

**Notes of a meeting of the Covid Response Advisory Working Group  
held on Microsoft Teams**

**Monday 16 August 2021 – 6pm**

Present:

Cllr Andy Foulsham            Chair  
Cllr Gabby Barody  
Cllr Cheryl Briggs  
Cllr Alex Greenaway  
Cllr Lorraine Oates

In attendance:

Louise Brown                    Community Services and Events Officer  
Susan Whipp                    Deputy Town Clerk / RFO

1.    **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Eric de la Harpe.

2.    **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Foulsham declared a non-pecuniary interest with regard to the grant application for Archway Foundation as he has volunteered for them for several years.

3.    **Notes**

The Community Services and Events Officer referred to the decision at the last meeting to place plaques on benches in recognition of the work of volunteers in Abingdon through the Covid-19 pandemic. The working group had asked for this matter to go to the Urgency Committee but it was noted that the delegated powers of the working group rest with the Town Clerk, so this was not necessary. The meeting was asked to clarify the specific action required. The Chair noted that the working group had intended that the Town Clerk would prepare appropriate wording for the plaques.

**The Town Clerk would be asked to email the proposed wording to Members and, when the wording had been agreed, to order the plaques. It was noted that the Town Clerk had the delegated authority to complete this action.**

It was suggested that temporary signs might be installed in the interim.

During this discussion, the Chair noted that there had been a lot of very positive feedback from residents about the work of the Outdoor Services team and in particular the floral displays.

The notes of the Covid Response Advisory Working Group meeting held on 12 July 2021 were agreed.

4. **Updates from District Council**

Cllr Foulsham noted that vaccinations are now being opened up to 16- and 17-year-olds. The two nearest walk-in centres to Abingdon are in Reading and Aylesbury and it is expected that young people will be contacted by their GP surgeries.

Cllr Barody noted that Oxford University will be undertaking online teaching from September, acknowledging the continued level of covid infection in Oxford.

A walk-in testing centre remains open at the Charter but it is not known how long this will remain open.

5. **Updates from County Council**

Cllr Nathan Ley, County Councillor for Abingdon North, would be invited to join the next meeting or to provide a written update.

6. **Covid bounce back projects**

**a. Grants:**

A grant request was received by Archway Foundation and distributed to members for consideration ahead of the meeting. The Archway Foundation started in Oxford and has been working in Abingdon for the past 10 years. The charity visits housebound residents and hosts a series of Friday meetings for more mobile residents.

It was proposed by Cllr Oates, seconded by Cllr Briggs and agreed to award £3,000 to the charity.

**b. Additional seating within the Town Centre**

This item was discussed under item 3. The works team will install the benches when they have been delivered.

**c. Engagement with businesses**

There were no updates to provide.

7. **General update on Town Council Services**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Town Council offices have been open between 10am and 4pm since 12 July 2021. The information centre and the reception have now been merged and the County Council Registration Office is open. The number of visitors is currently very low.

A new member of admin staff has started at the Town Council: Cat Dixon. Jo Blackmore is currently on extended leave for medical reasons.

The museum has reopened and is no longer requiring visitors to book a visit.

The Outdoor Services team continue to work as normal.

8. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Monday 13 September 2021 at 6pm.

The meeting rose at 7.38pm