

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2021

Agenda item 8: District Council report

VALE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT TO ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

GARDEN WASTE COLLECTIONS

Following my report to council last month, I can now report that Biffa was able to resume Brown Bin collections last week (week commencing 15th February) and also picked up leftover Christmas trees. The service usually provides 25 collections per year, with a one collection pause at Christmas. On top of that there are double collections on the extra garden waste weeks in Spring and Autumn. However, the service is not currently taking on new customers.

COMMUNITY COVID 19 TESTING

This week The Beacon in Wantage has opened as a Covid 19 testing site for public facing workers and volunteers who are not displaying symptoms. People in these roles who are cannot work from home and do not have access to workplace testing will be able to book a weekly test at the centre. The Lateral Flow tests take only 15 minutes with results available within an hour.

South and Vale district councils have worked closely with partners across the county to set up this rapid symptom free testing site to help stop the spread of the virus. This centre will remain open for as long as required.

COUNCIL MEETING 10/2/21

At the meeting of the 10th February, Council approved the budget and set the council tax for 2021/22. District Council tax rises are capped at £5 on a band D property. Council also considered the recommendations of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel and decided not to implement an increase in Councillor allowances at this time, however Council did agree to introduce a Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chair of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, the only committee chair who is not already receiving an SRA.

Motions were passed related to Oxfordshire's 20 is Plenty initiative, on calling for funding for the Abingdon Flood Alleviation and a motion related to the re-allocation of S106 funding previously allocated by the previous administration to the ill-fated Wessex Leisure centre at Grove.

The minutes for this Council meeting have not yet been published, however, if you missed the meeting it is still available to watch on Youtube (along with other formal council meetings include the Planning committee) – just go to Youtube.com and search for Vale of White Horse Council

OLD ABBEY HOUSE

The sale of Old Abbey House has been completed. Oxfordshire building company Ede Holdings Ltd intend to turn the building into a 20 bedroom hotel. The new hotel will create jobs locally and they will also be looking to work with local companies, eg laundry provider, baker for fresh morning goods and cleaning staff. Ede estimates that the hotel could bring in around £430,000 per year of spend into Abingdon in retail, food, drink and local attractions.

During the bidding process for the sale of the building, Vale officers had discussions with a number of community results. As a result of this we are excited that the **Yellow Submarine charity** will be moving into The Charter later this year. The charity, who supports young people with learning disabilities and autism, plans to provide training opportunities, support and to open the building to other support groups.

HELEN PIGHILLS

Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities
Vale Councillor for Abingdon Abbey Northcourt ward
February 2021