

Notice of a meeting of the

Environment and Climate Committee
Monday 13th November 2023 at 7.30pm
All Saints Room, Civic Hall



Members of the Environment and Climate Committee are summoned to attend a meeting on Monday 13th November 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).

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 Deputy Town Clerk at lblake@didcot.gov.uk

Agenda

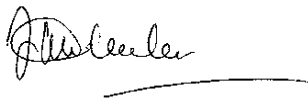
1. To receive apologies
2. To receive declarations of interests
Members are reminded to declare any interests they may have on any item on this agenda in accordance with Didcot Town Council's Code of Conduct
3. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2023 as a true and correct record **(attached)**
4. Questions on the minutes and review the progress report **(attached)**
5. To note the External Income and Expenditure to date for external works, as updated on 6th November 2023 **(attached)**
6. To note the Outdoor Services Manager's report and recommendations to the Committee **(attached)**
7. To consider the future of the Ford Ranger vehicle report and the recommendations to the Committee **(attached)**
8. To consider the second round of budget considerations for the 2024-2025 financial year
9. To consider the charges of the Funfair events in Didcot, and the recommendations to the Committee **(attached)**
10. To consider the Football Club usage agreement updates and recommendations to the Committee **(attached)**
11. To consider the suggested annual charges for 2024-2025 **(attached)**
12. To consider the suggested budget for 2024-2025 and the recommendations to the Committee **(to follow)**
13. To consider the resident request of installing bollards/barriers at the entrance to Stubbings Land from Bluebell Lane – Cllr A Hudson
14. To consider the costs for the cleaning of the Town Council owned bus shelters in Didcot report and the recommendations to the Committee **(attached)**
15. To note the draft meeting notes from the Ladygrove Management Working Group meeting held on 21st September 2023 and the site visit on 12th October 2023 **(attached)**
16. To note the draft meeting notes from the Allotment Liaison Group meeting held on 21st September 2023, and consider any recommendations to the Committee **(attached)**

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 the committee will be asked to exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

17. To note the incident in Ladygrove Park

18. To consider the request from an allotment tenant



Janet Wheeler
Town Clerk
7th November 2023

Voting members:

Cllr Gavin Roberts (Chair)
Cllr Kelly Morrison (Deputy Chair)
Cllr Stephen Cole
Cllr Andrew Jones
Cllr Anthony Hudson
Cllr James Broadbent
Cllr Luke Hislop

Nominated Substitute Members:

Cllr Chris Jennings
Cllr David Aragao
Cllr Hugh Macdonald
Cllr Zia Mohammed
Cllr Denise Macdonald
Cllr Mocky Khan
Cllr George Ryall

Didcot Town Council

Environment & Climate Committee
Monday 11th September 2023 at 7.30pm
All Saints Room, Civic Hall



DRAFT Minutes

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

PRESENT

Councillors:

Cllr G Roberts (Chair)
Cllr K Morrison (Deputy Chair)
Cllr A Hudson
Cllr S Cole
Cllr A Jones
Cllr L Hislop
Cllr D Macdonald

Officers:

Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk)
Mrs L Blake (Deputy Town Clerk [minutes])
Mr M Blake (Outdoor Services Manager - OSM)

One member of the public attended.

23. To receive apologies

Apologies were tendered from Cllr J Broadbent. Cllr D Macdonald substituted.

24. To receive declarations of interest

Cllr D Macdonald informed the Committee that she was part of the Edfest organisation team and would therefore refrain from voting on agenda item 10 – To consider the report on Hatwell's Funfair event charges.

No other declarations were received.

25. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2023 as a true and correct record

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

All members agreed.

26. Questions on the minutes and review the progress report

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


Cllr K Morrison asked that a colour 'key' be added to the progress report. This would be done.

Cllr G Roberts enquired as to the progress of the Sow and Grow project. The OSM informed members that work to construct the polytunnel and access paths would commence during October.

Cllr A Jones asked about the hemlock on the mounds and was informed that this had been treated and cut down. The hemlock would be routinely treated by the Outdoor Team in the coming months in the hope that this would be eradicated.

It was also confirmed that SODC had fixed the drain cover on Tyne Avenue.

There were no other questions.

Action	Responsible	Rating	Meeting 10.07.2023	Meeting 11.09.2023
Tidying up of the noticeboards	Officers	Amber	This would be carried out throughout the summer.	Due to staffing issues and holidays, work on tidying up the boards had stalled.
Shared cycle path additions to visible desired line in Ladygrove	Officers & Councillors	Amber	Investigations to this had stalled due to work loads.	The Ladygrove Management Working Group would discuss this during their meetings and therefore this item would be removed from the progress report.
Ladygrove Lake Pump	Officers & Councillors	Amber	Ladygrove Management Group would have their initial meeting.	First meeting was held on 3 rd August 2023. Notes of the meeting were on the agenda for noting. The Ladygrove Management Working Group would discuss this and therefore this item would be removed from the progress report.
Millennium Woods signs	Officers	Green	An update on this was covered in the OSM report.	 <p>All three signs were installed by 24th July 2023.</p>
Reducing the Oak tree and felling the Pine at Cockcroft allotments	Officers	Amber	Work would commence later in the year.	This had been completed.
Graffiti Project at the Skatepark	Officers & Councillors	Amber	Investigations were on going.	This project had stalled due to concerns regarding making the artwork safe to skate on. More investigations would be needed and would be taken up by the Ladygrove Management Working Group.

				Therefore this item would be removed from the progress report.
Investigate installing a bench at the bus stop on Wantage Road	Officers	Amber	OCC had agreed that a bench could be located in Wantage Road. Officers were waiting on quotes for this.	This item was on the agenda for consideration.
Smokefree play park signs	Officers	Amber	Six local primary schools were emailed on 12.06.2023, two expressed interest in being involved – would make sense to start the project at the beginning of the next academic year (September 2023).	This project would be re-visited once schools had settled back in after the summer break.
'Sow & Grow' – Community Planting project at New Road allotments	Officers	Amber	Application was submitted 09.06.2023 – Closing date was 30 th June 2023.	Officers were informed that the application was successful on 25 th July 2023. Funds were received on 11 th August 2023. Purchases had been made for some of the equipment. Local companies had been contacted for donations of materials to aid the project. The polytunnel was delivered on 1 st September 2023 and work to construct the site would commence in October.

27. To note the External Income and Expenditure to date for external works, as updated on 5th September 2023

The Committee noted the updated figures, as of 5th September 2023, presented to them at the meeting.

Cllr G Robert enquired as to why cost centre 301/3154 was over budget. The OSM could not recall why this was the case but agreed to investigate this.

- *It was noted after the meeting that the purchase of the new electric tools had been added incorrectly to this cost centre. This would be amended before the next meeting.*

Members questioned why cost centre 306/3151 (Water charges at Loyd Rec) was over budget. The Town Clerk explained that a lot of utility bills were estimated, and it would be beneficial to only look at utility cost centres six months into the financial year and towards the end, to get a more accurate idea of the spending.

310/3150 'Plants' cost centre was questioned as to why the budget was overspent. It was explained that the cost of the town's hanging baskets had been taken from this cost centre, as it was not previously budgeted for, but would be moved to the 'Community Projects' cost centre.

It was confirmed that the business rates for the cemetery was £848 last financial year.

The OSM explained that the income generated from the sale of the fishing permits had been paid into the Town Council's account and would show on the income and expenditure balance sheet at the next meeting.

- *The amount paid into the Town Council's account, which cleared on 8th September 2023, was £2,625.*

28. To consider the Outdoor Services Manager's report

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

Allotments - General

7. The Committee was asked to consider whether to implement a concession charge for the additional strimming and spraying charges for allotment tenants. The OSM explained that offering these ad hoc services was a challenge for the outdoor team.

It was proposed by Cllr S Cole, seconded by Cllr A Jones, and **RESOLVED** to defer this item to the next agenda. All members agreed.

The Town Clerk advised that the Committee review the service charges at the end of the current financial year.

17. Treating the Japanese Knotweed at Cockcroft allotment sites was discussed. The OSM and another member of the outdoor team are PA1 and PA6 qualified and could carry out the treatment of the weed without the need of contracting an outside company.

It was proposed by Cllr S Cole, seconded by Cllr A Hudson, and **RESOLVED** to instruct the OSM and his team to treat the weed on the allotment site.

All members agreed.

The Committee discussed the dismantling annual inspection of all zip wires, the servicing of all roundabouts and the repairs to the cargo net at Loyd Rec. It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and **RESOLVED** to:

- 29. Approve the zip wire inspections at a combined cost of £1,732.50, to be taken from cost centre 309/3153 'Play Equipment Maintenance'
- 31. Approve the servicing of all roundabouts at a cost of £1,487.50, to be taken from cost centre 309/3153 'Play Equipment Maintenance'
- 34. Approve the cargo net repair at Loyd Rec at a cost of £1,823, to be taken from cost centre 309/3153 'Play Equipment Maintenance'

Vita Play would carry out this work.

All members agreed.

Smallbone Rec

38. The Committee discussed the quote to repair the surfacing of the roundabout in Smallbone Rec. Sutcliffe Play, who had installed the equipment, were contacted regarding this but confirmed that the Town Council was out of warranty. They did state that a company representative could meet with the OSM to discuss options.

The decision on this item was deferred until a meeting with Sutcliffe Play could be arranged.

Ladygrove Park

47. The Committee considered the two quotes to replace the gates and the springy.

It was proposed by Cllr D Macdonald, seconded by Cllr G Roberts, and **RESOLVED** to accept the £3,851 (£1,925.50 for each gate) quote to replace the two gates at the park, using Vita Play but to defer the replacement of the springy. The Committee wanted the OSM to investigate whether re-setting the springy would be a better alternative to replacement.

All members agreed.

Marsh Rec

50. It was proposed by Cllr G Roberts, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and **RESOLVED** to approve the quotes to fix the safety surfacing around the roundabout and to install a new gate, for a combined total of £2,262.50 – to be taken from cost centre 309/3153 'Play Equipment Maintenance'.

All members agreed.

Events

A late events application had been received following the publication of the agenda. Elite Youth Sports wanted to book football pitches at Edmonds Park for a school tournament on Thursday 12th October 2023 12-3.30pm, and Thursday 7th December 2023 12-3.30pm. They also wanted to hire the toilet block.

The Committee considered the application. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the dates of the event and the use of the toilet block. The toilet block would be charged at £20 per day.

All members agreed.

29. To consider the first round of budget considerations for the 2024-2025 financial year

The Town Clerk explained the process of the first-round considerations; the Committee were to think of future large projects they wanted the Council to consider. Cllr D Macdonald suggested that improvements to the Ladygrove area should be considered, whilst improvements to the play areas in Edmonds Park were also suggested.

Cllr K Morrison suggested teen provisions be considered for both Ladygrove and Edmonds Park. The Town Clerk informed members that s106 monies had been 'put aside' for the Council to use solely on teen play provisions specifically at Edmonds Park.

Any further ideas for future projects were to be received by Cllr G Roberts, ideally before the 26th September 2023 (the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee).

All members agreed.

30. To note that an application for a Fisheries Improvement Programme Grant had been submitted.

The Committee noted that the application was submitted on 31st August 2023. The outcome of this application would be decided on by the end of October 2023.

31. To consider the report on bench options for a bus stop on Wantage Road, Didcot and the recommendations to the Committee

Members discussed the quotes for the two bench options. The fact that traffic management could potentially be needed was a concern, as was the cost.

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and **RESOLVED** to defer the item to the end of the financial year and to investigate funding options.

All members agreed.

32. To consider the report on Hatwell's Funfair event charges and the recommendations to the Committee

The Committee discussed the report and noted the fact that Hatwells had supplied Didcot with a funfair for approximately 41 years. They were keen to support the fair where possible.

Some concerns were raised regarding Hatwells application for dates in 2024 at Edmonds Park, due to the conflict with Edfest. Cllr L Hislop suggested that the Edfest Working Group consider the situation at their next meeting and investigate a potential compromise.

It was proposed by Cllr G Roberts, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and **RESOLVED** to charge Hatwells £260 per trading day, for the event in Ladygrove in October 2023.

The subject on future charges and the confliction in dates would be discussed by the Environment and Climate Committee after the next Edfest Working Group meeting.

All members agreed.

33. To note the draft meeting notes from the Ladygrove Management Working Group meeting held on 3rd August 2023

The Committee noted the draft meeting notes from the Ladygrove Management Working Group meeting. There were no recommendations to the Committee, other

than to approve an application for a Fisheries Improvement Grant, which had been consulted on via email due to the closing date.

The OSM confirmed that repairs to the aerator had been completed and it was working at full capacity.

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

34. To consider the report on the Cemetery charges and the recommendations to the Committee

The Committee considered the report and the confidential statement from a Didcot resident.

It was proposed by Cllr G Roberts, seconded by Cllr S Cole, and **RESOLVED** to approve a refund of £450 and to consider each enquiry into non-resident charges on a case-by-case basis.

It was also **RESOLVED** to re-instate the Cemetery Working Group to investigate future cemetery rules and charges.

All members agreed.

The meeting closed at 21.10

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____

Environment & Climate Committee Meeting 13.11.2023
Agenda Item 4- Progress Report

Action	Responsible	Rating	Meeting 11.09.2023	Meeting 13.11.2023
Tidying up of the noticeboards	Officers	Amber	Due to staffing issues and holidays, work on tidying up the boards had stalled.	
Investigate installing a bench at the bus stop on Wantage Road	Officers	Amber	The Committee resolved to defer this item until the end of the financial year.	DEFERRED UNTIL END OF FINANCIAL YEAR.
Smokefree play park signs	Officers	Amber	This project would be re-visited once schools had settled back in after the summer break.	One of the new Estate Officers will pick this project up once they have settled into their new role.
'Sow & Grow' – Community Planting project at New Road allotments	Officers	Amber	Officers were informed that the application was successful on 25 th July 2023. Funds were received on 11 th August 2023. Purchases have been made for some of the equipment. Local companies have been contacted for donations of materials to aid this project. The polytunnel was delivered on 1 st September 2023 and work to construct the site would commence shortly.	Work on preparing the ground for the installation of the polytunnel will start on w/c 27 th November 2023. It is hoped the groundwork will be fully completed by the end of the year.
Fisheries Improvement Grant	Officers	Green	Application was submitted on 31 st August 2023.	Members were informed that the application was successful on 19 th October 2023. All testing equipment, the oxygen meter and generator have been purchased and received.
Zip wire inspections	Officers	Green	The inspections were approved.	All inspections carried out and completed. Redmedial work will be needed on some – awaiting quotes

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 07/11/2023

Month No: 7

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
301 External Works-Central Costs							
3101 Salaries - Works	183,900	121,163	232,000	110,837		110,837	52.2%
3102 Salaries - Works Er's NI	16,994	11,120	16,800	5,680		5,680	66.2%
3103 Salaries - Works Er's Superann	36,469	26,293	36,100	9,807		9,807	72.8%
3104 Events Staffing	0	0	2,200	2,200		2,200	0.0%
3105 Agency Staffing	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%
3108 Staff Travel	1,189	918	2,370	1,452		1,452	38.7%
3120 Protective Clothing	1,318	1,057	2,000	943		943	52.9%
3124 Telephone-Works	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%
3127 Subscriptions	100	55	150	95		95	36.7%
3140 Vehicle Insurance	2,993	0	2,932	2,932		2,932	0.0%
3141 Vehicle Fuel	7,898	3,741	6,000	2,259		2,259	62.3%
3144 Equipment & Small Tools	0	14	0	(14)		(14)	0.0%
3145 Machinery Costs	3,307	3,366	10,000	6,634		6,634	33.7%
3154 Maintenance	3,668	1,217	2,000	783		783	60.9%
9034 Ford Ranger Pick Up	3,229	2,143	3,863	1,720		1,720	55.5%
9039 Ransomes HR300 Rotary	6,332	3,397	5,110	1,713		1,713	66.5%
9045 Ransomes Parkway 3	3,814	1,539	1,200	(339)		(339)	128.3%
9062 John Deere Gator	7,123	2,992	2,000	(992)		(992)	149.6%
9063 ALKE ATX 340 ED	3,552	285	1,000	715		715	28.5%
99160 Tfr from EMR Grounds Equip	(350)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
External Works-Central Costs :- Indirect Expenditure	281,537	179,299	327,725	148,426	0	148,426	54.7%
Net Expenditure	(281,537)	(179,299)	(327,725)	(148,426)			
302 Allotments							
3282 Allotment Rents	13,327	15,511	14,500	(1,011)			107.0%
32581 Grant Received	0	1,000	0	(1,000)			0.0%
Allotments :- Income	13,327	16,511	14,500	(2,011)			113.9%
3151 Water Charges	4,037	1,215	2,500	1,285		1,285	48.6%
3154 Maintenance	1,364	0	0	0		0	0.0%
3233 Allotment Competition	150	0	350	350		350	0.0%
3244 Allotment Maintenance	3,694	1,231	4,000	2,769		2,769	30.8%
3250 Allotment -Polytunnel	0	1,800	0	(1,800)		(1,800)	0.0%
Allotments :- Indirect Expenditure	9,245	4,246	6,850	2,604	0	2,604	62.0%
Net Income over Expenditure	4,082	12,264	7,650	(4,614)			

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 07/11/2023

Month No: 7

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
303 Cemetery							
3383 Cemetery Fees	18,070	14,890	18,000	3,110			82.7%
Cemetery :- Income	18,070	14,890	18,000	3,110			82.7%
3151 Water Charges	172	9	1,000	991		991	0.9%
3154 Maintenance	583	2,210	0	(2,210)		(2,210)	0.0%
3340 Rates - Cemetery	848	905	600	(305)		(305)	150.9%
99121 Tfr from EMR Cemetery Fund	(150)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
Cemetery :- Indirect Expenditure	1,454	3,124	1,600	(1,524)	0	(1,524)	195.2%
Net Income over Expenditure	16,616	11,767	16,400	4,634			
304 Edmonds Park							
3151 Water Charges	148	860	1,200	340		340	71.7%
3152 Electricity	972	1,339	1,800	461		461	74.4%
3154 Maintenance	11,087	6,305	10,000	3,695		3,695	63.0%
3155 Security	5,878	776	6,000	5,224		5,224	12.9%
3170 Waste Recycling	8,252	4,250	9,500	5,250		5,250	44.7%
3387 Pre-fab Toilets	19,531	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99137 Tfr from EMR Pre-Fab Toilet	(8,378)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
Edmonds Park :- Indirect Expenditure	37,491	13,530	28,500	14,970	0	14,970	47.5%
Net Expenditure	(37,491)	(13,530)	(28,500)	(14,970)			
305 Ladygrove Park							
3183 Lady Grove Park Income	4,602	200	3,000	2,800			6.7%
3185 Ladygrove Lakes Income	3,429	2,188	3,000	813			72.9%
Ladygrove Park :- Income	8,031	2,388	6,000	3,613			39.8%
3152 Electricity	0	(43)	0	43		43	0.0%
3154 Maintenance	7,563	7,247	7,000	(247)		(247)	103.5%
3163 Sandpit & Train	5,185	0	0	0		0	0.0%
3165 Ladygrove Lakes	9,249	7,459	0	(7,459)		(7,459)	0.0%
99025 Tfr to EMR Ladygrove Park	182	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99124 Tfr from EMR Ladygrove Lakes	(4,754)	(3,328)	0	3,328		3,328	0.0%
99126 Tfr from EMR L'grove Staging	0	(1,800)	0	1,800		1,800	0.0%
Ladygrove Park :- Indirect Expenditure	17,425	9,534	7,000	(2,534)	0	(2,534)	136.2%
Net Income over Expenditure	(9,394)	(7,146)	(1,000)	6,146			

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 07/11/2023

Month No: 7

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
306 Loyd Park							
1195 Miscellaneous Income	10	0	0	0			0.0%
Loyd Park :- Income	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>			
3151 Water Charges	(314)	(1,324)	550	1,874	1,874	(240.7%)	
3152 Electricity	462	141	350	209	209	40.3%	
3154 Maintenance	3,301	44,046	0	(44,046)	(44,046)	0.0%	
99120 Tfr from EMR Building Repair	0	(43,450)	0	43,450	43,450	0.0%	
99138 Tfr from EMR Play Areas	(1,246)	0	0	0	0	0.0%	
Loyd Park :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>2,203</u>	<u>(587)</u>	<u>900</u>	<u>1,487</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,487</u>	<u>(65.2%)</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(2,193)</u>	<u>587</u>	<u>(900)</u>	<u>(1,487)</u>			
308 Other Parks & Recreation Areas							
3179 Carbon Return Income	0	2	0	(2)			0.0%
Other Parks & Recreation Areas :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(2)</u>			
3154 Maintenance	22,729	1,426	5,500	4,074	4,074	25.9%	
3166 Millennium Wood Upkeep	514	2,985	3,000	15	15	99.5%	
99134 Tfr from EMR Community Project	(3,695)	0	0	0	0	0.0%	
Other Parks & Recreation Areas :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>19,548</u>	<u>4,411</u>	<u>8,500</u>	<u>4,089</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,089</u>	<u>51.9%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(19,548)</u>	<u>(4,409)</u>	<u>(8,500)</u>	<u>(4,091)</u>			
309 Play Areas							
3149 Bark Top-up	2,084	1,033	3,000	1,967	1,967	34.4%	
3153 Play Equipment Maintenance	29,357	18,299	25,000	6,701	6,701	73.2%	
99128 Tfr from EMR CiL	(7,132)	0	0	0	0	0.0%	
99134 Tfr from EMR Community Project	(3,287)	0	0	0	0	0.0%	
99138 Tfr from EMR Play Areas	(11,647)	0	0	0	0	0.0%	
Play Areas :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>9,374</u>	<u>19,332</u>	<u>28,000</u>	<u>8,668</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8,668</u>	<u>69.0%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(9,374)</u>	<u>(19,332)</u>	<u>(28,000)</u>	<u>(8,668)</u>			
310 Environmental Services							
1183 Bowls Club Rent	0	0	50	50			0.0%
3180 Sports Hire	4,130	5,190	4,000	(1,190)			129.8%
3184 Funfair Hires	2,000	2,080	4,000	1,920			52.0%
3198 Bus Shelter Advertising Income	10,000	0	10,000	10,000			0.0%
Environmental Services :- Income	<u>16,130</u>	<u>7,270</u>	<u>18,050</u>	<u>10,780</u>			<u>40.3%</u>

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 07/11/2023

Month No: 7

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
3148 Bus Shelter Contract	10,000	0	10,000	10,000		10,000	0.0%
3150 Plants	580	5,311	1,000	(4,311)		(4,311)	531.1%
3157 Dog Fouling Clean-up Service	2,912	1,941	3,100	1,159		1,159	62.6%
3158 Trees	6,135	300	8,500	8,200		8,200	3.5%
3159 Grass Cutting	34,960	0	0	0		0	0.0%
3162 Football pitch maintenance	2,687	2,715	8,000	5,285		5,285	33.9%
3168 Street Furniture Maintenance	2,147	3,390	3,000	(390)		(390)	113.0%
99134 Tfr from EMR Community Project	0	(7,000)	0	7,000		7,000	0.0%
99135 Tfr from EMR Bus Shelt/Street	(815)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
Environmental Services :- Indirect Expenditure	58,606	6,657	33,600	26,943	0	26,943	19.8%
Net Income over Expenditure	(42,476)	613	(15,550)	(16,163)			
325 Projects							
32587 CIL Income	12,097	3,751	0	(3,751)			0.0%
90005 Edmonds Park	240	0	0	0			0.0%
Projects :- Income	12,337	3,751	0	(3,751)			
3162 Football pitch maintenance	1,792	0	0	0		0	0.0%
9031 Tree Management - Contract	0	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	0.0%
9050 Play Equipment St Annes	15,603	0	0	0		0	0.0%
9051 MemorialWW1 Commemorative Seat	499	0	0	0		0	0.0%
9059 Bus shelters	0	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	0.0%
32518 Edmonds Park	(80)	(700)	0	700		700	0.0%
32525 Pavilion build	158,425	7,680	0	(7,680)		(7,680)	0.0%
32591 Skatepark Refurbishment	772	0	0	0		0	0.0%
32599 Splash Park	7,585	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99028 Tfr to EMR CiL	181,383	3,751	0	(3,751)		(3,751)	0.0%
99123 Tfr from EMR Skatepark	(772)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99127 Tfr from EMR Building Proj Fee	(10,800)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99134 Tfr from EMR Community Project	(10,603)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99138 Tfr from EMR Play Areas	(5,000)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99152 Tfr from EMR Pavilions	(4,300)	(1,953)	0	1,953		1,953	0.0%
99154 Tfr from EMR Rolling Budgets	(13,866)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
Projects :- Indirect Expenditure	320,637	8,778	10,000	1,222	0	1,222	87.8%
Net Income over Expenditure	(308,300)	(5,027)	(10,000)	(4,974)			
Grand Totals:- Income	67,905	44,812	56,550	11,739			79.2%
Expenditure	757,521	248,324	452,675	204,351	0	204,351	54.9%
Net Income over Expenditure	(689,616)	(203,513)	(396,125)	(192,612)			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(689,616)	(203,513)					

Environment and Climate Committee

13th November 2023 at 7.30pm

Report author: Mike Blake



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 – General

3. The outdoor team cleared over 20 plots in the two weeks leading up to the renewal period. These were completed so that they could be offered out to new tenants.
4. Trailer days are underway. The outdoor team will be removing non compostable waste from the sites over the next couple of weeks.

Broadway allotments

5. Maintenance to remove the overgrowth was scheduled to take place 7th and 8th November which coincided with their trailer day.
6. An area will be created on an unusable plot for the outdoor team to dispose of leaves as per request of some allotment holders.

New Road allotments

7. The 'Sow and Grow' Community planting polytunnel construction, is due to commence around the 28th October. We are hoping to have all the groundwork completed before Christmas.

Wantage Road allotment

8. This allotment is now at full capacity with a very large waiting list. We have already had our trailer day, and this was a huge success however, we did get a lot of help organising it from the two site representatives. This allotment is now cleared for winter.
9. We are trialling numbering plots on this site so that plot locations are more visible for the outdoor team and new tenants.

Cockcroft allotments

10. 12 plots were cleared on this site and offered out. This cleared the waiting list for Cockcroft.
11. Their trailer day is scheduled for the 14th and 15th November 2023.
12. The Japanese Knotweed was treated by me at the end of September and will continue to be treated and monitored.

Mereland Road

13. DTC received reports of pests going through to neighbouring properties on Royal Berkshire Court. They were believed to be coming from old compost piles and in the undergrowth. The area was cleared and dealt with by the outdoor team. The only nest we came across was a wasp's nest which again was dealt with by our own trained team member.
14. Trailer day for the Mereland Road site is due 21st and 22nd November 2023.

Cemetery

15. There have been four cremated remains interments and six burials since the last meeting of the Environment and Climate Committee.
16. The grass cutting at the cemetery is due to end mid-November.

17. The hedges are all due to be reduced at the end of November - all waste from this will be reused in Millennium Woods.
18. More potholes are appearing in the cemetery. There doesn't seem to be a maintenance budget for the cemetery, however we are going to need to investigate resurfacing the drive at some point in the near future.

Civic Hall

19. The Civic Hall is having its tidy up for the winter and is currently looking a little bare. The carpark will have a tidy up before the Remembrance Parade.
20. The Christmas tree has been ordered and is due to be in place by Tuesday 21st November ready for the Christmas lights to be switched on – usually the last Thursday in November.

Parks – General

21. Regular cutting is starting to slow down and should have stopped by the end of November at the latest. Maintenance does continue throughout the winter, but it is mainly leaf blowing, litter picking and play equipment checks.
22. Tree work is due to take place across all parks at the beginning of November.

Zip wires

23. All zip wires have been inspected - this was done the week before half term to avoid any disruption. Some remedial repairs have been highlighted - I will reference this further down.

Roundabouts

24. The Roundabouts have also been inspected at the same time as the zip wires. Some repairs were highlighted. Again, I will reference this further down.

Loyd Rec

25. After having a walk around Loyd Rec, I noticed a bit of dead wood in some of the trees. I believe that the Outdoor Team can deal with this, and work will start asap.
26. Football matches and training sessions were called off the weekend of 21st October due to the condition of the pitches brought on by the rainfall we had.
27. It has been noted that there are no benches in Loyd Rec playing field. There are areas where a bench could go without getting in the way of the pitches.

Recommendation

28. The Committee is asked to consider how many benches should be installed in the field and the locations. Perching benches work out to cost around £90 each.

Smallbone Rec

29. We had to have some emergency repairs carried out to the swings, under health and safety grounds due to movement. We also had some of the minor repairs done at the same time this came in at a cost of £630.00 + VAT.
30. We investigated to see if the playground surfacing around the roundabout was still under warranty with Sutcliffe Play. Unfortunately, it was not, and a quote received for the work came in higher than all the previously received quotes - £1,425.00. Another quote from a separate company has been received for this work which has come in at £948.00 including VAT (this is lower than the previous quote shown to the Committee at the last meeting - £1,015.00 + VAT).
31. Work was carried out on the Maple Tree next to the Bowls Club. This work I had to authorise on health and safety grounds due to it being in the location of the Remembrance Day Memorial Service. The cost of this work was £275.00 and will be taken from cost centre 310/3158 'Trees'.

Recommendation

32. The Committee is asked to consider the quote for the repairs to the surfacing around the roundabout at Smallbone Rec, at a cost of £948.00 (inc VAT) and decide whether to approve the spend cost can be taken from cost centre 308/3154 'Other Parks & Recreation Areas'.

Edmonds Park

33. Unfortunately, we had to call off some football games during the weekend of 21st October. This was due to the rain and the waterlogged condition of the pitches.
34. We had a meeting with a Splash Park company who advised us it would be a good idea to have the trees around the proposed Splash Park area lifted before any work takes place. I am currently obtaining quotes for this work. So far I have received one quote for this work and will bring it to Committee once more have been received.
35. The zip wire was inspected, and some repairs were highlighted, these are as follows:
 - a. Bark level needs topping up – which can be done asap
 - b. The start/stop spring is not working and needs replacing - I am awaiting quotes for this.
36. The Roundabout was inspected, and repairs were highlighted. I am awaiting quotes for these repairs.

Ladygrove Park

37. The gates for the play area have been ordered, there is currently a back log of up to 8 weeks.
38. Two new perching benches and a bin have been installed in Ladygrove Park. Installation was carried out by the outdoor team at a cost of around £200. Two more will be installed around the perimeter of the field in due course.
39. The quote for replacing the springy was discussed at the last meeting (£1,780.00 + VAT) where it was suggested I investigate other options. I have since received a quote from a different company to reset the springy and repair the surface. This quote was for £480 inc VAT.
40. The same company quoted to dismantle and re-grease the Huck Rotator Basket swing at a cost of £480 inc VAT.

Recommendation

41. The Committee should consider these quotes and approve the works at a combined cost of £960.00 (inc VAT) to be taken from cost centre 308/3154 'Other Parks & Recreation Areas'.

Marsh Rec

42. The roundabout was inspected, and a minor repair needs to be done. I am awaiting a quote for this.
43. The new gate is on order and has a back log of 8 weeks.

Ladygrove Lakes

44. The solar panels for the aerator have been repaired. The aerator is now running at full capacity.
45. The 6 new bins were installed around the lake. These have bait boxes built in to help deal with the pests.
46. The Willow trees around the lake needs some maintenance work. I have met with a tree surgeon, and I am waiting on a quote for this.
47. It has been noted that the water in the large lake has dropped by approximately a foot since March 2023. I believe that the drop in the water level is mainly due to size of the Willow trees located around the big lake. In a dry spell a mature Willow can absorb between 10-100 gallons of water per day.

I have liaised with tree surgeons, an EA representative and other industry professionals who have all agreed that the Willow trees could be responsible for the loss of water. I have spoken with a tree surgeon who has recommended capping the Willows, but this work would need to be done over a 3-year cycle, and work would need to be carried out every year.

48. Investigations into sourcing a water source will be undertaken by the Ladygrove Management Working Group.
49. The water testing kit and generator have arrived - this was purchased with a Fisheries Improvement Grant. Initial tests, to act as a 'starting point' will be carried out this week.

Ladygrove Mounds

50. As per the request of the Ladygrove Management Working Group the outdoor team have uncovered the pattern on the top of the first mound. This is apparently called the contemplation zone.

Events

Edmonds Park

51. Didcot Town Youth Football Club Tournament – Saturday 7th – Sunday 8th June 2024
- All weekend
 - Fee will be charged at the 2024-2025 rate – *TBC at agenda item 11.*

Ladygrove Park

52. Hatwells Funfair 15th April – 29th April 2024
- 8 trading days
 - Fees will be discussed separately – *TBC at agenda item 9.*

Recommendation

53. The Committee is asked to approve the dates for the two events.

Millenium Woods

54. A bulb planting project was arranged to take place on Saturday 4th November; however, this was cancelled due to the conditions of the pathways and the ground not being suitable for planting. This project will be re-arranged.

Staffing

55. 6 members of the Outdoor team passed their Small Engine and Ground Care Machinery Maintenance course. This has already paid for itself as we have had to carry out some repairs to our own machines and equipment since passing the course.
56. 4 members of the outdoor team are attending a welding course at the end of January 2024.
57. A new apprentice has started work on the outdoor team and will start attending college in January.

Environment and Climate Committee

13th November 2023

Report Author: Lucy Blake



Ford Ranger Pick Up

Introduction

1. This report asks the Committee to consider the future of the Town Council's Ford Ranger vehicle, due to the lease expiring on 2nd December 2023.

Background

1. Didcot Town Council (DTC) entered into an agreement with Lex Auto Lease (BCA Remarketing Solutions) in December 2018 for the lease of the Ford Ranger Pick Up. This agreement was for 60 months.
2. The Ford Ranger is well used by the outdoor team, for day-to-day jobs, manoeuvring the boat (used at the lakes) for carrying bigger materials (fence posts, timber sleepers), and is the only vehicle that can be used for distance driving (attending training courses, picking up materials).
3. The financial agreement was as follows:

Payment details	Lease/Finance charge ex VAT	Service charge ex VAT	Total charge ex VAT	Total charge inc VAT
Initial payment	£219.00	£46.78	£265.78	£318.94
Followed by 59 payments of	£219.00	£46.78	£265.78	£318.94
Total	£13,140.00	£2,806.80	£15,946.80	£19,136.40

4. The lease expires on 2nd December 2023.
5. All members of the outdoor team were consulted on this, and all agreed that the Town Council should retain this vehicle, owing to its usefulness.
6. There are four options for the Town Council to consider:

To consider the future options of the Ford Ranger Pick Up

- a. Return the vehicle
- b. Informal extension – the Council could keep the vehicle after the contract has ended on a month-by-month basis until we are ready to return it. However, if the maintenance budget is overspent, it is likely that the vehicle will get de-hired
- c. Formal extension – DTC could formally extend the lease on the vehicle. However, in doing so the contract would exceed 60 months, which is the maximum term allowance, meaning approval would be needed – *quote for a 12-month extension has been requested*
- d. Purchase the vehicle for the estimated purchase price of £14,825.00 (ex. VAT) – *quote valid until 30th November 2023.*

Alternative options

7. Ford are bringing out a hybrid version of this vehicle but will not be available until 2025. The Town could formally extend the lease of the current Ranger for one year and re-visit the hybrid version after this period. The cost to purchase the Ranger after this time, may well be a lot less.

Recommendations

8. The Committee is asked to consider the options and decide on the future of the Ford Ranger, whether to ‘buy’ the Ranger and pay the estimated purchase price of **£14,825.00**, which would need to be approved by Full Council, or apply to formally extend the lease for a further 12 months – *staff are waiting on the quote for this.*

Legal Implications

9. 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.*

Financial Implications

10. The estimated purchase price of the Ford Ranger Pick Up Super XLT 2.2 TDCi Diesel is £14,825.00 excluding VAT. This quote was provided by the BCA Driver Sales Team on 31st October 2023 and is valid until 30th November 2023.

11. There could be costs associated with returning the vehicle, if the company inspected it and found any damages.
12. Extending the lease would incur additional costs for the duration of the extension. The exact cost of this has not been received yet.

Risk Implications

13. If the Ford Ranger was to be returned and no alternative arranged, the outdoor team would be down a vehicle which would affect the deliverance of the Town Council's services.

Environment and Climate Committee

13th November 2023

Report Author: Lucy Blake



Funfair charges for events in Didcot

Introduction

1. This report asks the Committee to consider future charges for Hatwell's Funfair when holding events on Town Council owned land.

Background

2. The current park hire charge is £350 per day - Hatwells pay per trading day.
3. The charge for park hires in 2022-2023 was £260 per day.
4. Hatwells has been providing Didcot with a funfair for over 40 years, both in Edmonds Park and Ladygrove, which has always been hugely popular with the residents.
5. The Finance and General Purposes Committee considered a request submitted by Hatwell's Funfair, regarding 2024 event dates (which conflicted with the planned Edfest event) and the annual charges. The F&GP Committee resolved to ask Hatwells to host their event from the second weekend in August 2024, and for the Environment and Climate Committee to consider what charges Hatwell should pay and whether this should be for a fixed period.
6. Hatwells contacted DTC asking for the Council to re-consider the increases. They were happy to pay £300 per trading day for Edmonds Park and £260 per trading day for Ladygrove Park. They also asked for this to be fixed for a period of up to 3 years.

7. Hatwells have not increased their prices since before the Covid-19 pandemic, as they are *“trying to keep things affordable to local families who are feeling the pinch more than ever.”*

Recommendations

8. The Committee is asked to consider these charges and whether, like the suggested football pitch usage agreement, fixing them for a period of three years.

The charges suggested for Hatwells Funfair only, are as follows:

- a. Edmonds Park - £300 per trading day
- b. Ladygrove Park - £260 per trading day

Legal Implications

9. The Town Council has the power to provide and encourage the use of facilities – Local Government Act 1972, s.144.

Financial Implications

10. Hatwells usually hold one event in August at Edmonds Park and two events throughout the year in Ladygrove Park. Based on these charges and the fact that most of their booked events consist of eight trading day, these hires would generate an income of approximately £6560 (£2400 for Edmonds and £4160 for the two events at Ladygrove).

Risk Implications

11. Should the Council fail to come to an agreement with Hatwells, they could decide not to book any future events with Didcot Town Council.

Environment and Climate Committee

13th November 2023

Report Author: Lucy Blake



Didcot Football Clubs usage agreements

Introduction

1. There are two local Football Clubs in Didcot who use Town Council facilities to run their clubs: Didcot Town Youth Football Club currently use Edmonds Park and Didcot Casuals Football Club use Loyd Recreation Ground.

Background

2. Both Football Clubs have been using the Town Council's parks as their home grounds for many years.
3. Historically the clubs have been invoiced per fixture, throughout the football season. This became time consuming, especially when fixtures were cancelled due to bad weather and then refunded. Fixtures were then re-arranged and then invoiced again.
4. Both Clubs have access to welfare facilities: Didcot Town Youth, the welfare units in Edmonds Park, Didcot Casuals, the pavilion.
5. Both Clubs also have access to storage units on both sites, paid for by the Town Council.
6. Both Clubs were initially contacted on 6th October with suggested terms of an agreement. As both sites are different, the proposed agreements differed slightly, but both included the following:
 - a. Full use of the pitches at weekends throughout September to April (excluding holidays) weather dependant

- b. Full use of the pavilion (at Loyd Rec) and welfare units (at Edmonds Park) throughout September to April (excluding holidays)
 - c. Initial measuring and marking of all pitches at the start of the season – layout of pitches to be agreed between the club and the OSM
 - d. Full use of the storage unit all year round
 - e. Routine grass cutting and maintenance throughout the whole year
7. The proposed agreements did not include:
- a. Overmarking throughout the season
 - b. Guaranteed weekly training session space
 - c. Marking of the pitches for any event/tournament
8. Each club was offered the opportunity to 'hire' one of the Town Council's line marking machines for a returnable deposit of £350 per season.
9. Didcot Casuals were offered a suggested charge of £3,500 per year, whilst Didcot Town Youth were offered a suggested charge of £5,500. These figures were based on last years fixtures and any unit hire charge paid last season.
10. The Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Outdoor Services Manager met with the Chairman and Treasurer of Didcot Casuals on Monday 30th October where they discussed the proposed terms. A summary of this meeting is shown below:

Meeting with Didcot Casuals (DC) Football Club

- *DC asked that the £3,500 per year figure be re-considered and asked that the Committee consider charging them £3,000 per year, fixed for a three-year period.*
 - *DC asked the Council to check on the status of the locks on the toilet doors, the outdoor lights and PIR sensors.*
 - *DC understand that weekday evening training sessions are not booked and can not be guaranteed by the Council (as has always been the case).*
 - *A line marking machine and paint can be stored in the storage room of the pavilion. The club will ask one of their electricians to look at installing a plug socket in this storage room.*
 - *DC asked that the Committee agree to allowing them to continue to use the pavilion on a Saturday morning, outside of the football season, to run sessions for young children. No pitches would be needed but a small area would be marked off for the sessions. The Club did understand that should an event application come in for the pavilion and use of the space, then that would take priority.*
 - *DC confirmed that they would continue to rotate the pitches where possible.*
11. Didcot Town Youth were contacted again on 31st October for their feedback, in preparation for this Committee meeting. A response was received on 7th November 2023. This is shown below:

"I'm afraid we still haven't come to a firm decision on your proposal, but would like a copy of this email shared with your committee members in advance of your meeting for discussion next week,

This basis of this proposal is going to be a dramatic change to our circumstances of usage at Edmunds park, the main sticking point is currently around the requirement to mark out the pitches, we've been unable to find any available resource to volunteer to do this yet, we are still exploring options but as its not something we have ever had to do as a club before we are very nervous to committing to this at this stage, it may be something that we need to pay somebody to do for us if we cannot come to an agreement with the council, when you add the cost of the line paint on top of the proposal (which you previously told us had cost you £4000) it all soon adds up and the proposal of £5500 isn't really a true reflection of what we are likely to be spending going forward and it is then closer to the £10,450 you originally told us the pitch fees would increase to for this season. If the toilet hire costs £1000 for a season for example, we would be paying £4500 per season for the council to cut the grass once a week which presumably the council would do anyway regardless of if we were using the park for football use or not,

We really want to work with you to find a solution to suit us both but are finding it incredibly difficult as a committee to see that pitch fees have increased by 72% in 7 years when all we are trying to do is provide sport to the local residents of our community.

7 years ago those fees included full use and full access to an operational pavilion, toilets, changing rooms, storage facilities, safe and secure goal storage and an operational kitchen that could be used to provide teas and coffees to visitors to the park, and only 10 years or so ago the council even paid for and provided the goals and replacement nets for the club to use at the park. Those fees also included the use of everything above for the tournament weekend.

Now we don't have any kitchen facility, a suitable storage area for the goals that we have had to purchase or any help trying to secure the unsafe area behind the containers, the toilets need to be booked weekly although we are the sole users.

In summary we like the idea of having a club use agreement in place, everyone knows where we stand with that and its less admin for both parties, its just the absolutely massive cost increase that we are now being faced with that's the issue, and the fact that over the last few years we are receiving less and less for seemingly ever increasing fees,

We obviously want to stay at the park and come to a solution here, its been our home since 1923 when Didcot Boys played there first game at Edmunds park so we our now entering our 100th year as users of the council park, as a club we are providing sport to over 400 boys and girls from Didcot but unfortunately for the community the people this is going to affect in the long term is the parents of all the children who are going to be

faced with increasing registration fees that will be required to cover such significant cost increases.

We would be happy to meet up in person to discuss in more detail and come up with a solution to suit all."

12. The Town Clerk requested copies of Didcot Town Youth's finances again, on 7th November 2023, to enable Councillors to make an informed decision on charges. These will be presented to the Committee confidentially should they be received prior to the meeting.

Recommendations

13. The Committee is asked to consider the proposed usage charge for Didcot Casuals use of Loyd Recreation Ground and pavilion - *Key points to note would be the charge of £3,000 per year, fixed for a three-year period and additional use of the pavilion on a Saturday morning outside of the football season.*
- *DTC will look to amend any agreement with DC should an agreement with Didcot Town Youth be reached, to ensure both sports clubs are treated the same. Charges to DC would not be increased.*
14. The Committee is also asked to consider the proposed charges for Didcot Town Youth, along with the response from the club, and advise Officers of their views on this, prior to a them meeting with club representatives.
15. Agreements with both clubs would need to be similar. However, Officers are aware that Didcot Town Youth have more pitches in Edmonds which are used, and which are of a larger size than those in Loyd Rec.

Legal Implications

16. Didcot Town Council has a duty adhere to any agreement signed by both parties.
17. The Town Council also has a duty of care to all visitors and hirers of our outdoor spaces and facilities and has the power to maintain and control land for open spaces – Open Spaces Act 1906, s.9-10.
18. The Town Council has the power to provide and encourage the use of facilities – Local Government Act 1972, s.144.

Financial Implications

19. There would obviously be financial implications as the hire charges are income for the Town Council.
20. Should any agreed charges for DC be approved by the Committee it would be fixed income for three years.

Risk Implications

21. The main risk to the Council is the potential of one of the clubs refusing to adhere to any signed agreement, or to not agreeing on the terms. This would potentially delay the Town Council receiving any payment for club use of the Town Council's land and facilities.

Environment & Climate Committee

13th November 2023

Report author: Lucy Blake



Suggested annual charges 2024-2025

Introduction

1. As part of the budget review process, the Committee is asked to review the charges the Town Council makes for services it provides to the residents of Didcot.
2. Allotment rents are usually set two years in advance, meaning any increase would come into effect for the 2025-2026 financial year (due from 1st October 2025) – charges from 1st October 2024 have already been agreed.
3. Officers have reviewed the current charges and applied the nominal 3% applied to the budget more generally. The tables shown show the item charged for, the current charge, a 3% uplift and the recommended charge on the Town Councils outdoor services.

Recommendation

4. There has been a lot of work done on the allotment sites this year, including the need to dispose of lots of waste left by exiting plot holders. Many hours are spent by Officers chasing rent payments, inspecting the plots, asking the plot holders to improve the standard of the plot etc, therefore the Officer's recommendation for allotment increases for the 2025-2026 financial year, is shown below:

Allotments	From 1 st October 2024	3%	Recommendation from 1 st October 2025
Non-Concessions	£39	£1.17	£41 (£20.50 part)
Concessions (65 or over at start of rent year)	£27	£0.81	£28 (14.00 part)
Cultivation deposit (for new plots)	£90	£2.70	£95
Late Payment Fee	£15.50	£0.47	£16

Suggested annual charges for 2024-2025

5. The suggested increases to the rest of the annual charges can be seen below:

Cemetery fees – for all non-Didcot residents there is a 200% additional payment on ERoB and interment fees	Current fees	3%	Recommendation
Exclusive right of burial			
Person whose age at time of death exceeded 16 years	£310	£9.30	£320
Person whose age at time of death did not exceed 16 years	No Charge	-	No Charge
Cremated remains plot	£130	£3.90	£135
Interments			
In a grave (in respect of which an EroB has been granted)	£435	£13.05	£445
Cremated remains (in respect of which an EroB has been granted)	£225		£230
Person whose age at time of death did not exceed 16 years	No Charge	-	No Charge
Late afternoon burial fee (applies for bookings 14:30 or later Mon-Thurs and 14:00 Fri)	£45	£1.35	£50
Private burial fee (for burials and cremations without a funeral director)	£105	£3.15	£110
Headstones and Memorials			
Headstones and Memorials including first inscription	£125	£3.75	£130
Additional Inscription	£60	£1.80	£65
Memorial Bench application (not including bench costs)	£105	£3.15	£110
Kerbing fee (in addition to headstone fee)	£415	£12.45	£425
Other			
Late/incomplete paperwork	£65	£1.95	£70
Cancellations/amendment/administration fee for reserved plot	£75	£2.25	£80
Remembrance Garden Planting			
Rose bush – lease/maintenance 10 years	£180	£5.40	£185
Tree – lease/maintenance 10 years	£250	£7.50	£255
Additional 5-year lease	£75	£2.25	£80
Plant in Remembrance			
Tree – lease/maintenance 20 years	£350	£10.50	£355
Additional 10-year lease	£125	£3.75	£130

Additional Allotment services	Current	3%	Recommendation
Strimming (per plot)	£45	-	TO REMOVE THIS SERVICE
Spraying (per plot)	£45	-	TO REMOVE THIS SERVICE
Fishing Permits			
	Current	3%	Recommendation
Adults	£30	£0.90	£31
Adult Concessions	£15	£0.45	£15.50
Juniors	£15	£0.45	£15.50
Juniors Concession	£6	£0.18	£6.50
Pitches			
	Current	3%	Recommendation
Adults	£70	£2.10	£72
Juniors	£30	£0.90	£31

Suggested annual charges for 2024-2025

Park Events	Current	3%	Recommendation
Commercial Hire Per Day	£350	£10.50	£360
Hire Per Day - Charities	Up to £300	-	Up to £300
Football Clubs Hire	-	-	TBC
Fun Fair Hire	-	-	TBC

- Charity Hire charges would be agreed by the Environment and Climate Committee on a case-by-case basis.

6. It is the Officer's recommendation the Committee agree to remove the additional allotment services as the outdoor team do not have the manpower, or the time to offer these services, and for members to approve the suggested price increase for services for the 2024-2025 financial year.

Background

7. Officers are spending many administrative hours chasing allotment rents and inspecting and reinspecting allotment plots. It is hoped an increase in the deposit and late payment fee, will deter allotment holders from doing this in the future.
8. Any increase in charges will be applied from 1st April 2024, excluding the allotment rents.

Legal Implications

9. Local Councils may receive rent from tenants of their property or for herbage on their land, and charges and fees for the use of common pasture, for burials and for admission to playing fields.
10. Under the Allotment Act 1950 s.10, "Land let by a Council under the Allotment Acts 1908-1931 for use as an allotment shall be let at such rent as a tenant may reasonably be expected to pay for the land."
11. Any agreements would need to be adhered to.
12. Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 permits charging for the use of leisure and recreational facilities.

Financial Implications

13. For 2023-24 the income from allotments was budgeted at £14,500. As of 16th October 2023, the actual YTD income for 2023-24 was £12,355. Rents from 1st April 2023 were paid for a 6-month period, as the Council agreed to change the bill date. Tenants were billed again from 1st October 2023, and will

Suggested annual charges for 2024-2025

continually be billed from this date going forward. This will mean that the allotment rents for the 2023-2024 FY will look disproportionately high, compared to previous years.

14. Cemetery: the number requests for burials, interments, and memorials, are unknown and unpredictable.

Risk Implications

15. As with any price increase for services, there may be some negativity received.
16. All new charges will need to be advertised so residents and users, are made aware.
17. It will be important to ensure the Fishing Club and all other regular users of the Town Council facilities, are made aware of any agreed increases. Once agreed, the annual charges will be added to the Town Council's website.

Environment & Climate Committee

13th November 2023

Report author: Lucy Blake



Bus Shelter Cleaning

Introduction

1. Didcot Town Council own six bus shelters in Didcot, which in the past, have been cleaned by two different companies.
2. The Town Council has received a few requests for the shelters to be cleaned again, so Officers have enquired about more regular cleaning and the costs associated with this.
3. One company contacted explained that most Town Councils they deal with usually have their shelters cleaned twice a year; once before and once after the summer months.

Background

4. The 6 shelters in Didcot owned by Didcot Town Council are shown below:



1. Cow Lane – oxfgjpgw
(2 bay, full end panel shelter)



2. Trent Road – oxfgjtjg
(2 bay, full end panel with seat)



3. Wantage Road – oxfgdwgt

(3 bay, ¼ end panel with bench)



4. Barnes Road – ofgjpwj

(2 bay, ½ end panel with bench)



5. Station Road/Cineworld shelter – JQ45+XX

(2 bay, one full end, one ½ end panel with bench)



6. Avon Way/Dagdale Drive

(2bay full end, green roof (SEDUM) shelter)

5. Two companies have been contacted and quotes have been requested for cleaning these six structures. Only one company has responded so far. This company has stated that Town/Parish Councils they work with, usually contract them to clean their bus shelters twice a year.
6. The company suggest an initial deep clean in April, followed by a standard clean in October ready for the winter. The shelters are “seen more in Summer due to longer daylight hours and get dirtier in Winter due to weather so better to have the deep clean then.”
7. The quote received from ‘Company One’ for the two types of cleans, are as follows:

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	VAT	Amount GBP
To give shelters an initial deep clean	6	£59.00	20%	£354.00
To give shelters a follow up clean	6	£39.00	20%	£234.00
Subtotal				£588.00
Total VAT 20%				£117.60
TOTAL				£705.60

8. These cleans would be full cleans including the roof and the shelter 'squeegied down'. The company would also supply DTC with a photo of each shelter after the cleaning has taken place. These would be kept on record.
9. It would be sensible to arrange a deep clean to be completed by the end of this year, as the shelters have not been cleaned for a while and requests have been received by residents for staff to look into this.

Recommendation

10. The Committee is asked to consider the costs associated with cleaning the six Town Council owned bus shelters at a cost of £705.60 (inc VAT) per year (starting in April 2024) with an additional 'deep clean' at the end of 2023, at a cost of £354.00 (inc VAT).

Legal Implications

11. Local Government (Miscellaneous) Act 1953 s.4 gives the Town Council the power to provide and maintain bus shelters.

Financial Implications

12. There would be a financial commitment for the 2024-2025 FY of £705.60 (inc VAT). However, the 'deep clean' arranged for the end of 2023, would be paid for out the 2023-2024 budget – The current 'Street Furniture Maintenance' cost centre (310/3168) has a budget of £3,000 but is £390 overspent. Consideration must be taken when setting the maintenance budget for the next FY for cleaning these structures.
13. Cost centre 325/9059 'Bus Shelters' (FY 2023-2024) can be used for the deep clean at the end of 2023.

Risk Implications

14. Any Contractor carrying out work on behalf of the Town Council will need to provide DTC with all relevant documentation.

Didcot Town Council

Ladygrove Management Working Group Thursday 21st September 2023 7pm All Saints Room, Civic Hall



Meeting notes

Working Group Members Present:

Councillor J Broadbent
Councillor D Rouane
Councillor C Jennings
Mr P Davies – Ladygrove Resident's Association representative
Mr N Thompson – Ladygrove Fishing Association representative

Officers:

L Blake (Deputy Town Clerk - DC)
M Blake (Outdoor Services Manager - OSM)
D Furby (Outdoor Services Supervisor – OSS)

1. Apologies

Apologies were tendered from the Environment Agency representative and Cllrs K Morrison, T Worgan, and Z Mohammed.
Cllr O Glover was absent.

2. To agree the notes from the meeting held on 3rd August 2023

The group agreed the meeting notes.

3. Questions on the meeting notes and review of the progress report

The group reviewed the progress report.

4. Update from the Outdoor Services Manager/Supervisor on recent progress and issues

Both the Outdoor Services Manager (OSM) and the Outdoor Services Supervisor (OSS) spoke regarding the following items:

a. Machinery

The outdoor team had attended a trade show where they saw a demonstration of a Ventrac 4520 Tractor, cutting grass up and over hilly terrain. The machine would cost approximately £40,000 and there were finance options available. The OSM and the OSS explained that purchasing this type of machine would enable the team to cut the mounds 'in house' and could also be used to cut other open green spaces. Various attachments could be purchased to ensure the machine could be used at its full potential.

Cllr J Broadbent suggested a costing report be presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration, after the Environment and Climate Committee had discussed it. Cllr C Jennings advised Officers to investigate what capital expenditure could potentially be used for a purchase like this.

b. Playpark

The replacement of the two park gates had been approved by the Environment and Climate Committee at their meeting on 11th September 2023.

Cllr C Jennings suggested the OSM look at basic welding courses for members of the outdoor team.

c. Benches

Locations for benches in the open green space at Ladygrove were considered. Mr P Davies suggested Officers liaise with Didcot Park Run before installation so as not to cause obstruction on their route.

d. Sign

The new skate park sign had been delivered and displayed whilst SODC were running their summer skate sessions. It was then removed until a more permanent solution could be reached as to ensuring it was as anti-theft proof as possible.

e. Trees

A tree surgeon had been contacted and asked to quote for work to 'cut back' the willow trees. Discussions were had as to how much water Willow trees absorb.

f. Small lake

The group liked the idea of making the smaller lake a more 'visitor friendly' area. Installing benches would encourage visitor to the small lake, and if they were to feed the ducks, it wouldn't make too much of an issue to the water, as there are no fish in it.

g. Siltex treatment

The OSM and OSS informed the group of a potential Siltex treatment for the lakes. The treatment is usually undertaken in two stages, and a full report would be presented to the Environment and Climate Committee for consideration. Cllrs J Broadbent and C Jennings advised the Officers to seek advice from the Environment Agency representative at a future sit meeting.

Mr P Davies informed the group that some refuse collection vehicles have been ruining the grass in the area due to driving on it.

5. To note the amended 'Ladygrove Management Plan – Ideas Document 2023'3

The group noted the amended document. Cllr J Broadbent suggested a smaller document be created as a 'Medium Term Plan' to include 'quick wins' for the site. All members agreed.

6. To note the meeting notes from the Public Art Delivery Group's meetings – 26th January 2023 and 13th February 2023

The group noted the notes of both the Public Art Delivery Group meetings and confirmed there were projects that the group would be interested in pursuing.

In addition to some of this projects, Cllr D Rouane suggested that functional signs could be displayed throughout the area, stating how far the town centre is, for example, and how many minutes it would take to walk/cycle there.

7. Update on the Fisheries Improvement Programme grant application

The Deputy Town Clerk (DC) updated the group on the progress of the application – it was submitted on 31st August 2023, any decision would be made by the end of October 2023.

8. Update from Thames Water

The DC informed the group that Thames Water had been in touch and had asked for the exact location of the culvert in question – *DTC had tried contacting them to obtain permission to pump from the culvert if/when needed.*

It was stated that a Thames Water representative would contact the DC by 28th September with an update.

Members discussed that if Thames Water confirms that the culvert is not theirs, Officers should request this in writing.

9. Discuss options for a water fountain with associated flow restricted water feed for the lake and/or water connection

Mr P Davies spoke regarding his idea of installing a drinking fountain at the lakes, it would mean that the Town Council would need to install a water supply and connection. The fountain could potentially supply the lakes with additional water during long, hot spells. Mr N Thompson explained that drinking water is high in calcium and could potentially upset the chemical levels in the lakes. He also stated that he had hoped to use the smaller lake as a breeding pond in the future.

All members discussed installing a water fountain within the smaller lake and investigate fixing the connection between the two bodies of water.

Officers would investigate this further and bring the item back at the next meeting.

10. To arrange a 'Facilities Walk around'

Mr N Thompson had requested that the group arrange a facilities walk around so that members could visualise the site in its entirety. The Environment Agency representative had supplied the DC with his availability and the walk around has arranged for Thursday 12th October 2023 at 11am – the group would meet at the car park on Mersey Way - *Notes from this meeting are attached as appendix 1.*

11. To discuss control of overgrown vegetation in Ladygrove

Cllr D Rouane spoke regarding the complex issues of ownership throughout the whole of Ladygrove, and informed the group that some volunteers were willing to cut back areas if the Town Council could dispose of the waste.

The OSM confirmed that the Town Council managed areas are regularly maintained, however, disposing of extra green waste would be an additional charge to the Council as the Town Council's compost bays are full and a green waste skip would cost £270.

Cllrs J Broadbent, C Jennings, and D Rouane supported the idea of the Town, District and County Council's working in collaboration to cut back Ladygrove, twice a year.

Ideas on disposing the green waste was discussed and it was noted that the Ladygrove Management Working Group had no budget.

The Group would need to be clear on what it was they wanted the Environment and Climate Committee to consider so that a report could be presented.

12. Confirm the next meeting date

The meeting was arranged for Thursday 23rd November but later changed to **Thursday 30th November at 6.30pm** so that the Town Clerk could attend.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Didcot Town Council



Site visit – Ladygrove Thursday 12th October 2023, 11am

In attendance:

Mike Blake – Outdoor Services Manager
Dan Furby – Outdoor Services Supervisor
Jaiden Sparks – Outdoor Services Supervisor
Phil Davies – Ladygrove Residents Association Representative (LRA rep)
Adam Hilliard – Environment Agency Representative (EA rep)

Apologies were tendered by Cllr James Broadbent and Cllr Kelly Morrison.

Those present attended the site and spoke mostly on the lakes. A few points were raised as needed, which included:

- Decreasing the foliage around the lakes – hard cutting the large vegetation area beneath the pylons
- Decreasing the size of the Willow trees, due to their constant water consumption
- Netting of the lakes to ‘thin out’ the stock and to remove the small little silvers. This would need to be carried out by a contractor. Officers were informed that some companies could potentially do this free of charge, if they were able to keep the silver fish. Carrying out this work would require the relevant authorisation from the Environment Agency
- Planting up the margins with more suitable, oxygenating plants
- Aerator – the EA rep suggested the best time for the aerator to be operating was between 1am and early sunrise (when the oxygen levels are at their lowest)

The EA rep agreed that the smaller lake could become a more family orientated area to encourage duck feeding at the little lake – due to there being little to no fish present. Signs could be installed to say duck feeding is preferred at that location, rather than the large lake. To make the area at the smaller lake more appealing to families, picnic style inclusive benches with tables can be made and installed by the outdoor team; the staging would be removed and the area ‘tidied up’. Local schools could be contacted and asked if woodwork students wanted to create bird houses for the trees in the area.

The LRA rep liked the location of the newly installed perching benches in the open green space and the fact that they did not affect the Park Runners. He suggested another couple could be installed, one by the Queen’s Green Canopy and one in the gaps amongst the ‘bramble bushes’.

Lucy Blake
Deputy Town Clerk

Didcot Town Council

Allotment Liaison Group

Thursday 21st September 2023 at 7:15pm

Didcot Civic Hall, Northbourne Room



Minutes

PRESENT

Councillors:

Cllr A Jones (Chair)

Cllr N Hards (Broadway)

Allotment Representatives:

Ms N Lyons (Wantage Road)

Ms P Ramsbottom (New Road)

Ms A Pitts (Mereland Road)

Mr D Taylor (Broadway [sub])

Officers:

Mr A Guzinski (Planning and Estate Officer [minutes])

Mr J Sparks (Outdoor Team Supervisor)

Ms T Tye (Mayor's Secretary and Administration Assistant)

1. To receive apologies.

Apologies were tendered from:

Ms T Feest (Broadway), Mr A Feest (Broadway), Ms M Samuels (Wantage Road), and Cllr D Rouane (New Road).

Mr T Morey (New Road), Mr M Bartlett (Cockcroft Road), Mr T Bray (Cockcroft Road), and Ms R Butcher (Mereland Road) were absent.

Mr D Taylor substituted for Mr A Feest.

No other apologies were received.

2. To agree the minutes of 8th June 2023 (attached).

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting and note them as such.

3. Questions from the minutes and matters arising.

There were no questions on the minutes.

The Planning and Estate Officer gave an update on the Great Western Park allotments.

4. To note the Progress Report (attached).

The Planning and Estate Officer paged through the progress report.

Ms A Pitts queried the hedge at Mereland Road, as there had been reports of a hedge which needed additional maintenance.

The Outdoor Team Supervisor explained that all hedging looked in good condition, however stated that the brambles by the entrance gates needed more attention and would be on the job list.

5. To note the Outdoor Services Managers report (attached).

The Planning and Estate Officer paged through the report and explained the reasons for the number of vacant plots.

Ms N Lyons enquired if the Council could close the applications on sites with a large waiting list.

The Planning and Estate Officer explained that the Council could not close the applications, however the Council is informing the new applicants of the lengthy waiting time for an allotment on the affected sites.

6. To discuss the Allotment Awards criteria.

Ms N Lyons explained that the Wantage Road Representatives have come up with a “numerical scoring” system which could be used to grade the allotments in order to pick the best plot.

This template will be circulated with the other Allotment Representatives and the Officers.

Ms N Lyons also asked for the Council to consider pausing the award for the “best newcomer”, as there was a reduced rental period of 6 months, allowing for less time to pick the best newcomer.

Ms N Lyons further stated that the voting for the best plot should be done by the tenants themselves via email/post on the noticeboards, as this could improve the sense of community and involvement in the allotment sites.

7. To discuss the allotment measurements.

Ms N Lyons explained that there is vast inconsistency in the measurements of the allotment plots on the sites, which was supported by Ms P Ramsbottom, who stated that some plots seemed too small to be classed as 2.5 pole, and some 5 pole which seemed to be larger than others.

Ms N Lyons suggested that a metric system would be beneficial, as it would allow for an easier measurement of the allotment plot by the tenants.

The Planning and Estate Officer explained that the office has a metric equivalent, which is used to measure the plots at the end of tenancies, however it would be impractical to re-measure existing plots, as they might all need to be “moved” or “shuffled”.

Ms N Lyons asked if the Climate and Environment Committee could consider changing the wording of the allotment rules to use the metric system.

8. To discuss and propose co-tenancy rules.

The Planning and Estate Officer gave a brief overview of the current situation regarding co-tenancies, and the need for a set of rules or policies to be implemented to avoid any loopholes, especially regarding the waiting lists.

The Planning and Estate Officer explained that under the current system, any person could be named as a co-tenant, and become the primary tenant, effectively skipping the waiting list. This could also mean that the plot could be kept by one family indefinitely.

Ms N Lyons gave a brief explanation of previous co-tenancies on Wantage Road.

Ms P Ramsbottom also explained that there is a similar situation at New Road.

Ms N Lyons explained that the wording of the draft rules would need to be restructured and allow close family to be able to register as a co-tenant.

Ms N Lyons also queried whether applications could be made in retrospect, which would allow tenants who have already shared the plot to skip the 12-month probation.

Cllr A Jones also stated that applications can be made in retrospect.

Ms N Lyons stated that creating co-tenancy rules could result in plots which were shared by a family for generations becoming unavailable to those families in the future.

Cllr N Hards stated that as tenants become of age, they will gradually require more help with the maintenance of their plots, which would then result in the higher applications for co-tenancies by friends or family members. Cllr N Hards emphasised the need flexibility within the rules and review applications in a case-by-case basis.

Ms N Lyons queried if an applicant could apply for multiple lists.

The Planning and Estate Officer explained that an applicant is only listed on one list, however the applicant can also give a secondary preference, should the waiting list for the secondary site be shorter.

Ms N Lyons questioned whether Didcot Town Council has enough allotment space to accommodate for all the applicants.

The Planning and Estate Officer will ask the Environment and Climate Committee to consider all the sides and propose a new set of rules to be approved by the Full Council.

9. Any other business.

WANTAGE ROAD:

Ms N Lyons enquired about the dates and the rules of the green skip, which will be used as an alternative to the burns.

The Planning and Estate Officer listed the dates and times for each of the sites, as well as explaining the rules, which will be located on the noticeboards with a month's notice. The Planning and Estate Officer also explained that the team will be able to pick up the eligible waste from the tenant's plot directly, but only when requested.

NEW ROAD:

Ms P Ramsbottom enquired about the numbering of the plots for ease of navigation.

The Planning and Estate Officer explained that in the past, numbering was to be done via a wooden post with a metal number affixed to the post, however as the numbering did not arrive, the posts were painted with the number. Over time, the tenants have reported injuries, and a number of the posts was removed by the allotment holders as they took the plots on and were not replaced. The Outdoor Team did not have any plans to replace the posts and would encourage any plot holders with a shed to pain the plot number on the shed itself.

Ms P Ramsbottom explained that a number of pathways around the edge of the New Road site are quite dangerous and overgrown, and asked who was responsible for the maintenance.

The Planning and Estate Officer explained that while the path maintenance was carried out by the Outdoor Team, the tenants are more than welcome to cut the pathways more frequently. The pathways were the tenant's responsibility in the past.

Ms P Ramsbottom also asked if the rules can be amended to include a section to mention that the allotment holders should maintain the defined edges of the plot to avoid accidental trips.

The meeting closed at 21:09

DRAFT

Didcot Town Council

Environment and Climate Committee Allotment Liaison Group Report

Report authors: Arek Guzinski & Lucy Blake



Recommendations from Allotment Liaison Group meeting 21st September 2023

1. The ALG asked that the Environment and Climate Committee consider closing off the waiting list for Wantage Road, due to the number of applicants on the list.

Officer's recommendation

It is the Officer's recommendation to NOT suspend applications on any of the allotment sites - Under the Small Holdings Allotments Act 1908 ss.23, 26 and 42, Didcot Town Council has a duty to provide allotments. The Council can not stop a resident from joining a waiting list, as is their right.

2. The ALG asked that the Committee consider suspending the Newcomer Award this year as some new tenants have only had six months to work their plot.

Officer's recommendation

It is the Officer's recommendation to NOT suspend any Didcot Town Council awards. The awards run every year and preparations are well underway for the event, including the purchasing of the trophies and medals. The tenants having less time could also be a positive, as the plots would be worked to a good standard in less time.

3. The ALG asked that the Committee consider amending the allotment rules and guidance to use the metric system, so that tenants could measure their plots and query the size and charges.

Officer's recommendation

Allotments have always been measured in poles and that is the measurement used in law. It is the Officer's recommendation to not amend the measurements on documentation as the computer system, website, and all historic documents use poles as the unit for allotment sites.

Poster could be made for the notice boards to show a metric conversion.

4. The ALG wanted the Committee to clarify the subject of co-tenancies on the allotments. At the present time, any tenant can sign someone as a co-tenant, then terminate their tenancy, leaving the co-tenant as the sole tenant and thus

by-passing the whole waiting list. The group suggested the Committee provide a guideline on which any new rules be based upon.

The Officers at the ALG meeting proposed that any new rules or policies should be made to avoid giving the plot over to new tenants outside of the immediate family, so that the waiting list can be respected. Some allotment representatives had views against the introduction of the rules, as it could potentially reduce the number of plots being kept by a new generation of the same family.

Officers at the meeting, then explained that this would be beneficial, as plots should not be kept in perpetuity – they are available to all residents of Didcot, and the land belongs to the Council.

Officer's recommendation

It is Officer's Recommendation to create a co-tenant rule which would allow for a tenant to add a 'co-tenant' to their existing tenancy with a minimum term of **TWO YEARS** before they are eligible to solely take over the tenancy - *unless there are exceptional circumstances which would need to be approved by the Environment and Climate Committee.*

Should the Committee resolve to include an additional rule on co-tenancies, members should consider the suggested wording of the additional rules, below:

- *Any existing tenant can add another person as a co-tenant on their allotment tenancy, provided that:*
 - *The request received by the Town Council is submitted by the original tenant, and includes all correct and up to date contact information of the proposed co-tenant, including name, address, telephone number and email address*
 - *The proposed co-tenant agrees with the co-tenancy and as such, signs their own copy of the tenancy agreement. This will be contractually binding between Didcot Town Council and the co-tenant*
 - *The annual rent would be the responsibility of both tenants*
- *A co-tenant can only take on the tenancy as a sole tenant when:*
 - *The original tenant has submitted written confirmation of their desire to terminate their allotment agreement, to Didcot Town Council, and;*
 - *That the co-tenant has been named on the tenancy for a period of at least TWO YEARS*