

Minutes of the Council of the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames held in the Council Chamber, Guildhall on Wednesday 20 March 2013.

Present

Cllr Monica Lovatt	Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames
Cllr Andrew Todd	Deputy Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames
Cllr Alice Badcock	
Cllr Marilyn Badcock	
Cllr Michael Badcock	
Cllr Samantha Bowring	
Cllr Jason Fiddaman	
Cllr Jeanette Halliday	
Cllr Angela Lawrence	
Cllr Iain Littlejohn	
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	
Cllr Sandy Lovatt	
Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer	
Cllr Herman Mattheson	
Cllr Penny McDougall	
Cllr Aidan Melville	
Cllr Katie Nobes	
Cllr Helen Pighills	
Cllr Alison Rooke	

In Attendance

Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk
Mrs Sandra Hill	Deputy Town Clerk (Clerk to the Meeting)
Mr Steve Rich	Head of Service Delivery

Two members of the public.

C105 Prayers

The Revd Paul Smith led the meeting in prayer.

C106 Public Participation

No statements were made or questions asked by members of the public.

C107 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Peter Jones and Cllr Lesley Legge.

C108 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

C109 Minutes

Resolved to adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Council of Abingdon-on-Thames held on 16th January 2013.

C110 Matters Arising from the Minutes of 16th January 2013

Page 6- C78 (vi) – 2nd paragraph:

It was noted that a response to the e-mail had not yet been received.

C98 – A73

The Chairman of the Christmas Lights Working Group reported that she met with the installation company who initially denied that they had installed the solar panels incorrectly. On having checked the paperwork, they now agree that the installation was incorrect. As a result of this error, the Council has been offered, free of charge, a battery system for the lights which are worth £34.50 each. The batteries have a life of six weeks and come with a timer mechanism. The situation is still unsatisfactory and another meeting would be arranged to discuss the original costs to the Council. She added that new Christmas lights have been selected.

C111 Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames

- (a) The Council received and considered the schedule of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's engagements for period from 10 January to 14 March 2013.

Resolved to note the engagements.

- (b) The Mayor highlighted the recent opening of the County Hall Museum stating that the event went well, and that HRH the Duke of Gloucester took a great interest in the architectural aspect of the Museum. Letters of thanks have been received from the Duke of Gloucester for the opportunity to open the Museum and for the gift. Oxfordshire's Lord-Lieutenant, Tim Stevenson, conveyed his congratulations on the Council's good organisational skills in relation to the official opening. The Mayor relayed her gratitude to everyone who ensured that the opening was such a success.

The Mayor also relayed her thanks to the Town Clerk, staff and councillors for their work over the past year.

She highlighted that the recent Burns Night Quiz had been a success and gave thanks to all those who supported the event. She has raised a total of £3,600 so far for her charities.

Thanks were also relayed to the Morris Men for their support during her mayoral year.

The annual PhAB event would be taking place on 25 April 2013, and she hoped that councillors would come forward to make a Town Council team.

C112 Questions under Standing Order 10

There were no questions under Standing Order 10.

C113 Finance and General Purposes Committee

Resolved to receive and consider the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 12 March 2013 and to approve any recommendations therein.

C114 County Hall Museum Management Committee

Resolved to receive and consider the minutes of the meeting of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on 26 February 2013, and to approve any recommendations therein.

The Chairman of the County Hall Museum Management Committee relayed her thanks to the Guildhall staff and Duty Manager for hosting guests from the recent Museum opening.

The Chairman of Finance & General Purposes and Leader of the Council conveyed his thanks, on behalf of the Council, to the Chairman of the County Hall Museum Management Committee for her commitment to the museum, and for her contribution to the success of the official Museum opening.

C115 Amenities and Recreation Committee

Resolved to receive and consider the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 20 February 2013, and to approve any recommendations therein.

P 21 - A91 – Green Gym

The Chairman of Amenities and Recreation Committee reported that she and officers of the Council met with Green Gym; they had a long discussion about what Green Gym would like to do, which resulted in a very constructive meeting.

C116 Planning and Highways Committee

Resolved to receive and consider the minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee meetings held on 28 January, 18 February and 11 March 2013, and to approve any recommendations therein.

18 February 2013, P24 – 09 – Neighbourhood Plans

A Member enquired regarding the Town Clerk's research on this matter and enquiries which had been made of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

The Town Clerk reported that there were a variety of different types/formats of Plans which could be produced, according to the needs of the town and that these would be considered by the Planning & Highways Committee. He further reported that representatives of Thame Town Council had been invited to brief the Town Council on their Neighbourhood Plan. A Member stated that whilst the Council could learn from Thame's experience, there were other ways of approaching neighbourhood planning and she felt that another Council should be invited to outline their experience. The Chairman of Planning & Highways Committee reported that they would listen to Thame's briefing and then take a view whether to invite another relevant council.

11 March 2013, P35 – 07 – Planning Decisions

It was reported that the Vale of White Horse District Planning Committee rejected Greene King's planning application. The Chairman of Planning & Highways Committee reported that the Town Clerk had approached Greene King for a meeting; he had chased this matter up but was waiting to hear back.

C117 Guildhall Committee

Resolved to receive and consider the minutes of the Guildhall Committee meetings held 9 January, 13 February and 4 March 2013, and to approve any recommendations therein.

P 39 – 95 – Guildhall Development and Improvements

The Chairman of the Guildhall Committee stated that plans for the development and improvement would be presented to the meeting within the confidential section. Following their consideration these would then be moved to the public record.

C118 Notice of Motion to permanently vary Standing Orders under Standing Order 38

The Standing Orders Working Party, consisting of Cllr Monica Lovatt (Mayor), Cllr Sandy Lovatt and Cllr Alison Rooke met on 14th February and 6th March 2013 and is due to meet again on 19th March 2013 to come forward with its final recommendations in relation to the Standing Orders. It was anticipated that a motion would then be brought forward to the June meeting of the Town Council.

C119 To Receive Notice of Motions under Standing Order 8 as follows

(a). Proposed by Cllr Samantha Bowring, seconded by Cllr Julie Mayhew Archer

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 requires county councils to lead the coordination of flood risk management for surface water, groundwater and smaller water courses in their area. It does not appear from the Oxfordshire County Council website that the county council have a Flood Risk Management Strategy in place. This Council instructs the Town Clerk to write to Oxfordshire County Council and formally request a copy of their Flood Risk Management Strategy document; if this document is not immediately available the Town Clerk will enquire when it will be available, and request a copy as soon as it is published.

It was proposed by Cllr Sandy Lovatt and seconded by Cllr Marilyn Badcock that the Motion should be amended to read:

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 empowers the Environment Agency to required local authorities to lead the coordination of flood risk management for surface water, groundwater and smaller water courses in their area. Since the consultation of Flood Risk Management Strategy in May 2012, a final version has not yet been included on the Oxfordshire County Council website. We understand that this has not yet been agreed by the Environment Agency. This Council instructs the Town Clerk to remind Oxfordshire County Council that our town is strongly affected by seasonal flooding and request that we receive a copy of their Flood Risk Management Strategy document as soon as it is available.

The amendments were accepted by the proposer and seconder of the original motion, and consequently became part of the substantive motion. The Council then **resolved** unanimously to approve the motion that:

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 empowers the Environment Agency to required local authorities to lead the coordination of flood risk management for surface water, groundwater and smaller water courses in their area. Since the consultation of Flood Risk Management Strategy in May 2012, a final version has not yet been included on the Oxfordshire County Council website. We understand that this has not yet been agreed by the Environment Agency. This Council instructs the Town Clerk to remind Oxfordshire County Council that our town is strongly affected by seasonal flooding and request that we receive a copy of their Flood Risk Management Strategy document as soon as it is available.

(b). Proposed by Cllr Samantha Bowring, seconded by Cllr Patrick Lonergan

The developers of the proposed housing site south of Abingdon have appealed against the refusal of planning permission primarily on the grounds of the Vale of

White Horse District council not yet having its new Local Plan in place, and having not identified adequate land for five years housing supply. The vast majority of other similar-tiered councils have their plans in place or are near to doing so. At the public meeting organised by the Town Council it was reported that the Vale's new Local Plan will not be in place until the end of 2014.

This Council therefore urges the Vale of White Horse District Council to do everything it can to get the new Local Plan in place as quickly as possible.

It was proposed that by Cllr Michael Badcock and seconded by Cllr Katie Nobes that the Motion be amended to read:

The developers of the unsustainable proposed housing site on land on Drayton Road south of Abingdon have appealed against the refusal of planning permission primarily on the grounds of the Vale of White Horse District council not yet having its new Local Plan in place, and having not identified adequate land for five years housing supply.

The consultation for the new Local Plan is currently taking place and this Council will therefore work with the Vale of White Horse District Council to do everything it can to get the new local plan in place as quickly as legally possible.

The amendments were accepted by the proposer and seconder of the original motion, and consequently became part of the substantive motion. The Council then **resolved** unanimously to approve the motion that:

The developers of the unsustainable proposed housing site on land on Drayton Road south of Abingdon have appealed against the refusal of planning permission primarily on the grounds of the Vale of White Horse District council not yet having its new Local Plan in place, and having not identified adequate land for five years housing supply.

The consultation for the new Local Plan is currently taking place and this Council will therefore work with the Vale of White Horse District Council to do everything it can to get the new local plan in place as quickly as legally possible.

(c). Proposed by Cllr Marilyn Badcock, seconded by Cllr Alice Badcock

This Council instructs its officers to arrange a Public Meeting in partnership with the Environmental Agency about protecting our homes against flooding.

In speaking to the Motion Cllr Alice Badcock highlighted that those who are affected by flooding should be made aware of what is available to help them protect their homes against flooding.

It was proposed by Cllr Alison Rooke and seconded Cllr Patrick Lonergan for an amendment that *Oxfordshire County Council* should be included, as a partner, in the public meeting. The Motion should therefore be read:

This Council instructs its officers to arrange a Public Meeting in partnership with the Environmental Agency and Oxfordshire County Council about protecting our homes against flooding.

The amendments were accepted by the proposer and seconder of the original motion, and consequently became part of the substantive motion. The Council then **resolved** unanimously to approve the motion that:

This Council instructs its officers to arrange a Public Meeting in partnership with the Environmental Agency and Oxfordshire County Council about protecting our homes against flooding.

(d). Proposed by Cllr Marilyn Badcock, seconded by Cllr Alice Badcock

This Council instructs our officers to arrange for the plaque of Queen Elizabeth II opening the Museum to be moved from where it is currently hidden by our new signage and place it with that of HRH the Duke of Gloucester in full view of the public.

On speaking to the Motion Cllr Marilyn Badcock highlighted that the plaque needed to be clearly displayed and on view for all to see.

In response it was highlighted that permission would need to be sought from English Heritage and the Vale of White Horse District Council as the County Hall Museum was a listed building. The Council therefore need to seriously consider where both plaques should go. It was suggested that this should be discussed by the County Hall Museum Management Committee under Standing Order 18 for recommendation to Town Council.

On being put to the vote it was resolved unanimously resolved that officers investigate the relocation of the plaque and the Motion to then be considered by the County Hall Museum Management Committee.

C120 Internal Control and the Management of Risk

The Town Clerk spoke to his report and apologised for tabling it at the meeting.

Resolved to note the report and endorse the Corporate Risk Assessment Action Plan, and that the Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames should sign on behalf of the Council.

C121 Calendar of Meetings

Resolved to approve the draft calendar of meetings for the 2013/2014 municipal year.

C122 Election of Mayor

It was proposed by Cllr Sandy Lovatt and seconded by Cllr Marilyn Badcock that Cllr Andrew Todd be nominated as Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames for the 2013/2014 civic year.

It was proposed by Cllr Alison Rooke and seconded by Cllr Helen Pighills that Cllr Samantha Bowring be nominated as Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames for the 2013/2014 civic year.

Resolved that these nominations be put forward at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 8th May 2013.

(For the avoidance of doubt , by statute the appointment of the Mayor is wholly within the power of the Annual Meeting, including the power of that meeting to consider any other nominations).

C123 Election of Deputy Mayor

It was proposed by Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer, seconded by Cllr Patrick Lonergan and **resolved** that Cllr Angela Lawrence be nominated as Deputy Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames for the 2013/2014 civic year.

(For the avoidance of doubt , the appointment of the Deputy Mayor is wholly within the power of the Annual Meeting, including the power of that meeting to consider any other nominations).

C124 Exclusion of the Public, Including the Press

The Mayor will move:

“That in accordance with section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted as summarised below.”

SECTION II (Excluding the public and the press)

C125 Confidential appendix to the Town Council meeting

Resolved to approve the confidential appendix to the Town Council meeting of 16 January 2013 as a correct record.

C126 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Resolved to receive and consider the confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 12 March and to approve any recommendations therein.

C127 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee

Resolved to receive and consider the confidential appendix to the minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on 26 February 2013, and to approve any recommendations therein.

There was an adjournment of the meeting at this point, it being 8.25 pm. The meeting resumed at 8.35 pm at which point Cllr Jeanette Halliday left the meeting.

The Council’s professional advisors, Mr David Boyd (architect), Mr Dan Lewandowski (architect) and Mr Peter Turvey (quantity surveyor) joined the meeting for discussion of the following item.

C128 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Guildhall Committee

Resolved to receive and consider the confidential appendix to the minutes of the Guildhall Committee held on 13 February and 4 March 2013 and to approve any recommendations therein.

13 February 2013, P57 – G102 – Property Matters

It was **resolved** that delegation be given to the Guildhall Committee regarding the licence agreement between Oakman Inns and Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council.

Cllr Penny McDougall left the meeting at this point, the time being 8.45pm.

Standing Orders were suspended in order for a presentation and debate to take place in respect of the Guildhall Development & Improvements.

The architects presented six options in order for the Council to decide:

- which one it wishes to take forward for further consideration;
- whether it wishes to stage all the options, subject to building feasibility, remain under consideration – subject to further developments in relation to financing of the project.
- how the Council wishes to seek the public's opinion.

Members emphasised that the needs of disabled people and all other groups should be considered within the plans.

In response to a question, the Town Clerk confirmed that the Council's powers to operate and develop the Guildhall were contained in section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972.

After questions and discussion the following recommendations were considered and **resolved**:

- 1 That the architectural plans and associated costings in relation to the Guildhall Phase 2 project, produced by the Council's project team, as summarised in the report of the Town Clerk and the professional team, be approved.

In relation to the options to be considered as part of the public engagement process an amendment was moved to delete option 6; this was lost by 2 votes For, 11 votes Against and 2 Abstentions.

- 2 That options 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 be taken forward for further consideration.
- 3 That the architectural plans and any agreed phasing be subject to public engagement. The planning for the public engagement exercise to be delegated to the Project Team as in resolution 4 (below) with a report going to the next Guildhall Committee regarding the plans being made. It should be noted that, whilst the engagement would focus on the plans, there would be a statement over the likely funding options and approximate costs.
- 4 That authority to agree the detailed text required to support the public engagement process be delegated to the Project Team which consisting of the Chairman of the Guildhall Committee, Cllr Iain Littlejohn, Cllr Alison Rooke, Town Clerk and the Guildhall Manager.
- 5 That the plans be further evaluated by the Guildhall Committee following the public engagement exercise, and that the Committee make recommendations in relation to phasing of the work, and proposals for funding the cost of the work.
- 6 That authority be given to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Guildhall Committee, to release information relating to the Guildhall Phase 2 project into the public domain, subject to his discretion that certain items should remain confidential.

The meeting rose at 10.05pm

Signed Date