

**Minutes of the Council of the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames held on
Wednesday 28th June 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 Neil Fawcett	
Cllr Dennis Garrett	
Cllr Robert Hall	
Cllr Vicky Jenkins	
Cllr Angela Lawrence	
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	
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 Nigel Warner	Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting)
Mrs Susan Whipp	Treasurer / RFO

14 members of the public and the press.

SECTION I (Open to the Public Including the Press)

C14 Prayers

In the absence of the Rector, Rev. Dr. Charles Miller, the Town Clerk read from the Gospel According to St Matthew Chapter 5 (the Beatitudes).

The Council then stood in a minute's silence in memory of the victims of the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

Following the conclusion of the one minute's silence the leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, proposed and it was **resolved** that, having due regard to the longstanding historic link between the Town of Abingdon and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the Town Clerk write to the Worshipful the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr Marie-Therese Rossi, to express the Town Council's condolences to all the victims of the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

C15 **Public Participation**

The Mayors presented a badge of office to Lance Corporal Will Smith of the Army Cadets who was appointed a Mayor's cadet for 2017/18. He had been unable to attend the Mayor Making on 10th May 2017.

The Mayor stated that the Council had awarded a number of local organisations grants and was pleased to present cheques to representatives of those organisations as follows:

1. The Friends of Abingdon Civic Society received a grant of £700 towards its project, the Heritage Open Days in September – cheque presented to Jackie Smith and Bobby Nichols.
2. Abbey Brass received a cheque for £1,000 towards the purchase of instruments, music and uniforms - cheque presented to Nicky Warden and Ian Wooldridge.
3. The Abingdon Flower Club received a cheque for £500 towards the Flower Festival in September – cheque presented to Melissa Fletcher.
4. Royal Voluntary Service Abingdon Branch received a cheque for £400 to help towards its project, the Darby and Joan Club – cheque presented to Jean Fraser.
5. The Rotary Club of Abingdon received a cheque for £800 to help towards the Abingdon Food and Drink Festival – cheque presented to Paul Thompson.
6. The Oxfordshire Play Association received a cheque for £800 towards its play and activity day at Southern Town Park. A representative for the Oxfordshire Play Association was unable to attend so the cheque was posted directly to the organisation.
7. Life Education Wessex received a cheque for £630 towards a shortfall in funding for educational programme at Carswell School. A representative for Life Education Wessex was unable to attend so the cheque was sent to the organisation.

C16 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jeanette Halliday and Cllr Brian Hedley.

C17 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Samantha Bowring and Cllr Margaret Crick both declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee (minute C27 below) – Grant - Children's Centres (Minute F14). Cllr Bowring and Cllr Crick had been involved in discussions in relation to Abingdon Carousel who were seeking to provide a service for children's centres in

Abingdon and therefore believed that there could be a perception of apparent bias and conflict of interest.

Cllr Sandy Lovatt declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Minute C26, the minutes of the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee, as he is Chairman of the Vale of White Horse District Council Planning Committee, which determines planning applications within the district.

It was noted that one of the recipients of the Mayor's Award from the immediate Past Mayor, Cllr Alice Badcock, had been unable to attend the Annual Meeting of the Council on 10th May 2017 and would be invited to receive her award at the Council Meeting due to take place on Wednesday 18th October 2017.

C18 **Minutes**

It was noted that Cllr Vicky Jenkins had draft read the minutes previously and any typographical errors had already been corrected by the Town Clerk in the grey copy.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Council of Abingdon-on-Thames held on 10th May 2017 be adopted and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

C19 **Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames**

The Council received from the Mayor, Cllr Jan Morter, her schedule of engagements since the last meeting of the Council and received the Mayor's announcements.

The Mayor announced the following dates for the diary:

- Annual Bowls Match against Oxford to take place at Kidlington Bowls Club on Saturday 6th August 2017. The interest of a number of members in taking part in this match was noted.
- The Civic Service would take place at St Helen's Church at 10am on Sunday 10th September 2017. This would be followed by a lunch at the Crown & Thistle for which invitations would be sent in due course. The cost of attending the lunch was to be advised.

Miss Louise Brown, who had commenced working at the Council as an Administrative Assistant, was in attendance at the meeting and was welcomed by members.

C20 **Oxfordshire County Council - Report**

Members received and considered a report from Cllr Neil Fawcett, Oxfordshire County Councillor for the Abingdon South which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

C21 Questions under Standing Order 10

Question submitted by Cllr Samantha Bowring:

“Please will the leader of Finance & General Purposes Committee update council about what is happening to the money allocated in the revenue budget to run the Guildhall while it has been closed the past two years?”

Cllr Mike Badcock, Chairman of the Guildhall Committee responded:

The Guildhall closed for public lettings from 1st September 2015. It has continued to be used for meetings, the Mayors Parlour and the Information Centre. In line with Council policy any underspends from 2015-16 and 2016-17 have been returned to the general fund.

C22 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 10th May 2017 and 25th May 2017.

Minute M14

A member stated that the minute was correct in that the Committee had received a progress report in relation to proposals for exhibition space, storage and office accommodation for one member of staff at the Old Magistrates' Court but that it would have been helpful to state within the minutes that the Committee had been minded to move forward with this project.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on 10th May 2017 and 25th May 2017 be approved together with any recommendations contained therein.

C23 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 10th May 2017 and 24th May 2017

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee of 10th May 2017 and 24th May 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C24 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 10th May 2017 and 23rd May 2017

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Community Services Committee of 10th May and 23rd May 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C25 **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 Guildhall Committee meeting held on 10th May 2017 and 18th May 2017.

A Member enquired regarding work in relation to the business plan for the Guildhall service. He was supportive of the plans but felt that the staffing implications of the proposals needed to be considered. The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Dennis Garrett stated that progress was being made but that the estimates would depend on proposals for the Museum and Guildhall services working together.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Guildhall Committee of 10th May and 18th May 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein

C26 **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 of the Planning and Highways Committee meetings held on 3rd April, 24th April, 8th May and the draft minutes of the meetings held on 10th May, 30th May and 19th June 2017.

Members considered the recommendation at minute 14 page 79, that the Town Council decline the invitation from Westbourne Engagement, on behalf of CEG, to appoint a representative of the Town Council to participate in a Community Liaison Group in relation to the application in relation to land north of Dunmore Road/ Twelve Acre drive. The recommendation was endorsed accordingly.

Cllr Angela Lawrence expressed her dissatisfaction that she had been taken off the Community Services Committee and appointed to the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee. She stated that she had not been asked whether she wished to be on this Committee and she went on to explain that she had not been asked whether or not she could serve on this Committee and Monday, which was when this Committee met, she had another commitment. The Mayor stated that Committee places were agreed at the Annual Meeting / Mayor Making and noted that Cllr Lawrence had not been at that meeting. The Leader of the Council stated that communication went two ways and that in any case any member was able to attend any committee meeting of the Council.

A number of other points were made by members in relation to planning related matters:

- A trial run of flood defences in south Abingdon took place in April 2017 and had proceeded successfully.
- Members noted that various works had taken place and were due to take

place in the near future in relation to the A34 close to Abingdon. Concern was expressed that when the A34 northbound is closed between the A415 Marcham Interchange and the junction of the A423 north of Kennington, the diversion route includes Colwell Drive, Copenhagen Drive and the Dunmore Road. It was understood that closures were already in operation up until 7th July 2017 to enable barrier repairs to take place. When the diversion route was operational, the noise of the additional traffic travelling along the peripheral road caused considerable nuisance to residents. The Council asked that the Town Clerk write to the County Council to ask if there were any measures which could be put in place to mitigate this noise nuisance. In particular it was suggested that a reduction from the usual speed limit along the peripheral road, the usual speed limit for which was 40 mph may be helpful in this regard.

Resolved: that the draft minutes of the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee meetings of 3rd April, 24th April, 8th May and the draft minutes of the meetings held on 10th May, 30th May and 19th June 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C27 **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 meetings of 29th March 2017, 10th May 2017 and the draft minutes of 13th June 2017 together with the recommendations contained therein.

Minute F14 – Grant Children’s Centres

A Member asked what the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was expecting from Abingdon Carousel in order to enable the Children’s Centre to re-open in September. The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Mike Badcock, stated that the information required from the organisation was in accordance with the various queries which had been raised by Members and conveyed to the organisation by officers. As mentioned at the Committee meeting subject to the various queries being answered there could then be a special meeting of the Committee to progress matters. A Member queried whether a special meeting was required, the response was that a meeting was required so that Members could consider the responses to the queries which they had raised.

Councillor Alice Badcock, as Chairman of the Summer Events Sub-Committee, asked that all staff be thanked for their hard work in relation to Fun and Music in the Park and in particular the efforts of the Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk and Works Supervisor who had to manage the various changes which had been required to address the current security situation.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 29th March 2017, 10th May 2017 and the draft minutes of 13th June 2017 be approved, together with all the recommendations contained therein, including those detailed above.

C28 **Community Led Plan Working Group**

It was proposed by Cllr Mike Badcock and seconded by Cllr Margaret Crick that the Council receive and consider the notes of the Community Led Plan Working Group meeting of 26th April 2017.

The Town Clerk updated the meeting and reported that it was originally intended that the Community Led Plan would be launched with consultation events in July 2017. However matters had been delayed for a number of reasons not least of which was the extended period of what was commonly known as “purdah” relating to the County and General (national) elections which had restricted the Council’s ability to progress matters, issue publicity and engage with the public on these matters. The launch events had therefore been postponed until September. This would give a longer lead time to publicise the events so that there could be a meaningful consultation and enable as many people as possible to get involved. Members noted the update.

It was **resolved** that the notes of the Community Led Plan Working Group meeting of 26th April 2017 be approved.

See also addendum at the end of these minutes, as approved by the Council on 18th October 2017.

C29 **Completion and Approval of Annual Governance Statement**

The Council received and considered the Annual Governance Statement for the year ending 31st March 2017, which was section 1 of the Council’s Annual Return, and the report of the Treasurer / Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

The Treasurer / RFO reported that subsequent to the agenda being sent out, the internal auditor had visited and signed off the Internal Audit Report for 2016/17, with the report stating that the internal control objectives of the Council had been met.

It was proposed by the Mayor, Cllr Jan Morter and seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Margaret Crick and

Resolved (by 16 votes in favour, 0 against and 1 abstention) (i) that the report of the Treasurer/RFO be approved (ii) that the Council approve the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2017, answering “Yes” to questions 1 to 8 of section 1 of the Annual Return (question 9 not being applicable) and (iii) that the Mayor and the Town Clerk sign the statement on behalf of the Town Council.

Cllr Angela Lawrence left the meeting at this point, it being 7.55pm.

C30 Approval of Annual Return and Financial Statements 2016/17

The Council received and considered the report of the Treasurer/ RFO in relation to the above, together with the Annual Return and the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2017. It was noted that the relevant sections of the Annual Return and Financial Statements had been signed by the Town Clerk and the Treasurer/ RFO.

Resolved (unanimously) (i) that the report of the Treasurer and Responsible Financial Officer, the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2017 and the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2017 be approved and (ii) that the Annual Return and Financial Statements be signed on behalf of the Council by the Mayor.

C31 Motion under Standing Order 8

Members considered the following motion, which was proposed by Cllr Helen Pighills and seconded by Cllr Samantha Bowring:

“This Council considers that a direct and frequent bus service between Abingdon and Oxford Railway station is an essential service for the residents of and visitors to Abingdon.

This Council is disappointed that, due to redevelopment work in Oxford City Centre, the X3 service to the station has ceased for an indefinite period

Council wishes to see the reinstatement of the regular bus service between Abingdon and Oxford Station. Council instructs the Town Clerk to write to Oxfordshire County Council to ask them to maintain traffic routes through Oxford City Centre that allow reinstatement of the direct Oxford station - Abingdon bus service.”

Cllr Mike Badcock proposed the following amendment which was seconded by Cllr Dennis Garrett:

“This Council considers that a direct and frequent bus service between Abingdon and Didcot and both Oxford Railway stations is an essential service for the residents of and visitors to Abingdon.

This Council understands that, due to redevelopment work in Oxford City Centre, the X3 service to the station has by necessity ceased for an indefinite period.

Council wishes to see the reinstatement of a regular bus service between all parts of Abingdon and Oxford Station, also that increased bus provision be made for services to Didcot and Oxford Parkway.

Council instructs the Town Clerk to write to Oxfordshire County Council and the Appropriate Bus companies accordingly.”

The proposer and seconder of the motion accepted the proposed amendments and these became part of the substantive motion.

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

This Council considers that a direct and frequent bus service between Abingdon and Didcot and both Oxford Railway stations is an essential service for the residents of and visitors to Abingdon.

This Council understands that, due to redevelopment work in Oxford City Centre, the X3 service to the station has by necessity ceased for an indefinite period.

Council wishes to see the reinstatement of a regular bus service between all parts of Abingdon and Oxford Station, also that increased bus provision be made for services to Didcot and Oxford Parkway.

Council instructs the Town Clerk to write to Oxfordshire County Council and the Appropriate Bus companies accordingly.

C31 **Exclusion of the Public, Including the Press**

The Mayor moved and it was **resolved**:

“That in accordance with section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, 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)

C32 **Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee**

Members received and considered the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 13th June 2017.

The Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Badcock, reported that security for the Fun and Music in the Park events which took place on 3rd June 2017 had to be urgently reviewed at very short notice in the light of the national security situation. This had resulted in additional expenditure which had been funded

from the earmarked reserve for the event. Security for other events would be reviewed. See also confidential appendix.

Resolved that the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 13th June 2017 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

The meeting rose at 8.16 pm.

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Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames

ADDENDUM TO MINUTE C28 (APPROVED BY TOWN COUNCIL ON 18TH OCTOBER 2017):

Minute C28, Community-Led Plan Working Group

Cllr Angela Lawrence stated that at the previous meeting (28th June 2017) she had asked three questions of the Leader in relation to the dissolution of the Environmental Working Group and the subsuming of its role by the Community-Led Plan. In response to the questions he had responded “no, no and yes.” She stated that this exchange had not been minuted and asked that it now be recorded. Cllr Mike Badcock responded and stated that his answers had been “no, no and no;” and not “no, no and yes.”

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