

## ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

Report to	FINANCE, GOVERNANCE AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
Meeting date	22 March 2022
Report author	Town Clerk
Agenda item	11

### Consultations Policy

1. **Purpose of the Report**

1.1 To consider and adopt a Consultations Policy.

2. **Summary**

2.1 Minute FG50 of the last meeting of this committee (18 January 2022) states: “the Committee requested that the Town Clerk report to the next meeting regarding a potential time slot for a policy on consultations to be drafted, considered and approved.”

2.2 This report and the [attached draft](#) address this action.

3. **Action required**

3.1 The Committee is requested to consider the attached draft policy and whether to recommend its adoption by the Town Council.

4. **Link to strategic plan and objectives**

4.2 The policy supports all the Council’s key objectives:

Key objective 1: To respond effectively and speedily to the climate emergency

Key objective 2: To develop a resilient, sustainable town which will provide a home for residents now and in the future.

Key objective 3: To manage the Council’s assets efficiently and effectively to meet for the needs of the community now and in the future.

Key objective 4: To work with community partners to support those who are vulnerable and in need and to create opportunities to increase social inclusivity

5. **Key information and options**

- 5.1 I do not intend to set out and duplicate detail in this report which is included in the attached draft. However, effective consultation is important in meeting the needs of the community and involving residents in decisions that affect them.
- 5.2 The Town Council has consulted with residents for many years but does not have a policy framework for consultation. The policy sets out when we will consult and the matters we will consider when undertaking consultation that all members of the community can have a voice in the debate around how services are delivered.
- 5.3 The Council's system of governance is that services are the responsibility of four standing committees, each of which have delegated powers to make decisions and develop our services. This policy will ensure there is a consistency to the way in which we plan, develop, and share learning from consultations to influence the way in which we provide services in the future.
- 5.4 In developing this policy we have had due regard to other policies which town councils have adopted, noting that whilst some principal authorities have such policies there are many towns which do not. It is a positive improvement for the Council to have a policy in place for the reasons outlined in this report and the draft policy.
- 5.5 The committee may, should it decide to recommend approval of this policy, then consider a policy statement on how it engages with residents, which is much wider matter to consider. I did consider expanding the consultation policy but have not had time to do so whilst doing justice to the matter.

6. **Climate change/green implications**

- 6.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.
- 6.2 However, appropriate and effective consultation potentially has positive implications for climate change and environmental issues.

7. **Financial/budget implications**

- 7.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.
- 7.2 Undertaking consultation will have a financial cost.
- 7.3 Appropriate and effective consultation potentially has financial and budget implications when decisions are made. These will clearly depend on the matter being consulted on and so are not explored further in this report.

8. **HR implications**

- 8.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.
- 8.2 Undertaking a consultation will involve use of staff and Member time.
- 8.3 Appropriate and effective consultation potentially has HR implications. These will clearly depend on the matter being consulted on and so are not explored further in this report.

9. **Supporting papers and appendices**

- 9.1 [APPENDIX A: Draft consultations policy.](#)

Nigel Warner  
Town Clerk  
17 March 2022