

Minutes of the Council of the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames held in the Council Chamber, Guildhall on Wednesday 28th November 2012

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 Lesley Legge	
Cllr Iain Littlejohn	
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	
Cllr Sandy Lovatt	
Cllr Hermann Matteson	
Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer	
Cllr Penny McDougall	
Cllr Katie Nobes	
Cllr Helen Pighills	
Cllr Alison Rooke	

In Attendance

Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting)
Mr Steve Rich	Head of Service Delivery

C65 Prayers

The Rector, Rev Dr Charles Miller, led the meeting in prayers.

C66 Public Participation

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

C67 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Peter Jones and Cllr Angela Lawrence.

C68 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of pecuniary interest

None.

Other interests

Cllr Alice Badcock declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Minute C72, Finance and General Purposes Committee F47 Grants Sub-Committee, as a member of the Abingdon Vale Netball Club

Cllr Lesley Legge declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Minute C78 (v) Motions under Standing Order 8, as a trustee of the South and Vale Carers' Centre.

Cllr Iain Littlejohn declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Minute C78 (viii) Motions under Standing Order 8, as a member of the Steering Group for the Abingdon-on-Thames Science Festival.

C69 Minutes

The Council received and considered the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19th September 2012.

The Town Clerk updated Members regarding the impact on the council tax base and the precept of the localisation of Council Tax support. This meant that the Council would not be in a position to agree its budget for 2013/14 until January 2013. He referred to the recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee (F50/3) that the Council meeting scheduled to consider the budget on 19th December 2012 should be cancelled. Instead a briefing on the budget would be held for Members on 19th December 2012. The budget would then be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 8th January 2013. The Committee would examine the Council's overall budget in order to make a recommendation to the full Council over the budget and its funding, and the precept and council tax would be set at the Council meeting on 16th January 2013.

Resolved to adopt and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Council of Abingdon-on-Thames held on 19th September 2012.

C70 Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames

The Council received and considered the schedule of the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's engagements for the period from 20th September to 17th November 2012, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved to note the above engagements.

C71 Questions under Standing Order 10

None

C72 Finance and General Purposes Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Sandy Lovatt and seconded by Cllr Marilyn Badcock that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 13th November 2012.

In relation to Minute F47 (Grants Sub-Committee) a Member noted that in relation to the South and Vale Carers' Centre, where a grant of £1,000 had been awarded, there was a note "they should also be informed to apply for a grant from the Vale of White Horse District". The Member stated that District Council grants are for capital, and not the revenue funding which this application sought, and therefore this needed to be reflected in any advice which was being given by this Council.

Resolved that the Council receive and adopt the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 13th November 2012 and to approve any recommendations contained therein.

Cllr Alice Badcock declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item at minute F47 as a member of the Abingdon Vale Netball Club.

C73 County Hall Museum Management Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer and seconded by Cllr Jason Fiddaman that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the meeting of the County Hall Management Committee held on 6th November 2012, as circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer, drew Members' attention to the award which had been presented to the Museum by the Oxford Preservation Trust, which had been received on behalf of the Council by the Mayor, Cllr Monica Lovatt. She stated that this award was a great honour and that the Museum Project had been in strong competition with other worthy projects.

Resolved that the Council receive and adopt the minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on 6th November 2012 and approve any recommendations contained therein.

C74 Amenities and Recreation Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Marilyn Badcock and seconded by Cllr Andrew Todd that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 7th November 2012, as circulated with the agenda.

In response to a query against Minute 57, Notice Boards and Street Furniture, the Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Marilyn Badcock, stated that the matter of notice boards had been referred to the Amenities and Recreation Committee by the Communications Sub-Committee so that a plan and programme could be set out.

Resolved that the Council receive and adopt the minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 7th November 2012 and approve any recommendations contained therein.

C75 Planning and Highways Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Michael Badcock and seconded by Cllr Alice Badcock that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee meetings held on 1st October, 22nd October and 12th November 2012, as circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Michael Badcock, referred to Minute 08-23 of the meeting of 12th November 2012. He had discussed this matter with the Town Clerk and taking into account the Committee's objections to the major application for the proposed erection of 120 residential dwellings off the Drayton Road, the Town Clerk had instructed an experienced planning advisor to advise on this matter and ensure that the Council's strong objections were detailed clearly and in the best way. A copy of the Council's submission to the Vale of White Horse District Council would be circulated to Members in due course.

A Member reminded the Council that there were provisions within the Standing Orders to allow for substitute Members to be appointed to attend and vote at Planning meetings if a Committee Member were unable to attend (Standing Order 38 (1e)).

Resolved that the Council receive and adopt the minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee meetings of 1st October, 22nd October and 12th November and approve any recommendations therein.

C76 Guildhall Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Iain Littlejohn and seconded by Cllr Marilyn Badcock that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the Guildhall Committee meetings held on 4th October and 14th November 2012.

In response to a query, the Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Iain Littlejohn, stated that at Minute 63 the unused open space referred to which the Committee wished to explore as potential additional car-parking space should more accurately be referred to as “the unused open space adjacent to Roysse Court / the Roysse Room and on the west side of the Guildhall car park”.

Cllr Alice Badcock referred to the recent flooding in Abingdon, and the flood warnings which had been in place. She stated that contingency plans had been put into operation for the Guildhall to be opened up as a rest centre which had meant that staff had been placed on standby, although thankfully the Guildhall had not needed to have been used. She proposed that in the light of the recent weather and the flooding situation in Abingdon-on-Thames, the Council extended its thanks to the Environment Agency, local Fire Brigade, its own staff and other local authority staff for all the extra work they had been doing on behalf of the local community sometimes above their normal hours. She suggested that the Council request that the Town Clerk write and thank the necessary organisations whilst reminding them that the Town Council were willing to be of continued assistance if required.

In supporting this Cllr Michael Badcock asked that his thanks be conveyed to those staff who had attended with him together with Cllr Alice Badcock and a member of the Fire and Rescue service to review the situation late on the evening of 26th November 2012. Members supported that the action outlined above be taken.

Resolved that the Council receive and adopt the minutes of the Guildhall Committee meetings of 4th October and 14th November 2012 and to approve any recommendations therein.

C77 Notice of Motion to permanently vary Standing Orders

Members noted that at the Council Meeting of 19th September 2012 it had been proposed by Cllr Sandy Lovatt and seconded by Cllr Alison Rooke that Standing Order 38 – List of Committees be amended by adding the words “(e) *Guildhall – Five Members*”. In accordance with Standing Order 34 (Variation, Revocation and Suspension of Standing Orders) this Motion had been adjourned to the current meeting of the Town Council.

It was resolved that the above Motion be approved and the Council's Standing Orders be amended accordingly.

C78 Motions under Standing Order 8

It was proposed by Cllr Helen Pighills and seconded by Cllr Lesley Legge that:

- (i) *This Council resolves to begin the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Abingdon-on-Thames and that this process should be undertaken as soon as possible, side by side with the Vale of White Horse District Council's developing Local Plan, in order to ensure that a robust, complementary,*

compliant and sustainable set of planning guidelines is available to Planning Committees in making their decisions.

This Council further welcomes the intention of the Vale of the White Horse District Council to bring forward proposals to share a proportion of the DCLG funding to support Neighbourhood Plans with Parish Councils to enable them to bring forward their plans as soon as possible.

There was detailed discussion regarding the advantages and disadvantages of developing a Neighbourhood Plan, and the timing of such a plan. The Chairman of the Planning and Highways Committee, Cllr Michael Badcock, stated that this was a matter which he intended to bring to that Committee in the New Year.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was lost by nine votes in favour to ten against and consequently not adopted.

- (ii) It was proposed by Cllr Alice Badcock and seconded by Cllr Jason Fiddaman:

That this Council create a dedicated webpage whose sole purpose is to keep Abingdon-on-Thames residents aware of any new major planning applications within the town boundaries and to update them on any applications which are currently going through the planning process by listing these applications through a link to the District Council website. Major applications will be defined as such by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning and Highways Committee.

This webpage should be on our current website but also be integrated into the new portal when it is developed. Information should include how residents can comment on an application and also what are considered to be material considerations with regard to planning applications. The webpage would make it clear that the Town Council is a consultee in the planning process, and that it is the Vale of WHDC which is the local planning authority and makes decisions on applications.

The Webpage will commence with the proposed housing development in South Abingdon (land east of Drayton Road) – P12/V2266/FUL; and the proposed generation of hydro electricity from the River Thames using two Archimedes screws (land at Abbey Meadow) – application P12/V2111/FUL.

An amendment proposed by Cllr Samantha Bowring and seconded by Cllr Lesley Legge that the words “*within the town boundaries*” be substituted by the words “*affecting the town*” was debated and approved by 15 votes to 0 against and 4 abstentions.

This then became part of the substantive motion and following debate it was **resolved** by 19 votes in favour and 0 against:

That this Council create a dedicated webpage whose sole purpose is to keep Abingdon-on-Thames residents aware of any new major planning applications affecting the town and to update them on any applications which are currently going through the planning process by listing these applications through a link to the District Council website. Major applications will be defined as such by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning and Highways Committee.

This webpage should be on our current website but also be integrated into the new portal when it is developed. Information should include how residents can comment on an application and also what are considered to be material considerations with regard to planning applications. The webpage would make it clear that the Town Council is a consultee in the planning process, and that it is the Vale of WHDC which is the local planning authority and makes decisions on applications.

The Webpage will commence with the proposed housing development in South Abingdon (land east of Drayton Road) – P12/V2266/FUL; and the proposed generation of hydro electricity from the River Thames using two Archimedes screws (land at Abbey Meadow) – application P12/V2111/FUL.

- (iii) It was proposed by Cllr Jeanette Halliday and seconded by Cllr Penny Mc Dougall that:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council would like to express thanks to all past and present officers and councillors of the Vale of White Horse District Council who worked for many years to negotiate for the refurbishment of the Abbey Centre. It notes with pleasure the imminent completion of Phase 1 of the scheme and asks the Chief Executive to urge the developers to erect appropriate shelters in the main concourse of the Centre.

Cllr Sandy Lovatt moved an amendment, seconded by Cllr Marilyn Badcock, to amend the motion by removing various words as indicated below:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council would like to express thanks to all past and present officers ~~and councillors~~ of the Vale of White Horse District Council who worked for many years to negotiate for the refurbishment of the Abbey Centre. It notes with pleasure the imminent completion of Phase 1 of the scheme ~~and asks the Chief Executive to urge the developers to erect appropriate shelters in the main concourse of the Centre.~~

Following debate the amendment was approved by 11 votes in favour to 8 votes against, and became the substantive motion.

The proposer, Cllr Jeanette Halliday, requested permission to withdraw the motion, as she considered that an important part of the motion, in relation to requesting the installation of appropriate shelters, had been removed. The Standing Orders (13 I) required unanimous consent of the Council to allow this, and this consent was withheld.

The motion was therefore put to the vote and it was **resolved** by 15 votes in favour and 4 abstentions that:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council would like to express thanks to all past and present officers of the Vale of White Horse District Council who worked for many years to negotiate for the refurbishment of the Abbey Centre. It notes with pleasure the imminent completion of Phase 1 of the scheme.

- (iv) It was proposed by Cllr Samantha Bowring and seconded by Cllr Lesley Legge that:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council has given a substantial revenue grant towards the cost of running the open air pool at Abbey Meadow for a number

of years. The Town Council urges the Vale of White Horse District Council to include appropriate sums in its capital budget for 2013/14 and subsequent years to permit necessary works to be carried out to the Abbey Meadow Swimming Pool so that Abingdon-on-Thames residents can enjoy this facility for years to come.

Resolved (unanimously) that the above motion be approved.

- (v) It was proposed by Cllr Jeanette Halliday and seconded by Cllr Lesley Legge that:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council urges the Vale of White Horse District Council to include an appropriate sum in its revenue budget for 2013/14 to allow for the community revenue grants scheme to be re-established in order that community groups and organisations may continue to promote the vitality of the town and the well being of the community.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was lost by nine votes in favour to ten against and consequently not adopted.

(Cllr Lesley Legge declared a non-pecuniary interest in this matter as a trustee of the Vale and South Carers Centre).

- (vi) It was proposed by Cllr Jeanette Halliday and seconded by Cllr Penny McDougall that:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council urges the Vale of White Horse District Council to allocate its capital and revenue grants budgets on a per capita basis when making allocations to its area committees.

Following debate the motion was put to the vote and it was **resolved** by 18 votes in favour, 0 against and 1 abstention, that the motion be approved.

- (vii) It was proposed by Cllr Samantha Bowring and seconded by Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer that:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council commits to paying all its employees a living wage as set by Centre for Research in Social Policy and to apply to become an accredited living wage employer.

Following a point of order from Cllr Sandy Lovatt, the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, the Mayor referred this motion to that Committee under standing order 21, noting that a mechanism to discuss this matter was already in place under minute F59/12.

- (viii) It was proposed by Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer and seconded by Samantha Bowring that:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council welcomes the Science Festival to Abingdon in 2014 and asks the Finance and General Purposes Committee in January 2013 to consider setting aside a sum in the estimates for a grant to the Festival.

Following debate the motion was put to the vote and it was **resolved** by 18 votes in favour, 0 against and 1 abstention, that the motion be approved.

Cllr Iain Littlejohn declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to this motion, as a member of the Steering Group for the Abingdon-on-Thames Science Festival.

C79 Local Code of Conduct and Dispensations

The Council received and considered the report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above, as circulated with the agenda.

It was proposed by Cllr Michael Badcock and seconded by Cllr Patrick Lonergan and **resolved** that:

1. *The Council grant Members a dispensation under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 in order that Members can participate in discussion and vote on the setting of the Council's precept;*
2. *This dispensation be granted up to and including 10th May 2015.*

C80 Exclusion of the Public, Including the Press

The Mayor moved and it was **resolved**:

"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)

C81 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Resolved to receive the confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 14th November 2012. (Note: no recommendations).

C82 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee.

Resolved to receive the confidential appendix to the minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on 6th November 2012 (Note: recommendation previously approved by the Finance and General Purposes Committee).

C83 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Amenities & Recreation Committee

Resolved to receive the confidential appendix to the minutes of the Amenities & Recreation Committee held on 7th November 2012 (Note: no recommendations).

C84 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Guildhall Committee.

Minute 63: A Member stated that storage for Museum artefacts needed to be considered.

In relation to the recommendation in the confidential appendix, minute G75 B (3) of 14th November 2012, an amendment was moved to add “subject to final approval by the Town Council” to the minute and this was **approved**.

Resolved to receive the confidential appendix to the minutes of the Guildhall Committee held on 4th October and 14th November 2012 and the recommendations contained therein.

The meeting rose at 9.15pm