

## Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

### Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 at 7.00pm.

*Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this meeting was held online in accordance with  
The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local  
Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020  
("the 2020 Regulations")*

#### **Present:**

Councillor Jim Halliday                      Chair  
Councillor Charlie Birks  
Councillor Samantha Bowring  
Councillor Grace Clifton  
Councillor Eric de la Harpe  
Councillor Robert Maddison

#### **In Attendance:**

Mr Stephen Rich                              Assistant Town Clerk & Head of Services  
    (Clerk to the meeting)  
Mr Tim Badcock                              Cemetery and Works Supervisor

#### A15. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Andrew Coveney.

#### A16. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### A17. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was **resolved** the Minutes of the previous meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### A18. **Matters Arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

Minute A12 - Cremated Remains – the meeting was informed that the creation of a garden area to accept the scattering of cremated remains was in the programme of works for the Council to be carried out at a future date.

Minutes A15 – Roundabouts in Abingdon – There had been no further update on this matter and the Tesco and McDonald’s roundabout continued to look untidy and poorly maintained. Councillor Eric de la Harpe was asked to keep the pressure on the District Council for a resolution of this matter. The Chair also asked if information could be gained from Henley and Thame to see how the roundabouts in their areas are maintained.

Minute A26 – Notice Boards – The Cemetery and Works Supervisor informed the meeting that he hoped to get the two new notice boards installed soon. The Committee was reminded of the social distancing rule which made installation difficult.

Members were informed that despite several reminders the company asked to design a round notice board for the Market Place had not produced a proposal. Members discussed the options available but preferred to keep to the round design although, because of the current pandemic felt this action could be treated as a low priority at the present time.

Minute A47 – Spring Road Cemetery Grazing -The Cemetery and Works Supervisor informed the meeting that a beehive had been successfully installed in the Spring Road Cemetery and that everything seemed to be going according to plan and the hive was healthy. However, due to circumstances beyond the Council’s control, the grazing of sheep would have to be postponed for the time being until the Cemetery and Works Supervisor could find another contact.

Minute A48 – Spring Garden Cemetery Lodge Shower – due to the pandemic restrictions this project has been delayed. However, the Cemetery and Works Supervisor will discuss with the contractor a date for installation.

Minute A49 – Benches in St Helen’s Wharf – All benches on St. Helen’s Wharf have now been replaced.

Minute A59 – Tree Survey and Planting – Requests for tenders have been issued with two companies showing interest. The result of the tender exercise will be known shortly.

Minute A64 – Bus Shelters – The Boundary House (south) bus shelter on the Oxford Road should be installed in October. The new Vineyard shelter was under discussion with suppliers recommended by the County Council.

Minute A66 – Bicycle Rack Outside Abbey Cinema – Six cycle rack have been ordered for outside the Abbey Hall cinema. The Chair asked that the County Council be chased for the replacement cycle racks in the High Street which were damaged over a year ago in a vehicle accident. (At the time of writing these minutes these cycle racks have now been replaced).

Item A68 – Plaque to commemorate 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Twinning with Schongau, Bavaria – Due to manufacturing delays because of the pandemic the order was cancelled as the plaque could not be guaranteed for the summer floral season. After discussion on a Twinning finger signpost Councillor Lorraine Oates said she would go back to the Abingdon Twinning Society for further talks on twinning signage.

The Committee, on a request of the Chair, resolved to approve funding of up to £500 for the refurbishment of the finger signpost at the Unicorn Theatre in the Abbey buildings.

A19. **Financial Report**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Treasurer / Responsible Finance Officer for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 as circulated with the agenda. The Committee **resolved** to approve the report. The Committee wished to minute their thanks to the Treasurer/ RFO for the comprehensive reports written for the Amenity and Recreation Committee.

A20. **Cemetery and Works Supervisor's Report**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Cemetery and Works Supervisor as circulated with the agenda. It was **resolved** to accept the report.

A21 **Fishing – Abingdon Waters**

The Cemetery and Works Supervisor informed the meeting that there were problems along part of Wilsham Road with fishermen blocking the pathway and endangering the public when fishing. Records could not be found regarding the rights to fish along Wilsham Road and the Committee were therefore asked to prohibit the use of the railed area for fishing along that stretch of the road.

After discussion the Committee **resolved** that the area of Wilsham Road which is railed and has a walkway should not be used for fishing purposes.

The Cemetery and Works Supervisor said he would get the appropriate signage prohibiting fishing installed.

A22. **New Cemetery**

The Committee were informed that no further progress had been made on the new cemetery but contact had been established with the District Council's new property officer. The new officer had expressed concerns over the land offered by the District Council but was to make further enquiries.

The Chair asked Councillors Maddison and de la Harpe to let him know who the District Council Member for property was and he would also make enquiries regarding land adjoining the Spring Garden Cemetery.

A23. **Abingdon Fairs and Remembrance Day**

Members were reminded that at the Town Council meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020 the decision was made to cancel both the Michaelmas and Runaway fairs due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

With regard to Remembrance Day it was **resolved** that the decision on any activity on that day be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Chair of Amenities and Recreation and the Mayor of Abingdon.

A24. **Abingdon In Bloom**

The Committee were informed that the winter display of blooms had been ordered and, would consist of a colourful mix of polyanthus and wallflowers.

The Committee discussed the arrangements for the 2021 Summer floral displays and resolved that the colour scheme should be vibrant throughout the town.

A25. **Environmental Implications**

The Committee considered environmental implications in relation to matters on the agenda having regard to the Council's resolution on the Climate Change Emergency. Members felt that environmental matters had been fully considered during discussions on agenda items.

A26. **Publicity**

The Committee felt there should be a press release from the Town Council as soon as details for Remembrance Day were known.

A27. **Items for Next Meeting**

Members were informed that they could email officers with items, with an appropriate narrative, for inclusion in future agendas of the committee. Councillor de la Harpe requested an item be put on the agenda regarding funding for cycling ideas and what the Council could do in this respect. Councillor de la Harpe was informed that this was not under this committee's terms of reference and perhaps it should be directed to the Planning, Highways and Consultation Committee or the Traffic Advisory Committee.

A28. **Dates of future meetings**

Members were informed that the Amenities and Recreation Committee would next meet on the following dates:

- 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020
- 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021
- 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021

A29 **Mr S. Rich**

The Chair, Cllr Jim Halliday, informed the meeting that this was the last meeting Mr Steve Rich, Assistant Town Clerk and Head of Services would attend the Amenities and Recreation Committee as he was due to his upcoming retirement. He thanked Mr Rich for his 19 years' service to the Amenities and Recreation Committee and wished him well in his retirement.

A30 **Exclusion of the public, including the press**

The Chair moved:

*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.*

Items discussed:

1. To receive the Confidential Appendix of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020. and discuss matters arising therein. **Resolved:** that the confidential appendix to the meeting of the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020 be approved as a correct record.

The meeting rose at 9.00pm.

Signed ..... Date .....  
Chair