

**Draft Minutes of the Council of the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames held on
Wednesday 5th October 2016 in the Roysse Room, Guildhall,
Abingdon-on-Thames**

Present

Cllr Alice Badcock	Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames
Cllr Jan Morter	Deputy Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames
Cllr Mike Badcock	
Cllr Samantha Bowring	
Cllr Margaret Crick	
Cllr Neil Fawcett	
Cllr Dennis Garrett	
Cllr Robert Hall	
Cllr Jeanette Halliday	
Cllr Brian Hedley	
Cllr Vicky Jenkins	
Cllr Angela Lawrence	
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	
Cllr Monica Lovatt.	
Cllr Sandy Lovatt	
Cllr 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

10 members of the public and the press.

SECTION I (Open to the Public Including the Press)

C40 Prayers

In the absence of the Mayor's Chaplain, Rev Stephen Hancock, Chaplain to the Defence Academy at Shrivenham, led the Council in prayer.

C41 Public Participation

The Council received statements from four members of the public as follows:

- Dave Butterworth, the Healthy Abingdon initiative;
- Jon Bright, Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens' Advice;
- Jim Hines, Abingdon Music Centre Trust;
- Will Tansey, Abingdon Neighbours Scheme.

C42 **Apologies**

None.

C43 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Alice Badcock, Mike Badcock and David Pope stated that they had all declared various interests at meetings of the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee during the course of the cycle. They asked that these interests be noted should those particular applications be discussed at the Council meeting.

C44 **Approval of Minutes**

Resolved: that the Council adopt and the Mayor sign as a correct record the minutes of the Council of Abingdon-on-Thames held on 29th June 2016 and 9th August 2016.

Matters Arising

Cllr Samantha Bowring noted a number of apologies, including her own, had been received for the meeting of 9th August 2016. She pointed out that this meeting had been called at relatively short notice and consequently she and a number of other members had been unable to attend as they had existing commitments. She asked that this be noted as she was concerned that members of the public should not get the impression that those members who could not attend were not taking matters seriously.

C45 **Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames**

1. The Council received a presentation from Beth Brown-Reid of Oxfordshire MIND, one of the Mayor's chosen charities for the year.
2. The Council received the schedule of Mayor's engagements.

The Mayor made the following announcements:

3. On Saturday 1st October 2016 the works team had assisted in the road closures and security for the Freedom of the Vale exercised by the Royal Logistic Corps. This was on the basis of this Council's expertise in this matter and the costs were being charged to the Vale. The Mayor thanked them for their hard work and drew to the attention of the Council an e-mail which had been received from the Assistant Town Clerk Steve Rich:

I have just received a telephone call from Jason Kenny of Thames Valley Police who praised the Town Council for delivering all that they said they would for the

Freedom Parade on Saturday 1st October making the event very successful as far as they were concerned.

Apparently on the ground were Police Research Advisers and their report was singing the praises of the Town Council which the Police said they very seldom do for event organisers. Even the police were surprised by the praise that was levied against the Town Council organising abilities.

4. Fair Service – 7.45pm to meet for robing at the Guildhall for service at Galloping Horses at 8pm.

The Mayor thanked staff for working additional hours during the period of the Fairs.

5. Armistice Day – Friday 11th November Meet at War Memorial at 10.55am for Act of Remembrance at 11am.

6. Remembrance Day – Sunday 13th November.

7. Christmas Extravaganza – Saturday 26th November.

8. Mayor's Quiz – Friday 2nd December, Abingdon Rugby Club.

9. Mayor's Christmas Carol Service – Saturday 17th December 2016 St Helen's Church late afternoon/ evening time TBC.

10. OAPs Christmas Party – Monday 19th December 2016.

11. Budget cycle - The Mayor stated that the Council was now in the process of considering its estimates for 2017/18. She stated that the Council's officers were available to speak with any member of the Council during the budget process.

It was noted that two staff had recently left the Council's employment, John Morris, Works Team Assistant, and Heather Brown, Community Services Officer. A vote of thanks to both former members of staff for their service to the Council and contribution to the life of the town was proposed by the Mayor, Cllr Alice Badcock, and seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Jan Morter, and **resolved** unanimously.

C46 **Report from Oxfordshire County Council**

Members received and considered a report from County Councillor Neil Fawcett, which had been circulated earlier that day. Cllr Fawcett spoke to the report.

A report was also circulated from County Cllr Sandy Lovatt.

A member expressed his concern regarding the Abingdon Marathon on Sunday 23rd October 2016. The route of the Marathon meant that the route would be going past the Abingdon Rugby Club (South Town Park) on Lambrick Way. It

was understood that on Sunday morning there are ten rugby teams and six football teams which meet and this generates a significant amount of traffic. The member had spoken with County Council officers regarding his concerns but they had proposed to take no action in this regard. The South Town Park was in the division of Cllr Neil Fawcett, County Councillor for Abingdon South, and he agreed to take matters up with the County Council.

C47 **Questions under Standing Order 10**

None.

C48 **County Hall Museum Management Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Monica Lovatt and seconded by Dennis Garrett that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee of 8th September 2016.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee of 8th September 2016 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C49 **Amenities and Recreation Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Sandy Lovatt and seconded by Cllr Lorraine Oates that the Council receive and consider the draft minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee of 31st August 2016.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee of 31st August 2016 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C50 **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 of 9th August 2016.

Resolved that the draft minutes of the Guildhall Committee of 9th August 2016 be approved.

It was noted that the recommendations had been resolved at the special meetings which had followed the Guildhall Committee meeting.

C51 **Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee**

It was proposed by Cllr Jeanette Halliday and seconded by Cllr Mike Badcock that the Council receive and consider the minutes of the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee of 27th June, 18th July, and 8th August 2016; and the draft minutes of the meeting held on 30th August and 12th September 2016.

Urgent items

At the meeting of the Planning, Highways & Consultations Committee which took place on Monday 3rd October 2016, members had requested that two urgent items be brought forward to the Town Council meeting. The Mayor, Cllr Alice Badcock, had agreed that these two items could be considered. The Town Clerk had circulated a report regarding these items, which was received and considered.

a) Precept Referendum – Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Technical Consultation.

The above consultation was considered by the Committee at its meeting of 3rd October 2016. It was noted that the closing date for the consultation was 28th October 2016.

The Committee considered that this was an important consultation which required determination directly by the Town Council and the matter had been referred accordingly.

The Council felt that a response should be made to the consultation and in discussing matters the following points were made:

- The consultation document stated that government was “minded to” adopt the referendum principles for councils with a precept of over £500,000 and a Band D Council Tax of £75.46. There was a logic to this course of action as this was what already happened with principle authorities. The Council should object to the extension of the referendum principles to town councils but it will probably happen.
- Any response should address the four questions which are specifically asked within the consultation. Government should be removing bureaucracy and red tape, not adding to it.
- Important that people read the consultation document as there are pros and cons in relation to this suggestion.
- All councillors should respond individually to the consultation as well as the Town Council sending a strong message to Government that it objects to these proposals. Should also copy the response to the National Association of Local Councils.
- There needs to be stronger representation from the National Association of Local Councils in relation to this matter.

It was proposed by the Mayor, Cllr Alice Badcock, and seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Jan Morter:

- 1) **That the Town Council write a strong letter of objection to the proposals set out in the consultation paper, this letter to be drafted by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee.**

- 2) **That all Councillors be encouraged to respond to the consultation on an individual basis and that the National Association of Local Councils and the Member of Parliament be cc'ed into all letters.**

On being put to the vote, this was **agreed** by 13 votes in favour with six abstentions.

b) Community Governance Review

The Committee had asked that the Council consider requesting that the Vale of White Horse District Council undertake a Community Governance Review with a view to altering the boundaries of the parish of Abingdon-on-Thames. There would also be a consequential impact on the Town Council wards.

The Town Clerk reported that in order to request a Community Governance Review the Town Council would need to put forward firm proposals in relation to the parish boundary. It was not in a position to do that at this meeting and consequently he suggested that this take place at a future council meeting.

Special meetings of the Council and the Finance and General Purposes Committee: The Town Clerk then stated that earlier that day he had emailed members in relation to the Guildhall project. The next meeting of the Guildhall Committee was due to take place on Thursday 1st December 2016. It was likely that from this Committee a number of recommendations would come forward which would require the approval of both the Finance and General Purposes Committee and of the Town Council. Whilst a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was scheduled for 13th December 2016, this was specifically for budget estimates. Consequently it had been suggested that special meetings of both the Finance and General Purposes Committee and of the Town Council should take place from 7pm on Thursday 8th December 2016. The Town Clerk further suggested that the matter of the Community Governance Review could then be added to the agenda. There were no objections coming forward from members in relation to having special meetings taking place on 8th December and consequently these dates were put into the Council diary.

Minute 6 of 8th August 2016 – Moorings Update

A Member drew attention to the District Council's draft policy in relation to moorings which could be found via the website link:

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/sports-and-leisure/leisure-facilities/parks/moorings>

Resolved that the minutes of the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee of 27th June, 18th July, and 8th August 2016; and the draft minutes of the meeting held on 30th August and 12th September 2016 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C52 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 minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2016 and approve any recommendations contained therein.

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2016 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

C53 Approval of Audited Annual Return 2015 /16 including the auditor's certificate

The Council received and considered the audited annual return, including the auditor's certificate, for the year ending 31st March 2016.

It was proposed by the Mayor and seconded by the Deputy Mayor and **resolved unanimously that the Council approve the audited Annual Return, including the audited certificate, for the year ended 31st March 2016.**

C54 Motions under Standing Order 8

- (a) Motion adjourned from previous meeting:
Motion proposed by Cllr Neil Fawcett
Seconded by Cllr Samantha Bowring

At the meeting of the Council which took place on 29th June 2016 the following motion had been proposed by Cllr Neil Fawcett and seconded by Cllr Samantha Bowring:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council will increase the community fund by up to £60,000 to help fund Children's services in Abingdon that would otherwise disappear when Oxfordshire County Council reduces funding. This will partly funded by efficiency savings across Town Council service areas.

At the previous meeting the Mayor, Cllr Alice Badcock, had ruled that under Standing Order 21 this motion should be referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee because of the financial implications.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee had, at its meeting of 21st July 2016, recommended that the motion not be approved.

The motion was then debated by the Town Council.

At the conclusion of the debate, the requisite number of members asked that a named vote be taken and they were recorded as follows:

For the Motion:

Cllr Samantha Bowring
Cllr Neil Fawcett
Cllr Margaret Crick
Cllr Jeanette Halliday
Cllr Angela Lawrence
Cllr Patrick Lonergan
Cllr Lorraine Oates
Cllr Helen Pighills

Against the Motion:

Cllr Michael Badcock
Cllr Dennis Garrett
Cllr Robert Hall
Cllr Brian Hedley
Cllr Vicky Jenkins
Cllr Sandy Lovatt
Cllr Monica Lovatt
Cllr David Pope
Cllr Andrew Todd

Abstention:

Cllr Alice Badcock
Cllr Jan Mörter

The motion was therefore not adopted, there having been recorded eight votes for the motion, nine votes against and two abstentions.

- (b) Motion proposed by the Mayor, Cllr Alice Badcock
Seconded by Cllr David Pope

“We are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. We believe that hate crimes have no place in our country, whether they are based on Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Age, Disability or Gender Identity. Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council condemns racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally. We will not allow hate to become acceptable.

We reassure all people living in Abingdon-on-Thames that they are valued members of our community.”

This motion was then debated and prior to being voted on, the requisite number of members asked a named vote to be taken.

There were then recorded for the motion:

For the Motion:

Cllr Alice Badcock
Cllr Michael Badcock
Cllr Samantha Bowring
Cllr Margaret Crick
Cllr Neil Fawcett
Cllr Dennis Garrett
Cllr Robert Hall
Cllr Jeanette Halliday
Cllr Brian Hedley
Cllr Vicky Jenkins
Cllr Angela Lawrence
Cllr Patrick Lonergan
Cllr Monica Lovatt
Cllr Sandy Lovatt
Cllr Jan Morter
Cllr Lorraine Oates
Cllr Helen Pighills
Cllr David Pope
Cllr Andrew Todd

There were therefore recorded 19 votes in favour of the motion with none against and no abstentions and consequently the motion was adopted and it was **resolved**:

“We are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. We believe that hate crimes have no place in our country, whether they are based on Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Age, Disability or Gender Identity. Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council condemns racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally. We will not allow hate to become acceptable.

We reassure all people living in Abingdon-on-Thames that they are valued members of our community.”

- (c) Motion proposed by Cllr Sandy Lovatt
Seconded by Cllr David Pope

“In view of the fact that the Planning, Highways & Consultations Committee has made no progress in the production of a Community Led Plan (CLP), despite provision having been made in the budget, this Council resolves to transfer the responsibility for the production of the CLP to the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee. This Council further requires the F&GP Committee to present to the Council a draft CLP for debate and its approval at the Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council meeting in January 2017 so that, if necessary, provision can be made for the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.”

An amendment was proposed by Cllr Mike Badcock and seconded by Cllr Dennis Garrett, the effect of which was to change the wording in the motion as follows:

“In view of the fact that the Planning, Highways & Consultations Committee has made no progress in the production of a Community Led Plan (CLP), despite provision having been made in the budget, this Council resolves to transfer the responsibility for the production of the CLP to a working party of five members and requires that Working Party to present to the Council a draft CLP for debate and its approval at the Abingdon on Thames Town Council meeting in February 2017 so that, if necessary, provision can be made for the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.”

The proposer, Cllr Sandy Lovatt, indicated that he would accept the amendment and consequently was prepared for his motion to be altered accordingly. The Mayor then referred to the Council’s Standing Orders which allowed an alteration of the motion in these circumstances as long as the Council unanimously consented, without debate on the matter. The Council did not unanimously consent and therefore the amendment was debated.

Following debate the amendment was agreed.

There being no further amendments tabled, the Mayor then put the matter to the vote and it was **resolved** unanimously that:

“In view of the fact that the Planning, Highways & Consultations Committee has made no progress in the production of a Community Led Plan (CLP), despite provision having been made in the budget, this Council resolves to transfer the responsibility for the production of the CLP to a working party of five members and requires that Working Party to present to the Council a draft CLP for debate and its approval at the Abingdon on Thames Town Council meeting in February 2017 so that, if necessary, provision can be made for the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.”

Having created the Community Led Plan Working Group, the Mayor then turned to the matter of appointing the group. The group would be comprised of five members and the Council agreed that this should be three members from the ruling group and two members from the opposition.

The Leader of the ruling group, Cllr Mike Badcock, stated that he would advise the Town Clerk regarding that group’s nominations and the Council was content in this regard.

In relation to the opposition members, Cllr Samantha Bowring proposed that Cllrs Margaret Crick and Angela Lawrence be appointed to the Working Group. This was seconded and agreed by the Council.

- (d) Motion proposed by Cllr Patrick Lonergan
Seconded by Cllr Helen Pighills

“A draft copy of the non-confidential minutes of Council and Council’s standing committees will be posted on the town council within seven days of the meeting to which they refer and updates within three days of being agreed at the subsequent meeting of that committee or council.

At least seven days’ notice of all meetings of council and council’s standing committees will be posted on the town council website and town council noticeboards within the town.”

The motion was debated by the Council.

The Mayor, Cllr Alice Badcock, drew the Council’s attention to policy which was already in place following adoption of the report on democratic structures agreed by the Council in March 2014. This provided for minute-taking to be the shorter, resolution-type minutes which it would be aimed should be published in draft form on the website in 10 days.

Following discussion, an amendment was proposed by Cllr Mike Badcock and seconded by Cllr Samantha Bowring to alter the motion to the effect that it would read:

“A draft copy of the non-confidential resolution minutes of Council and Council’s standing committees will be posted on the town council website within ten days of the meeting to which they refer and updates within three days of being agreed at the subsequent meeting of that committee or council.

At least ten days’ notice of all meetings of council and council’s standing committees will be posted on the town council website and town council noticeboards within the town.”

The amendment was approved by 16 votes in favour with three abstentions.

There being no further amendments moved, the Mayor then put the motion to the vote and it was **resolved** by 16 votes in favour with three abstentions that:

“A draft copy of the non-confidential resolution minutes of Council and Council’s standing committees will be posted on the town council website within ten days of the meeting to which they refer and updates within three days of being agreed at the subsequent meeting of that committee or council.

At least ten days’ notice of all meetings of council and council’s standing committees will be posted on the town council website and town council noticeboards within the town.”

(Note that there was an omission in the draft of the motion in that it stated “posted on the town council”; this has been altered to “ posted on the town council website”).

- (e) Motion proposed by Cllr Neil Fawcett
Seconded by Cllr Samantha Bowring

“All agendas, reports and minutes relating to the business of Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council are to be available to the public and all meetings open to the public, with the exception of specific appendixes to reports and minutes relating only to individual items, that the Council specifies and then minutes the reason for so doing, citing the reason under schedule 12A of the Local Government Acts 1972 (as amended and which applies to principal authorities) or the Data Protection Act 1998.”

Following debate by members the motion was put to the vote; there being eight votes in favour, nine against and two abstentions the motion was not adopted.

- (f) Motion proposed by Cllr Margaret Crick
Seconded by Cllr Samantha Bowring

“Should Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council designate any land owned by Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council to be developed to include the building of residential units, it shall retain the freehold and work with developers to provide residential accommodation for local people at affordable rents which remain in the council’s ownership. Any profits will be used to invest in further affordable accommodation.”

The Mayor drew the attention of the Council to Standing Order 21 which stated:

"Any motion which is moved otherwise than in pursuance of a recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee or of another committee after recommendation by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and which, if carried, would, in the opinion of the Mayor, increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management by more than £1,000 or reduce the revenue at the disposal of any committee, or which would involve capital expenditure in excess of £1,000 shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council. Any committee affected by it shall consider whether it desires to report thereon. The Finance and General Purposes Committee shall report on the financial aspect of the matter."

Consequently the motion stood adjourned and was referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

C55 Motion under Standing Order 34, to permanently vary standing orders

At the Council meeting of 29th June 2016 the following motion had been proposed by Cllr Jeanette Halliday and seconded by Cllr Helen Pighills:

Council notes that substitute members may attend meetings of the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee and wishes to extend this provision to all other committees and sub-committees.

It therefore proposes the following change to standing orders:

Standing Order 38 (1) to be changed from:

(1) The following committees shall be the Standing Committees of the council and shall consist of the number of members stated below each committee:

To

(1) The following committees shall be the Standing Committees of the council and shall consist of the number of members stated below each committee: Where a member is unable to attend a meeting of a committee or sub-committee they may nominate a substitute member provided that the nominating member informs the office of the Town Clerk prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Standing Order 38(1) (b) to be changed from

(a) Planning, Highways and Consultations

Nine members

Where a member is unable to attend a meeting of this committee they may nominate a substitute member provided that the nominating member informs the office of the Town Clerk prior to the commencement of the meeting.

To

(b) Planning, Highways and Consultations

Nine members.”

As a proposed change to the Council's Standing Orders and in accordance with Standing Order 34 (3) the motion had been adjourned without discussion until this meeting of the Council.

Following debate the Mayor then put the motion to the vote. There were recorded eight votes in favour, nine against and two abstentions, and consequently the motion was not adopted.

C56 National Association of Local Councils

The Council received and considered the report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above.

It was noted that Cllr Angela Lawrence had previously been nominated by the Town Council and had been subsequently elected to the Larger Councils' Committee of the National Association of Local Councils. Cllr Lawrence stated that she did not on this occasion wish her name to go forward to be nominated to serve on this committee.

Following discussion, the Council **resolved**, 18 votes in favour and one abstention **that the Council not nominate a member for election to the National Association of Local Councils' Larger Councils' Committee.**

C57 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)

C58 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee

Resolved that the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Committee held on 8th September 2016 be approved.

C59 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Amenities & Recreation Committee

Resolved that the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 31st August 2016 be approved.

C60 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Guildhall Committee

Resolved that the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the Guildhall Committee held on 9th August 2016 be approved.

C61 Confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Resolved that the confidential appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 9th August 2016 and the confidential draft appendix to the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21st September 2016 be approved.

The Council considered a number of recommendations within the confidential appendix.

Minute F111 – Property Matters

Recommendation One – **approved** by ten votes in favour, seven against and two abstentions.

Recommendation Two – **approved** by nine votes in favour, eight against and two abstentions.

Recommendation Three – **approved** by ten votes in favour, seven against and two abstentions.

The recommendation at F112 (2) was referred back to the Finance and General Purposes Committee as its determination would be contingent upon the Council's consideration of the motion at Minute C54 (f).

The meeting rose at 9.35 pm.

Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames

Draft 13/10/16