



# ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

## Council Summons & Agenda

Wednesday 29 September 2021

Upon the closing of the Urgency Committee

24 September 2021

To All Members of the Council

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames, to be held on **Wednesday 29 September 2021 upon the closing of the Urgency Committee** for the transaction of the business stated below. A note on governance can be found at the end of the agenda.

The meeting will be held in person **in the Town Council offices at Roysse Court** but due to the Covid-19 pandemic the Town Council will not allow members of the public to attend in person. If you would like to view the meeting via Teams, please e-mail [democratic@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@abingdon.gov.uk) and you will be sent the relevant link on the day of the meeting. The meeting ID has been sent out with this agenda.

In order to proceed in the safest manner it is intended that the meeting be organised so that it is quorate and that most members will join the meeting remotely. However, it will be permitted for the Mayor to take an indicative vote of all members who are present in person or virtually if she considers this to be helpful but in these circumstances note that this would need to be followed by a vote of only those who are present in order to comply with legal requirements.

The meeting will, as far as possible, be conducted in the same way as a meeting with all participants attending in person. Members of the public may view the meeting online and may,

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with notice, make representations, ask questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business at agenda item 2.

At each open agenda item there are links to the relevant documents which open the document from the [Town Council website](#). Should you require a separate pdf version of individual documents please e-mail [democratic@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@abingdon.gov.uk).

Any queries on the agenda should also be directed to [democratic@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@abingdon.gov.uk).

Yours faithfully

*Nigel Warner*

Nigel Warner  
Town Clerk/ signed electronically

## **Abingdon Town Council - Our Vision**

To develop an inclusive community so that Abingdon is the place where everyone wants to live and where the wellbeing of residents is prioritised. In developing this community the town will be one which is environmentally sustainable, vibrant, resilient and safe.

### **Our key objectives**

1. To respond effectively and speedily to the climate emergency.
2. To develop a resilient, sustainable town which will provide a home for residents now and in the future.
3. To manage the Council's assets efficiently and effectively to meet for the needs of the community now and in the future.
4. To work with community partners to support those who are vulnerable and in need and to create opportunities to increase social inclusivity.

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### **1 Prayers**

There will not be any prayers at the start of the meeting.

2 **Public Participation**

It is Council policy that the Council sets aside a total of 15 minutes prior to the commencement of full Council Meetings for residents of Abingdon-on-Thames or owners/managers of businesses in Abingdon-on-Thames to ask questions of the Mayor or Chairs of the Standing Committees or to express views by way of making a statement.

In order to ask questions or make a statement written notice of questions or statements, served by way of letter or e-mail ([democratic@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@abingdon.gov.uk)), must be given to the Town Clerk by 12pm on Tuesday 28 September 2021.

There will be a question from Lise Jamieson, resident:

3 **Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence. Apologies were received before the meeting from Cllr Grace Clifton and Cllr Helen Pighills.

4 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of interest from Members in relation to any items to be considered at the meeting in accordance with the Local Code of Conduct.

5 **Minutes**

To adopt and sign as a correct record the draft minutes of the meeting of the Council held on [1 September 2021](#) and to consider any matters arising.

6 **Mayor's Announcements**

A list of the Mayor's Engagements can be found [here](#).

7 **Oxfordshire County Council**

To receive and consider a [report](#) on the work of the County Council.

8 **Vale of White Horse District Council**

To receive and consider a [report](#) on the work of the District Council.

9 **Urgency Committee**

There will be a verbal report of the proceedings of the Urgency Committee meeting of 29 September 2021.

**Minutes of Council Advisory Committees to 31 August 2021, for adoption as a report of their proceedings (not accuracy) – no recommendations to consider, these having already been approved by the Urgency Committee**

10 **Traffic Advisory Committee**

To receive and consider the draft minutes of the Traffic Advisory Committee held on [16 June 2021](#).

11 **Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee**

To receive and consider the minutes of the Planning, Highways and Consultations Advisory Committee meetings held on [7 June 2021](#), [28 June 2021](#), [19 July 2021](#), [9 August 2021](#) and [31 August 2021](#).

12 **Guildhall Advisory Committee**

To receive and consider the minutes of the Guildhall Advisory Committee held on [20 May 2021](#).

13 **Amenities and Recreation Advisory Committee**

To receive and consider the draft minutes of the Amenities and Recreation Advisory Committee held on [9 June 2021](#).

14 **Community Services Advisory Committee**

To receive and consider the draft minutes of the Community Services Advisory Committee held on [6 July 2021](#).

15 **Green Advisory and Scrutiny Committee**

To receive and consider the draft minutes of the Green Advisory and Scrutiny Committee held on [13 July 2021](#).

16 **Finance and General Purposes Advisory Committee**

To receive and consider the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on [20 July 2021](#).

17 **County Hall Museum Management Advisory Committee**

To receive and consider the draft minutes of the County Hall Museum Management Advisory Committee held on [15 July 2021](#).

**Minutes of Council Advisory Committees from 1 September 2021, for adoption as a report of their proceedings (not accuracy) – recommendations for approval**

18 **Community Advisory Committee**

To receive and consider the draft minutes of the Community Advisory Committee meeting held on [7 September 2021](#).

**Matters referred**

C5: Minutes. It was recommended to the Urgency Committee that the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Advisory Committee of 6 July 2021 be approved as a correct record.

C5: Minutes. It was recommended to the Urgency Committee that the minutes of the meeting of the County Hall Museum Management Advisory Committee of 15 July 2021 be approved as a correct record.

C11: Grant application. It was recommended to the Urgency Committee that a grant of £1,000 be awarded to 'Inspiring Minds' and that the charity be invited to apply for further funding with more information provided.

C11: Grant application. It was recommended to the Urgency Committee that a grant of £900 be awarded to 'Trinity Learning'.

19 **Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee**

To receive and consider the draft minutes of the Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee meeting held on [16 September 2021](#).

20 **Finance, Governance and Asset Management Advisory Committee**

To receive and consider the draft minutes of the Finance, Governance and Asset Management Advisory Committee meeting held on [21 September 2021](#).

**Matters referred**

**FG10: Management accounts.** The committee received a report from the Deputy Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer in relation to management accounts from 1 April 2021 to 31 July 2021. The committee recommended to the Urgency Committee that the management accounts be approved.

**FG12: List of payments.** The committee received a report from the Deputy Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer in relation to the list of payments made between 1 June 2021 and 31 August 2021. The committee recommended to the Urgency Committee that the report be accepted.

**FG14: Abingdon Climate Emergency Response Centre.** It was recommended to the Urgency Committee that responsibility be delegated to the Town Clerk and officers to proceed with the licensing of the basement to the Abingdon Climate Emergency Response Centre.

21 **Freedom of Abingdon**

To receive a report from the Town Clerk regarding the history, statutory provisions and practice of the Town Council in awarding the Freedom of Abingdon. This report will be published directly on the Council's website and Council SharePoint.

There are no recommendations.

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

The Mayor will move:

*"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 (Confidential Agenda)**

23 **Confidential appendices to the minutes of meetings**

To receive and consider the confidential appendices to minutes of meetings below:

Guildhall Advisory Committee, 20 May 2021

Amenities and Recreation Advisory Committee, 9 June 2021

Finance, Governance and Aset Management Advisory Committee, 21 September 2021.

Matters referred

FG19: There were six recommendations made by the advisory committee. Please refer to the confidential appendix to the minutes of this meeting which has been placed in Sharepoint.

24. **Confidential items referred from advisory committees**

To consider a confidential matter referred from the Community Advisory Committee:

C23: Market management. It was recommended to the Urgency Committee that the recommendation of the Town Clerk be approved. The report of the Town Clerk can be found in Sharepoint.

## **Note on Governance**

### **Context:**

At the start of the pandemic government approved the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (“the 2020 Regulations”). These regulations enabled council meetings to take place online. However the Regulations expired on 6 May 2021. The government has not brought forward new legislation and a legal challenge in relation to the Local Government Act 1972, which if successful would have enabled virtual meetings to continue, failed.

The impact of the above is that from 7 May 2021 any meetings where decisions are taken – either by council or committees – are required to be in-person meetings.

The council has made representations to government regarding this matter as it considers this requirement to represent an unnecessary and avoidable risk to elected representatives and council officers. The council is keen to return to in-person meetings as soon as it is safe to do so but considers that councils should be able to take full advantage of modern technology to enable Councillors and the public to attend meetings virtually as well as in person.

Councils have responded in different ways to the new circumstances. At its meeting of 28 April 2021 the council decided to delegate all decision-making to an Urgency Committee comprising of 5 members. This committee will meet “in person” in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972. The council’s committees will continue to meeting virtually as Advisory Committees in order to discuss matters but will not make decisions; all committee recommendations will be referred to the Urgency Committee.

These arrangements have been made in response to the current continuing public health emergency. The arrangements are made on a temporary basis and will be reviewed regularly.

### **Council resolution of 28 April 2021**

The full text of the Council’s resolution is below:

- 1. Online attendance at Council meetings is no longer legal but the council considers that there remains a serious risk to health when meeting in person indoors. Consequently the Council delegates its powers to an Urgency Committee.*
- 2. Committees will meet online as advisory committees and will discuss business as usual. The recommendations and decisions will be advisory until they are ratified by the Urgency Committee, apart from the Planning, Highways and Consultations Committee, whose recommendations will be actioned immediately by the Town Clerk.*
- 3. Members of the public can continue to attend the advisory committee meetings via the joining link and apply to participate in the public participation section of the meeting.*
- 4. The decisions made by the urgency committee will be in accordance with the recommendations from the advisory committees and not changed without a material reason.*

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5. *The time and frequency of Urgency Committee will depend upon the urgency of recommendations coming up through the advisory committees. Non-members of the Committee and members of the public may view the meeting through the joining link but the provisions of the Council's public participation scheme will not apply.*
6. *The urgency committee will consist of five members. In accordance with standing orders the quorum will be three members and the provisions for substitute members will apply.*
7. *Meetings will take place subject to risk assessment and the Covid security precautions.*
8. *These arrangements will be in place until the Urgency Committee votes to change arrangements which will depend on legislation, guidance and health advice.*

*Attendance at meetings*

9. *With effect from 28 April 2021 any member who does not attend at least one meeting in a six-month period due to the risk to their health resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic has the requirements of Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 waived and the time limit extended.*
10. *The matter will be reviewed by the Urgency Committee every two months and if necessary a motion extending the time limit by a further six months will be considered.*