

**Draft minutes of the Council of the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames held on
Wednesday 18th October 2017 in the Roysse Room, Guildhall,
Abingdon-on-Thames**

Present

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

In Attendance

Mr Nigel Luker	Macebearer
Mr Steve Rich	Assistant Town Clerk/ Head of Services
Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting)
Mrs Susan Whipp	Treasurer / RFO

19 members of the public and the press.

SECTION I (Open to the Public Including the Press)

C33 **Prayers**

Rev Mary Williamson led the meeting in prayer.

C34 **Public Participation**

a) **Mayor's Award 2016/17**

At the Mayor Making Ceremony and the Annual Meeting of the Council which took place on 10th May 2017, the immediate Past Mayor, Cllr Alice Badcock, presented her Mayor's Awards for services to the Community. One of the

award recipients, Valerie Keates, was unable to attend the ceremony and therefore she was presented with her award at this meeting.

The award citation was circulated with the agenda and is also attached as appendix 1 to these minutes.

b) Presentation of Grant Cheques to Local Organisations

The Mayor, Cllr Jan Morter, 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. Abingdon Good Neighbour Scheme received a grant of £235 towards its project for printing and paper costs for producing leaflets welcoming new residents to Abingdon – cheque presented to Alan Keymer and Val Ship.
2. Abingdon Street Pastors received a cheque for £1000 towards the general running costs of the scheme – cheque presented to Patrick Mulqueen.
3. Clean Slate received a cheque for £500 towards general running costs for their project which provides support to victims of sexual, physical and emotional abuse living in the Abingdon area – cheque presented to Claire King.
4. St Nicolas Church received a cheque for £1990 towards its project of replacing pews with alternative flexible seating – cheque presented to Andrew Coker.
5. Thrive South Abingdon received a cheque for £500 towards its project “The Gardening Club” – cheque presented to Matt Warmington.
6. Trinity Toddler Group received a cheque for £340 towards its project of replacing toys and equipment – cheque presented to Vicki Leehy and Eve Newton.

c) Mayor of Sint Niklaas, Belgium

The Mayor, Cllr Jan Morter, introduced Lieven Dehandschutter, Mayor of Sint Niklaas, Belgium.

Mr Dehandschutter detailed the longstanding twinning link between St Niklaas and Abingdon, a link which was celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year, having commenced in 1967. The twinning link continued to be a very active one to this day. He stated that whilst European matters had been greatly debated and there were many different views it was important that the close contacts between the twin towns be maintained.

d) Citizens' Advice Oxfordshire South and Vale

Liz Johnson, Deputy Director Advice Services of Citizens' Advice Oxfordshire South and Vale (CAB), made a presentation to the meeting. The presentation had been circulated with the agenda.

Ms Johnson outlined the work of the CAB. The CAB was an independent charity offering the Citizens' Advice service locally and advised over 9,000 people. During 2016/17 a total of 1,762 clients came from Abingdon, an increase of 11% over the previous year. The Bureau relied very heavily on its volunteers

and there was a focus on the client. The Town Council had awarded a grant to the CAB of £15,100 for 2017/18 and the Bureau was very appreciative of the Town Council's assistance. It could not provide the services which it did without this grant.

- e) Susan Williams made a statement regarding the Guildhall. She stated that she was very concerned about the future of the Abbey Hall and the Guildhall. She presented a petition to the Town Council which stated as follows:

1. *"We wish the Town Council to renovate the Abbey Hall, as promised. We want the residue of the Vale grant to be invested to help fund a large town centre space to serve a growing population of 38,000 people. The Hall is needed for civic functions, for Abingdon's many clubs and societies and for activities for all ages. It should have disabled access to public rooms. A cinema space would be good. Do not sell the Abbey Hall for development.*
2. *We need the Council to maintain and preserve the beautiful and historic Guildhall and its 18th century staircase intact for future generations."*

She stated that to date the petition had been signed by 1,546 persons in its online form and approximately 300 persons had signed the paper version. She emphasised that the Abbey Hall needed to be fit for purpose to serve the town, it was used by Clubs and Societies and was capable of hosting larger events which could not be hosted elsewhere. It was also necessary to preserve the historic fabric of the Guildhall itself. She stated that the Beacon at Wantage was the sort of hall which Abingdon should aspire to. She stated that the Council needed to consider the level of public feeling on this matter and reconsider its work to the historic side or suspend the project.

- f) Roger Thomas stated that he wished to make a statement regarding the Guildhall Accessibility Project and the proposed works to the staircase. He stated that he spoke as an experienced heritage conservation professional. He had seen the letter from Historic England regarding the staircase and it referred to "substantial harm". The National Planning Policy Frameworks says that "substantial harm" to a listed building should be "exceptional" and he understood that Historic England arrived at such a judgement at probably fewer than 5% of the cases it is consulted on. He felt that the Council would be advised to engage an accredited conservation architect with expertise in access issues to explore alternative solutions and see if one could be found which would be more acceptable to planners. He stated that he realised this may seem irksome to do so at this point but was very concerned that the cost of not doing so will be delays, frustration and abortive expenditure on plans which end up being rejected and have to be re-drawn.

- g) Mrs Hester Hand asked a number of questions which she stated were on behalf of the Friends of Abingdon. The answers to the questions are in italics:

Abbey Hall

Q1 Why is the Council considering severing the links between the old and new parts of the Building before a decision on the new part is reached?

This plan, if implemented, will close down options for future use of Abbey Hall, and will also remove some options for inclusive access to the older rooms. This is particularly important since we understand that the timescale for discussions with other Councils is a long one, so Abbey Hall will not be put to a new use for some considerable time.

Answer: The Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, answered as follows:

Although the old and the new buildings will have the ability to operate independently the Council is not considering severing the links between the old and the new buildings. In fact, the Council is being careful to keep its options open for the future and should an alternative community use be proposed for the Abbey Hall then I would expect flow of people between the two parts of the building.

One of the building's inherent problems, which has compromised its security and driven up staffing costs, has been the open nature of the building and the inability to secure parts of the building. For instance in the past if only the Roysse Room has been hired in the evening, customers have required access to the new side of the building to use the toilet facilities and due to the fire risk assessment they have had to have virtually free access to the new side of the building. This always meant having to employ a minimum of two staff and has made the building vulnerable. People may not know but at the end of a shift it would take staff about 15 minutes to check all those areas to ensure that the building was empty. This is one of the things that the project seeks to address.

I would add that the proposals from Historic England involve putting a platform lift in the corridor between the Bear Room and the new building, blocking off the access at that point.

Q2 Professional advice: Historic England guidance advises local authorities that "Working with heritage assets requires specialist skills and expertise. The need for such skills and ongoing dialogue with other bodies ... is paramount at all stages. And on access, the Historic England guidance says "a creative approach using appropriate professional advice is often the key to providing an appropriate solution".

Please could you say what advice the Council has sought from professionals who specialise in accessibility solutions for historic buildings, and what further dialogue it has engaged in since April with Historic England, the Vale Council, and other relevant bodies?

Answer: The Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, answered as follows:

I have already answered this question at the Finance and General Purposes Committee, you are aware that we have received pre-application advice from both Historic England and the Vale of White Horse District Council.

Work has been ongoing and we are now looking to undertake further research on the history of the staircase. We believe that the staircase has been subject to alteration over the years and when this work is complete, having taken further advice on matters, we will be arranging to discuss matters again with Historic England and the Vale of White Horse District Council.

Arrangements have been made to visit the Berkshire County Records office to examine the Abingdon Borough Council records of the structural work commissioned at the time of building the Abbey Hall.

Similarly our Museum Advisor has been requested to find a suitable "independent expert" to resolve the matter of the staircase.

Q3 Community: A few years ago, the leader of the Council was quoted as saying that he wanted the Guildhall to be "Abingdon's village hall". What has changed his mind? Does he not think the town still needs a venue – not just for meetings, but also for social activities, entertainment, etc. – particularly including daytime activities for the elderly and the young. There is an excellent example of this as close as Wantage. Why does Abingdon apparently deserve less?

Answer: The Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, answered as follows:

The questioner will be aware of the great efforts which this Council has made. Ultimately the building has defeated us, the capital costs were too high at over £3,000,000 and we could not afford to undertake the work. Without substantial works to the Abbey Hall we would not be able to afford to continue to operate the whole of the complex as it used to be operated, an annual cost of approaching £200,000.

We have taken a long hard look at this. Despite what some people are saying, we are not closing the Guildhall, the old buildings. We intend to re-open them and make them accessible to all, not just people fortunate enough to be able to walk up stairs.

We know that occupancy of the complex was running at approximately 15% and consequently the majority of the activities which took place in the Abbey Hall can be accommodated in the new Guildhall. There are some meetings we know we could not accommodate but the number of groups affected does not justify the additional capital and revenue expense of running the Abbey Hall.

Two other points:

- *You mention Wantage and others mention Didcot. These are District Council facilities which operate at a cost considerably more than we could afford;*

- *The business context of public halls has changed considerably in the last twenty years and massively since the Abbey Hall was built. Groups can now hire rooms in schools, churches, pubs etc and so the local council's role, whilst still there, is diminished. Indeed during the past year our original Business Plan has been greatly affected by new developments, including for instance the range of Public Screenings etc. at the Amey Hall and new Conference Complex being commenced in the west of the town. Groups can now hire rooms in schools, churches, pubs etc and so the local council's role, whilst still there, is diminished.*

Q4 Consultation and communication: Why has there been no public consultation on this proposal? You have recently launched the Community-Led Plan process. Why are you pre-empting this by taking steps, without any consultation, to deprive the town of a key piece of community infrastructure'?

Answer: The Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, answered as follows:

In relation to the Guildhall – the old rooms – we are simply improving a property to get it up to a modern standard particularly in relation to accessibility. To undertake what we should be doing anyway does not require consultation. We have however specifically met with the Vale Accessibility Group to enable us to do our utmost to be inclusive.

I would remind all those here that our meetings are open to the public and the public does take the opportunity to speak at the meetings, communicate with members etc. Our proposals have also been subject to the due planning process.

The proposals for the new side of the building will retain a community use of that building. I wish that I could say more but I would say that should these proposals come to fruition it would be a great benefit to the future of this town and the town centre, quite possibly a once in a generation opportunity. I am sure that as and when these proposals come forward the authorities will be communicating with the public.

Q5 The Friends of Abingdon is not a “protest group”: we have been the town’s Civic Society since 1944 and have a long history of working collaboratively with the elected representatives on issues to do with the town. Several of us have been taking an active and constructive interest in the future of the Guildhall for nearly 10 years now. There are plenty of people in the Friends - and elsewhere in the Abingdon community - who have professional skills and experience which could help with some of the challenges you face.

While final decisions must of course rest with Councillors, will the Town Council commit to working collaboratively with Friends of Abingdon and the community to find imaginative solutions for the future of these community buildings?

Answer: The Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, answered as follows:

I would remind all those here that the Council is a democratically elected body and all the Councillors round this table have been appointed with thousands of residents casting their votes. The Council has a strong democratic mandate.

Of course we will work with all interested parties. However our recent experience is that what is coming to us is less than constructive, with point scoring, personal attacks and groups pursuing their own agendas. We have commenced a Community-Led Plan which will run its course.

C35 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Neil Fawcett and Patrick Lonergan.

C36 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Jeanette Halliday declared a non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating to the external works to the Abbey Hall / Guildhall as she was a local resident.

Cllr Alice Badcock declared a pecuniary interest in relation to the planning application relating to 6 Springfield Drive, Abingdon (Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee of 2nd October 2017) as she was related to the applicant.

Cllr Mike Badcock a non-pecuniary interest in the application relating to 6 Springfield Drive, Abingdon (Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee of 2nd October 2017) as he was related to the applicant.

Cllr Samantha Bowring and Cllr Margaret Crick both declared non-pecuniary interests in relation to the minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee (minute C45 below) as both are trustees of Abingdon Carousel.

C37 **Minutes**

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Council of Abingdon-on-Thames held on 28th June 2017 be adopted and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

Matters arising

Minute C28: Community-Led Plan Working Group

Cllr Angela Lawrence stated that at the previous meeting she had asked three questions of the Leader, Cllr Mike Badcock, in relation to the Council's policy on environmental issues and the transition town initiative. This was following dissolution of the Environmental Working Group and the subsuming of its role by the Community-Led Plan. Cllr Lawrence stated that this exchange had not been minuted and asked that it now be recorded.

Resolved: that an addendum be issued to the minutes of 28th June 2017 to reflect the above.

C38 Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames

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

The Mayor announced the following dates for the diary:

Sunday 12th November 2017 – Remembrance Day. A service was to take place at St Helen's Church at 10am followed by an Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial at 11am.

Mayor's Charity Quiz – Saturday 9th December 2017 at Long Furlong Community Centre.

The Over 70s' Christmas Party would take place between 12 noon and 2pm on Monday 18th December 2017 at Long Furlong Community Centre.

The Mayor also stated that she was organising a Christmas Carol Concert and the date and time would be advised in due course.

C39 Oxfordshire County Council Report

The Council received and considered the report from Cllr Emily Smith in relation to the above. This had been circulated with the agenda.

In presenting her report, Cllr Smith drew attention to the ongoing issues in relation to the road surface on Northcourt Road, infrastructure planning for Local Plan Part 2 and the County Councillor locality fund.

C40 Amenities and Recreation Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Alice Badcock and seconded by Cllr Lorraine Oates that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 6th September 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Alice Badcock, thanked the Works Team for their hard work especially over the period of the Fair. They were a credit to the Council and a great asset to the town. The Chairman also stated that a number of members of the team had undertaken training recently and offered her congratulations.

The Mayor, Cllr Jan Morter, supported these comments and in particular stated that she had been impressed by the way in which Mr Tim Badcock, the Works Team Supervisor, had dealt with an incident at the Fair.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee of 6th September 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C41 **Guildhall Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Dennis Garrett and seconded by Cllr Mike Badcock that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the Guildhall Committee held on 14th September 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

In discussing matters the following points were made:

- In relation to the proposed installation of a lift and the rebuilding of the staircase in the Guildhall a member stated that she was not against installing a lift, what she was against was taking away important features of a listed building.
- A member stated that any decision to install the lift and remove the staircase should be discussed by full Council.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Guildhall Committee of 14th September be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C42 **County Hall Museum Management Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Monica Lovatt and seconded by Cllr Lorraine Oates that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on 21st September 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman, Cllr Monica Lovatt, stated that she was pleased to report that the Museum Committee was operating within its budget.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee of 21st September 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C43 **Community Services Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Vicky Jenkins and seconded by Cllr Alice Badcock that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 26th September 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Community Services Committee of 26th September be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C44 **Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Margaret Crick 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 10th July, 31st July, 21st August, 11th September 2017 and draft minutes of 2nd October 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Planning, Highways & Consultations Committee held on 10th July, 31st July, 21st August, 11th September 2017 and draft minutes of 2nd October 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C45 **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 3rd October 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

Minute F27: Grant – Children’s Centres

It was noted that the Committee had resolved that the first instalment of the grant, amounting to £15,000, would be paid when a letter of intent had been received from Oxfordshire County Council that they will enter into a lease agreement with Abingdon Carousel in relation to the premises at Caldecott School, authority to approve the payment when such a letter has been received being delegated to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Minute F32: Matters referred, Guildhall Committee of 14th September 2017

The Council considered the recommendations and it was **resolved**:

Tenders and Contract for Building Works

- a. That the scope of building works be increased and that additional budgetary provision be made for these works as follows:
 - i. removal of the ramp running from the car park to the Abbey Hall (*by 16 votes in favour and 1 abstention*)
 - ii. Lighting of the outside of the Guildhall building (*by 15 votes in favour with 2 abstentions*).
- b. That the Council approve the reports of Leys Longden and PT Projects in relation to the proposed building works which included a full tender analysis. (*Unanimous.*)
- c. That a contract for works be entered into based on the lowest tender, following the detailed tender analysis. (*Unanimous.*)
- d. That authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to place an order for the building works in accordance with the above tender and the additional works

set out above at paragraph (a) and enter in to a contract with the company accordingly. (*Unanimous.*)

The Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Cllr Mike Badcock, proposed that two recommendations for increase of scope of the building works be withdrawn. Firstly the proposal for flagpoles in Roysse Court which he stated would be an unnecessary expense at this stage of the project and secondly the removal of the internal staircase from the Roysse Room to the Abbey Hall foyer area, which he felt should be deferred pending further work and discussion with other authorities regarding the longer-term use of the Abbey Hall.

The Council **resolved** accordingly.

Revised Estimates in Relation to the Guildhall Project

Resolved:

- a. that the Council approves the revised estimates in relation to the project and
- The current building project in relation to the extension, works to Reception and Roysse Court Garden improvements;
 - Improvements to the commercial kitchen;
 - Wi-Fi / Hearing Loop – subject to agreeing suitable system;
 - New carpeting and other works;
 - Replacement for controls in relation to heaters;
 - Furniture and equipment;
 - Security improvements throughout the building;
 - Works to muniment room.

(By 16 votes in favour with 1 abstention.)

With regard to the historic staircase in the Guildhall the Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, stated that the Council's Museum Advisor, Mrs Jane Bowen, had been requested to recommend a suitable independent expert who could advise on the Council on this matter.

It was further **resolved:**

- b. that authority be delegated to the Guildhall Development Working Group to further consider the matter of the installation of a lift and rebuilding of the staircase in the old building and the development of these plans. (*By 8 votes in favour, 7 against and 2 abstentions.*)

c. The Working Group be requested to consider works to Old Magistrates' Court with reference back to the Guildhall Committee when proposals are received in relation to necessary capital works, revenue implications and funding of both. (*By 10 votes in favour, 6 against and 1 abstention.*)

Property Matters – The Abbey Hall

It was **resolved** that:

- a. That the Town Clerk be authorised to engage in further discussions with the County Council, the District Council and the relevant local health trust with a view to agreeing a brief in relation to a feasibility study to include the Guildhall complex of buildings and a memorandum of understanding. *(By 10 votes in favour, 4 against and 3 abstentions.)*
- b. That when this work has been completed then the brief and the memorandum of understanding be brought to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for it to make a recommendation to the Town Council on taking any work forward. *(By 14 votes in favour, and 3 against.)*
- c. That the Council Investigate the feasibility of bringing the Abbey Hall back in to use at an early date and for a report to come back to this Committee in the next cycle. *(By 16 votes in favour, with 1 abstention.)*

Resolved that the draft minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee of 3rd October 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations (as amended) contained therein.

C46 Community-Led Plan Working Group

It was proposed by Cllr Alice Badcock and seconded by Cllr Mike Badcock that the Council receive and consider the notes of the Community-Led Plan Working Group meeting held on 18th July 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman of the Working Group, Cllr Alice Badcock, reported that the meeting of 17th October had been postponed as the Council had yet to receive the results data in relation to the Community Survey. She expressed some concern that despite the efforts of Councillors and Officers not as many responses had been received back as had been hoped. She was particularly concerned that many generations were not covered, with less than 1% of the community having responded to the survey. The Council needed to be careful that the Community Led Plan will not unduly increase workload.

In discussion a number of points were made by members.

- There were very hard working people in the community who could add value, for instance Carbon Cutters and Friends of Abingdon.
- We need to get younger people involved.
- Concern over public being influenced by other people with prejudiced views, particularly at the Preston Road meeting. Two members overheard an individual urging someone to protest about everything.

Resolved that the notes of the Community-Led Plan Working Group meeting held on 18th July 2017, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C47 **Approval of Audited Annual Return 2016/17**

The Council was requested to approve the audited Annual Return, including the Auditor's certificate, for the year ended 31st March 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

The Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, commended Mrs Susan Whipp, the Responsible Financial Officer / Treasurer, for her hard work in producing the end of year accounts and seeing the Council through the audit process.

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 2017.

C48 **Traffic Advisory Committee - Constitution**

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

Cllr Samantha Bowring proposed, and it was seconded, that all references in the constitution to "Chairman" be changed to "Chair". Following discussion there were recorded 4 votes in favour, 6 against and 7 abstentions in relation to this amendment which was consequently lost.

Subsequently, on being put to the vote, it was **resolved** that the Town Council adopt the constitution for the Traffic Advisory Committee as appended to these minutes appendix 2).

C49 **Motions under Standing Order 8**

Members considered the following motions:

Motion One

Motion proposed by Cllr Jeanette Halliday,
Seconded by Cllr Lorraine Oates.

"Abingdon on Thames Town Council believes that trees make a positive contribution to the environment of our town, but also considers that the trees would benefit from a programme of pro-active maintenance.

Council asks the Town Clerk to consult the District Council and County Council with a view to setting up an agency agreement whereby all publicly-owned trees in Abingdon (except for those in public parks) would be maintained by a qualified agency. The contract would be administered by the Town Council on a cost recovery basis from the respective owning councils. The Town Clerk is requested to report back on the feasibility of this arrangement to the next meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee for consideration prior to setting the budget for 2018-19."

An amendment was proposed by Cllr Sandy Lovatt and seconded by Cllr Andy Todd to delete and add words so that if approved the motion would read as follows:

Abingdon on Thames Town Council believes that trees make a positive contribution to the environment of our town, but also considers that the trees would benefit from a programme of pro-active maintenance.

Council asks the Town Clerk to ~~contact~~ consult the District Council and County Council with a view to setting up an agency agreement whereby all publicly owned trees in Abingdon (except for those in public parks) would ~~be cared be~~ maintained by a qualified agency. This contract would be administered for by the Town Council staff on a ~~cash~~ cost recovery basis from the respective owning councils. The Town Clerk is requested to report back on the feasibility of this ~~matter~~ arrangement to the next meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee for consideration prior to setting the budget for 2018-19.

On consideration both the proposer and the seconder accepted the amendment and with the consent of the Council this then became part of the substantive motion.

On being put to the vote it was then **resolved** by 16 votes in favour and 1 abstention that:

Abingdon on Thames Town Council believes that trees make a positive contribution to the environment of our town, but also considers that the trees would benefit from a programme of pro-active maintenance.

Council asks the Town Clerk to consult the District Council and County Council with a view to setting up an agency agreement whereby all publicly owned trees in Abingdon (except for those in public parks) would be maintained by a qualified agency. This contract would be administered by the Town Council on a cost recovery basis from the respective owning councils. The Town Clerk is requested to report back on the feasibility of this arrangement to the next meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee for consideration prior to setting the budget for 2018-19.

Motion Two

Motion proposed by Cllr Helen Pighills,
Seconded by Cllr Samantha Bowring.

“Abingdon on Thames Town Council will transfer all revenue savings arising from the temporary closure of the Abbey Hall and Guildhall into an earmarked reserve. This to be used for capital expenditure arising from the reopening to the public of the Abbey Hall and Guildhall.”

An amendment was moved by Cllr Mike Badcock and seconded by Cllr Dennis Garrett that the motion be amended by removing the phrase “will transfer” and replacing it with the phrase “will review and consider transferring”. Following discussion this amendment was approved by 10 votes in favour with 6 against and 1 abstention.

Following further discussion the Mayor then put the motion to the vote and it was then **resolved** (unanimously) that:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council will review and consider transferring all revenue savings arising from the temporary closure of the Abbey Hall and Guildhall into an earmarked reserve. This to be used for capital expenditure arising from the re-opening to the public of the Abbey Hall and Guildhall.

Motion Three

Motion proposed by Cllr Samantha Bowring,
Seconded by Cllr Jeanette Halliday.

“Abingdon on Thames Town Council notes the government’s consultation on the assessment of housing numbers is likely to lead to a reduction in the numbers for Oxford City’s unmet housing need. Abingdon on Thames Town Council therefore calls upon the Vale of White Horse District Council to review the number of homes to be built in the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area to meet Oxford City Council’s unmet need.

Abingdon on Thames Town Council calls upon The Vale of White Horse District Council to ensure that all infrastructure that has been identified as needed, including school places, health care, the interchange at Lodge Hill, and the promised bus lanes, are in place before anymore additional housing is built around Abingdon.

Abingdon on Thames Town Council calls upon The Vale of White Horse District Council to prioritise house building which provides genuinely affordable housing particularly key worker housing and social housing.”

Following lengthy and detailed debate, the Mayor put the motion to the vote, there being 7 votes recorded in favour and 10 against. The motion was lost and therefore not adopted.

Motion Four

Motion proposed by Cllr Helen Pighills,
Seconded by Cllr Samantha Bowring.

“Abingdon on Thames Town Council notes that a number of companies now offer by the hour cycle hire from a number of locations in Oxford. ATC would welcome similar schemes in Abingdon to promote cycling within the town and between Abingdon and Oxford. Council therefore request that the Town Clerk contacts all companies offering such schemes in Oxford and asks them to investigate extending their services to Abingdon.”

An amendment was proposed by Cllr Dennis Garrett and seconded by Cllr Alice Badcock to add the words: “at no cost to the Council” to the end of the motion. On consideration both the proposer and the seconder accepted the amendment and with the consent of the Council this then became part of the substantive motion.

Following debate it was then **resolved** (unanimously) that:

Abingdon on Thames Town Council notes that a number of companies now offer by the hour cycle hire from a number of locations in Oxford. ATC would welcome similar schemes in Abingdon to promote cycling within the town and between Abingdon and Oxford. Council therefore request that the Town Clerk contacts all companies offering such schemes in Oxford and asks them to investigate extending their services to Abingdon at no cost to the Council.

C50 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)

C51 **Confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting of the Council 28th June 2017**

Members received and considered the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting of the Council of Abingdon-on-Thames held on 28th June 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved that the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting of the Council of Abingdon-on-Thames held on 28th June 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C52 **Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee**

Members received and considered the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 6th September 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved that the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 6th September 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

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 14th September 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved that the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the Guildhall Committee held on 14th September 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C54 **Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Members received and considered the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 3rd October 2017, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved that the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 3rd October 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

The meeting rose at 9.39 pm.

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Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

Annual Meeting and Mayor-Making

Wednesday 18th October 2017

Minute C34 (a)

Mayor's Award Winner

VALERIE KEATES

At the Mayor Making Ceremony and the Annual Meeting of the Council which took place on 10th May 2017, the immediate Past Mayor, Cllr Alice Badcock, presented her Mayor's Awards for services to the Community. One of the award recipients, Valerie Keates, was unable to attend the ceremony and therefore it has been arranged that she will receive her award at this evening's meeting.

Flooding over the years has caused major problems for many residents in Abingdon-on-Thames. Following the major flooding of the River Ock in July 2007, when over 500 properties were affected, the Environment Agency and local authorities have looked at ways in which flood defences can be developed and installed to protect the town and its citizens from future problems. One of the improvements is a temporary flood defence scheme which is now in place to protect parts of south Abingdon.

Valerie is being given an award to recognise her co-operation and community spirit in allowing her property to be used so that this flood defence scheme can become a reality. She has done this by allowing her garden fence to be altered and amended. This means that in the event of a flood being declared likely, her fencing can quickly and easily be removed and temporary flood barriers can be put in to place to protect properties in Meadowside. Without her co-operation it would not be possible to have implemented this scheme, a scheme that is an important part of the work to prevent the devastating impact of a flood in this area in the future.

**ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PROPOSED CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1 **Title**

The Committee shall be known as the “Abingdon-on-Thames Traffic Advisory Committee”, hereinafter called the “Advisory Committee”.

2 **Administration**

The administration of the Advisory Committee will normally be undertaken by the Town Clerk of Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council.

3 **Meetings of the Advisory Committee**

3.1 Meetings of the Advisory Committee will normally be held three times a year, commencing at 7.00 pm, on dates agreed by the Advisory Committee.

3.2 The quorum of the Committee shall be five members and a representative of each of the local authorities at 5.1 a, b and c.

3.3 No business other than that set out in the agenda published by the Town Clerk may be considered at a meeting of the Advisory Committee unless details have been notified to the Town Clerk prior to the start of the meeting, and the Chairman has agreed to such matter being considered on the grounds of urgency.

4 **Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

4.1 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be elected by the Advisory Committee at its annual meeting, being the first meeting of each Council year.

4.2 The Chairman is to be an elected member of Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council.

5 **Representatives**

5.1 The Advisory Committee may include representatives from the following, who shall be regarded as members of the Advisory Committee: -

Representatives from:

a)	Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council	5
b)	Vale of White Horse District Council	3
c)	Oxfordshire County Council	3
d)	Southern Oxfordshire Magistrates Committee	1
e)	Abingdon on Thames Chamber of Commerce	1
f)	Thames Valley Police	1

5.2 Any organisation represented on the Advisory Committee may, at the discretion of the Advisory Committee determined at its Annual Meeting, have more than one representative.

6 **Officers**

Officers representing (a) the County Council (b) the District Council (c) Town Council and (d) Thames Valley Police, shall have a right to attend meetings of the Advisory Committee and speak in an advisory capacity.

7 **Terms of Reference**

7.1 The Advisory Committee does not have executive powers, but may consider any traffic related matter of concern either directly or indirectly to the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames, and may offer advice on such matters to Oxfordshire County Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council, or to any other relevant organisation as may be appropriate.

7.2 The following list is not exhaustive, but represent the type of matters which may be discussed by the Advisory Committee: -

- a) Existing or proposed road systems or traffic management schemes
- b) One-way systems
- c) Traffic calming
- d) Waiting restrictions
- e) Traffic signalling, signing and road markings
- f) Pedestrian crossing sand school crossings
- g) Footpaths
- h) Street lighting
- i) On-street and off-street car parking
- j) Road safety engineering

8 **Public Participation**

8.1 Meetings of the Advisory Committee shall be open to the public and press. However the public and press may be excluded by resolution of the Advisory Committee on the grounds of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

8.2 At the discretion of the Chairman, Members of the public or representatives of organisations may address the Advisory Committee. The address shall be in the form of a statement lasting not more than three minutes. The person giving the address shall not be permitted to participate in any subsequent debate by the Advisory Committee on the matter in question.

9 **Amendments to constitution and Terms of Reference**

The Advisory Committee's constitution and terms of reference may be amended by resolution of the Town Council.

Approved by Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council, 18th October 2017.