

Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting

A meeting of the **Environment Committee Meeting** was held on **Monday 13th July 2026** at **19:00 hrs** at **The Chamber Room, The Garth, Launton Road, OX26 2PS**.

Present:

Cllr Les Sibley (**Chair**)
 Cllr Rachel Mallows (**Vice Chair**)
 Cllr Donna Ford
 Cllr Dan Hallett
 Cllr Damien Maguire (arrived at 19:04)
 Cllr Nick Mawer
 Cllr Chris Pruden
 Cllr John Willett

In Attendance:

Michael Lee, Officer
 Isobel May, Events and Marketing Administrator

Representatives from:

Glory Farm Resident
 Kompan
 Wolfson College

13/ 2627 Apologies for Absence
RESOLVED that no apologies were received.
 It was noted that no apologies were received from Cllr Alisa Russell.

14/ 2627 Declarations of Interest
RESOLVED that no declarations of interests were received.

15/ 2627 Minutes of the Environment Committee
RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the **MINUTES** and **RESOLUTIONS** of the following **Environment Committee Meeting** held on:

- **ENV01/2627 – Monday 15th June 2026**

Cllrs requested an update on the bin mapping system. The Officer advised that approximately half of the mapping information has been circulated to Cllrs and confirmed that the remaining information will be distributed once it is complete.

16/ 2627 Public Session
RESOLVED that members of the public were present.
 Representatives from:
 Glory Farm Resident:

- A resident whose property backs onto the green space near Spitfire Park raised concerns about late-night noise and anti-social behaviour. They reported damage to their boundary wall, guttering, roof tiles, and brickwork caused by children playing in the area, as well as vandalism to the wall. The resident requested that the space be converted into a biodiverse area.
- A Cllr spoke on behalf of another resident who reported similar concerns, stating that the noise is disrupting their baby's sleep and forcing them to keep windows closed

during hot weather. They also supported the area being managed as a no-mow, biodiverse space.

17/ Biodiverse Planting Area

2627 RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the proposed biodiverse planting area but on a trial basis.

The Chair changed the order of the agenda by moving this item first as this links to the public session.

Cllrs raised the following:

- Queried the ownership of the land, believed to be owned by CDC, and requested that Officers investigate whether it should be transferred to the Council. The Officer confirmed the Council currently maintains the land under a lease.
- Concerns were raised that converting the area to a no-mow space could displace anti-social behaviour to other locations.
- It was suggested that introducing mounds and varied landscaping could discourage informal football.
- Members proposed a trial of a no-mow, biodiverse approach, with the option of making it permanent if successful.

18/ A presentation to be received by Kompan

2627 RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** and **COMMENTED** on the Presentation.

Kompan Representative:

- Outlined options for the Council to use Kompan for play area inspections, maintenance, and equipment.
- Acknowledged previous communication issues, apologised for the problems at Garth Park Play Area, and confirmed they would act as the Council's dedicated contact.

Cllrs raised the following:

- Sought assurance that communication would be reliable.
- Officers were asked to investigate the costs, potential savings, and implications for the Outdoor Team.
- Members queried Kompan's ability to repair older play equipment.
- It was noted that an improved repair service could reduce future replacement costs.
- Members requested a formal proposal, including costings.

19/ A presentation to be received by Wolfson College

2627 RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** and **COMMENTED** on the Presentation.

University of Oxford Representative:

- Gave an overview of their current research into memorial benches in the UK, with particular reference to Oxfordshire.
- Memorial benches were discussed as an important form of public remembrance, combining commemorative, social and practical functions within public spaces.
- Key policy considerations identified included:
 - accessibility and affordability of memorial benches
 - long-term record keeping and lease management
 - ongoing maintenance responsibilities and associated costs
 - placement of benches and their impact on public spaces
 - management of flowers, and other memorial items
 - the importance of clear and consistently applied policies
- Examples from other local authorities were shared to illustrate the practical challenges and different approaches taken across the country.

Cllrs raised the following:

- Asked whether land ownership is a common issue; the representative confirmed that it is.
- Enquired whether guidance is available on the design of walking routes and the placement of benches. The representative confirmed that best practice guidance includes recommendations on bench design, spacing, and siting to encourage accessibility while helping to reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour.
- Requested that the representative return to review and provide feedback on the Council's policies once they have been drafted.

**20/
2627**

Office IT Equipment Renewal

UNRESOLVED that the Committee **DID NOT APPROVE** the purchase of new IT equipment.

Cllrs agreed this agenda item gets deferred to the next meeting in September with 3 quotations.

**21/
2627**

Ashes Scattering

UNRESOLVED that the Committee **DID NOT APPROVE** the proposed procedure for referral to the Policy Committee and authorise officers to obtain costings for a Garden of Remembrance.

Cllrs raised the following:

- Welcomed the proposal and considered it to be a positive initiative.
- Requested clarification on the legal and ethical implications of the proposal, and officers were asked to investigate and report back.
- recommended removing the word "may" from the procedure to provide greater clarity and certainty.
- Requested that the memorial wall proposal be revisited. They asked for representatives from DL Hancock to attend a future meeting, alongside the mapping consultant once the mapping work has been completed, to help identify a suitable location for a Garden of Remembrance.

**22/
2627**

Allotment Rent and Inspections Report

RESOLVED that the Committee **APPROVED** the issue of Notices to Quit to allotment tenants with outstanding 2026/27 rent and three consecutive failed inspections.

Cllrs also requested for the Officer to provide an updated list of who is on the wait list.

**23/
2627**

Forward Plan

RESOLVED that the Committee **NOTED** and **APPROVED** the forward plan.

Cllrs raised the following:

- Agreed that the installation of additional bike racks in Garth Park should be added to the Forward Plan and authorised officers to progress the work.
- Requested that a date be arranged for the planned playground site visit.
- Requested an update on the Council's vehicle fleet be included on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Cllrs formally recorded their thanks to Isobel for organising the screening of the World Cup Semi-Final.

**24/
2627**

Date of Next Meeting:

Monday 21st September 2026, at 19:00 hrs, The Council Chamber, The Garth, Launton Road, OX26 2PS.

CLOSE OF MEETING: 21:07 hrs