



ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee

17 March 2022

DRAFT NOTES

Present:

Cllr Andrew Skinner
Cllr Neil Fawcett
Cllr Charlie Birks
Cllr Grace Clifton
Cllr Jim Halliday
Cllr Eric de la Harpe
Cllr Rawda Jehanli

Chair
Vice-Chair

In attendance:

Nigel Warner

Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting)

SECTION I - Open to the Public Including the Press

T47. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

T48. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

T49. Public participation

There were no members of the public present.

T50. Notes of meeting

The meeting received and considered the [draft notes](#) of the meeting of the Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee of 13 January 2022.

T35 – Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Grace Clifton stated that she had prepared a report for the meeting but that this had not been attached to the minutes either by way of appendix or electronic attachment. The Town Clerk stated that he would review this and take appropriate action. Subsequent to the meeting the report has been added as an appendix to the draft notes of the meeting of 17 March 2022 as the minutes from the January meeting have already been presented to the council.

The [draft notes](#) of the meeting of the Town Infrastructure Advisory Committee of 13 January 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

T51. Forward Plan and Actions Register

Actions Register

The actions register report, which may be found [here](#) was noted and the following items discussed:

16 September 2021, T10: Planning Panel. Cllr Jim Halliday stated that the notes against this action said “refer to governance review working group as part of their work on evaluating the system introduced in September 2022.” He felt that given the comments which had been made by the Planning Panel were such that this was rather late in the process. In response the Town Clerk stated that this note was ambiguous and incorrect, it referred to the date of the implementation of the new committee system which was actually September 2021. The Town Clerk stated that the working group had not yet met as the intention was that the Council should go through a full six months of meetings so that it had enough time to evaluate any changes which may need to be made, having given enough time for the new system to establish itself. Therefore, the intention was to undertake this review following the end of the current cycle, ahead of the new municipal year. Members considered that it was important that this review take place.

The concerns raised by the Planning Panel were detailed in the action plan for this committee. Councillor Halliday stated that the intention was that plans should be reviewed by all Members, but the evidence was that this was not happening. One of the pressing issues was that the work in relation to planning was falling on just three Members and so they felt it was necessary to increase the size of the panel as this would spread the workload more manageably. It was envisaged this would be one of the matters to take to the Governance Review Implementation Working Party and the committee look forward to this meeting taking place. In the meantime, it:

Recommended to the Town Council: that the size of the Planning Panel be increased from three to five members.

Cllr Grace Clifton volunteered to serve on the Planning Panel. **The committee recommended to the Town Council that Cllr Grace Clifton be appointed to serve on the planning panel.**

Cllr Jim Halliday also stated that in terms of the timing it would assist members if the date of the panel was moved to later in the week, i.e. a Thursday as this would give members the weekend to review which plans should be referred. The Chair, Cllr Andrew Skinner, stated that he was of the view that the date to be chosen for meetings to take place should be a matter for the Planning Panel members to decide.

11 January 2019, Roundabouts – A15: Cllr Charlie Birks noted the suggestion that this action should be transferred to the Traffic Advisory Committee. He queried whether that was the best place for this but in any case, felt that the Town Council should press the County Council very hard on this subject so matters could be concluded; it appeared to be a fairly straightforward matter – the County owned the roundabouts, and the Vale was the planning authority. The town clerk stated that he understood the frustration. This was the oldest action on the Council's action list and was one over which we had no control beyond writing letters. He had suggested transfer to the Traffic Advisory Committee as there were members of all authorities at that committee, including county officers and it was helpful if the matter was primarily discussed at one committee. He added that in any case the Traffic Advisory Committee reported to the Town Infrastructure Committee.

Cllr Jim Halliday stated that he had made vigorous representations on this matter at the last Traffic Advisory Committee. He understood why the Town Clerk was making the suggestion to transfer the action to that committee but was concerned by lack of progress. He suggested that a report back from the Traffic Advisory Committee be requested for the next meeting of this committee.

Cllr Neil Fawcett stated that he was not convinced that Traffic Advisory was the best committee to consider this as the county officers in attendance were not the ones who would be responsible for this action, although they may pass advice on to colleagues. He felt that in reality this matter would not be resolved until we were able to get hold of the person who was responsible. He had taken from previous discussions that there was an agreement in relation to maintenance of roundabouts at South Oxfordshire but that the person who would lead on this no longer worked for the authority.

It was agreed that this matter should be transferred to the Traffic Advisory Committee and that a report be requested back from the committee in time for the Town Infrastructure Committee in June. **The chair, Councillor Andrew Skinner, stated that in the meantime he would make enquiries and representations to the County Council regarding this matter.** He would ask Cllr Neil Fawcett in his role as a County Councillor if he required assistance on this matter.

20 January 2021, Bus shelters A60. Councillor Charlie Birks raised the issue of the Drayton Road bus shelter which had been installed as part of a new development but had been removed due to its poor location. Cllr Jim Halliday was concerned that the developer had a commitment to install a bus shelter, but this bus shelter had not as yet been replaced. According to minutes from 2017 the developer had removed the bus shelter because the bus shelter had been placed in the centre of a cycle lane. This needed to be expedited because the longer it was left, the harder it would be to do. **The Town Clerk would make appropriate enquiries of the District Council and if necessary, the developer, and**

report back to the next meeting regarding whether we would be able to resolve this.

18 November 2021, membership of Town and Country Planning Association - T27.

It was noted that the council had agreed to join the association subject to a member being the council contact. Cllr Jim Halliday had volunteered and consequently **the committee requested the Town Clerk to make the necessary arrangements to join.**

13 January 2022, T37 cycle path bridge and T38 20MPH zones: The committee agreed that both of these specific actions as minuted were complete and should be removed from the actions register.

With regard to T37, cycle path bridge, the Chair, Cllr Andrew Skinner, reported that he had spoken with District Councillor Mike Pighills. It had been agreed that this would be an appropriate use of CIL monies, but Cllr Skinner had stated that this should be District Council money, as it was a District Council property.

9 June 2021 - Sponsorship of benches- A10.

The committee received a draft [policy](#) on memorial benches from the Town Clerk which had been drafted in consultation with the Cemeteries and Outdoor Services Manager.

The committee considered the policy in detail and the following points were made:

- Paragraph 3.7: If a refund is required in relation to a bench and we cannot contact the person who paid for it, it was suggested that the refund be placed into a suspense account. However, a different view was put forward, that the onus should be on the applicant to inform the council of any change of their contact details and that setting up numerous suspense accounts would prove to be overly bureaucratic.
- Paragraph 4.5: this paragraph stated that the Town Council would maintain memorial benches. It was felt that it could be written in a “more generous” way e.g., the Town Council will do its best to maintain the benches etc.
- Paragraph 4.6: states “No additional mementoes, e.g., statues, flowers, wreaths, vases etc will be permitted on or around the bench.” The committee debated whether or not such a clause was necessary and whether it was enforceable. The Town Clerk stated that the origin of this paragraph related to issues in the cemeteries where benches have been surrounded by various items which can be a hazard to those using the bench and made maintenance more difficult. Some members felt that this paragraph should remain as it will give council staff the right to remove such items. Others felt that it should be rephrased along the lines of “people are requested not to leave mementos at the bench because of the hazard they can present to users of the cemetery.”
- Paragraph 4.7 This was ambiguous as it was not clear whether the council would be charging for both the bench and the dedication park. The Town Clerk confirmed that it would be both and would make appropriate amendments.
- An explanatory note should be added to the policy regarding how it would be communicated to the public. Following discussion members were of the opinion that a press release was not appropriate.

Recommended to the town council:

1 That the memorial bench policy be approved in principle and that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to accept further comments from members in relation to the draft policy following which he would then make amendments to the policy, consult with committee members on these amendments and then adopt the final policy.

2 That when approved, the policy be published on the website together with an explanatory article.

Forward Plan

Where items are marked red this indicates further information / discussion / decision at the meeting.

Review of local transport support	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
Albert Park Conservation Area Appraisal – updated timescale	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 VWHDC by 30 September 2022. Cllr Halliday reported to the meeting that he had spoken with Roger Thomas has been working through the revised draft with and Grant Audley-Miller, who are both members of the working group. It was anticipated that the draft will then be circulated to the group and then submitted to the Vale. If both the Cabinet member and the Conservation Officer are content then it would go for public consultation by the Vale, as local planning authority and then be submitted for approval by the Cabinet.
Neighbourhood Plan – updated to reflect March 2022 timescale	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
Travel initiatives	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 – timescale to be agreed having regard to current workloads and priorities
Town Centre area appraisal -revised March 2022 – to commence following formal submission of Albert Park Conservation Area Plan	Oct to Dec 2022	Commence town centre conservation area appraisal
	Mar to June 2023	Submit town centre conservation area appraisal to district council

T52. Traffic Advisory Committee 9 February 2022

These would be considered at the next meeting.

T53. Neighbourhood Plan

A written update from Cllr Grace Clifton [attached](#) was noted.

In relation to paragraph 6 it was noted that the support required was in “peaks and troughs.” Cllr Clifton had discussed this with the Town Clerk and agreed a way forward, with the Town Clerk as lead officer who would allocate and manage officer support which was required in terms of publicity on the Town Council’s website, a social media and practical local arrangements in relation to booking rooms. The Chair Cllr Andrew Skinner suggested that the understanding be written down and the Town Clerk agreed to do this.

Cllr Jim Halliday stated that the Neighbourhood Plan was a major council project and was working to a very finite timescale which it was important to keep to. If additional resource was required this needed to be found. Cllr Skinner stated that was content this had been discussed and that if more resource was required to keep the project moving he asked that Cllr Clifton and the Town Clerk should contact him. The Town Clerk thanked the Chair but hoped that this would not be necessary as most of the work is contracted-out to Feria Urbanism so the amount of staffing support was not great.

In relation to paragraph 7 of the report, members expressed some disappointment with the lack of engagement by the Vale town centre project consultants with the Town Council’s Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Unfortunately, they were also due to attend a meeting of the group which had taken place on 16 March 2022 but had failed to turn up.

Cllr Neil Fawcett reported that he appreciated the problems and this had been taken up with the consultants. Cllr Clifton reminded the Committee that the section 14 consultation in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan was due to take place in June/ July 2022 and that the recent Vale press release on the town centre stated that there would be consultation on that project in the summer; it was important that both consultations were effectively aligned. On a related-matter Cllr Skinner stated that the recently issued Vale press release in relation to the town centre had missed a number of opportunities.

Cllr Jim Halliday stated that he was concerned that terminology for the various plans was consistent as it was confusing for residents, especially in relation to the town centre work being undertaken by consultants for the Vale. Cllr Fawcett stated that he was aware of this issue and that work was taking place to improve matters.

Cllr Clifton informed the Committee of the next three next topics being tested:

- Access and movement (linking to the LCWIP – two members of the group also serve on the LCWIP);
- Business and employment;
- Leisure.

There were also three cross-cutting themes emerging - Healthy town, sustainability and people – how designs for Abingdon affect different groups.

There was a dedicated website in relation to the Plan which could be accessed [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](#).

The Chair, Cllr Andrew Skinner, thanked all those involved for what was a very professionally driven project.

The report was noted by the Committee.

T54. Bus Service 41

The Committee noted the email which was received from Thames Travel on 2 March 2022 which stated:

“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 5th 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 had met with representatives of Thames Travel on 14 March 2022 to discuss matters. Thames Travel had explained the issues in relation to passenger numbers as a result of the pandemic and the change to the various subsidies which would have a negative impact on the service in detail. Based on current estimates they stated that they could continue to operate the timetable as agreed with the Town Council to 30 September 2022. After that date unless further support was obtained it would be necessary to make cuts to the service. Cllr Skinner and the Town Clerk had outlined the Town Council's position, that it was looking at the way in which it supported local bus services but that it had set a budget of £30,000 for 2022/23, a matter resolved by the Council in January 2022 and there were no plans to release any further support to the service. It was therefore noted that the service 41 would very likely appear on the list of routes which were “at risk.”

The Town Clerk stated that this made it important that we progress our own review and would speak further with the Chair regarding the timescales with a view to updating the next Council meeting.

Cllr Jim Halliday stated that there was a need to publicise this service more effectively including in the Town Crier, where the route goes and the fact that the Town Council

support this service. He also stated that previously the committee had agreed to receive the usage statistics. The Town Clerk apologised that this was not on the agenda this time but would ensure that these statistics appeared on future agendas. It had been reported that last week there had been 239 passengers and that they were running at about 60% of pre-Covid usage.

The report was noted, and Cllr Skinner and the Town Clerk would report further at the next meeting.

T55. Corporate identification on Town Council-funded infrastructure

The Chair, Cllr Andrew Skinner, had 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.

The officers had advised that such work could be funded from the street furniture budget.

For information the Committee noted the 2022/23 street furniture budget allocated to this committee was 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.

Cllr Skinner clarified his request and stated that it was not his intention that all existing street furniture was marked with corporate identification but that it be council policy from herein when we install infrastructure in the future so that people know that we have provided the items concerned. Cllr Grace Clifton agreed that this was a sensible approach and she would not recommend retro-fitting. Councillor Jim Halliday noted that there were already items of council property which had such identification, for instance the flower tubs. However, this was not a feature of the bus shelters, and such identification would be useful. Cllr Rawda Jehanli felt that it was very important that Town Council infrastructure was identified in this way as it was important that residents knew how their money was spent.

Members considered that it would be helpful to give guidance to the officers in relation to the council's wishes and then it should be considered to be an operational matter in relation to implementation for the Cemetery and Outdoor Services Manager to use his discretion.

It was recommended to the Town Council that authority be delegated to the Cemetery and Outdoor Services Manager to utilise funding from the street furniture budget to incorporate appropriate corporate identification on street furniture, at his discretion.

T56. **Cycling and Pedestrian Matters**

The committee received an update in relation to the above.

Cllr Eric de la Harpe reported as follows:

- LCWIP (Local Cycling Walking and Infrastructure Plan). A draft had been produced by the County Council in the last few days. The plan was wider in scope than the volunteer led LCWIP; for example, its geographical reach extended to Radley and it has more route on it than the volunteer-led document.
- The design work in relation to the Bridge Street / East Saint Helen Street junction will shortly be completed by Sustrans and they would value the opportunity make a presentation to councillors. The consensus was that it should be presented to all Members.
- Sustrans also has a project to dedicate benches along its routes which had silhouettes behind them to represent under a Jubilee project entitled "Portrait Benches." They would be made of railway sleepers and each bench had three silhouettes behind them to represent "local heroes." They wished to place one of the five benches which they have planned, in Abingdon. They have requested assistance from the Town Council in publicising its project as the timescales were so short and passing on any information they sent us. In this regard the Town Clerk advised that any publicity should be sent to the Community Services and Events Officer andy.crick@abingdon.gov.uk Cllr Eric de la Harpe shared their document with the Committee. In response to a question from Cllr Charlie Birks in relation to ongoing maintenance and he had concerns regarding the silhouettes. Cllr de la Harpe would check with Sustrans. The Town Clerk gave the opinion that responsibility would rest between the landowner – unlikely to be the Town Council – and Sustrans. Most of the land along the local route was District Council land and Cllr de la Harpe would liaise with them accordingly. Cllr Jim Halliday advised that the District Council have an Arts Officer who Sustrans should contact.

The Chair, Cllr Andrew Skinner, had requested the committee consider the installation of some cycle racks to service the Roysse Court offices, Registration Office and Guildhall. The committee considered this matter. It was noted that there were bicycle racks proximate to this location, in front of the Abbey Hall /Abbey Cinema and that these were available to visitors to the Town Council offices. Cllr Neil Fawcett stated this was also more secure in the evening as the cinema was open but the racks had sometimes been full and therefore we should consider whether there might be space for more. Consequently, at this stage the committee did not recommend proceeding with installation of further racks in this area.

The report was noted.

T57. **Public convenience provision in Abingdon**

The Committee received a [report](#) from Cllr Charlie Birks with regards to public convenience provision.

Cllr Birks Stated that there were numerous problems in relation to public toilets in the town, which were often out of order and had notices referring to other toilets which themselves

were not open. Recently of the three assessable District Council toilets only one – in the Charter – opened and that with some difficulty. He stated that in stark comparison to the District Council facilities the “Space for Change” at the Guildhall was a good example of how facilities should be presented to the public - in good condition, warm and clean.

Cllr Jim Halliday stated that from his observation the cleaner regularly attended the different facilities, and this was not a problem; the problem was maintenance. He stated that the District Council needed to undertake basic repairs to its public toilets and when repairs needed to be undertaken this needed to be done quickly. The facilities also needed to be regularly checked.

Cllr Neil Fawcett stated that Vale Members had the same discussions and concerns. He understood that vandalism was the primary problem which affected Abbey Meadow toilets and this could also explain the missing notices. The Vale was aware and trying to address the issues. The primary problem for the Charter was the condition of the building itself. They were looking higher-level “portaloos” to meet the immediate need. Different facilities and toilets would be repaired and then vandalised again very quickly. There was then a longer-term discussion to be had in relation to toilet provision which we may take a view on. One approach undertaken in towns was rather than have public toilets there is a scheme involving local businesses, which had worked in some towns.

The report was noted. It was proposed by Cllr Charlie Birks and seconded by Cllr Jim Halliday and **recommended to the Town Council that the Town Clerk write to the District Council:**

- 1. To ask for an update in relation to the toilets at Hales Meadow.**
- 2. State that the toilets in the Abbey Meadows require urgent repair specifically the Changing Spaces facility; and those in the Charter are dilapidated – what are the Vale’s intentions.**
- 3. To request that the District Council review all their signage in relation to the public toilets and keep them up to date.**
- 4. In recognition of fact that that any works in relation to the public toilets will take some time to complete hat the Town Council requests a contribution from the District Council amounting to 50% of the costs incurred by the Town Council in operating the “Space for Change” in the Guildhall.**

T58. Land and Property review

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

The Town Clerk reported:

Responsibilities for these matters primarily spanned 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 was clear on what land it maintained but we were aware of legacy issues in relation to ownership of communal areas. The work to clarify land holdings was almost complete and land holdings mapped in the Council's GIS system (Pear). Lists of parcels of land which were maintained but not owned by the council would be brought forward to future meetings of the relevant committee with officer recommendations for action, for consideration. These recommendations would 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 reported that 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 that year, it currently in its early stages. From what he understood there was a quarterly meeting of the SPR, which has had its first initial meeting. They were looking at the various land owned by the Vale and the process was for the SPR group then to consult with local members regarding these various areas, with the consultation responses then being considered by the next quarterly meeting. He understood that it is then that parishes would be approached regarding any proposed transfers.

He had been told there was no timetable but that the process would be ongoing for the next 12 months. On being pressed it was not clear how quickly this would move from discussions to actions, but he understood 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.

He would report further with any updates to this and the other committees at future meetings.

The report was noted.

T59. **Stratton Way - underpass**

Cllr Jim Halliday reported that the mural in the underpass at Stratton Way had been repaired and repainted at a previous Jubilee and this would be an appropriate small project to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee.

It was proposed by Cllr Jim Halliday, seconded by Cllr Grace Clifton and **recommended to the Town Council that:**

- a) the Town Clerk seeks approval from the relevant Oxfordshire County Council Department to permit the Town Council to repair and 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.

It was noted that 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. The allocation to street furniture other than bus shelters, for 2022/23, was: £6,667 plus earmarked reserve £8,054.

CONSULTATIONS

T60. Joint Design Guide

The Committee considered the Joint Design Guide produced by Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils, of which all Members had previously received notification. There was a dedicated website for the Guide which may be accessed [here](#).

It was noted that the closing date for the consultation was 15 March 2022 but, having regard to our meetings' cycle, the Town Council had been granted an extension to 31 March should it wish to respond corporately.

The chair, Cllr Andrew Skinner expressed concern regarding how useful this guide was. He stated that it seemed to be addressed to developers and it would have been helpful to have had something to guide the individual who may be looking to undertake building work. He stated that he had looked at other guides which were more helpful, mentioning one produced for Milton Keynes in this regard. Cllr Andrew Skinner would send a comment to the Town Clerk for inclusion in any response.

Cllr Jim Halliday stated one of the issues faced by the Planning Panel was the lack of guidance on sustainability and this would be a good vehicle to communicate such guidance; therefore he would look at it and feed some comments back to the Town Clerk. Cllr Grace Clifton stated that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was aware of the guide. She felt it had been written to a very high level and posed the question as to how you could possibly encompass everything across the Vale and South across its varied urban and rural areas in such a publication.

Recommended to the Town Council that authority to respond to the consultation be delegated to the Town Clerk taking into account the above and any other points brought forward by Members.

T61. **Dates of next meeting**

The dates of the next meeting and items for the agenda was noted as 16 June 2022.

The Chair Cllr Skinner thanked all Members for what had been a productive meeting which had been well-served by the papers presented to the meeting.

The meeting rose at 2100 hrs.