

**Draft Minutes of the Council of the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames held on  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019  
in the Roysse Room, Guildhall, Bridge Street, Abingdon**

**Present**

Cllr Charlie Birks	Mayor
Cllr Cheryl Briggs	Deputy Mayor
Cllr Gabby Barody	
Cllr Samantha Bowring	
Cllr Grace Clifton	
Cllr Andrew Coveney	
Cllr Eric de la Harpe	
Cllr Neil Fawcett	
Cllr Andy Foulsham	
Cllr Jeanette Halliday	
Cllr Jim Halliday	
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	
Cllr Robert Maddison	
Cllr Lorraine Oates	
Cllr Ulrike Rowbottom	
Cllr Andrew Skinner	

**In Attendance**

Mr Nigel Luker	Macebearer
Rev Ian Millgate	Abingdon Baptist Church
Mr Steve Rich	Assistant Town Clerk / Head of Services
Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting)
Mrs Susan Whipp	Treasurer/ Responsible Financial Officer

24 members of the public and the press.

**SECTION I (Open to the Public Including the Press)**

C41 **Prayers**

Rev Ian Millgate of the Abingdon Baptist Church led the meeting in prayer.

## C42 Public Participation

### a) Presentation of Grant Cheques to Local Organisations

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

	<b>Name of Applicant</b>	<b>Purpose of grant, as summarised in the grant application</b>	<b>Grant awarded</b>
1	Abingdon Church Twinning Margaret Greaney & Eileen Bontempelli	To host the two groups of visitors that Abingdon receives each year	£150
2	Abingdon Flower Club Christine Brown	Towards the cost of a Flower Festival during Heritage weekend	£150
3	Abingdon Music Centre Trust Anne Newton	To purchase a digital projector & the necessary speakers, cabling & fixtures	£440
5	Cardiac Risk in the Young Ulrike Rowbottom	Towards the cost of a cardiac screening held in Abingdon to allow young people to be screened free of charge	£750
7	Enrych Oxfordshire Lucas Somarakis	To help support the increasing number of referrals they are receiving	£500
8	St Johns Ambulance Alan Weir and Paul Hopkins	To raise money for a medical crisis manikin	£750

9	Trinity Church  Malcolm Newton & Mrs. Evelyn Newton	To improve access to the Conduit Centre for the disabled etc. To relocate for ease of access, and improve toilet facilities. To improve safety of staircase to 1st floor	£1,000
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A cheque for £5,000 was awarded to the Abingdon Damascus Youth Project towards the cost of the Young Peoples Legacy Project. The cheque was presented to Roxy Elford, Senior Youth Worker and representatives from the Project.

There was a presentation to the meeting by Friends of Abingdon Civic Society followed by an opportunity to ask questions.

There was a presentation to the meeting by Radley Parish Council in relation to the Radley Lakes followed by an opportunity to ask questions.

C43 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Margaret Crick, Alex Greenaway and Helen Pighills.

C44 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

C45 **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the draft minutes of the Council of Abingdon-on-Thames held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019 be adopted and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

Matters arising

Cllr Neil Fawcett stated how good it had been to see the Rainbow Flag flying from the County Hall. He stated that Abingdon Pride, which took place on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2019, had been an enjoyable and successful event and he thanked all those involved in the organisation of the event, including Town Council staff, Dawn Hutcheon's and all the volunteers. The Council unanimously supported this vote of thanks.

C46 **Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames: Engagements and Announcements**

The Mayor, Cllr Charlie Birks, presented his schedule of engagements since the last meeting of the Council, as circulated with the agenda.

The events attended and numbers included the presentation of the Queens Award for Voluntary Service to the Abingdon Bridge.

Other outstanding engagements involved a wide range of societies, one being the Heritage Festival earlier in the month; the Mayor conveyed special thanks to Friends of Abingdon Civic Society for their organisation of this event.

The Mayor stated that it was marvellous to see the many opportunities for residents to become involved in the life of the town. Two other events he mentioned were a performance by the Junior Section of the Oxfordshire Orchestra, and the presentation of medals to children which undertook the Summer Reading Challenge at Abingdon Library. Over 700 children took part in this event in the latter.

The Mayor conveyed his thanks for fundraising for his chosen charities by the Abbey Cinema and ASK restaurant.

The Mayor announced that the Mayor's Civic Service would take place at 3.00 pm on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2019, in the Abbey Hall, all would be welcome.

The Mayor concluded by extending an invitation to the Mayor's Parlour after this meeting had concluded for light refreshments.

#### **C47 Oxfordshire County Council Report**

The Council received and considered the report from Cllr Emily Smith, County Councillor for Abingdon North Division in relation to the above, as circulated ahead of the meeting and attached to these minutes. Cllr Emily Smith had conveyed her apologies for being unable to attend the meeting and therefore County Cllr Neil Fawcett had offered to respond to any questions.

Cllr Jim Halliday stated that the painted road markings at the junction of Ock Mill Close and the Marcham Road have become very faded. The Highways Dept at Oxfordshire County Council had been asked to re-paint the markings but they had stated that there was no budget remaining for the year. He asked whether County Cllr Neil Fawcett would consider getting this work done from his councillor budget. Cllr Fawcett responded yes, he would consider this but would also look towards funding from the normal maintenance budget for highways.

#### **Lodge Hill Update**

Cllr Jim Halliday was concerned regarding the delays to the implementation of the Diamond Interchange junction at Lodge Hill and asked whether or not the Town Council could do anything to help speed matters up. Cllr Fawcett responded that all three Abingdon county councillors repeatedly pressed the county to press harder in relation to this matter. The current delay was due to the Highways Agency but if Oxfordshire County Council had pushed harder on this the project would be much further forward. He was not convinced that Abingdon Town Council could do to speed matter along. He stated that the

Abingdon County Councillors will push matters along as far as they are able at full council and area committee meetings. The whole matter was very frustrating especially if the planned housing developments go ahead without the Diamond Interchange having been implemented. Cllr Jeanette Halliday stated that a large planning application had been approved in outline in north Abingdon and reserved and detailed matters would now be coming forward. The Council's Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee does not want development until infrastructure is in place. She asked whether we can still take that stance? Cllr Fawcett stated that the local planning authority was the Vale of White Horse District Council and he had no information in relation to this matter. However, generally he felt that the Town Council's planning committee should push this one as far and as hard as they could. Cllr Fawcett stated that having a timetable as detailed in Cllr Emily Smith's report was a step forward.

#### A415 Ock Street (Abingdon) – Proposed Parking Restrictions Consultation

Cllr Jim Halliday noted the consultation which was detailed in Cllr Emily Smith's report. He stated that concern had been expressed at the Abingdon Traffic Advisory Committee regarding waiting times in relation to loading bays. He understood that there was a significant cost to undertaking consultations in relation to traffic orders, much of this relating to legal and advertising costs, and therefore it made sense to include where possible as many sites within a particular order as possible in order to spread the cost. He asked whether the proposed reduction in waiting times in relation to loading bays could be added on to the Ock Street order. In response Cllr Fawcett stated that he was not sure about this but it may be as consultation in relation to the proposed Ock Street restrictions was already underway it would be best to deal with these other proposals as a package at a later date.

The Mayor, Cllr Charlie Birks, appreciated that the Abingdon county councillors have worked very hard to remove the Lodge Hill Diamond Interchange Project forward. However he had read the report from Cllr Emily Smith with some dismay as the County Council had not even given a firm commitment to building the Diamond Interchange. No legal commitments had been given and timescales continually get ditched. In response Cllr Fawcett stated that he agreed with the sentiment of Cllr Birk's comments. He had got the Lodge Hill Diamond Interchange put into the County Council's Transport Plan in 2001 and then the County Council had dropped it. It was then put back in in 2013. In principle agreements had been made and had been written in the various planning permissions. However, he agreed that nothing was as yet definite although matters should progress unless the modelling shows there would be a major problem in building the interchange. He stated that the Town Council was solid in its support for the interchange.

The report was noted.

#### C48 **Vale of White Horse District Council Report**

Members received and considered the report from Cllr Helen Pighills, District Councillor for Abingdon Abbey Northcourt as circulated ahead of the meeting and attached to these minutes.

Cllr Helen Pighills had given her apologies as she was unable to attend the meeting.

##### Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

Cllr Jim Halliday welcomed the Vale of White Horse District Council's opposition to the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. He stated that the last district council administration had decided to make certain things confidential and asked whether the new administration would overturn that previous decision. District Councillor Neil Fawcett stated that he agreed in principle with Cllr Jim Halliday. The Vale of White Horse District Council had signed a non-disclosure agreement with the Highways Agency in March 2019. A review of this decision had been initiated. He understood that the non-disclosure agreement related to very specific information at that time and would not impact upon more general matters in the future. He stated that the District Council was now wishing to be as open and transparent as they can be.

District Councillor Andy Foulsham stated that he had seconded the motion to oppose the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway at the District Council meeting. There had been a cool response from the Government Minister but the government was in no doubt as to the District Council's opinion.

The report was noted.

#### C49 **Reports from Outside Bodies**

##### The Abingdon Bridge

The Council received and considered a report from Cllr Ulrike Rowbottom, the Council's representative on the Abingdon Bridge. Her report detailed the key points raised at the Abingdon Bridge's AGM which took place on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019. Since the meeting she had been in regular contact with the organisation and the Abingdon Bridge was looking to have a tour of the Guildhall and a meeting with the Mayor for the young people.

##### Town Council representation on 2121 (Abingdon) Squadron

The Council received and considered the report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above. It was noted that the Squadron was requesting "a named councillor who was interested in young people as a point of contact to invite to our annual formal inspection, annual general meeting and any other events which celebrate the Squadron."

**Resolved:** that Cllr Charlie Birks be appointed as the named councillor in relation to the 2121 (Abingdon) Squadron.

C50 **Questions under Standing Order 10**

None.

C51 **Traffic Advisory Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Jim Halliday and seconded by Cllr Andy Foulsham that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the Traffic Advisory Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019, as circulated with the agenda.

Cllr Jim Halliday, who had chaired the meeting, reported that this had been a very productive meeting and he encouraged any members who had an interest in relation to traffic / highway matters to attend.

**Resolved** that the draft minutes of the Traffic Advisory Committee held on held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C52 **Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Jeanette Halliday and seconded by Cllr Lorraine Oates that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee meetings held on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 15<sup>th</sup> July and 5<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and the draft minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019, as circulated with the agenda.

Cllr Jeanette Halliday, as Chair of the Planning, Highways & Consultations Committee, expressed some surprise that the Town Council had been advised that officers at the Vale of White Horse District Council stated that the identity of the individual / organisation who had applied for the Old Abbey House to be added to the list of assets of community value was being treated as confidential. She expressed concern regarding this matter.

A member of the public stated that the organisation who had applied was the Friends of Abingdon Civic Society.

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Planning, Highways & Consultations Committee held on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 15<sup>th</sup> July and 5<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and the draft minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C53 **Green Scrutiny Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Eric de la Harpe and seconded by Cllr Gabby Barody that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the Green Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and the draft minutes of 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019, as circulated with the agenda.

The Chair of the Committee, Cllr Eric de la Harpe, reported that the two meetings held so far had been very lively and interesting and well attended by members of the public. He encouraged anyone who had an interest in these matters to attend the meetings.

**Resolved** that the minutes of the Green Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and the draft minutes of 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

#### Meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> August 2019 - Minute GS3: Terms of reference

The Committee had Recommended:

“to change the Council’s target so that the Council aims to be carbon neutral by 2030, subject to the ability to offset emissions.”

It was noted that the current policy read to: “Pledge to make council as carbon neutral as possible by 2030 and to do all it can to support carbon emission reduction across the town.”

Following further discussion it was **resolved** to:

“Pledge to make council be carbon neutral by 2030, subject to the ability to offset emissions. and to do all it can to support carbon emission reduction across the town.”

#### Meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019 - Minute GS6: Terms of reference

It was **resolved**:

That the terms of reference of reference of the Committee be changed as follows:

- (i) That the Committee increase from 7 members to 10 members
- (ii) That the Committee change its name from ‘Green Scrutiny Committee’ to ‘Green Advisory and Scrutiny Committee’

In relation to the membership of the Committee it was **resolved**:

That Cllrs Cheryl Briggs, Margaret Crick and Alex Greenaway be appointed as Members of the Green Advisory and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the civic year 2019/20.

**Resolved** that subject to the above the minutes of the Green Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and the draft minutes of 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

#### C54 **Guildhall Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Grace Clifton and seconded by Cllr Neil Fawcett that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the meeting of the Guildhall

Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019, as circulated with the agenda.

**Resolved** that the draft minutes of the Guildhall Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019 and the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

## C55 Community Services Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Neil Fawcett and seconded by Cllr Lorraine Oates that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019, as circulated with the agenda.

### Minute CS25 Communications Review Working Group

The Chair of the Committee, Cllr Neil Fawcett, drew the attention of Members to the Communications Strategy which had been adopted. The Committee had a very positive and wide-ranging discussion in this regard and he thanked Cllr Andy Foulsham for drafting the resulting Strategy. Noticeboards were also discussed by the Committee and it was felt that the Council would achieve better use of the new boards by working with local organisations who had offered to keep the boards up to date.

In relation to the provision of tablets for Members, Cllr Andy Foulsham reported that this was being looked at by the IT Working Group but their work to date had been concentrated on IT improvements in the office and Museum.

Cllr Jim Halliday enquired regarding the process for the publication of the Town Crier magazine in October 2019. The Chair, Cllr Neil Fawcett, responded that work on this had been delegated to himself and Louise Brown in the office. He commended Louise on the excellent work she had done. The October publication was 8 pages long. For future editions it was planned to gather input more widely but it was not intended to circulate the Town Crier to all Members ahead of its publication.

### Minute CS27: General Report of the Town Clerk

In response to a question from Cllr Jim Halliday, the Chair Cllr Neil Fawcett stated that the Committee would be considering suitable commemoration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of both VE Day and VJ Day. Cllr Jeanette Halliday stated that she understood from the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils that there were grants available for commemorations.

### Minute CS29: Publicity

Cllr Jim Halliday noted that there was a suggestion to present cheques for any larger grants to organisations at the Annual Council and Mayor Making meeting. Cllr Halliday urged some caution in this regard as he would not wish cause financial issues to organisations by their waiting for this meeting. The Cllr Neil Fawcett stated that the intention was not to hold up actual payment to that date

but to raise awareness of the work of the Council by making a formal presentation.

*Cllr Andrew Skinner left the meeting at this point, it being 8.32pm.*

**Resolved** that the draft minutes of the Community Services Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C56 **Amenities and Recreation Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Jim Halliday and seconded by Cllr Rob Maddison that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019, as circulated with the agenda.

**Resolved** that the draft minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C57 **County Hall Museum Management Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Patrick Lonergan and seconded by Cllr Andy Foulsham that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

*Cllr Andrew Skinner re-joined the meeting at this point, it being 8.35pm.*

**Minute M30: Accreditation**

The Chair, Cllr Patrick Lonergan, stated that at the meeting he had thanked Elin Bornemann, the Collections Officer, for the considerable amount of work which she had undertaken on accreditation, in addition to her usual daily duties. Elin had undertaken an excellent job but had not minuted his comments and so wished his thanks to be acknowledged here.

**Resolved** that the draft minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee of 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C58 **Finance and General Purposes Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Samantha Bowring and seconded by Cllr Andy Foulsham that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

The Chair of the Committee, Cllr Samantha Bowring, reported that the Committee had been working hard across a wide range of areas to set a solid foundation as a modern Council.

The Council then considered the recommendations.

**Resolved** by 13 votes in favour and one abstention: that £20,866 be released from the Civic Treasures earmarked reserve (emr 334) to part fund the replacement treasures cabinet.

#### Minute F28 Financial Regulations

**Resolved** unanimously: that the draft updated Financial Regulations be approved.

#### Minute F29 Council Core documents

**Resolved** unanimously: that the Council's core documents be approved for continued use, subject to the amendments listed below:

- (i) Member Code of Conduct
- (ii) Standing Orders
- (iii) Council Terms of Reference – subject to amending:
  - (a) *“Co-option of members to Sub-Committees requires the approval of the parent committee, which will then make a recommendation to the Council for final approval”*  
To:  
*“Co-option of members to Sub-Committees requires the approval of the parent committee”*
  - (b) changes to reflect the establishment of the Green Scrutiny Committee;
- (iv) Council privacy policy
- (v) Code of Practice in relation to public speaking at Council meetings
- (vi) Privacy Policy
- (vii) General privacy notice for residents and members of the public
- (viii) General privacy notice for staff, councillors and role holders
- (ix) Subject access requests policy
- (x) Code of practice for handling complaints
- (xi) Flag policy in relation to the County Hall

#### Minute F34 Confidential Report of the Town Clerk

#### Matters referred Amenities and Recreation Committee Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019

It was noted that a New Cemetery Working Group had been established, comprising of Cllrs Eric de la Harpe, Jeanette Halliday and Jim Halliday. It was agreed that the matter of membership should also be placed on the Town Council agenda to see if any other members were interested in serving on the group.

No further appointments were made to the Working Group.

**Resolved:** that subject to the above the draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 be approved together with any recommendations contained therein.

## C59 **Motions under Standing Order 8**

Motion approved by Cllr Ulrike Rowbottom and seconded by Cllr Gabby Barody:

“That this Council expands its climate emergency strategy for reducing carbon footprint by creating a cross-functional working group (District & Town), with the specific aim of investigating a 20mph speed limit zone for Abingdon. In alignment with the Council's declared climate emergency strategy, the envisaged benefits of a 20mph speed limit directly contribute towards:

- increased road safety
- reduced carbon footprint
- create a healthier environment through improved air quality and reduced noise pollution
- encourage more physical activity such as walking and cycling.

It is recommended that as part of this work consultation and engagement take place with local communities and other stakeholders and that this work be included as part of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.”

In making this proposal Cllr Ulrike Rowbottom noted that a number of authorities including Oxford, Bristol, Warrington and Hackney had implemented 20 mph zones. The reasons were to improve road safety and create a healthier environment. Research had shown that 20mph zones improve air quality, reduce noise pollution and increase physical activity. Local authorities were responsible for roads and should take advantage of the legislation enabling them to do this. Introducing 20 mph zones would assist in tackling social deprivation, reducing accidents and other issues. Safer routes to school were required and more consideration of walking and cycling. Studies had concluded that introducing 20 mph zones improved health and the costs of introducing the zones were far lower than the benefits. In taking this forward it would be important to consult and engage with the community to ensure that can gauge what the community thinks.

In debating the motion the following points were made:

- Support but with some caveats. Thames Valley Police will respond that they have no resources to police 20 mph zones and therefore it will rely on changing the physical nature of the roads, as has taken place in Oxford.
- In Walthamstow North London there is the “little Holland scheme” which encourages walking and cycling.
- This would have a positive impact but would mean a huge investment. We should liaise with other authorities and look at examples of work elsewhere but need to consider that this will be a long-term project.
- What areas of Abingdon are we being asked to consider – the whole parish, the town centre, inside the peripheral road, new estates? In air quality terms slowing traffic down can make air quality worse.
- Capital cost will be immense. May wish to concentrate on problematic areas e.g. outside schools.

- Echo the above comments. Pleased to support any efforts to reduce the number and severity of accidents. RoSPA refer to 20 mph zones rather than 20mph limits.
- Cllr Eric de la Harpe stated that he was the Vale Cycling Champion. He supported the motion noting that many people were afraid to cycle due to the hazards.
- Everyone knows about the climate emergency. We can either follow or lead. Do not believe we can police 20 mph or 30 mph limits so the biggest challenge is to get residents on board.

In responding to the debate Cllr Ulrike Rowbottom thanked the Council for its support and noted that caveats made by Members. This would be a huge project. She agreed that it was best progressed through the planning process. It would be up to the community as to how we progress.

Agreed unanimously that:

*“This Council expands its climate emergency strategy for reducing carbon footprint by creating a cross-functional working group (District & Town), with the specific aim of investigating a 20mph speed limit zone for Abingdon. In alignment with the Council’s declared climate emergency strategy, the envisaged benefits of a 20mph speed limit directly contribute towards:*

- *increased road safety*
- *reduced carbon footprint*
- *create a healthier environment through improved air quality and reduced noise pollution*
- *encourage more physical activity such as walking and cycling.*

*It is recommended that as part of this consultation with local communities and other stakeholders that the results be included as part of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.”*

**C60 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)**

**C61 Guildhall Committee**

The Council received and considered the confidential appendix to the minutes of the Guildhall Committee of 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

**Resolved:** that the confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting of the Guildhall Committee of 19<sup>th</sup> August 2019 be approved.

C62 Amenities and Recreation Committee

The Council received and considered the confidential appendix to the minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee of 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

**Resolved:** that the confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee of 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 be approved.

C63 Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Council received and considered the confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

**Resolved:** that the confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 be approved together with the recommendations contained therein.

The meeting rose at 9.08 pm.

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Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames

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Date

# COUNCILLOR REPORT TO ABINGDON ON THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

26 JUNE 2019

CLLR ALISON ROOKE – ABINGDON EAST DIVISION

## **Lodge Hill Interchange**

OCC is continuing its design work, though delayed responses from Highways England have greatly extended the estimated completion date. The current completion date being quoted is Summer 2021. Negotiations with land owners are continuing.

## **Other Transport issues**

I requested extra attention be paid to the road surfaces of Bridge Street, East St Helen Street and Stratton Way. Unfortunately, the County team have confirmed that these roads do not meet their criteria (other than standard patching) to be included in their coming 12-month resurfacing programme. Road markings at the junction of Stert, Bridge and High Streets, and Stratton Way cycle marking have been repainted.

I encourage anyone noting highway/ pavement etc problems to report them online to 'fix my street'.

The following has been sent from OCC's cabinet member for local communities re the 'refreshing' of the network of Parish Transport Representatives (PTRs):

*'The PTR was established some time ago to give communities an opportunity to discuss local transport issues and find out more about transport in Oxfordshire. The County Council administer the PTR network and meetings are held in County Hall three times a year.*

*However, due to the withdrawal of bus subsidies and the subsequent disbandment of the bus services team, the number of PTRs attending the meetings has declined and the meeting has become less effective over recent years.*

*Clearly with my interest in Community Transport, and transport as a whole, I would like to breathe new life into this role and these meetings. I am therefore asking if you can put the feelers out as you attend parish council meetings to encourage them to appoint someone as PTR (if they don't currently have one), particularly if your division is not well represented (see attached list of current PTRs).*

*It is not a requirement that a PTR is a parish or town councillor, but they should be appointed by the local council. Someone who would be effective as a PTR would be someone who has an interest in public transport services and a desire to help identify and address the transport needs of their community.*

*As well as the meetings, there are also a 'surgery' sessions beforehand where PTRs have an opportunity to talk directly to Council officers about their specific transport concerns.*

*I have attached a handbook that was provided to PTRs and last updated in 2012. Much of this handbook is outdated, particularly with the withdrawal of subsidies, however there is some useful information here that describes the role of a PTR.*

*The next PTR meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019** at County Hall.*

*Please contact Shirley McAneny ([shirley.mcaneny@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:shirley.mcaneny@oxfordshire.gov.uk)) for more information and to notify any changes.'*

I see from the attached list of members of the PTR that there doesn't appear to be a member from Abingdon Town Council – it might be something that ATC wishes to consider?

### **Other news from the county**

Rob MacDougall has been appointed as Oxfordshire County Council's new Director of Community Safety and Chief Fire Officer. Rob is currently Assistant Chief Fire Officer and will replace Simon Furlong, who is retiring from the post later this year.

Ansaf Azhar has been appointed as Oxfordshire County Council's new Director of Public Health, following the retirement of Jonathan McWilliam. Ansaf was the Interim Director of Public Health for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council in the West Midlands and will take up his new post in August.

## DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT TO ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL JUNE 2019

### Vale Election Results

Following the May elections there has been a big change to the political balance of the Vale District Council. We now have 31 Liberal Democrats, 6 Conservatives and 1 Green.

Emily Smith, Botley and Sunningwell Ward, was elected Leader and, following elections within the Lib Dem group, she appointed the following cabinet:

Debby Hallett – Deputy Council Leader & Corporate Services

Andy Crawford – Finance

Helen Pighills – Community Services

Neil Fawcett – Legal & Democratic

Bethia Thomas – Development & Regeneration

Catherine Webber – Planning Policy

Judy Roberts – Partnership & Insight

Ruth Molyneaux – Housing & Community Safety

Jenny Hannaby – Environmental Services

### Planning

I recommend that Town Councillors sign up to receive Vale planning alerts for applications in your ward. Every time a new planning application is received you will get an email with a link to the full application details on the Vale website.

Anyone can register for these updates, not just councillors.

Sign up by visiting [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk) and under **News and events** look for “Keep me informed”

If residents approach you about planning applications, you should remind them that while the Town Council is a consultee for all Abingdon applications, it is the District Council that makes the final decision on whether to approve a scheme.

### Anti-Idling Campaign

On Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June (Clean Air Day) the Vale council launched an anti-idling campaign. There was a stall in Abingdon last Thursday afternoon and on Monday, Market Day. One of the targets of the campaign will be around schools.

### Abbey Meadow Pool

The Abbey Meadow Pool is now open for the summer. I have asked officers to look into whether the opening hours and/or season could be extended. I understand that the pool is already open for longer than the original hours contracted with GLL at their expense, so extra opening may incur extra expense for the Vale – but I am waiting for the outcome of the investigation.

### Next Vale Council Meeting

The next Vale Council Meeting will be on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 7pm at The Beacon, Wantage. One of the motions will be concerning the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. All welcome to attend

Helen Pighills

21/6/19