



# ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

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## Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee Thursday 17 March 2022 AGENDA

Date of agenda: Friday 11 March 2022

To: Members of the Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee:

Cllr Andrew Skinner	Chair
Cllr Neil Fawcett	Vice-Chair
Cllr Charlie Birks	
Cllr Grace Clifton	
Cllr Jim Halliday	
Cllr Eric de la Harpe	
Cllr Rawda Jehanli	
Cllr Samantha Bowring	Leader ( <i>ex-officio</i> )
Cllr Cheryl Briggs	Mayor ( <i>ex-officio</i> )

To all other Members of the Council for information only

Dear Member

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee** to be held on **Thursday 17 March 2022 at 7.00pm.**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the Town Council will hold this meeting online and not in person. The link to join the meeting will be sent out separately. As agreed by the Town Council at its meeting on 29 September 2021, the recommendations of this advisory committee will be considered by the Town Council at its next meeting. Please see the note on governance at the end of this agenda.

Members have been sent the meeting ID. Any members of the public who wish to attend should 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 will be conducted in the same way, as far as possible, as a meeting in person. Members of the public may view the meeting online and may, with notice, make representations, ask questions, and give evidence in respect of any item of business at agenda item 3.

If you would like to provide written comments on any of the planning items in this agenda, please submit them to the town council as soon as possible so that committee members are able to view them before the meeting. If written submissions are received on the day of the meeting they may not be read.

**Please note that the Town Council is a consultee on planning applications and any comments may best be submitted directly to the Vale of White Horse District Council [using the website which can be found here](#).**

Should any Member be unable to attend and wish to send a substitute to the meeting, they should email [democratic@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@abingdon.gov.uk).

The agreed terms of reference for this committee can be viewed [here](#).

Any queries in relation to this agenda should be directed to myself.

Yours sincerely

*Nigel Warner*

Nigel Warner  
Town Clerk

### **Lead Councillors for areas of committee responsibility**

Please note that, as agreed at the meeting of the Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee on 16 September 2021, the lead Councillors for areas of responsibility are set out below. Lead Councillors are asked to ensure that matters are addressed and that deadlines are met. Responsibility for specific areas will be delegated to the Town Clerk, who will consult with officers and the Councillors named below. (The relevant paragraph in the scheme of delegation is included in brackets.)

**Neighbourhood Planning** (paragraph 5) – Cllr Clifton.

**Planning**: to be the link with the Planning Panel (paragraph 2) and related matters set out in paragraph 4 of the scheme of delegation (strategic/development plans, proposed listed buildings, conservation areas, tree protection orders and building preservation orders), plus those areas covered by paragraph 7 – Cllr Halliday.

**Highways/transport/parking** (paragraphs 8 and 9) - Cllr Jehanli.

**Active travel** (paragraph 14) – Cllr de la Harpe.

**Licensing** (paragraph 11) and house naming/ street numbering (paragraph 3). Street naming would need approval by the full committee - Cllr Fawcett.

Responsibility for all other consultations as set out in paragraph 12 will be confirmed at a future meeting.

## **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.

**The timings provided for each agenda item are approximate and may change if some items take more or less time.**

## **SECTION I - Open to the Public Including the Press**

1. **Apologies** 19.00  
To receive any apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of interest** 19.01  
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.

3. **Public participation** 19.02

Members of the public are permitted to make representations, ask questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda for any meeting of the Council (with the exception of the Annual Meeting) and its standing committees. Notice should be submitted in writing no later than 12 noon on the day of the meeting. This should be by e-mail to [democratic@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@abingdon.gov.uk).

4. **Notes of meeting** 19.07

To agree the [draft notes](#) of the meeting of the Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee of 13 January 2022 be agreed as a correct record, to be signed by the Chair.

Note that the majority of matters arising should be discussed under agenda item 5.

5. **Forward Plan and Actions Register** 19.10

The Forward Plan was approved by Full Council on 27 January 2021 and reviewed in June 2021.

There is some overlap between the Forward Plan and the Actions Register and your officers will be addressing this for the next cycle of meetings.

**Actions register**

The actions register report can be found [here](#).

To receive a draft [policy](#) on memorial benches from the Town Clerk which has been drafted in consultation with the Cemeteries and Outdoor Services Manager.

**Forward Plan**

Where items are marked red this means that there is a decision required or that the Committee is requested to note a change to timescales.

<b>Review of local transport support</b>	Apr to June 2021	Review of local transport support
	Jun 2021: review	Query resourcing of the local transport support - suggest transfer to July-Sept 21
	Jan to Mar 2022	Report to January 2022 meeting approved
	Update Mar 2022	See report on agenda for meeting of 17 March 2022, this will issue will require urgent consideration. Staff resources are under some pressure at present but this will have to be progressed

Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee 17 March 2022 - Agenda

<b>Albert Park Conservation Area Appraisal – updated timescale</b>	Oct to Dec 2020	Submit to DC
	Jun 2021: review	Chase Albert Park Appraisal with Vale
	March 2022 update	Working Group to submit final version for approval by VHHDC by 30 September 2022
<b>Neighbourhood Plan – updated to reflect March 2022 timescale</b>	Jan to Mar 2021	End of Stage 1; commission consultancy re stage 2 so that starts 1/4/21
	Apr to Jun 2021	Stage 2 of Plan
	Jan to June 2022	Neighbourhood Plan area agreed by VWHDC March 2022 Public engagement Prepare Reg 14 draft plan
	Jun/Jul 2022	Six-week formal consultation by Town Council
	Sept/ Oct 2022	Prepare Reg 16 plan and submit
	Autumn 2022	Six-week formal consultation (run by VWHDC)
	Jan to May 2023	Examination and referendum
<b>Travel initiatives</b>	Jan to Mar 2021	Discuss the merits of the active travel and LCWHIP adoption by the TC.
	July to Sept 2021	Promote cycling and walking infrastructure. Awaiting LCWHIP publication prior to adoption.
	March 2022 update	See separate item on agenda for meeting of 17 March 2022
<b>Town Centre area appraisal -revised March 2022 – to commence following formal submission of Albert Park Conservation Area Plan</b>	July to Sept 2022	Commence town centre conservation area appraisal
	Jan to Mar 2023	Submit town centre conservation area appraisal to district council

6. **Traffic Advisory Committee**

19.22

To receive and consider the notes of the meeting of the Abingdon Traffic Advisory Committee of 9 February 2022.

7. **Neighbourhood Plan**

19.25

Update from Cllr Grace Clifton [attached](#).

There is a dedicated website in relation to the Plan which can be access [here](#).

A public meeting was held on 3 March 2022 and the presentation made by FERIA Urbanism and the Steering Group may be found [here](#).

## 8. **Bus service 41**

19.35

Since October 2018 the Town Council has subsidised the town bus service 41 under contract to Thames Travel, the cost being £30,000 per annum.

On 2 March 2022 the following e-mail was received from Thames Travel:

"I thought I should write with an update on the status of bus industry funding in England, and the implications this has for the 41 service, which we have operated as a partnership with you for several years now.

"You may have seen in the media recently several articles highlighting the possibility of widespread reductions and / or withdrawal of bus services, following the scheduled end of COVID-19 emergency government funding on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022. I am pleased to advise that this week we have learned the emergency funding is to be extended for a further 6 months until early October 2022, although at a reduced level compared to that currently provided. This means the "cliff edge" which had been expected to lead to reductions in services from April 2022 has now been pushed back, which is good news.

"Bus patronage remains depressed, however, compared with pre-pandemic levels. We are currently seeing around 75% of the passenger numbers on our network that we would have expected to see at this time of year before the pandemic. On services like the 41, with a high proportion of elderly passengers this number is lower still, at around 65%. As government funding is reduced, we need patronage to return to around 90% of pre-pandemic levels in order to avoid having to make cuts to services.

"One issue which particularly affects the 41 service is the reimbursement that we receive from Oxfordshire County Council for carrying concessionary pass holders on our services. These passengers make up around 75% of the total users of the 41 service. During the pandemic the County followed government guidance and continued to pay 100% of the level that we received for these passholders prior to pandemic, despite actual passenger volumes being significantly impacted by lockdown restrictions, guidance on shielding and government messaging to avoid public transport etc.

"Government has issued Local Transport Authorities with revised guidance, advising them that they should taper down the level of additional concessionary funding provided to us over the 2022-23 financial year - with a view to returning to paying only for actual journeys made by the beginning of the 2023-24 financial year. So far, Oxfordshire County Council has not formally stated their intention with regard to this guidance, however we understand through discussions with them that they are minded to implement this from April 2022. If this happens, we will not be able to continue to operate service 41 for the current contract price of £30,000 per year and would need an additional £15,000 in order to cover the costs of continuing to provide the service.

"I recognise that this will not be welcome news but thought you would appreciate being made aware of the issue so we can consider together what can be done about it. We are looking at making any necessary changes to our services around the end of August, once

we have a better handle on how patronage has recovered after a sustained period of COVID-19 restrictions being lifted and once we better understand the picture regarding funding. This will hopefully give us some time for discussions to take place.”

The Chair, Cllr Andrew Skinner and the Town Clerk are meeting with representatives of Thames Travel on 14 March 2022 to discuss matters and will report directly to the meeting.

9. **Corporate identification on Town Council-funded infrastructure** 19.44

The Chair, Cllr Andrew Skinner, has requested that this item be included on the agenda with a view to inclusion of corporate identification on Town Council owned and funded infrastructure, which could include bus shelters, some litter bins and perhaps public seats. This would be funded from the street furniture budget and your officers would advise a budget of up to £2,000 and timescale by end of July 2022 for rollout.

Note the 2022/23 street furniture budget allocated to this committee is as follows:

Bus shelters: £6,667 plus earmarked reserve £8,054 (potential to extinguish or vire elsewhere if commercial arrangement is made for advertising and provision of replacement and repair and maintenance of existing shelters).

Other street furniture: £6,667 plus earmarked reserve £8,054

10. **Cycling and pedestrian matters** 19.50

To receive an update in relation to the above including the LCWIP (Local Cycling Walking and Infrastructure Plan).

The Chair, Cllr Andrew Skinner, has requested the committee consider the installation of some cycle racks to service the Roysse Court offices, Registration Office and Guildhall. Installation in Roysse Court itself would require careful thought with regard to the aesthetics and layout of the area.

If agreed your officers would suggest an allocation of £2,000 from the street furniture budget.

Bus shelters: £6,667 plus earmarked reserve £8,054 (potential to extinguish or vire elsewhere if commercial arrangement is made for advertising and provision of replacement and repair and maintenance of existing shelters).

Other street furniture: £6,667 plus earmarked reserve £8,054

11. **Public convenience provision in Abingdon.** 19.59

To receive a [report](#) from Cllr Charlie Birks with regards to Public Convenience Provision.

12. **Land and Property review**

20.08

At the last meeting Members requested an update regarding ownership of land and property in Abingdon.

The Town Clerk reports:

Responsibilities for these matters primarily span over three committees:

- Environment and Amenities: to oversee all arrangements in the town relating to recreation areas and open spaces, including the responsibilities of the various local authorities and arrangements in place for the management and maintenance of open spaces;
- Finance, Governance and Asset Management: the disposal, acquisition or renewal of any property interests;
- Town Infrastructure: the neighbourhood plan and making representations to the planning authority; to consider all matters in relation to highways, footpaths and bridleways; to consider all other consultations as may relate to services operated in the town including leisure and recreation.

Town Council land:

The Town Council is clear on what land it maintains but we are aware of legacy issues in relation to ownership of communal areas. The work to clarify land holdings is almost complete and land holdings mapped in the Council's GIS system (Pear). Lists of parcels of land which are maintained but not owned by the council will be brought forward to future meetings of the relevant committee with officer recommendations for action, for consideration. These recommendations will depend on a number of factors including the maintenance issues in relation to the land, the community benefit of the land, environmental and financial implications.

Vale of White Horse District Council land:

Town Clerk reports: Based on our conversations with Vale officers although early in 2021 we understood that the Strategic Property Review (SPR) would report by the end of 2021, it currently in its early stages. From what I understand there is a quarterly meeting of the SPR, which has had its first initial meeting. They are looking at the various land owned by the Vale and the process is for the SPR group is then to consult with local members regarding these various areas, with the consultation responses then being considered by the next quarterly meeting. I understand that it is then that parishes will be approached regarding any proposed transfers.

I have been told there is no timetable but that the process will be ongoing for the next 12 months. On being pressed it was not clear how quickly this would move from discussions to actions but I understand that as a result of the Town Council's desire to engage in constructive discussions the Abingdon part of the review is in the first tranche.

I will report further with any updates.



13. **Stratton Way – underpass** 20.13

The following proposal has come forward from Cllr Jim Halliday:

That a) the Town Clerk seeks approval from the relevant Oxfordshire County Council Department to permit the Town Council to repair & repaint the murals in the Stratton Way underpass; b) that once permission has been obtained, the Town Council commissions a local artist (ideally to be aided by pupils of Abingdon Schools) to undertake repairs to the existing murals in the Stratton Way Underpass (as happened during a previous Jubilee year) and install a new Platinum Jubilee mural on those parts of the underpass which currently do not feature a mural; and c) the committee delegates approval of the contracting arrangements to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Committee Chair.

If agreed this work would need to be funded from the Street Furniture budget and it is suggested a budget of £5,000 be allocated. In terms of the timing of the work we would suggest the period July to December 2022.

Bus shelters: £6,667 plus earmarked reserve £8,054 (potential to extinguish or vire elsewhere if commercial arrangement is made for advertising and provision of replacement and repair and maintenance of existing shelters).

Other street furniture: £6,667 plus earmarked reserve £8,054

## **CONSULTATIONS**

14. **Joint Design Guide** 20.23

Members will previously have received notification of the consultation relating to the Joint Design Guide.

The Committee is requested to consider the Joint Design Guide produced by Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils. Joint Design Guide provides guidance on how new development in the area can be designed and constructed to the highest quality and sustainability. As a Supplementary Planning Document, once adopted, it will be a material consideration in any future planning decisions we make. The guide provides steps and design principles that will help applicants understand what makes high-quality and sustainable design and inspire them to reach these standards.

There is a dedicated website for the Guide which may be accessed [here](#).

The District Councils are consulting on the Guide. The closing date is 15 March 2022 but, having regard to our meetings' cycle, the Town Council has been granted an extension to 31 March should it wish to respond corporately.

15. **Dates of future meetings** 20.29

To note the dates for future meetings and items for the agenda.

- 16 June 2022

The calendar of meetings for 2022/23 is due to be considered by the council at its meeting of 30 March 2022.

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## **Note on Governance**

On 29 September 2021 the Urgency Committee and the Town Council reviewed the emergency governance arrangements in place during the current phase of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The council's committees continue to meet on-line as advisory committees.

The recommendations of each advisory committee are then considered by the next meeting of the town council. The town council is conducted as a hybrid meeting with those members physically present at the meeting able to vote and make decisions but with the option also for members to attend on-line, in which case they can speak but not vote.

The emergency arrangements will be reviewed regularly and at each council meeting.