

Asset Management Working Group

Notes of Meeting held on 19 June 2025, 10.15am at Maintenance Depot Meeting Room

Present: Adrian Dite, Linda Emery, Catherine Jones, Andrea Oughton, Mandy Sturdy

Apologies: Paul Cowell

Cuttle Brook Local Nature Reserve (CBLNR)

- Invites to official opening of the path through Rycote Meadow on 25 June 2025 have been sent out. The annual tour of the Reserve will take place following the opening.
- Support Cuttle Brook Volunteer Committee: 1) with proposals to fence around scrape near Watkins Bridge. Report to Environment & Asset Committee meeting on 15 July 2025 will provide details of proposal to erect wooden post and rail fence with rabbit protection to include access gate. An application to Trust for Oxfordshire Environment (ToE) will be submitted to cover the cost. 2) Reviewing Risk Assessments, first aid kit, record keeping, volunteer policy.
- Legal clarification has been obtained regarding the current unofficial mown path which crosses the area to be enclosed by fencing.
- Ensure details on the council's asset list (published on the website) show CBLNR as a nature reserve designated by South Oxfordshire District Council.
- Areas where spoil was removed / lowered have been seeded, the next step is to lay green hay from the annual hay cut over the top to promote growth.
- Unauthorised grass cutting within the Reserve by residents – it was noted that various paths have been cut through and around the meadows. Agreed that a gentle worded reminder letter is sent to residents requesting that they do not cut the grass. If cutting continues consider sending a cease and desist letter.
- Working on signage for the Reserve to inform and educate dog owners about why dogs should remain on leads and not encouraged to enter the Brook or scrapes. Have examples from other Councils that TTC can adapt. Town Council has the power to set Bylaws.
- Environment Agency could be asked to run some education sessions / tours of the Reserve.
- Exploring the idea of employing a Biodiversity Officer using s106 funding. Report to come to a future meeting of Environment & Assets Committee.

Play Areas

- **Southern Road Recreation Ground (SRRG)** - Quotes obtained to mark out a 400m (4 lane) running track on Southern Road Recreation Ground. Working Group agreed to mark track and see how it is received. Gather data on use over a period of time. If popular apply for grant funding for 2026. Initial funding to come from Community Infrastructure Levy funds. PR plan once track is in-situ to encourage residents and groups to use it, both formally and informally. It was noted that children enjoy running around the sports track in Elms Park outside of school hours.
- **Community Youth Building** – current project plan requires the removal of the play area at SRRG as one of the first things to be done. Reinstallation of the play area will be one

of the last phases of the project. Asset Management WG agreed it is unacceptable for the play area to be out of action for 12 months. Mandy & Andrea to go back to the architect to find a way of removing and reinstalling the play area in its new location without a gap in play provision.

- It was noted that the cost of removal, storage and reinstallation of play equipment is not included in the budget for the Community Youth Building.
- **Elms Park** - Noted that a complaint has been received about people riding e-scooters through Elms Park. Agreed to use social media / newsletter for regular reminders to people about not using e-scooters in parks and public areas, dog control, dog mess, litter, etc.
- **Queen Elizabeth Circle** – Maintenance of the sandpit is increasing including replacement of the wooden surrounds. Play sand is often scattered in vast amounts (by older children) over other pieces of play equipment in the toddler area which needs to be returned to the pit by the Maintenance Team. The sandpit needs to be topped up each year. This year play sand has proved difficult to source and the cost is increasing. Initial enquiries have taken place with play provider to find an alternative piece of play equipment to the sandpit in the toddler area of the park. Three themed pieces of play equipment have been put forward as a conversation starter / consultation with parents of pre-school children who use the sandpit.
- **Ear Marked Reserves** (EMR) ran through reserves related to assets owned by the Town Council. Agreed EMR to be presented to Environment & Asset Committee meetings alongside with budget vs actual summary.

Maintenance Depot

- The Building Condition Survey advised replacing the roof of the depot building. Following the report preliminary investigations have started on the design i.e. include rooflights or not, roof material, ability to install solar PV, rainwater harvesting. A volunteer who helped project manage work to the museum roof last September has agreed to help draw up a specification for replacing the depot roof ready for tendering. Need to agree a budget and where funds will be drawn from. Report to future Full Council meeting.

Thame Museum

- Carbon Reduction Recommendations Report noted by Town Council.
- Operations Manager has met with two volunteers from the museum to discuss the redecoration of the main exhibit gallery. Quotes are being sought for the work. If agreeable the work is planned to take place in January 2026 when the museum is closed to the public.
- Lease needs to be updated and has been shared with museum committee. Grant funders require continuous ownership for over 10 years, current lease expires in 2029.

Easements

- Mandy / Andrea to work on better data base to record details and provide better accessibility to information.

Any Other Business

- Thame Community Land Trust Development – Windmill Road - reminder that public open space within the development has been given to the Town Council on a long-term lease (which will be accompanied by a commuted sum). First spade in the ground for the development of 31 dwellings is expected in the coming months.
- Items for next agenda – Sustrans / Greenway

Meeting closed at 12 noon.