings Land to replace the lost commemorative tree.

33. Three trees have been planted in Edmonds Park to replace the three which were lost in recent storms.

34. Four trees have been planted in and around the Civic Hall grounds.
35. There are four trees which will be planted near to the Outdoor Depot for the time being, until a specific site has been arranged for them to be planted in. This is to ensure they do not die.

Millenium Woods

36. All current debris will be 'chipped' once the new chipper has been delivered. The waste in the compound is due to be 'mulched' on Enviroplant's next visit.

Staffing

37. Two members of the outdoor team will be attending a Tree Inspection course on 17th January 2023.
38. Work on 'Richard's Memorial Garden' is due to start at the end of the month. This should include a seating area for up to eight people and will be located within the Civic Hall Garden.
39. All five members of the outdoor team will attend a one days Woodchipper course on 20th March 2023.

Didcot Town Council

Environment & Climate Committee 16th January 2023

Report author: Lucy Blake



To consider the suggested Allotment Rental charges for 2024-2025

Introduction

1. This report asks the Committee to consider the suggested allotment rent charges for 2024-2025.
2. Didcot Town Council sets allotment rents in advance. The rental charges for 2023-2024 have already been approved and will be:
 - a. £37 (£18.50 part) for non-Concessions
 - b. £25 (£12.50 part) for Concessions
3. It is suggested that the allotment rental charges for the 2024-2025 financial year, be as follows:
 - a. £39 (£19.50 part) for non-Concessions
 - b. £27 (13.50 part) for Concessions

Recommendation

4. The Committee approve these charges which would come into effect from 1st April 2024.

To consider the proposal from the Ladygrove Angling Association

To: Fred Lamb, Didcot Town, Outdoor Services Manager **From: Ladygrove Angling Association**

24 Oct 2022

20220924-Toilet_Block-Proposal-Ladygrove_AS-Official

Ladygrove Lakes Sanitation Facilities

Issue

1. Ladygrove lakes have no sanitation facilities onsite or within the immediate area. This is impacting the club and the environment leaving many anglers no option but to pack up early or relieve in the surrounding bushes. This proposal solves the problems that have been identified below.

Recommendations

Didcot Outdoor Services Manager is invited to consider and propose:

- a. **Didcot Town Council to build a toilet block to include suitable hand washing facilities and an access ramp for disabled users. Looking to start the build NLT April 2023.**
- b. **Ladygrove Fishing Association to install a permanent Portaloo NLT January 2023.**

Timing

2. **Routine.** A decision is required by NLT 30 December 2022 so that planning can commence. If this timing is delayed, it will negatively impact the construction timeline and affect our ability to complete the task prior to the 2023 season.

Background

3. **Context.** Ladygrove Lakes are an integral part of Didcot Town, they offer fishing for all ages whilst providing a natural area of beauty and habitat for wildlife. The lakes receive upwards of ten anglers per day and a substantial number of residents who come down to admire the wildlife. Currently there are no sanitation facilities on site or within the immediate area which is unpractical and unhygienic.

4. **Toilet block.** It is proposed that Didcot Town Council build a sanitation facility suitable for all users. Not only is this a much more hygienic option but it will prolong the duration in which anglers and guests can remain around the lakes. This could also become quite profitable for Didcot Town Council especially if access was charged. **Didcot Town Council to build a toilet block to include suitable hand washing facilities and an access ramp for disabled users. Looking to start the build NLT April 2023.**

5. **Portaloo.** It is proposed that Ladygrove Angling Association install a Portaloo as a means of relief for the anglers and guests, although an immediate solution to the problem it does have a few disadvantages. Such as: may not be disability friendly or able to withstand a high number of visitors. The maintenance/upkeep of the toilet will be controlled

To consider the proposal from the Ladygrove Angling Association by a local company and funded by Ladygrove Fishing Association. **Ladygrove Fishing Association to install a permanent Portaloo NLT January 2023.**

Summary

6. Ladygrove lakes requires a sanitation facility, without this amenity anglers and young children are having to relieve themselves onto the ground or into a bush. A toilet block solves this issue and shows that Didcot endorses good hygienic practices.

Environment and Climate Committee

16th January 2023

Report Author: Lucy Blake



Summer Hanging Baskets in Didcot proposal

Introduction

1. This report asks the Committee to consider re-instating the hanging baskets throughout the town.

Background

2. Back in 2018, Didcot Town Council maintained 64 hanging baskets at various sites cross the town. The work to maintain these was contracted out at a cost of £3,968.00. This equated to £62 per basket.



3. Hanging baskets are popular in many towns. For example, Wallingford, Wantage, Newbury, Witney, and Henley on Thames, all have hanging baskets.
 - *Wallingford Town Council offer residents the opportunity to sponsor a fully maintained basket in the town centre or in the riverside area.*
4. Hanging baskets provide a source of food and habitat for wildlife and insects as

well as an improved environment for the community. They improve overall air quality by filtering out pollutants.

Recommendations

5. The Committee should decide whether to recommend the re-installation of the hanging baskets, at a cost of £4,800 to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration.

Legal Implications

6. All conditions within any agreed contract would need to be adhered to. All items will always remain the property of the company and will be removed at the end of the contract period.

Financial Implications

7. The cost of the quote received amounts to £4,800 and includes:

- “The rental of **sixty-four** 450mm diameter traditional lined wire hanging baskets filled with fresh Window flowers compost and planted with a dense display of massed summer flowering plants, installed in late May/early June, and removed during late September/early October with full maintenance over the period

i.e. watering, feeding, spray-cleaning, pest, and disease control, picking over and free replacement of any plants dying prematurely or outgrowing their position in any display, but excluding any plants stolen or vandalised

Sixty-four at **£75.00** nett per basket

£4,800.00 nett”

Risk Implications

8. Potential benefits include:
 - Increase in Biodiversity
 - Improve community spirit
 - Creates a positive image

Potential negatives:

- An additional cost that has not been budgeted for

Didcot Town Council



Environment & Climate Committee

16th January 2023

Report author: Arek Guzinski

Millennium Woods Signage

Introduction

1. Following up from an incident earlier in the summer at the Millennium Woods, an action point was raised to review the design of the noticeboards located throughout the public space.
2. This report asks the Committee to consider the different materials, sizes, and looks of the signage and to explore any solution which will mitigate the risks of accidents.

Recommendation

3. The Committee should consider this report and decide:
 - a. The materials, size, and overall aesthetics of the new signs.
 - b. Whether or not to pursue involvement from any local artists with designing the new informational signage under the Section 106 scheme (Public Art funds), and whether to recommend the Council to apply for the scheme.
 - c. If a public consultation needs to be considered, as this report relates to a public space.

Background

4. Following up from an incident earlier in the summer at the Millennium Woods, an action point was raised to review the design of the noticeboards located throughout the public space.
5. A new design is to be agreed upon to refresh the area, as well as to mitigate any risks of ageing and damage. The signage must also be robust and withstand anti-social behaviour.
6. As the Didcot Town Council declared a climate emergency, sustainable solutions must be considered when agreeing on a design.
7. The previous design used for the noticeboards used only wood for the entire structure, including the posts and the frame in which the board was located in. While the structures have lasted a long time, they are slowly exhibiting signs of wear and tear due to weather conditions and ageing.



8. To comply with the need of more durable materials, the use of wood or any other materials susceptible to weather-induced wear and tear needs to be limited where possible. The design should also be structurally stable and should resist forces acting upon it.

9. The materials used should also not harm the environment around it, and where possible, should blend in or enhance the local landscape.
10. Where possible, locally sourced materials should be used as it will reduce the costs of transport and will feed back into the local economy.

Findings and proposals

11. A range of designs should be considered and discussed on the grounds of safety, sustainability, and aesthetics. Should wood still be the preferred material, all measures must be taken to maintain the structures and prevent rotting and ageing. The posts should be regularly inspected for damage and signs of wear and tear.
12. To improve the stability and longevity of the design, the use of ballast is recommended in the design, whether it be natural or artificial. This could be done by sinking metal or composite posts into the ground and covering them with materials such as concrete or sand. Another possible solution would be to sink the posts deeper into the ground to increase the amount of force needed to shift the structure. Ballast could also be mounted above ground to form a raised platform; however extra care needs to be taken to ensure that it does not pose any danger to the public.

Various ballasts can be sourced from local, small businesses, with the overall design of the post still having possible variations to minimise costs, such as a standard dual-post design, or the 'lectern' design used previously with different materials.



13. To comply with the idea of the signage blending in with the surroundings, the sign could be mounted to a boulder placed at the entrance to the woods, as a potential homage to “the ring”, a circular arrangement of boulders located at the centre of the woods.



The boulder should be of specific shape as to not pose a risk to the public (no sharp edges, no sticking out parts to reduce the risk of tripping), and will ideally have two flattened sides, one of which would be used to mount the sign onto. If a boulder is found that meets the criteria partially, it could be viable to partially sink the boulder into the ground.



14. To minimise the costs and the need for ballast, an A-style frame could be used and sunk deep into the soil. The design would include 4 posts, angled outwards from the centre of the sign, which would help increase the resistance to forces acting on the sign and minimise any movement caused, however the solution is bulky and potentially unsightly, as it requires more raw material which will be visible and therefore could impact the surrounding environment. The design should also not pose any hazards.

15. Should the sign be mounted via posts and ballast, the structure should be kept as light as possible, as heavy structures could cause more stress on the joints holding it together.

Legal Implications

16. The Town Council has the power and responsibility to provide and maintain its open spaces under the Open Spaces Act 1906.

Financial Implications

17. The costs of this project should be taken into consideration when deciding on the final proposal. The approximate estimates for different approaches are listed below:

- a) A lectern-style frame (to be sunk with ballast) - £280 to £1200 depending on style and material.
- b) Ballast needed – approximately £50 from local businesses.
- c) Boulder – Approximately £200-300 (excluding costs of masonry).

18. There would be extra costs included with contracting local artists to design and make any signage. These costs could be covered by S106 monies, should the Council resolve to apply for, and subsequently be granted the funds.

Didcot Town Council

Environment & Climate Committee 16th January 2023

Report author: Lucy Blake



The Queen's Green Canopy report and future projects for the site in Ladygrove

Introduction

1. Didcot Town Council was awarded a Trust for Oxfordshire' Environment grant for the planting of a Queen's Green Canopy project in Ladygrove.
2. This report updates the Committee on the planting and asks members to consider arranging future 'green' community projects on the site.

Recommendation

3. The Committee should consider this report and decide:
 - a. What green community projects the Town Council can arrange for the Queen's Green Canopy area in Ladygrove
 - Examples are:
 - Information days – explain to school children what trees have been planted, how to encourage them to grow, what wildlife will benefit from the planting
 - Insect/wildlife housing building events
 - Bulb planting
 - Joint ventures with groups such as Sustainable Didcot, Wildlife Café, local schools etc
 - b. To agree a budget for the projects
 - *It is recommended that the Committee consider a £1,000 budget for 'green' community events at Ladygrove to be taken from cost centre 101/1173 'Green Projects'*

To consider the Queen's Green Canopy report and future 'green' projects in Ladygrove

- c. To allow officers to organise and arrange these events with community groups and volunteers and to communicate these plans with the Committee via email – All events will be advertised on social media

Background

4. Didcot Town Council was awarded a grant from TOE in June 2022, with a contribution from Grundon Waste Management Ltd included in this sum, to go towards the cost of planting a Queen's Green Canopy in Ladygrove.
5. The amount was awarded on the condition that Didcot Town Council had agreement from SODC to plant here (due to Didcot Town Council leasing the land).
6. Permission was sought in May 2022 and the Town Council was eventually informed that an agreement would need to be drafted by SODC's legal team.
7. The agreement was finally sent to the Town Council at the end of October 2022, which delayed the planned planting. The Town Council was unable to prepare any plans or order the trees as officers were uncertain if the agreement would be granted.
8. Didcot Town Council resolved to sign the agreement at the meeting of full Council held on 7th November 2022, after which the OSM ordered the trees/whips. There were some concerns on availability at this time.
9. It was planned to invite community groups and volunteers to aide with the planting but due to the delay with the agreement, the unconfirmed delivery date and severe weather at the time, the outdoor team felt it was safer to carry out the planting without volunteers (*as per the risk assessment*) – *there were also concerns that the trees would not last until after Christmas to be planted, should the staff wait to organise a planting event.*
10. All the whips and trees in Ladygrove were planted by 21st December 2022. An official 'open' event will be arranged in January 2023.
11. Education is vital to aid the fight on climate change and the Committee should consider allowing officers to arrange 'green' community projects on the site, using the 'Green Projects' cost centre.
12. Officers have completed the required 'proof of expenditure claim form' for the grant and a poster to advertise what was done, which has been sent to TOE for their approval prior to advertising on social media (the Town Council was asked to run any text relating to the project by TOE and to include both TOE's and Grundon's logo on the poster).

To consider the Queen's Green Canopy report and future 'green' projects in Ladygrove

Legal Implications

13. Any organised activity involving volunteers will need an individual risk assessment written up by the Town Council and plans for each of the days/events.
14. Any children attending the events will need to be supervised. If local schools and community groups attend, the Town Council will need copies of their own safeguarding policy and risk assessments.

Financial Implications

15. Financial Regulations 4.1 state:

"Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- *The Council for all items over £5,500.*
- *A duly delegated Committee of the Council for items over £1000.*
- *The Clerk in conjunction with the Leader or Chair of the appropriate Committee for any items below £1000.*

16. There would be costs involved with purchasing equipment to make things, such as the insect/wildlife hotels, although a lot of the equipment could be recycled from the allotment sites and/or Millenium Woods.

- *One way to gain more materials is by organising a 'material gathering' event around Ladygrove prior to making the wildlife houses. Volunteers could go foraging for recyclable materials and then meet on the green in Ladygrove to see what it is they have found and how they can use it*

17. There would be costs involved with staff manning these events, but if they were to be arranged for Monday-Friday, there would be no extra costs as it would be incorporated with their normal salary.

To ensure that the projects are not wholly reliant on office/outdoor staff (and thus taking them away from what they would usually be working on) the events could be arranged for 'half term' and casual staff could be used – there would be additional staffing costs for this.

Risk Implications

18. As has been the case with the planting, severe weather conditions could become a risk implication and the events may very well need to be cancelled/postponed.

To consider the Queen's Green Canopy report and future 'green' projects in Ladygrove

19. Community involvement could pose a risk if not adequately advertised and all relevant risk assessments will need to be in place.

The Queen's Green Canopy planting - Ladygrove

