

**Draft minutes of the special meeting of the Council of the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2012 at 6.00pm in the Committee Room at the Old Abbey House, Abingdon**

**Present:**

Cllr Monica Lovatt	Mayor
Cllr Andrew Todd	Deputy Mayor
Cllr Alice Badcock	
Cllr Marilyn Badcock	
Cllr Michael Badcock	
Cllr Samantha Bowring	
Cllr Jason Fiddaman	
Cllr Angela Lawrence	
Cllr Sandy Lovatt	
Cllr Hermann Matheson	
Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer	
Cllr Penny McDougall	
Cllr Helen Pighills	
Cllr Alison Rooke	

**In attendance:**

Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting)
Mr Derek Kemp	DCK Beavers Ltd.

34. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from the following Councillors: Cllrs Peter Jones; Lesley Legge, Iain Littlejohn; Aidan Melville and Katie Nobes.

35. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Michael Badcock; Marilyn Badcock and Sandy Lovatt declared a personal interest in any matters relating to Oxfordshire County Council as they are members of that authority. Cllrs Michael Badcock; Marilyn Badcock; Jason Fiddaman; Angela Lawrence; Sandy Lovatt; Julie Mayhew-Archer; and Helen Pighills declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Vale of White Horse District Council as they are members of that authority, and in particular, the matters relating to the Electoral Review of the Vale of White Horse, and also the County Hall Museum, as the latter receives Grant Aid from the District Council.

36. **Approval of Financial Statements and Annual Return**

The Mayor introduced Mr Derek Kemp of DCK Beavers who provided accountancy support to the Town Council. Mr Kemp introduced the Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 and presented them to Members, explaining the format of the Financial Statements and answering questions. Members then moved on to consider the Annual

Return for the year, which would be submitted to the auditors, BDO. It was proposed by Cllr Sandy Lovatt, seconded by Cllr Marilyn Badcock and **resolved** unanimously:

1. that the Accounting Statements (section 1 of the Annual Return) for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 be approved and signed on behalf of the Council by the Mayor and the Town Clerk;
2. that the Annual Governance Statement (section 2 of the Annual Return), with questions 1-9 answered “yes”, be approved on behalf of the Council by the Mayor and the Town Clerk;
3. that Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 (unaudited) be approved and signed on behalf of the Council by the Mayor and the Town Clerk.

*(Councillor Helen Pighills entered the meeting during discussion of this item, it being 6.20pm)*

### 37. **Electoral Review of Vale of White Horse**

Members received and considered the letter from the Local Government Boundary Commission dated 20<sup>th</sup> June 2012 in relation to the next phase of the Electoral Review of the Vale of White Horse. It was noted that the consultation period was from 20<sup>th</sup> June -28<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

Members reiterated their previous view that the size of the District Council should not be reduced but noted the correspondence that the Commission were minded to reduce the size of the Council from 51 to 38 members. It was noted that the review of the County Council boundaries had divided Abingdon into three divisions and if co-terminosity was to be achieved, the number of the Abingdon members on the District Council and the size of the Town Council needed to be a multiple of three. Members considered that if the size of the District Council were to be reduced, then the number of Abingdon members should be reduced from 14 to 12 rather than from 14 to 9. Whilst acknowledging the way the system works, Members considered that it was regrettable that the review of the County Council divisions had taken place prior to that of the District Council.

It was noted that it would be necessary to have a special meeting during the summer months to consider the Town Council’s position and so that the Town Council could put forward proposals. Members felt that it would be valuable to consider the position in the light of proposals which would emerge at the District Council. It was suggested that the Town Council should meet prior to the District Council’s meeting. The Town Council’s response to the District Council’s proposals, and the Town Council’s proposals should then be presented by the Mayor to the meeting of the District Council.

Following the District Council meeting, Members felt that the Town Council should then hold another special meeting in order to consider its final recommendation to the Boundary Commission for England. It was noted that at this stage there was no date for the special District Council meeting and so it was not yet possible to arrange the special meetings.

#### **Resolved:**

1. that a special meeting of the Town Council be called by the Mayor to consider the Council’s response to the second stage of the Electoral Review of the Vale of White Horse. It was noted that the Mayor would need to call this meeting before the meeting of the District Council, which is being held for the same purpose and that in

- order to have sight of the District Council's proposals, it was likely that this meeting would be a few days ahead of the District Council's meeting;
2. that the Mayor attend the special meeting of the District Council and put forward the Town Council's views in relation to this phase of the review;
  3. that following the special meeting of the District Council a further special meeting of the Town Council be called by the Mayor to consider the Council's submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission. Again it was noted that depending on the timing of the District Council meeting, the window of dates to convene this meeting may be very narrow.

*(Cllr Alice Badcock entered the meeting during discussion of this item, it being 6.36pm)*

38. **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 (as extended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

39. **County Hall Museum**

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above. It was **resolved** by 12 votes in favour and two abstentions that the Council does not charge for education and learning activities at County Hall Museum.

The meeting rose at 6.59 pm.