

ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 30 JUNE 2021

AGENDA ITEM 7: REPORT TO ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

CLLR NATHAN LEY, ABINGDON NORTH DIVISION, OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

ELECTION RESULTS

County Council Elections – 6 May 2021

In May the County Council elections in Oxfordshire resulted in a change of administration, with the Conservatives losing control of the Council. An alliance of Liberal Democrat, Green and Labour Councillors now form the administration, including the three Abingdon-based Councillors, myself (Nathan Ley), Alison Rooke, and Neil Fawcett.

The individual members of the Oxfordshire's Fair Deal Alliance Cabinet and responsibilities can be viewed at the link below:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/about-your-council/oxfordshire-councillors/cabinet>

ROADS AND TRANSPORT

Abingdon Bridge

In May, motorists were warned that traffic restrictions would be placed on Abingdon Bridge in after concerns were discovered during a routine inspection. Stonework to the eastern side of the northern arch of the bridge has become displaced, reducing the bridge strength in this area. Temporary traffic signals have been put in place to enable vehicles up to 44 tonnes to continue to use the bridge safely by avoiding the weakened area. The introduction of the temporary traffic signals required the pelican crossing to the north to be turned off, together with the Market Place traffic signals at the junction of Bridge Street and High Street.

The repairs will require the use of a specialist subcontractor and advice from Historic England, due to this being a scheduled monument, and the Environment Agency, as access will be required from the River Thames below.

The timescales for this repair work have still not yet been fully established, but it is likely to be at least six months before work can start and possibly more than a year before a satisfactory repair is completed and the temporary traffic signals can be removed.

<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/temporary-traffic-restrictions-in-place-on-abingdon-bridge/>

In the meantime Cabinet Member for Highways Management, Tim Bearder, is exploring options to temporarily reallocate road space along the length of the bridge and provide more room for pedestrians and cyclists to safely transit across the river – especially vital for the busy summer months with large flows of people along the narrow footpath. A week-long trial period is likely to be initiated imminently, monitoring the effect on traffic flows and air quality, with a view to providing a solution for the duration of the works, and possibly beyond.

Lodge Hill New south facing slip roads for A34 at Lodge Hill, North Abingdon

There are no further updates since those given by Alison Rooke on 28 April 2021. We still await publication of a report shortly following the 'virtual exhibition'. An update on the project is expected at the next Abingdon Locality Meeting on 5 July 2021.

Cabinet Member for Highways Management – Forward plan and future business

Items identified from the Forward Plan for Forthcoming Decision: 29 July 2021.

- Larkhill Road - Proposed Waiting Restrictions. To seek approval of the proposals.

20 mph Scheme Rollout

A streamlined, county-wide scheme for approval of 20 mph zones for residential streets and town centres is in development but is likely to take some time to come to fruition. At the moment there is a lot of push back from officers on legal aspects of unilaterally placing in 20 mph schemes, which need to be worked through. Currently the county Council has a laborious and expensive multi-stage process, led by the County Councillor/and or Parish Council with local issues resolved worked through as best they can.

As a result, OCC are looking at ways to streamline the process and achieve savings through bulk processing some of those stages. The aim is to develop a two-page document that outlines the process, commitments, and the costs to parish and town Councils. Following this OCC will then take expressions of interest and schedule/prioritise the work. For now, Cllr Bearder has signed of £50,000 for five villages to test various concepts so OCC has the evidence base for pushing back against any possible legal challenges.

Consultation on Proposed Virtual 'Pay & Display' Parking Tickets

Views are being sought on the proposal to give the option to allow payments for on-street parking without the need to pay at a machine and displaying a parking ticket on a vehicle within Abingdon. Specifically, a 'Virtual Parking Ticket' will be able to be obtained by means of connectivity to the internet or an appropriate application ('App') via a mobile phone, or similar method (without the need to display a ticket) but which then gives the same rights and responsibilities as the issue of a ticket for display. Enforcement officers will have access to the relevant information to perform their duties (charges for parking remain unchanged).

Details are available to view on the Council's consultation pages:

<https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/OxfordSouthOxonVirtual/consultationHome>

COUNCILLOR PRIORITY FUND

The Councillor Priority Fund, supporting Councillor priorities in their local areas, is now open to new applications. The fund will be at the discretion of the individual county Councillors to award. Councillors each have £15,000 for the two-year period 2021-2023. For more information and to apply please visit <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/community-and-living/thriving-communities/councillor-priority-fund>

ABINGDON'S VARIOUS COUNCILS AND OCC MEETINGS INFORMATION

Links to view all County Council virtual public meetings can be found on the [meeting details](#) page on the County Council website – click on each meeting in the calendar to view the link. For those requesting to speak, committee officers will make the necessary arrangements for them to attend the meeting. Recordings can be viewed after each meeting.

There have been cases where some members of the public are unaware of which local Council is responsible for which services. The following links are useful pointers to exact lists of the three Councils' responsibilities:

www.abingdon.gov.uk

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk