

**Draft minutes of the Council of the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames held on
Wednesday 17th October 2018 in the Main Hall, North East Abingdon
Community Association, Lindsay Drive
Abingdon-on-Thames, OX14 2RT**

Present

Cllr Margaret Crick	Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames
Cllr David Pope	Deputy Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames
Cllr Alice Badcock	
Cllr Mike Badcock	
Cllr Samantha Bowring	
Cllr Neil Fawcett	
Cllr Dennis Garrett	
Cllr Robert Hall	
Cllr Jeanette Halliday	
Cllr Brian Hedley	
Cllr Vicky Jenkins	
Cllr Angela Lawrence	
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	
Cllr Monica Lovatt	
Cllr Sandy Lovatt	
Cllr Helen Pighills	
Cllr Andrew Todd	

In Attendance

County Cllr Alison Rooke	Abingdon East Division
Mr Steve Rich	Assistant Town Clerk/ Head of Services
Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting)
Mrs Susan Whipp	Treasurer / RFO
Rev Mary Williamson	Duty Associate Priest, Abingdon-on-Thames

8 members of the public and the press.

SECTION I (Open to the Public Including the Press)

C35 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Lorraine Oates and Jan Morter.

C36 **Prayers**

Rev Mary Williamson led the meeting in prayer.

C37 Public Participation

a) Presentation of Grant Cheques to Local Organisations

The Mayor, Cllr Margaret Crick, stated that the Council had awarded a number of local organisations grants through the Community Services Committee and was pleased to present cheques to those organisations as follows:

1. ATOM Festival of Science received a grant of £1,000 towards the ATOM Festival – cheque presented to Dave Pennington.
2. Dance Creative received a grant of £800 towards a Falls Prevention Dance Class based at the Abingdon Health and Wellbeing Centre – cheque presented to Denise Watts.
3. Thames Valley Police received a grant of £150 to go towards the delivery of accredited training for representatives of groups /charities / organisations that regularly work with young people- cheque presented to PC Sarah Merritt.

It was noted that the Community Services Committee (minute C46) had also approved a grant of £1,000 to All Saints Methodist Church, Abingdon in relation to their project “to create three separate toilet areas which can be associated with the three main hiring areas and to provide disabled toilet access at each of these three areas.”

b) Dr Jim Halliday

Following a statement which had been made by Dr Jim Halliday at the Guildhall Committee it had been suggested that he address the full Council regarding broadband in Abingdon town centre. The Town Clerk stated that Dr Jim Halliday was unable to attend the meeting and read out the statement as minuted at the Guildhall Committee.

Dr Halliday stated that he had read in Committee papers that the WiFi capability in the Guildhall would be compromised by the slow broadband speeds.

Dr Halliday advised Members that the Government, County and District Councils had put together a £35M scheme to deliver high-speed broadband to properties in Oxfordshire which would, through the market, not have received high-speed broadband. This meant that 96% of properties in the area could now be served by high-speed broadband but unfortunately this improved coverage had not extended to Abingdon town centre. This was because it had previously been considered that high speed broadband provision in the town centre was commercially viable and therefore not requiring subsidy.

Indeed BT Open reach had planned to upgrade two town centre cabinets but this plan had been cancelled in July 2018 on the grounds that it was not

commercially viable at present for them to proceed. The county-wide assessment of commercial viability (the Open Market review) would not be repeated until three years after the last review, by which time the current subsidy scheme would have finished.

Dr Halliday stated that there were various Government grants available to upgrade broadband but it seemed that these were more applicable to village communities, and required a group of affected people/businesses to progress this matter but finding out who was affected was difficult as this information was deemed “commercially sensitive.”

He asked if the Town Council would be willing to work with local residents to press for broadband speeds in the town centre to be improved.

c) Mr Frank Watters

Mr Watters stated that he was speaking on behalf of Abingdon Traders and would like to ask for the continued support of the Town Council. He made the following points/ asked the following questions:

1. *As you are aware the BID (Business Improvement District) is in the process of being closed down. The bank accounts have been frozen.*
2. *Despite efforts from Layla Moran and various traders, we have been unable to obtain the following requested information from the two active directors of the BID Bryan Brown and Paul Holt.*
3. *When are the full accounts going to be disclosed and available to the traders?*
4. *How much money is in the BID account and who does it belong to?*
5. *What have In Publications done with the approx. £200K of levy payers' money and are they proposing to return the unspent money?*
6. *Are any businesses likely to receive a rebate for year 1 and 2 contributions that have been made?*
7. *Given that Cllr Lovatt – despite not being authorised by the Vale and Town Council – attended board meetings – could he shed any light on the above?*

In relation to Question 7, Cllr Sandy Lovatt stated that he had had very little to do with the BID during the period since the traders' petition had been served and he now had no contact. Cllr Lovatt stated that he had served on the BID Advisory

Board specifically in relation to the Vale of White Horse District Council matters which pertained to the BID. He had not been part of the management of the BID. The BID was managed as an independent company and its management was the responsibility of the BID directors.

The Leader, Cllr Mike Badcock, stated that whilst Mr Watter's questions were ones for the BID management he was content to continue to work with the traders to seek a resolution in relation to matters.

A member asked the Leader whether the sums referred to by Mr Watters included BID levy contributed by Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council; if so, how much money was involved; he also asked that this matter be reported back to the Council. The Treasurer / RFO stated that she had already contacted the District Council and they had confirmed that the Town Council were due to receive a refund in relation to part of the BID levy.

(d) Mrs Pat Bryden

Mrs Pat Bryden addressed the meeting in relation to town maps. In memory of her late husband and former town and county councillor, Alan Bryden, she was funding and pursuing a project to replace the existing town maps. These maps had been provided some years ago, principally for tourists and visitors to the town, at various locations within the town centre. The maps themselves were now becoming out of date and the boards within which the maps were housed required replacement.

Mrs Bryden presented a draft map to members. She stated that she was aware that there were some errors on the maps. While she was not in a position to leave copies of the maps at the meeting she stated that if any councillors wanted to see the drafts they should contact her. The plan was that these maps be installed to replace the existing maps in the Rye Farm car park and on district council owned land adjacent to the river, south west of the bridge. She also reminded members that she was keen to progress a project in relation to provision of seating in the vicinity of bus stops.

A member thanked Mrs Bryden for her work in relation to these matters which would provide a lovely memorial to the late Alan Bryden.

(Four members of the public left the meeting at this point)

C38 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

C39 **Minutes**

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Council of Abingdon-on-Thames held on 27th June 2018 be adopted and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

Matters arising

C28: Finance and General Purposes Committee – Minute F17 – Confidential Appendix

Cllr Monica Lovatt referred to her previous proposal which had been approved by the Town Council. This was that councillors be given the option of receiving confidential papers by post; she queried whether this had been implemented. The Town Clerk stated that this was now policy but no confidential papers had been posted during the current cycle. He stated that there were now far fewer confidential papers produced. Unfortunately during this cycle the few that had been produced had been published after the main agenda papers had been posted out and would have arrived after the meeting if they had been posted.

Minute C28: Finance and General Purposes Committee – Minute F30 – Community Led Plan Working Group

A member requested an update in relation to the Community Led Plan process. The Chairman of the Community Led Plan Working Group, Cllr Alice Badcock, stated that only a few people had signed up to attend the last public meeting and consequently this meeting had been cancelled because, with so few people wishing to attend, this was not a good use of council money. In relation to existing projects she was still waiting for updates from the community. In response to a further query regarding whether the Council's own working group should have met by now, Cllr Alice Badcock reminded members that this was a community led plan.

C33 – Motions under Standing Order 8

The Leader, Cllr Mike Badcock, reported that following the approval of motions at the last Council meeting, the following responses had been received:

1. Motion in relation to the Upper Reaches Hotel site

The Council had approved the following motion:

This Council is concerned that the Upper Reaches Hotel Site remains derelict after 3 years. Council requests that the Town Clerk writes to the Chief Executive of Vale of White Horse District Council to request an update on the future of this site.

The response from the District Council was as follows:

The Vale Council recognises the importance of the Upper Reaches hotel site to the town. Unfortunately we have limited powers under the lease to force the tenant to do anything with the site. We have presented a schedule of dilapidations to the tenant pointing out their maintenance responsibilities and the concerns that we share with yourselves over the

state of the property. The tenant has since been in contact and we are now in active dialogue with them about their plans for the site. These plans are now being assessed by our strategic advisors Cushman and Wakefield and whilst the information is commercially sensitive at the current time, I would hope to be able to share further details with the Town Council in the near future.

Further update 11th October: A meeting has been held in recent weeks with the tenant and we are expecting further conversations with them in the next couple of weeks when they have proposed to come back to the council with a proposal.

2. Motion in relation to The Charter

The Council had approved the following motion:

In February 2016 Vale Council publicly announced a capital programme for renovations to the Charter multi storey car park, including £800,000 for renovations to the car park and £150,000 for the public toilets. In January 2017 Planning Permission was granted to refurbish the toilet block. Council requests that the Town Clerk writes to the Chief Executive of Vale of White Horse District Council to request an update on the progress of this project and requests that priority be given to completing the toilets in time for the busy Christmas shopping period. The Council also ask that the District Council give a progress report on the Charter development more generally and to be kept up to date in the future.

Response from the District Council was as follows:

As you correctly identify the redevelopment of the Charter area is not a simple regeneration project to progress. It depends on a wide number of factors, including viability and re-location of community uses, to ensure that a suitable scheme can be developed. Whilst development constraints (including site assembly constraints and relocation of existing uses) are being explored, firm plans and strategic direction cannot yet be determined for the redevelopment of this site. Along with the town council, Vale officers are actively involved in the One Public Estate discussions for the town which may help provide a more comprehensive discussion about provision of public services in the town and therefore aid the development of the Charter area to progress. It is anticipated that in the coming months officers will be in a position to bring an updated report by the council's strategic property advisors, Cushman and Wakefield, to Vale Cabinet for determination of the council's strategy and approach on this site.

In respect of the car park and public toilets refurbishment project, following the recent staffing restructure, officers are reviewing resources to deliver this project.

Update 11th October:

The One Public Estate funding has now been approved by the OPE board and Cushman and Wakefield have been commissioned by OCC

to do an options appraisal of the identified OPE sites in the town, including the Charter site. I understand that site visits are planning in the next week to commence this work for OPE.

3. Motion in relation to Civil Parking Enforcement

The Council approved the following motion:

This Council recognises that:

- Thames Valley Police are stretched, and they have made clear parking enforcement is one of their lowest priorities;*
- Members are regularly contacted by residents about inconvenient and dangerous parking infractions that are not being tackled;*
- The Vale District Council has the power to introduce civil parking enforcement, as neighbouring councils have done, at no additional cost to the tax payer.*

This Council agrees in principle to support the introduction of a civil parking enforcement scheme across the Vale of White Horse.

Council instructs the Town Clerk to write to the Vale of White Horse District Council, calling on them to produce a Business Case (to include financial costs and income, delivery options and timescales) to be considered as part of their 2019-20 budget.

Response from the District Council was as follows:

Vale has no outright power to introduce Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE), although we do have the ability to make a request that the County Council work with us to introduce it.

We are in the process of making a formal approach to County Council officers regarding CPE and, once their response is received, will proceed to developing a business case for consideration as part of the council's budget cycle.

(A further three members of the public left at this point, it being 7.30pm.)

In relation to the response relating to the refurbishment of the public toilets at the Charter, a member stated that the response did not answer the main question about whether the toilets would be re-opened by Christmas; it sounded like this was a longer-term project. Could the Leader clarify matters with the District Council? Cllr Mike Badcock, Leader of the Council, agreed that he would seek clarification.

C40 Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames

The Mayor, Cllr Margaret Crick, presented her schedule of engagements since the last meeting of the Council (as circulated with the agenda).

The Mayor reported that both she and the Deputy had been very busy during this period.

The Mayor announced the following dates for the diary:

- Mayor's Charity Quiz – this would take place on a date before Christmas. (This took place on Friday 30th November.)
- The Over 70s' Christmas Party would take place on 17th December 2018 at 2pm in the Roysse Room.
- The Mayor intended to organise a Christmas drinks reception (this took place on Wednesday 19th December 2018.)

C41 **Oxfordshire County Council Report**

The Council received and considered the report from Cllr Alison Rooke, County Councillor for Abingdon East division, in relation to the above. This had been circulated earlier that day and is attached as an appendix to the minutes.

A member reported that there had been an increase in fly-tipping due to changes in relation to the Drayton Waste & Recycling Centre. Cllr Alison Rooke asked whether there was any particular location where fly-tipping had increased; the response was that there were no particular locations in this regard. Cllr Rooke commented that she had voted against these changes.

C42 **Questions under Standing Order 10**

1. Cllr Samantha Bowring to Cllr David Pope Chairman of Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee

Does the chair of planning believe that the proposal in a Written Ministerial Statement to redefine non-hydraulic fracturing shale gas exploration applications as permitted development and to redefine large scale shale gas production sites as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, is a threat to local authority control and community involvement in decision-making?

Will the chair of planning bring this matter to the next planning, highways and consultations committee so that this council can consider a response to the government consultation on this matter?

Cllr David Pope's response was as follows:

I thank Cllr Bowring for her questions and for bringing this matter to my attention. I would like to make three points in response:

Firstly, I am confident that irrespective of any proposals in Ministerial Written Statements, Planning matters will remain the responsibility of higher authorities such as District Councils, not Town Councils like ours. I do wonder about the

relevance of these questions to us, therefore. The issues surrounding a central Government consultation on shale gas exploration are not really the stuff of our Town Council Planning Committee's deliberations, nor, some might say, are they uppermost in the minds of the inhabitants of our town, given that Abingdon-on-Thames and, indeed, our local area is not built, I understand, on any kind of soil conducive to such exploration.

Secondly, it has been the practice of this Town Council only to respond to local and central Government consultations when we are invited to do so. Prompted by these questions, I have done my due diligence and asked our Town Clerk to check. We don't appear to have been approached as a Town Council for any response to this consultation.

Consequently and lastly, I do not think it appropriate to table this matter at the next Town Council Planning meeting on Monday 23rd October at 7pm, although of course any member is free to reply individually to the consultation to express his/her personal views, as several of us have often done in the past. The consultation closes next Thursday, October 25th, so again I thank Cllr Bowring for bringing it to our individual attention in a timely manner. If any Member wishes to respond, you have until a week tomorrow to do so and I'm sure the Town Clerk will be happy to pass on to you the relevant website address.

2. Cllr Samantha Bowring to Cllr Mike Badcock, Leader of the Council

Does the leader of the council believe council is doing enough to meet our carbon reduction targets following the report last week from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change?

The Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, responded that major works had taken place in the Guildhall and whilst the Council aimed where possible to reduce energy consumption the Council would soon find out if it had been successful in this regard. Until the Guildhall re-opened he was unable to give an honest answer.

3. Cllr Pat Lonergan to Cllr Mike Badcock, Leader of the Council

Please could we have a summary of staff time, including the salary bands, spent on any matters relating to the Michaelmas Fair.

The Leader responded that he was unable to respond to this question at this stage as the relevant salary allocations are not made until the end of month.

C43 **Guildhall Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Dennis Garrett and seconded by Cllr Mike Badcock that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the meeting of this committee held on 25th June 2018 and the draft minutes of the meeting of the Guildhall Committee held on 18th September 2018, as circulated with the agenda. It was noted that the proceedings of the meeting of 25th June 2018 had already been considered by the Council at its June 2018 meeting by way of a note of the resolutions of the Guildhall Committee, attached as an appendix to the minutes

of the Council meeting of 27th June 2018 (pages 28 to 29 of the Council agenda of 17th October 2018).

Commemorations for the end of the First World War

The Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, reminded members that to mark the final year of the World War One Centenary, the Royal British Legion was offering, for donation, a variety of silhouettes to symbolise the communities that took part in World War One. The Council had obtained three of these silhouettes. They are near life size and can be fixed to a wall or attached to an upright post in public or private spaces. Cllr Badcock asked members if they could come forward with ideas regarding possible locations. The following were suggested:

- In the undercroft of the Museum or outside the Museum front door;
- Roysse Court Gardens;
- The outside steps to the Council Chamber;
- On various roundabouts in the town.

The consensus from members was that a suitable location would be on the outside steps to the Council Chamber. *(Note in the eventuality it was not possible to secure the silhouettes in this location and therefore they were installed in the raised garden in Roysse Court.)*

Minutes G30 – Guildhall Development Working Group

Cllr Neil Fawcett referred to paragraph three of the report of the Town Clerk to the meeting of the Guildhall Committee. This reported an increase in the contract sum of approximately 30% over the sum reported to the meeting of the Committee in June 2018. As a member of the Committee and of the Guildhall Development Working Group he was familiar with the reasons for this increase but he felt it would be helpful if the Chairman could elaborate on matters direct to the Council.

The Chairman of the Guildhall Committee, Cllr Dennis Garrett, ran through some of the reasons for the increase which were fully detailed in the various minutes and notes of meetings and the reports of the Town Clerk. The reasons included: a significant increase in the scope of works, essential works found necessary due to the age of the building, the addition of works in relation to the opening of the cinema at the Abbey Hall, issues in relation to asbestos and water ingress, the installation of a new fire alarm and detection system across the whole of the Guildhall complex and the replacement and installation of a new emergency lighting system across the whole of the Guildhall complex. In relation to fire detection / alarm and emergency lighting he stated that there had been a significant change in the regulations and interpretation of regulations in this regard and this was resulting in an estimated additional expenditure of approximately £150,000 at this stage. He hoped that no one would think this was not the right thing to do. In terms of financing the Council had significant funds available in its pooled property reserve and also the deferred grant which had been given following the transfer of the building from the Vale of White Horse District Council.

Cllr Garrett stated that it is down to this Council to make the building secure and safe for future generations. The work currently being undertaken was a very worthwhile investment. In relation to the future management and operation of the Guildhall, the outsourcing of the service would result in substantially reduced running costs. However, he would be proposing that a significant part of the net revenue saving on the Guildhall and Abbey Hall should be put aside by way of an increased property maintenance and repair budget for these properties so the Council would never again be in the position again where it had had to spend substantial sums on the building after many years of neglect. Cllr Garrett also pointed out that there had been substantial works to the Old Magistrates' Court which would provide an additional facility and one in which the Council would be able to hold its meetings. In looking to the future the charges which the Guildhall Committee had set for the hire of rooms were lower than many other councils in the area.

A member stated that she appreciated what the Chairman of the Guildhall Committee was saying but was surprised that costs were so over budget. In relation to the need to remove asbestos she stated that the requirement to remove asbestos should have come as no surprise in a building of this age and why was a budget not allowed for this purpose? Cllr Dennis Garrett responded that by removing asbestos at this stage this would ensure that this burden was not passed on to future generations; the Council has done what was right.

A member noted that at Paragraph 8 of the report it was stated "no contingency was provided for within the contract itself". She queried this matter. The Town Clerk responded that whilst there was not a contingency within the contract itself there was a contingency within the overall budget.

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of 25th June and the draft minutes of the Guildhall Committee of 18th September 2018 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C44 **Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr David Pope and seconded by Cllr Mike Badcock that the Council receive and consider the minutes the draft minutes of the meeting of the Planning, Highways & Consultations Committee held on 25th June, 16th July, 6th August and 28th August; and draft minutes of 17th September and 1st October 2018, as circulated with the agenda.

Meeting of Tuesday 28th August 2018, Minute 7: Community Governance Review – Abingdon-on-Thames, Radley, St Helen Without and Sunningwell Parishes.

A member reported that the proposed boundary changes had been approved by the District Council at its meeting of 10th October 2018. The additional areas included within Abingdon would become of part of the adjacent current Abingdon wards until such time as a formal review was undertaken to consider the ward structure of the town.

Resolved that the minutes of the meetings of 25th June, 16th July, 6th August and 28th August 2018 and draft minutes of 17th September and 1st October 2018 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C45 **Amenities and Recreation Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Alice Badcock and seconded by Cllr Vicky Jenkins that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 12th September 2018, as circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Alice Badcock, thanked the Works Team and the officers for their hard work in relation to the Michaelmas and Runaway Fairs.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee of 12th September 2018 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C46 **Community Services Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Vicky Jenkins and seconded by Cllr Andrew Todd that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 18th September 2018, as circulated with the agenda.

CS25: Grant Applications

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Vicky Jenkins, referred to the grant application by All Saints Methodist Church in relation to improved toilet facilities for their three main hiring areas. The Committee had approved a grant of £1,000 subject to a visit to the premises by herself to review the plans in the context of the site. Following a site visit she had, together with the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Andrew Todd, exercised their delegation to authorise the grant payment.

Cllr Helen Pighills' apologies had not been received by the meeting but she asked that they be noted at this stage and requested that her name be added to the distribution list at the top of the agenda.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Community Services Committee of 18th September 2018 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C47 **County Hall Museum Management Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Monica Lovatt and seconded by Cllr Dennis Garrett that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on 20th September 2018, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee of 20th September 2018 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C48 **Finance and General Purposes Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Mike Badcock and seconded by Cllr Dennis Garrett that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 2nd October 2018, as circulated with the agenda.

F25 – Matters Referred: Guildhall Committee of 13th September 2018

The Council considered a recommendation that three flag poles be installed in the Roysse Court Gardens. In debating this matter a member stated that he considered that this was a case of “over flagging”; there were too many flags in the town. Another member stated that as the Guildhall was over budget then the Council may wish to reconsider this proposal.

The Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, stated that in the circumstances he was prepared to advise the Council that this recommendation be withdrawn as it would save approximately £5,000. The Chairman of the Guildhall Committee, Cllr Dennis Garrett, concurred and the recommendation was, with the consent of the Council, withdrawn.

In relation to staffing, the Leader Cllr Mike Badcock stated that the office had been short-staffed on occasions during the last few months and asked that the Council’s thanks be passed to Louise Brown, Administrative Assistant, for taking on additional tasks during that period. The Mayor, Cllr Margaret Crick endorsed these comments and stated that she was very grateful to Louise in relation to the support she has given to her in her role as Mayor’s Secretary.

Resolved that the draft minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee of 2nd October 2018 be approved, together with any recommendations (as amended) contained therein.

C49 **Traffic Advisory Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Alice Badcock and seconded by Cllr Helen Pighills that the Council receive and consider minutes of the Traffic Advisory Committee held on 20th June 2018, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved that the minutes of the Traffic Advisory Committee held on 20th June 2018 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C50 **Approval of Audited Annual Return 2017/18**

The Council was requested to approve the audited Annual Return, including the Auditor's certificate, for the year ended 31st March 2018, as circulated with the agenda.

It was proposed by Cllr Mike Badcock, seconded by Cllr Dennis Garrett, and **resolved** (unanimously) that the Council approve the audited Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2018.

C51 **Motions under Standing Order 8**

None.

C52 **Exclusion of the Public, Including the Press**

The Mayor moved:

"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)

C53 **Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Guildhall Committee**

Members received and considered the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting of the Guildhall Committee held on 18th September 2018, as circulated with the agenda.

A member made reference to the new management and operational arrangements in relation to the Guildhall and asked whether the Council would still receive free use of rooms for its meetings. The Town Clerk stated that the Council would be liable to pay the community groups room hire charge but that 40% of this charge would, under agreement, be returned back to the Council. The Town Clerk stated that he would report further on this matter.

(Post meeting note: whilst the Council under its previous direct management arrangements did not pay a room hire charge for its council meetings, it was paying for staffing the Guildhall. This was a cost to the Council although if there were other rooms being hired then this cost was reduced as the staff would be working anyway. Consequently, on a meeting by meeting basis and in relation

to the costs of hiring rooms for Council meetings, on occasion the Council would be worse off financially under the new arrangements; on other occasions better off. However, the figures involved were relatively small in the context of the significant net revenue savings arising from the new arrangements.)

Cllr Angela Lawrence gave notice that at the next meeting she would be bringing forward a motion under the confidential agenda having been advised that this was the correct and established course of action in relation to the matters which she wished the Council to consider.

Resolved that the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the Guildhall Committee held on 18th September 2018 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

The meeting rose at 8.40 pm.

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Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames

DRAFT

**REPORT TO ABINGDON ON THAMES TOWN COUNCIL
17 OCTOBER 2018
CLLR ALISON ROOKE**

KEY DEVELOPMENT SITES

North Abingdon (950 homes + school + other activities) – Consent (P17/V0050/O) was issued in October 2017. The developers are now dealing with discharges of conditions and reserved matters.

North West Abingdon (200 homes) – Consent (P17/V1336/O) was issued in March 2018. The County Council has a current transport objection to a Reserved Matters application.

North West Radley (240 dwellings) – There was a resolution to approve on 30 May 2018 (P17/V1894/O) and the S106 is currently being finalised.

Dalton Barracks (draft allocation) – The draft allocation was discussed in detail at the Local Plan Part 2 hearings.

MAJOR TRANSPORT PROJECTS

Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

The current timetable is: corridor decision – released 12 September 2018 (see below), route options shortlist for consultation in autumn 2019, and preferred route announcement in autumn 2020.

The Government's corridor selection is Route B. This is the middle option of the three considered and broadly follows the line of East West Rail. However, two of the three sub-options around Oxford have been left in the running. These are B1 west of Oxford (including a possible on-line upgrade of the existing A34) and B3 to the south and east of Oxford. B2 across Otmoor has been ruled out. More details of the basis for the decision can be found in Highways England's website at www.highwaysengland.co.uk.

I am very concerned that there has been no public consultation thus far and, whichever route is chosen, there could be a severe environmental impact on Abingdon, Botley or both.

A34 Lodge Hill interchange

The scheme is on programme to deliver by the end of 2020. Currently OCC is liaising with Highways England (HE) on the junction modelling in order to gain approval from HE. This will enable design to proceed and commence work on the Trunk Road Order. OCC will look to consult in winter 2018.

COUNCILLOR PRIORITY FUND

Some councillors still have a little money that is as yet unallocated for the 2018/19 financial year. Application forms and advice can be found at <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/community-and-living/thriving-communities/councillor-priority-fund>

NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT OCC

Yvonne Rees has been appointed the joint CEO of Oxfordshire County and Cherwell District (CDC) councils, and started her new role at the beginning of October. CDC had a very close relationship providing services with S Northamptonshire DC which will have to end following the forced reorganisation of Northamptonshire's local authorities. CDC will now share some functions with Oxfordshire, though the exact details of how this will work are still being explored.

Cllr Alison Rooke
Abingdon East Division
Oxfordshire County Council